

Final External Evaluation of the YOUTH Community Action Programme 2000-2006

Final report

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Table of contents

List of Figures	11
List of Tables	13
Preface	17
Summary	19
Introduction	19
Purpose of the evaluation and methodological approach	19
Intervention logic	20
Complementarity and relevance	20
Effectiveness	21
Utility and sustainability	24
Efficiency	25
Conclusions	28
Recommendations	29
Zusammenfassung	31
Einführung	31
Ziel der Beurteilung und methodologischer Ansatz	31
Interventionslogik	32
Komplementarität und Relevanz	32
Effektivität	33
Nützlichkeit und Nachhaltigkeit	36
Effizienz	38
Schlussfolgerungen	41
Empfehlungen	42
Résumé	43
Avant-propos	43
Objectif de l'évaluation et approche méthodologique	43
Logique d'intervention	44
Complémentarité et pertinence	44
Efficacité	45
Efficacité	50
Conclusions	53
Recommandations	54

1	Introduction: YOUTH Community Action Programme	55
1.1	General policy framework	55
1.2	History of the YOUTH programme	57
1.3	Objectives and Actions of the Youth Community Action Programme	58
1.3.1	Objectives	58
1.4	Actions, measures and target groups	59
1.5	Organisation structure	61
1.6	Procedure	63
1.7	Budget	63
1.8	Main outcomes of previous relevant evaluations	65
2	Purpose of the evaluation and methodological approach	67
2.1	Objectives	67
2.2	Evaluation questions	67
2.3	Evaluation methodology	68
2.3.1	Desk research and interviews with the EC	68
2.3.2	Formulation Indicators	68
2.3.3	Questionnaires	69
2.3.4	The Country Studies	70
2.3.5	The national reports	71
3	Reconstruction of the intervention logic and indicators	73
3.1	Coherence and assumptions	73
3.2	The horizontal relationships and indicators	74
3.2.1	Measures – Operational objectives – Output indicators	74
3.2.2	Actions – Objectives – Result indicators	74
3.2.3	The wider aim - impact indicators	75
3.3	The vertical relations	75
3.4	Conclusions on the intervention logic	78
4	Complementarity	79
4.1	Introduction	79
4.2	Correspondence of the YOUTH programme to the objectives of the White Paper and Youth Pact, evaluators judgement	79
4.2.1	White paper	79
4.2.2	European Youth Pact	80
4.3	Complementarity Leonardo da Vinci and Socrates	81
4.3.1	Evaluators judgement	81
4.3.2	Judgment National Agencies and National Authorities	83
4.4	Complementarity at national level	84
4.4.1	Opinion National Agencies/National Authorities	84
4.4.2	Opinion of the Youth workers	85
4.5	Relevance of the Actions of the YOUTH programme with the needs of target groups	87
4.6	Conclusions	87

5	Effectiveness of the programme for young people	89
5.1	Introduction	89
5.2	Nature activities, profile respondents and profile of the activity	89
5.2.1	Type of activities Action 1 and 2 in which respondents participated	89
5.2.2	Profile of young people who participated in study	89
5.2.3	Profile of the activity	91
5.3	Effectiveness of the programme in general terms	94
5.4	Effectiveness objectives on young people	96
5.4.1	Active citizenship competencies	97
5.4.2	Active citizenship in practice	99
5.4.3	Employability and new professional orientations	104
5.4.4	Solidarity	106
5.4.5	Orientation towards Europe	107
5.5	Unintended results	110
5.6	Effectiveness in reaching specific target groups	111
5.6.1	Effectiveness in addressing equal opportunities in the Programme	111
5.6.2	Effectiveness in addressing access for young people with fewer opportunities to Programme	111
5.7	Conclusions	115
6	Effectiveness of the programme for the youth workers and organisations	117
6.1	Introduction	117
6.2	Effectiveness of specific outputs of YOUTH programme	117
6.2.1	Experimental / innovative nature of YOUTH programme	120
6.3	Effectiveness Action 5 support activities for youth workers	120
6.3.1	Extent to which the youth workers are reached by Action 5	120
6.3.2	Relation to the needs and aspirations of youth worker	121
6.3.3	Support to professional development / increased confidence in relation to integration of European citizenship as a theme into work with young people	121
6.3.4	Involvement in European networks of trainers / youth workers	121
6.3.5	Increased knowledge in relation to specific issues	122
6.3.6	Opinion of evaluators on effectiveness support activities	125
6.4	Impact	126
6.4.1	Employability	126
6.4.2	Importance of certification / formal acknowledgement of certification in projects, training, et cetera	126
6.4.3	Unintended results	127
6.5	Suggestions for improvement	127
6.5.1	Measures to improve relevance and effectiveness of YOUTH programme for Youth Workers	128
6.5.2	Utility of Inclusion of specific measures in future programmes contributing the work of youth workers	129
6.5.3	Specific measures to enable youth organisations to work with more effectively with young people with fewer opportunities	130
6.6	Effectiveness for the organisations	131
6.7	Effectiveness training and support measures for National Agencies	135

6.8	Conclusions of effectiveness for youth workers, organisations and National Agencies	136
7	Utility and sustainability	139
7.1	Introduction	139
7.2	Contribution to a Europe of Knowledge by offering mobility and non-formal learning opportunities	139
7.3	Introduction of new approaches and influence on policy	140
7.4	Area of cooperation and stable contacts between policy makers and young people/youth organisations	143
7.4.1	New international contacts between stakeholders in the youth field in general and the influence on youth policy	143
7.4.2	Influence on policy makers	144
7.4.3	Contact policy makers and young people/youth organisations	145
7.4.4	New networks: youth organisations and young people	146
7.4.5	Political interest and adaptation of (national) policy	150
7.5	Institutional and administrative adaptations	151
7.6	Reduction administrative mobility obstacles and legal status EVS volunteers	152
7.6.1	Influence on administrative mobility	152
7.6.2	Legal status EVS volunteers and policy influence on EVS	153
7.7	Recognition voluntary activities and value non-formal learning	155
7.7.1	Recognition of voluntary activity of young people	155
7.7.2	Recognition value non-formal learning	156
7.7.3	Opinion evaluators	157
7.8	Conclusions	158
8	Programme implementation and efficiency	159
8.1	Human and financial resources	159
8.1.1	Human resources	159
8.1.2	Operating grant NAs	160
8.1.3	Appropriateness financial envelope ADEC	162
8.1.4	Number of applications for different actions	163
8.1.5	Appropriateness of financing of SALTO “Training and Cooperation”	164
8.1.6	Budget for the Activities received by organisations	165
8.2	Efficiency Decentralised Procedures	166
8.2.1	Adequacy of administration and management procedures	166
8.2.2	Criteria and (funding) rules	167
8.2.3	Frequency/timing of calls for proposals and duration of selection process	169
8.2.4	Efficiency overall selection process	170
8.2.5	Efficiency payments	171
8.2.6	Influences of changes in management	172
8.2.7	Illustrative remarks by organisations	173
8.3	Efficiency centralised procedure	174
8.4	Efficiency and appropriateness structures	175
8.4.1	Overview of the opinions on the support structures	176
8.4.2	European Commission	178

8.4.3	TAO/ Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency	179
8.4.4	National Agencies	180
8.4.5	SALTO Resource centres	182
8.4.6	Eurodesks	186
8.5	Visibility of the YOUTH programme	187
8.5.1	Effectiveness of NA/NAUTHs in enhancing the visibility of the Programme	187
8.5.2	Effectiveness of publicity in reaching all target groups	188
8.5.3	Dissemination strategy of SALTO	188
8.6	Monitoring arrangements	189
8.6.1	What is being monitored and levels of monitoring	189
8.6.2	Monitoring at central level	189
8.6.3	Appropriateness monitoring system (decentralised)	191
8.6.4	Monitoring of the centralised strand	191
8.6.5	Monitoring at project level	192
8.6.6	Monitoring by the SALTOs	192
8.7	Conclusions	193
9	Conclusions and recommendations	195
9.1	Conclusions	195
9.1.1	Intervention logic	195
9.1.2	Complementarity	196
9.1.3	Relevance	196
9.1.4	Effectiveness	197
9.1.5	Utility and sustainability	201
9.1.6	Efficiency	203
9.1.7	Efficiency of resources	203
9.1.8	Efficiency of procedures	204
9.1.9	Efficiency of structures	206
9.1.10	Visibility	208
9.1.11	Monitoring arrangements	209
9.2	Recommendations	209
9.2.1	Relevance	209
9.2.2	Effectiveness	209
9.2.3	Efficiency	210

List of Figures

Figure 1.1	Influences of European Programmes to a European area of education and vocational training	55
Figure 3.1	General intervention logic	74
Figure 3.2	Hierarchy of objectives and measures	76

List of Tables

Table 1.1	Actions and target groups of the YOUTH programme	59
Table 1.2	Summary of figures Annual activity reports	64
Table 1.3	Statistics on projects started from 01 January 2004 and ended by 01 January 2007	65
Table 2.1	Main evaluation questions	68
Table 2.2	Target group and scope questionnaire	69
Table 2.3	Response distribution of the questionnaires	70
Table 2.4	Selection of countries for further analysis	71
Table 3.1	Assessment measures and their contributing activities	77
Table 4.1	Degree of correspondence of the YOUTH programme to White Paper objectives, evaluators judgement	79
Table 4.2	Degree of correspondence of YOUTH programme to Youth Pact objectives, evaluators judgement	80
Table 4.3	How does the YOUTH programme relate to other interventions with similar objectives in which Youth Workers are involved?	86
Table 5.1	Educational level of young participants at the time of the activity	90
Table 5.2	Ways of becoming involved in the exchange (youth questionnaire)	91
Table 5.3	Who participated in the activity, besides you? (in %)	92
Table 5.4	Subjects addressed as part of the project (youth questionnaire, in %)	92
Table 5.5	Programme objectives aimed at by the activities	93
Table 5.6	Perception on the effectiveness of the programme as an whole of the NA/NAUTHs	94
Table 5.7	Extent of achievement objectives for Young people according to NA/NAUTHs	94
Table 5.8	Correspondence of the Actions to the needs	95
Table 5.9	Impact on young people: strongly agree or agree	96
Table 5.10	Citizenship competencies: effects on young people	98
Table 5.11	Citizenship competencies: effects on young people	99
Table 5.12	Citizenship in practice: effects on young people	100
Table 5.13	Active citizenship in practice; effects of the programme (in %)	102
Table 5.14	Employability: effects on young people	104
Table 5.15	Young people with fewer opportunities by country group (%)	112
Table 5.16	To what extent did you reach young people with fewer opportunities?	113
Table 6.1	Ranking of outputs that support youth workers to be more effective in their work with young people	118
Table 6.2	Reasons for not participating in Action 5 support activities	120
Table 6.3	Reasons why youth workers are not involved in a European network (multiple responses were possible)	122
Table 6.4	Increased knowledge of youth workers in relation to specific issues	123
Table 6.5	Difficulties in applications of training considered by youth workers	124

Table 6.6	Influence of T-kits on the practice of youth workers	124
Table 6.7	Importance of formal acknowledgement of participation in projects and training, considered by youth workers	126
Table 6.8	Measures that could improve the relevance and effectiveness of the YOUTH programme for youth workers	128
Table 6.9	Ranking of measures that may improve relevance and effectiveness of the YOUTH programme for youth workers	128
Table 6.10	Youth workers considering the utility of inclusion of specific measures in future programmes for youth workers	129
Table 6.11	Ranking extent of specific measures to improve the utility of future programmes for youth workers	129
Table 6.12	Utility of measures to support youth organisations to work more effective with young people with fewer opportunities (youth workers questionnaire)	130
Table 6.13	Utility of measures to support youth organisations to work more effective with young people with fewer opportunities	131
Table 6.14	Effectiveness of the programme for the organisations	132
Table 6.15	Support by the host and sending organisation, Action 2 (EVS)	133
Table 6.16	Previous experience organisation with the European Union	134
Table 6.17	Continuation of the activities	135
Table 6.18	Adoption of results of the project in practice	135
Table 6.19	Effectiveness of programme support activities for NA/NAUTH	136
Table 7.1	Increase in level of cooperation in the field of non-formal education	140
Table 7.2	Introduction of new approaches or methods	141
Table 7.3	Increase in level of cooperation	143
Table 7.4	Development of on-going contacts and dialogue among policy-makers	144
Table 7.5	Ongoing contact and dialogue with policy-makers	146
Table 7.6	Continuation of partnerships after the project (organisations questionnaire)	147
Table 7.7	Ongoing contact and dialogue with other organisations	147
Table 7.8	Adopted results in policy making	151
Table 7.9	Opinion NA/NAUTH effectiveness on reduction of administrative obstacles	152
Table 7.10	Influence of EVS on specific policy issues which affect the sustainability of international volunteer programmes	153
Table 7.11	Increased recognition of the importance of voluntary activities of young people	156
Table 7.12	Increased recognition of the contribution of non-formal education	157
Table 8.1	Number of staff per type organisation	159
Table 8.2	Size of the NA by population aged 15-24 (*1000) and by self evaluation sufficiency of human recourses	160
Table 8.3	Budget en time consumption per activity	161
Table 8.4	Activities requiring more budget	161
Table 8.5	More budget wanted for which actions?	162
Table 8.6	Depletion of budget	163
Table 8.7	Degree of success of applications	164
Table 8.8	Level of funding the organisation receiving through the Programme (in euros)	165

Table 8.9	Adequacy of administrative and management procedures	166
Table 8.10	Efficiency of selection process	170
Table 8.11	Problems with payment procedures according to organisations	171
Table 8.12	Overall experience of changes	172
Table 8.13	Effects of changes on smooth running of Programme	172
Table 8.14	Extent to which the working of structures are considered to be a strength or weakness by the NA/NAUTHs	176
Table 8.15	Negative experience with support structures; questionnaire organisations (only applicants who had contact with them)	177
Table 8.16	Opinion on efficiency of the Commission	178
Table 8.17	The organisational Issue that is experienced as a difficulty	181
Table 8.18	Extent of adoption by NA/NAUTH in YOUTH programme	182
Table 8.19	Efficiency of the different functions of SALTO	183
Table 8.20	Enhancement of visibility of the YOUTH Programme	187

Preface

ECORYS Research and Consulting is proud to present the final external evaluation report of the YOUTH programme 2000-2006.

The opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views held by the European Commission services or National Agencies responsible for managing the Programme.

In answering the evaluation questions, a wide variety of activities were undertaken by the evaluation team. These activities could not have been performed without the willingness to participate of many young people, youth workers, staff member of youth organisations, staff member of the national agencies and national authorities. We all thank them for their cooperation in the evaluation.

Furthermore the evaluation team wishes to thank the staff of the Commission involved in this evaluation including the staff of DG EAC and the members of the steering committee for the evaluation. We thank the Commission for the pleasurable and constructive cooperation.

We sincerely hope that the results of this evaluation contribute to further improvements of the YOUTH in Action Programme.

Rotterdam. December 2007,

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Summary

Introduction

This report presents the findings of the external final evaluation of the YOUTH Programme 2000-2006. The YOUTH programme was aimed at “*The promotion of a Europe of knowledge by developing a European area of cooperation in the field of Youth Policy, based on non-formal education and training.*” The programme consists of the following Actions:

- Action 1 Youth for Europe: youth exchanges;
- Action 2 European Voluntary Service;
- Action 3 Youth Initiatives;
- Action 4 Joint Actions (activities that are undertaken jointly with other Community programmes);
- Action 5 Support measures.

The target groups of the programme are young people, youth workers and youth organisations from EU Member States, EFTA and pre-accession states (programme countries). Next to programme countries, third countries can also participate.

The programme is implemented through centralised strands, managed by the Technical Assistance Office, and from 2006, by the Education, Culture & Audiovisual Executive Agency and decentralised strands, managed by National Agencies within the programme countries. Other institutes involved in the programme are the National Authorities, Resource centres (SALTO) and Eurodesks.

Purpose of the evaluation and methodological approach

The evaluation serves two main functions: accountability and learning. The overall objectives of the evaluation are:

- Assessment of the YOUTH Programme 2000-2006 according to the evaluation questions established in the Terms of Reference;
- Analysis and synthesis of the national reports on the implementation of and impact of the programme;
- The provision of useful lessons and recommendations for the new “Youth in Action” Programme (2007-2013).

The main evaluation criteria covered by the evaluation are: complementarity, effectiveness, efficiency, utility and sustainability.

The evaluation process consisted of the following activities during the period February – November 2007:

- Desk research;
- Defining a set of indicators to measure the effectiveness of the programme;
- Interviews;
- Web-based surveys by questionnaires with National Authorities, National Agencies, young people, youth organisations and youth workers;
- Country studies: desk research, interviews with National Agencies, National Authorities, SALTO and target groups and focus group discussions;
- Summarising national reports (separate report);
- Analysis phase;
- Drafting the final report.

Intervention logic

The evaluators studied the intervention logic of the programme and found it to be in some parts incoherent. The programme has a wider aim and wider objectives, but does not have operational objectives which are linked to the measures of the programme. Next to measures, Actions are identified in the programme, which have a direct link with the objectives. However, the connection of the measures to the Actions is not very strong, as the activities employed under the Actions do not always have a direct relationship with the measures.

For the YOUTH programme no indicators were formulated a priori to measure the effectiveness of the programme. For the purpose of this evaluation, the evaluators have developed ex post a set of indicators linked to the objectives of the programme, which they believe are a sound base for the measurement of the results of the programme.

Complementarity and relevance

Complementarity with EU policy

The assessment of the evaluators shows that the YOUTH programme corresponds to the objectives of EU Youth policy as laid down in the White Paper and the Youth Pact. With regards to the complementarity of the YOUTH programme with other Commission Programmes, the evaluators conclude that the YOUTH programme is partially complementary with the Leonardo da Vinci and Socrates Programme. This complementarity can mainly be found in work placements and in the exchange of experience of professionals working with young people. In this sense the types of activities and objectives are broadly the same, but directed towards different target groups. For several other elements, no relationship between the programmes is found. This demonstrates that in general, there are not enough connections to reinforce further cooperation between the programmes, except through common publication and information (this is also indicated by the respondents of the National Agencies survey by questionnaire).

Complementarity with national policy

The YOUTH programme is largely complementary with national youth policy in *terms of activities* and is at the same time *related to the national objectives* in youth policy. The latter is not surprising as the national youth policies are linked to, and influenced by, the general EU youth policy.

Relevance

Stakeholders involved indicate that the programme targets the needs of most beneficiaries, especially the youth groups. Also the youth workers place a high value on the programme in terms of addressing their needs. However National Agencies and Authorities indicate that this is less the case for policy makers in the Old Member States. Although the relevance of the programme for youth workers is considered to be high, the relevance of the activities employed can be further strengthened, according to youth workers, through improved consultation with youth workers on the design, content, methodology, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the training courses. Furthermore, respondents from some countries asked for greater flexibility to enable programme activities to be tailored to specific needs and circumstances of the particular country. The evaluators consider that in justified cases, greater flexibility to enable better targeting of needs could be useful, so long as the overall aim of the programme is served.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness for young people

The effectiveness of the YOUTH programme for young people has been measured through different indicators related to:

- *Citizenship*

In general the YOUTH programme is considered to be very successful in improving young participants' citizenship competencies, especially when it comes to attitudes, communication and social skills. The effects on a better understanding of European values seem to be lowest, but are still considerable.

According to the evaluators, the effectiveness of the programme in increasing participants' *active citizenship* are in practice somewhat less promising than the effectiveness on increasing the competencies related to active citizenship, but they are still not disappointing. Although a significant number of young people remained or became active in local or international organisations after the completion of their activity, this was not always as a consequence of the programme. Looking at the net results of the programme, around one third of participants became active internationally as a consequence of the programme, while slightly fewer than a quarter became active at national level. Because in general the average number of active young people is estimated to be much lower than this, these results are considered by the evaluators to be rather good, although participants of the YOUTH programme may be considered to be a more active group of young people.

- *Job orientation*

Due to the nature of the Actions, it is not remarkable that the effectiveness of the programme on employability is higher for Action 2 than for Action 1. Ex-EVS

participants report a very positive effect on their employability, especially in terms of job orientation (62% of the EVS participants state that participation influenced their professional career, while 56% indicated it has given them better job opportunities). Self-reported effects on employability for Action 1 participants are somewhat smaller. Nevertheless, the evaluators consider it a positive result that through the short term exchanges in Action 1 young people have become more open to working in other countries. Participation also influences educational choices. It must be noted that the conclusions are mainly based on self reports and the impressions of stakeholders. In order to be able to measure the real effects on employability and education choices, the participants should be monitored over a longer period of time.

- *Solidarity and citizenship*

The self reports of the young people show that they have a greater sense of solidarity as a result of participation in the programme; 80 percent feel an increased sense of responsibility, and 90 percent indicate it contributed at least to some extent to a stronger feeling of solidarity. However it does appear that with regards to this, the main effect is a change in feeling. Whether this change results in concrete actions is not further investigated by this evaluation, as no further indicators were set up to measure this. The feeling of being a European citizen as indicated by the young people was already relatively high among participants prior to the start of the activity, but the percentage increased quite considerably after participation (from 70% to 85-90%). The attitude towards Europe also became more positive due to participation in the programme, especially for ex-EVS participants from New Member States. The evaluators consider the programme to be effective in these aspects.

- *Effectiveness in reaching the target group*

The programme aimed to reach all young people, paying special attention to young people with fewer opportunities. In practice we see that the programme mainly reaches higher educated young people, while this group only forms a relatively small percentage of the target group as a whole in Europe (for Action 1, 60% of participants were highly educated while the percentage for Action 2 is even higher at 75%. The indicative average for the EU is 25%). The evaluators consider this a missed opportunity in providing non-formal education chances to those people who have less education. The effectiveness in reaching young people with fewer opportunities is less straightforward to judge, as the definition is not clear and different concepts seem to be used by different stakeholders. Having said this and keeping in mind that overall around 20 percent of young people are considered to have fewer opportunities, the evaluators conclude that the programme is modestly successful in reaching people with fewer opportunities (20% for Action 1 and 13% for Action 2). However, the programme is mainly reaching people with fewer opportunities who are more highly educated, indicating that only a specific group of these young people is being reached. The evaluators consider the programme to be effective in terms of equal gender opportunities, with even an overrepresentation of women in Action 2.

Effectiveness of the YOUTH Programme for youth workers

The effectiveness of the YOUTH programme for youth workers was determined using the following criteria.

- *Most supportive outputs*

The increased cultural / intercultural awareness and European / international dimensions in youth worker practice gained through the programme, are assessed by youth workers as the most important aspects in supporting them to be more effective in their work with young people. Exposure to new methods of working with young people is also considered to be important. The evaluators notice that in comparison with other elements, central elements in the programme such as training, networking and dissemination of results and good practice are ranked relatively low (but not unsatisfactory).

- *Effectiveness Action 5*

The support activities are in general effective in supporting the professional development of youth workers. Participation in activities leads to a higher degree of involvement of youth workers in EU networks, which influences their work with young people. The results of the survey by questionnaire with youth workers shows that participation in supporting activities led to an increase in knowledge on a range of specific issues. However, youth workers also indicate that they experienced some difficulties in applying this knowledge to their work in practice and they can more effectively apply skills and knowledge acquired outside the framework of the YOUTH programme, than inside.

The evaluators are of the opinion that more attention paid to needs assessment (which is also indicated by the youth workers) might increase the practical usage of the knowledge gained. Depending on the aims of the programme, this might lead to a need to review training components of the YOUTH programme. The T-Kits are indicated by youth workers to be the least effective in terms of work practice. On the basis of the responses to the surveys by questionnaires it is found that the effectiveness of the YOUTH Programme is in general higher for pre-accession countries and partner countries.

The indication from a relatively high proportion of youth workers across all country groupings showed that the training received under the YOUTH programme ‘to some extent’ duplicated other trainings they had received. This is considered by the evaluators to be a point for attention. Care should be taken that training has not developed a ‘life of its own’ and risks becoming divorced from practice and also the changing needs of youth work practitioners. Despite the critical points, youth workers do indicate that the programme has contributed to their own development and moderately to their employability.

The evaluators found that the effectiveness of the programme was reduced through the non-participation of youth workers in training, support and networking activities as a result of a lack of awareness of such opportunities. The implication of this requires further examination.

- *Unintended positive effects for organisations*

Although it is not a direct intention of the programme, organisations indicate that they have benefited from the programme. These benefits include having volunteers placed in their organisations, the learning effect on youth work (also in relation to Action 5) and through a more international orientation of organisations as a result. The evaluators consider these outcomes as positive side effects of the programme.

Utility and sustainability

The utility and sustainability criteria are basically wider impacts. The influence of the programme on the following criteria is investigated.

- *Contribution to a Europe of Knowledge*

The programme offers opportunities for mobility and non-formal learning, which could be seen as one of the aspects of lifelong learning. In this sense, the programme contributes to a Europe of Knowledge. Moreover it contributes to the strengthening of cooperation in the field of non-formal education.

The evaluators found that the YOUTH programme has had more influence upon, and has been more able to penetrate, youth work practice than youth policy. The innovative approach towards voluntary services, (also considered as contributing to a Europe of Knowledge), is considered by the evaluators to be the most promising in this respect. In general it seems that the innovation with regards to generating new approaches in the programme is modest, but has the highest influence in New Member States. It may be regarded as somewhat disappointing that the contribution towards innovative approaches to lifelong learning and non-formal education seems to be modest.

- *Policy and innovative approaches*

The programme has not had so much influence on policy, although in the New Member States some influence is reported. Based on the outcomes of the surveys by questionnaires, the programme seems to have more influence on innovative approaches.

- *International governmental cooperation*

In general the programme seems to contribute to an increase in cooperation between stakeholders in the youth field. However, the influence of the YOUTH programme on international *governmental* cooperation is not very convincing. First of all, many respondents of the National Agency/National Authority survey by questionnaire have no idea about this influence at all. Based on the outcomes of the surveys by questionnaires, the evaluators conclude that the programme has only moderately contributed to the development of ongoing contacts and dialogue amongst policy-makers, although the influence is relatively successful at a European level.

Based on the outcomes of the different sources (country studies, surveys by questionnaires, national reports) it is concluded that the most obvious contribution is found in the readiness of governments to exchange information with other countries. Less influence is found on the readiness of other governments to enhance cooperation in the area of youth voluntary civic services.

- *Ongoing dialogue between organisations and policy makers*

It is found that there is an ongoing contact between policy makers and organisations, mainly at a local level. The ongoing contacts at a national level are rather limited. Although the organisations indicate that their activities under the programme contribute to developing sustainable contacts with policy makers, the extent of the contribution in comparison with other autonomous developments is difficult to judge.

- *International connections between organisations*

The outcomes of the survey by questionnaire with organisations show that there is some contribution from the programme with regard to the establishment of new international contacts between organisations; but in many cases those contacts were already in place. The evaluators think that in this way, the programme might contribute towards a strengthening of these networks and serve to foster the sustainability of them.

- *Political interest*

The contribution of the programme to an increase in political interest, and the influence of the programme on national policy are found to be rather limited, based on the outcomes of the country studies, questionnaires and national reports. Where there is some influence on national policy, this is mainly in the New Member States. Contrary to the influence on policy at higher geographical levels, the survey by questionnaire with the youth organisations show that influence from the programme on policy at the level of organisations and at a local level, is quite considerable.

- *Administrative and institutional structures*

It is found that in general, there is no real influence on the administrative and institutional structures within the Member States, although in the New Member States some influences were reported. There seems to be no influence of the programme on the reduction of administrative obstacles for mobility. The visa problem is still indicated as an important bottleneck. The effect of the programme on the legal status of European volunteers, social security and rights of young people is rather modest. In general some influence of the programme on those issues is indicated by the different sources, but also around one third of the respondents of the questionnaire with National Agencies/National Authorities feel that there was no influence at all.

Efficiency

Resources

Sufficiency Decentralised Action Budget (ADEC envelope)

The ADEC envelope is found in general to be fine, based on the needs indicated and the successfulness of the number of applications. However, about half of the National Agencies and Authorities are of the opinion that Action 1 needs a greater budget, and about one third, suggest that Action 5 does. At the same time, in light of the conclusions on the effectiveness of the training for youth workers for instance, the evaluators are of the opinion that the execution and financing of Action 5 needs adjustments, mainly in terms of meeting the needs of the beneficiaries.

Sufficiency Operating Grant

The different opinions held by the National Agencies and their corresponding National Authorities differs per country. Whether the operating grant for National Agencies is sufficient should be closely monitored for the new programme, as the administrative burden for the National Agencies has increased, especially for the new programme period. At the same time, it becomes clear for the evaluators that for certain activities more resources are needed, namely monitoring and dissemination of information and the

advising of project managers, which are all markers of the efficiency of the programme. The evaluators consider it important to ensure sufficient resources for these tasks.

Human resources

Most National Agencies indicate that the human resources available are hardly sufficient. This issue is closely related to the finding that some activities need more attention, such as monitoring, publication and support to applicants. In general, there is not enough capacity for these activities. According to the Agencies, in the course of the programme, the capacity for these activities came under further pressure because of the increased capacity needed for the administrative procedures.

Efficiency of procedures

The decentralised procedure functions well, but the difficulties within the application procedure for organisations negatively affects the accessibility of the programme. Issues for attention are the difficulties that less experienced organisations encounter in the application procedure. There are some indications that only a select group of organisations are benefiting from the programme. However, it must be noted that for the new programme attempts have been made to simplify the procedures. It could be worthwhile to closely monitor the effectiveness of this simplification. Another issue for attention is the late payments by the Commission.

Efficiency of structures

In general, the structures are seen as efficient, but in some cases there is room for improvement. The European Commission could improve in terms of providing clear instructions for National Agencies, timely payments and contracts and a reduction in response time to questions. Regarding the former TAO, concerns were expressed related to monitoring and response time to questions. The opinions on the TAO and Agency need to be put into perspective, as most respondents did not have contact with them. Furthermore, in 2006 the TAO was replaced by the Education, Culture and Audiovisual Executive Agency, for which it is still too early to draw conclusions on its efficiency. It might be useful to establish contact between National Agencies and the Executive Agency in order to enable exchanges of experiences.

Although the National Agencies are seen as efficient structures, the National Agencies themselves, however, do have some concerns that might influence the efficiency and effectiveness of their organisation, especially related to staff resource capacity. This point is related to the need for more resources for monitoring, information and advice to project promoters. Furthermore, the evaluators are of the opinion that concerns about the reported administrative and financial / audit burdens should be a point for attention and monitoring, or even for reviewing. Although this burden is partly caused by factors outside the YOUTH programme such as the financial regulation, at least, attention should be paid to this aspect in the mid term evaluation. The results could be reported to the appropriate decision making level.

The main concerns expressed by the different stakeholders were related to the functioning of the SALTOs and Eurodesks. The SALTOs are seen as appropriate structures and the importance of their work is acknowledged. However, with regards to their functioning, several concerns are expressed, mainly relating to the resources available for the SALTOs, the tuning of activities and the need to strengthen cooperation between the

National Agencies and the SALTOs. Furthermore, the outcome of the youth workers survey by questionnaire indicates that a large number of youth workers are not aware of the (training) opportunities offered. Although the SALTOs employ several methods of communication, they do not sufficiently reach this group. This asks for more targeted communication activities.

Related to the Eurodesks major concerns are expressed within the surveys by questionnaires and country studies about the added value of the information provided by them. Furthermore, it seems that the role of the Eurodesks within the YOUTH programme and the connection of their activities with the YOUTH programme are limited, or at least not clear. This is also indicated in the national reports. Just as for the SALTO, the evaluators consider that a review of the activities of Eurodesks could be necessary in order to make improvements in the relevance of their work.

Visibility

Based on the survey by questionnaire with National Agencies/Authorities it is concluded that there seems to be a limit to the role of the National Agencies and Authorities in enhancement of the political visibility of the programme. The meaning of political visibility may have different connotations both within and between the various country groupings, as well as between the Member States and the Commission. It also presupposes a desire on the part of the National Agencies and Authorities to enhance the political visibility of the programme. If the challenge is to increase the political visibility of the Youth in Action Programme, strategies need to be developed to facilitate the enhancement of visibility of the new programme.

Furthermore, as the programme has difficulty in efficiently reaching disadvantaged young people and less highly educated people, it is difficult to conclude that the programme has achieved optimum effectiveness through its publicity in reaching its target groups

Monitoring

The organisations put quite a lot of energy into their reporting of results. However, these reports are not systematically used for monitoring purposes, neither are uniform criteria (indicators) used to report upon.

Hence the evaluators are of the opinion that within the YOUTH programme no efficient use is made of the information that is available at different levels. This is caused by the fact that the monitoring procedures and tools are not streamlined and a coherent set of indicators, used by all stakeholders involved, is missing. The organisations monitor different outputs and results, which makes it impossible to aggregate the data to a higher level (e.g. data per Action).

Furthermore, different monitoring systems are in place at the central and decentralised levels, which does not facilitate obtaining a good overview. On top of this, the monitoring system at the decentralised level is not used by all National Agencies, as there are problems with the user friendliness of the system. As a consequence, the programme suffers from a lack of adequate information on the achievements and progress at EC level, but probably also at national level. The evaluators find that there is considerable room for improvement.

Conclusions

Intervention logic

- The YOUTH Programme has wider aims and objectives, but the linkages to the operational objectives, measures and Actions are not always clear.

Complementarity

- The YOUTH programme corresponds well to overall EU Youth policies; it is largely complementary with the national activities of the Member States. The programme is only partially complementary with the Leonardo da Vinci and Socrates programmes, although it is the only programme with a focus on non-formal education.

Relevance

- The YOUTH programme is relevant because it addresses the needs of most beneficiaries.

Effectiveness

- Regarding young people the YOUTH programme has been effective in improving citizen competencies, influencing job orientation and contributing to a higher sense of solidarity and the feeling of being a European citizen. The programme has been less effective in fostering active citizenship;
- The YOUTH programme has not been very effective in targeting young people with fewer opportunities;
- Important positive outputs of the programme at the level of youth workers led to a positive assessment of effectiveness at this level;
- The programme generated unintended positive effects for organisations.

Utility and sustainability

- The programme contributes to a Europe of Knowledge;
- The contribution of the programme to national policies is limited;
- No changes in administrative mobility obstacles.

Efficiency

Efficiency of resources

- The ADEC envelope is sufficient. In case more budget would be available for the operating grant, these resources could go to Action 1 (Youth exchanges) and 5 (supporting measures);
- The volume and appropriateness of the Operating Grants differs per country.

Efficiency of procedures

- The decentralised procedures function well, but the application procedure for organisations negatively affects accessibility;
- The centralised procedure has become more efficient.

Efficiency of structures

- The structures are, in general, appropriate and efficient.

Monitoring arrangements

- Basic monitoring arrangements are in place, but no efficient use is made of the available information.

Recommendations

Relevance

- Ensure relevance by sound needs assessment.

Effectiveness

- Develop a strategy to reach youth groups other than just the higher educated youth;
- Consider more involvement of young people in the preparation of projects;
- In designing new programmes, attention needs to be paid to the intervention logic.

Efficiency

- Improve monitoring especially through a more systematic use of the already available information and streamlining of existing procedures and system;
- Improve the visibility of the programme;
- Ensure sufficient guidance to project promoters;
- Consider the possibility of making more resources available for monitoring, dissemination and publicity and providing guidance to project promoters;
- Examine solutions for the relatively late transfers of money to the implementing bodies;
- Consider a review of the supporting structures SALTO and Eurodesk.

More detailed recommendations are provided in the final chapter of the evaluation report.

Zusammenfassung

Einführung

Dieser Bericht präsentiert die Ergebnisse der externen abschließenden Beurteilung des JUGEND-Programms 2000-2006. Ziel des JUGEND-Programms war *„Die Förderung eines Europas des Wissens durch die Entwicklung eines europäischen Kooperationsgebiets im Bereich der Jugendpolitik auf der Grundlage von nichtformeller Ausbildung und Schulung.“* Das Programm setzt sich aus den folgenden Aktionen zusammen:

- Aktion 1: Jugend für Europa: Jugendaustausche;
- Aktion 2: Europäischer Freiwilligendienst;
- Aktion 3: Jugendinitiativen;
- Aktion 4: Gemeinsame Aktionen (Aktivitäten, die gemeinsam mit anderen Gemeinschaftsprogrammen unternommen werden);
- Aktion 5: Unterstützende Maßnahmen.

Die Zielgruppen des Programms sind Jugendliche, Jugendarbeiter und Jugendorganisationen aus den EU-Mitgliedsstaaten, den EFTA-Ländern und den Ländern, die sich auf den EU-Beitritt vorbereiten (Programmländer). Neben den Programmländern können auch Drittländer teilnehmen.

Das Programm wird über zentralisierte Abteilungen, die vom Technischen Unterstützungsbüro und ab 2006 von der Exekutivagentur Bildung, Audiovisuelles und Kultur geleitet werden und von dezentralisierten Abteilungen unter der Leitung von nationalen Agenturen innerhalb der Programmländer umgesetzt. Andere beteiligte Institutionen sind die nationalen Behörden, Ressourcenzentren (SALTO) und Eurodesks.

Ziel der Beurteilung und methodologischer Ansatz

Die Evaluierung hat zwei Hauptfunktionen: Verantwortung und Lernen. Die allgemeinen Ziele der Beurteilung sind:

- Bewertung des JUGEND-Programms 2000-2006 gemäß den Bewertungsfragen, die in den Richtlinien festgelegt wurden;
- Analyse und Synthese der nationalen Berichte über die Umsetzung und Auswirkung des Programms;
- Die Bereitstellung von nützlichen Lektionen und Empfehlungen für das neue „Jugend in Aktion“-Programm (2007-2013).

Die Hauptbeurteilungskriterien, die durch die Beurteilung abgedeckt werden, sind: Komplementarität, Effektivität, Effizienz, Nützlichkeit und Nachhaltigkeit.

Der Bewertungsprozess bestand aus den folgenden Aktivitäten während des Zeitraums Februar-November 2007:

- Sekundärforschung;
- Definition einer Reihe von Indikatoren, um die Effektivität des Programms zu messen;
- Interviews;
- Web-gestützte Umfragen mittels Fragebögen mit nationalen Behörden, nationalen Agenturen, Jugendlichen, Jugendorganisationen und Jugendarbeitern;
- Länderstudien: Sekundärforschung, Interviews mit nationalen Agenturen, nationalen Behörden, SALTO und Zielgruppen und Schwerpunktgruppendifkussionen;
- Zusammenfassung nationaler Berichte (gesonderter Bericht);
- Analysephase;
- Abfassen des Abschlussberichts.

Interventionslogik

Die Beurteiler haben die Interventionslogik des Programms untersucht und herausgefunden, dass sie teilweise nicht kohärent ist. Das Programm hat breitere Absichten und Zielsetzungen, hat jedoch keine operationalen Ziele, die an die Maßnahmen des Programms gekoppelt sind. Neben den Maßnahmen wurden Aktionen im Programm identifiziert, die einen direkten Bezug zu den Zielen haben. Dennoch ist die Verbindung zwischen den Maßnahmen und den Aktionen nicht sehr stark, da die unter den Aktionen veranstalteten Aktivitäten nicht immer einen direkten Bezug zu den Maßnahmen haben.

Für das JUGEND-Programm wurden a priori keine Indikatoren formuliert, um die Effektivität des Programms zu messen. Für diese Beurteilung haben die Beurteiler ex post eine Reihe von mit den Zielen des Programms verbundenen Indikatoren entwickelt, die sie als solide Grundlage für die Messung der Ergebnisse des Programms betrachten.

Komplementarität und Relevanz

Komplementarität in Bezug auf die EU-Politik

Die Beurteilung durch die Beurteiler zeigt auf, dass das JUGEND-Programm den Zielen der EU-Jugendpolitik entspricht, die im Weißbuch und dem Pakt für die Jugend festgelegt sind. In Bezug auf die Komplementarität des JUGEND-Programms mit anderen Kommissionsprogrammen folgern die Beurteiler, dass das JUGEND-Programm zum Teil komplementär zu den Programmen Leonardo da Vinci und Sokrates ist. Diese Komplementarität findet sich vor allem in Praktika und dem Erfahrungsaustausch von Berufstätigen, die mit jungen Leuten arbeiten. In dieser Hinsicht ist die Art der Aktivitäten und Ziele groÙteils dieselbe, richtet sich jedoch an verschiedene Zielgruppen. Für einige andere Elemente wurde keine Beziehung zwischen den Programmen gefunden. Dadurch zeigt sich, dass im Allgemeinen nicht genügend Verbindungen bestehen, um eine weitere Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Programmen zu verstärken, mit Ausnahme von gemeinsamen Veröffentlichungen und Informationen (das sagen auch die Personen,

die im Rahmen der Umfrage der nationalen Agenturen mittels Fragebögen geantwortet haben).

Komplementarität in Bezug auf die nationale Politik

Das JUGEND-Programm ist *in Bezug auf die Aktivitäten* im Großen und Ganzen komplementär zur nationalen Jugendpolitik und ist gleichzeitig verwandt *mit den nationalen Zielen* in der Jugendpolitik. Letzteres ist nicht überraschend, da die nationale Jugendpolitik an die allgemeine Jugendpolitik der EU gekoppelt ist und von ihr beeinflusst wird.

Relevanz

Die beteiligten Akteure weisen darauf hin, dass das Programm auf die Bedürfnisse der meisten Begünstigten, vor allem der Jugendgruppen, abzielt. Außerdem beurteilen die Jugendarbeiter das Programm in Bezug auf die Berücksichtigung ihrer eigenen Bedürfnisse als besonders wertvoll. Allerdings teilen nationale Agenturen und Behörden mit, dass dies weniger für die Entscheidungsträger in den alten Mitgliedsstaaten gilt. Auch wenn das Programm als besonders relevant für Jugendarbeiter angesehen wird, kann die Relevanz der eingesetzten Aktivitäten den Jugendarbeitern zufolge noch verstärkt werden, indem eine engere Beratung mit den Jugendarbeitern in Bezug auf die Gestaltung, den Inhalt, die Methodologie, die Implementierung, Überwachung und Evaluierung der Schulungen stattfindet. Zudem haben die befragten Personen aus einigen Ländern den Wunsch nach einer größeren Flexibilität geäußert, damit die Programmaktivitäten auf spezielle Bedürfnisse und Umstände des einzelnen Landes abgestimmt werden können. Die Beurteiler halten eine größere Flexibilität in berechtigten Fällen für nützlich, um die Bedürfnisse besser zu berücksichtigen, solange dem allgemeinen Ziel des Programms gedient wird.

Effektivität

Effektivität für die Jugend

Die Effektivität des JUGEND-Programms wurde anhand mehrerer Indikatoren gemessen:

- *Bürgerengagement*

Das JUGEND-Programm wird im Allgemeinen als sehr erfolgreich für die Verbesserung des Bürgerengagements der jungen Teilnehmer angesehen, vor allem in Bezug auf Verhalten, Kommunikation und soziale Fähigkeiten. Die Auswirkungen für ein besseres Verständnis der europäischen Werte stellen sich als gering heraus, sind aber dennoch beachtlich.

Den Beurteilern zufolge ist die Effektivität des Programms für die Verstärkung des *aktiven* Bürgerengagements in der Praxis etwas weniger vielversprechend als die Effektivität für die Verstärkung der Kompetenzen, die mit aktivem Bürgerengagement zusammenhängen, dennoch ist diese nicht enttäuschend. Auch wenn eine erhebliche Anzahl junger Leute nach der Beendigung ihrer Aktivität in lokalen oder internationalen Organisationen aktiv blieb oder wird, geschah dies nicht immer infolge des Programms. Wenn man die Nettoergebnisse des Programms betrachtet, wurde ein Drittel der Teilnehmer infolge des Programms international aktiv, während etwas weniger als ein Viertel auf nationaler Ebene aktiv wurde. Da die durchschnittliche Anzahl aktiver

Jugendlicher im Allgemeinen als wesentlich geringer als diese Zahl eingeschätzt wird, werden diese Ergebnisse von den Beurteilern als recht gut angesehen, auch wenn die Teilnehmer des JUGEND-Programms zu den aktiveren Jugendlichen gehören.

- *Berufliche Orientierung*

Angesichts des Charakters der Aktionen, ist es nicht erstaunlich, dass die Effektivität des Programms für die Arbeitsmarktfähigkeit für die Aktion 2 höher ist als für die Aktion 1. Ehemalige EVS-Teilnehmer berichten von einer sehr positiven Auswirkung auf ihre Arbeitsmarktfähigkeit, vor allem in Bezug auf die berufliche Orientierung (62 % der EVS-Teilnehmer stellen fest, dass die Teilnahme ihre berufliche Laufbahn beeinflusst hat, während 56 % angeben, dass sich ihre beruflichen Möglichkeiten durch die Teilnahme verbessert haben). Die Auswirkungen auf die Arbeitsmarktfähigkeit waren für die Teilnehmer von Aktion 1 nach eigenen Angaben etwas geringer. Dennoch betrachten die Beurteiler es als positives Ergebnis, dass die jungen Leute durch die kurzzeitigen Austausche in Aktion 1 eine positivere Haltung hinsichtlich der Arbeit in anderen Ländern entwickelt haben. Die Teilnahme beeinflusst auch die Entscheidungen, die die Jugendlichen in Bezug auf ihre Ausbildung treffen.

Dazu muss angemerkt werden, dass den Schlussfolgerungen in der Hauptsache die Berichte und Eindrücke der beteiligten Akteure zugrunde liegen. Um die tatsächlichen Auswirkungen auf die Arbeitsmarktfähigkeit und Ausbildungswege messen zu können, müssten die Teilnehmer über einen längeren Zeitraum beobachtet werden.

- *Solidarität und Bürgerengagement*

Die eigenen Berichte der Jugendlichen zeigen, dass sie infolge der Teilnahme am Programm einen stärkeren Solidaritätssinn entwickelt haben; 80 % haben ein höheres Verantwortungsgefühl und 90 % geben an, dass die Teilnahme zumindest in gewisser Weise zu einem stärkeren Solidaritätssinn beigetragen hat. In jedem Fall zeigt sich, dass der diesbezügliche Haupteffekt eine Änderung des Gefühls ist. Ob diese Veränderung zu konkreten Aktionen führt, wurde von dieser Beurteilung nicht weiter untersucht, da keine weiteren Indikatoren aufgestellt wurden, um dies zu messen.

Das von den Jugendlichen angegebene Gefühl, ein europäischer Bürger zu sein, war unter den Teilnehmern bereits vor dem Beginn der Aktivitäten relativ weit verbreitet, nach der Teilnahme war der Prozentsatz allerdings erheblich gestiegen (von 70 % auf 85-90 %).

Auch die Haltung gegenüber Europa wurde durch die Teilnahme an dem Programm positiver; das gilt vor allem für ehemalige EVS-Teilnehmer aus den neuen Mitgliedsländern. Die Beurteiler halten das Programm diesbezüglich für effektiv.

- *Effektivität beim Erreichen der Zielgruppe*

Ziel des Programms war es, alle Jugendlichen zu erreichen, wobei benachteiligten Jugendlichen eine besondere Aufmerksamkeit galt. In der Praxis ist festzustellen, dass das Programm vor allem Jugendliche mit höherer Bildung erreicht, obwohl diese Gruppe nur einen relativ kleinen Prozentsatz der gesamten Zielgruppe in Europa ausmacht (bei der Aktion 1 hatten 60 % der Teilnehmer eine höhere Ausbildung, während dieser Prozentsatz bei der Aktion 2 noch höher lag, nämlich bei 75 %. Der indikative Durchschnitt in der EU ist 25 %). Die Beurteiler betrachten dies als verpasste Chance in Bezug auf das Angebot von informellen Ausbildungsmöglichkeiten für Jugendliche mit weniger Bildung.

Die Effektivität beim Erreichen benachteiligter Jugendlicher kann nicht so direkt beurteilt werden, da die Definition nicht eindeutig ist und scheinbar verschiedene Konzepte von verschiedenen Akteuren gehandhabt werden. Unter Berücksichtigung dieser Erkenntnis und der Tatsache, dass nach Schätzung etwa 20 % der Jugendlichen benachteiligt sind, folgern die Beurteiler, dass das Programm einen bescheidenen Erfolg erzielt, wenn es darum geht, benachteiligte Jugendliche zu erreichen (20 % für Aktion 1 und 13 % für Aktion 2). Allerdings erreicht das Programm vor allem benachteiligte Jugendliche, die eine höhere Ausbildung haben, was zeigt, dass nur eine bestimmte Gruppe dieser jungen Leute erreicht wird. Die Beurteiler betrachten das Programm in Bezug auf gleiche Chancen zwischen den Geschlechtern als effektiv, wobei die Frauen bei der Aktion 2 sogar in der Überzahl sind.

Effektivität des Jugend-Programms für Jugendarbeiter

Die Effektivität des JUGEND-Programms für Jugendarbeiter wurde anhand der folgenden Kriterien bestimmt.

- *Die wichtigsten Ergebnisse*

Das zunehmende kulturelle/interkulturelle Bewusstsein und die europäischen/internationalen Dimensionen in der Praxis der Jugendarbeiter wurden während des Programms verstärkt und werden von den Jugendarbeitern als wichtigste Aspekte für die Unterstützung der effektiven Gestaltung ihrer Arbeit mit Jugendlichen bezeichnet. Auch die Entdeckung neuer Arbeitsmethoden mit Jugendlichen wird als wichtig angesehen. Die Beurteiler stellen fest, dass zentrale Elemente im Programm, wie Ausbildung, Knüpfen von Kontakten und Verbreitung der Ergebnisse sowie guten Praktiken, im Vergleich zu anderen Elementen relativ niedrig abschneiden (jedoch nicht unzufriedenstellend).

- *Effektivität der Aktion 5*

Die unterstützenden Aktivitäten sind für die berufliche Entwicklung der Jugendarbeiter im Allgemeinen effektiv. Die Teilnahme an Aktivitäten führt zu einer stärkeren Beteiligung von Jugendarbeitern an EU-Netzwerken und das beeinflusst ihre Arbeit mit Jugendlichen. Die Ergebnisse der Umfrage unter den Jugendarbeitern mittels Fragebögen zeigen, dass die Beteiligung an unterstützenden Aktivitäten zu einem größeren Wissen bezüglich verschiedener Themen geführt hat. Allerdings geben die Jugendarbeiter auch an, dass sie einige Schwierigkeiten bei der Anwendung dieses Wissens in ihrer praktischen Arbeit hatten und dass sie die Fähigkeiten und das Wissen, die sie außerhalb des JUGEND-Programms erworben haben, effektiver einsetzen können als das Wissen, das sie innerhalb des Programms erworben haben.

Die Beurteiler sind der Meinung, dass eine stärkere Berücksichtigung der Bedarfsanalyse (was auch von den Jugendarbeitern angegeben wird) die praktische Verwendung des erworbenen Wissens erhöhen könnte. Je nachdem, welche Ziele das Programm hat, könnte daraus der Bedarf entstehen, Ausbildungskomponenten des JUGEND-Programms zu überdenken. Die Jugendarbeiter halten die T-Kits in Bezug auf die Arbeitspraxis für am wenigsten effektiv. Auf der Grundlage der Antworten auf die Umfrage mittels Fragebögen wurde festgestellt, dass die Effektivität des JUGEND-Programms im Allgemeinen höher für Länder ist, die sich auf einen EU-Beitritt vorbereiten, als für die Länder, die bereits Partnerländer sind.

Ein relativ hoher Anteil der Jugendarbeiter in allen Ländergruppierungen gab an, dass die Ausbildung im Rahmen des JUGEND-Programms „in gewisser Hinsicht“ andere Ausbildungen kopiert, an denen sie teilgenommen hatten. Dies wird von den Beurteilern als wichtiger Punkt bezeichnet, dem Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt werden muss. Es muss darauf geachtet werden, dass die Ausbildung kein Eigenleben entwickelt und das Risiko besteht, dass sie sich von der Praxis und den sich ändernden Bedürfnissen von Jugendarbeitern entfernt. Trotz der kritischen Punkte sind die Jugendarbeiter der Meinung, dass das Programm zu ihrer eigenen Entwicklung und in mäßiger Weise zu ihrer Arbeitsmarktfähigkeit beigetragen hat.

Die Beurteiler kamen zu dem Ergebnis, dass sich die Effektivität des Programms durch die Nichtbeteiligung von Jugendarbeitern an der Ausbildung, Unterstützung und den Kontaktaktivitäten verringert, und zwar infolge eines fehlenden Bewusstseins hinsichtlich derartiger Möglichkeiten. Die diesbezüglichen Auswirkungen müssen eingehender untersucht werden.

- *Unbeabsichtigte positive Auswirkungen für Organisationen*

Auch wenn dies keine direkte Absicht des Programms ist, geben Organisationen an, von dem Programm profitiert zu haben. Sie profitieren von der Tatsache, dass ehrenamtliche Mitarbeiter in den Organisationen eingesetzt wurden, dem Lerneffekt für die Jugendarbeit (auch in Bezug auf Aktion 5). Dies hatte eine internationalere Ausrichtung der Organisationen zum Ergebnis. Die Beurteiler betrachten diese Ergebnisse als positive Nebeneffekte des Programms.

Nützlichkeit und Nachhaltigkeit

Die Nützlichkeits- und Nachhaltigkeitskriterien haben im Wesentlichen eine größere Auswirkung. Die Auswirkung des Programms auf die folgenden Kriterien wurde überprüft.

- *Beitrag zu einem Europa des Wissens*

Das Programm bietet Möglichkeiten für Mobilität und informelles Lernen, was als einer der Aspekte des lebenslangen Lernens gesehen werden könnte. In dieser Hinsicht leistet das Programm einen Beitrag zu einem Europa des Wissens. Außerdem trägt es zur Stärkung der Zusammenarbeit im Bereich der informellen Bildung bei.

Die Beurteiler stellten fest, dass das JUGEND-Programm einen stärkeren Einfluss auf die Jugendarbeit hat und diese stärker durchdrungen hat als die Jugendpolitik. Der innovative Ansatz im Bereich der Freiwilligendienste (der auch einen Beitrag zum Europa des Wissens leistet) wird von den Beurteilern in dieser Hinsicht als am aussichtsreichsten betrachtet. Im Allgemeinen scheint die Innovation hinsichtlich der Entwicklung neuer Ansätze im Programm mäßig zu sein, hat jedoch in den neuen Mitgliedsstaaten am meisten Einfluss. Es könnte als eine gewisse Enttäuschung gesehen werden, dass sich der Beitrag zu innovativen Ansätzen zum lebenslangen Lernen und informeller Bildung als mäßig herausstellt.

- *Politik und innovative Ansätze*

Das Programm hatte keinen großen Einfluss auf die Politik, obwohl in den neuen Mitgliedsstaaten ein gewisser Einfluss festgestellt wurde. Auf der Grundlage der Ergebnisse der Umfrage mittels Fragebogen scheint das Programm mehr Einfluss auf innovative Ansätze zu haben.

- *Internationale Zusammenarbeit auf staatlicher Ebene*

Im Allgemeinen scheint das Programm die Zusammenarbeit zwischen Akteuren in der Jugendarbeit zu verstärken. Dennoch ist der Einfluss des JUGEND-Programms auf die internationale *staatliche* Zusammenarbeit nicht sehr überzeugend. Zuerst ist vielen im Rahmen der Umfrage mittels Fragebogen der nationalen Agentur/nationalen Behörde befragten Personen überhaupt nichts von diesem Einfluss bekannt. Auf der Grundlage der Ergebnisse der Umfragen mittels Fragebogen folgern die Beurteiler, dass das Programm nur mäßig zur Entwicklung von fortlaufenden Kontakten und Dialogen zwischen Entscheidungsträgern beigetragen hat, auch wenn der Einfluss auf europäischer Ebene recht erfolgreich ist.

Auf der Grundlage der Ergebnisse verschiedener Quellen (Länderstudien, Umfragen mittels Fragebogen, nationale Berichte) ist man zu dem Schluss gekommen, dass der eindeutigste Beitrag in der Bereitschaft der Regierungen liegt, Informationen mit anderen Ländern auszutauschen. Es wird ein geringerer Einfluss auf die Bereitschaft anderer Regierungen festgestellt, die Zusammenarbeit auf dem Gebiet der Freiwilligendienste für Jugendliche zu verbessern.

- *Fortlaufender Dialog zwischen Organisationen und Politikern*

Es wurde festgestellt, dass - vor allem auf lokaler Ebene - ein fortlaufender Kontakt zwischen Politikern und Organisationen besteht. Die laufenden Kontakte auf nationaler Ebene sind eher begrenzt. Obwohl die Organisationen angeben, dass ihre Aktivitäten im Rahmen des Programms zur Entwicklung von nachhaltigen Kontakten zwischen Politikern beitragen, ist das Ausmaß des Beitrags im Vergleich zu anderen unabhängigen Entwicklungen schwer zu beurteilen.

- *Internationale Beziehungen zwischen Organisationen*

Die Ergebnisse der Umfrage mittels Fragebogen unter Organisationen zeigen, dass das Programm einen gewissen Beitrag für das Entstehen neuer internationaler Kontakte zwischen Organisationen leistet; in vielen Fällen haben diese Kontakte jedoch bereits vorher bestanden. Die Beurteiler denken, dass das Programm auf diese Weise zu einer Festigung dieser Netzwerke beitragen und deren Nachhaltigkeit stärken könnte.

- *Politische Interessen*

Der Beitrag des Programms für ein zunehmendes politisches Interesse und der Einfluss des Programms auf die nationale Politik erweisen sich den Ergebnissen der Länderstudien, Fragebögen und nationalen Berichte zufolge als eher gering. Wenn die nationale Politik beeinflusst wird, ist dies vor allem in den neuen Mitgliedsstaaten der Fall. Im Gegensatz zu der Beeinflussung der Politik auf höheren geografischen Ebenen zeigt die Umfrage mittels Fragebogen bei den Jugendorganisationen, dass das Programm einen relativ großen Einfluss auf die Politik auf der Ebene der Organisationen und auf lokaler Ebene hat.

- *Administrative und institutionelle Strukturen*

Es wurde festgestellt, dass im Allgemeinen kein richtiger Einfluss auf die administrativen und institutionellen Strukturen innerhalb der Mitgliedsstaaten ausgeübt wird, auch wenn von einer gewissen Beeinflussung in den neuen Mitgliedsstaaten berichtet wurde. Das Programm scheint sich nicht positiv auf die die Mobilität erschwerenden Verwaltungshindernisse auszuwirken. Das Visaproblem wird immer noch als erheblicher Engpass gesehen. Die Auswirkung des Programms auf den rechtlichen Status der europäischen Freiwilligen, die Sozialversicherung und Rechte der Jugendlichen ist eher bescheiden. Im Allgemeinen weisen verschiedene Quellen auf einen gewissen Einfluss des Programms auf diese Punkte hin, allerdings hat ein Viertel der von den nationalen Agenturen/Behörden mittels Fragebogen befragten Personen angegeben, gar keinen Einfluss bemerkt zu haben.

Effizienz

Ressourcen

Hinlänglichkeit des Budgets für dezentralisierte Aktionen (ADEC-Budget)

Das ADEC-Budget wird auf der Grundlage der angegebenen Bedürfnisse und des Erfolgs der Anzahl der Anwendungen im Allgemeinen als ausreichend angesehen. Dennoch ist etwa die Hälfte der nationalen Agenturen und Behörden der Meinung, dass die Aktion 1 ein größeres Budget benötigt, und ein Drittel findet, dass die Aktion 5 mehr Mittel braucht. Gleichzeitig sind die Beurteiler - beispielsweise hinsichtlich der Schlussfolgerungen bezüglich der Effektivität der Ausbildung für Jugendarbeiter - der Meinung, dass die Umsetzung und Finanzierung von Aktion 5 angepasst werden muss, und zwar vor allem dahingehend, dass die Bedürfnisse der Begünstigten erfüllt werden.

Hinlänglichkeit der betrieblichen Zuwendungen

Die Meinungen der nationalen Agenturen und der entsprechenden nationalen Behörden gehen je nach Land auseinander. Ob die betrieblichen Zuwendungen ausreichen, muss für das neue Programm genau geprüft werden, da die Verwaltungslast für die nationalen Behörden, insbesondere für den neuen Programmzeitraum, gestiegen ist. Gleichzeitig wird es den Beurteilern deutlich, dass für bestimmte Aktivitäten mehr Ressourcen benötigt werden, vor allem für die Prüfung und Verbreitung von Informationen und die Beratung von Projektmanagern, die allesamt eine wesentliche Rolle für die Effizienz des Programms spielen. Die Beurteiler halten es für wichtig, dass für diese Aufgaben genügend Mittel zur Verfügung gestellt werden.

Personelle Ressourcen

Die meisten nationalen Agenturen geben an, dass die verfügbaren personellen Ressourcen kaum ausreichen. Dieser Aspekt hängt eng mit der Feststellung zusammen, dass einigen Aktivitäten, wie zum Beispiel Überwachung, Veröffentlichung und Unterstützung der Antragsteller, mehr Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt werden muss. Im Allgemeinen stehen für diese Aktivitäten nicht genügend Kapazitäten zur Verfügung. Den Agenturen zufolge geriet die Kapazität für diese Aktivitäten aufgrund des Anstiegs der für die administrativen Verfahren benötigten Kapazität weiter unter Druck.

Effizienz der Verfahren

Das dezentralisierte Verfahren funktioniert gut, das Bewerbungsverfahren für Organisationen beeinflusst die Zugänglichkeit des Programms jedoch negativ. Die Schwierigkeiten, auf die weniger erfahrene Organisationen im Bewerbungsverfahren stoßen, benötigen Aufmerksamkeit. Einige Aspekte weisen darauf hin, dass nur eine ausgewählte Gruppe von Organisationen von dem Programm profitiert. Dazu muss jedoch erwähnt werden, dass für das neue Programm Versuche zur Vereinfachung der Verfahren gestartet wurden. Es könnte sich lohnen, die Effektivität dieser Vereinfachung genauer zu überprüfen. Ein anderer Aspekt, dem mehr Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt werden muss, ist die späte Zahlung durch die Kommission.

Effizienz der Strukturen

Im Allgemeinen werden die Strukturen als effizient angesehen, in einigen Fällen können diese jedoch noch verbessert werden. Die Europäische Kommission könnte in Bezug auf deutliche Anweisungen für die nationalen Agenturen, rechtzeitige Zahlungen und Verträge und ein schnelleres Beantworten von Fragen Verbesserungen erzielen. In Bezug auf das ehemalige TAO (Technisches Unterstützungsbüro) wurden Bedenken hinsichtlich der Überwachung und der Antwortzeit auf Fragen geäußert. Die Meinungen zum TAO und der Agentur müssen im Verhältnis gesehen werden, da die meisten befragten Personen keinen Kontakt zu ihnen hatten. Außerdem wurde das TAO 2006 durch die Exekutivagentur für Bildung, Audiovisuelles und Kultur ersetzt, für die noch keine Schlussfolgerungen bezüglich der Effizienz gezogen werden können, da es dafür noch zu früh ist. Es könnte nützlich sein, einen Kontakt zwischen den nationalen Agenturen und der Exekutivagentur herzustellen, um den Austausch von Erfahrungen zu ermöglichen. Auch wenn die nationalen Agenturen als effiziente Strukturen gelten, haben die nationalen Agenturen selbst jedoch einige Bedenken, die die Effizienz und Effektivität ihrer Organisation beeinflussen könnten, und zwar insbesondere in Bezug auf die Kapazität der Personalressourcen. Dieser Aspekt hängt damit zusammen, dass mehr Ressourcen zum Überwachen, Informieren und Beraten der Projektträger benötigt werden. Außerdem sind die Beurteiler der Meinung, dass den gemeldeten administrativen und finanziellen / Prüfungsbelastungen Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt werden sollte und diese überprüft und gegebenenfalls überarbeitet werden sollten. Auch wenn diese Belastung zum Teil durch Faktoren außerhalb des JUGEND-Programms verursacht wird, wie zum Beispiel die Haushaltsordnung, sollte dieser Aspekt zumindest in der Halbzeitbilanz berücksichtigt werden. Die Ergebnisse können bei der angemessenen Beschlussfassungsebene gemeldet werden.

Die Hauptbedenken, die von den verschiedenen Akteuren geäußert wurden, bezogen sich auf die Funktionsweise der SALTOs und Eurodesks. Die SALTOs werden als angemessene Strukturen angesehen und die Bedeutung ihrer Arbeit wird anerkannt. In Bezug auf ihre Funktionsweise werden einige Bedenken geäußert, insbesondere hinsichtlich der für die SALTOs verfügbaren Ressourcen, die Abstimmung der Aktivitäten und die erforderliche Stärkung der Zusammenarbeit zwischen den nationalen Agenturen und den SALTOs. Außerdem zeigt das Ergebnis der Umfrage mittels Fragebogen unter Jugendarbeitern, dass sich viele von ihnen der gebotenen (Ausbildungs) Möglichkeiten nicht bewusst sind. Auch wenn die SALTOs mehrere Kommunikationsmethoden einsetzen, erreichen sie diese Gruppe nicht in ausreichendem Maße. Deshalb werden gezieltere Kommunikationsaktivitäten benötigt.

Bezüglich der Eurodesks werden in den Umfragen mittels Fragebogen und den Länderstudien große Bedenken angesichts des Mehrwerts der von ihnen gelieferten Informationen geäußert. Außerdem scheint die Rolle der Eurodesks innerhalb des JUGEND-Programms und die Verbindung ihrer Aktivitäten mit dem JUGEND-Programm begrenzt oder zumindest nicht sehr deutlich zu sein. Dies wird auch in den nationalen Berichten angegeben. Die Beurteiler halten - wie bei den SALTOs - eine Überprüfung der Aktivitäten der Eurodesks für erforderlich, um die Bedeutung ihrer Arbeit zu verbessern.

Sichtbarkeit

Auf der Grundlage der Umfrage mittels Fragebogens der nationalen Agenturen/Behörden kam man zu dem Ergebnis, dass die Rolle der nationalen Agenturen und Behörden für die Verbesserung der politischen Sichtbarkeit des Programms begrenzt ist. Die Bedeutung der politischen Sichtbarkeit kann in und zwischen den verschiedenen Ländergruppierungen sowie zwischen den Mitgliedsstaaten und der Kommission unterschiedlich sein. Sie erfordert auch den Wunsch seitens der nationalen Agenturen und Behörden, die politische Sichtbarkeit des Programms zu verbessern. Wenn die Herausforderung darin besteht, die politische Sichtbarkeit des Programms Jugend in Aktion zu erhöhen, müssen Strategien entwickelt werden um die Verbesserung der Sichtbarkeit des neuen Programms zu erleichtern.

Außerdem kann schwerlich gefolgert werden, dass das Programm durch seine Öffentlichkeitsarbeit eine optimale Effektivität bei der Erreichung seiner Zielgruppen erzielt hat, da das Programm Schwierigkeiten hatte, benachteiligte Jugendliche und geringer ausgebildete Jugendliche effizient zu erreichen.

Überwachung

Die Organisationen widmen sich relativ stark der Berichterstattung der Ergebnisse. Diese Berichte werden jedoch nicht systematisch für Überwachungszwecke genutzt und es werden auch keine einheitlichen Kriterien (Indikatoren) für die Berichte verwendet. Deshalb sind die Beurteiler der Meinung, dass die Informationen, die auf den verschiedenen Ebenen verfügbar sind, innerhalb des JUGEND-Programms nicht effektiv genutzt werden. Das liegt daran, dass die Überwachungsverfahren und -instrumente nicht rationalisiert sind und von den beteiligten Akteuren keine zusammenhängende Reihe von Indikatoren verwendet wird. Die Organisationen überwachen verschiedene Leistungen und Ergebnisse, sodass es unmöglich wird, die Daten auf einer höheren Ebene zusammenzutragen (z.B. Daten pro Aktion).

Zudem wird mit verschiedenen Überwachungssystemen auf zentraler und dezentraler Ebene gearbeitet, was den Erhalt eines guten Überblicks erschwert. Darüber hinaus wird das Überwachungssystem auf der dezentralisierten Ebene nicht von allen nationalen Agenturen verwendet, da Probleme bezüglich der Benutzerfreundlichkeit des Systems bestehen. Infolgedessen leidet das Programm unter einem Mangel an angemessenen Informationen bezüglich der erreichten Ziele und Fortschritte auf EG-Ebene, möglicherweise jedoch auch auf nationaler Ebene. Die Beurteiler finden, dass es viele Verbesserungsmöglichkeiten gibt.

Schlussfolgerungen

Interventionslogik

- Das JUGEND-Programm hat breitere Absichten und Ziele, die Verbindungen zu den praktischen Zielen, Maßnahmen und Aktionen sind jedoch nicht immer deutlich.

Komplementarität

- Das JUGEND-Programm deckt sich mit der allgemeinen EU-Jugendpolitik und es ist im Großen und Ganzen auf die nationalen Aktivitäten der Mitgliedsstaaten abgestimmt. Das Programm ist nur zum Teil komplementär zu den Programmen Leonardo da Vinci und Sokrates, auch wenn es das einzige Programm ist, das einen Schwerpunkt auf nichtformelle Bildung legt.

Relevanz

- Das JUGEND-Programm ist wichtig, da es sich an die Bedürfnisse der meisten Begünstigten richtet.

Effektivität

- Was die Jugend betrifft, hatte das JUGEND-Programm eine effektive Wirkung hinsichtlich der Verbesserung des Bürgerengagements, der Beeinflussung der beruflichen Orientierung und des Beitrags zu mehr solidarischem Bewusstsein und EU-Bürgersinn. Für das Stärken eines aktiven Bürgerengagements war das Programm weniger effektiv;
- Das JUGEND-Programm war nicht sehr effektiv in Bezug auf das Erreichen benachteiligter Jugendlicher;
- Erhebliche positive Leistungen des Programms in Bezug auf Jugendarbeiter haben zu einer positiven Beurteilung der Effektivität auf dieser Ebene geführt;
- Durch das Programm sind unbeabsichtigte positive Effekte für Organisationen entstanden.

Nützlichkeit und Nachhaltigkeit

- Das Programm trägt zu einem Europa des Wissens bei;
- Der Beitrag des Programms für die nationale Politik ist begrenzt;
- Keine Änderungen bei die Mobilität erschwerenden Verwaltungshindernissen.

Effizienz

Effizienz der Ressourcen

- Das ADEC-Budget ist ausreichend. Wenn ein höheres Budget für die betrieblichen Zuwendungen zur Verfügung stünde, könnten diese Ressourcen den Aktionen 1 (Jugendaustausch) und 5 (unterstützende Maßnahmen) zugute kommen.
- Der Umfang und die Angemessenheit der betrieblichen Zuwendungen sind je nach Land unterschiedlich;

Effizienz der Verfahren

- Die dezentralisierten Verfahren funktionieren gut, das Bewerbungsverfahren für Organisationen hat jedoch einen negativen Einfluss auf die Zugänglichkeit;
- Das zentralisierte Verfahren ist effektiver geworden.

Effizienz der Strukturen

- Die Strukturen sind im Allgemeinen angemessen und effizient.

Überwachungsvorkehrungen

- Es wurden grundlegende Überwachungsvorkehrungen getroffen, die verfügbaren Informationen werden jedoch nicht effektiv genutzt.

Empfehlungen

Relevanz

- Relevanz durch eine gründliche Einschätzung der Bedürfnisse sicherstellen.

Effektivität

- Entwicklung einer Strategie, um Jugendgruppen zu erreichen, die keine höhere Ausbildung haben;
- Eine stärkere Beteiligung von Jugendlichen an der Vorbereitung von Projekten in Betracht ziehen;
- Bei der Gestaltung von neuen Programmen muss die Interventionslogik berücksichtigt werden.

Effizienz

- Verbesserung der Überwachung, vor allem durch eine systematischere Nutzung der bereits verfügbaren Informationen und Rationalisierung der vorhandenen Verfahren und des Systems;
- Verbesserung der Sichtbarkeit des Programms;
- Eine ausreichende Beratung der Projektträger sicherstellen;
- Die Möglichkeit in Betracht ziehen, mehr Ressourcen für die Überwachung, Verbreitung und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit sowie die Beratung der Projektträger zur Verfügung zu stellen;
- Lösungen für die relativ späten Geldtransfers an die ausführenden Körperschaften prüfen;
- Eine Überprüfung der unterstützenden Strukturen SALTO und Eurodesk in Erwägung ziehen.

Weitere detaillierte Empfehlungen sind im letzten Kapitel des Evaluierungsberichts zu finden.

Résumé

Avant-propos

Le présent rapport présente les conclusions de l'évaluation finale externe du programme JEUNESSE 2000-2006. Le programme JEUNESSE avait pour objectif « *La promotion d'une Europe du savoir grâce au développement d'une aire de coopération européenne dans le domaine de la politique de la jeunesse, à partir d'une formation et d'un enseignement non formels.* » Le programme prévoit les actions suivantes :

- Action 1 Jeunesse pour l'Europe : échanges de groupes de jeunes ;
- Action 2 Service volontaire européen ;
- Action 3 Initiatives de jeunes ;
- Action 4 Actions conjointes (activités entreprises conjointement avec d'autres programmes communautaires) ;
- Action 5 Mesures d'accompagnement.

Les groupes cibles du programme sont les jeunes, les personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes et les organisations de jeunes d'États membres de l'Union européenne, de l'A.E.L.E. et d'États en phase de préaccession à l'U.E. (pays du programme). Outre ces pays du programme, des pays tiers peuvent également participer.

Le programme est mis en œuvre par le biais de divisions centralisées, gérées par le Bureau d'assistance technique, et depuis 2006, par l'Agence exécutive Éducation, Audiovisuel et Culture, ainsi que par des divisions décentralisées et gérées par des agences nationales au sein des pays du programme. D'autres instituts sont également impliqués dans le programme : les pouvoirs publics nationaux, les centres de ressources (SALTO) et les Eurodesks.

Objectif de l'évaluation et approche méthodologique

L'évaluation sert deux fonctions principales : responsabilité et apprentissage. Les objectifs d'ensemble de l'évaluation sont :

- Évaluation du programme JEUNESSE 2000-2006 conformément aux questions d'évaluation établies dans les Conditions de Référence ;
- Analyse et synthèse des rapports nationaux sur la mise en œuvre et l'impact du programme ;
- Fourniture de recommandations et de leçons utiles pour le nouveau programme « Jeunesse en action » (2007-2013).

Les principaux critères d'évaluation couverts par l'évaluation sont : complémentarité, effectivité, efficacité, utilité et durabilité.

Le processus d'évaluation a comporté les activités suivantes, durant la période de février à novembre 2007 :

- Étude documentaire ;
- Définition d'un ensemble d'indicateurs permettant de mesurer l'efficacité du programme ;
- Entretiens ;
- Sondages sur Internet par le biais de questionnaires, menés auprès des pouvoirs publics nationaux, agences nationales, jeunes, organisations de jeunes et personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes ;
- Études par pays : étude documentaire, entretiens avec des agences nationales, pouvoirs publics nationaux, SALTO et groupes cibles et discussions de groupe projectif ;
- Résumé des rapports nationaux (rapport distinct) ;
- Phase d'analyse ;
- Rédaction du rapport final.

Logique d'intervention

Les évaluateurs ont étudié la logique d'intervention du programme dont ils ont relevé certaines incohérences. Le programme possède une intention et des objectifs plus vastes mais ne présente pas d'objectifs opérationnels liés aux mesures du programme. Parallèlement aux mesures, des actions sont identifiées dans le programme, qui sont en lien direct avec les objectifs. Néanmoins, le lien entre mesures et actions n'est pas très solide, car les activités mises en œuvre dans le cadre des actions ne présentent pas toujours une relation directe avec les mesures.

Pour le programme JEUNESSE, aucun indicateur n'a été formulé a priori pour mesurer l'efficacité du programme. Pour cette évaluation, les évaluateurs ont donc développé ex post un ensemble d'indicateurs liés aux objectifs du programme, qui constituent selon eux une base solide permettant de mesurer les résultats du programme.

Complémentarité et pertinence

Complémentarité avec la politique de l'U.E.

L'appréciation des évaluateurs indique que le programme JEUNESSE correspond aux objectifs de la politique de la jeunesse de l'U.E. tels qu'ils sont présentés dans le Livre blanc et le Pacte Jeunesse. En ce qui concerne la complémentarité du programme JEUNESSE avec d'autres programmes de la Commission, les évaluateurs concluent que le programme JEUNESSE est partiellement complémentaire au programme Léonard de Vinci et au programme Socrate. Cette complémentarité réside principalement dans des placements professionnels et dans l'échange d'expérience de professionnels travaillant auprès des jeunes. En ce sens, les types d'activités et d'objectifs sont identiques, d'une manière générale, mais ils visent des groupes cibles différents. Pour plusieurs autres

éléments, aucune relation n'est relevée entre les programmes. Ceci démontre que, d'une manière générale, il n'y a pas suffisamment de liens pour renforcer davantage la coopération entre les programmes, si ce n'est par le biais d'informations et de publications communes (ceci est également indiqué par les personnes interrogées dans le cadre du sondage par questionnaire mené auprès des agences nationales).

Complémentarité avec la politique nationale

Le programme JEUNESSE est largement complémentaire à la politique nationale de la jeunesse en termes d'activités et il est simultanément en relation avec les objectifs nationaux de la politique de la jeunesse. Ce dernier point n'est aucunement surprenant puisque les politiques nationales de la jeunesse sont liées à la politique générale européenne sur la jeunesse et sont sous son influence.

Pertinence

Les parties prenantes impliquées indiquent que le programme vise les besoins de la plupart des bénéficiaires, spécialement les groupes de jeunes. Les personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes accordent également une valeur élevée au programme qu'ils jugent répondre à leurs besoins. Néanmoins, les agences nationales et les pouvoirs publics nationaux indiquent que cela est moins le cas pour les décideurs politiques dans les anciens États membres. Bien que la pertinence du programme pour les personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes soit considérée comme élevée, la pertinence des activités mises en œuvre peut être davantage renforcée, selon des personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes, grâce à une amélioration de la consultation avec les personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes concernant la conception, le contenu, la méthodologie, la mise en œuvre, le suivi et l'évaluation des cours de formation. En outre, les sondés de certains pays ont demandé une plus grande souplesse afin de permettre la personnalisation d'activités du programme selon les besoins et conditions spécifiques des pays. Les évaluateurs considèrent que, dans des cas justifiés, une plus grande souplesse permettant un meilleur ciblage des besoins pourrait être utile, tant que l'objectif général du programme est servi.

Effacité

Effacité pour les jeunes

L'efficacité pour les jeunes du programme JEUNESSE a été mesurée par le biais de différents indicateurs en relation avec les points suivants :

- *Citoyenneté*

D'une manière générale, le programme JEUNESSE est considéré comme un grand succès en matière d'amélioration des compétences citoyennes des jeunes participants, surtout en termes d'attitudes, de communication et d'aptitudes sociales. Les effets sur l'amélioration de la compréhension des valeurs européennes semblent moins élevés mais néanmoins importants.

Selon les évaluateurs, l'efficacité du programme dans l'accroissement de la citoyenneté active des participants est dans la pratique quelque peu moins prometteuse que l'efficacité sur l'amélioration des compétences liées à la citoyenneté active, mais elle n'est toutefois pas décevante. Bien qu'un nombre important de jeunes soient restés ou devenus actifs dans des organisations locales ou internationales à l'issue de leurs activités, le programme

n'en était pas toujours la cause. Si l'on considère les résultats nets du programme, environ un tiers des participants sont devenus actifs à l'échelle internationale du fait du programme, alors qu'un peu moins d'un quart sont devenus actifs au niveau national. Étant donné que, en général, le nombre moyen de jeunes gens actifs est estimé nettement inférieur à ces chiffres, ces résultats sont considérés par les évaluateurs comme plutôt positifs, bien que les participants du programme JEUNESSE puissent être considérés comme un groupe de jeunes plus actifs.

- *Orientation professionnelle*

Étant donné la nature des actions, il n'est pas étonnant que l'efficacité du programme sur l'employabilité soit plus élevée pour l'action 2 que pour l'action 1. D'anciens participants au Service volontaire européen rendent compte d'un effet très positif sur leur employabilité, surtout en termes d'orientation professionnelle (62 % des participants au Service volontaire européen déclarent que leur participation a influencé leur carrière professionnelle et 56 % indiquent qu'elle leur a fourni de meilleures chances d'emploi). Les effets sur l'employabilité pour les participants d'action 1, rapportés par eux-mêmes, sont quelque peu moins élevés. Néanmoins, les évaluateurs considèrent comme un résultat positif que, grâce aux échanges à court terme en action 1, des jeunes gens se soient montrés plus ouverts au travail dans d'autres pays. La participation influence également les choix en matière d'enseignement.

Il convient de noter que les conclusions s'appuient principalement sur les comptes rendus des participants eux-mêmes et sur les impressions des parties prenantes. Afin de pouvoir mesurer les effets réels sur l'employabilité et les choix d'enseignement, les participants devraient être suivis sur une plus longue période.

- *Solidarité et citoyenneté*

Les comptes rendus fournis par les jeunes eux-mêmes indiquent qu'ils ont un plus grand sens de la solidarité à la suite de leur participation au programme ; 80 % d'entre eux ressentent un sens accru des responsabilités et 90 % indiquent que leur participation a contribué au moins dans une certaine mesure au renforcement du sentiment de solidarité. Quoiqu'il en soit, l'effet principal qui en ressort est un changement de sentiment. La présente évaluation n'a pas étudié plus avant si ce changement résulte en des actions concrètes, étant donné qu'aucun autre indicateur n'a été établi pour en effectuer la mesure.

Le sentiment d'être un citoyen européen, tel qu'il est indiqué par les jeunes, était déjà relativement élevé parmi les participants avant le début de l'activité, mais le pourcentage s'est considérablement accru à l'issue de la participation (passant de 70 % à 85-90 %). L'attitude envers l'Europe est également devenue plus positive grâce à la participation au programme, surtout pour les anciens participants au Service volontaire européen des nouveaux États membres. Les évaluateurs considèrent que, sur ces points, le programme est efficace.

- *Efficacité à atteindre le groupe cible*

Le programme voulait atteindre tous les jeunes, en accordant une attention particulière aux jeunes ayant moins de perspectives. Dans la pratique, nous constatons que le programme atteint principalement les jeunes à niveau d'études supérieur, alors que ce groupe ne constitue qu'un pourcentage relativement faible du groupe cible dans son ensemble en Europe (pour l'action 1, 60 % des participants présentaient des niveaux

d'études élevés et le pourcentage pour l'action 2 est même encore supérieur, atteignant 75 %. La moyenne indicative pour l'Union européenne est de 25 %). Les évaluateurs considèrent que la possibilité de fournir des chances de formation non formelle aux personnes ayant un niveau d'études moins élevé n'a pas été saisie ici. L'efficacité à atteindre les jeunes ayant moins de perspectives est plus délicate à juger, car la définition n'est pas claire et des concepts différents semblent être utilisés par différentes parties prenantes. Ceci étant dit, et considérant que d'une manière générale environ 20 % des jeunes sont considérés avoir moins de perspectives, les évaluateurs concluent que le programme ne parvient que modérément à atteindre les personnes ayant moins de perspectives (20 % pour l'action 1 et 13 % pour l'action 2). Cependant, le programme atteint principalement les personnes ayant moins de perspectives et présentant des niveaux d'études élevés, ce qui indique que seul un groupe spécifique de ces jeunes est atteint. Les évaluateurs considèrent que le programme est efficace en termes d'égalité des sexes par rapport aux perspectives, avec même une surreprésentation des femmes en action 2.

Efficacité du programme JEUNESSE pour les personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes

L'efficacité du programme JEUNESSE pour les personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes a été déterminée en fonction des critères suivants.

- *Résultats apportant le meilleur soutien*

L'accroissement de la prise de conscience culturelle / interculturelle et des dimensions européennes / internationales dans la pratique des personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes, obtenu grâce au programme, est jugé par ces personnes comme le principal aspect de leur soutien en vue de les rendre plus efficaces dans leur travail avec les jeunes. Le contact de nouvelles méthodes de travail avec les jeunes est également considéré comme important. Les évaluateurs remarquent qu'en comparaison avec d'autres éléments, des éléments centraux du programme tels que formation, établissement de réseau de contacts et diffusion de résultats et de bonnes pratiques sont classés à un niveau relativement bas (sans être toutefois insatisfaisants).

- *Efficacité de l'action 5*

Les activités d'accompagnement sont efficaces, d'une manière générale, pour le soutien du développement professionnel des personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes. La participation à des activités accroît le degré d'engagement des personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes dans des réseaux de l'U.E., ce qui influence leur travail avec ces jeunes. Les résultats du sondage par questionnaire auprès de personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes montrent que la participation à des activités d'accompagnement a conduit à un accroissement des connaissances sur toute une gamme de questions spécifiques. Cependant, des personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes indiquent également avoir connu des difficultés à mettre en application ces connaissances dans leur travail, dans la pratique, et disent pouvoir appliquer les compétences et les connaissances acquises plus efficacement en dehors du cadre du programme JEUNESSE qu'à l'intérieur de ce cadre.

Les évaluateurs estiment qu'en accordant davantage d'attention à l'évaluation des besoins (ce qui est également indiqué par les personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes), il serait possible d'accroître l'utilisation pratique des connaissances acquises. En fonction des objectifs du programme, ceci pourrait impliquer la nécessité de réexaminer certaines

composantes de formation du programme JEUNESSE. Ces kits de formation sont notés par les personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes comme les moins efficaces en termes de pratique professionnelle. Il ressort des réponses aux sondages par questionnaires que l'efficacité du programme JEUNESSE est en général plus élevée pour les pays en phase de préaccession et les pays partenaires.

L'indication provenant d'une proportion relativement importante de personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes, à travers tous les groupements de pays, a montré que la formation reçue dans le cadre du programme JEUNESSE a reproduit « dans une certaine mesure » d'autres formations qu'avaient reçues ces personnes. Les évaluateurs estiment que cette question mérite d'être examinée. Il conviendrait de veiller à ce que la formation ne développe pas sa « propre existence » et qu'elle ne risque pas de se séparer de la pratique et des besoins en évolution des professionnels du travail auprès des jeunes. En dépit des points critiques, les personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes indiquent néanmoins que le programme a contribué à leur propre développement et, d'une manière modérée, à leur employabilité.

Les évaluateurs ont noté que l'efficacité du programme était réduite du fait de la non-participation à des activités de formation, de soutien et d'établissement de réseau de contacts de la part de personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes, ces personnes ne connaissant pas l'existence de ces possibilités. L'implication de cet aspect nécessite un examen complémentaire.

- *Effets positifs non-intentionnels pour les organisations*

Plusieurs organisations indiquent avoir bénéficié du programme, bien qu'il ne s'agisse pas de son intention directe. Parmi ces avantages, le placement de bénévoles dans les organisations et l'effet d'apprentissage sur le travail auprès des jeunes (également en relation avec l'action 5), avec pour résultat une orientation plus internationale des organisations. Les évaluateurs considèrent ces résultats comme des effets secondaires positifs du programme.

Utilité et durabilité

Les critères d'utilité et de durabilité présentent fondamentalement des impacts plus étendus. L'influence du programme sur les critères suivants a été étudiée.

- *Contribution à une Europe du savoir*

Le programme offre des possibilités de mobilité et d'apprentissage non-formel, ce qui pourrait être considéré comme l'un des aspects de l'apprentissage de toute une vie. En ce sens, le programme contribue à l'établissement d'une Europe du savoir. En outre, il contribue au renforcement de la coopération dans le domaine de l'enseignement non-formel.

Les évaluateurs ont constaté que le programme JEUNESSE a exercé une plus grande influence et a été mieux capable de pénétrer la pratique professionnelle auprès des jeunes que la politique de la jeunesse. L'approche novatrice des services volontaires (également considérés contribuer à une Europe du savoir), est jugée par les évaluateurs comme la plus prometteuse dans ce cadre. D'une manière générale, il semble que l'innovation concernant la création de nouvelles approches dans le programme soit modeste, mais elle

exerce la plus grande influence dans les nouveaux États membres. La modestie de la contribution envers des approches novatrices pour l'apprentissage de toute la vie et l'enseignement non-formel, peut être considérée comme quelque peu décevante.

- *Politique et approches novatrices*

Le programme n'a pas exercé une très grande influence sur la politique, bien que l'on rende compte de quelque influence dans les nouveaux États membres. Selon les résultats des sondages par questionnaires, le programme semble avoir davantage d'influence sur des approches novatrices.

- *Coopération gouvernementale internationale*

D'une manière générale, le programme semble contribuer à un accroissement de la coopération entre les parties prenantes du secteur de la jeunesse. Cependant, l'influence du programme JEUNESSE sur la coopération *gouvernementale* internationale n'est pas particulièrement convaincante. En premier lieu, de nombreuses personnes interrogées dans le cadre du sondage par questionnaire mené auprès des agences nationales / pouvoirs publics nationaux ne remarquent aucune influence. S'appuyant sur les résultats des sondages par questionnaires, les évaluateurs concluent que le programme n'a que modérément contribué au développement de dialogues et de contacts en cours parmi les décideurs politiques, bien que l'influence connaisse un relatif succès à un niveau européen.

Les résultats provenant des différentes sources (études par pays, sondages par questionnaires, rapports nationaux) indiquent que la contribution la plus évidente réside dans la bonne volonté des gouvernements à échanger des informations avec d'autres pays. L'influence est moindre sur la bonne volonté d'autres gouvernements à améliorer la coopération dans le domaine des services civiques bénévoles des jeunes.

- *Dialogue en cours entre les organisations et les décideurs politiques*

On constate qu'il existe un contact en cours entre décideurs politiques et organisations, principalement à un niveau local. Les contacts en cours à un niveau national sont assez limités. Bien que les organisations indiquent que leurs activités menées dans le cadre du programme contribuent à développer des contacts durables avec les décideurs politiques, l'ampleur de cette contribution, en comparaison avec d'autres développements indépendants, est difficile à évaluer.

- *Rapports internationaux entre les organisations*

Les résultats du sondage par questionnaire auprès d'organisations montrent que le programme contribue pour une part à l'établissement de nouveaux contacts internationaux entre les organisations ; mais dans de nombreux cas, ces contacts étaient déjà en place. Les évaluateurs estiment que, de cette manière, le programme peut contribuer à renforcer ces réseaux et à favoriser leur durabilité.

- *Intérêt politique*

La contribution du programme à un accroissement de l'intérêt politique et son influence sur la politique nationale sont assez limitées, selon les résultats des études par pays, questionnaires et rapports nationaux. En cas d'influence sur la politique nationale, il s'agit principalement de nouveaux États membres. Contrairement à l'influence sur la politique à des niveaux géographiques supérieurs, le sondage par questionnaire mené

auprès des organisations de jeunes montre que l'influence du programme sur la politique est assez importante au niveau des organisations et à un niveau local.

- *Structures administratives et institutionnelles*

On constate qu'en général, il n'existe pas de véritable influence sur les structures administratives et institutionnelles au sein des États membres, bien que certaines influences dans les nouveaux États membres aient été indiquées. Le programme ne semble pas influencer sur la réduction des obstacles administratifs à la mobilité. La question du visa est toujours indiquée comme un problème important. L'effet du programme sur le statut légal des bénévoles européens, la sécurité sociale et les droits des jeunes est assez modeste. D'une manière générale, une certaine influence du programme sur ces questions est indiquée par les différentes sources, mais dans un même temps environ un tiers des personnes interrogées pour le questionnaire auprès des agences nationales / pouvoirs publics nationaux estiment qu'il n'existait aucune influence.

Efficacité

Ressources

Suffisance du budget d'action décentralisée (enveloppe ADEC)

L'enveloppe ADEC est jugée convenable d'une manière générale, en fonction des besoins indiqués et du succès du nombre des applications. Néanmoins, la moitié environ des agences et pouvoirs publics nationaux estiment que l'action 1 nécessite un budget plus important et un tiers environ d'entre eux suggèrent que c'est également le cas pour l'action 5. Simultanément, à la lumière des conclusions relatives à l'efficacité de la formation pour les personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes par exemple, les évaluateurs estiment que la mise en œuvre et le financement de l'action 5 nécessitent des réajustements, principalement en termes de satisfaction des besoins des bénéficiaires.

Suffisance des subventions de fonctionnement

Les opinions des agences nationales et de leurs pouvoirs publics correspondants diffèrent selon le pays. La suffisance de la subvention de fonctionnement devrait être contrôlée de près pour le nouveau programme, car la charge administrative pour les agences nationales a augmenté, surtout pour la période du nouveau programme. Simultanément, il apparaît clairement aux évaluateurs que davantage de ressources sont nécessaires pour certaines activités, à savoir le suivi et la diffusion d'informations et les conseils aux responsables de projet, qui sont autant d'indicateurs de l'efficacité du programme. Les évaluateurs considèrent qu'il importe d'assurer des ressources suffisantes pour ces tâches.

Ressources humaines

La plupart des agences nationales indiquent que les ressources humaines disponibles suffisent à peine. Cette question est étroitement liée avec la découverte que certaines activités nécessitent davantage d'attention, comme le suivi, la publication et le soutien aux candidats. D'une manière générale, la capacité est insuffisante pour ces activités. Selon les agences, la capacité pour ces activités a été soumise à une pression supplémentaire au cours du programme, du fait de l'accroissement du besoin de capacité pour les procédures administratives.

Efficacité des procédures

La procédure décentralisée fonctionne correctement, mais la procédure de candidature pour les organisations exerce un effet négatif sur l'accessibilité du programme. Les difficultés que rencontrent les organisations moins expérimentées dans la procédure de candidature doivent faire l'objet d'une attention particulière. Certaines indications semblent souligner que seul un groupe choisi d'organisations bénéficie du programme. Il convient cependant de noter que des tentatives de simplification des procédures ont eu lieu pour le nouveau programme. Il pourrait être intéressant de contrôler en détail l'efficacité de cette simplification. Les retards de paiement par la Commission doivent également faire l'objet d'une attention particulière.

Efficacité des structures

D'une manière générale, les structures sont considérées comme efficaces, mais des améliorations pourraient être envisagées dans certains cas. La Commission européenne pourrait présenter des améliorations en termes de clarté des instructions fournies aux agences nationales, de contrats et paiements dans les délais prévus et de réduction du délai de réponse aux questions. Concernant l'ancien Bureau d'assistance technique (B.A.T.), certaines inquiétudes ont été exprimées au sujet du suivi et du délai de réponse aux questions. Les opinions sur le B.A.T. et l'Agence doivent être mises en relief, car la plupart des personnes interrogées n'ont pas été en contact avec eux. En outre, le B.A.T. a été remplacé en 2006 par l'Agence exécutive Éducation, Audiovisuel et Culture, au sujet de laquelle il est encore trop tôt pour tirer des conclusions en matière d'efficacité. Il pourrait être utile d'établir un contact entre les agences nationales et l'Agence exécutive afin de permettre des échanges d'expériences.

Bien que les agences nationales soient considérées comme des structures efficaces, les agences nationales elles-mêmes ont certaines inquiétudes susceptibles d'influencer l'efficacité de leur organisation, surtout en ce qui concerne la capacité de ressource de personnel. Ce point est lié au besoin de davantage de ressources pour le suivi, l'information et le conseil aux organisateurs de projet. En outre, les évaluateurs estiment que les inquiétudes relatives aux charges administratives et financières / audit dont il est fait état devraient faire l'objet d'une attention particulière et d'un contrôle, voire même d'un réexamen. Bien que cette charge soit due en partie à des facteurs extérieurs au programme JEUNESSE tels que le règlement financier, il conviendrait pour le moins de prêter attention à cet aspect lors de l'évaluation à moyen terme. Les résultats pourraient être communiqués au niveau de prise de décision approprié.

Les principales inquiétudes exprimées par les différentes parties prenantes étaient liées au fonctionnement des centres SALTO et des Eurodesks. Les centres SALTO sont considérés comme des structures appropriées et l'importance de leur travail est reconnue. Cependant, plusieurs soucis ont été exprimés concernant leur fonctionnement, principalement liés aux ressources disponibles pour les centres SALTO, à l'harmonisation des activités et au besoin de renforcement de la coopération entre les agences nationales et les centres SALTO. En outre, le résultat du sondage par questionnaire mené auprès de personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes indique qu'un nombre important de personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes ne sont pas informées des possibilités (de formation) qui sont proposées. Bien que les centres SALTO fassent appel à plusieurs méthodes de

communication, ils n'atteignent pas suffisamment ce groupe. Ceci requiert des activités de communication plus ciblées.

En ce qui concerne les Eurodesks, des inquiétudes importantes sont exprimées au sein des sondages par questionnaires et des études par pays, sur la valeur ajoutée des informations qu'ils fournissent. De plus, il semble que le rôle des Eurodesks au sein du programme JEUNESSE et les relations de leurs activités avec le programme JEUNESSE soient limités, ou du moins manquent de clarté. Ceci est également indiqué par les rapports nationaux. Comme dans le cas du SALTO, les évaluateurs considèrent qu'un réexamen des activités des Eurodesks pourrait être nécessaire afin d'apporter des améliorations dans la pertinence de leur travail.

Visibilité

À partir du sondage par questionnaire mené auprès des agences nationales / pouvoirs publics nationaux, on conclut qu'il semble y avoir une limite au rôle des agences et pouvoirs publics nationaux dans l'amélioration de la visibilité politique du programme. La signification de la visibilité politique peut avoir des connotations différentes à la fois au sein des différents groupements de pays et entre eux, ainsi qu'entre les États membres et la Commission. Ceci présuppose également un désir de la part des agences nationales et des pouvoirs publics nationaux d'améliorer la visibilité politique du programme. Si le défi est d'accroître la visibilité politique du programme Jeunesse en action, des stratégies doivent être développées afin de faciliter l'amélioration de la visibilité du nouveau programme.

En outre, étant donné les difficultés rencontrées par le programme pour atteindre efficacement les jeunes désavantagés et les personnes à niveaux d'enseignement moins élevés, il est difficile de conclure que le programme soit parvenu à la meilleure efficacité dans sa publicité pour atteindre ses groupes cibles.

Suivi

Les organisations ont engagé beaucoup d'énergie à rendre compte des résultats. Cependant, ces rapports ne sont pas utilisés systématiquement à des fins de suivi et des critères uniformes (indicateurs) ne sont pas davantage utilisés pour des comptes rendus. En conséquence, les évaluateurs estiment que les informations disponibles à différents niveaux ne sont pas efficacement utilisées au sein du programme JEUNESSE. Ceci est dû au fait que les procédures et outils de suivi ne sont pas rationalisés et qu'un ensemble d'indicateurs cohérent, utilisés par toutes les parties prenantes impliquées, fait défaut. Les organisations assurent le suivi de résultats différents, ce qui rend impossible le regroupement des données à un niveau supérieur (données par action, par exemple).

En outre, différents systèmes de suivi sont en place aux niveaux centralisés et décentralisés, ce qui ne facilite pas l'obtention d'une vue d'ensemble correcte. En sus, le système de suivi au niveau décentralisé n'est pas utilisé par toutes les agences nationales, car le système pose des problèmes de convivialité. En conséquence, le programme souffre d'un manque d'informations adéquates sur les réalisations et les progrès au niveau de la C.E. et probablement aussi au niveau national. Les évaluateurs estiment que des améliorations considérables peuvent être envisagées.

Conclusions

Logique d'intervention

- Le programme JEUNESSE possède des intentions et des objectifs plus vastes, mais les liens avec les objectifs opérationnels, mesures et actions manquent parfois de clarté.

Complémentarité

- Le programme JEUNESSE correspond bien à la politique d'ensemble de l'E.U. sur la jeunesse ; il est largement complémentaire aux activités nationales des États membres. Le programme n'est que partiellement complémentaire aux programmes Léonard de Vinci et Socrate, bien qu'il soit le seul programme se concentrant sur l'enseignement non formel.

Pertinence

- Le programme JEUNESSE est pertinent car il s'adresse aux besoins de la majeure partie des bénéficiaires.

Effectivité

- En ce qui concerne les jeunes, le programme JEUNESSE a été efficace en améliorant les compétences citoyennes, en influençant l'orientation professionnelle et en contribuant à accroître le sens de la solidarité et le sentiment de citoyenneté européenne. Le programme a été moins efficace à stimuler la citoyenneté active ;
- Le programme JEUNESSE n'a pas été très efficace dans le ciblage des jeunes ayant moins de perspectives ;
- D'importants résultats positifs du programme obtenus au niveau des personnes travaillant auprès des jeunes ont conduit à une évaluation positive de l'efficacité à ce niveau ;
- Le programme a généré des effets positifs non-intentionnels pour les organisations.

Utilité et durabilité

- Le programme contribue à une Europe du savoir ;
- La contribution du programme aux politiques nationales est limitée ;
- Aucun changement dans les obstacles administratifs à la mobilité.

Efficacité

Efficacité des ressources

- L'enveloppe ADEC est suffisante. Dans le cas où un budget supérieur serait disponible pour la subvention opérationnelle, ces ressources pourraient être allouées à l'action 1 (échanges de groupes de jeunes) et à l'action 5 (mesures d'accompagnement).
- Le volume et l'adéquation des subventions de fonctionnement diffèrent selon le pays.

Efficacité des procédures

- Les procédures décentralisées fonctionnent correctement, mais la procédure de candidature pour les organisations exerce un effet négatif sur l'accessibilité ;
- La procédure centralisée est devenue plus efficace.

Efficacité des structures

- Les structures sont, d'une manière générale, appropriées et efficaces.

Dispositions de suivi

- Des dispositions de suivi de base sont en place, mais aucune utilisation efficace n'est faite des informations disponibles.

Recommandations

Pertinence

- Assurer la pertinence par une évaluation correcte des besoins.

Effectivité

- Développer une stratégie visant d'autres groupes de jeunes que les seuls jeunes à niveau d'enseignement supérieur ;
- Considérer davantage d'implication de jeunes dans la préparation de projets ;
- Dans la conception de nouveaux programmes, il conviendra de prêter attention à la logique d'intervention.

Efficacité

- Améliorer le suivi, surtout par une utilisation plus systématique des informations déjà disponibles et par une rationalisation du système et des procédures existants ;
- Améliorer la visibilité du programme ;
- Assurer suffisamment d'indications pour les organisateurs de projet ;
- Considérer la possibilité de rendre disponibles davantage de ressources pour le suivi, la diffusion et la publicité, et la fourniture d'indications aux organisateurs de projet ;
- Examiner des solutions concernant les retards relatifs de transferts financiers aux corps exécutifs ;
- Considérer un réexamen des structures de soutien SALTO et Eurodesk.

Des recommandations plus détaillées figurent dans le dernier chapitre du rapport d'évaluation.

1 Introduction: YOUTH Community Action Programme

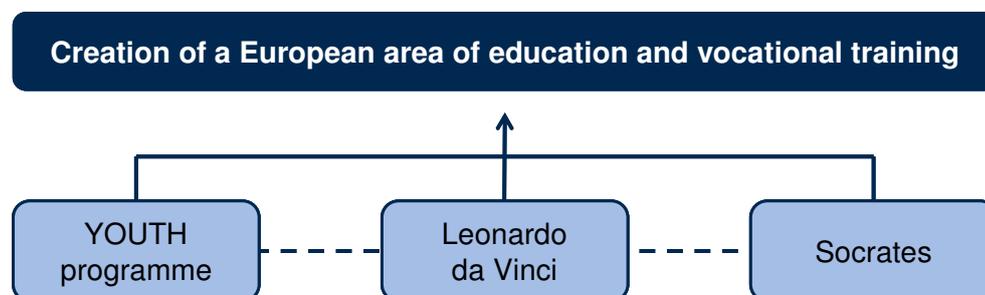
In this Chapter we provide an introduction to the YOUTH programme. After an introduction on the general policy framework in which the YOUTH programme operates, the set up of the programme in terms of objectives, measures and target groups is described. The third part of the Chapter provides an overview of the institutes involved in the implementation of the YOUTH programme and their respective roles.

1.1 General policy framework

The YOUTH programme aims at contributing to overall Community objectives in the scope of the Lisbon strategy, the development of quality education and training, the objectives of the employment strategy in which lifelong education and training have a fundamental role to play and the aim to create an open and dynamic European education area capable of achieving the objective of lifelong education and training. Those aims in relation to young people are reflected in the White Paper and the Youth Pact.

The YOUTH programme is not an isolated EU initiative in this field. It is closely connected to the Programmes SOCRATES and LEONARDO DA VINCI. All three programmes have a common justification for the proposal of the Programme, indicating that the programmes are interconnected. The three programmes aimed at creating a European area of education - both formal and non-formal - and vocational training. The YOUTH programme has a focus on non-formal education, which distinguishes it from the other programmes.

Figure 1.1 Influences of European Programmes to a European area of education and vocational training



Source: ECORYS, based on Decision no 1031/2000/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council.

Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci

The global objectives of Socrates II were *strengthening the European dimension of education, promoting a quantitative and qualitative improvement in the knowledge of EU languages, promoting cooperation and mobility in education, encouraging innovations, the use of new technologies and the exploration of questions of common interest in education policy.*

The aims were:

- To strengthen the European dimension of education at all levels;
- To improve knowledge of European languages;
- To promote cooperation and mobility throughout education;
- To encourage innovation in education;
- To promote equal opportunities in all sectors of education.

The Leonardo da Vinci Programme was designed to build a skilled workforce through European partnerships. Leonardo funded overseas work placements and the development of training materials with the objective of improving the provision of Vocational Education and Training (VET) across Europe.

The global objective of Leonardo da Vinci II was *“To contribute towards the creation of a European education area through the promotion of lifelong learning and continued Community-level cooperation between actors in the field of vocational training”*.

This global objective was to be achieved by meeting a set of specific objectives:

1. *Initial vocational training*: to improve initial vocational training and its quality at all levels, by developing working life contacts or apprenticeship training in order to promote employability;
2. *Continuing vocational training*: to improve the quality of and access to continuing vocational training with the aim of increasing adaptability to technological and organizational changes;
3. *Competitiveness, entrepreneurship, training institution- enterprise co-operation*: to strengthen the role of vocational training in developing competitiveness and entrepreneurship in order to create new employment opportunities.

Although the initial proposal for the above programmes run in parallel, the implementation of the programmes was separated. As a result, in practice, the links between the programmes were not visible, apart from the Action 4 of the YOUTH programme, which aimed at synergy between the three programmes by financing joint Actions.

The White Paper and Youth Pact

There are a number of EU-wide initiatives such as the White paper and the Youth pact. During the implementation of the YOUTH programme, these policy developments have been taken into account.

The White Paper on a New Impetus for European Youth

In the past decade there has been an increase in political interest for Youth. In the last ten years, many things have evolved in the Youth sector, at the European level. During the 1990s, the implementation of the "Youth for Europe" and "European Voluntary Service" Programmes made the mobility of young people throughout Europe much easier. The

YOUTH Programme was adopted in order to strengthen these initiatives. An important amount of knowledge has thus been acquired and the foundations of Community co-operation set.

Following the above developments and the increase in interest is reflected in the White Paper on Youth Policy (2001). The White Paper identified the main challenges for youth policy in a European socio-demographic context characterised by a growing disequilibrium between the young and the not so young and changing living conditions for young people. The objective as formulated in the White paper is to deepen the Community co-operation to the benefit and with the involvement of young people, as a specific and essential element of a policy which is resolutely directed towards the future. The Commission thus indicated it wishes to make this policy acquire a genuine Community dimension in complementarity and close co-operation with the local, regional and national authorities of the Member States.

The framework of European cooperation in the youth field, established by the Council Resolution of June 2002 based on the Commission White Paper, has two complementary strands:

- Applying the open method of coordination (OMC) to the specific priorities of the youth field;
- Taking better account of the youth dimension in other policies.

The Resolution establishes the principles of flexibility in the method, non-discrimination and equal opportunities, the involvement of young people and the association of the applicant countries in the cooperation framework. In the Resolution, the four priorities proposed in the White Paper, i.e. (i) participation, (ii) information, (iii) voluntary activities among young people, (iv) greater understanding and knowledge of youth, are confirmed as priorities of the OMC, and the procedures to be followed which should lead to the adoption of common objectives by the Council and the Member States are laid down.

Youth pact

Again, against the background of Europe's ageing population, the European Council sees a need for young Europeans to benefit from a set of policies and measures forming a fully integrated part of the Lisbon Strategy. The Youth Pact, agreed on in 2005 by the member States, aims to improve the education, training, mobility, vocational integration and social inclusion of young Europeans, while facilitating the reconciliation of working life and family life.

1.2 History of the YOUTH programme

The YOUTH programme 2000-2006 is a programme that is based on a long history of Actions in the field of Youth policy. Its basis is found in the two predecessor programmes Youth for Europe and the European Voluntary Service. The Youth for Europe Programme, aiming at youth exchange, dates from 1988, and was implemented at 1989. In 1995, the first year of Youth for Europe programme III started. The European Voluntary Service (EVS) started in 1996 as a pilot project, followed by a legal basis in 1998. All

Actions that were implemented under those two programmes were merged into the YOUTH programme. Furthermore, there were some pilot Actions that also found their place within the YOUTH programme as they had proven their success.

The budget available for the several programmes targeting Youth has increased significantly in the past decade. For the years 1989-1994 40 million Euro was available for Youth in Europe I and II. For the YOUTH programme 2000-2006 the budget was 520 million at time of approval, which became 615 million after enlargement.

The YOUTH programme focused on the training, education and working experience element. Additionally, the Programme aimed at citizenship and culture, but these elements were less important (in the new Programme the focus shifted to citizenship, but still the education element is dominant).

The above mentioned focus is a result of the justification for the Programme as presented in the decision on the establishment of the Youth Community Action Plan. At the same, the justification shows that more than one objective needs to be served. The main elements of the justifications are the following:

- The EU aims to contribute to development of quality of education and training;
- Cooperation in the field of Youth should be strengthened;
- The emphasizes on the role of lifelong education and training in order to enhance employability, adaptability and the culture of entrepreneurship and to promote equal opportunities as indicated in the employment strategy adopted in 1997;
- The aim for a creation of a European education area;
- The advantages of mobility for people and competitiveness in the European Union as indicated in the Green Paper Education, training, research: the obstacles to transnational mobility;
- The need to promote active citizenship and the fight against exclusion in all its forms.

1.3 Objectives and Actions of the Youth Community Action Programme

1.3.1 Objectives

The overall aim of the Programme was:

The promotion of a Europe of knowledge by developing a European area of cooperation in the field of Youth Policy, based on non-formal education and training

Objectives

The four objectives of the Programme were given in Decision No 1031/2000/EC:

- to promote an active contribution by young people to the building of Europe through their participation in transnational exchanges within the Community or with third countries so as to develop an understanding of the cultural diversity of Europe and its fundamental common values, thus helping to promote respect for human rights and combat racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia;
- to strengthen their sense of solidarity through more extensive participation by young people in transnational community service activities within the Community or with

third countries, in particular those with which the Community has concluded cooperation agreements;

- to encourage young people's initiative, enterprise and creativity so that they may take an active role in society and, at the same time, to stimulate recognition and the value of non-formal education acquired within a European context;
- to reinforce cooperation in the field of youth by fostering the exchange of good practice, the training of youth workers/leaders and the development of innovative Actions at Community level.

Within the Programme no operational objectives were formulated.

The YOUTH programme emphasises social inclusion, namely that all young people (without discrimination) should have access to the Programme. In addition to the formal objectives of the YOUTH programme, the YOUTH programme aims at promoting awareness of and stimulating Youth policy. The creation of structures for the formulation and implementation of national and international Youth policy is one of the important secondary effects the Programme aims at. The Programme actively stimulates such structures through providing budget and means that enable the setting up of national agencies and advising organizations (see implementation structure).

1.4 Actions, measures and target groups

The Actions, sub-actions and target groups of the YOUTH programme are presented in the following table:

Table 1.1 Actions and target groups of the YOUTH programme

Actions	Sub-Actions	Target group
Action 1 Youth for Europe	Action 1.1: Intra-Community exchanges for young people	Young people aged between 15 and 25 legally resident in a Member State
	Action 1.2 Exchanges of young people with Third Countries	Young people aged between 15 and 25 and legally resident in a Member State or a third country
Action 2 European Voluntary Service	Action 2.1 Intra-community European Voluntary Service	Persons aged between 18 and 25 and legally resident in a Member State
	Action 2.2 European Voluntary Service with third countries	Persons aged between 18 and 25 and legally resident in a Member State
Action 3 Youth Initiatives		Young people/young volunteers
Action 4 Joint Actions		Organisations active in other schemes relating to Europe of knowledge; activities that are undertaken jointly with other Community schemes

Actions	Sub-Actions	Target group
Action 5 Support measures	Action 5.1 Training and cooperation in relation to those involved in youth policy	Persons involved in Youth work, particularly EVS instructors, youth workers/leaders, those running European projects and youth initiative counsellors
	Action 5.2 Information for young people and youth studies	Persons active in Youth work
	Action 5.3 Information and visibility of measures	-
	Action 5.4 Support measures	National agencies

Source: Decision no 1031/2000/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council.

Focus of the Programme

The original proposal for the YOUTH programme emphasized the EVS, which was a very important element of the Programme according to the Commission. The Council and parliament were keen to have considerable amounts of small sized projects as financed under the Youth exchanges. Consequently, EVS became Action 2 and the Youth for Europe Action 1. Action 1 and 2 are the main Actions of the Programme in financial terms.

Measures

The above mentioned Actions had to be implemented through (a combination of) the following types of measures. However, these measures are intimately linked to the operational objectives:

- support for the transnational mobility of young people;
- support for the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the youth field;
- support for the development of cooperation networks at the European level permitting mutual exchange of experience and good practice;
- support for transnational projects to promote citizenship of the Union and the commitment of young people to the development of the Union;
- promotion of language skills and understanding of different cultures;
- support for pilot projects based on transnational partnerships designed to develop innovation and quality in the youth field;
- development, at a European level, of methods of analysis and follow-up of youth policies and their evolution (e.g. databases, key figures, mutual knowledge of ‘systems’) and of methods of disseminating good practice.

From the interviews with the EC, it became clear that the emphasis of the Programme was on non-formal learning. During the course of the programme active citizenship became more important. This development is not reflected in the specific objectives. Furthermore, it became clear that specific objectives and operational objectives do not correspond (one on one) to the Actions (see Chapter 3).

Countries

Countries which can participate in all five Actions of the YOUTH programme were called Programme countries. These countries are EU Member States, EFTA/EEA countries, pre-accession countries. For the latter groups of countries, the access to the programme was as following:

- 12 candidate countries participated in the Programme as of 2000;
- as of 2004, 10 became Member States; remained BG and RO;
- in 2004, TR became also a candidate country;
- the EFTA/EEE countries are non candidate countries; they participated as of 2000.

The YOUTH programme was mainly aimed at partners from Programme countries (EU Member States, EFTA/EEA countries and pre-accession countries). To a limited extent and under certain conditions, it is also open to partners from countries in other parts of the world, i.e. “Partner Countries” or “Third countries”. These countries can participate in Actions 1, 2 and 5 of the YOUTH programme. They have been divided into the following priority regions:

- Priority 1 regions: Mediterranean partner countries, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus (former CIS - Commonwealth of Independent States).
- Priority 2 regions South East Europe and Latin America.

The partner country cooperation strand of the YOUTH programme supported non-formal education and intercultural learning among young people from Programme and Partner Countries. At the same time, youth organisations, youth leaders and youth workers were supported by training activities and the transfer of know-how in the youth field.

1.5 Organisation structure

In this section we present a short description of all actors involved (e.g., EC departments, steering group, National programme structures, et cetera), describing their roles and responsibilities. The programme is both centrally and decentrally implemented. For the decentralised part, National bodies are responsible for the implementation of the programme, while the EC is responsible for the implementation of the centralised part of the YOUTH programme. The main recourses are allocated to the decentralised strand. (see also section 1.6).

European Commission

The European Commission, which initiated the Programme, is ultimately responsible for its smooth running. It manages the budget and sets priorities, targets and criteria for the Programme on an ongoing basis. The Commission also bears overall responsibility for the coordination of the YOUTH programme.

From Technical Assistance Office to the Education, Culture & Audiovisual Executive Agency

Within the YOUTH programme a distinction is made between the centralised and decentralised implementation. The following activities are implemented centrally:

- Action 1 for European Non-governmental organisations, based in one of the Programme countries and that have member branches in at least eight Programme

countries and for the international cooperation with partner countries and applications from Mediterranean countries;

- Action 2: for Europe wide projects for Europe-wide networks and NGOs/ENGYOs (European non-governmental youth organisations) and multi-lateral EVS with Partner Countries;
- Action 4;
- Action 5: for the activities Youth information, Transnational partnerships and networks, support for capacity building and innovation and for ENGYOs, which are based in one of the Programme countries and have member branches in at least eight Programme countries.

Till 2006 the centralised programme implementation took place through the Technical Assistance Office (TAO), which had mainly an administrative task. The TAO was a subcontractor of the Commission and did not have any decision making power. In 2006 the functions of the TAO was taken over by the Education, Culture & Audiovisual Executive Agency, with a broader mandate.

The National Authorities

The National Authorities are the relevant Ministries in the countries involved in the Programme. They are also responsible for designating and monitoring the National Agencies (the latter task is shared with the European Commission). Additionally, they were responsible for the selection of the projects for the decentralised programme (in the new Programme the selection committee falls under responsibility of the agencies, to enable a clear division of tasks and not to have a control function on something you make the selection for). Furthermore, the National Authorities are represented in the Programme Committee.

The Programme Committee

This committee played the role devoted to committees, management or consultative committees, depending on the matter submitted.

National Agencies

National Agencies are offices that have been designated and set up by the national authorities (national coordinating units), and are bodies charged with the management of the Programme at national level. They are responsible for the everyday management of the decentralised strands of the Programme, covering the whole Programme life cycle, except for the decision on project selection, which was a task of the National Authorities. The Commission cooperates closely with the National Agencies and oversees their activities, as well as guiding and monitoring the general implementation, image, follow-up and evaluation of the Programme at European level.

Each National Agency acts as a link between the European Commission, project promoters at national, regional and local level, and the young people themselves, and is a key contact point. The Agencies are responsible for disseminating general information about the YOUTH programme as well as encouraging and facilitating the establishing of partnerships. They are also responsible for the selection of projects according to the criteria set by the European Commission. They advise project promoters and organize

different kinds of training activities. The National Agencies are the primary sources of information for the users of the Programme.

The Commission signs contracts with the National Agencies, based on their work plan. One contract covers the operational costs of the National Agency; the other contract concerns the budget available for the Actions.

Resource centres

Under the YOUTH programme eight resource centres have been established, being part of some National Agencies. These resource centres are for 95 percent financed by the commission and the activities provided are ensured by certain National Agencies. It is an instrument in favour of the National Agencies Network, beneficiaries and the Commission, in order to strengthen the structures in the field of Youth. They are attached to certain NAs with a view to specialisation and economies of scales of these NAs on certain specific issues, for the benefit of the whole network. These Resource centres are called SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres (SALTO: Support and Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities), and their role is to provide different kinds of resource and support to improve the quality of YOUTH projects, such as training, dissemination of information, partnership development and so on.

Eurodesk network

The Eurodesk's are financed completely through the YOUTH programme and a national co-financing contribution. Eurodesk is a European network of information services in 27 countries providing access to European information for young people and those who work with them.

1.6 Procedure

There are two kinds of procedures, centralized and decentralized. The centralized procedures were managed by the Technical Assistance Office, and later by the Education, Culture and Audiovisual Executive Agency and the Commission. The decentralized procedures are managed by the National Agencies.

1.7 Budget

The budget division over the Actions was decided upon yearly by the Programme Committee, so every country has a division over Actions in the same proportion. Each country had the possibility to deviate from the overall division up to a maximum of 20 percent.

At this stage no accurate information is available concerning the budget granted. This information will come available at a later stage only, as not all grant agreements have been conducted yet and not everything is closed yet. The full picture is available only next year.

From the available Activity reviews, on the YOUTH programme, the following figures were extracted, covering both the decentralised as well as the centralised strand. These

data are an indication, as in the reviews is mentioned that these data are considered not to be complete.

Table 1.2 Summary of figures Annual activity reports

2000**	Action 1	Action 2	Action 3	Action 5	Total
Number of participants	45,393	2,798	21,869	33,724	103,784
Number of projects funded	2,692	5,423	836	1,078	10,029
Amount Mio €	23.1	20.7	5.6	8.7	58.1
Average funding per project €	8,581	3,817	6,699	8,070	5,793
2001	Action 1	Action 2	Action 3	Action 5	Total
Number of participants	61,169	3,430	18,570	24,370	107,539
Number of projects funded	2,951	5,754	1,136	1,616	11,457
Amount Mio €	27.4	23.9	6.7	10.7	68.7
Average funding per project €	9,247	4,158	5,857	6,626	5,992
2002	Action 1	Action 2	Action 3	Action 5	Total
Number of participants	60,736	3,432	18,515	33,516	116,199*
Number of projects funded	2,824	6,526	1,342	1,337	12,029
Amount Mio €	28.9	21.9	7.1	12.9	70.8
Average funding per project €	10,230	3,353	5,320	9,625	5,884
2003	Action 1	Action 2	Action 3	Action 5	Total
Number of participants	68,603	3,566	18,557	30,845	121,571
Number of projects funded	3,089	6,255	1,395	680	11,419
Amount Mio €	31.6	23.5	7.4	13.3	75.8
Average funding per project €	10,220	3,760	5,336	19,580	
2004	Action 1	Action 2	Action 3	Action 5	Total
Number of participants	77,722	4,067	36,648	35,320	153,757
Number of projects funded	3,268	7,037	1,756	959	13,020
Amount Mio €	36.1	26.4	9.3	11.8	83.7
Average funding per project €	11,047	3,752	5,296	12,304	
2005	Action 1	Action 2	Action 3	Action 5	Total
Number of participants	68,349	3,919	17,493	17,163	106,924
Number of projects funded	2,937	7,522	1,667	871	12,997
Amount Mio €	36.9	27.9	9	12.5	86.3
Average funding per project €	12,550	3,705	5,428	14,330	
Total	Action 1	Action 2	Action 3	Action 5	Total
Number of participants	381,972	21,212	131,652	174,938	709,774
Number of projects funded	17,761	38,517	8,132	6541	70,951
Amount Mio €	184.1	144.7	45.6	69.7	444.1

Source: Annual activities report.

* this figure differs from the source, it seems a calculation mistake was made.

** this numbers are not complete

For the period 2004-2007 the following figures are available.

Table 1.3 Statistics on projects started from 01 January 2004 and ended by 01 January 2007

	N. of approved projects	% out of total approved projects
Action 1 – Youth Exchanges in Programme Countries	8,185	30.72
Bilateral youth exchanges	4,314	16.19
Trilateral youth exchanges	1,084	4.07
Multilateral youth exchanges	2,787	10.46
Action 1.2 - Youth Exchanges in cooperation with Partner Countries	216	0.81
Multilateral exchanges with Mediterranean Countries	216	0.81
Action 2 – EVS Programme Countries	15,169	56.94
EVS one-to-one hosting the activity	7,308	27.43
EVS one-to-one sending to activity	7,861	29.51
Action 2.2 - EVS in cooperation with Partner Countries	511	1.92
Short term	23	0.09
Long term	488	1.83
Action 5 – Support Measures Programme Countries	1,911	7.17
All activities	1,911	7.17
Action 5.1.2 – Support Measures Partner Countries	650	2.44
All activities	650	2.44
Total All Actions	26,642	100.00

Source: Table supplied by the steering Committee for the evaluation.

The majority of the projects and participants live in the Programme countries. The total size of the population in those countries aged between 15 and 25 is around 78 million (2000, source: Eurostat).

Funding of projects

The funding of projects is based on the principle of co-funding, with other public and or private contributions. Applicants have to contribute to the project themselves, either in cash or kind.

1.8 Main outcomes of previous relevant evaluations

There have been several previous evaluations which are relevant for the YOUTH programme:

- Interim evaluation;
- Evaluation of the Partnership Covenant;
- Evaluation of the third country cooperation strand 2000-2002;
- Evaluation of Youth for Europe and European Voluntary Service 1996-1999.

The most important findings of these evaluations can be found in Annex D

2 Purpose of the evaluation and methodological approach

2.1 Objectives

Objectives and functions of the evaluation

The evaluation serves two main functions: accountability and learning. The overall objectives of the evaluation are:

- Assessment of the YOUTH Programme 2000-2006 according to the evaluation questions established in the Terms of Reference;
- Analysis and synthesis of the national reports on the implementation of and impact of the programme;
- The provision of useful lessons and recommendations for the new “Youth in Action” Programme (2007-2013).

Although all evaluation questions should be answered, the effectiveness aspect is emphasized in this study. The evaluation is expected to provide useful lessons and recommendations for the future YOUTH programme (2007-2013). This future Programme is already developed and ongoing at the time of the evaluation, while also an ex ante evaluation has been carried out. Hence, recommendations are mainly sought for operational issues.

The results of this external evaluation, in parallel with those emerging from the Member States reports on the implementation and impact of the programme, will be used, inter alia, to report on the implementation of the programme as foreseen in the Decision establishing the “Youth” programme (art. 13).

2.2 Evaluation questions

The evaluation questions as mentioned in the Terms of Reference (ToR) are structured according to five main evaluation criteria. These questions are presented in the following table.

Table 2.1 Main evaluation questions

Evaluation criterion	Main evaluation questions
Complementarity	To what extent the YOUTH programme has been complementary to other interventions with similar objectives?
Effectiveness	To what extent was the YOUTH programme successful in attaining the objectives set and achieving the intended results?
Efficiency	How economically have the various inputs of the Programme (financial and human resources) been converted into outputs (projects and complementary activities) and results?
Utility	To what extent do the results and impacts of the YOUTH Programme actually meet the needs and expectations of its stakeholders and intended beneficiaries? To what extent the YOUTH Programme has generated the expected impacts or unintended impacts?
Sustainability	To what extent could the positive changes or trends induced by the Programme be expected to last if it were terminated?

Source: ECORYS evaluation team.

In the ToR these main questions are further detailed in sub-questions, for which we have drafted evaluation criteria (Annex A Evaluation questions, indicators and judgement criteria).

2.3 Evaluation methodology

The evaluation took place through the following research steps:

2.3.1 Desk research and interviews with the EC

Desk research and interviews:

- Analysis of documents relevant and available for the programme. A complete list of documents studied are included Annex E;
- Analyses relevant statistical monitoring data as far as possible. The extent to which those data were readily available was very limited, as the monitoring database was only partially filled;
- Interviews with representatives from Unit D1 and D2 and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. The complete list of people interviewed is presented in Annex B.

2.3.2 Formulation Indicators

Ideally, at the start of the Programme a set of indicators linked to the objectives is established, including a target value indicating what success level is expected. However, for the YOUTH programme no indicators have been formulated serving the measurement of the effectiveness of the Programme. The only indicators that have been used during the Programme lifetime are the input and output indicators. This is why we have set up, ex post, a set of key output, result and impact indicators for the measurement of the

effectiveness of the Programme. These indicators are presented in Annex A and served as far as possible as base for the questionnaires, and also serve to report on the achievement of the programme.

2.3.3 Questionnaires

For this study, several questionnaires, with differences in scope, were organised. We organised web-based questionnaires for the following target groups and scope:

Table 2.2 Target group and scope questionnaire

Target group	Scope questionnaire
National Agencies (33) and National Authorities (33)	Organisation of the implementation, policy effects, institution building and impressions of effectiveness.
Beneficiaries: Organisations	Action 1 and 2, as these are the two main Actions within the Programme.
Beneficiaries: Young people	Action 1 and 2, as these are the two main Actions within the Programme.
Beneficiaries: Youth workers	Action 5, the Youth workers part.

The following Actions were not studied through the questionnaire:

- Action 3, which is mainly about Youth initiatives within the home countries. Action 4, which was discarded during the Programme. The procedure for this Action was too complicated (due to tripartite management) and the themes for the calls were not always related in a good manner to the objectives. It proved to be difficult to generate projects for this Action and only a few projects were undertaken. Therefore was considered to be inefficient to focus on this Action in this evaluation¹;
- Action 5, other target groups than youth workers, as the Action covers a broad range of activities and target groups, supporting the other measures.

Analysis

After consultation with the client, it was decided to analyse the data according to country groupings (for countries involved in the programme see paragraph 0). The country grouping that the steering committee agreed upon is as following:

- Old Member States (EU 15) and EFTA;
- Pre-accession countries: Turkey (preparatory measures were launched in 2003, with full participation in 2004), Bulgaria (full participation in 2001), Romania (full participation from the beginning);
- New Member States (EU10) (in the Programme as "Programme Countries" from the beginning (2000);
- European partner countries and Mediterranean partner countries;
- Latin American partner countries.

Throughout the report, the data are presented, where relevant, according to the above grouping.

¹ This information was gathered through the interviews held on the 20th of March.

Response rates

In the following table the overall response to the several questionnaires is presented.

Table 2.3 Response distribution of the questionnaires

Response by questionnaire	National Agencies and National Authorities		Organisations		Young people		Youth workers
	NA	NAUTH	Action 1	Action 2	Action 1	Action 2	Action 5
Approached	37*	27*	14003	5593	**	**	**
Partial completed	3		455	225	72	47	191
Completely filled out	25	6	1196	591	369	403	267
Total Responded	28 (67.6%)	6 (22.2%)	1651 (11.7%)	816 (14.6%)	441	450	458

Source: ECORYS evaluation team.

* approached by email with addresses that we received from the European Commission.

** Reached indirectly by organisations, numbers of young people and youth workers that are reached are unknown.

We reached two thirds of the National Agencies, more than 2,400 organisations, over 900 young people and 458 Youth workers with the different questionnaires. In Annex C the response rates on the several questionnaires are presented, including their distribution over the groups of countries.

Methodological limitations

- As the e-mail addresses of young people and youth workers were not available for the evaluators, we did not have any control on to who the questionnaire has been send. Nevertheless, as it was the only option to reach the final target group, it was decided to follow this approach as it will be better than not trying to reach the target group at all;
- No base-line measurement has been done at the start of the Programme. The outcomes of the questionnaire on effects will be based on the perceptions of how attitude and skills of the respondents were influenced and developed due to the Programme;
- Some beneficiaries have participated a few years ago, others recently. This might influence their answers (risk of faulty interpretations of differences).

2.3.4 The Country Studies

For the country studies we distinguish two groups:

- Five countries for in depth analysis: desk research, meetings with the National Authority and Agency, SALTO, interviews with applicants and focus groups with beneficiaries;
- Five countries for a 'light' analysis, directed to management aspects: interviews with National Authority and Agency and SALTO.

Selection of the countries for a in depth analysis

Based on the budget spent, geographical spread and status of the countries (Old MS, New MS and candidate MS), we selected the following countries for analysis.

Table 2.4 Selection of countries for further analysis

In depth analysis	'Light' further analysis
Germany	France
Spain	Greece
Ireland	Czech Republic
Turkey	Bulgaria
Poland	Denmark

The distribution of the interviews with beneficiaries over the different Actions is presented in Annex C. The number and names of the people who were interviewed can be found in Annex B.

2.3.5 The national reports

Parallel to this evaluation, the countries are asked to prepare national reports on the YOUTH programme in their country, covering all Actions. One of the tasks within the evaluation was to make a synthesis of those national reports. The synthesis of the reports was made according to the evaluation questions. The results emerging from this synthesis is also used to evaluate the YOUTH programme.

The difficulties encountered during the data collection are presented in Annex C.

3 Reconstruction of the intervention logic and indicators

One of the tasks for the inception phase was the reconstruction of the intervention logic. For this purpose we have studied the relevant documents related to the establishment of the Programme; Decision No 1031/2000/EC, relevant policy and evaluation documents. The other source was feedback gathered through interviews conducted with relevant members of staff involved in the setting up and implementation of the YOUTH programme from the European Commission. The aim was to reconstruct the intervention logic of the Programme, relating operational, specific and overall objectives to specific Actions.

3.1 Coherence and assumptions

As the Programme consists of a collection of earlier Programmes and Initiatives, that have been merged in one Programme, the objectives of the Programme seem to be constructed on top of the former Programmes that are included in the YOUTH programme as Actions (one overall aim has been formulated in the Decision², that covers all the Actions in the Programme). As a result of this set up of the Programme, the evaluators found that in the Guidelines for the national reports a large number of output and outcome measures were brought together, but with no clear connection with the objectives of the Programme or the Actions.

Indicators measuring the effectiveness were not formulated within the Programme. The evaluators formulated indicators ex post, enabling measuring the success of the programme. The indicators are presented in this chapter.

The objectives and the type of activities under the different Actions changed during the lifetime of the Programme in response to success rates of activities, in response to changing political contexts, and to annual priorities stated in the Workplans.

In this Chapter, we try to reconstruct how the activities and objectives of the Programme are interrelated. In the following figure, the general logic of a Programme is presented.

² DECISION No 1031/2000/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 13 April 2000 establishing the 'Youth' Community Action programme.

found relationships between objectives and actions, assumptions and result indicators presented in Annex A. The result indicators that the evaluators have identified are presented in this table as well.

3.2.3 The wider aim - impact indicators

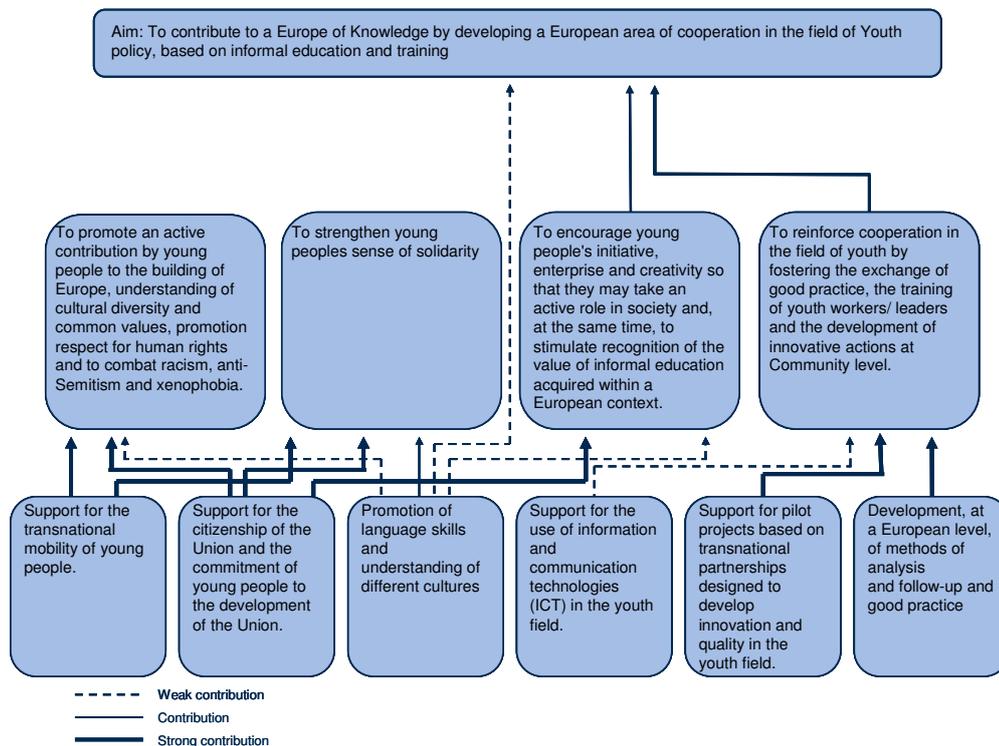
As said before, the Decision only indicates one set of objectives. Next to this, it indicates that the YOUTH programme should contribute “to a Europe of Knowledge by developing a European area of cooperation in the field of Youth policy, based on non-formal education and training”. This can be considered to be the overall aim of the programme. The assumption underlying the overall objective is that cooperation in the field of Youth policy related to informal training and cooperation will contribute to a Europe of Knowledge, fostering innovation and competitiveness (the Lisbon objectives).

Just as for the objectives, no (impact) indicators have been formulated by the Commission. The overall aim is, however, an overall aim for more programmes than the YOUTH programme alone. For this reason, the client indicated that formulating impact indicators for this wider aim will be outside the scope of this study.

3.3 The vertical relations

As shown in the tables in Annex A, the Actions relate to the objectives. However, it is much more important to see what the vertical logic is. In other words: how do the objectives and measures contribute to the Actions and in the end to the overall aim. As the Decision does not really reflect a hierarchy of objectives, we tried to reconstruct the contribution based on the aim, objectives and measures. Although theoretically not completely correct, it provides an insight on the coherence of the programme, as judged on by the evaluators.

Figure 3.2 Hierarchy of objectives and measures



Source: ECORYS, based on Decision No 1031/2000/EC.

As can be seen in the above figure, our assumption on the hierarchy shows that not in all cases the hierarchy is coherent. Some measures only contribute weakly to the specific objectives (e.g. ICT in the youth field). Concerning the contribution of the objectives to the aim of the programme, the evaluators conclude that out of four objectives, 2 objectives do not have a direct contribution to the overall objective. At the best, it can be said that those two objectives form a precondition for later developments in the field of the overall objective.

Coherence of the activities to the measures and operational objectives

Above we have analysed the hierarchy of objectives. As the Programme is implemented through concrete activities (projects), it is important to analyse the coherence of the activities to the measures and operational objectives.

The table below shows that the activities (projects) are not completely coherent with the measures. For instance, fostering the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the youth field is not targeted by the activities that are implemented under the Actions. At the same time, activities are employed that do not have a direct relationship with the measures, like projects which prioritize access to those young people most in need (this is rather a selection criteria than an activity).

Table 3.1 Assessment measures and their contributing activities

Measures	Contributing activities
A) Support for the transnational mobility of young people.	Intra-community exchanges for young people (under Action 1). Exchanges of young people with third countries (under Action 1). Intra-community EVS (under Action 2). EVS with third countries (under Action 2). Extension of projects in which young people actively participate in other MS (Action 3). Support to the organising of meetings of young promoters of Europe wide initiatives and the effective establishment of trans-national partnerships Increasing awareness of the opportunities provided by the EU to young people (Action 4).
B) Support for the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the youth field.	
C) Support for the development of cooperation networks at the European level permitting mutual exchange of experience and good practice.	Intra-community exchanges for young people (under Action 1). Intra-community EVS (under Action 2). Extension of projects in which young people actively participate in other MS (Action 3). Support to the organising of meetings of young promoters of Europe wide initiatives and the effective establishment of trans-national partnerships. Increasing awareness of the opportunities provided by the EU to young people (Action 4). Developing a common system of information and dissemination of good practice in field of knowledge/life long learning (Action 4). Activities to develop European modules fulfilling the requirements for transnational cooperation (Action 5).
D) Support for the citizenship of the Union and the commitment of young people to the development of the Union.	Intra-community exchanges for young people (under Action 1). Intra-community EVS (under Action 2). Extension of projects in which young people actively participate in other MS (Action 3). Project in which young people actively participate in innovative and creative schemes (Action 3). Support to the organising of meetings of young promoters of Europe wide initiatives and the effective establishment of trans-national partnerships Increasing awareness of the opportunities provided by the EU to young people (Action 4).
E) Promotion of language skills and understanding of different Cultures.	Intra-community exchanges for young people (under Action 1). Exchanges of young people with third countries (under Action 1). Intra-community EVS (under Action 2). EVS with third countries (under Action 2). Extension of projects in which young people actively participate in other MS (Action 3). Increasing awareness of the opportunities provided by the EU to young people (Action 4).

Measures	Contributing activities
F) Support for pilot projects based on transnational partnerships designed to develop innovation and quality in the youth field.	Project in which young people actively participate in innovative and creative schemes (Action 3). Support to the organising of meetings of young promoters of Europe wide initiatives and the effective establishment of trans-national partnerships Increasing awareness of the opportunities provided by the EU to young people (Action 4). Training of youth workers and other organisations involved in the Programme (Action 5). Experimental activities (innovation youth policy, new approaches) (Action 5). Activities to develop European modules fulfilling the requirements for transnational cooperation (Action 5). Exchange of good practice (Action 5). Support to conferences (Action 5).
G) Development, at a European level, of methods of analysis and follow-up of youth policies and their evolution (e.g. databases, key figures, mutual knowledge of 'systems') and of methods of disseminating good practice.	Experimental activities (innovation youth policy, new approaches) (Action 5). Activities to develop European modules fulfilling the requirements for transnational cooperation (Action 5). Exchange of good practice (Action 5). Support to conferences (Action 5). Activities to develop European modules fulfilling the requirements for transnational cooperation (Action 5).
Activities not directly related to the operational activities/measures	Support to young people after completing their EVS in launching and promoting activities of a social, cultural and economic nature and/or aim at their personal development. Promoting, at regional and local level interAction between those participating in the Programme and in Programmes dealing with vocational training and education.

Source: ECORYS, evaluation team.

3.4 Conclusions on the intervention logic

Incoherence of the intervention logic

The evaluators found the intervention logic of the programme at some parts incoherent. The programme has a wider aim and objectives, but does not have operational objectives which are linked to the measures of the programme. Next to measures, Actions are identified in the programme, which have a direct link with the objectives. However, the connection of the measures to the Actions is not very strong, as the activities employed under the Actions do not always have a direct relationship with the measures.

Indicators for the measurement of the effectiveness of the programme are lacking

For the YOUTH programme no indicators were formulated a priori to measure the effectiveness of the programme. For the purpose of this evaluation, the evaluators have developed ex post a set of indicators linked to the objectives of the programme, which they believe are a sound base for the measurement of the results of the programme.

4 Complementarity

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the complementarity of the programme in relation to EC, national and regional policy is assessed. This chapter presents the evaluators' judgement on the correspondence of the YOUTH programme to the White Paper and the Youth Pact (actually, this is relevance of the programme for the White Paper and Youth Pact). Furthermore, the complementarity as found by the evaluators of the YOUTH programme to Leonardo da Vinci and Socrates is described, as well as the judgement of the main stakeholders on this. Finally, the judgement of national stakeholders on the complementarity of the YOUTH programme to the national policy is described.

4.2 Correspondence of the YOUTH programme to the objectives of the White Paper and Youth Pact, evaluators judgement

4.2.1 White paper

The preparation of the White paper took place parallel to the preparation of the YOUTH programme. Although the YOUTH programme started earlier than the final publication of the White Paper, elements that are included in the White paper were already taken into account in drafting the YOUTH programme. In the following table the relevance and correspondence of YOUTH programme to the objectives of the White Paper is indicated.

Table 4.1 Degree of correspondence of the YOUTH programme to White Paper objectives, evaluators judgement

Common objectives adopted by the Council of Ministries	Degree of Correspondence of YOUTH programme to White Paper Objectives
Participation Objectives	
1. Creating the conditions for young people's participation in the life of their local community	Medium (A longer term impact of the YOUTH programme be increased participation of young people in their local community i.e. "Think Global - Act Local")
2. Creating the conditions for young peoples in the system of representative democracy	Low
3. Creating the conditions for young peoples to learn how to participate	High

Common objectives adopted by the Council of Ministries	Degree of Correspondence of YOUTH programme to White Paper Objectives
Information Objectives	
4. Facilitating young people's access to information,	High (in respect to 'European' information)
5. Ensuring the quality of information systems	High (supports Eurodesk and Youth portal)
6. Ensuring greater involvement of young people in the preparation and dissemination of information.	Medium
Voluntary Activities Objectives	
7. Developing voluntary activities in their diversity activities	High
8. Facilitating access to them for even more young people	Low – involving disadvantaged young people in voluntary service is likely to remain a significant challenge
9. Promoting their individual and collective benefit.	High at the level of individual benefit
10. Better recognising their individual and collective benefit.	High at the level of individual benefit
Greater Understanding and Knowledge of Youth Objectives	
11. Identifying and updating existing knowledge, firstly on priority themes specific to the youth field	High
12. Identifying themes of general interest to young people,	High
13. Ensuring the quality of the methods and tools,	High
14. Promotion of exchanges, dialogue and network creation on the other.	High

Source: ECORYS, evaluation team.

4.2.2 European Youth Pact

In the following table the correspondence of the YOUTH programme to the objectives of the Youth Pact is indicated.

Table 4.2 Degree of correspondence of YOUTH programme to Youth Pact objectives, evaluators judgement

Youth Pact Objectives	Degree of Contribution of YOUTH programme to Youth Pact Objectives
Employment, Integration and Social Advancement	
Specifically monitoring policies for the sustained integration of young people into the labour market, in the context of the mutual learning programme on employment	Low
Endeavouring to increase employment of young people;	Medium – (potential Contribution of YOUTH programme to personal, inter-personal and skills development)
Giving priority under national social inclusion policy to improving the situation of the most vulnerable young people, particularly those in poverty, and to initiatives to prevent educational failure	Low
Inviting employers and businesses to display social responsibility in the area of vocational integration of young people;	Medium (Potential exists to promote joint Actions in the area of vocational education and training.
Encouraging young people to develop entrepreneurship and promoting the emergence of young entrepreneur	Medium (Potential exists for 'Youth Initiatives' in the economic field)

Youth Pact Objectives	Degree of Contribution of YOUTH programme to Youth Pact Objectives
Education, Training and Mobility Objectives	
Ensuring that knowledge matches the needs of a knowledge-based economy and, to this end, encouraging the development of a common set of core skills; in this context, concentrating primarily on the problem of drop-outs from the school system;	Low
Expanding the scope for students to undertake a period of study in another Member State;	High
Encouraging mobility of young people by removing obstacles for trainees, volunteers and workers and for their families; for researchers, stepping up ongoing initiatives under the Marie Curie Programme;	High
Developing, between Member States, closer cooperation on transparency and comparability of occupational qualifications and recognition of non-formal education.	High
Reconciliation of Working Life and Family Life Objectives	
Promoting the reconciliation of working life and family life by sharing the responsibility between partners, particularly by expanding the child care network and developing innovative forms of work organisation;	Low
Considering child-friendly policies, in the light of discussions on the Commission Green Paper on demographic change	Low

Source: ECORYS, evaluation team.

4.3 Complementarity Leonardo da Vinci and Socrates

4.3.1 Evaluators judgment

As indicated in paragraph 1.1, there is a close relationship between the YOUTH programme and the Leonardo da Vinci and Socrates programme. Of those programmes, the YOUTH programme is the only programme with a focus on non-formal education.

The different programmes had one Action in common, which was to be financed under Action 4 of the YOUTH programme. During the evaluation, respondent commented that this Action 4 was not very successful in the YOUTH programme. One of the reasons that this Action was not very successful was the different nature of the programmes.

Leonardo

For Leonardo, the evaluators see some fields on which the programmes work and which are clearly complementary to each other:

- Under the Action Mobility, the Leonardo programme supports work placements for Vocational Education and Training (VET) students in other countries than their home country. The objective of this activity is not only to learn about working methods in other countries related to the field of their studies and to increase the job opportunities of the participants, but also to gain experience abroad, to improve their language and to become a European citizen. It can be concluded that this relates closely to EVS, which partly aims at the same objectives. The difference is that EVS is not directly related, but can be, to the formal education of the participant. In this respect, both measures are complementary to each other, but might have a certain overlap.
- Furthermore, the Leonardo programme stimulates exchange of experience between teachers, study coordinators and schools (Under the Action Mobility, Pilot projects and Transnational Networks), as well as it facilitates networks between institutes (schools). As the YOUTH programme does the same for Youth workers and Youth organisations, we can see a parallel development here. Both programmes aim at strengthening the capacity of professionals working with young people and at further internationalisation of the work and bringing it further to common standards. The programmes are complementary in the fact that they aim at different target groups.
- For the other Actions under Leonardo, we do not see many connections, as these are aiming at language competencies (directed to less used languages), and the building up of reference materials to compare VET international.

Socrates

Comenius Action

The Comenius Action is directed to the networking and exchange of experience between schools and teachers in order to increase their professionalism and to enhance policy exchange in the field of education and training. This Action is complementary to the Action 5 of the YOUTH programme, as it is about the same type of activities (strengthening of the capacities of people working with youth, the exchange of best practices and policy and the establishment of networks between professionals), but for a different target group (teachers).

Erasmus

Erasmus provides mobility opportunities for students and teaching staff in higher education institutions throughout Europe, supports multilateral cooperation projects between higher education institutions and supports cooperation between higher education institutions, private sector and civil society. The possible complementarity (and overlap) can be found in the first aspect. The mobility aspect corresponds, mainly, with the Action 2 of the YOUTH programme (EVS). The difference is that ERASMUS has a very specific target group (high educated) and is directed to formal learning. At the same time, this brings the risk of overlap: people participating in ERASMUS can participate in the YOUTH programme and vice versa. For the other objectives/activities of ERASMUS we do not see strong connections with the YOUTH programme.

Grundtvig

Grundtvig is directed to adult education. It aims at developing and disseminating modules / didactic materials / methodologies / validation tools for teachers, exchange of experience/practice/methods, individual Training Grants for Adult Education Staff and platforms for exchange of information, shaping policy and research; small networks to continue co-operation, disseminate results and promote new projects. The evaluators do not see much relation with the YOUTH programme, as the target groups and aims of the programme are completely different.

Lingua

Lingua is designed to promote language learning and to develop tools and materials for language, teaching and learning. Although learning languages is one of the objectives of the YOUTH programme, this element is more or less a side effect of the activities of the YOUTH programme. In this sense, the evaluators do not see a close relationship between Lingua and the YOUTH programme, although Lingua is also directed to non-formal learning.

Minerva

Minerva supports the exchange of ideas and use of ICT and/or ODL models on the organisation of learning/teaching and/or on the learning process. It does not have a direct linkage with Actions under the YOUTH programme.

4.3.2 Judgment National Agencies and National Authorities

Measured via online questionnaire, the opinion amongst the NA/NAUTH (globally and across country groupings) was fairly divided on this subject. The YOUTH programme bore no relationship (14 and 13 respectively) or added value (13 and 14 respectively) to the Leonardo Programme and Socrates Programme in their respective countries. It should be recognised, that some NA's also have responsibilities in respect of Leonardo and Socrates Programmes (such as in Poland), whilst others may have limited contact with these programmes.

However, there was almost total agreement (29 of 31) that YOUTH programme is contributing to the Lisbon Agenda.

During the interviews, a more consistent opinion arose. Here, the consensus was that the Programme is complementary to other EU interventions in the field of life long learning Programmes. An often mentioned reason is that the YOUTH programme targets different targets groups (especially the young people with fewer opportunities) and the profiles of the beneficiaries are different. Also, different networks and actors are involved. In respect of information distribution, cooperation between the programmes is possible (and sometimes applied), according to the interviewees. One states it as following:

"The programmes reach different target groups, but it would be good to present all the programmes more as one family. For instance, promote the other programmes at an activity of one programme (on individual/groups level) to increase the visibility."

Action 4 of the YOUTH programme actually aimed at the cross cutting themes of the different programmes. However, this Action is seen as a failure by most of the stakeholders. In their view, it was difficult to cooperate in practice. Hence, in our opinion the failure of Action 4 can be seen as an example of the Programmes existing separately.

Summary national reports

The national reports also give mixed views, which are also caused by the lack of naming all the possible different existing programmes. However, especially in the NMS, synergies between the YOUTH programme and other EU funds have been identified.

Opinion of evaluators

Based on our own analysis and the indications by the NA/NAUTHs, we can conclude that there is a partial complementarity between the programmes. This complementarity can mainly be found in the work placements and the exchange of experience of professionals working with young people, in this sense that the type of activity and objectives are broadly the same, but directed to different target groups and in a different context: non formal compared to the more structured context of vocational training. For several other elements no relationship between the programme is found. This could explain that in practice not much cooperation between the programmes is found, illustrated by the lack of interest for Action 4.

4.4 Complementarity at national level

4.4.1 Opinion National Agencies/National Authorities

Globally, the NA/NAUTHs reported a high degree to certain degree of overlap between the **objectives** of Actions 1, 2, 3 and 5 of the YOUTH programme with national policy/initiatives. Action 3 (Youth Initiatives) in particular was singled out as having a high degree of overlap with national policy / initiatives with 31 respondents subscribing to this view. Action 4 (Joint Actions) was an exception to this trend, with only 12 of respondents able to confirm some degree of overlap. Across the country groupings of the NA/NAUTH, it was the Old Member States (OMS) who saw the least overlap between the objectives of the Actions of the YOUTH programme and their national policy/initiatives.

At the same time, when asked about the existence of the same type of measures under national policy, 24 respondents answered that this is the case to some extent. Seven indicated that there are no comparable types of measures under national policy. The interviews with NA/NAUTHs showed that for example bi- and multilateral exchanges already were major aspects in national youth policy in some countries (for instance Spain and Germany). The YOUTH programme took over these exchanges, enabling more of these exchanges.

There was a generally tendency for NA to see greater degrees of overlap of objectives between the YOUTH programme and national policies / initiatives than their respective NAUTH. This could be explained by the fact that the National Agencies are more

immersed in the day-to-day ‘downstream’ realities of the YOUTH programme, whilst the National Authorities focus is on the higher level policy issues.

The complementarity and mutual influence was confirmed in the interviews that were conducted. Interviewees commented that it should be noted that in Europe, of course, national policies are implemented in different ways³. In some countries (for instance Czech Republic) the national agencies are involved in giving advice and taking part in debates about national policy. Vice versa, the Ministry has an impact on the implementation of the YOUTH programme. In this manner, positive and fruitful cooperation is reached.

In line with this, influence of EC policy (such as the White Paper) on national level is stated. It is mentioned that the Programme has produced inputs for further development of policies regarding youth at national level in several countries.

Next to this, it was mentioned that grants for the operating costs of the bodies were primarily used in several countries for the implementation, and setting up and/or organising of relevant bodies, whereas the grant of the Programme for ‘actions’ or ‘projects’ were used mostly for the actual realisation of the different Actions.

Summary of national reports

Most national reports have reported an existing complementarity between the YOUTH programme and national, regional or local programmes, especially at the local level. The international component of the YOUTH programme normally complements their national efforts and municipalities have greatly benefited from this.

Comments evaluators

The YOUTH programme seems to be largely complementary to national youth policy in terms of activities and is at the same time more or less related to the national objectives in youth policy. In this sense, in general, it can be concluded that the YOUTH programme reinforced both the activities employed to reach the objectives in relation to young people. At the same time, there seems to be an influence of EU youth policy on national policy, especially in setting the objectives (see also 7.4.5).

4.4.2 Opinion of the Youth workers

For **Action 5**, the youth workers indicated a high degree of overlap with national policy. At the same time, 70 percent of all Youth Worker respondents indicated that the YOUTH programme has ‘added value’ to their work in interventions (activities, projects, programmes, et cetera) with similar objectives. With the exception of Latin American Youth Workers (for which the percentage that indicates that the programme adds value is 50%), the response rates across the 5 groupings were consistent.

3 For example, in Denmark, the local authorities are very independent in executing national policy. In this way, the implementation of the Programme is relatively easy, although the different EU Programmes are the responsibility of different ministries.

Table 4.3 How does the YOUTH programme relate to other interventions with similar objectives in which Youth Workers are involved?

Response of Youthworkers	Total	% of responses	%
1 No relationship	31		7%
2 Adds value	293		70%
3 Duplicates	14		3%
4 Substitutes	10		2%
5 Contradicts	1		0%
6 Undermines	3		1%
7 Don't know/no answer	67		16%
Total responses: 419			

Source: ECORYS Youth workers questionnaire.

The total response rate for what might be considered as ‘negative’ complementarity (‘duplicates’, ‘substitutes’, ‘contradicts’, ‘undermines’) was 7 percent. Over half of these ‘negative complementarity’ responses came from the Old Member States and EFTA countries. According to the evaluators, this could be explained by the fact these countries are more likely to be involved in other international YOUTH programmes, some of them preceding the YOUTH programme. ‘Negative complementarity’ responses do not imply the ‘ineffectiveness’ of the YOUTH programme, but are more likely to have consequences for its efficiency, which involves the optimum use of financial and human resources.

The 7 percent of Youth Workers, who replied that the YOUTH programme bore ‘no relationship’ to other interventions with similar objectives which they are involved, could highlight the new, innovative or experimental nature of the YOUTH programme in relation to their work.

Of the 16 percent of Youth Workers were unable to respond to this question, the majority of these (66%) came from the New Member States, European partner countries and Latin America countries. This response rate could in some ways be explained by the lack of other similar programmes.

Complementarity training under Action 5

A significantly high proportion of youth workers stated that the training received under Action 5 had ‘added-value’ to other trainings which they had received (96%) though 55 percent of the youth workers responded that the trainings received under the YOUTH programme ‘to some extent’ duplicated other trainings which they received. Responses across the country groupings to this question were fairly consistent, although the duplication rate was a little bit lower in pre-accession countries and partner countries. This is also an indication of complementarity; the activities are partially complementary, seen the relatively high indications for overlap.

Comments evaluators

Based on the above, it can be concluded that in general the complementarity of the activities for the YOUTH Workers is not very high, as there is an overlap in training activities at national level. At the same time do the activities in general add value to their work. The transnational dimension has an added value as well.

Based on this it seems, again, that the activities employed have at least a certain extent of complementarity to activities employed under national policy.

4.5 Relevance of the Actions of the YOUTH programme with the needs of target groups

The NA/NAUTHs saw all actions, with exception of Action 4 which was excluded from the questionnaire, as highly relevant and complementary to the needs of young people and youth organisations with positive ratings (to some degree / to a greater degree) ranging from 97 percent - 100 percent. Action 5 (Support measures) received a 100 percent positive rating in respect of its relevance to youth workers. Across the country groupings, the response rates were generally consistent. At the same time, the Youth workers have indicated that in general the training activities have a rather high degree of overlap with other training activities and the relation to their needs could be strengthened (see also Chapter 6).

However, 28 percent of NA/NAUTH respondents indicated that the in relation to the target group of policy makers, the YOUTH programme was not at all complementary to their needs. The bulk of this 'negative' feedback is coming from the OMS.

For some countries, it is indicated in the country studies that the non-profit organisations (in Action 2) do not have an international focus yet. The remark is made by respondents from a NMS. The consequence is that during implementation it proves that there is not enough absorption capacity. This proves that in this specific case the needs are smaller than the budget allows. In this specific case, the grants have been reallocated, with permission from the EC. In general, some countries indicated some flexibility would be welcome, as to make the Programme even more suitable for the countries unique position (in youth policy development and implementation). This issue is also reflected in the recommendations made in some national reports.

4.6 Conclusions

The main findings of this Chapter are as follows:

- *The YOUTH programme is partially complementary to Leonardo da Vinci and Socrates;*
- *Activities of the YOUTH programme largely complementary to the activities of national policy but overlaps with the objectives;*
- *The programme seems to be in general in correspondence with the needs of the target groups, except for policy makers in the Old Member States.*

5 Effectiveness of the programme for young people

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter we present the effectiveness of the programme for the participating young people. The main basis for this chapter are the outcomes of the questionnaire used with the participating young people of Action 1 and 2, along with the information collected through the questionnaire with the organisations of Action 1 and 2, the questionnaire and interviews with the NA/NAUTHs, the questionnaire of the Youth workers, the country studies and the results of the national reports.

Before the results on effectiveness are presented, we describe the nature of the activities, organised according to the responding organisations and the background of the young respondents.

5.2 Nature activities, profile respondents and profile of the activity

5.2.1 Type of activities Action 1 and 2 in which respondents participated

Activities for Action 1 were very different from those for Action 2. Most activities headed under Action 1 were short term exchanges (e.g. discussions, art projects) with participants from several countries, during one or a few weeks - the potential participants being 15-25 years old. Action 2 activities were mostly transnational projects with a longer duration of often more than 6 months, with a lower number of participants, mostly aged between 18 and 25 years old who were doing voluntary service for a non-profit organisation in country other than their home country. Given the differences between the Actions, different results may be expected for young participants. For example, language improvement and employability may be expected to improve more as a consequence of participation in EVS activities than through participation in Action 1. To find out about different effects from the Actions, effects on outcomes for youth were measured roughly in the same way for both Actions.

5.2.2 Profile of young people who participated in study

Before we discuss the effects of the various objectives and intended results for young people (for Action 1 and 2), we provide a profile of the young respondents engaged through this study.

Education level

At the time of the activity, most respondents to the questionnaire of Action 1 were still in school. One fifth had quitted school or had completed his or her studies. Most respondents to the questionnaire of Action 2 had finished school when they started their exchange. The difference with Action 1 participants can be explained by their higher age. Table 5.1 shows the educational level, measured by the type of education participants were following at the time of the exchange, or by the type of education they were in before they finished school. As is clear from the table, the Youth Action programme is in practice primarily a programme for higher educated young people, although an explicit goal is to reach young people with fewer opportunities. Only very few participants have vocational training; most were at university, or had finished university when participating in the exchange.

Table 5.1 Educational level of young participants at the time of the activity

	Action 1 in %	Action 2 in %
Primary school	1	0
Secondary school	29	20
Lower vocational education	1	2
Intermediate vocational education	4	3
Higher vocational education	8	13
University	52	62
Other	5	-
Total (N)	100 (418)	100 (430)

Source: ECORYS Youth Questionnaire.

Frequency of participation and introduction into new countries

An interesting question is, whether the Youth in Action programme has reached young people who had not previously participated in European projects, or whether it has given young people the opportunity to get to know new countries. The results show that for half of the respondents in Action 1, the activity was their first participation in a European project. The other half had participated once (23%) or more (26%) times before. In Action 2, respondents were asked whether their experience with the EVS was their first participation in a YOUTH project. Most of them (85%) confirmed that this was the case. According to the Legal Base, Action 3 is meant to offer follow-up activities from Action 2⁴, based on the initiatives of participants. The interviews show that in many cases the activities under Action 3 are not undertaken as a follow-up from other international activities, but are isolated local initiatives. Some respondents would like to see even more interconnection between the Actions; below is an example of one of the respondents:

The Programme is effective but could be even more effective if the experiences of the young people are incorporated in their daily life, and are part of a person's course of life. The design and order of the different actions within the Programme is in keeping with this idea: Action 1 is a first experience, Action 2 asks more commitment and Action 3 is about constructing things themselves. But the Programme is not used in this sense.

4 The Community will support initiatives designed to help young volunteers to make the best possible use of the experience they have gained during their period of voluntary service and to encourage their active integration into society (DECISION No 1031/2000/EC), p. 8

Most respondents participated in an activity in a country other than their home country. For 73 percent of the young people in Action 1 and 60 percent of the respondents in Action 2, the exchange was their first introduction to the country where the activity or EVS took place.

How did they get involved?

For Action 1, local youth organisations and schools were the most important institutions bringing the respondents into contact with the YOUTH programme. For Action 2, the EVS-exchanges, the National Agencies and the Internet were important sources of information besides local and national youth organisations. Especially in Action 2, many respondents were actively involved themselves in setting up the exchange: 52 percent said they took the initiative for their exchange project, 35 percent said they did so together with a sending organisation. Most respondents in Action 1 were just participants in the activity; one fifth was one of the organisers and 17 percent a ‘youth leader’.

Table 5.2 Ways of becoming involved in the exchange (youth questionnaire)

	Action 1	Action 2
Local youth organization	47%	34%
National youth organization	13%	22%
International youth organization	12%	9%
Internet	8%	24%
School, student organization	19%	5%
National Agency of the YOUTH programme	7%	20%
Eurodesk	2%	3%
Municipality/other	20%	20%
Total (N)	100% (407)	100% (426)

Source: ECORYS Youth Questionnaire.

Communication

Virtually all respondents were aware that the activity or the exchange they participated in was financed by the European Union. Apparently, the communication from the European Commission was very clear on this point.

5.2.3 Profile of the activity

Young respondents gave an insight into the time and place of the activity they participated in. Two thirds of respondents of the youth questionnaire for Action 1 participated in the activity in 2006, most others in 2004-2005. In most cases, the activity lasted 1 (56%) or 2 (34%) weeks. In one third of the cases, the activity took place in the home country of the respondents; 59 percent of the activities took place in programme countries and 8 percent in partner countries (see paragraph 2.3.3 for a categorisation of countries).

Among the respondents in Action 2, a larger number participated in the activity earlier than 2006, in comparison with ex-participants of Action 1. Half of the respondents of Action 2 carried out their EVS in 2006, a quarter in 2004-2005 and a fifth in 2002-2003. Only a few respondents did the exchange in 2000-2001. Most exchanges lasted

6-12 months; in 13 percent of the cases the duration of the exchange was 3-6 months. Only in a very small number of cases, was the duration any longer or shorter. Three quarters of respondents did their EVS in one of the Old Member States of the European Union and/or an EFTA country. Second in place were New Member States (11%). 13 Percent volunteered in a partner country within Europe / the Mediterranean or within Latin America. Only a few respondents volunteered in pre-accession countries. According to the organisations, the main part of the EVS activities involved one to two young people (in 63% of the cases). In 17 percent of the cases 3-5 people participated and in 21 percent more than 5 persons were involved.

Almost all participants in Action 1 reported that young people from other countries participated in their project with them; predominantly young people from programme countries. The organisations report that in more than half of the cases, between 15-40 people were involved in the activities, while in a small quarter of the cases 40 to 60 young people participated.

In Action 2, almost a quarter said there were no other young EVS participants in their host organisation at the time they were completing their EVS. The rest did their EVS together with other young people from their own and/or other countries.

Table 5.3 Who participated in the activity, besides you? (in %)

	Action 1	Action 2
Young people from my country	74	23
Young people from other Programme countries	86	66
Young people from partner countries	27	17
Don't know/No other people	1	24
Total N	371	405

Source: ECORYS Youth Questionnaire.

Themes addressed by the projects

Respondents were asked which themes were addressed as part of their project or exchange. They could mention one or more themes. In Action 1, most activities were in the domain of art and culture, European awareness, social exclusion, anti-racism, equal opportunities, youth leisure and youth information or the environment. In the EVS exchanges (Action 2), the focus was more on social exclusion and youth leisure and less on art and culture, European awareness and anti-racism.

Table 5.4 Subjects addressed as part of the project (youth questionnaire, in %)

	Action 1	Action 2
Art and culture	50	26
European awareness	36	21
Antiracism/xenophobia	25	15
Youth leisure	25	39
Equal opportunities	21	24
Youth information	21	23
Social exclusion	20	32
Environment	19	21

	Action 1	Action 2
Media and communications	15	14
Other	15	17
Youth sports	13	10
Heritage protection	9	6
Rural development	8	10
Urban development	6	5
Anti-drugs/substance abuse	6	10
Health	4	11
Don't know	3	1
Measures against delinquency	1	2
Total N	403	425

Source: ECORYS Youth Questionnaire.

The distribution over the themes indicated by the organisations was about the same as that indicated by the young people.

Objectives of the activities

The YOUTH programme has many objectives, some related to effects on young people, others to effects on youth workers or the political field. Respondents to the organisations questionnaire were asked which of the pre-categorised seven objectives they had tried to achieve through their activities for the YOUTH programme (see table 5.5).

Table 5.5 Programme objectives aimed at by the activities

Percentage 'to some extent or a large extent'	Action 1	Action 2
To develop understanding of the cultural diversity of Europe and its fundamental common values.	94%	88%
To encourage young people's initiative, enterprise and creativity so that they make taken an active role in society.	87%	92%
To strengthen young people's sense of solidarity.	86%	88%
To help young people acquire the skills and competencies they need tot engage with society as active citizens.	85%	92%
To stimulate recognition of the value of non-formal education acquired within a European context.	73%	74%
To reinforce cooperation in the field of youth by fostering the exchange of good practice, the training of youth workers/leaders and the development of innovative actions at Community level.	72%	73%
To promote respect for human rights and to combat racism, anti-semitism and xenophobia.	70%	66%
Other.	44%	40%
Total N	1.189	601

Source: ECORYS Organisations questionnaire.

Almost all of these respondents (85% or more) said their project was aimed at different programme objectives related to the intended effects on young people in the field of active citizenship, solidarity and understanding of European common values. Most organisations (about three quarters) also claimed to have stimulated the recognition of the value of non-formal education through their projects and reinforced cooperation in the

youth field. About two third said they had tried to achieve the promotion of greater respect for human rights and combating racism.

A quote from a focus group:

The focus group participants of a youth initiative organization thought that it is extremely difficult to answer whether attitudes of young people change towards other (ethnic) groups, especially because of the fact that there are still a lot of extremist right-wing groups present in the district of the organization. Events they organized however, gave inhabitants from the district the opportunity to learn to know immigrants. At that event cultural organizations and foreigners were able to present themselves. This was meant to create a greater culture of the district.

Differences between the Actions in contributing towards the general objectives of the programme are small, which can probably be explained by the abstract character of the aims. In practice, effects can be expected to vary according to intensity and duration of the activities. These aspects on average differ greatly between action 1 and action 2.

5.3 Effectiveness of the programme in general terms

Opinion of NA/NAUTHs

The NAs and NAUTHs were asked their opinion in terms of general effectiveness of the YOUTH programme, and responded as follows:

Table 5.6 Perception on the effectiveness of the programme as an whole of the NA/NAUTHs

Successful in terms of Effectiveness	
Not successful at all	0
Not successful	1
Neutral	4
Successful	19
Highly successful	6
Don't know / no answer	0

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTHs.

There were no major differences in the response rates across the country groupings and from the perspective of successfulness, the YOUTH programme as a whole, is considered to be effective.

The extent of the effectiveness of the Programme in achieving its intended objectives for young people and for people with fewer opportunities was seen by NA/NAUTH as follows:

Table 5.7 Extent of achievement objectives for Young people according to NA/NAUTHs

Intended objectives in relation to	To a great extent	To some extent	Total
Young people	16	14	N=30
Young people with fewer opportunities	11	19	N=30

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTHs.

During the interviews with the NA/NAUTHs, the picture of the questionnaires was confirmed. It was indicated the Programme was effective in targeting young people and that Actions resulted in development of competencies.

It is remarkable however, that with regard to effects across the countries a range of different terms are used, such as: personal, soft/hard, and social competencies, life and intercultural skills, or professional competencies (especially through EVS).

In the opinion of the evaluators, the multitude of terms is an indication that the measurement of/judgment on effectiveness, has been subject to multiple interpretations (in contrast with unified or objective description)⁵. Making statements about the precise nature of the kind and magnitude of effectiveness is therefore somewhat difficult, although all-round, positive reports for the effectiveness of impacts on young people are given.

In relation to the correspondence of the programme to the needs of the young people, the NA/NAUTH gave an overwhelming positive picture (source: questionnaire). To the question asking the extent to which Actions 1, 2, 3 and 5 meet the needs of young people, all except one (on Action 5) answered positive (to some extent and to a great extent). That Action 5 does not directly relate to the needs of young people is logical, as this Action is mainly directed at professionals working with young people and not so much to young people themselves.

Table 5.8 Correspondence of the Actions to the needs

	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all
Action 1	28	4	
Action 2	25	7	
Action 3	24	8	
Action 5	7	24	1

Source: ECORYS NA/NAUTH questionnaire.

Opinion organisations

In general, organisations are very positive about the results of their projects. More than half of the respondents (56%) of Action 1 and Action 2 say that the project met most of the initial objectives; 40 percent (action 1) and 31 percent (action 2) even think that the project met *all* of the initial objectives.

One should keep in mind that the specific initial objectives of the organisations and the ones related to the programme, were not researched. In the following paragraph the general positive picture is tested against the opinion of the young people on the effectiveness.

Organisations were asked to what degree their activities have had *general effects* on young people as intended by the programme, such as ‘developing understanding of the cultural diversity of Europe’ and ‘encouraging young people’s initiative’. Not

⁵ The decision for Key competencies for life long learning was established in December 2006.

surprisingly (given the fact that most projects say they reached some or most of their objectives), the organisations are very optimistic (Table 5.9). They think their participants have developed understanding of the cultural diversity of Europe, have a strengthened sense of solidarity and that the project has encouraged their initiative, enterprise and creativity. They are however least certain about whether the project has helped to promote respect for human rights and combat racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia. This is in correspondence with the fact that these are themes that are less addressed by the activities (see table 5.5). The by the organisations indicated impact on young people is further investigated under young people themselves, of which the results are presented in the next paragraph.

Table 5.9 Impact on young people: strongly agree or agree

	Action 1	Action 2
The project has developed understanding of the cultural diversity of Europe and its fundamental common values	96%	89%
The project has strengthened young people's sense of solidarity	89%	85%
The project has encouraged young people's initiative, enterprise and creativity	87%	91%
The project had helped to promote respect for human rights	74%	66%
The project has helped to combat racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia	58%	62%
	n = 1272	n = 642

Source: ECORYS questionnaire organisations.

A better insight into the effects of the programme on young people may be derived from the specific questions in the questionnaire for organisations that relate to impacts on employability and active citizenship of ex-participants. They are described in paragraph 5.4.

Opinion Youth workers

We also asked Youth workers their opinions with regards to achieving objectives for young people; 81 percent of youth workers who filled out the questionnaire responded that the YOUTH programme had achieved its objectives in respect of young people 'to a great extent' and 15 percent stated 'to some extent'. These figures were consistent across the country groupings. The combined figure of 96 percent is a very high rating. Only one percent of youth workers were unable to respond this question.

5.4 Effectiveness objectives on young people

A general evaluation question to measure the programmes' effectiveness was 'To what extent was the YOUTH programme successful in attaining the objectives set and achieving the intended results for young people'. The objectives and intended results can be divided in several sub questions, which we will discuss now.

5.4.1 Active citizenship competencies

Evaluation question to be answered

To what extent the YOUTH programme has contributed to increased active citizenship of young people?

Opinion of young people (participants) on effectiveness citizenship competencies

Active citizenship can be considered to have improved when young people have acquired citizenship competencies or when they have become more active citizens in practice. Two types of indicators were used to answer this question:

- Young participants have acquired active citizenship competencies;
- Young participants have become more involved in activities, e.g. through participation in lobby groups, organisation of other (EU) activities.

To measure changes in *citizenship competencies*, young respondents (participants in Action 1 and 2) had to react to a number of propositions, demonstrating qualities that they might have acquired through the project. The different propositions or items related to four dimensions of citizenship: attitudes, skills, knowledge and reflection (adapted from Ten Dam, 2003; Steketee and Mak, 2005). The skills were subdivided into instrumental, communication, social, emotional and language. The different 'skills' were illustrated by short explanations. For example, emotional skills were explained as 'e.g. having more self-confidence, self-esteem and self-responsibility; the project changed the view I had about myself'. The respondents could agree or disagree as to whether they had developed citizenship competencies measured by the items related to the four dimensions. A third possible answer was 'don't know (yet)'. The number of respondents differed somewhat between items (see table).

Overall, respondents were very positive about the effects of their participation in the YOUTH programme on citizenship competencies (Table 5.10). Eighty to ninety percent reported positive effects on attitudes related to citizenship; eight in ten thought they had gained insight into the effects of their own actions (reflection). Respondents were also very positive with regards to the impacts on their communication and social skills and their knowledge/understanding of other cultures. Three quarters felt they had developed instrumental skills and gained insight into their own culture. Around the same amount reported improved language skills and better emotional skills. On the whole, differences between the two Actions are small, which might be related to the fact that the impacts measured are relatively general or abstract. Nevertheless, there are differences between the Actions. For example, respondents who volunteered for EVS (Action 2) report bigger impacts on emotional skills, such as having self-esteem and self-confidence. This is not hard to explain. Working as a volunteer in another country for several months can be expected to have a larger effect on these skills, than participating in a one-week discussion activity or making a film on racism with a group of other young people during two weeks. Somewhat surprisingly, ex-participants from Action 1 reported a greater impact on 'understanding of European values like democracy'. This could be explained by the fact that more of the activities in Action 1 were specifically aimed at this goal (see Table 5.10).

Table 5.10 Citizenship competencies: effects on young people

Dimension	Indicators	% that agrees Action 1	% that agrees Action 2
Attitudes	More openness to exchange projects/volunteering	84	90
	More positive attitudes towards other ethnic or religious groups :		
	• More tolerant towards people from another country	87	80
	• More positively about other ethnic and religious groups	90	88
Skills	Instrumental skills	78	74
	Communication skills	94	92
	Social skills	89	91
	Emotional skills	72	85
Language skills	Action 1:		
	• Speak more fluently, writing better	77	
	• Learned some other words in another language	86	
	Action 2: command of one/more languages significantly improved		69
Knowledge	Better understanding of ones own culture	72	76
	Better understanding of European values like democracy	72	57
	Better understanding of other cultures:		
	• Better understanding of the cultural diversity of Europe	91	91
• Increase knowledge on people with other cultural backgrounds, about their values and ways of behaving	97	95	
Reflection	More insight in the effect of one's Actions	80	83
Total N		381-394*	410-414*

Source: ECORYS Youth questionnaire.

* Not all respondents have answered all questions, the responds rate varied between 381 and 394 for Action 1 and 410 and 414 for Action 2

The results regarding language skills need some further clarification. These were measured differently in the two questionnaires. For Action 2, greater impact on language skills can be expected. This is why only a 'significant' improvement of the command of one or more languages was considered to be an effect for ex-participants in Action 2. The results regarding language improvement for Action 2 are not bad. Of the respondents to the EVS-questionnaire, 69 percent said that their command of one or more languages spoken in the host country had improved significantly, 21 percent reported that this was 'somewhat' the case.

Since results were so uniform regarding citizenship competencies, no further analyses were done regarding different background variables such as educational level and country category of respondents.

Opinion organisations on effectiveness citizenship competencies

The organisations are very optimistic with regards to the acquired citizenship competencies (asked in almost the same way as in the youth questionnaires, see Table 5.11). The answers do not differ greatly from those in the youth questionnaire, although,

organisations are more positive than young people. For example, organisations are more optimistic about effects of the Actions on language and instrumental skills.

Table 5.11 Citizenship competencies: effects on young people

Dimension	Indicators	% that agrees	
		Action 1	Action 2
Attitudes	More tolerance towards people from another country	96	95
	More positive attitudes towards other ethnic or religious groups	95	92
Skills	Instrumental skills	82	90
	Communication skills	95	94
	Social skills	93	95
	Emotional skills	87	89
	Language skills	90	93
Knowledge	Better understanding of ones own culture	92	85
	Better understanding of European values like democracy	75	64
	More knowledge of people with other cultural backgrounds	96	94
Total N		1.266	635

Source: ECORYS questionnaire for organisations.

National reports

Although the criteria that have been assessed in the national reports differ slightly from the above, in general the national reports find that the programme has had a clear impact on knowledge, skills and attitudes to foster citizenship. The most mentioned skills on which an impact is found are individual skills (self-esteem, confidence, motivation, capacity to solve problems), social skills (improvement of communication skills, capacity to dialogue, improvement of knowledge of foreign languages, tolerance, reduction of xenophobia) and intercultural skills.

Opinion of evaluators

In general, the YOUTH programme is effective in fostering citizenship competencies in terms of attitudes (tolerance), skills and knowledge. The effect on the better understanding of European values seems to be the least, but is still considerable.

5.4.2 Active citizenship in practice

The programme also had effects on *citizenship in practice*, active participation and initiatives in (inter)national youth organisations and/or other organisations after the project. These aspects are not only relevant to measure ‘active citizenship of young people’ (evaluation question). They are also mentioned in the programme as result of indicators for two ‘specific objectives’ (see the following text box and chapter 3).

Specific objectives of the YOUTH programme and result indicators related to the concept of active citizenship in practice

Specific objective 2: 'To strengthen their sense of solidarity'

Result indicator objective 2:

- Participation of (young people) in NGOs, lobby groups, other community/society related institutions (after the project).

Specific objective 3: 'To encourage young people's initiative, enterprise and creativity so that they may take an active role in society and, at the same time, to stimulate recognition of the value of non-formal education acquired within a European context'.

Result indicators objective 3:

- Participation (young people) in NGOs, lobby groups, other community/society related institutions (after the project).
- Number of participants that started new initiatives after completion of the project.
- Number of participants involved in the set up of new transnational initiatives after completion of the project.

Opinion young people (participants) on effectiveness active citizenship in practice

About 60 percent of the respondents who either participated in or organised an international youth event, were active in an international youth organisation or participated otherwise in political and/or youth activities internationally following completion of the project (Table 5.12). In most cases, young people only *participated* in an activity or organisation; in a smaller number of cases (26% for Action 1, 16% for Action 2) the respondents were the (co-) organisers. As regards active participation in local or national activities, results are roughly the same: 52 (Action 1) to 70 (Action 2) percent of the respondents participated in an activity or organisation after their participation in the YOUTH programme, as a participant and/or organiser. An interesting result is that having participated in Action 1, young people were more active as organiser, participant or lobbyist, locally or nationally, than young people who volunteered through the EVS. This difference might be caused by the fact that the activities within Action 1 are more often group activities at a local level and more often involve informal groups. A large majority of all respondents state that in general, they have become more active in youth, societal or political organisations as a consequence of their participation in the YOUTH programme, at least to some extent (Table 5.12).

Table 5.12 Citizenship in practice: effects on young people

Indicators	Items	Action 1 (% yes)	Action 2 (% yes)
Participation in international/European activities after the exchange	Organized international (youth) event or post-EVS-activity	26	16
	Participated in an international (youth) activity, e.g. conference, workshop	38	35
	Active in an international (youth) organization, e.g. lobby group, political organization	12	12
	Active in other international/European activities	13	15
	No participation in any of the above mentioned activities	39	45

Indicators	Items	Action 1 (% yes)	Action 2 (% yes)
Participation in local/national activities after the exchange	Organized local/national event	33	19
	Participated in local/national (youth) activity, e.g. conference, workshop	42	28
	Active in a local/national (youth) lobby group or political organization	19	10
	Active in other local/national activities	5	9
	No participation in any of the above mentioned activities	30	48
In general more active in civil society	Has participation in the YOUTH programme in general made you more active in youth, societal or political organizations?	43 yes 44 to some extent	33 yes 47 to some extent
Total N		373-378	405-408

Source: ECORYS Questionnaires for youth.

* Not all respondents have answered all questions, the responds rate varied between 381 and 394 for Action 1.

Higher educated respondents (higher vocational training or university) and respondents who were co-organisers of their project in Action 1, stayed more active after completion of the project, in comparison with others. Young people with fewer opportunities stayed more active nationally, as well as young people from pre-accession countries; the latter compared to participants from Old Member States⁶. For Action 2, only young people from old and New Member States could be compared, as regards ‘country category’. Here, young people from New Member States remained more active after completion of the project than young people from Old Member States. Higher educated ex-participants from Action 2 only stayed more active in *international* projects.

A relevant question is whether the participation of young people may be attributed to the respondents’ former participation in the YOUTH programme. Roughly half of the respondents who were active after participation (54% for both Actions) attributed their continued *international* participation as an active citizen to their participation in the YOUTH programme. The other half thought they would have become active without the influence of the programme. As regards *local or national* activities, a large minority of the respondents (36% for Action 1, 41% for Action 2) who were active after participation think their participation in post-YOUTH activities is a result of having participated in the programme. The contribution of the programme to the aspect of Active citizenship in practice is presented in the following table.

⁶ The number of youth from European/Mediterranean partner countries and Latin American partner countries was too small to involve in the comparison. There were no significant differences with New Member States.

Table 5.13 Active citizenship in practice; effects of the programme (in %)

	Action 1	Action 2
International activities		
Did not become active internationally	39	45
Became active internationally, but not as a result of the programme	28	25
Became active internationally, as a result of the programme	33	30
Total	100	100
Local/national activities		
Did not become active locally/nationally	30	48
Became active locally/nationally, but not as a result of the programme	45	31
Became active locally/nationally, as a result of the programme	25	21
Total	100	100

Source: ECORYS Youth questionnaires.

This means that, on the whole, around a third of the young ex-participants report a genuine effect of the programme on active citizenship in practice *internationally* and a fifth to a quarter report an effect at the local or *national* level (Table 5.13). Seen in the light of an average participation rate of 5 percent, the programme might be considered successful. Yet should be noted that young people who are prepared to participate in the programme are already a selection of the more active youth.

Opinion of organisations on effectiveness active citizenship

As regards active citizenship in practice, the organisations are much more optimistic about the results than the young people. Most respondents from organisations felt that their ex-participants had become more active citizens than they were before the project. Three quarters of the respondents (Action 1) say that some or many ex-participants developed European initiatives after having participated in the project, or became involved in political or other organisations. Only 5 percent do not think this to be the case, the rest do not know. For Action 2, results are roughly the same. There the question was whether ex-participants realised voluntary activity initiatives or became involved in youth, civil society or political organisations after having participated in the project. Young people report less involvement: 55 (Action 2) to 61 (Action 1) percent reported involvement in international activities (Table 5.13).

A majority of the organisations (85% Action 1; 75% Action 2) believe that after the ending of the project, many or some ex-participants became more active in *their own country*. Only a very low percentage does not believe this to be the case. The rest say they do not know. Organisations are more optimistic than young people.

On the whole, respondents of the questionnaire for organisations, like young people themselves, are very positive regarding active citizenship.

Opinion of the youth workers on the effectiveness for active citizenship

In line with the organisations, the youth workers were convinced that the programme results in increased active citizenship. The 87 percent that indicated this contribution were generally distributed evenly across the country groupings, with the exception of youth

workers in New Member States, who appeared to be less sure that the programme was ‘to a great extent’ effective in relation to ‘fostering active citizenship’. This response is understandable in the sense that ‘civil society’ (as understood in the Old Member States) is still developing in these New Member States.

Opinion of National Agencies/Authorities

The National Agencies/Authorities were also asked to indicate whether they considered the programme effective in fostering active citizenship within young people. 35 Percent were very optimistic about this, thinking that the programme contributes to a great extent, while 55 percent considered the contribution to be to some extent.

In the summary of the national reports, the focus was not on active citizenship so much, but more on the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are believed to be necessary, or are at the base of active citizenship. Overall, the different country groupings judge the impact of the Programme on these skills as positive, although different countries emphasised different skills. Further specific information was not available.

Also the interviews showed that almost all National Agencies and Authorities interviewed hold the opinion that the programme (action 1-3) contributed to active citizenship of young people. Involvement in those actions go together with commitment to society (in their home/and or foreign country). However, some interviewees indicated that the role of the programme is difficult to measure. They state that it could also work the other way around: young people with a high commitment to society are willing to participate in the programme. Of course, the programme is helpful to give these people the opportunity to become active.

At the same time, the country studies show that some youth initiatives under Action 3 are set up by organisations for youth, instead of being set up by young people. Hence, this Action is not always used to give young people the opportunity to initiate something themselves. On the other hand, if activities are set up by young people themselves, the impression is that young people are learning a great deal through designing their own projects and their application for funding:

The applicants discovered new responsibilities, especially in relation to their own habitat. Youth-initiatives proved to be a vehicle for young people to improve their own life-circumstances.

National reports

Within the national reports the active citizenship aspect is not assessed, with the exception of Finland, where an impact on participation in public activities is indicated.

Opinion of the evaluators

The effectiveness of the programme on increasing active citizenship of participants in practice is somewhat less promising than the effectiveness on enhancing competencies that relate to active citizenship. Although a significant number of young people remained or became active in local or international organisations after the completion of their activity, only a minority became active as a direct consequence of the programme. Nevertheless, compared to the overall participation rate of young people, this may be considered as a rather good result. At the same time, it could be true that the programme

provides also an opportunity for young people that are already active to undertake an activity.

5.4.3 Employability and new professional orientations

Evaluation questions to be answered:

To what extent has the Programme provided former participants with an orientation towards new professional or educational possibilities?

To what extent has the Programme increased their employability on the job market?

One of the goals of the YOUTH programme was to enhance young people's employability and to inspire them to new orientations in their professional and educational career. The hypothesis behind this is that non-formal learning activities, like formal learning, may lead to new directions in career paths and/or help young people to develop qualities needed for a successful professional life.

Opinion of young people on effectiveness employability

Effects of the programme on employability and new orientations in professional or educational opportunities were measured by 7 statements, representing general influences on employability and orientations (5 items) and influences on *international* professional orientations and job chances (2 items). Respondents could answer 'agree', 'disagree' or 'don't know (yet)'.

Table 5.14 Employability: effects on young people

Dimension	Items The project/EVS experience	% that agrees Action 1	% that agrees Action 2
Influence on professional or educational career	Changed or influenced my job and future plans	49	76
	Influenced my educational path and/or choices	49	61
	Influenced my professional career	37	62
	Has given me better job opportunities	34	56
	In general has been a valuable experience in the view of (future) working life	83	91
Influence on international job opportunities / orientation	Has made it easier for me to find work abroad (if I wished)	31	49
	Influenced my intention to work (temporarily) in another country (again) in the future	61	81
Total N		372	405

Source: ECORYS youth questionnaires.

Ex-participants of Action 1 are less confident about the influence of the programme on their employability in comparison with ex-participants of Action 2, which is understandable taking into account the differences between Action 1 (activity of a few weeks) and Action 2 (volunteering alone or with several others in a foreign organisation for several months). Still, about half of the ex-participants of Action 1 say their experience in the YOUTH programme has influenced their future professional and educational plans. Eight out of ten think their participation has been a valuable experience

in the view of their (future) working life. Moreover, more than half of the respondents within Action 1 have become more interested in working abroad. Only one third think their participation in the programme has improved their chances to work abroad and has given them better job opportunities.

Especially ex-EVS young people were very positive about the effects of the programme on professional orientations and opportunities (Table 5.14). Three in every four state that their participation in the programme has influenced their job and future plans, more than half agree that their volunteering experience has influenced their professional career, their educational path and/or choices or has increased their job opportunities. No less than eight in ten say their participation in the EVS-programme has influenced their intention to work in another country (again). About half of the respondents think their EVS-experience has made it easier to find work abroad.

For ex-participants in Action 1 coming from pre-accession countries, effects on their professional and educational orientation and/or professional career are larger than for young people from Old Member States. Young people from New Member States are in between. Furthermore, young people with fewer opportunities report more changes in orientations or influences on their professional career than others. Apparently participation in the programme has larger impacts for them. Educational levels of the ex-participants do not influence the outcomes. Young people from pre-accession countries say more often than young people from Old Member States that their participation has made it easier for them to work abroad. Youngsters from New Member States are in between. Among respondents from Action 2, young people from New Member States are more positive than from Old Member States about the positive effect of their participation on the chance to find work abroad. Young people from Old Member States doubt the effect more. The intention to work abroad was not related to background variables.

Opinion of organisations on effectiveness employability

According to 80 percent (Action 1) and 91 percent (Action 2) of the respondents of the questionnaire for organisations, young ex-participants have developed qualities that have enhanced their employability to some or to a great extent. Whether effects are in fact so strong can be doubted. For one thing, young people themselves are less optimistic about effects of the programme on their employability.

Opinion of National Agencies and National Authorities on effectiveness on employability

The National Agencies and National Authorities subscribe these positive notions. They feel convinced that employability (and to a lesser degree new professional orientations) are effected in a positive manner. However, some of them make the observation that it is difficult to quantify the true effects, as it is hard to measure. In that manner, accreditation of participation is considered to be a good development. By doing so, more use can be made of the experiences of the young people (provided the employers know of the programme, and can judge the value of the certificate).

Summary national report

As already mentioned in 5.3.2, the national reports only focussed on underlying skills and attitudes, and not on employability (or active citizenship). However, in general the national reports were positive about the experience the participants acquired through the

programme (mainly EVS), stating that official recognition of their experience would greatly enhance the participants' chances on the job market.

Country studies

Within the country studies, the positive contribution of EVS to the employability of young people is particularly indicated. It is stated that young people learn to cooperate with other people and are more independent. Furthermore participants gained a higher work ethic than contemporaries.

Opinion of evaluators

Taking into account the nature of the Actions, it is not remarkable that the effectiveness of the programme on employability is higher for Action 2 than for Action 1. Participation in EVS has influence on the professional sphere, especially in terms of job orientation, but also in terms of educational choices. Also, there is a considerable influence on the intention of EVS participants to work in another country. For Action 1 these aspects are less visible, but the participants do consider their participation as a valuable experience in the view of working life.

It must be noted that the conclusions are mainly based on the self reports and impressions of stakeholders. In order to be able to measure the real effects on employability and education choices, the participants should be monitored over a longer period of time.

5.4.4 Solidarity

One of the specific objectives of the YOUTH programme, specifically for EVS, is to strengthen young participants' sense of solidarity. A result indicator is 'a strengthened sense of solidarity' and (increased) 'participation of (young people) in ngo's, lobby groups, other community/society related institutions'. The latter is related to the concept of 'citizenship in practice', and was already elaborated on above. The effect of the programme on young people's 'sense of solidarity' is described below.

Opinion of Young people on effectiveness on solidarity

To measure whether the programme has strengthened the 'sense of solidarity' of ex-participants of Action 2, two questions were asked. The results were as follows. About three in four say they now feel more responsible for helping people in other countries. These outcomes show that the programme has reached its goal in this respect. Almost all ex-participants of Action 2 (95%) agree that their participation in an EVS project has 'made (them) get a stronger feeling of solidarity', at least to some extent (44%).

Summary national reports

The social skill solidarity was mentioned as an impact of the programme.

Opinion of evaluators

The self reports of the young people show that they have a higher sense of solidarity through their participation of the programme. To what extent this change results in concrete actions is not further investigated. It seems that the effect of the programme is mainly found in a changed feeling.

5.4.5 Orientation towards Europe

A possible side effect of the project not mentioned explicitly as an objective of the programme, is a more positive orientation towards Europe. Participation in the YOUTH programme has increased the sense of belonging to Europe for a number of participants. Before their participation, about 70 percent considered him- or herself a European citizen, after the project 85 to 90 percent did. Three quarters of the respondents in Action 1 and 60 percent in Action 2 feel more positive about Europe, now that they have participated in the programme. For Action 1, there are no differences related to background variables like country category. For Action 2, more young people from New Member States report a positive effect on their feeling about Europe than young people from Old Member States.

A representative of an organisation under Action 1 (in depth country case) makes the following remark:

[An organisation that participated under Action 1] stated that it is important to put the exchange experience in perspective and its 'impact' particularly on "Europeanness" should not be overstated. For the participants, it is mainly a 'one-off' personal experience and their only encounter with international youth work. The effectiveness / impact can only be sustained through further contact with the (different Actions) the YOUTH Programme.

Summary national reports

From the national reports summary, it became clear that the impact on improving the image, raising awareness and increasing participation in building Europe produced a heterogenous image across countries, and there was no unanimous response that this objective has been achieved. However, within the New Member States, the results tend to be more positive, although it is stated that the impact on this issue has been lower than the impact on knowledge and skills.

Opinion of evaluator

It seems that the feeling of being a European citizen was already relatively high among participants before the start of the activity, and there is an indication that this feeling was strengthened through participation in the YOUTH programme. The same counts for the attitude towards Europe, for which there is some indication that this has become more positive due to participation in the programme. This is also supported by the international friendships that are established.

Outcomes focus group on Youth exchanges (Turkey)

Some participants within this focus group came in to contact with the programme through meetings and projects that were taking place in their local community; they became aware of such opportunities to be an active citizen". Other participants highlighted other ways they got involved such as through: Beneficiaries, Ex-beneficiaries, Internet, Yahoo groups, et cetera.

Participants expressed that through Action projects young people were learning about the importance of respect and coherence in society, and now see ethnic groups as a source of cultural richness. They

also added that on an intercultural basis, attitudes towards other ethnic groups had changed in three specific ways: Between Turks, Turks looking to Europeans and Europeans looking to Turks.

It was felt that youngsters had become more interested in daily news on the media. They want more opportunities for youngsters. It was also mentioned that some 20 percent had established NGO's and youth organisations after participating in those programmes. Moreover, they added that some young people had started to take part actively in political activities and in shaping youth policies within their countries.

Participants stated that the effect of the Programme on young people's opinion of European citizenship was quite positive in Turkey.

All participants in the focus group stated that ex-beneficiaries had acquired many skills that should enable them to find new jobs. They also stated that after taking part in projects and developing projects, the young people had a greater chance to of getting a job that they could handle with ease. This served to encourage employers to choose new employees not just according to school grades, but also to their success in contributing to civil society.

The participants agreed that youth workers were given the opportunity to work with young people in a comprehensive way, enabling young people to build self confidence. Through this young people were able to voice their opinions with regards to solving problems or transforming conflicts. Participants also mentioned that this served to increase the projects' qualities

Outcomes of the focus group on EVS (Ireland)

The central message arising from the discussion related to the question: 'does the local community benefit from EVS volunteers' was that EVS has the potential to offer benefits to the local community in which the volunteer placements take place, but that volunteer involvement in the community needs to be planned and structured.

Another question that arose during the focus group was whether EVS volunteers should pay to participate in action 2. The general conclusion was that that the current policy of young people receiving allowances to participate in EVS (Longer-term) should be maintained, but the allowances be reviewed to take into account the cost of living in Ireland. Issues related to transparency, accountability and professionalism of sending and host organisations were the responsibility of the National Agencies.

There were certain ideas as to how to increase the visibility of EVS, such as through investment in advertising, promotion in schools and use of mass media. Greater visibility is also needed among policy makers e.g. the National Taskforce on Active Citizenship were not aware of EVS.

This led to the last discussion, How to increase the recognition of voluntary work of young people among policy makers? The following ideas were given:

- Disseminating examples of good EVS practice and results of evaluations to policy makers – this should be the responsibility of the National Agency;
- Volunteer schemes are particular vulnerable to 'value for money' concerns – “ they are a kind of holiday” – Research into the cost-effectiveness of volunteer schemes should be undertaken and policy implications identified;
- To develop research capacity to address. issues such as 'efficiency', 'effectiveness' 'impact', 'valorisation in all aspects of YOUTH Programmes;

- EVS volunteers could be attached to policy makers / policy departments to demonstrate the value of EVS and also increase its visibility and legitimacy;
- Large scale promotion campaign targeting public opinion leaders / policy makers and development of a lobbying strategy for EVS;
- Commission a comparative research study into efficiency and effectiveness of different volunteer schemes. This should be the responsibility of the European Commission.

Outcomes of focus group on Youth Initiatives (Germany)

The participating organisations within this focus group had all set up multiple Youth initiatives and were put in touch with the programme through friends and other youth workers. According to the participating organisations in this focus group, there is a need for the YOUTH programme. These organisations wouldn't exist without the programme and they considered it very positive that the European Union also supports very regional projects like the ones they organise.

The participants felt it was difficult to say whether the YOUTH programme results in changes in attitudes towards other (ethnic) groups, because they know that there are a lot of extremist right wing groups present in their region. However they did think that the organised events resulted in greater cooperation between young people from different cultural backgrounds, new friendships, knowledge exchange , discovery of new interests, and offered a way of informing young people about new possibilities to do in their leisure time

The group said they had become more politically active. They launched initiatives in the run-up to the elections for the EU-Parliament, especially to protest against the influence of extremist right-wing groups.

The problem of Europe (the European Union) lies, according to one organisation, in identification. It is not easy to find out what Europe means and even more difficult to identify oneself with Europe. The European Union fails in this respect: it fails to connect people. However, generally speaking the interest in experiences in foreign countries among young people has increased. The YOUTH Programme has contributed to this desire.

Participants in the focus group stated that it is absolutely necessary to receive certificates (like the Youth pass) for work at action 2 and action 3. Especially, because they feel that they learned a great deal from their participation the actions, for example:

- How to organise events;
- The fact that one depends on others in order to achieve something: to work in teams;
- How to organise oneself, to be reachable to others;
- To think socially (social commitment);
- To appreciate the work of others;
- To deal with things immediately;
- To deal with ones own reservations

This learning process is reflected in a radical increase in the self-confidence of the members. Several members of an organisation were/ are applying for jobs around the time of the interview And depicted that potential employers had shown a great deal of interest in their activities in the YOUTH programme. For one member, this resulted in a new job at a youth organisation – the other member has not found a job yet.

5.5 Unintended results

Opinion of Young people

Three fifth (60%) of the ex-participants of Action 1 and two third of the ex-EVS young people said they learned many things during the exchange that they had not expected; almost all other respondents said they had at least learned ‘some’ things they had not expected. These statements show that the programme has generated unintended results.

The following findings make clear that in most cases, the experience of the programme in general was very positive. Almost all respondents formed friendships with young people from other countries (94% in Action 1, 98% in Action 2) during their participation in the programme. 84 (Action 1) to 95 (Action 2) percent still have contacts with young people from other countries whom they met through the project. Almost all respondents said they would recommend participation in an exchange activity to others and considered their participation ‘worth doing’. Only very few respondents said their expectations of the project did not come true.

Opinion of organisations

No less than 95 percent (Action 1) and 93 percent (Action 2) of the organisations mention “unintended” positive results (in addition to those that were pre-categorized in the questionnaire). Among the respondents of both Actions, many were enthusiastic about the enduring networks and friendships of ex-participants, and about the results already mentioned in the questionnaire, including increased openness to other cultures and the exchange of experiences.

Youth for Europe is certainly a precious project which allows all the participating people to open their mind and become aware of a lively European Union with important values like friendship and respect towards foreign people.

It was a life experience for the participants. Many of them said, that this project was the best they've ever done in their lives! They learned so much!

Others report the experience has made young people more aware of the possibilities for participation in other EU projects, and say that some young people ‘are an example of mobility for other young people’. Some young people who did their EVS stayed to work on a more permanent basis in their host organisation or host country.

A quarter of the (respondents of the) organisations of Action 1 and more than a third (34%) of Action 2 report ‘unintended’ negative results. Only some of these concern young people, such as unmotivated / problem young people: some respondents say, for example, that young people sometimes see their participation in the YOUTH programme as a ‘paid holiday’ or that they drink excessively and are unmotivated.

Some people behaved like small children, who escaped from their parent's care - drank lots of alcohol et cetera. It was a problem - at least during first exchanges. Later we implemented quite strict rules about behaviour.

Also, some constraints for effectiveness were indicated. Especially for young people with fewer opportunities and informal groups, it was mentioned that the large amount of money that they have to pay themselves in advance (e.g. for travel costs) may hinder them to participate.

The only negative results are the delays in the payments, especially because we work with young people with fewer opportunities that don't have money, so when our NA delays for more than one year the payment of second parts of money creates serious problems.

Opinion of National Agencies/NAUTH's

The NA/NAUTHs did not mention a large number of unexpected results concerning young people. Some were surprised that projects lasted after they had been terminated, some mentioned marriages between participants as unexpected positive result. In all, no considerable unexpected results came to light.

Summary national reports

The national reports did not mention any unintended results for young people.

5.6 Effectiveness in reaching specific target groups

5.6.1 Effectiveness in addressing equal opportunities in the Programme

Opinion of NA/NAUTHs

The NA/NAUTHs judge the programme as effective in addressing equal opportunities, with 18 respondents of the questionnaire stating to a 'great extent' and 11 to 'some extent'. The one dissenting voice came from an OMS. To the question whether the respondents felt that the implementation of the YOUTH programme addressed the objective of access to the Programme without discriminations, all agreed.

This opinion is subscribed by the division of respondents of the questionnaires among young people: for Action 1 male and female respondents were represented equally, for Action 2 there was even an overrepresentation of female respondents (72%).

Summary national reports

There was a greater female than male participation in almost all countries, and this was particularly true for the EVS. Some countries have assessed this to be positive because of the promotion of women, but others assessed it in a negative sense because they were ideally aiming for a balanced mix of males and females.

5.6.2 Effectiveness in addressing access for young people with fewer opportunities to Programme

One of the goals of the YOUTH programme is to include young people with fewer opportunities, like ethnic minority and physically or mentally handicapped young people. However, it is not indicated what percentage of young people with fewer opportunities the programme is aiming at.

Furthermore, the term “young people with fewer opportunities” was not very precisely defined in Decision No 1031/2000/EC (establishing the ‘Youth’ Community Action programme). Article 4 has two sections dedicated to it:

4.2. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that all young people, without discrimination, have access to the activities of this programme.

4.3. The Commission and the Member States shall ensure that special efforts are made to assist young people who, for cultural, social, physical, mental, economic or geographical reasons, find it more difficult to participate in relevant Action programmes at Community, national, regional or local level, as well as to assist small local groups. The Commission shall accordingly take account of the difficulties faced by these target groups, thus contributing to combating exclusion.

For the concept of young people with fewer opportunities, no further details were provided in documents related to the YOUTH programme. Consequently, how the different factors are defined and should be measured or put into operation is unclear. In general, the NAs and NAUTHs state that they do understand the concept of people with fewer opportunities, although 6 of the 31 respondents indicate that they understand the concept to some extent. As these institutes are the ones that will implement the policy, this is still a large number. During the interviews with NA/NAUTHs it became clear that the different actors use different definitions.

Opinion of young people

One fifth of the respondents of Action 1 and 13 percent of the respondents of Action 2 consider themselves as having fewer opportunities (Table 5.15).

Table 5.15 Young people with fewer opportunities by country group (%)

Percentage that considers him/herself having less opportunities per country group		
	Action 1	Action 2
Old Member States and EFTA	14 %	7 %
Pre-accession countries	33 %	-*)
New Member States	22 %	23 %
European and Mediterranean partner countries	42 %	-*)
Latin American partner countries	-*)	-*)
Total N	392	420

Source: ECORYS Youth questionnaires.

*) too small number of respondents (<20).

Opinion of organisations

The image given by the organisations on the effectiveness of the programme in reaching young people with fewer opportunities is more optimistic than the picture provided by the young people themselves. Half of the organisations in the survey by questionnaires think they reached young people with fewer opportunities to some extent, while about a quarter (Action1) to a third (Action 2) even reported to have reached them to a great extent. There are no differences between country categories, while this was the case for young people.

Table 5.16 To what extent did you reach young people with fewer opportunities?

	Action 1	Action 2
Not at all	11%	23%
To some extent	54%	52%
To a great extent	35%	25%
Total	100%	100%
Total N	1.651	659

Source: ECORYS questionnaires organisations.

So, results as regards the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities are not straightforward. One explanation could be that young people with fewer opportunities have less access to the internet than other ex participants and are therefore underrepresented in the youth questionnaires. Another possibility is that organisations have a different idea as to who young people with fewer opportunities are, than the young people themselves.

It should also be noted that on the one hand, certain projects were undertaken by ‘regular’ applicants, and included discussions about issues of disadvantage, social inclusion, and/or xenophobia, and on the other hand, young people with fewer opportunities could participate in regular projects.

Opinion youth workers

Whilst 69 percent of youth workers indicated that the YOUTH programme was effective in relation to young people with fewer opportunities, the remaining 31 percent did not support this position. These figures were consistent across the country groupings.

Fourteen percent of youth workers were unable to answer this question (compared to the 1% figure in the corresponding question for young people). This raises the question as to whether these youth workers do not work with disadvantaged young people, subscribe to different interpretations of disadvantage or do not make categorisations of the young people with whom they work. Since the YOUTH programme is open to all – then it is perfectly legitimate for youth workers to work with young people whom they do not consider (or do not want to label) ‘young people with fewer opportunities’. However, the responses across the country groupings where a much higher ratio of youth workers from the New member states and the European partner countries were unable to address this question, suggests that especially outside of the Old member states, youth workers hold different interpretations of young people with fewer opportunities or may not categorise young people with whom they work.

The figure of 17 percent of youth workers who consider that the YOUTH programme has ‘not at all’ achieved its objectives in relation to disadvantaged young people was consistent across the country groupings – in the case of European partner countries it was 24 percent.

Opinion of National Agencies and National Authorities

The respondents (NA/NAUTH) saw themselves as effective in involving young people with fewer opportunities to the Programme, with 17 of respondents stating this to a ‘great extent’ and 12 to ‘some extent’. In terms of policies, 19 of the respondents indicated that

special approaches had been developed and implemented in order to involve disadvantaged groups. The other 12 respondents indicated that this had been done to some extent. During the interviews some respondents called for a strategy to reach the young people with fewer opportunities. An example where this has been taken up at the national level is the Czech Republic, where a special network of consultants who are experts in certain groups (Roma and orphans) have been asked to design a strategy to reach these groups and training activities for youth workers. In Ireland, the NA has set up their own definition of young people with lesser opportunities which they adhere to.

The questionnaire showed that 22 of 31 respondents experienced difficulties to some extent in reaching disadvantaged groups. From the interviews it became clear that some countries have particularly focused on young people with fewer opportunities and felt that they have reached them. Others commented that it is really difficult to reach some groups of young people with fewer opportunities. These include young people who are not organised, homeless young people, substance abusers and other young people on the margins. Young people with fewer opportunities who can be reached relatively easily tend to already be active via youth organisations.

Furthermore, some difficulties in including young people with fewer opportunities are mentioned. It is indicated that these young people need more guidance and preparation; moreover being asked for a contribution and prepayments (which normally should not be the case, as the programme should pre-finance 80% of the activities) may also hinder their participation. The difficulties in reaching young people with fewer opportunities are seen by many respondents as particularly prevalent in Action 2, with access seemingly quite hard for young people with fewer opportunities. For Action 1 and 3, the bottlenecks for participation of young people with fewer opportunities are less severe.

Summary national reports

The national reports reported specific efforts to attract young people with fewer opportunities to the Programme. Nevertheless, almost all reports state that these efforts have not been sufficient to get rid of the barriers affecting participation of these groups. Difficulties vary from one Action to another: it is clear that participation in EVS is especially difficult for people with fewer opportunities and easier in Action 1 projects.

Opinion of evaluators

The programme has not set an objective as to what extent it should reach young people with fewer opportunities, so it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of the programme in doing so. Also, the definition of young people with fewer opportunities is not clear and different concepts seem to be used. This calls for setting a common definition.

Having said this, and bearing in mind that throughout Europe about 20 percent of young people are considered to have less opportunities, the percentages reported by the young people as to how much those with fewer opportunities were reached per action (20% for Action 1 and 13% for Action 2), seem to be quite successful. At the same time, the evaluators note, that in general the young people with fewer opportunities who are reached by the programme (based on the outcomes of the questionnaire), are also the more highly educated, indicating that it is probably just a specific group of young people with fewer opportunities who are reached. Out of EUROSTAT data we found an indicative average of 25 percent of the students and pupils over 15 years old are higher

educated (higher vocational education and university). This is data out of 27 EU countries. Table 5.1 showed 60 percent of the participants in action 1 and 75 percent of the participants in action 2 were educated. This is substantially more than average.

5.7 Conclusions

The main findings of the study on effectiveness for Young people are:

- Action 2 (EVS) is not a direct stepping stone to becoming active in Action 3;
- The YOUTH programme is effective in fostering citizenship competencies;
- The YOUTH programme is less effective in fostering active citizenship, but there is still a considerable contribution;
- The YOUTH programme has influence on job orientation and intention to work in another country, especially through Action 2;
- The YOUTH programme has contributed to an increase in sense of solidarity, but it is not known whether this is translated in concrete actions;
- The YOUTH programme has contributed to an increased feeling of being a European citizen and a more positive attitude towards Europe;
- The Programme seems modestly effective in targeting young people with fewer opportunities but it did have some promising effects on young people with less access to opportunities;
- An unintended, but very relevant effect of the YOUTH programme, are the new international (friendship) networks that the programme has brought about.

6 Effectiveness of the programme for the youth workers and organisations

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter the effectiveness of the programme for the Youth workers is described. The main basis for this chapter is the questionnaire for Youth workers (all results come from this questionnaire, unless mentioned otherwise). The questions were directed to the overall effectiveness of the programme for the Youth workers as well as specifically to activities under Action 5 in which they participated. Furthermore, the questionnaire resulted in suggestions for improvement of the effectiveness of the programme for Youth workers and for measures that might support the work of Youth workers. These are presented in paragraph 6.5.

Although the organisations running the project are not so much seen as a target group that benefits of the programme, we describe at the end of this chapter some issues related to effectiveness for the organisations (paragraph 6.6.), followed by conclusions. Finally, the programme provided supporting activities for the National Agencies. To what extent those were useful for them is presented in paragraph 6.7.

6.2 Effectiveness of specific outputs of YOUTH programme

Youth workers were requested to consider the extent to which the following outputs of the YOUTH programme supported them to be more effective in their work with young people:

- Access to financial resources;
- Development of language skills for youth workers;
- Increased cultural / intercultural awareness;
- Increased European / international dimension in youth workers practice;
- Specialist training for youth workers (project management, anti-racism, inclusion, et cetera);
- Establishment and support to sustainable partnerships;
- Introduction of network thinking into youth work;
- Establishment and support to sustainable networking;
- Introduction of quality awareness and expertise into youth work;
- Multiplier effects of youth work;
- Exposure to new methods of working with young people;
- Monitoring support from structures implementing the programme at national and European level;
- Dissemination of results and good practice;
- Publicity and visibility.

The responses are presented in Table 6.1. The table shows that the judgement of the Youth Workers in respect of every single one of the above outputs of the YOUTH programme was overwhelmingly positive.

The outputs have been ranked in order of supporting youth workers to be more effective in their work with young people. However, the responses clearly show that all of the above outputs of the YOUTH programme are seen by Youth workers to be very effective - the lowest score of 80 percent positive response, demonstrates this clearly.

Opinion of evaluators

That youth workers rank 'increased cultural / intercultural awareness' above and the 'establishment and support to sustainable networks' below, is not an indication of the 'ineffectiveness' of the latter per se, but perhaps rather an indication of the value youth workers place on the different outputs of the YOUTH programme (see also the relatively high rate of Youth workers that became involved in a network as a result of participation in Action 5, paragraph 6.5.2).

The evaluators notice that, compared to other elements, training, networking (introduction to network thinking and establishment and support to sustainable networking) and dissemination of results and good practice are ranked relatively low (but not unsatisfactory). This is an important sign, as one of the main objectives of the programme is to reinforce cooperation through the exchange of good practise and training of youth workers. This may have implications for other and future programmes, as this could be a sign that these elements relate not so strongly to the needs of the Youth workers. This also relates to the view of the youth workers that the relevance of the programme could be improved and that they can spend their time and resources could be more effectively used (see paragraph 6.5.3).

Table 6.1 Ranking of outputs that support youth workers to be more effective in their work with young people

Global Overview				
Ranking *- Extent of Effectiveness	Outputs	% 'to a high degree' effective	% of response 'to some degree' effective	Total % all positive responses
1.	increased cultural / intercultural awareness	82%	16%	98%
2.	increased European / international dimension in youth workers practice	70%	26%	96%
3.	exposure to new methods of working with young people	53%	40%	93%
4.	multiplier effects of youth work	50%	36%	86%
5.	development of language skills for youth workers	52%	34%	86%
6.	access to financial resources	48%	39%	87%
7.	Introduction of quality awareness and expertise into youth work	43%	46%	89%

Global Overview				
Ranking *- Extent of Effectiveness	Outputs	% 'to a high degree' effective	% of response 'to some degree' effective	Total % all positive responses
8.	establishment and support to sustainable partnerships	43%	44%	87%
9.	specialist training for youth workers (project management, anti-racism, inclusion, et cetera)	46%	37%	83%
10	introduction of network thinking into youth work	41%	43%	84%
11.	dissemination of results and good practice	36%	50%	86%
12	monitoring support from structures implementing the programme at national and European level	35%	50%	85%
13.	publicity and visibility	33%	54%	87%
14.	establishment and support to sustainable networking	32%	48%	80%

Source: ECORYS questionnaire youth workers.

* Applying weightings of 1 for 'to some extent' and 2 for 'to a great extent'

Across the different country groupings, there are few noticeable deviations. 17 Percent of European partner countries stated that access to financial resources was 'not at all' effective compared just 2 percent of New Member States and 9 percent of Pre-accession countries. This presumably reflects the lack of direct access of European partner countries to funding.

Compared to the other country groupings, Old Member States + EFTA countries, who made up 60 percent of total respondents, were generally less enthusiastic about the effectiveness of the above 14 outputs. They were less likely to rate any of the outputs as contributing 'to a great extent' to effectiveness, and registered 70 percent of the negative 'not at all' responses. This is likely to be related to level of development in Youth policy and Youth work in New Member States and the increased resources for international youth work that the YOUTH programme has brought.

Twenty two percent of New Member States were unable to answer whether the multiplier effects of youth projects affected 'effectiveness' compared to 10 percent of Old Member States and EFTA countries. This difference could be related to the lack of or different understandings of the term 'multiplier effects'. European partner countries were less convinced (30%) than Pre-accession countries (46%) and New Member States (40%), that 'monitoring and support from structures implementing the programme at national and European level 'to great extent' contributed to effectiveness

6.2.1 Experimental / innovative nature of YOUTH programme

The YOUTH programme was considered to be experimental and innovative ‘to some extent’ by 45 percent and ‘to a great extent’ by 50 percent of youth workers. Pre-accession and New Member States, who were less likely to have been exposed to the previous EC YOUTH programmes, in particular delivered ‘to a great extent’ response rate (77% and 57% respectively) compared to the 46 percent ‘to a great extent’ response rate of youth workers from Old Member States and EFTA, (who were more likely to be familiar with YOUTH programme methodology)

6.3 Effectiveness Action 5 support activities for youth workers

6.3.1 Extent to which the youth workers are reached by Action 5

Fifty three percent of those youth workers who responded to the questionnaire had participated in an activity supported through Action 5 of the YOUTH programme. 90 Percent of participants from European partner countries had participated in Action 5 supported activities.

Reasons given by those youth workers (37%) who had not participated in Action 5 Support Activities are presented below:

Table 6.2 Reasons for not participating in Action 5 support activities

Response	Total	% of responses	%
1 Not aware of opportunities	67		58%
2 Applied but not accepted	5		4%
3 Unable to get permission from my employer	3		3%
4 Training content did not appear relevant	11		9%
5 Workload	36		31%
6 Financial constraints	18		16%
7 Others	12		10%
Total responses: 116			

Source: ECORYS questionnaire youth workers.

The above table indicates that the main reason why youth workers did not participate in Action 5 support activities was that they were not aware of opportunities. Of these youth workers, 53 percent were from the Old Member States and EFTA and 37 percent from New Member States. Assuming those youth workers who responded to the questionnaire represent those more actively involved in the YOUTH programme, this figure of 1 in 5 of the youth workers respondents who were not aware of the opportunities under Action 5 is likely to be higher in reality. A high number of youth workers were thus excluded from this aspect of the Youth work. Workload and financial constraints were mainly restricted to the Old Member States and EFTA.

6.3.2 Relation to the needs and aspirations of youth worker

Personal development of youth worker

In terms of their own development, youth workers placed a high value on the YOUTH programme. 60 percent stated that the programme met their needs and expectations 'to a great extent' and 33 percent 'to some extent'. There was a general consistency with regard to the responses across the country groupings, with the highest ratings coming from European partner countries.

Young people with whom youth workers work

Very high levels of satisfaction were expressed across all country groupings. 65 Percent of youth workers stated that the programme met their needs and expectations 'to a great extent' and 30 percent 'to some extent'.

Opinion of the NA/NAUTHs

The positive signals of the youth workers on the extent to which the programme meets their needs is also reflected in the perception of the NA/NAUTHs on this issue: all respondents of the NA/NAUTH questionnaire answered positive (8, to some extent, 24, to a great extent) to the question of the extent to which Action 5 met the needs of the target group, in this case, the youth workers.

6.3.3 Support to professional development / increased confidence in relation to integration of European citizenship as a theme into work with young people

As mentioned before, youth workers have indicated that training provided adds value to their work. At the same time more than half of the respondents indicated an overlap with other training (see paragraph 4.3.2). 66 Percent of youth workers stated that 'to a great extent' their professional development had been supported and their confidence increased in relation to the integration of European citizenship as a theme into their work with young people – 31 percent stated that this occurred 'to some extent'. The highest number of 'to a great extent' responses occurring in Pre-accession countries (80%).

6.3.4 Involvement in European networks of trainers / youth workers

70 Percent of those youth workers who responded to the questionnaire stated their participation in Action 5 had led to their involvement / membership of a European network of trainers / youth workers. Youth workers from Pre-accession countries (93%) European partner countries (80%) reported significantly higher involvement rates than their counterparts in Old Member States and EFTA (67%) and New Member States (61%). Clearly the YOUTH programme has offered new opportunities to Pre-accession countries and European partner countries which did not exist prior to their involvement. Youth workers in Old Member States and EFTA and New Member States are more likely to already be involved in other European networks of trainers / youth workers as a result of their contact with previous programmes.

Reasons for not participating in networks

Reasons given by those youth workers (31%) who stated their participation in Action 5 had not led to their involvement / membership of a European network of trainers / youth workers are presented below:

Table 6.3 Reasons why youth workers are not involved in a European network (multiple responses were possible)

Response	Total	%
1 Not aware of opportunities	30	48
2 Applied but not accepted	4	6
3 Unable to get permission from my employer	5	8
4 Training content did not appear relevant	5	8
5 Workload	29	47
6 Financial constraints	12	19
7 Others	12	19
Total responses: 62		

Source: ECORYS questionnaire youth workers.

The above table indicates that the main reason why youth workers' participation in Action 5 had not led to their involvement / membership of a European network of trainers / youth workers was that they were not aware of opportunities. Another important constraint for participation in a network is the workload of the Youth workers.

Assuming those youth workers who responded to the questionnaire represent those more actively involved in the YOUTH programme, this figure of 1 in 4 of the youth workers respondents who were not aware of the opportunities is likely to be higher in reality. A significant number of youth workers were thus excluded from this aspect of European youth work. The problem of non-awareness of the opportunities was earlier also indicated. As mentioned by the evaluators before, there would appear to be implications for the efficiency and effectiveness of the structures of the YOUTH programme who have responsibilities in respect of dissemination of information.

Influence network on work youth workers

96 Percent of all respondents felt that their involvement / membership of a European network of trainers / youth workers had an impact on their work with young people. The greatest impact was felt amongst youth workers in the pre-accession countries where 86 percent responded that it had done so 'to a great extent'.

6.3.5 Increased knowledge in relation to specific issues

Youth workers were asked to what extent participation in an Action 5 activity has increased their knowledge in relation to the following issues to the point where they could introduce these into their work practice and train others in these issues:

- European citizenship;
- Youth participation and inclusion of young people in society and politics;
- Intercultural learning;
- Concepts of quality in European Youth Work;
- European youth policy and European funding programmes;

- Fight against racism and xenophobia;
- Project cycle management;
- Developing / participating in transnational projects.

The responses are given below:

Table 6.4 Increased knowledge of youth workers in relation to specific issues

Increased knowledge of youth workers in relation to:	% 'able to introduce into work practice	% able to train others	Total % all positive responses
Intercultural learning	36%	60%	96%
Youth participation and inclusion of young people in society and politics	57%	33%	90%
European citizenship	66%	22%	88%
Developing / participating in transnational projects	42%	44%	86%
Concepts of quality in European Youth Work	48%	37%	85%
Project cycle management	42%	41%	83%
European youth policy and European funding programmes	47%	34%	81%
Fight against racism and xenophobia	45%	35%	80%

Source: ECORYS questionnaire youth workers.

The responses indicate that although youth workers had to different degrees gained an increased knowledge and ability to apply that knowledge, the response rates were generally very high, with intercultural learning receiving the highest rating and European youth policy and European funding programmes (which in itself is the most technical issue) and fight against racism and xenophobia the lowest ratings. That the response rates for the youth workers who were able to train others is generally lower than response rates for those able to introduce these issues into their work practice, is logical since not all youth workers perform training functions.

The fact the response rate for the ability to train others in intercultural learning is correspondingly higher than for those able to apply it in their work could be a reflection of the methodology used in intercultural learning training which is likely to be highly interactive, participatory and method-based (and thus more interesting, user-friendly and pragmatic for Youth Workers). The other issues are much more likely to be delivered through a more information-based and technical methodology.

Youth workers in Pre-accession countries and European partner countries consistently rated themselves highly (in comparison to the Old and New Member States), in relation to their ability to train others. One reason for this could be a more academic background of youth worker trainers in these countries. The fact that training also offers employment and income generation opportunities within a wider European market for these youth workers / trainers, should not be overlooked.

Application of training to practice

Youth workers were asked the extent to which they have experienced difficulties in applying the learning from the YOUTH programme into their work practice: The response is presented in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5 Difficulties in applications of training considered by youth workers

Response	Total	% of responses					%
1 Not at all	57						30%
2 To some extent	115						59%
3 To a great extent	14						7%
4 Don't know/no answer	10						5%
Total responses: 196		0%	20%	40%	60%	80%	

Source: ECORYS questionnaire youth workers.

The responses across the country groupings showed a high degree of consistency in respect of the above ratings.

That 66 percent of the respondents experienced difficulties in applying the learning from the YOUTH programme into their work practice raises questions about the effectiveness of the training undertaken in the YOUTH programme.

Paradoxically, when asked to what extent they have been able to apply the acquired skills and knowledge outside the framework of the YOUTH programme in their own local/regional/national/international setting, youth workers responded positively with response rates of between 60 percent and 93 percent indicating that the skills and knowledge could be to some extent / to a great extent applied.

Effectiveness of T- Kits

When asked to what extent the T-Kits have influenced their practice, youth workers responded as follows.

Table 6.6 Influence of T-kits on the practice of youth workers

T-Kit	Extent of influence on practice			
	Not at all	To some degree	To a great degree	Not applicable
International Voluntary Service	24%	31%	21%	24%
Training Essentials	12%	40%	27%	21%
European Citizenship	18%	38%	27%	18%
Social Inclusion	13%	36%	32%	18%

Source: ECORYS questionnaire youth workers.

The International voluntary service T-Kit has had the least influence on practice and the response rate across the county groupings, are consistent in this respect. The influence of the other T-Kits - Training Essentials, European Citizenship & Social Inclusion has been fairly equal from a global overview.

From the perspective of the different country groupings, Training Essentials, European Citizenship & Social Inclusion T-Kits have had a greatest degree of influence on the practice of youth workers in Pre-accession countries, This is coherent with high ratings youth workers in these countries gave themselves with regard to their ability to train others in these and other issues. Otherwise the responses have been fairly consistent.

National reports

The national reports state an improvement of the youth workers competences to set up projects, in their working methodologies and organisational competences. It is indicated that the professionalisation of youth workers has come as a result of the participation in training courses and exchanges. The programme has, according to the national reports, contributed to the possibility of contact making and the building of networks, both at national and sub national level, as well as on European level. New partnerships have been created or are starting to be developed.

6.3.6 Opinion of evaluators on effectiveness support activities

Effectiveness of the programme was reduced through the non-participation of youth workers in training, support and networking activities due to their non-awareness of opportunities afforded by the programme. Assuming those youth workers who responded to the questionnaire represent those more actively involved in the YOUTH programme, this figure of 1 in 4 of the youth workers respondents who were not aware of the opportunities is likely to be higher in reality. A significant number of youth workers were thus excluded from this aspect of European youth work. The implications of this for the work of those structures of the YOUTH programme who have responsibilities in respect of dissemination of information et cetera – the National Agencies, SALTO Centres, Eurodesks et cetera, require further examination.

In general the support activities seem to be effective in supporting the professional development of youth workers. Participation in activities leads to a higher degree of involvement of youth workers in EU networks, which influences their works with young people. In line with the remarks on awareness of opportunities, it seems that youth workers that did not become involved in networks are often not aware of the opportunities.

The participation of youth workers in supporting activities led to an increase in knowledge of youth workers on a range of specific issues. However, it seems that they experience some difficulties in applying the knowledge in their work in practice; youth workers can more effectively apply acquired skills and knowledge outside the framework of the YOUTH programme than inside the framework. Depending on the aims of the programme, this might lead to the a need for reviewing the training component of YOUTH programmes. The T-Kits seem to be the least effective for the practice of youth workers.

6.4 Impact

In this paragraph we will present the impact the programme had on the youth workers in terms of employability, importance of certification and unintended results.

6.4.1 Employability

With regard to the extent to which participation in the YOUTH programme has affected / increased their employability in the job market, youth workers' responses were generally moderately positive – 40 percent stated 'to some extent' and 24 percent 'to a great extent' – 24 percent stated 'not at all'. Pre-accession countries registered the highest rating by far for 'to a great extent' responses. It was not possible to determine whether youth workers in these countries were referring to employability in their own countries or employability in the European context. Whilst the response rates for the Pre-accession countries, New Member States and European partner countries may not come as a surprise in view the boost that the YOUTH programme has given to youth workers in these countries, the 38 percent of youth workers from the Old Member States who responded 'to some extent' requires further explanation. The fact that youth work structures in the Old Member States have developed differently, with different roles for voluntary and statutory sectors may go some way to explain this link between employability and the participation of youth workers in the YOUTH programme.

6.4.2 Importance of certification / formal acknowledgement of certification in projects, training, et cetera

When asked to comment on the importance of 'Certification' (formal acknowledgement of participation in projects; training, et cetera), youth workers responded as follows:

Table 6.7 Importance of formal acknowledgement of participation in projects and training, considered by youth workers

Response	Total	% of responses	%
1 Not at all	22		8%
2 To some extent	86		32%
3 To a great extent	132		49%
4 Don't know/no answer	27		10%
Total responses: 267			

Source: ECORYS questionnaire youth workers.

The above global overview shows that 81 percent of youth worker respondents confirmed the importance of 'certification'. Across the country groupings, these responses ranged from 80 percent in the Old Member States to 100 percent in European partner countries. This is consistent with the high utility value that European partner countries and Pre-accession countries have placed on training and support activities in their responses to the questionnaire.

6.4.3 Unintended results

85 Percent of the youth worker respondents stated that the YOUTH programme had generated unintended ‘positive’ results and 39 percent unintended ‘negative’ results. Whilst the questionnaires were unable to identify specific examples of these ‘unintended’ results, they did reveal consistency across the country groupings in relation to response rates.

Summary Focus Group support activities (Spain)

Support activities are considered relevant specially for producing a leverage effect: people are trained and they become more active on dissemination on the programme and on preparing projects themselves. Action 5 makes more evident the interrelation of the Programme activities. It is frequent to start benefiting from an Action 5 project and continue by preparing or participating on an Action 1 and 2 projects.

Participants on the focus group consider that there have been some interesting achievements. Each year new associations are presenting projects, and although the profile of the associations or persons presenting projects is in general, not that of a young person with disadvantages, indirectly it will benefit these target groups.

Beneficiaries from Action 5 trainings are very willing to incorporate their new findings in the methodologies and activities that they carry out in their organisation. Some beneficiaries of trainings for trainers have organised working groups incorporating different associations and are sharing new methods and implementing them in their organisations. Training of trainers has also a leverage effect because trainers disseminate the knowledge they are learning, at their time, by participating on international trainings. There is a lot of exchange and good practices identified, as well as in ideas for new projects, mutual influencing of projects and of the trainer to beneficiaries of training and vice versa.

Action 5 has given to associations the opportunity of defining themselves the training in which they are interested on an international context: choosing the subjects, contents, formats, trainers and beneficiaries that better adapt to their idea of training. The ability to prepare an international project is also acquired through these trainings.

However, organisers and beneficiaries of Action 5 projects consider that many people have good ideas that are not put into place because of bureaucracy, or because the fact of being a programme of the European Commission gives to them the impression that they will not fulfil the requirements. After trainings, changes in these “a priori” can be observed and the attitude towards the programme becomes much more proactive. The fact of participating in a project carried out by an association with similar characteristics to the ones where the beneficiaries belong, raises their mental barriers because they can see that it is feasible to carry out a project under the programme.

6.5 Suggestions for improvement

From a lessons learned perspective, the youth workers were asked what measures could be taken to improve the relevance and effectiveness of the YOUTH programme for their work.

6.5.1 Measures to improve relevance and effectiveness of YOUTH programme for Youth Workers

97 Percent of youth workers stated that it was possible to improve the relevance and effectiveness of the opportunities for youth workers offered by the YOUTH programme. This response was fairly consistent across the country groupings. This is supported by the fact that 65 percent of youth workers considered that the time, effort and resources which they committed to the YOUTH programme could be more effectively used on other activities and the overlap with other training. The following specific measures all received high ratings with regard to their potential to improve the relevance and effectiveness of the YOUTH programme for youth workers:

Table 6.8 Measures that could improve the relevance and effectiveness of the YOUTH programme for youth workers

Measure	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	No answer
More consultation with youth workers over content and methodology of the training	47%	44%	1%	8%
More capable and better-skilled trainers	41%	39%	8%	12%
Involvement of field-based based youth workers in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the training courses	48%	39%	4%	8%
Research into the impact of the trainings on the practice of youth workers	38%	51%	4%	8%
More systematic external monitoring and evaluations of training work structures	26%	44%	12%	17%
Certification / validation of training courses in relation nationally-recognised youth work qualification	44%	35%	9%	12%

Source: ECORYS questionnaire youth workers.

Applying weightings of 1 for 'to some extent' and 2 for 'to a great extent', the responses can be ranked as follows:

Table 6.9 Ranking of measures that may improve relevance and effectiveness of the YOUTH programme for youth workers

Ranking - Extent of potential to improve the relevance and effectiveness of YP for youth workers	Measures to improve relevance and effectiveness
1.	More consultation with youth workers over content and methodology of the training
2.	Involvement of field-based based youth workers in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the training courses
3.	Research into the impact of the trainings on the practice of youth workers
4.	Certification / validation of training courses in relation nationally-recognised youth work qualification
5.	More capable and better-skilled trainers
6.	More systematic external monitoring and evaluations of training work structures

Source: ECORYS questionnaire youth workers.

Youth workers clearly see the need for more consultation and involvement on their part in all aspects of the training project cycle. This will increase ownership, responsibility and accountability of the various European training structures to the practitioners. This, together with more capable and better skilled trainers, was very strongly felt at the levels of Pre-accession countries, New Member States and European partner countries, where the current organisation and structure of Training appears to be a contentious area.

6.5.2 Utility of Inclusion of specific measures in future programmes contributing the work of youth workers

Youth workers were asked to what extent would the adoption of the following specific measures into future programmes, be of benefit to their work.

Table 6.10 Youth workers considering the utility of inclusion of specific measures in future programmes for youth workers

Measure	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	No answer
Large scale projects to support capacity building	41%	38%	6%	14%
Regular meetings to exchange good practice	61%	34%	2%	5%
Definition of quality standards	47%	38%	8%	7%
Strengthening the network of trainers	56%	30%	5%	9%
Involving grass-roots youth workers in training	46%	36%	2%	14%
Increased focus on youth workers multipliers and cooperation activities	50%	37%	1%	12%
Participation of 2 or more ethnic groups from the same country	40%	35%	11%	14%
Focus on very disadvantaged young people and those in rural / remote areas	48%	33%	9%	10%

Source: ECORYS questionnaire youth workers.

Applying weightings of 1 for ‘to some extent’ and 2 for ‘to a great extent’, the responses can be ranked as follows:

Table 6.11 Ranking extent of specific measures to improve the utility of future programmes for youth workers

Ranking - Extent of Utility	Specific Actions in future programmes of benefit to youth workers
1.	Regular meetings to exchange good practice
2.	Strengthening the network of trainers
3.	Increased focus on youth workers multipliers and cooperation activities
4.	Involving grass-roots youth workers in training
5.	Definition of quality standards
6.	Large scale projects to support capacity building
7.	Focus on very disadvantaged young people and those in rural / remote areas
8.	Participation of 2 or more ethnic groups from the same country

Source: ECORYS questionnaire youth workers.

Youth workers prioritised the need for regular meetings to exchange good practice as a priority in future programmes as well as strengthening the network of trainers. With no exceptions and across all measures, the highest number of ‘to a great extent’ responses came from the Pre-accession countries and European partner countries.

6.5.3 Specific measures to enable youth organisations to work with more effectively with young people with fewer opportunities

Youth workers were asked to what extent would the inclusion of the following specific measures into future programmes’ enable youth organisations to work more effectively with young people with fewer opportunities. The results are presented in the following table.

Table 6.12 Utility of measures to support youth organisations to work more effective with young people with fewer opportunities (youth workers questionnaire)

Measures to support youth organisations to work with young people with fewer opportunities	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	No answer
Clear definition and consensus as to what constitutes having fewer opportunities.	44%	44%	5%	7%
Positive discrimination in favour of young people with fewer opportunities.	34%	48%	10%	8%
More involvement of youth workers in programme selection processes.	47%	41%	4%	8%
Quota systems (each project to have a certain percent of young people with fewer opportunities).	27%	37%	29%	8%
Financial incentives for the individual young person with fewer opportunities (e.g. 100% support costs + pocket money).	64%	26%	6%	4%
Increased financial incentives for youth workers / youth organisations to target young people with fewer opportunities.	58%	31%	7%	4%
Financial opportunities to increase youth worker-young person ratio on projects targeting young people with fewer opportunities.	56%	32%	5%	7%
Shorter projects.	19%	42%	31%	8%
Equip/train youth workers to work with young people with fewer opportunities.	60%	32%	4%	4%

Source: ECORYS questionnaire youth workers.

Applying weightings of 1 for ‘to some extent’ and 2 for ‘to a great extent’, the responses can be ranked as follows:

Table 6.13 Utility of measures to support youth organisations to work more effective with young people with fewer opportunities

Ranking - Extent of Utility	Measures to support youth organisations to work with young people with fewer opportunities
1.	Financial incentives for the individual young person with fewer opportunities (e.g. 100% support costs + pocket money)
2.	Equip/train youth workers to work with young people with fewer opportunities
3.	Increased financial incentives for youth workers / youth organisations to target young people with fewer opportunities
4.	Financial opportunities to increase youth worker-young person ratio on projects targeting young people with fewer opportunities
5.	More involvement of youth workers in programme selection processes
6.	Clear definition and consensus as to what constitutes having fewer opportunities
7.	Positive discrimination in favour of young people with fewer opportunities
8.	Quota systems (each project to have a certain % of young people with fewer opportunities)
9.	Shorter projects

Source: ECORYS questionnaire youth workers.

Across all the country groupings, youth workers see a clear link between financial incentives and more effective work with young people with fewer opportunities. This is particularly the case with regard to youth workers in the pre-accession countries and European partner countries, where per capita incomes are likely to be much lower than in the Old and New Member States.

Youth workers in all country groupings had reservations concerning the effectiveness of quota systems and shorter projects in supporting youth organisations to work with young people with fewer opportunities. This was especially the case in Old Member States, where ‘not at all’ response rates of 36 percent and 32 percent respectively were registered. In respect of the ‘shorter projects’ measure, this would appear to challenge the EVS strategy of introducing shorter EVS placements in order to target young people with fewer opportunities.

Training is once again seen by youth workers as a critical factor in working with young people with fewer opportunities.

6.6 Effectiveness for the organisations

Profile of the organisations reached

Most of the respondents of organisations (both applicants and partner organisations) in Action 1 work for ‘non profit making non-governmental organisations or associations’, namely 65 percent; 14 percent work for a public authority, 10 percent belong to an ‘informal group’, 4 percent are affiliated with a European Youth NGO and 7 percent with ‘another organisation’. In Action 2, no less than 80 percent of the respondents belong to a ‘non profit making non-governmental organisation or association’, which might be explained by the large number of ‘host’ organisations among the respondents. One in ten

works for a public authority, 3 percent for a European Youth NGO and 7 percent for another organisation.

For both Action 1 and 2 the majority of the partner organisations are a non-governmental, non profit making organisations (75-85%). Other partner organisations are public authorities or informal groups.

Organisations active in Action 2 work mostly in the field of ‘youth’ (80%). The organisations could indicate more than one field in which they were active. Almost one third of the respondents say their organisation works (also) in the field of art and culture (30%), about a quarter in the fields of anti-discrimination (27%) and environment (26%). Less mentioned are the European Union (19%), Democracy (19%), Human Rights (18%) or world peace (11%). 31 percent of the respondents think their organisation belongs to a field that is not pre-categorized in the questionnaire (‘other’).

Effectiveness of the programme for organisations

The NA/NAUTHs were asked about the extent of effectiveness of the YOUTH Programme for obtaining the objectives in relation to the youth organisations. This was judged positive (16 to great extent, 14 to some extent) by them.

The NA/NAUTH’s (30 in total) were positive on whether they felt that the Actions (in this case, 1, 2, 3 and 5) were effective for the target group “organisations”. By far, the NA/NAUTHs are the most positive about Action 5, the least positive about Action 3. This is not surprising, seen the nature of the activities. Action 5 is directed to support to professionals working with youth. The relatively low judgement for action 2 might be considered to be surprising, as one might expect that the hosting organisations profit from the work of the volunteers (which is also indicated by the organisations active in Action2, see below).

Table 6.14 Effectiveness of the programme for the organisations

	Not at all	To some extent	To great Extent
Action 1	0	11	21
Action 2	0	20	12
Action 3	1	20	12
Action 5	0	7	25

Source: ECORYS questionnaire NA/NAUTHs.

In the programme, and consequently in the evaluation, less attention is paid to the effects of the programme on organisations, which occasionally surprises the organisations, as they report positive effects as well for their organisation and clients. As some responding EVS organisations stated it:

“It’s interesting that EVS and this questionnaire focus so much on the experience of the volunteer. Our service users benefit enormously from EVS input because many of them never have the opportunity to travel abroad and meeting and sharing their lives with people from other countries.”

“It was not only the volunteers that benefited a lot from the project, but our organisation as well, as the volunteers’ innovative Actions, different background and different working methods also influenced the hosting organisation.”

Opinion of Young people

Ex-EVS participants were asked whether they received adequate support from the sending and host organisation before, during and after the exchange. In most cases, the support was good, according to the respondents. A bit less positive were they about the support after finishing the project, but still, the majority agreed that it was good. Nevertheless, the support after completion of the project might be improved.

Table 6.15 Support by the host and sending organisation, Action 2 (EVS)

% 'good'	Before the project	During the project	After the project
Host organisation	86	83	59
Sending organisation	94	81	67
Total N	418	418	418

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire Young People Action2.

Learning effect

Some organisations report the learning effect of the programme in terms of youth work as an important effect on their organisation. One of the respondents states it as following:

"We learned a lot about new methods of youth work, international projects and got to know very experienced trainers, youth workers et cetera."

This learning effect is also indicated by the NA/NAUTHS; the extent to which the YOUTH programme introduced new approaches or methods of work in relation to organisations/structures (e.g. Government or NGOs, 'umbrella organisations', regional / local issues) was a positive feature of the YOUTH programme, with 28 (of 30) respondents acknowledging this. Across the country groupings, the NMS gave much higher 'to a great extent' ratings than the OMS; the NMS tend to be more positive regarding the value of YOUTH programme than the OMS.

Effects of organisations on local communities

From the summary of the national reports it becomes clear that the impact on youth initiatives and stakeholders promotion by enabling a large number of initiatives and organisations to promote themselves through the Programme, is found to have had a more positive impact in the new Member States than in the EU15 and EFTA. Most of the national reports have found that the Programme has brought a multiplier effect: more projects and of more complexity, more organisations being created, more workers attracted to organisations as a result of the YOUTH projects, beneficiaries of the Programme that turn to be project coordinators. However, the impact on local communities has been less perceived (or addressed). Impact on local communities has been found with a number of new organisations being created at local level and an increase in local youth work.

Effects on internationalisation

The programme led partly to new experiences for the organisations involved. For a quarter of the organisations, their participation in the YOUTH programme was their first experience with programmes from the European Commission. More than half of the organisations had previous experience with projects supported by a Programme of the

European Union. As Table 6.16 shows, Action 2-organisations have more previous experiences with Youth for Europe/European Voluntary Service project(s) than organisations responding for Action 1. For the respondents themselves and their staff the percentages are roughly the same.

Table 6.16 Previous experience organisation with the European Union

	Action 1	Action 2
Yes, previous Youth project(s)	57%	52%
Yes, previous Youth for Europe/European Voluntary Service project(s) (pre 2000)	18%	28%
Yes, ESF project(s)	6%	8%
Yes, involvement in other European project(s)	28%	30%
No	27%	23%
	n = 1197	n = 593

Source: ECORYS questionnaires organisations.

Some organisations report that they have developed a more international orientation due to their participation in the YOUTH programme. As one of the respondents states it:

“Our organisation has become more international, with the secretariat now made up of young people from various European countries. This strengthened cultural exchange and has brought more life and ideas into the running of our organisation.”

Other effects

Some say the image or profile of their organisation improved as a consequence of the project, others report the experience made youth more aware of the possibilities for participation in EU projects or say that some young people ‘are an example of mobility for other youth’. Some young people who did their EVS stayed to work on a more permanent basis in their host organisation or host country.

Opinion Youth workers

The positive effects for the organisations are also indicated by the youth workers. The levels of satisfaction across all country groupings were generally high. 47 percent of youth workers stated that the programme met their needs and expectations ‘to a great extent’ and 42 percent ‘to some extent’, 8 percent of youth workers said that the programme did not meet the needs and expectations of youth workers in respect of the development of their organisations.

Factors hindering the effectiveness

A quarter of the respondents from the organisations questionnaire of Action 1 and more than a third (34%) of Action 2 report ‘unintended’ negative results. Most of these results are in fact problems that the organisations encountered with partners, due to cultural differences and language problems, and procedures (see also chapter on efficiency).

An important question in the light of sustainability is whether the activities were continued after the funding stopped. As may be read from Table 6.17, in most cases the activities were continued, at least to some extent. There are no differences by country-

category or by Action, which is surprising, considering the differences in types of activities between the two Actions.

Table 6.17 Continuation of the activities

	Action 1	Action 2
Yes, the activities did/will continue in full	16%	26%
Yes, the activities did/will continue to some extent	56%	43%
No	18%	17%
Don't know	10%	13%
N	N = 1197	n = 591

Source: ECORYS questionnaires organisations.

Not only did the activities continue to a large extent, many respondents also report that results or learning from the project have been adopted in practice: mostly within the organisation, but also within the partner organisation and sometimes in other organisations (Table 6.18).

Table 6.18 Adoption of results of the project in practice

% Yes	Action 1	Action 2
Within the organisation	68%	72%
Within partner organisations	48%	34%
Within other (non-partner) organisations	19%	17%
Not adopted	11%	14%
N	n = 1197	n = 591

Source: ECORYS questionnaires organisations.

The chance that activities continue after the completion of the programme, are at least partly influenced by the strategies that organisations employ to monitor their project and to disseminate outputs. Most organisations report to have a monitoring strategy for their project (Action 1, 62%; Action 2, 70%), an evaluation strategy (Action 1, 89%; Action 2, 82%) and a strategy to disseminate their project's outputs, results and learning (Action 1, 77%; Action 2, 63%).

6.7 Effectiveness training and support measures for National Agencies

Under the YOUTH programme, there were also training opportunities and supporting activities for the National Agencies provided. IN this paragraph we assess the effectiveness of those activities, based on the questionnaires and interviews with the National Agencies and National Authorities.

Effectiveness of training activities for NAs

Respondents confirm that the training activities provided under the YOUTH programme for NA/NAUTH are helpful to them in their work. The responses of 14 ('to a great extent' and 12 ('to some extent') are evidence of this. Across the country groupings, NMS are generally more positive about the training activities of the Programme,

registering 5 of 8 ‘to a great extent’ response in comparison to that of 8 of 20 for the OMS.

Effectiveness of programme support activities for NAs

The NA/NAUTH judged the effectiveness of specific programme support activities in contributing to the programme being a successful experience as follows:

Table 6.19 Effectiveness of programme support activities for NA/NAUTH

Type of activity	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Don't know / No answer
Increased partnership and networking opportunities	18	11	0	1
Access to specialised training for your staff	6	19	3	2
Access to specialised information and support	6	22	1	1
Access to funding to develop new activities	7	16	5	2
Exposure to new methods of work with young people	16	13	0	0

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire for NA/NAUTH.

‘Increased partnership and networking opportunities’ and ‘exposure to new methods of work with young people’ are clearly singled as being the most effective programme support activities for NA/NAUTH. In comparison to these, the other support activities received relatively low ratings in terms of effectiveness. There were no real differences in the response rates across the country groupings. The 7 respondents for ‘access to funding to develop new activities’ appears to be somewhat surprising since it is reasonable to assume that increased funding support would be likely to prove popular amongst NMS and PAC.

Effectiveness of mentoring and support activities for NA

Whilst the mentoring and support provided under the YOUTH programme for NA/NAUTH staff received a generally positive response, the fact that only 8 (of 30) of respondents gave this a ‘to a great extent’ rating (as opposed to 16 who responded ‘to some extent’), suggests that measures should be put in place to increase the effectiveness of this form of support to NA/NAUTH. The response rates were in general consistent across the country groupings and also the fairly general pattern of negative responses being confined to the OMS.

6.8 Conclusions of effectiveness for youth workers, organisations and National Agencies

The main results from the evaluation in terms of effectiveness for youth workers, organisations and national agencies are as following:

- Outputs contributing to the work of youth workers: The increased cultural / intercultural awareness and European / international dimension in youth workers practice and the exposure to new methods of working are considered the most important elements, training and networking are ranked relatively lower;
- Effectiveness of programme for the youth workers is reduced through non-participation due to non-awareness of the opportunities the programme provides;
- Attention needed for the added value of training provided, as in many cases there is some duplication with other training. Care should be taken that training has not developed a 'life of its own' and risks becoming divorced from the practice and the changing needs of youth work practitioners;
- Support activities are generally seen effective, it contributes to networking, but difficulties are envisaged in applying the knowledge gained through training in practice. The YOUTH Programme is in general higher for pre-accession countries and partner countries. Youth workers indicate that the programme has contributed to their own development and moderately to their employability;
- There is room for measures to improve the relevance and effectiveness of the YOUTH programme in relation to youth workers;
- To work more effectively with young persons with fewer opportunities could be sought in financial incentives for the individual young person with fewer opportunities and equip/train youth workers to work with young people with fewer opportunities;
- The programme contributes modestly to the employability of the participating youth workers;
- Unintended effects for organisations be found in the fact that organisations benefited from the volunteers placed in their organisations, the learning effect on youth work (also in relation to Action 5) and a more international orientation of organisations involved.

7 Utility and sustainability

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter the evaluation questions about utility and sustainability are described. These mainly consider wider impacts of the YOUTH programme⁷. The main bases for this chapter are the questionnaires for the National Agencies and National Authorities and the questionnaire for the organisations. Other sources include the questionnaire for young people and youth workers, as well as interviews undertaken through the country studies. The questions were directed at the overall utility and sustainability of the programme and more specifically to themes including Europe of knowledge, the new international contacts and networks among policy makers, the political interest in youth policy, the contacts established between policy makers and organisations, as well as the sustainable contacts between organisations themselves. Furthermore, the impact of the programme on institutional adaptations and administrative obstacles as well as the recognition of voluntary activities is assessed.

7.2 Contribution to a Europe of Knowledge by offering mobility and non-formal learning opportunities

The concept of lifelong learning is closely connected to the concept of Europe of Knowledge. The objective is that citizens of Europe will be able to develop their fund of knowledge, and this will facilitate an enhancement of citizenship and the development of employability through the acquisition of competencies. The policy aims to build a greater degree of integration between the fields of education, training and youth policy. The new generation of Actions must focus upon a limited number of objectives:

- Increasing the access of European citizens to the full range of Europe's education resources;
- Innovation in resources;
- Wide dissemination of good practice in education.

The YOUTH programme aims at contributing to those objectives by offering mobility and non-formal learning opportunities. The NA/NAUTHs feel that the objectives development of the role of non-formal education and life long learning, are achieved. This is supported by the majority of NA/NAUTHs, 25 out of 30, with 10 answering that they feel this to a great extent.

⁷ The evaluation questions concerning 'utility' for young people (which are basically questions on effectiveness) , are described in Chapter 5.

Furthermore, nearly all (28 out of 30) NA/NAUTH confirmed that, in general, the level of cooperation in non-formal learning had increased as a result of the YOUTH programme, with 13 respondents stating ‘to a great extent’ and 15 ‘to some extent’. There were no major differences across the country groupings. In relation to specific aspects of non-formal learning, the number of responses can be found in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Increase in level of cooperation in the field of non-formal education

Aspect of non-formal learning	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Don't know / No answer
By incorporating non-formal learning elements due to increased cooperation	10	15	2	3
By paying more attention to non-formal education	15	11	1	3
Through new active networks in non-formal education	12	12	4	2

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTH.

There were no major differences across the country groupings.

Summary national reports

In the synthesis of national reports nearly all NA/NAUTH confirmed that in general the level of cooperation in non-formal learning had increased as a result of the YOUTH programme. They also stated that most of the participants of the YOUTH programme express their will of studying or working abroad after their participation in the programme.

7.3 Introduction of new approaches and influence on policy

Alongside the evaluation questions set by the client, the influence of the programme on the introduction of new approaches and on youth policy is evaluated. For this purpose we looked at the influence towards young people, young people with fewer opportunities, lifelong learning and non-formal education, voluntary work and active citizenship. The influence of the programme on new approaches and/or methods of work in relation to organisations and structures is also looked at, along with the influence on policy.

Opinion of the National Agencies and National Authorities: new approached in specific areas

The responses of the NA/NAUTH to the question to what extent the YOUTH programme has introduced new approaches or methods of work in specific areas are summarised below. There was a general consistency in the response rates across the country groupings.

Table 7.2 Introduction of new approaches or methods

Specific area	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Don't know / No answer
Youth field in general	8	21	0	1
Policy towards youth with fewer opportunities	5	20	4	1
Voluntary work	12	14	3	1
Life-long learning	3	20	4	3
Recognition of non-formal education	8	17	4	1
Active citizenship of young people	7	18	3	2

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTH.

Outside of the youth field in general, the greatest extent of influence of the YOUTH programme in terms of the introduction of new methods and approaches has been, according to the NA/NAUTHs, in relation to voluntary work. The least has been in relation to life-long learning. The low extent of influence of the Programme on the introduction of new approaches to life long learning might in some way be explained by the rather abstract nature of life-long learning in comparison to the other more concrete concepts.

Opinion of NA/NAUTHs on the introduction of new approaches or methods of work in relation to organisations/structures

The extent to which the YOUTH programme introduced new approaches or methods of work in relation to organisations/structures (e.g. Government or NGOs, ‘umbrella organisations’, regional / local issues) was a positive feature of the YOUTH programme, with 28 (of 30) NA/NAUTHs respondents acknowledging this. Across the country groupings, the NMS gave much higher ‘to a great extent’ ratings than the OMS; the NMS tend to be more positive regarding the value of YOUTH programme than the OMS, who are likely to be familiar with the so-called ‘new approaches and methods’ – many of these were likely to have been developed in the individual OMS and then integrated into the YOUTH programmes through networking and exchange of good practice events. NMS are thus more likely to find these methods ‘new’ due to the previous experiences of youth work methodology (prior to their accession to the EC / EU), where youth work methodology was less open to innovation and more shaped by centralist modes of thought and organisation. From another perspective, the response rates indicate that the YOUTH programme has had more influence upon / been more able to penetrate, youth work practice rather than youth work policy, in relation to all member states

Opinion of organisations on the introduction of new approaches or methods of work in relation to organisations/structures

To begin with, around three fifths of organisations (61% Action 1; 57% Action 2) think that their project has fostered the development of innovative Actions at the community level. One third (33% and 30%) neither agree nor disagree, only 7 percent and 9 percent disagree. The rest (few percent) have no opinion. More than four fifth of the respondents (84% Action 1; 81% Action 2), feel that their project has fostered the exchange of good practices. A small number (13% and 18%) neither agree nor disagree; only a very low

percentage (3%) disagrees. In other words, when it comes to the *exchange of good practices*, respondents from the organisations are highly positive.

However, they are less positive about the influence on new political initiatives. According to only a quarter of respondents (27% Action 1, 24% Action 2), their activity resulted in more *political initiatives* in the field. Two out of five (42% and 45 %) neither agree nor disagree, a quarter (24% and 23%) disagree; less than a tenth (7% and 8%) strongly disagree.

So, in the opinion of the respondents, on the one hand the programme is not very successful in creating new political initiatives, but on the other hand, the programme is relatively successful in creating innovative Actions.

Summary national reports

The summary of the national reports indicated that in the EU15 and EFTA countries there seems to be no real systematic valorisation of global project results and best practices. However, it is indicated that this is probably due to the fact that good practices were already established. If this is the case, the evaluators consider this a limitation to the ability to introduce new approaches based on best practices. The national reports indicate that for the New Member States, many of the good practices and processes developed under the YOUTH Programme are not only sustainable, but are also giving shape to an important part of the new youth policies emerging in several countries. In candidate countries non formal education is more recognised due to the YOUTH programme and other EU programmes.

Opinion of the evaluators

The YOUTH programme has had more influence upon, and has been more able to penetrate, youth work practice than youth policy in relation to all member states. The innovative approach towards voluntary services, also considered to be contributing to a Europe of Knowledge, seems the most promising in this respect. In general, it appears that the innovation in terms of generating new approaches of the programme is modest, but has the highest influence in New Member States.

In relation to the utility of the programme towards the contribution of the programme to a Europe of Knowledge, it might be considered disappointing that the contribution towards innovative approaches in lifelong learning and non-formal educations, are only judged to be taking place to some extent.

The fact that the programme has more influence on innovative approaches and not so much on policy, may also be a consequence of the fact that stakeholders do not see much complementarity between the objectives of the YOUTH programme when compared to national policy, and limited overlap with the activities (except for the training provided under Action 5).

7.4 Area of cooperation and stable contacts between policy makers and young people/youth organisations

The area of cooperation is assessed on the basis of:

- the new international contacts between stakeholders in the youth field in general and the influence on youth policy;
- ongoing contacts amongst policy makers at different geographical levels;
- number of structural contacts with other countries on youth policy;
- the participation of policy makers in international exchange events;
- the increase of structural contacts with other countries on youth policy, and;
- the sustainability of the partnerships;
- contact policy makers and young people/youth organisations.

7.4.1 New international contacts between stakeholders in the youth field in general and the influence on youth policy

In the questionnaire for National Agencies and National Authorities all NA/NAUTH confirmed that in general, the level of cooperation in the youth field increased as a result of the YOUTH programme, with 13 respondents stating 'to a great extent' and 17 'to some extent'. NMS again recorded much higher 'to a great extent' response rates (5 of 8) than the counterparts in the OMS (6 of 20).

In relation to specific aspects of cooperation, the global response rates were:

Table 7.3 Increase in level of cooperation

Aspect of cooperation	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Don't know / No answer
By incorporating policy elements due to increased cooperation	3	20	2	5
By paying more attention to the youth field	11	15	3	1
By new active networks in the youth field	12	17	0	1

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTH.

Across the country groupings, NMS were generally more positive about the YOUTH programme in relation to increasing the level of cooperation in the youth field. It seems that the increased cooperation does not so much contribute to incorporating new policy elements, but contributes to an increase in attention for the youth field and new active networks among stakeholders.

The same picture becomes visible in the country studies. The area of cooperation in the field of youth increased due to the YOUTH-programme, in particular for National agencies and NGOs. One National Agency emphasized that EURODESK took a special part in this.

7.4.2 Influence on policy makers

Ongoing contacts amongst policy makers

The influence of the programme on on-going contacts amongst policy makers was assessed at different geographical scales: local, regional, national, international and European level. Responses of the questionnaire for National Agencies and National Authorities concerning the extent to which the Programme led to the development of on-going contacts and dialogue among policy-makers are summarised in the following table.

Table 7.4 Development of on-going contacts and dialogue among policy-makers

Level	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Don't know / No answer
Local level	2	18	7	3
Regional level	2	14	11	3
National level	4	22	3	1
International level	5	19	2	4
European level	11	15	1	3

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTH.

The Programme has only moderately contributed to the development of on-going contacts and dialogue amongst policy-makers, although the influence is relatively successful at European level. Across the country groupings, the only difference was in relation to response rates to the issue of development of on-going contacts and dialogue among policy-makers at international level, where the OMS' responded 1 out of 20 'to a great extent' and 16 of 20 'to some extent', in comparison to the NMS' 3 out of 8 and 2 out of 8 respectively. This again is a reflection of the NA/NAUTH in the NMS viewing the YOUTH programme in a more positive light than their counterparts in the OMS.

We found the same results with the interviews during the country studies, which also give a mixed picture of the development of on-going contacts and dialogue among policy-makers. This development differs per country. The national reports however provide a much more optimistic picture: sustainable contacts, networks and policy dialogue in the old member states have been identified. Even though most of these countries already had developed networks, the YOUTH Programme has strengthened and broadened them, while creating new ones where they had not existed.

Sustainability as enhanced participation of policy makers in international exchange events

23 out of 30 respondents to the questionnaire for National Agencies and National Authorities, felt that the YOUTH programme had to some extent enhanced the participation of policy makers in international exchange events. 4 (solely the OMS respondents) stated 'not at all' and there was not one respondent answering 'to a great extent'. A strategy to encourage the participation of policy makers in international exchange events is required if there is to be reduction in the 'to some extent' response rate and an increase in the 'to a great extent' response rate.

From a sustainability perspective, the response rates are encouraging. Participation of policy makers in international exchange events can result in the development of on-going

contacts amongst policy makers, which can lead to policy cooperation and the strengthening of the sustainability of international youth work initiatives.

Sustainability as increase of fruitful structural contact with other countries on youth policy.

Half (15 of 30) of respondents to the questionnaire for National Agencies and National Authorities felt that as a result of the YOUTH programme, fruitful structural contact with other countries on youth policy had, to some extent, increased. 4 (evenly distributed between OMS and NMS respondents) stated ‘not at all’ and there were 3 who answered ‘to a great extent’ (all OMS). The fact that 8 respondents did not know / did not answer, of which 7 were NA’s, reflects the greater focus of the NA’s on management and implementation issues and less on the wider structural / policy concerns, which are seen to be the prerogative of politicians and not civil servants / administrators. Only the OMS (3) were able to confirm that the YOUTH programme had increased fruitful structural contact with other countries on youth policy.

Interviews with National Authorities tell us there hasn’t been an increase in cooperation between the authorities. They already cooperated a lot with each other before the programme existed.

Sustainability as the continuation of partnerships established through the YOUTH programme

In general, 27 of the 30 respondents to the questionnaire for National Agencies and National Authorities, estimate that the partnerships that have been newly established through Youth are likely to continue in some form, though some partners may drop out / withdraw. The fact that most NA/NAUTH envisaged continuing (3 respondents did not know/answer) is very positive from a sustainability perspective. However, it needs to be clarified whether the partnerships are likely to continue because they can access funding support from the new Youth in Action Programme or other EU / non-EU sources, or whether they are likely to continue independent of this external funding support.

The responses rates across the country groupings were consistent in their optimism concerning the continuation of partnerships established through the YOUTH programme.

7.4.3 Contact policy makers and young people/youth organisations

The organisations were asked whether they felt their project has resulted in increased stable contacts and dialogue between policy makers and young people/youth organisations in general. About half of the respondents think this is the case: they agree or strongly agree with this statement. 32 percent (Action 1) and 38 percent (Action 2) neither agree nor disagree, about 20 percent (strongly) disagrees.

More specifically, the respondents were asked to what extent the project has led to the development of on-going contact and dialogue with policy makers at a local, regional, national level and at the level of the organisation. The response categories were: ‘not at all’, ‘to a small extent’, ‘to a great extent’ or ‘don’t know’. According to three quarter of the organisations, the project has fostered ongoing contact with policy makers at the level

of their organisation (Table 7.5). More than half of the respondents report ongoing contact at the local level, 40 percent at the regional level and a quarter at the national level.

Table 7.5 Ongoing contact and dialogue with policy-makers

% 'to a small or great extent'	Action 1	Action 2
Local level	64%	57%
Regional level	41%	37%
National level	28%	26%
Level organisation	71%	77%
Total N	1195	591

Source: ECORYS Organisations questionnaire.

Outcomes of the interviews of the country studies show that most of the countries declare that there are stable contacts between policy makers, young people and organisations, but most of them do not consider this as a result of the YOUTH-programme. In some countries no stable contacts between the mentioned groups are in place.

7.4.4 New networks: youth organisations and young people

Although the extent to which sustainable contacts and networks between organisations and between organisations and young people came into existence was not an explicit evaluation question, we have paid attention to this aspect as we consider it important within the programme. In this section, new networks and dialogue resulting from the activities are discussed, beginning with networks and dialogue with youth organisations, followed by the sustainable contacts with young people.

Contact with (youth) organisations

The YOUTH programme has generated new contacts with other organisations, but only partly. One third of the respondents of the organisations questionnaire of Action 1 and one fifth of the respondents of Action 2, previously organised activities with all or most of the partners involved. About one third (Action 1, 35%; Action 2, 31%) did do so with some of them. Hence, most organisations already had their connections with partners in the field. However, a third (31%) of the respondents of Action 1 and almost half (43%) of Action 2 say that there was with no contact with their partners before the project. In part it can be said, that new networks have been developed as a result of the programme.

For Action 1, there are some differences between the country-categories. Pre-accession countries have worked less often than others with their partners: 40 percent have never worked with any of them. The European and Mediterranean partner countries have more experience. About 40 percent of them have worked with all or most partners before, another 40 percent with some. For Action 2, there are no differences between organisations from old and New Member States (the other categories counted not enough respondents to include them in the analysis).

The respondents of the organisation questionnaire were asked: 'did you stay in contact with partner organisations after the project ended?' For Action 1, 95 percent claim to

have stayed in contact with some or most of the partner organisations. Of the responding organisations for Action 2, 81 percent kept in contact with their partners.

Not only is there continued contact with partners: most partnerships will be or are continued after the project, at least partly (Table 7.6). In this sense, continuation is also guaranteed.

Table 7.6 Continuation of partnerships after the project (organisations questionnaire)

	Action 1	Action 2
Yes, all partners did/will work continue to work together	27%	21%
Yes, most partners did/will continue to work together	28%	22%
Yes, some partners did/will continue to work together	31%	33%
No	8%	10%
Don't know	7%	14%
	n = 1197	n = 591

Source: ECORYS Organisations questionnaire.

Besides questions about the contacts with the partner organisations, questions were also asked about general contact with other (youth) organisations. Roughly two thirds of respondents indicate that the project resulted in increased openness to other organisations work in the youth field. For both Actions, a quarter neither agrees nor disagrees with this, 5 percent disagree and 1 percent strongly disagrees.

Furthermore, the organisations were asked to what extent the project has led to the development of on-going contact and dialogue with other youth organisations at a local, regional, national and European level. The response categories were: 'not at all', 'to a small extent', 'to a great extent' or 'don't know'. As shown in Table 7.7, there is an influence, mainly at the local and the regional level, and less at the national or European level. In general, it seems that the EVS-projects of Action 2 resulted in more ongoing contact and dialogue with other organisations than the projects within Action 1.

Table 7.7 Ongoing contact and dialogue with other organisations

% 'to a small or great extent'	Action 1	Action 2
Local level	75%	80%
Regional level	55%	66%
National level	44%	53%
European level	57%	61%
Total N	n = 1195	n = 591

Source: ECORYS Organisations questionnaire.

Contact with young people

Not only did the projects result in new and continuing contacts with (other) youth organisations; contacts with young participants also continued to a large extent. Almost all organisations (97% Action 1 and 95% Action 2) kept contact with some or most participants after the project ended. Organisations from European and Mediterranean *partner* countries report more often that they have stayed in contact with 'most' ex-participants, compared to other country categories: 57 percent say they are still in contact

with most young ex-participants, in comparison with 36, 44 and 30 percent of the organisations from Old Member States, pre-accession countries and New Member States.

Summary national reports

The national reports confirm the influence of the programme on networks: they show that most of the new Member States youth organisations and young participants have increased their existing networks, both internationally and locally boosting the working possibilities and follow-up activities. The Programme has enabled international and local contacts leading to exchanges of experience. The lasting consequence is that it is now easier for them to find partners for cooperating and potential individuals for joining their activities. In EU15 and EFTA countries networks were already developed, but the YOUTH programme strengthened them.

Opinion of evaluators

Influence on international governmental cooperation not very convincing

In general the programme seems to contribute to an increase in cooperation between stakeholders in the Youth field. However, the contribution of the YOUTH programme on international *governmental* cooperation is not very convincing. First of all, many respondents of the NA/NAUTH questionnaire do not have an idea about this influence at all. The Programme has only moderately contributed to the development of on-going contacts and dialogue amongst policy-makers, although the influence is relatively successful at European level.

The most obvious contribution is found in the readiness of governments to exchange information with other countries, for which 22 respondents indicated that the programme contributes at least to some extent. In general, about half of the respondents indicate that there is some influence of the programme on the following aspects:

- Participation in international exchange events with policy makers;
- The readiness of the government to exchange information with other countries;
- The readiness of the government to foster best practice.

Less influence is found on the readiness of other governments to enhance cooperation in the area of youth voluntary civic services.

Ongoing dialogue between organisations and policy makers mainly found at local level, at national level limited influence

There is an ongoing contact between policy makers and organisations, mainly at a local level. The ongoing contact at national level is rather limited. Although the organisations indicate that their activities under the programme have contributed to developing sustainable contacts with policy makers, the extent of the contribution in comparison to other autonomous developments is difficult to judge.

Modest contribution to the strengthening of international connections between organisations.

There is some contribution of the programme to the establishment of new international contacts between organisations, but in many cases those contacts were already in place. The programme may contribute to strengthening these networks, and fostering their sustainability. In general, the programme has contributed to an increased openness of

organisations to cooperate. This seems to lead to more cooperation at local and regional level.

Summary Focus group Policy influence (Poland)

The YOUTH programme influenced national policies in various ways. It was highlighted by the National Authority that the YOUTH programme has been influencing the system at the same time as the process of democratization of schools was taking place in Poland. School councils and other self-government bodies were created and new subjects introduced into the curriculum, as for example entrepreneurship. The visible result of the European Policy was the creation at schools of special education paths as European and regional path.

Currently the crucial issue from the point of view of NA, NAUTHs as well as NGO's representatives is to establish the National Youth Council which would be representative of the youth environment, having not only an opinion-creation and advisory role, but also representing Polish young people at the European level. Currently the Children and Youth Council has been operating since it was set up by the Minister of Education in June 2006. The NAUTH finds this establishment an important example of the influence of the YOUTH programme on the institutional settings.

The NA and NGOs are however sceptical about the utility of the existing bodies for the promotion of needs of the young people at national level. This is especially related to the Children and Youth Council; currently there is a discussion over the status and structure of the future Council.

The overall opinion of the NGO representatives was that in general the European Youth Policies are visible in relation to the YOUTH Programme. However many actions could still be undertaken to improve visibility. For example it was recommended to develop and support partnerships comprising of NGOs-local governments-local enterprises. Also more effort could be made to involve local officials into promotion and information. In particular, the role and actions undertaken by of the YOUTH programme Coordinators established in school inspectorates (associated mainly with formal education), requires improvement.

NGOs as well as the National Authority very positively assessed the dissemination activities of the NA. Also it was strongly stressed by the NGO and National Agency that many actions in this field have been undertaken by organisations themselves. There are however still towns/ villages in Poland where information about the YOUTH programme has not reached so far. Very positive assessment towards international trainings organised by the National Agency was expressed by one of the NGOs.

It was indicated that the key lesson learned from the YOUTH PROGRAMME is that it activates young people, their parents as well as local communities. Participation in the YOUTH programme gives for many young people, a first opportunity of leaving their home town/village. The YOUTH programme also contributes to breaking the stereotypes of the EU by their parents.

It was suggested that the language of the application should be made more understandable for young people, but that the NA is not entitled to introduce changes into the form. They could only add some guidance. The NA continued that currently the work on a new guide is being finalised, which would be more understandable for beneficiaries. The NA added that it undertook efforts to provide its own translation of the guide, instead of that provided by the EC which was found by the NA not to be fully clear from the point of view of the target group.

As far as input issues are concerned the NGO's representative stated that the level of grants is sufficient, however the total amount of money allocated for Poland is not enough from the point of view of needs. The NA

pointed out that there is a need for the EC to introduce more flexibility in relation to reporting and financing procedures.

The overall conclusion drawn by all participants from the meeting was that there is a need to improve communication between NA, NC and NGO's about available trainings, meetings and conferences to commonly shape the future of youth policy in Poland.

7.4.5 Political interest and adaptation of (national) policy

The political interest is measured through the following aspects:

- Changes in political interest in Youth policy.
- Adoption/changes in national policy.

Changes in political interest in Youth policy

The interviews from country studies show mixed results according to changes of political interest. Some countries mention that political interest increases in youth policy, other countries state there hasn't been any change to the extent of political interest in youth policy. A few countries declare that the YOUTH programme accomplished new dialogues between young people and policy makers in the youth field (see next paragraph).

Utility as the changes in National policy due to the implementation of the YOUTH programme

Opinion NA/NAUTHs

Overall the responses of the questionnaire for National Agencies and National Authorities did not see many significant degree of changes in national youth policy due to the implementation of the YOUTH programme with 7 stating 'not at all' and only 4 'to a great extent'. Over half of the respondents (17) indicated 'to some extent'. NAs/NAUTHs in OMS were less convinced about the contribution of the YOUTH programme to changes in national policy, than the corresponding structures in the NMS.

The country studies confirmed this picture: most interviewees stated that the programme has no influence on the national policies. Some influences were indicated in France and Greece: France mentioned that the YOUTH programme had brought up a new European dimension on local and national YOUTH policy. In Greece, the needs of young people had become more visible and the Greek government is getting more involved in the field.

Concerning the influence of the YOUTH programme on policy, the respondents of the NA/NAUTH questionnaire are the most optimistic about the influence on international policy. In general, they see (some) influence on this. The outcomes of the questionnaire for National Agencies and National Authorities show that the YOUTH programme has in general, at least to some extent, influenced the introduction of new approaches and methods on youth. A relatively strong influence is found to be in the field of voluntary work (14 indicated to a great extent, 13 to some extent), especially in the New Member States (at the same time the influence on specific EVS policy issues seems to be limited, see paragraph 7.6.2). It has also influenced the recognition of non-formal education, and the approach towards active citizenship of young people. Also here the influence in NMS

is slightly stronger than in the Old Member States. The influence of the programme on policies towards young people with fewer opportunities and life long learning is less strong, but still the majority do report a certain influence.

Opinion of organisations

The organisations were asked to what extent the results or insights from their project have been adopted in policy-making at different levels. Not surprisingly, results have been adopted by the organisations themselves in many cases. But, respondents are also optimistic about the adoption of results at the local and even regional level. A minority think results of their projects have been adopted in national or European policy (Table 7.8).

Table 7.8 Adopted results in policy making

% 'to a small or great extent'	Action 1	Action 2
Local level	73%	67%
Regional level	47%	47%
National level	29%	34%
European level	28%	25%
Level organisation	83%	81%
Total N	n= 1195	n = 591

Source: ECORYS Organisations questionnaire.

Summary national reports

In EU15 and EFTA countries the impact on national policy has not been large, in some countries the YOUTH programme helped either to let youth policies become more visible or to support ongoing developments. The first impact identified in the new Member States is related to the increased political interest in youth issues. The YOUTH Programme has helped to draw attention of the public and local authorities to youth issues.

Opinion of evaluators

The contribution of the programme to an increase in political interest and the influence of the programme on national policy is rather limited. Where some influence on national policy was found, it is mainly in the NMS. This could be related to the likelihood that youth policies in the NMS are in the process of review as a result of the political changes which preceded / accompanied their entry into the EU, and that their policies are now being shaped by European YOUTH programmes and policies. OMS youth policies may have been in place prior to their entry into the EC and therefore the influence of the YOUTH programme and EU Youth policy would be less penetrative. Contrary to the influence on policy at higher geographical levels, at the level of organisations and at the local level, there seems to be a considerable influence of the programme on policy.

7.5 Institutional and administrative adaptations

This issue is assessed through the following indicators:

- Extent to which new non-governmental structures have come into existence;
- Extent to which the programme has led to new administrative structures.

The influence on national level (like on non governmental structures), new national policy and administrative structures are in general seen by the NA/NAUTHs as rather limited, although about half of the respondents see a (limited) influence. At a national level, the influence on the introduction of new non governmental structures seems the most visible. The respondents from the New Member States and pre-accession countries are slightly more positive on the national effects than those of the Old Member States. This outcome was more or less expected, as the NMS have a less extended experience in Youth policy than the Old Member States.

In Poland the focus group within the country study was directed to policy topics. During the meeting the following wish concerning a new structure arose:

Currently the crucial issue from the point of view of NA, NC as well as NGO's representatives is to establish the *National Youth Council*. Council which would be representative of the youth environment, having not only an opinion-creation and advisory role, but also representing Polish young people at the European level. Currently the Children and Youth Council has been operating since it was set up by the Minister of Education in June 2006. The NC finds this establishment an important example of the influence of the YOUTH programme on the institutional settings.

Opinion of evaluators

In general, there seems to be no real influence on the administrative and institutional structures within the Member States.

7.6 Reduction administrative mobility obstacles and legal status EVS volunteers

7.6.1 Influence on administrative mobility

The responses from questionnaire for National Agencies and National Authorities illustrate that the influence of the YOUTH programme on reducing the number of administrative obstacles such as obtaining visas, is a cause for concern. The response rates, which are consistent across the country groups are presented in Table 7.9.

Table 7.9 Opinion NA/NAUTH effectiveness on reduction of administrative obstacles

Response	
Not at all	13
To some extent	13
To a great extent	0
Other	3
Don't know / no answer	1

Source: ECORYS questionnaire NA/NAUTH.

In the category, 'Other' responses, it was pointed out that the visa issue still remains a serious obstacle since most visa authorities do not know about the Programme and its aims, that visas to enter specific countries such as France were always difficult to obtain, and that (in Luxembourg, where there was no 'voluntary service'), the YOUTH

programme has not resulted in the reduction of obstacles but had created a number of administrative problems. From the perspective of utility, in respect of enhancing youth mobility, the YOUTH programme appears to have made few significant inroads.

An interviewee mentioned concerning troubles with regards to obtaining a visa:

Some obstacles concerning obtaining visas for voluntary workers of third countries have hindered the projects. As there is no European regulation concerning the status of these Young Voluntary workers, many problems were encountered.

A small number of young people involved in Action 2 (9%, 39 respondents) pointed out in the questionnaire, that they encountered problems with obtaining visa for the EVS (that this number is small is also due to the fact that most respondents are living within the EU and had their EVS within the EU as well, so they did not need visa), 16 percent (67 respondents) reported other obstacles, such as in legislation or administrative procedures.

Summary of national reports

In some EU15 and EFTA countries the YOUTH programme either contributed or tried to reduce mobility obstacles for EVS volunteers.

7.6.2 Legal status EVS volunteers and policy influence on EVS

Legal status

From the country studies it appeared that most countries think that the YOUTH programme didn't influence the legal status for volunteers, which other developments such as national policies did.

A positive exception is found in the Czech Republic where EVS contributed to the latest development of legislation regarding voluntary work. The Act of voluntary service was adopted by the Parliament in April 2002 and it was among others inspired by EVS experience. The existence of this Act proves that voluntary work has a certain importance in the Czech Republic due to the YOUTH programme.

Sustainability as policy impact of EVS

The extent to which the EVS Programme was judged by NA/NAUTH (in the questionnaire) to have influenced the current situation / future prospects from a policy perspectives (and thus potentially influence the sustainability of international volunteer programmes) is summarised in the following table.

Table 7.10 Influence of EVS on specific policy issues which affect the sustainability of international volunteer programmes

Policy issue	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Don't know / No answer
Core-funding support from national government sources for organisations engaged in International Volunteer Programmes	1	4	20	5

Policy issue	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Don't know / No answer
Access to funding of International Volunteer Programmes from non-EC sources	0	8	13	9
Inclusion of International Volunteer Programmes into the core-curriculum of youth work training	0	10	14	6
Mainstreaming of International Volunteer Programmes into national youth work	2	15	10	3
National budgetary allocations specifically for International Youth Exchanges	1	8	16	5
National funding of training and research in relation to International Volunteer Programmes	1	4	22	3
The legal status for EVS volunteers on national level	2	15	11	2

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTH.

Across the country groupings, NMS displayed reservations regarding the impact of EVS on policy issues and consistently registered very high 'not at all' response rates. This may be related to unrealistically high expectation levels amongst the NMS regarding the impact of EVS on policy issues. The frequency of the 'to some extent' responses from OMS, suggests that international voluntary service has been a feature of traditional youth policy in these countries prior to the establishment of EVS and that EVS is perhaps one scheme amongst others, thus reducing its potential impact in comparison to say that of the NMS. The above response rates suggest that EVS had little impact in respect of youth policy related to international voluntary service and thus contributes little to increasing its sustainability within national policy. It therefore reinforces the position of NA/NAUTH, that no additional funding should be allocated to EVS and that it should perhaps be subject to a more specific review in the context of the new Youth in Action Program.

According to the NA/NAUTHs, the extent to which EVS Action influenced the current situation or future prospects in their country, with regards to core-funding support from national government sources for organisations engaged in international volunteer Programmes, as many as 20 (of 30) respondents indicated that this was not at all the case (5 were positive, 5 did not answer/did not know).

Opinion of evaluators

There seems to be no influence of the programme on the reduction of administrative obstacles for mobility. The visa problem is still highlighted as an important bottleneck. The effect of the programme on the legal status for European Volunteers, social security and rights of young people is rather modest. In general some influence of the programme on those issues is suggested, but around one third of the respondents also indicated that there was no influence at all. The interviews from the country studies confirm this judgement.

7.7 Recognition voluntary activities and value non-formal learning

7.7.1 Recognition of voluntary activity of young people

Sustainability as the increased level of recognition of the value of voluntary activities

In the questionnaire for National Agencies and National Authorities the NA/NAUTH responded that as a result of the YOUTH programme, the level of recognition of the value of voluntary activities has increased, with 8 respondents answering 'to a great extent' and 19 answering 'to some extent'. All 3 of respondents, who expressed a 'not at all' response, represented the OMS. There were no major deviations in the responses of NA/NAUTH across the country groupings. From a sustainability perspective, these responses are encouraging since increased recognition of the value of voluntary activities, can lead to increased financial, institutional and legislative support for voluntary activities from the respective governments in the EU member and accession states.

The NAs and NAUTHS indicate that the profile of the voluntary activity for young people was to some extent raised at local, regional and national level. At local level, the influence seems to be the strongest. The NMS are more positive on the effect than the Old Member States.

This mixed picture is also confirmed by the country studies. Some countries, such as France, mention new laws on civil volunteering, some countries declare that voluntary work is now more recognised as a result of the programme, but they also highlight that recognition is also due to many other reasons, for example the Olympics in Greece. These countries see the increase in recognition of voluntary work as a general trend. There were also countries which stated that the recognition of voluntary work of young people had not increased.

Participants of a focus group stated that it is absolutely necessary to receive certificates (like the Youth pass) for their work at action 2 and action 3. Especially, because they feel that they learned very much by participating in the actions including:

- How to organise events;
- The fact that one depends on others in order to achieve something: to work in teams;
- How to organise oneself and be accessible to others;
- To think socially (social commitment);
- To appreciate the work of others;
- To deal with things immediately;
- To deal with ones own reservations.

Recognition of voluntary activities according to organisations

As regards Action 2, organisations gave their opinion on the degree of increased local recognition of the importance of *voluntary activities* for young people as a consequence of the project, and differentiated by policy level. More than half of the respondents say their project had a positive influence (to a great extent) locally. The assumed influences on regional and national level are smaller, only about a quarter of the respondents believe that the effect s on regional and national level have been significant (Table 7.11).

Table 7.11 Increased recognition of the importance of voluntary activities of young people

	Local level	Regional level	National level
Not at all	6%	15%	24%
To a small extent	30%	42%	32%
To a great extent	61%	29%	23%
Don't know	3%	13%	21%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Total N	n = 591	n = 591	n = 591

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire organisations Action 2.

During one of the focus groups, the following ideas on how to improve the recognition of voluntary work of young people among policy makers were postulated:

- Disseminating examples of good EVS practice and results of evaluations to policy makers – this should be the responsibility of the National Agency;
- Volunteer schemes are particularly vulnerable to ‘value for money’ concerns – “ they are a kind of holiday” – Research into the cost-effectiveness of volunteer schemes should be undertaken and policy implications identified;
- To develop research capacity to address issues such as ‘efficiency’, effectiveness’ ‘impact’, ‘valorisation in all aspects of YOUTH Programmes;
- EVS volunteers could be attached to policy makers / policy departments to demonstrate the value of EVS and also increase its visibility and legitimacy;
- Large scale promotion campaign targeting public opinion leaders / policy makers and development of a lobbying strategy for EVS;
- Commission a comparative research study into efficiency and effectiveness of different volunteer schemes. This should be the responsibility of the European Commission.

7.7.2 Recognition value non-formal learning

Opinion of NA/NAUTHs

The effect of the YOUTH programme on the level of recognition of the value of non-formal learning is seen by a lot of respondents: 17 of the 31 respondents indicate this is the case to some extent and 10 see it as a big influence. The effect seems to be slightly stronger in the NMS and pre accession countries.

From the country studies, it appears that almost all National Agencies and National Authorities see an increasing knowledge in Europe about non-formal education and the learning about key-competencies. But they also declare that it is difficult to measure to what extent this increase arose from the YOUTH-programme. Probably the YOUTH-programme is one of many interventions that contributed to this result.

Opinion of organisations

The European Commission hopes that the programme leads to a greater recognition of the value of non-formal learning. Three quarter of the organisation respondents (75% Action 1; 73% Action 2) agree that in general, their project ‘stimulates the recognition of the value of non-formal education acquired within a European context’. To learn about more specific *local* effects, respondents in Action 1 were asked to differentiate their opinion on the influence of the project according to policy level. They were asked to what extent

their project has led to an increased recognition of the contribution of non-formal education locally, regionally and nationally (Table 7.12). The respondents were quite optimistic about the effects on the local level; half of them think their project has increased recognition of the contribution of non-formal education *to a great extent*. It may come as no surprise that the respondents are less positive regarding influences on the regional and national level, since most activities took place at a local level

Table 7.12 Increased recognition of the contribution of non-formal education

	Local level	Regional level	National level
Not at all	7%	19%	27%
To a small extent	35%	36%	26%
To a great extent	51%	22%	17%
Don't know	8%	23%	30%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Total N	n = 1195	n = 1195	n = 1195

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire Youth organisations Action 1.

As already indicated in Table 7.2, the NA/NAUTHs are quite optimistic about the recognition of non-formal education, the majority indicates that this is a result that occurs at least to some extent. The summary of the national reports confirms that, especially in the New Member States, EVS is greatly encouraged and appreciated as it is recognised as very important for non-formal education.

Summary national reports

Some countries stated that the YOUTH programme helped to increase the recognition of voluntary work. Most of them were new member states and candidate member states.

7.7.3 Opinion evaluators

The picture influence on the recognition of voluntary services is rather mixed across the countries. Hence, we can say there is a limited influence. The increase in recognition reported by the organisations is mainly found at local level (but it may just be that this level is more visible to them). Concerning voluntary service, participants consider the certificates as crucial for the recognition of the service. There seems to be room for measures that contribute to the increase of recognition of voluntary work.

In general, the interest in non-formal learning in Europe is increasing. Studies show, that the different countries throughout Europe use different approaches for the implementation of non-formal learning. Just by the fact that the programme addresses non-formal learning the programme is contributing to making the non-formal learning aspect more visible. Hence, it is clear that the programme contributed to the aspect non-formal learning in terms of activities and awareness rising, but to what extent the programme contributed to these developments in comparison to exogenous elements, is difficult to determine.

7.8 Conclusions

The utility and sustainability criteria are basically wider impacts. The main findings are presented below:

- Contribution to a Europe of Knowledge due to the opportunities the programme provides and the contribution to strengthening cooperation in the field of non-formal education;
- The contribution towards innovative approaches to lifelong learning and non-formal educations is not very large;
- Limited contribution of the programme towards policy, but some influence on innovative approaches;
- Influence on international governmental cooperation not very convincing, but the readiness of governments to exchange information with other countries has been increased due to the programme. The programme does contribute to an increase in cooperation on a lower level between stakeholders in the Youth field;
- Ongoing dialogue between organisations and policy makers mainly found at local level, at national level limited influence;
- Modest contribution to the strengthening of international connections between organisations;
- Increase in political interest as result of the programme is limited. EU policy in general and not so much the YOUTH programme seems to influence national policy, although there is some effect in the New Member States;
- No influence on administrative and institutional structures, nor on the reduction of administrative mobility obstacles

8 Programme implementation and efficiency

In this Chapter the implementation and efficiency of the programme is looked at. In the first paragraphs the inputs into the programme in terms of human resources and financial means are looked at, followed by a description and judgement upon the decentralised and centralised procedures. The paragraphs following go into the appropriateness and efficiency of the different structures within the programme. Finally, within the last two paragraphs, the visibility of the programme and monitoring arrangements are judged upon, followed by conclusions.

8.1 Human and financial resources

8.1.1 Human resources

National Agencies promote and implement the YOUTH Programme at national level. They are responsible for the everyday management of the Programme, covering the whole Programme life cycle except for project selection. The NAs are staffed depending on size of country and budget to be deployed.

Opinion National Agencies/National Authorities

The number of staff within the NAs is indicated by them in the questionnaire. The size seems rather diversified.

Table 8.1 Number of staff per type organisation

Number of staff	National Agency
0-5	6
6-10	7
11-15	7
16-20	0
>20	8
	28

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTHs.

In general table 8.2 shows the number of staff of NA's is higher when the population of young people is larger in the countries. The relation is not one to one, sometimes a country with more young people has a smaller number of staff in the NA. It is most likely there are more criteria than the population size of young people to determine the number of staff.

Table 8.2 Size of the NA by population aged 15-24 (*1000) and by self evaluation sufficiency of human resources

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	>20	Total
0 through 500	4	1	2	0	0	7
500 through 1000	1	1	0	0	2	4
1000 through 1500	0	5	1	0	0	6
Over 1500	0	0	2	0	6	
Total	6	7	5	0	8	25
Sufficient	1	1	1	0	2	5
Barely sufficient	1	6	3	0	3	13
Insufficient	3	0	1	0	3	7
Total	5	7	5	0	8	25

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTHs

Perhaps more important is the question whether the successful running of the NAs (and thus the implementation of the Programme) is affected by the actual number of staff (in NA). The opinion of the NA on this issue, tend towards needing more staff. 13 of the NA's mention that the available human resources are barely sufficient, 7 judge them as insufficient and 5 as sufficient.

Additionally, 23 (of 30) NA and NAUTHs indicated that they had to some or to a great extent encountered particular difficulties with regards to staff resource capacity. This relates to the remarks made in the following paragraph on issues for which more resources are needed.

8.1.2 Operating grant NAs

Opinion NA/NAUTHs

We asked the NA/NAUTHs to rate whether they found the financial resources available for the overall successful running of the National Agencies sufficient. The picture is mixed as well: 11 respondents indicate that the financial resources are sufficient, while 14 indicate them as barely sufficient to insufficient.

Subsequently, NA/NAUTHs were asked how the operational budget was spent (in percentages), in relation to the key activities under the Programme. The responses are presented below (we calculated the average percentage).

Table 8.3 Budget en time consumption per activity

Activities	Budget Consumption	Time Consumption
Organisation of activities	15%	13%
Disseminating information	13%	12%
Establishing partnerships	6%	6%
Project selection	16%	16%
Advising project promoters	16%	19%
Management of the agreements with the beneficiaries	14%	16%
Monitoring	8%	9%
Reporting	8%	10%
Other *	26% (12%)	23% (7%)

Source: ECORYS questionnaire NA/NAUTHs.

* 3 (of 18) respondents filled in a percentage of 100 percent in the other response, these were all NC. Without the answers of the NC on the "other" option the new percentage is presented between brackets. For the remaining options, an average of 25 respondents answered.

Whilst there are a few major deviations across the country groupings in respect of the above responses, the above rates are a general representation of how the operational budget was spent in relation to the above activities. For comparison, the above table also includes time spent on the different activities. This largely corresponds with budget spend.

On the question whether the key activities required more budget, the responses can be found in Table 8.4. (NB. This question allowed the respondents to choose more than 1 option).

Table 8.4 Activities requiring more budget

Activities requiring more budget	Percentage of respondents who choose activity
Organisation of activities	44%
Disseminating information	64%
Establishing partnerships	16%
Project selection	32%
Advising project promoters	56%
Management of the agreements with the beneficiaries	32%
Monitoring	60%
Reporting	20%
Others*	36%

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTHs.

* such as providing funding to regional committees to do more promotion; research and evaluation; Supporting the national processes in building the European Youth Policy (e.g. OCM reporting, participation, European Youth Week).

The priority activities requiring greater budget were dissemination, monitoring and advising project promoters. These were generally consistent amongst country groupings.

Efficiency of Community Operating Grant

Next to rating the general amount of financial budget for the overall running of the NA/NAUTHs, we also asked the NA/NAUTHs to rate the size of the Community Operating Grant they received in relation to the decentralized Action budget. 16 of

30 NA/NAUTH respondents stated that the Community Operating Grant was too low. Across the country groupings, this included 12 (of 20) OMS and 3 (of 8) NMS.

A further 4 respondents did not know / gave no answer. Although 10 found the operating grant ‘OK’, not surprisingly, no respondent felt the grant was too high. Of the NAUTHs who responded to this question 3 of 6 did not know / gave no answer, whilst 1 of 6 felt it was too low – this compares to the 15 of 20 too low rating given by the NA. This fits in with the results of Table 8.5.

In the interviews that were conducted most of the NA/NAUTH indicated that the resources were not sufficient (money), although some were satisfied. More money was needed to enable better training (as the NAs want to be a learning organisations to propagate good practice) and more time for overall management (project management takes up a lot of time)

Opinion of evaluators

The different opinions held by the NA and their corresponding NAUTHs should be examined at the level of the individual OMS and NMS both internally. Whether the operation grant is sufficient should be closely monitored for the new programme, as the administrative burden for the NAs has increased. The administration burden issue has been raised within the context of other programme, like Socrates and Leonardo, as well. At the same time, it becomes clear that for certain actions more resources are needed. These findings are largely coherent with the main weaknesses found in the implementation of the programme, namely monitoring and dissemination of information. It might be considered as important to ensure resources for those tasks.

8.1.3 Appropriateness financial envelope ADEC

ADEC stands for decentralised action budget, in this chapter we analyse if the financial envelope of ADEC is appropriate. We start with the responses to question ‘For which of the following actions do you think more budget should be made available in your country? (Choose 1)’ The NA/NAUTHs responded as follows (Table 8.5).

Table 8.5 More budget wanted for which actions?

	Number
Action 1 - Youth for Europe	14
Action 2 - European Voluntary Service	2
Action 3 - Youth Initiatives	5
Action 4 - Joint Actions	0
Action 5 - Support Measures	9
	N= 30

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTHs.

Across the country groupings, there was no support in the PAC and NMS for increasing the budget for EVS and minimum support for this in OMS. Whereas the OMS expressed a preference for increased support to Action 1 and Action 5, NMS favoured increasing the support fairly evenly across Actions 1, 3 and 5. The low response rate (1 of 20) amongst

OMS for increasing the budget for Action 3 requires further examination. The much higher response of OMS (7 out of 20) for increasing the budget of Action 5 could perhaps be explained by the fact that training and support activities for the staff of NA/NAUTHs are supported through this Action and this rating could be an expression of vested interest on their part.

In the interviews within the country studies, only a few NA/NAUTH indicated that the budgets per Action were satisfactory. Most stated they would like more financing. Some have reallocated the budgets of the Actions, with permission of the EC. In general, if the EC want the Programme to develop and expand, the NA/NAUTH are of the opinion that more money is needed in any case.

Depletion of budget

The successful depletion of the budget for the YOUTH Programme can be seen as an indicator of the demand for the Programme. The responses rates of the NA/NAUTHs are summarised in Table 8.6.

Table 8.6 Depletion of budget

Depletion of Budget	
Not successful at all	0
Not successful	1
Neutral	5
Successful	20
Highly successful	4
Don't know / no answer	0

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTH.

There were no major differences in the response rates across the country groupings. From the perspective of successful budget depletion, the Programme should be considered efficient.

Opinion of the evaluator

The ADEC envelope seems in general to be fine, judged on the needs indicated and the successfulness of the number of applications (see next paragraph). However, about half of the NA/NAUTHS are of the opinion that Action 1 needs more budget. One third of them mention Action 5 as the Action that needs more financing. This could indicate that it is successful and the NA/NAUTHS want to expand this action, or that there is a clear need for the activities under this Action. At the same time, in light of the conclusions of Chapter 6 on the effectiveness of the training for youth workers for instance, the execution and financing of Action 5 appears to need adjustments, mainly in terms of meeting the needs of the beneficiaries.

8.1.4 Number of applications for different actions

The number of applications per Action is regarded as successful by the NA/NAUTHs. This aspect is, of course, highly related to the fact that the depletion of budget was successful as well. The responses rates are summarised below in Table 8.7.

Table 8.7 Degree of success of applications

Action	Not successful at all	Not successful	Neutral	Successful	Highly successful	Don't know/no answer
Action 1	0	0	1	13	16	0
Action 2	0	7	3	12	8	0
Action 3	0	2	4	9	15	0

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTH

Across the country groupings NMS gave more ‘highly successful’ ratings to Actions 1 and 3, than their counterparts in the OMS.

Action 2 – EVS was seen as the least successful of the Actions – there was consistency in the responses of OMS, PAC and NMS in respect of this. This is consistent with the earlier indication that the funding for EVS should not be increased.

Opinion evaluators

Action 1 and 3 seems to be successful as the NA/NAUTH largely indicate that the number of applications for these Actions is successful or highly successful. Furthermore, the successfulness of the number of applications also shows that the NA/NAUTHs are not satisfied with the interest for Action 2. It was only during the interviews that Action 2 was mentioned as needing more budget (while the number of NA/NAUTH included in the questionnaire was higher). This seems to point to the fact that EVS is less effective in attracting (good) applications, although it could also point in the direction of special interest in Action 2, with expectations and/or wishes that there were more applications for this interesting opportunity enabled by the Programme. As EVS is such an important part of the YOUTH programme, this issues needs to be addressed further in the mid term review for the new Youth in Action Programme.

8.1.5 Appropriateness of financing of SALTO “Training and Cooperation”

The SALTO offices receive an annual budget for the running of the activities. The budget is co-financed by the national governments. The SALTO Training and Cooperation indicates that the budget is rather tight; the majority of the resources are spent on personnel and office/ overhead costs. As a result, there is only little budget left for activities and certainly nothing left at the end of each budget-cycle.

The appropriateness of financial support varies per task of the Recourse centres:

- In the field of training, the funds are judged as being sufficient. Over the years training programmes have become established (and require not so much further development) and organised in such a way that potential trainees can subscribe for a course online. This has gradually reduced the costs for SALTOs;
- The budget for managing the SALTO website seems to be sufficient as well. The SALTO Training and Cooperation RC manages the website and arrange the technical aspects (like keeping the site online). Other SALTO centres maintain their own pages on the site;

- The question whether the budget for coordinating activities is sufficient depends, according to the interviewees, on the ambitions of the Commission. If coordinating activities should go beyond the organisation of -in particular- the TCP Seminar of the NAs towards virtual training-programmes on the internet, then the budget (but also the mandate) for the SALTO offices is too limited;
- Concerning the development of the Youthpass, the European validation instrument of non-formal learning, the budget is considered to be too limited. Given the objectives of the Youthpass and the size of the project, the number of staff who are currently working on this project should be equipped with more funds.

According to the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC the European Commission is very reluctant in providing individual SALTO centres with more funds than others. This leaves the impression that funds are not provided on the basis of an analysis of needs of SALTO centres, but rather rest on a consensus within the programme committee. At the same time, SALTOs do have a right to ask for extra funds during the year. Till now the Commission has rewarded the requests in those cases that they were well-substantiated.

Opinion of the evaluators

Seen in the light of the later remarks made on SALTOs, it seems that the budget available for the SALTOs could be subject for review, in combination with the activities and tasks.

8.1.6 Budget for the Activities received by organisations

The organisations were asked what level of funding their organisation received through the programme (Table 8.8). The level of funding varies enormously, probably due to the fact that the question was multi-interpretable. Some organisations may have mentioned the total amount of funding received during the past few years for a number of projects, while others reported only the amount for one project. Overall, the large differences are difficult to explain. The maximum amount reported for Action 1 was one million euros, for Action 2 the highest amount was 140.000 Euros.

Table 8.8 Level of funding the organisation receiving through the Programme (in euros)

%	Action 1	Action 2
1-500 Euro	4%	4%
500-1.000 Euro	5%	10%
1.000-2.500 Euro	10%	13%
2.500-5.000 Euro	16%	20%
5.000-7.500 Euro	12%	20%
7.500-12.500 Euro	17%	11%
12.500-25.000 Euro	25%	10%
25.000-100.000 Euro	10%	12%
More than 100.000 Euro	1%	1%
Total N	1189	601

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire organisations.

Opinion organisations

In response to the question about how appropriate the size of the grant had been in relation to the projects objectives and intended outcomes, about two third of the organisations (Action 1, 65%; Action 2, 59%) say the size of the grant was appropriate, about a quarter (Action 1, 23%; Action 2, 27%) think it was too small. Only very few respondents state the size of the grant was too large; the rest ‘don’t know’. From the country studies it became clear that for some countries for instance, the living allowances are too low in relation to the real costs. This is an aspect which is also indicated in the national reports: some countries call for more flexibility in order to differentiate according to the local circumstances.

8.2 Efficiency Decentralised Procedures

8.2.1 Adequacy of administration and management procedures

Opinion NA/NAUTHs

NA/NAUTH answered on several factors whether administration and management procedures were adequate.

Table 8.9 Adequacy of administrative and management procedures

Aspects	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Don't know / No answer
Information / communication systems in place	9	17	2	2
Deadlines for project submission / Timing of calls of proposals	15	10	2	3
Frequency of deadlines for project submission / calls of proposals	15	10	2	3
Selection processes and criteria	10	17	0	3
Fund management	9	18	0	3
Availability of matching-funding	6	15	4	5
Reporting by applicant to National Agency	12	16	0	2
Reporting National Agency to National Authority /European Commission	14	11	2	3

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTHs.

The aspects “deadlines for project submission/timing of calls of proposals”, “frequency of deadlines for project submission/calls of proposals”, and “reporting of National Agency to National Authority/European Commission” were rated most adequate. Availability of matching funding was deemed least adequate. There were no major differences across the country groupings.

From the country studies a different picture appears. In an open question about recommendations to the programme, multiple countries answered that the procedure should be simplified. They are not content with the changes that have been made; the procedure must still be modified and made less complicated. They also emphasise that administrative costs are too high and have to be reduced.

Opinion of youth workers

Youth workers generally deemed the procedures of the YOUTH programme to be appropriate and efficient. However, two thirds of youth workers considered that the time, effort and resources which they committed to the YOUTH programme could be more effectively used on other activities/aspects of their work. This is not necessarily a contradiction but an indication that unless international youth work is sufficiently 'mainstreamed' into the 'core business' of youth workers, these youth workers, are likely to view the efficiency of the YOUTH programme primarily from a comparative perspective i.e. the time, effort and resource requirements of other activities/aspects of their work, and not from the perspective of the YOUTH programme itself

Summary National Reports

The summary provides a mixed picture regarding to the user friendliness of selection procedures. Some countries state the procedure is easy (enough) others declare a lot of difficulties with the applications.

8.2.2 Criteria and (funding) rules

Opinion NA/NAUTHs

The implementation methodology in Programme handbook in relation to national context

High ratings (28 of 31 positive) confirmed the implementation methodology of the YOUTH programme as describe in the handbook, as fitting with the context of the countries. The handbook could be adapted to the national context by the National Agencies. However, some National Agencies report problems in the field of double book keeping due to different currencies (i.e. Euro and national currency for New Member State) and the problem that the handbook does not always fit with the national rules.

A tendency of the Commission to try to homogenise can be appreciated in the procedures described in the Handbook according to the National Authority. The model of Agency with which the Commission works is not easy to accommodate to each country. This makes processes strict and bureaucratic and makes it difficult to each country to adapt to the model imposed by the Commission. A more flexible model and an identification of which aspects can be more flexible is needed, because some management procedures and the accountancy system are very hard to adapt to a public management system (from interview).

Of the 32 respondents, 20 indicated that the implementation rules supported to some extent the good functioning of the organisation/implementation efficient implementation of the YOUTH programme 6 judged that this was the case to a great extent while 4 thought this was not at all the case. When asking it differently, to what extent the rules hindered the good functioning of the organisations, also 20 out of 32 indicated this was the case to some extent. Problems indicated are:

- The high administrative burden and the changes in procedures during the running time of the programme. The result of the rules is that there is a lot of time spent on administration, checking and control, and less time left for quality control during implementation and customer services (mentioned by 7 respondents);
- The information in youth link does not always match with the reporting requirements (mentioned by 3 respondents).

With regards the procedures towards the applicants, the following remark came up:

- Inflexibility of the rules and relatively difficult application procedures, which is difficult in relation to the target group that needs some flexibility, also to match the local circumstances (indicated by 6 respondents).

Also, over two thirds of respondent NA/NAUTH held the opinion that it is desirable to review / restructure the way of management arising from the YOUTH programme, in order to facilitate a better functioning of their organisation. Only 2 out of 30 said that this was not necessary. Across the country groupings, the need for a review / restructuring was expressed strongest in the OMS, where 4 (of 20) of the respondents gave the 'to a great extent' response, in comparison the other groupings where no country expressed this desire.

In the explanations the respondents could give, most respondents reflected on the high administrative and financial/audit burden. Although out of the scope of this evaluation, a lot of remarks were made about the procedures for the new programme, imposing more financial rules. Some NAs have the feeling they are becoming a financial institute instead of a supporting structure for Youth policy.

Over time more activities have been decentralised which has been very good for end users and the smooth running of the programme. At the same time this has increased the administrative procedures a lot (not necessarily bad), but an increase of procedures without an increase in staff and personnel resources calls for a review or new ideas when reviewing how to optimise the programme. Supportive approaches have not been so high priority as before, in order to cope with additional workloads. Reporting and administrative procedures to the Commission have increased a lot.

There needs to be greater simplicity and a greater transparency.

It is always necessary to review the management procedures and processes, in order not to lose from the sight that the Programme is meant for young people and not for the administrators.

National reports

The problems with the procedures were also stressed in the national reports; the majority of the national reports recorded difficulties with the procedures, which were considered complex, rigid, and bureaucratic, whereas the IT system and monitoring and evaluations procedures are not considered to be aimed at adjusting, valorising or capitalising.

Opinion of evaluators

Although in general the procedures are judged to be adequate, and certainly improvements have been made during the running time of the programme, the remarks on the administrative burden and the application procedure are important signs which ask for further monitoring in the new programming period. The administration burden issue is not only raised within this evaluation; the findings of the evaluations of SOCRATES and Leonardo are in the same line.

Although the procedural arrangements are a translation of the financial regulation, which is not only applicable to the YOUTH programme and contains principles guaranteeing sound financial management, there is a threat that the rules might not serve the original

objective. The evaluators consider this to be an aspect that requires further monitoring, in order to identify whether the rules hinder the effective implementation of the programme. Furthermore, if it is prove that the rules require more administration, the staff available should be in compliance with the increased workload.

8.2.3 Frequency/timing of calls for proposals and duration of selection process

Opinion of organisations

Outcomes of the questionnaire amongst the organisations show that almost three quarters of the applicants (Action 1: 74% and Action 2: 72%) believe that the *frequency of the deadlines* for submission of projects to the programme was appropriate. Less than one in five (18%) considered it too infrequent. On the other hand, a few percent found it too frequent. The rest did not know.

As can be seen in paragraph 8.2.4 (table 8.9), applicant organisations are unsatisfied with the length and time required to complete the form and with the (un)clarity of the form and the (un)clarity of the selections procedures and funding rules. Although not everything was clear, the guidance provided for completing the form is highly valued by most. Organisations that apply for the first time face the most difficulties. Once they become more experienced, fewer problems are reported.

The opinions of the organisations differ about the length of time between the application and the actual approval. About half of the respondents (Action 1, 50%; Action 2, 49%) thought it was about right, most others found it (Action 1, 44%; Action 2, 45%) too long.

Opinion of NA/NAUTHs

The NA/NAUTH indicate that the 5 round per year is favourable for the applicants. Some NA's are able to cope with the work load better than others. Some ask for a reduction (from 5 to 3 or 2) of rounds, also asking for shorter selection processes.

The duration of the selection process applications is extremely short and the number of calls is so elevated that the burden of work imposed on the management structures is so high that insufficient attention is paid to other aspects of the programme implementation, such as quality control and monitoring.

Some National Agencies observe that there seems to be a core group of young people/ youth organisations who are apparently always involved in the YOUTH Programme. The danger exists that the Programme could become a 'self-service' programme for a limited number of larger youth organisations.

Opinion of evaluators

The risk of having a difficult application form is that only a select group of organisations benefits from the programme, because they know how to apply. This picture was confirmed by the country studies, where it was mentioned that the programme is often used by the same established youth organisations, which is not considered desirable. Combined with the earlier remarks, this continues to be subject for further monitoring and, where necessary, improvements.

8.2.4 Efficiency overall selection process

Opinion of organisations

In the table below the percentages of organisations who gave negative answers per question and per Action are shown. Questions with different response categories between the Actions are marked with *.

Table 8.10 Efficiency of selection process⁸

% negative about	Action 1	Action 2
Finding out how to apply	17 (difficult/very difficult)	21 (difficult/very difficult)
Obtaining the application form	11 (difficult/very difficult)	9 (difficult/very difficult)
Clearness of the selection procedure*	36 (some/most unclear)	12 (not clear)
Clearness of the objectives*	32 (some/most unclear)	8 (not clear)
Time required to complete the form	33 (too much)	32 (too much)
Length of the form*	46 (little/much too long)	49 (long/too long)
Clarity of the form*	38 (some/most unclear)	14 (unclear)
Guidance for completing the form*	6 (poor/very poor)	14 (too little)
Clarity of funding rules*	45 (some/most unclear)	11 (unclear)

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire organisations.

As may be read from the table, the applicant organisations are most unsatisfied with the length and time required to complete the form and with the (un)clarity of the form and the (un)clarity of the selections procedures and funding rules. Although not everything was clear, the guidance provided for completing the form is highly valued by most.

A verbal example of this view can be read below (source: interview in depth country case):

It was easy to obtain the application form, however the length of the form was too long and some points were repeated. Taking into consideration that the form should be filled in by young people the clarity of the language/terminology used in the application form requires improvements. The form was assessed as not time consuming, but the guidance to complete the application form could have been more detailed. (Organisation under Action 1)

⁸ Table 8.10 shows a number of differences between respondents of Action 1 and Action 2. Organisations that organised a project for Action 1 seem to be much less satisfied. The differences in judgement between the Actions probably have to be attributed – at least partly – to discrepancies between the response categories. Many questions in the questionnaire for Action 2 had response categories like ‘adequate enough’, ‘clear enough’ or ‘about right’, which makes it less likely to give negative answers. For Action 1, the categories were more clearly positive or negative.

8.2.5 Efficiency payments

Opinion of organisations

The questionnaire for organisations contained a few questions that generated information on financial and other constraints that organisations were confronted with through their participation in the programme. The results are described below.

Table 8.11 Problems with payment procedures according to organisations

%	Action 1	Action 2
A lot	8%	9%
Some	33%	31%
None	54%	56%
Don't know/no answer	4%	5%
Total N (only applicants)	n = 756	n = 412

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire organisations.

A relatively large number of applicants (one third) mention that they have some problems with payment procedures (Table 8.11). Only one in ten report that they have ‘a lot’ of problems. More than half did not encounter any problems. For Action 1, pre-accession countries encounter most problems. Almost one fifth of them (19%) report a lot of problems, 46 percent report some and only 28 percent none. So, it seems that these procedures are more difficult in those countries, according to the respondents. Partner countries were not included in the analysis because of a too small number of respondents. For Action 2, only applicants from New and Old Member States could be compared. Applicants from New Member States more often encounter ‘some’ problems with payment procedures than applicants from Old Member States. No differences were found between host and sending organisations.

Opinion of NA/NAUTHs

The NA’s confirm that payments have been late and often come in the second half of the year. Only a few did not experience problems. Some NA’s are helped with pre-financing by the appropriate ministry. The delay in payment creates problems for small local organisations and does not contribute to the good name of the NA.

Because of this financial situation, the NA had to reject multiple applications. This damaged in particular the image of the NA, but also of the YOUTH programme and the EU in general.

The principle of co-financing only constitutes a solution for large projects. These can easily rely on other funds, but not the small ones. These are dependent on EU-funding in order to finance the start-up of the project. (NA)

Opinion SALTO

The SALTOs confirm that payments by the Commission are usually done very late.

Opinion of evaluators

It seems that in several cases the late payments by the Commission hinder the efficient implementation of the programme. It is very much dependent on the willingness of the national authorities to pre-finance the activities. In those cases there are fewer problems

8.2.6 Influences of changes in management

Opinion of NA/NAUTHs

When asked (in the questionnaire) to what extent they experienced the changes as a whole that were made during the lifetime of the programme as improvements of the organisation of the programme, NA/NAUTH responded, with no significant differences across the country groupings, as follows:

Table 8.12 Overall experience of changes

Positively	16
Neutral	10
Negatively	3
Don't know/no answer	1

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTHs.

From the country studies, overall positive accounts are given of the management changes. Especially decentralisation of the international cooperation strand of the Programme and the accreditation of EVS host organisations were viewed as positive, although they did encompass a higher workload.

A summary of the responses of the NA/NAUTH to the effect of changes in rules on the smooth running of the YOUTH programmes is presented below:

Table 8.13 Effects of changes on smooth running of Programme

Change in rules	'to a high degree'	'to some degree'	'not at all'	'don't know / no answer'
Introduction of the Financial Regulation provisions	14	7	2	7
Accreditation of EVS host organisations	9	10	7	4
Reporting	6	14	8	2
Decentralisation of international cooperation strand of the Programme	5	11	8	6
EVS certificate modalities	5	15	6	4

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTHs.

From the perspective of the NA/NAUTH, the introduction of the Financial Regulation Provisions had the most effect on the smooth running of the YOUTH programme and the EVS certification modalities, and the decentralisation of the international cooperation strand of the programme has had the least effect. It is however unclear from these responses, whether these changes affected the efficiency of the organisation.

Remarkably, only two countries that were included in the summary of national reports evaluated the changes in management; they were positive.

8.2.7 Illustrative remarks by organisations

In an open question in the questionnaire, the organisations had the opportunity to indicate unintended results. Some organisations used this space to indicate some of the problems they encountered. Here we present a short summary of some of the answers that were given in the questionnaires and interviews:

Organisations:

- The immense amount of paperwork/bureaucracy is a negative side-effect for many. It is especially a problem for youth associations or informal groups who want to organise something themselves

Our organisation had many problems with the subsidies. It motivated that we had to stop taking part in the program. The Agency does not at all help the organisations that take part in the program. The bureaucracy is excessive.

It's still very hard for small organisations or for youth association to start working with the EVS on a regular basis. The difficulties are mainly linked to the administration and the financial dimension of the programme.

- Funding problems, e.g. different countries being treated differently resulting in lack of funding for some partners and full funding for others

Unfortunately we have to mention that the delay in funding payment to organisations have created mayor problems both for our organisation and, to some extent, to volunteers.

The costs of administering EVS were much greater than the sum available from the YOUTH programme. As a result, our organisation had to subsidise the programme. In the end, this proved too difficult, and we had to reduce our involvement in EVS.

It is very annoying to realise that the funding and rules are very different depending on different countries and national agencies.

We have been frustrated as we did the major part of the dossier, get nothing, but our partner get full benefit!

- Especially for young people with fewer opportunities and informal groups: the large amount of money that they have to pay themselves in advance (e.g. for travel costs) may hinder their ability to participate. Also, late refunds are a problem for many (small) organisations.

The only negative results are the delays in the payments especially because we work with young people with fewer opportunities who often don't have money, so when our NA delays for more then one year the payment of second parts of money creates serious problems.

25 percent of the grant / money for the project arrived one year after the project ended! So, it was completely an economical disaster for our budget.

8.3 Efficiency centralised procedure

The establishment of an executive Agency

As described in paragraph 1.5 the management of the centralised part of the programme was moved from the Technical Assistance Office (TAO) to the Education, Culture & Audiovisual Executive Agency in 2006 (further shortened as ‘the Executive Agency’).

In the time that the TAO was in place, the Commission decided on the call for proposals, the rules for applicants and the decision on the applications as well as the payments. Furthermore the Commission signed the contracts to the participants. This procedure had negative consequences for the efficiency of the process.

The Executive Agency is responsible for the implementation of EC programmes in the connected fields. This facilitates a common vision and common rules for the different programmes. It should also facilitate the check on double financing in case applicants submit the project under more than one programme.

Youth Unit is responsible for the all policy decisions, the Executive Agency for all implementation aspects and decisions. This broadened the mandate of the Executive Agency compared to the TAO, as the Executive Agency has decision making power on project applications and payments. With this approach, the procedure was further streamlined. This resulted in simplified procedures, which saved time and effort compared to going back and forth between TAO and Commission for each step in the project cycle. The Executive Agency has regular formal and informal contacts with the Youth Unit.

The mission of the Executive Agency is to optimise the support to the applicants. Compared to what the TAO could do, there are according to the Executive Agency, better means of reaching the applicants and assisting them in making their application. The Executive Agency has a helpdesk and also tries to meet the applicant after a positive decision on the application, in order to assist the applicant in the implementation of the rules. To what extent they are successful in this in practice could not be measured by this evaluation, as in the response of applying organisations, not enough organisations that applied for a project at the Executive Agency were represented.

For the selection of projects at central level, selection panels are established, consisting out of representatives from the European Commission, some National Agencies and the European Youth Forum.

The procedure

Only a small part of the YOUTH programme is managed centrally (less than 10%). This procedure applies to projects submitted according to the rolling deadlines of the User’s Guide by European non-government youth organisations (ENGYOs) with branches in more than 8 Programme countries, as well as by Programme country applicants for Youth Encounters (Action 1), Europe-Wide projects and multilateral projects with Partner Countries (Action 2).

The selection procedure followed by the Executive Agency was as following. The implementation starts with the preparation and publication of a call for proposals. During the running time of the programme, specific priorities were identified that were reflected in the calls for proposals. These priorities were determined by the Commission.

In the call for proposals clear deadlines are indicated for the deadline for submission of proposals. Normally, applicants have at least two months to submit a proposal after the date of publication. Once the application is received, the project is checked on eligibility, after which at least two people from the Executive Agency assess the eligible projects against the selection criteria. After this assessment, a coherence check is made between both assessments. Once this assessment is made, the applications are sent to an evaluation panel. The members of the panel are representatives of the Executive Agency, National Agencies and the Commission. This panel analyses the financial and content aspects of the applications and advises on the selection list. This selection list is sent to the director of the Executive Agency, who takes the final decision. After that, the notification is sent to the applicant and a contract is drafted. Once the contract is signed, the first payment will be transferred to the applicant. The average time of this selection procedure lasts three months.

The procedure during the time that the Technical Assistance Office (TAO) was responsible, differed a little bit from the one described above. The main difference is that the TAO was not responsible for writing the call for proposals and taking decisions on project applications.

Opinion applicants

Unfortunately, the questionnaires were not answered by many respondents that had applied at the TAO/Agency. Due to the low number, it is fairly impossible to distillate the opinion of organisations on the procedure.

Opinion evaluator

The changes within the centralised procedure seem to contribute to a more efficient procedure. To what extent the applying organisations are satisfied with the new structure and procedure is not known, as there were not enough respondents that applied centrally. This aspect could be subject to further evaluation in the mid term evaluation.

8.4 Efficiency and appropriateness structures

In this paragraph we present the findings of the appropriateness and efficiency of the structures that are established or involved in the YOUTH programme. The findings are based on the questionnaires among NA/NAUTH, organisations and youth workers, the country studies and on the interviews with different stakeholders. First, a general overview of the opinions of the NA/NAUTHS and organisations on the structures is provided, followed by a more detailed explanation of the findings per structure:

- European Commission;
- TAO/Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency;
- National Agencies;
- SALTO resource centres;
- Eurodesks.

8.4.1 Overview of the opinions on the support structures

Opinion NA/NAUTH

The following responses were given to the question as to what extent the workings of the following structures could be considered a strength or a weakness in the administration and management procedures:

Table 8.14 Extent to which the working of structures are considered to be a strength or weakness by the NA/NAUTHs

Structure	Strength	Neither strength or weakness	Weakness	Don't know/ no answer
European Commission	17	11	0	2
Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (in 2006)*	1	10	10	9
Technical Assistance Office Socrates Leonardo da Vinci Youth (before 2006)*	11	10	2	7
National Agency	27	2	0	1
National Authority	10	11	1	8
SALTO Resource Centre	17	7	1	5
Eurodesks	16	8	4	2
Euromed Youth Platform	7	10	3	10

* The National Agencies and National Authorities do not have direct contact with the Technical Assistance Office Socrates Leonardo da Vinci Youth and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency and consequently do not have in depth knowledge on their functioning. Hence, the opinion on those institutes should be interpreted with care.

Source: ECORYS NA/NAUTH questionnaire.

The European Commission scored high strength ratings particularly from the OMS – NMS were more neutral in their judgement as to whether the Commission was to be seen a ‘strength’.

The response rates to both SALTO and the Eurodesk were similar and generally positive, however, there are some critical remarks (see paragraph 8.4.5.)

A striking difference lay in the respondents who gave their own NAUTHs ‘strength’ and ‘neither strength nor weaknesses’ ratings of 35 percent, as opposed to a 90 percent ‘strength’ rating for their own NA. These differences should be explored by stakeholders at the level of the individual NA/NAUTH to ascertain whether they are some underlying issues in the relationship between the NA/NAUTH which could affect the efficiency of the new Youth in Action Programme.

Opinion of Organisations

Applicants for action 1 were asked whether the following support structures in the programme were ‘appropriate’:

- National agencies;
- European Commission;
- Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (2006);

- Technical Assistance Office Socrates/Leonardo/Youth (before 2006);
- SALTO YOUTH resource centres;
- Eurodesks;
- Euromed Youth Platform.

The same questions were asked regarding ‘efficiency’ of these structures. In the questionnaire for action 2, there was only one question per type of support structure: ‘to which extent were the following support structures in the programme appropriate and efficient?’

For most respondents in Action 1, the National Agencies were an appropriate (79%) and efficient (73%) support structure. About 10 percent did not have contact with them. For respondents in Action 2, the result was about the same.

It proved difficult to get a general idea of the adequacy of the European Commission and other bureaus as support structures, since most organisations did not have any contact with them (around 50 to 60%) or had no opinion on their appropriateness or efficiency (around a quarter). The small number of contacts with the European Commission, in comparison with the national Agencies, is not unexpected, given the fact that most organisations applied through the national agencies.

Table 8.15 provides an overview of the experiences of the relatively small number of applicants who did have contact and did have an opinion on the appropriateness and efficiency of the structures (a quarter of the applicants). Applicants are most satisfied with the National agencies and the SALTO YOUTH resource centres: around 80 to 90 percent are satisfied. Euromed, Eurodesks and the European Commission are in between, with three quarter to two thirds of the respondents being satisfied. They are least satisfied with the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency and the Technical Assistance office Socrates/Leonardo/Youth. These support structures do not seem to have functioned very well, according to the respondents. A large minority of more than half do not consider these structures appropriate or efficient.

Table 8.15 Negative experience with support structures; questionnaire organisations (only applicants who had contact with them)

% (and total N per item)	Action 1: not (so) appropriate	Action 1: not (so) efficient	Action 2: not (so) appropriate and efficient
National Agency	13% (684)	19% (683)	18% (398)
European Commission	33% (147)	32% (142)	29% (87)
Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (2006)	42% (79)	54% (72)	33% (48)
Technical Assistance Office Socrates/Leonardo/Youth (before 2006)	42% (105)	31% (95)	45% (56)
SALTO YOUTH resource centres	18% (133)	18% (127)	18% (97)
Eurodesks	25% (160)	27% (143)	26% (96)
Euromed Youth Platform	32% (76)	32% (68)	25% (40)

Source: ECORYS Organisations questionnaire.

*There were no big differences were observed between country-categories.

In the following sub-paragraphs a presentation of the opinion on the individual structures is provided.

8.4.2 European Commission

The Efficiency of the EC is assessed by the NA/NAUTHS through the questionnaire and interviews and by the organisations and youth workers.

Efficiency of the European Commission in the implementation of the YOUTH programme Opinion of the NA/NAUTH

From a global view point, in general the NA/NAUTH saw the European Commission as (moderately) efficient – 13 of 31 stated ‘to a great extent’ and 17 of 31 ‘to some extent’. Comparison of the responses of the NA and those of the corresponding NAUTH, suggests a tendency for the NAUTH to be slightly less positive in relation to the efficiency of the Commission. However, there are some critical remarks about the operating efficiency of the Commission.

As the table below indicates, in relation to specific functions, the functions of the Commission related to ‘providing assistance’ received the highest ratings in terms of their efficiency and the ‘time needed to respond to questions’ the lowest.

Table 8.16 Opinion on efficiency of the Commission

Commission Function	‘to a high degree’ efficient	‘to some degree’ efficient	‘not at all’	‘don’t know / no answer’
Providing assistance	13	17	1	0
Providing information on eligibility/legal issues	12	17	2	0
Providing clear instructions on programme implementation issues (selection process, monitoring, financial management)	12	15	4	0
Time needed to respond to questions	9	15	4	3

N= 31

Source: ECORYS NA/NAUTH questionnaire.

Table 8.16 suggest that that efficiency could be increased with regard to the time needed by the Commission to respond to questions. Across the country groupings, the tendency was for the OMS to have more reservations about the efficiency of the Commission - though the reservations held by the NMS should not be understated.

The suggestions by the respondents for improvements on the support from the Commission concentrated on improving the response time: it was indicated that the Commission responds slowly to questions and does not always provide adequate answers. One of the respondents depicted it as following: “Instructions were not always clear and

very often they contradicted. Instructions like ‘use common sense’ or ‘improvise’ do not help in implementation of the programme in an integrated manner.” Also, decision periods are judged to be very long. It is also mentioned that there is room for improvement with regards to commission procedures, payments, sending out of contracts for NAs, final report forms et cetera. Other points of criticism were related to ICT support (Youth link) and the different requirements per report period.

At the same time, some NAs indicate that they have a very good working relationship with the staff of the Commission. One of the respondents indicated that suggestions from the NAs were taken on board, which was very positive. Respondents indicate that the cooperation with the Commission depends very much on the person responsible for their country.

Opinion of Youth workers and organisations

In relation to the Programme, the European Commission was seen as a secondary support structure in the YOUTH programme in comparison to the National Agency. Nevertheless of those Youth Worker respondents who had contact with the European Commission, nearly two thirds considered it to be appropriate and efficient. This figure is in correspondence with the opinion of the organisations (see table Table 8.15).

Summary national reports

Three countries stated positive changes in programme management introduced by the commission, all other countries didn’t. Positive changes were:

- the programme became closer to users, procedures become more user friendly, but it has been time for these changes according to the NAUTH.
- shortening of the time which organisations need to wait before they receive their grants

Opinion evaluators

In general, the Commission is seen as relatively efficient. However, there are certainly points for improvement in particular related to the time needed to respond to questions, but also in providing clear instructions. Also, improvements could be made regarding timely payments and contracts.

8.4.3 TAO/ Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency

Opinion NAs/NAUTHs

Concerning the Executive Agency some respondents report that there is no contact at all between the NAs and the Executive Agency. This contact is not included in the mandate of the Agency. Those respondents feel that it is a missed opportunity not to have interaction between the centralised and decentralised activities. Improvements can be made in the field of exchange of experience, consultation in the selection process, communication on projects selected and transparency of the activities of the Executive Agency in general.

Opinion of Organisations

More than one third of the organisations that have had contact with the TAO/ Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency see it as not an appropriate or efficient structures (see Table 8.15).

Opinion Youth workers

74 Percent of the Youth Worker respondents either did not have contact with the Education, Audiovisual & Cultural Agency or were unable to respond to the question about appropriateness and effectiveness. The corresponding figure for the Technical Assistance Office Socrates / Leonardo / Youth is 65 percent. Not surprisingly it is the Old member states and EFTA countries that have had most contact with these structures.

The judgements of the youth workers that had contact with the TAO/Executive Agency, tend to be somewhat more negative than the organisations about how the TAO/EA work. Data available suggests around 38 percent of respondents who had contact with the Executive Agency and 49 percent of respondents who had contact with the Technical Assistance Office, considered their work to be, to a varying extent, appropriate and efficient.

Opinion evaluators

The apparently negative nature of the response rates, clearly indicate the concerns of the different stakeholders about the efficiency of the Executive Agency and former TAO. The figures, however, need to be put into perspective, the Executive Agency started only up in 2006. It is probably too early to draw any conclusions from these figures and it might be more useful, at this stage, for the Executive Agency to learn from the responses related to the efficiency of its predecessor – the Technical Assistance Agency. Clearly, the efficiency of the Executive Agency will need to be examined in the mid term review of the new Youth in Action Programme.

Although the Technical Office was replaced by the Executive Agency, the concerns related to monitoring and response time to questions, should be noted from a lessons learned perspective, as they could have implications for the work of the Executive Agency.

The evaluators agree that exchange of information between the National Agencies and the Executive Agency might be useful and could lead to better implementation (procedures) at both central and national level.

8.4.4 National Agencies

In this subparagraph, the opinions of the different stakeholders on the appropriateness and efficiency of the National Agencies are looked at, along with the opinions of the NA/NAUTH themselves on the organisational difficulties they have faced and the support approach they have adapted.

Appropriateness and efficiency of the National Agencies

In general, all stakeholders (NA/NAUTH, EC, organisations and stakeholders) consider the National Agencies to be an appropriate and efficient structure, although some NAs indicate to have problems due to understaffing (see also paragraph 8.1.1)

Opinion Organisations

For most organisations in Action 1, the National Agencies were seen as appropriate (79%) and efficient (73%) support structures. About 10 percent did not have contact with them. For respondents in Action 2, the result was about the same. Applicants are most satisfied with the National Agencies.

Opinion of Youth workers

In relation to the Programme's structures, the National Agency as a primary support structure was seen as being appropriate and efficient across all country groupings.

Opinion NA/NAUTHs

- *Efficiency as the difficulties faced by NA/NAUTH*

As an indication on the functioning of the NA/NAUTHs, the responses to the question of the extent to which the NA/NAUTH faced particular difficulties in relation to specific organisational issues, are summarised in Table 8.17

Table 8.17 The organisational Issue that is experienced as a difficulty

Organisational Issue	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Don't know / No answer
Fund resource capacity	6	16	7	1
Staff resource capacity	11	12	6	1
Clarity over roles and responsibilities	2	10	17	1
Clarity of guidelines	2	13	13	2
Interest for the YOUTH programme shown by applicants	2	10	16	2
Reaching disadvantaged groups	2	19	8	1

Source: ECORYS NA/NAUTH questionnaire.

Across the country groupings, the biggest concerns of the NMS were in relation to fund resource capacity and reaching disadvantaged groups, whilst for the OMS, it was staff resource capacity and Interest for the YOUTH programme shown by applicants. Comparison of the responses of the NA with those of the corresponding NC reveals that NC saw staff resource capacity as less of a difficulty and reaching disadvantaged groups as more problematic.

- *Support approaches*

The extent to which support approaches were adopted in the YOUTH programme is summarised in Table 8.18.

Table 8.18 Extent of adoption by NA/NAUTH in YOUTH programme

Support Approach	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Don't know / No answer
Assistance to applicants in the preparation of projects	25	1	3	1
Mentoring / tutoring / training of project leaders	21	6	2	1
Monitoring visits to projects	13	13	3	1
Audit visits to projects	6	14	9	1
Stimulating follow-up on projects	6	21	2	1

N 30

Source: ECORYS NA/NAUTH questionnaire.

The bulk of support given by NA/NAUTH to the YOUTH programme partners and participants in the form of assistance to applicants with the preparation of projects, the mentoring / tutoring / training of project leaders and the monitoring visits to projects. These response rates were consistent across the country groupings. In comparison with the role of the NA, there were no clear patterns as to the role of the NC in the support approaches. Often, they were not involved at all. Their main involvement was in relation to monitoring, audit and stimulating follow-up on projects. However, it should be stressed that in comparison to the NA, their role was secondary in relation to supporting the stakeholders in the Programme.

In the summary of national reports the National Agencies consider themselves as efficient.

Opinion evaluators

The National Agency structure is generally seen as an appropriate and efficient structure. The NAs themselves, however, do have some concerns that might influence the efficiency and effectiveness of their organisation. This is especially related to the staff resource capacity. This is also related to the already identified need for more resources particularly for monitoring, information and advice to project promoters (see paragraph 8.1.2). Point for attention and monitoring, or even for reviewing, is the concern about the administrative and financial / audit burden reported. At least, attention should be paid to this aspect in the mid term evaluation.

8.4.5 SALTO Resource centres

In this sub- paragraph we look at the appropriateness and efficiency of the SALTO Resource centres.

Opinion National Agencies/ National Authorities

- *General judgement efficiency*

In general, from a global view point, SALTO Resource Centres are seen 'to some extent' 22 of 31 and 'to a great extent' 6 of 31 as efficient structures, with NMS registering more 'to a great extent' responses (4of 9) than OMS (2 of 20).

As the table below indicates, in relation to specific functions, the training functions of SALTO received the highest ratings in terms of their efficiency and the contact making activities, the lowest.

Table 8.19 Efficiency of the different functions of SALTO

SALTO Function	'to a high degree' efficient	'to some degree' efficient	'not at all'	'don't know / no answer'
Training	23	5	1	2
Youth Work Resources	15	11	3	2
Developing quality in cross-cutting thematic issues of the YOUTH programme	12	15	1	3
Promoting access to the Programme in Partner Countries	12	14	3	2
Support to National Agencies	11	15	2	3
Support to organisations	9	16	3	3

N= 31

Source: ECORYS NA/NAUTH questionnaire.

Across the country groupings, there are differences in the degree to which the SALTO Centres are seen to be efficient. The tendency is for the NA/NAUTH in the OMS to be less enthusiastic about the efficiency of SALTO Centres than in the NMS and PAC.

For example, whilst 8 out of 9 NMS gave a 'to a great extent response' to the efficiency of SALTO in respect of its training function, the corresponding figure in the OMS was 13 out of 20. Similarly, the corresponding figures in relation to the function of 'Support to National Agencies', were 5 out of 9 for NMS and 5 out of 20 for OMS.

This pattern is repeated in relation to the different functions and the picture emerges of the NA/NAUTH in OMS having more reservations about the efficiency of SALTO than their counterparts in the NMS. This observation is supported by the fact that 15 out of the 16 'not at all' responses in relation to the efficiency of different functions of SALTO, came from the OMS.

- *Efficiency as the necessity to review / restructure the SALTO Resource Centres (concerning their work in relation to NA/NAUTHs)*

To different extents, 21 of 30 respondents stated that there was a need to review / restructure the SALTO Resource Centres, whilst 5 of 31 stated that this was not necessary. Also, 5 of 31 did not know/ gave no answer. There were no major differences across the country groupings in respect of the response rates. This need for a review is supported by the response to the open question in the questionnaire and by the country studies:

The respondents that indicated that it is necessary to review the SALTO structure put forward three main points for attention:

- Resources of the SALTOs;

- Better tuning of the activities in relation to needs;
- Further coherence and involvement between the NAs and SALTOs and better tuning of the cooperation.

Some respondents ask for a further evaluation of the SALTO structure and tasks.

It is indicated by some respondents that the objectives are too ambitious in relation to the budget available and that the budget is too small to fulfil all the needs, which is confirmed during the interviews. At the same time, there are respondents that indicate that certain activities are not needed and that resources are not sufficiently utilised. Some interviewees emphasized that the SALTO's that work with a thematic approach work most efficient.

In relation to the above, some respondents ask for further prioritisation and streamlining of activities and better tuning of the activities with the needs. For this purpose, the NAs should be consulted more (the same is indicated by the Youth workers in relation to training, see paragraph 6.5). One of the respondents suggested establishing a steering group that will give input for a common strategy and activity plan and at the same time will enhance the transparency of the work of the SALTOs. This suggestion might support the call for a further synergy and coherence between the SALTOs themselves and the SALTOs and NAs, as well as better communication between the different institutes as indicated by several respondents. Next to this it is mentioned that the working procedures (i.e. tasks of the National Agencies in promotion of the activities of the SALTOs) should be better coordinated. The National Agencies point out that it is difficult for the SALTOs to base the activities to their needs, so long as SALTO make a work plan before the work plans of the National Agencies are finished.

Contrary to the feeling of the NAs that the training activities are not based on the needs, SALTO Euromed indicated that they employ their efforts based on the activities on the needs of the National Agencies. For this purpose, they send out questionnaires to the National Agencies to make an inventory on their needs. Based on this, SALTO Euromed developed its activities.

Opinion of Organisations

The respondents of the organisations questionnaire are in general satisfied with the SALTO recourse centres by comparison with other structures. Only 18 percent of the applicants considered the SALTO recourse centres as not (so) efficient and appropriate.

Opinion of Youth workers

The questionnaire under youth workers revealed a concern on the part of Youth Workers as to the appropriateness and efficiency of the SALTO Resource Centres and Eurodesks. As already indicated in Chapter 6, the Youth workers are often not aware of the (training) opportunities of the YOUTH programme. Hence, an important part of the target group is not reached, which raises concerns on the information channels to reach this group. At the same time, the youth workers indicated that there are opportunities to increase the relevance of the training by ensuring that it meets their needs. Just like the National Agencies, they feel they should be consulted before making the training programme.

Opinion of SALTO Recourse centres

SALTOs are created by the European Commission at request of the National Agencies. It is linked to the work of the National Agencies organically. During the first two years 2000-2002 SALTOs were working on the basis of requests from the European Commission. Since 2002 this has changed, and SALTOs have started working on the basis of requests from the National Agencies. The SALTO Training and Cooperation RC indicated during the interview that it does not work with young people directly. Given the limited capacity, it is not possible to expand activities in this direction.

Relationship with National Agencies and the European Commission

The relationship with the NAs is close and horizontally organised. Staff of the European Commission also makes use of the training-opportunities offered by the SALTO centre.

In practice cooperation with the Commission has proved to be difficult. Because of the high turnover of staff, it is difficult to communicate and even more difficult to make decisions. Cooperation is also constraint by the fact that Commission staff often have a background which differs radically from youth-work and the SALTO office has to explain its activities constantly anew.

Relationships between SALTO Centres

All members of the SALTO-network meet regularly once per year. During such meetings, SALTO-centres discuss particularly the issue of closer cooperation in the upcoming year(s).

Summary national reports

EU15 and EFTA countries consider SALTO as useful, with a very high quality training but there are some negative aspects of it such as not being sufficiently known or not being sufficiently coordinated with the needs of contents and focuses needed by project. Other countries have not assessed SALTO Resource Centres.

Opinion evaluators

In general, the SALTOs are seen as appropriate structures and the importance of their work is acknowledged. However, with regards to their functioning, several concerns are expressed. These mainly relate to:

- The resources available for the SALTOs;
- The tuning of activities in relation to needs (underlined by the fact that the Youth workers and the National Agencies particularly highlighted that there is much room for improvement in this respect, as well as for limiting the overlap of training activities with other activities), and
- Strengthened cooperation between the NAs and the SALTOs.

The above concerns might ask for a further review, in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the SALTOs.

8.4.6 Eurodesks

Opinion of NA/NAUTH

In general, Eurodesks were seen as efficient structures of the YOUTH programme by NA/NAUTH. In respect of the functions which they perform, they were seen as being most efficient at providing information to young people.

Some concern was expressed about their role in stimulating communication between professionals working with young people. 6 out of 31 respondents felt they did not do this at all, (and 4 out of 31 did not know / did not answer). In respect of providing information to professionals working with young people, 4 out of 31 felt they did not do this at all, and 4 out of 31 did not know. There were no major deviations in response rates across the country groupings.

Just as for the SALTOs, respondents asked for there to be a separate evaluation of the Eurodesk structure. The response rates of the NA/NAUTH to the question demonstrate the necessity to review / restructure the Eurodesks - 23 out of 31 stated that a review was necessary and only 2 out of 31 said not at all. There was no difference of opinion between the responses of the NA and those of the corresponding NC. The need for a review was most strongly articulated in the OMS.

The main criticism by respondents that indicated a need for review of the Eurodesks, is that the added value of the Eurodesks is not clear. At the start of the work of the Eurodesks, providing information through this structure was relevant. However, nowadays, there are many ways to find information, for example young people can search the web to find the information they need. Hence, at this moment the added value of the information provided is rather limited. For the Eurodesks to be effective, the added value of information should be sought for. This could be done by concentrating on issues that are relevant for the YOUTH programme, like active participation and information about the EU youth policy.

In line with the above, several respondents mention that a better collaboration between the Eurodesks and National Agencies is needed, to facilitate the information provided by the Eurodesks on the YOUTH programme. At this stage, some respondents feel that the YOUTH programme is not very well reflected within the activities of the Eurodesks. Also, the work of the Eurodesks should better serve the needs of the NAs. For some NAs it is even not clear what the function of the Eurodesks is. This is confirmed by the country studies.

Opinion of Organisations

Applicants are generally satisfied with the EURODESKS by comparison with other structures, 26 percent of the applicants considered the Eurodesks as not (so) efficient and appropriate.

Summary national reports

It appears that EU15 and EFTA countries consider the EURODESKS as less efficient, less well known and / or with a less clear position in the YOUTH programme. Other countries have not assessed EURODESKS, except for Bulgaria, this country considers

EURODESK as very efficient. It's possible that this country notice the efforts of the EURODESK because they are sheltered in the same building.

Opinion of evaluators

Although the Eurodesks are generally seen as an efficient structure, major concerns are expressed about the added value of the information provided by the Eurodesks. Furthermore, it seems that the role of the Eurodesks within the YOUTH programme and the connection of their activities with the YOUTH programme is limited, or at least not clear. Just as indicated for the SALTO, a review of the activities of Eurodesks could be necessary in order to make improvements in the relevance of the work of the Eurodesks.

8.5 Visibility of the YOUTH programme

8.5.1 Effectiveness of NA/NAUTHs in enhancing the visibility of the Programme

For the Programme to be effective, it needs to be visible to appropriate target groups on different levels. The NA/NAUTH had to indicate to what extent they had been able to enhance the visibility of the YOUTH programme (see Table 8.20).

Table 8.20 Enhancement of visibility of the YOUTH Programme

Type of visibility	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Don't know / No answer
Political visibility on national level	6	22	2	0
Political visibility on international level	2	20	5	3
Visibility at local level	13	17	0	0
Visibility at regional level	9	19	0	2
Visibility at national level	10	20	0	0

Source: ECORYS Questionnaire NA/NAUTH.

The above response rates of the questionnaire for National Agencies and National Authorities are generally consistent across the country groupings. They show that NA/NAUTH feel that they have been, to differing degrees, able to enhance the visibility of the YOUTH programme. The highest impact has been at local and national levels. Political visibility on an international level has been the biggest challenge – 20 state that they have been able to enhance the political visibility of the Programme ‘to some degree’, yet only 2 to ‘great extent’. Similar differences exist in the responses in relation to political visibility on a national level.

The country studies point out that the programme is not visible enough. The visibility depends too much on organisations and the internet. Almost all countries declare that a strategy should be developed. They mention several possibilities, for example a higher budget, utilising mass media, present outcomes of the programme, using only one logo in the future for the programme. The National Agencies and National Authorities interviews considered the visibility of the programme as very important in reaching target groups, in particular in reaching young people with fewer opportunities. Indeed, when the programme isn't visible enough, higher educated young people are more likely to get in touch with the programme than lower educated young people.

8.5.2 Effectiveness of publicity in reaching all target groups

Six (of 30) NA/NAUTHs answered that publicity was to a great extent, sufficient in reaching all target groups. 21 Said to some extent and 3 not at all, which were those of the OMS (3). The more positive response rates were evenly distributed across the country groupings.

Opinion of evaluators

The above figures suggest that there is a limit to the role of the NA/NAUTHs in the enhancement of the political visibility of the Programme. The meaning of political visibility may have different connotations both within and between the various country groupings, as well as between the member states and the Commission. It also presupposes a desire on the part of the NA/NAUTH to enhance the political visibility of the Programme. If the challenge is to increase the political visibility of the Youth in Action Programme, strategies need to be developed to facilitate the enhancement of visibility of the new Programme. Furthermore, as the Programme has difficulty in efficiently reaching disadvantaged young people, it is difficult to conclude that the Programme achieved optimum effectiveness through its publicity in reaching its target groups.

8.5.3 Dissemination strategy of SALTO

From the interviews that were conducted in both the in depth and light country studies, the follow dissemination strategy was reported.

- One of the main tools for SALTO in the dissemination of information is the *internet*: SALTO-YOUTH.net is an internet tool created by all SALTOs and includes for example a data base of European trainers, calendar of trainings and a tool box for youth work and training. The EECA Manual (<http://www.salto-youth.net/eecamanual/>) is a website where interesting web links to the internet resources about countries of the EECA Region;
- SALTO EECA sends reports from all events, meetings and trainings to NAs and participants;
- *Newsletters are made by several SALTOs*. E.g. SALTO EECA disseminates a newsletter 4 times a year (since 2007 - 6 times) which includes descriptions of all planned and accomplished Actions. Currently there are 5,000 subscribers. Newsletter covers information about Actions of all SALTOs as well as other youth initiatives and programmes;
- *Tool box* – An internet library of publications, trainings and methods on non-formal education;
- *Magazines are made by several SALTOs*
- SALTO EECA established the Support Service (<http://www.salto.org.pl/>), which is a separate website where contact lists and description of organisations are published and partner searches are possible. The users can manage the website by themselves. Since 2005 the website has included blogs and chat rooms for volunteers.

Opinion of evaluators

The outcomes of the youth workers questionnaire indicate that a large number of Youth Workers are not aware of the (training) opportunities. This implies that there is room for improvement here. Although the SALTOs employ several methods of communication, they do not sufficiently reach this group. This asks for more targeted communication activities.

8.6 Monitoring arrangements

8.6.1 What is being monitored and levels of monitoring

As mentioned earlier, the YOUTH programme has not established a system of indicators for monitoring the effectiveness of the (projects under the) Programme. The indicators that are in place are the input and output indicators, that mainly consist of financial information and numbers of people participating. As a consequence, the monitoring is based on coherent criteria and there is no monitoring data available on the achievements of the projects, and consequently the Programme, in relation to the objectives. The lack of indicators has hindered the sound monitoring of the programme.

For the YOUTH programme, monitoring takes place at several levels:

- Central level (overall monitoring);
- National level (project monitoring national projects);
- Agency level (project monitoring central level projects).
- Project monitoring.

8.6.2 Monitoring at central level

The control and monitoring system of the European Commission towards the National Agencies consists of the following tools:

- National reports;
- Monitoring visits (5 people in the unit, 4 visiting countries, thus 9 per person);
- Audit system by an external firm;
- Certification on final accounts (budget and content).

National reports

Based on the Workplans, the national agencies provide the Commission with two types of reports:

- One statistical report related to the decentralised project funds (ADEC)⁹;
- One financial and narrative report related to the operating costs (AGN)¹⁰.

The two types of reports are complementary and are analysed by the Commission.

9 So-called ADEC; interim report due on 30/4/N+1 which provides a picture of the activity immediately after the last commitments and is used for the reporting to the programme Committee in June N+1; one final report -projects statistics, finances, controls- due in November N+3 once all projects are paid and certifications of accounts made.

10 So called AGN; due in March N+1.

Firstly, the AGN final reports contain detailed information about the activities of the National Agencies (promotion, support to beneficiaries, and more generally all fields in which the National Agencies have room for adapting their strategy to domestic circumstances). They are analysed to see how far they comply with the original work programmes and to build understanding about what could be the justification for NAs who have not eventually achieved their objectives.

Secondly, the ADEC final reports mainly aim to know the end results in terms of projects, once all projects are all completed. They also enable the Commission to ensure the respect of the programme provisions regarding project monitoring and control.

All reports are subject to analysis by the relevant desk officers. Notes are systematically attached to files before all financial operations are done. The desk officers, who have between 3 to 9 countries each, can then make some comparisons between the different national strategies and point out best practices and specific difficulties related to domestic situations. Through the notes on reports, the Head of Unit is provided with an overview of the programme implementation in the different countries.

Communication with the Action managers is undertaken each time a good practice or specific difficulty is worth being underlined. However, the reports are not sent for information to the Actions managers.

The reports are only one of the tools to modify programme developments. Both the National Agency desk and the Action team are actively involved in the validation of the work programme of the National Agencies, whereby each of them describes its strategies, practices and difficulties concerning all aspects of the programme (e.g., Actions, information). Most importantly, both teams have daily contact with the National Agencies when they are asked questions about programme implementation, good practices and innovative projects.

It was decided that narrative reporting from 2004 onwards was not necessary for ADEC. The results of the projects have to be reported in the final reports. As a result, at this stage there is no full overview of the achievements and outputs of the full programme period.

Opinion of the evaluators

The lack of a coherent set of indicators used by everyone in the programme, the lack of yearly reports on the results and the lack of appropriate use of the monitoring system YouthLink (due to overfriendliness) are things that needs to be improved. At present, there is no reliable information available at Programme level with regards to the success of the programme. Ongoing monitoring is not possible due to a lack of information. As monitoring data is one of the most important resources for management decisions, it is recommended that the whole monitoring system be improved, including developing indicators, coherent reporting and a monitoring database to allow for presentation of relevant inputs, outputs and result indicators.

8.6.3 Appropriateness monitoring system (decentralised)

The National Agencies indicated that they have several kinds of monitoring activities, such as reports, audits (national and EC), evaluations and project visits. All indicate they are very important and fruitful, although they take up a lot of time (as stated before, there is a need for more resources for monitoring). Lack of clarity in the Programme and the changes (in the reporting requirements) generate some difficulties with regard to fulfilling requirements. Also, in spite of all these means, monitoring and reporting tends to focus on inputs and outputs as opposed to the outcomes of these inputs and outputs. This makes it, according to the National Agencies, difficult to verify whether the wider results and objectives of the YOUTH programme have been achieved. The National Agencies call for clear criteria for monitoring, and standard reporting requirements that do not change over time.

Youthlink

A monitoring database, YouthLink, has been established for the Programme. This system was put in place in 2002 as an aid for National Agencies in managing the selection procedure and also as a monitoring tool for the decentralised Actions. Most, but not all, NAs have made use of it. Due to the fact that it was established during the running time of the Programme and because the database has not been used by all Agencies, it is not reliable in giving the total overview of the Programme.

The use of YouthLink is limited due to the fact that not all users find it an appropriate, user-friendly system. 11 of 30 respondents stated that YouthLink was not at all appropriate in managing the YOUTH programme. A further 15 of 30 stated that it was to some extent appropriate. The responses were consistent across the country groupings.

Also in the interviews, a number of very critical comments were made. The system was seen by some as not user friendly, data would sometimes disappear the system was too slow and so on. In short, it does not facilitate work, but often serves to inhibit it. The Commission has indicated that the system has been improved for the new programme period, but it seems still that not all National Agencies feel that way.

8.6.4 Monitoring of the centralised strand

The monitoring process

The intensiveness of monitoring and auditing the project differs. According to the Executive Agency sometimes a project develops fluently and does not need a lot of attention, while in other cases a lot of amendments have to be done. Five to ten percent of the projects are visited. These projects are deliberately chosen, to include for example projects with implementation problems or weak implementation structures, best practices so as to offer learning, a variety of geographic locations, and a range of Actions.

At the end of a project, the beneficiaries have to submit a final report about activities and expenditures. Afterwards the final payment will be transferred, following which the project is closed.

The monitoring system

The monitoring system Youth link, is not used by the Executive Agency. For the financial part of the programme, the Executive Agency uses the general EC financial system. For the content related part, excel sheets are used for monitoring.

Opinion of evaluators

The centralised strand is monitored separately from the decentralised strand and YouthLink is not used. Instead, an administrative system in place within the Executive Agency is used. In terms of programme monitoring, it would be desirable to monitor the programme as a whole through one system that is able to aggregate data, especially as the Executive Agency is involved in the implementation of the same Actions as the National Agencies.

8.6.5 Monitoring at project level

In most countries there are monitoring requirements for the organisations that are involved in the implementation of the programme. The criteria on which the monitoring takes place differs per country and even per project. In many cases, the organisations themselves set criteria for monitoring. Most organisations report to have a monitoring strategy for their project (Action 1, 62%; Action 2, 70%), an evaluation strategy (Action 1, 89%; Action 2, 82%) and a strategy to disseminate their project's outputs, results and learning (Action 1, 77%; Action 2, 63%).

Opinion of evaluators

Again, due to the lack of indicators for monitoring, all organisations monitor and report different outputs and results. Hence, it is impossible to aggregate this data to a higher level (data per Action or type of activity per country). As the projects are the lowest level of implementation, they are crucial for the provision of input, output and result indicators. If the data is sound and coherent, then it would be relatively easy to aggregate at national and programme (EU) level.

8.6.6 Monitoring by the SALTOs

SALTO recourse centres do not have a general monitoring method. We have spoken with SALTO's in Germany, Poland and France (SALTO Training and Cooperation, SALTO Eastern Europe and Caucasus (EECA) and ALTO Euromed).

SALTO EECA could tell us the most about their monitoring strategy, which uses the following methods:

- Several SALTOs use follow up questionnaires. SALTO EECA, for example, has follow up email questionnaires which are disseminated 6 months after termination of the given project. This method was introduced in 2005 (40% of replies was received). The questionnaires are aimed at quantitative assessment of the impact of the projects. Alongside this, during meetings with all participants of trainings and trainers, the activities are evaluated;
- Network of SALTO's EECA information representatives (so called "multipliers") operating in Eastern Europe and Caucasus countries, which are responsible for

information and promotion of the Programme. They are recruited amongst youth workers. They were selected in 2004 for the first time within the open competition and then underwent trainings. In 2005 there were 20 multipliers and in 2006 25. Multipliers are provided with guidelines by SALTO EECA, based on this material they submit reports on Actions undertaken and needs identified in given regions. They also play a crucial role in solving conflicts between project participants/organisers. Each year there are multipliers' meetings organised by SALTO. Multipliers work voluntarily although in some countries SALTO was able to find financing for their operation (e.g. from SOROS Foundation);

- Data collection and analysis in terms of submitted and accepted projects. Since 2006 SALTO EECA collects data on EVS in Eastern Europe and Caucasus. No other statistics have been gathered; until 2004 TAO was responsible for data collection from all eligible countries. SALTO expressed its concern over the role of the Executive Agency in data collection processes and particularly the gaps in data collection in 2005 and 2006;
- On-going assessment during implementation of the projects/ trainings in the form of assessment meetings in small groups. Each meeting is described in the report from the meeting.

Opinion of evaluators

It seems that there is room for streamlining the monitoring efforts of SALTO among the SALTOs themselves and with the work of the National Agencies. It would be good if the SALTOs apply a common monitoring strategy, again based on indicators and preferably using YouthLink.

8.7 Conclusions

The main results of the evaluation on the efficiency aspect are as following:

Resources

- Sufficiency Operating Grant differs per country, but in general some activities require more resources, such as monitoring, publication and the advising of project managers. Whether the operation grant is sufficient should be closely monitored for the new programme, as the administrative burden for the NAs has increased;
- The ADEC envelope is fine, if more resources would be available, these could go to Action 1 and 5;
- Action 1 and 3 more successful in attracting good applications than Action 2.

Procedures

- In general the decentralised procedures are fine, but attention is needed for the administrative burden for the NAs in relation to their resources;
- The accessibility of the programme for organisations seems to be negatively influenced by the application procedure and rules;
- Late payments by the Commission sometimes hinder the efficient implementation of the programme;

- The centralised procedure seems to be improved in terms of efficiency, exchange of information National Agency and the Executive Agency could help in mutual learning.

Structures

- In general the structures are judged upon as appropriate and efficient, however, there is room for improvement for several institutes:
 - The European Commission: improvements can be made in terms of response time, clearness of instructions and timely payments and contracts;
 - Executive Agency and TAO: there are concerns from the different stakeholders about the efficiency of the Executive Agency (and former TAO), but it is probably too early to draw any conclusions from this. Although the Technical Office was replaced by the Executive Agency, the concerns related to monitoring and response time to questions, should be noted from a lessons learned perspective, as they could have implications for the work of the Executive Agency;
 - National Agencies: there are some concerns related to the staff resource capacity, mainly for monitoring and information tasks and advice to project promoters. Point for attention and monitoring, or even for reviewing, is the concern about the administrative and financial / audit burden reported. At least, attention should be paid to this aspect in the mid term evaluation;
 - Need for review activities SALTO and Eurodesk with regards to their functioning, resources and activities, in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the SALTOs. For Eurodesk also the connection between their activities and the YOUTH programme is an issue to look at

Visibility of the Programme

- If the challenge is to increase the political visibility of the Youth in Action Programme, strategies need to be developed to facilitate the enhancement of visibility of the new Programme. Furthermore, as the Programme has difficulty in efficiently reaching disadvantaged young people, it is difficult to conclude that the Programme has achieved optimum effectiveness through its publicity in reaching its target groups.

Monitoring arrangements

- Monitoring arrangements are not satisfying: there is a need for coherent indicators, a working monitoring tool and procedures.

9 Conclusions and recommendations

In this chapter the conclusions and recommendations of the final evaluation of the YOUTH programme are presented. The conclusions are based on the following evaluation criteria:

- Intervention logic;
- Complementarity;
- Relevance;
- Effectiveness,
- Utility and sustainability;
- Efficiency.

For each criterion we first present the overall conclusions from the evaluators (bold and italic). These are then explained by the sub-conclusions that follow. The overall conclusions reflect the judgement of the evaluators. In the sub-conclusions the factual findings and the opinions of the evaluators are clearly indicated.

9.1 Conclusions

9.1.1 Intervention logic

The YOUTH Programme has wider aims and objectives, but the linkages to the operational objectives, measures and Actions are not always clear

Based on the reconstruction of the intervention logic by the evaluators, the evaluators found the intervention logic of the programme was not always coherent. The programme has broad aims and objectives, but does not have operational objectives that link to the programme measures. The Actions do have direct links with the specific objectives, however the contribution of lower level objectives to higher objectives is in some cases weak, while the link between measures and objectives is not always clear.

The programme is lacking measurable indicators that are linked to the objectives of the programme. This issue is related to problems in the intervention logic. Therefore, it is difficult to assess the real objectives of the YOUTH programme. For this evaluation, the evaluators have developed ex post, a set of indicators linked to the objectives of the programme, providing a sound base for measuring the effects of the programme.

9.1.2 Complementarity

The YOUTH programme corresponds well to overall EU Youth policies, it is largely complementary with the national activities of the Member State, but it is only partially complementary with the Leonardo da Vinci and Socrates programmes.

The assessment of the evaluators shows that the YOUTH programme corresponds to the objectives of EU Youth policy as laid down in the White Paper and the Youth Pact. With regards to the complementarity of the YOUTH programme with other Commission Programmes, the evaluators conclude that the YOUTH programme is partially complementary with the Leonardo da Vinci and Socrates Programme. This complementarity can mainly be found in work placements and in the exchange of experience of professionals working with young people. In this sense the types of activities and objectives are broadly the same, but directed towards different target groups. For several other elements, no relationship between the programmes is found. This demonstrates that in general, there are not enough connections to reinforce further cooperation between the programmes, except through common publication and information (this is also indicated by the respondents of the National Agencies and Authorities survey by questionnaire).

The outcomes of the surveys by questionnaires and the country studies show that the YOUTH programme is largely complementary with national youth policy in *terms of activities* and is at the same time *related to the national objectives* in youth policy. The latter is not surprising as the national youth policies are linked to, and influenced by, the general EU youth policy.

9.1.3 Relevance

The YOUTH programme is relevant as it addresses the needs of most beneficiaries

Stakeholders involved indicate that the programme targets the needs of most beneficiaries, especially the youth groups. Also the youth workers place a high value on the programme in terms of addressing their needs. However National Agencies and National Authorities indicate that this is less the case for policy makers in the Old Member States. Although the relevance of the programme for youth workers is considered to be high, the relevance of the activities employed can be further strengthened, according to youth workers, through improved consultation with youth workers on the design, content, methodology, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the training courses. Furthermore, respondents from some countries asked for greater flexibility to enable programme activities to be tailored to specific needs and circumstances of the particular country. The evaluators consider that in justified cases, greater flexibility to enable better targeting of needs could be useful, so long as the overall aim of the programme is served.

9.1.4 Effectiveness

Effectiveness of the YOUTH programme for young people

The effectiveness of the YOUTH programme for young people has been measured through different indicators related to:

- Active citizenship competences (attitudes, skills, knowledge and reflection);
- Citizenship in practice (participation in European or international activities, participation in local or national activities, in general more active in social society);
- Effects on employability (influence on professional or educational career and influence on international job opportunities/orientation);
- Solidarity;
- Orientation towards Europe.

Overall, it can be concluded that regarding young people, the YOUTH programme has been effective in improving citizenship competencies, influencing job orientation and contributing to a higher sense of solidarity and the feeling of being a European citizen. The programme has been rather effective in fostering active citizenship.

This conclusion is further supported by the following sub-conclusions:

- *YOUTH programme effective in fostering citizenship competencies*
Based on the outcomes of the surveys by questionnaires and country studies, in general the YOUTH programme is considered to be very successful in improving young participants' citizenship competencies, especially when it comes to attitudes, communication and social skills. The effects on a better understanding of European values seem to be lowest, but are still considerable.
- *YOUTH programme rather effective in fostering active citizenship*
According to the evaluators, the effectiveness of the programme in increasing participants active citizenship are in practice somewhat less promising than the effectiveness on increasing the competencies related to active citizenship, but they are still not disappointing. Although a significant number of young people remained or became active in local or international organisations after the completion of their activity, this was not always as a consequence of the programme. In this sense, it could be true that the programme provides an opportunity for young people that are already active, to undertake such activities

Looking at the net results of the programme, around one third of participants became active internationally as a consequence of the programme, while slightly fewer than a quarter became active at national level. Because in general the average number of active young people is estimated to be much lower than this, these results are considered by the evaluators to be rather good, although participants of the Youth programme may be considered to be a more active group of young people.

- *YOUTH programme has influence on job orientation and intention to work in another country, especially through Action 2*
Due to the nature of the Actions, it is not remarkable that the effectiveness of the programme on employability is higher for Action 2 than for Action 1. Ex-EVS

participants report a very positive effect on their employability, especially in terms of job orientation (62% of the EVS participants state that participation influenced their professional career, while 56% indicated it has given them better job opportunities). Self-reported effects on employability for Action 1 participants are somewhat smaller. Nevertheless, the evaluators consider it a positive result that through the short term exchanges in Action 1, young people have become more open to working in other countries. Participation also influences educational choices.

It must be noted that the conclusions are mainly based on self reports and the impressions of stakeholders. In order to be able to measure the real effects on employability and education choices, the participants should be monitored over a longer period of time.

- *Increase in sense of solidarity, but not known whether this is translated in concrete actions*

The self reports of the young people show that they have a greater sense of solidarity as a result of participation in the programme; 80% feel an increased sense of responsibility, and 90% indicates it contributed at least to some extent to a stronger feeling of solidarity. However it does appear that with regards to this, the main effect is a change in feeling. Whether this change results in concrete actions is not further investigated by this evaluation, as no further indicators were set up to measure this.

- *Increased feeling of being a European citizen, more positive attitude towards Europe*
The feeling of being a European citizen as indicated by the young people was already relatively high among participants prior to the start of the activity, but the percentage increased quite considerably after participation (from 70% to 85-90%). The attitude towards Europe also became more positive due to participation in the programme, especially for ex-EVS participants from New Member States. The evaluators consider the programme to be effective in these aspects.

Effectiveness in reaching the target group

The distribution of participants of the YOUTH programme in terms of education levels does not reflect the distribution of the target group as a whole: higher educated young people are overrepresented. The YOUTH programme is found to be modestly effective in reaching people with fewer opportunities.

The programme aimed to reach all young people, paying special attention to young people with fewer opportunities. In practice we see that the programme mainly reaches higher educated young people, while this group only forms a relatively small percentage of the target group as a whole in Europe (for Action 1, 60% of participants were highly educated while the percentage for Action 2 is even higher at 75%. The indicative average for the EU is 25%). The evaluators consider this a missed opportunity in providing non-formal education chances to those people who have less education.

The effectiveness in reaching young people with fewer opportunities is however less straightforward to judge, as the definition is not clear and different concepts seem to be used by different stakeholders. Having said this and keeping in mind that overall around 20% of young people are considered to have less opportunities, the evaluators conclude

that the programme is modestly successful in reaching people with fewer opportunities (20% for Action 1 and 13% for Action 2). However, the programme is mainly reaching people with fewer opportunities who are more highly educated, indicating that only a specific group of these young people are being reached. The evaluators consider the programme to be effective in terms of equal gender opportunities, with even an overrepresentation of women in Action 2.

Effectiveness of the YOUTH Programme for youth workers

The effectiveness of the YOUTH programme for youth workers was determined using the following criteria:

- Outputs of the programme considered as the most supportive to youth workers in their work with young people;
- Effectiveness of the Action 5 support activities for youth workers: professional development, involvement in European networks, increase in knowledge on specific issues and the influence of the T-Kits;
- Effectiveness in terms of employability.

Overall it can be concluded that there are important positive outputs from the programme at the level of youth workers in terms of an increase in knowledge and cultural awareness, a greater European dimension and new working methods. However, it seems that youth workers experienced some difficulties in applying this knowledge in their daily work. The programme has positively contributed to the professional development of youth workers and to a lesser extent to their employability. It must be noted that the effectiveness of the programme has been negatively affected by the relatively low participation of youth workers in interesting programme activities due to the fact that they were not sufficiently aware of the opportunities, and an overemphasis on training.

This conclusion is based on the following sub-conclusions:

- *Outputs contributing to the work of youth workers: training and networking are not the most important elements*
The increased cultural / intercultural awareness and European / international dimensions in youth worker practice, are assessed by youth workers as the most important aspects in supporting them to be more effective in their work with young people. Exposure to new methods of working with young people is also considered to be important. The evaluators notice that in comparison with other elements, central elements in the programme such as training, networking and dissemination of results and good practice are ranked relatively low (but not unsatisfactory).
- *Support activities of Action 5 are generally seen as effective as they contribute to networking, but difficulties are envisaged in applying the knowledge gained through training in practice...*
Based upon the results of the questionnaire and country studies the support activities are in general effective in supporting the professional development of youth workers. Participation in activities leads to a higher degree of involvement of youth workers in EU networks, which influences their work with young people. In line with the remarks on awareness of opportunities, the results of the questionnaires show that

youth workers who did not become involved in networks were very often not aware of the opportunities.

The results of the questionnaire with youth workers shows that participation in supporting activities led to an increase in knowledge on a range of specific issues. However, youth workers also indicate that they experienced some difficulties in applying this knowledge to their work in practice and they can more effectively apply skills and knowledge acquired outside the framework of the YOUTH programme, than inside.

The evaluators are of the opinion that more attention paid to needs assessment (which is also indicated by the youth workers) might increase the practical usage of the knowledge gained. Depending on the aims of the programme, this might lead to a need to review training components of YOUTH programmes. The T-Kits are indicated by youth workers to be the least effective in terms of work practice. On the basis of the responses to the questionnaires, the effectiveness of the YOUTH Programme is in general higher for pre-accession countries and partner countries.

- *.... but, attention needed for the added value of training provided and...*
The indication from a relatively high proportion of youth workers across all country groupings, showed that the training received under the YOUTH programme ‘to some extent’ duplicated other trainings they had received. This is considered by the evaluators to be a point of attention. Care should be taken that training has not developed a ‘life of its own’ and risks becoming divorced from practice and also the changing needs of youth work practitioners. This aspect is also related to the earlier point of the need for good needs assessments.

Despite the critical points, youth workers do indicate that the programme has contributed to their own development and moderately to their employability.

- *... the effectiveness of programme reduced through non-participation due to lack of awareness of opportunities*
The evaluators found that the effectiveness of the programme was reduced through the non-participation of youth workers in training, support and networking activities as a result of a lack of awareness of such opportunities. The implications of this and the structures of the YOUTH programme that have responsibilities in respect of dissemination of information (such as the National Agencies, SALTO Centres, Eurodesks) requires further examination.

Effectiveness of the YOUTH Programme for organisations

Unintended positive effects for organisations

Although it is not a direct intention of the programme, organisations indicate that they have benefited from the programme. These benefits include having volunteers placed in their organisations, the learning effect on youth work (also in relation to Action 5) and through a more international orientation of organisations as a result. The evaluators consider these outcomes as positive side effects of the programme.

9.1.5 Utility and sustainability

The utility and sustainability criteria are basically wider impacts. The influence of the programme on the following criteria is investigated:

- Contribution to a Europe of Knowledge;
- Policy influence;
- Influence on international governmental cooperation;
- Ongoing dialogue between organisations and policy makers;
- International connections between organisations;
- Increase in policy interest;
- Influence on administrative and institutional structures and administrative mobility obstacles.

Contribution to a Europe of Knowledge due to the opportunities the programme provides

The programme offers opportunities for mobility and non-formal learning, which could be seen as one of the aspects of lifelong learning. In this sense, the programme contributes to a Europe of Knowledge. Moreover it contributes to the strengthening of cooperation in the field of non-formal education.

Based on the questionnaires and country studies, the evaluators found that the YOUTH programme has had more influence upon, and has been more able to penetrate, youth work practice than youth policy (see next section). The innovative approach towards voluntary services, (also considered as contributing to a Europe of Knowledge), is considered by the evaluators to be the most promising in this respect. In general it seems that the innovation with regards to generating new approaches in the programme is modest, but has the highest influence in New Member States. It may be regarded as somewhat disappointing that the contribution towards innovative approaches to lifelong learning and non-formal education seems to be modest.

Limited contribution of the programme towards policy, but some influence on innovative approaches

The surveys by questionnaires, country studies and national reports show that the programme has not had so much influence on policy, although in the New Member States some influence is reported. This may also be a consequence of the fact that stakeholders do not see much complementarity between the objectives of the YOUTH programme and national policy. Based on the outcomes of the surveys by questionnaires, the programme seems to have more influence on innovative approaches.

Influence on international governmental cooperation not very convincing

In general the programme seems to contribute to an increase in cooperation between stakeholders in the youth field. However, the influence of the YOUTH programme on international *governmental* cooperation is not very convincing. First of all, many respondents of the National Agency/National Authorities survey by questionnaire have no idea about this influence at all. Based on the outcomes of the survey by questionnaires, the evaluators conclude that the programme has only moderately contributed to the development of ongoing contacts and dialogue amongst policy-makers, although the influence is relatively successful at a European level.

Based on the outcomes of the different sources (country studies, surveys by questionnaires, national reports) it is concluded that the most obvious contribution is found in the readiness of governments to exchange information with other countries; there seems to be a modest influence of the programme on the following aspects:

- Participation in international exchange events with policy makers;
- The readiness of the government to exchange information with other countries;
- The readiness of the government to foster best practice.

Less influence is found on the readiness of other governments to enhance cooperation in the area of youth voluntary civic services.

Ongoing dialogue between organisations and policy makers mainly found at local level, at national level limited influence

Based on the outcomes of the surveys by questionnaires and country studies, it is found that there is an ongoing contact between policy makers and organisations, mainly at a local level. The ongoing contacts at a national level are rather limited. Although the organisations indicate that their activities under the programme contribute to developing sustainable contacts with policy makers, the extent of the contribution in comparison with other autonomous developments is difficult to judge.

Modest contribution to the strengthening of international connections between organisations

The outcomes of the survey by questionnaire with organisations show that there is some contribution from the programme with regards to the establishment of new international contacts between organisations; but in many cases those contacts were already in place. The evaluators think that in this way, the programme might contribute towards a strengthening of these networks and serve to foster the sustainability of them. In general, the programme contributed to a greater level of willingness to cooperate between organisations, as indicated in the survey by questionnaires. This seems to lead to enhanced cooperation at local and regional levels.

Increase in political interest as a result of the programme limited. EU policy in general and not so much the YOUTH programme, seems to influence national policy

The contribution of the programme to an increase in political interest, and the influence of the programme on national policy is found to be rather limited, based on the outcomes of the country studies, surveys by questionnaires and national reports. Where there is some influence on national policy, this is mainly in the New Member States. According to the evaluators, this could be related to the fact that youth policies in the New Member States are more likely to be in the process of review as a result of the political changes which preceded / accompanied their entry into the EU, and that their policies are now being shaped by European YOUTH programmes and policies. Old Member States youth policies may have been in place prior to their entry into the EC and therefore the influence of the YOUTH programme and EU youth policy would be less penetrative. Contrary to the influence on policy at higher geographical levels, the survey by questionnaires with the youth organisations show that influence from the programme on policy at the level of organisations and at a local level, is quite considerable.

No influence on administrative and institutional structures, nor on the reduction of administrative mobility obstacles

Based on the different sources (surveys by questionnaires, country studies, national reports) it is found that in general, there is no real influence on the administrative and institutional structures within the Member States, although in the New Member States some influences were reported. There seems to be no influence of the programme on the reduction of administrative obstacles for mobility. The visa problem is still indicated as an important bottleneck.

The effect of the programme on the legal status of European volunteers, social security and rights of young people is rather modest. In general some influence of the programme on those issues is indicated by the different sources, but also around one third of the respondents of the survey by questionnaire with National Agencies/National Authorities feel that there was no influence at all. The interviews from the country studies confirm this view.

9.1.6 Efficiency

The efficiency of the YOUTH programme is judged in terms of:

- Efficiency of resources;
- Efficiency of procedures;
- Efficiency of structures;
- Visibility;
- Monitoring arrangements.

9.1.7 Efficiency of resources

The efficiency of resources is assessed on the following criteria

- Human resources
- Sufficiency of the Operating Grant and related human resources;
- Sufficiency of the Decentralised Action Budget (ADEC).

The resources can be considered as sufficient, although it seems that more human resources might be needed for improving the visibility and monitoring of the programme. In case more budget would be available for ADEC funding, these resources could go to Action 1 (Youth exchanges) and 5 (supporting measures).

- *The Decentralised Action Budget (ADEC envelope) is fine, if more resources would be available, these could go to Action 1 and 5*

The ADEC envelope is found in general to be fine, based on the needs indicated and the successfulness of the number of applications. However, about half of the National Agencies and Authorities are of the opinion that Action 1 needs a greater budget, and about one third, suggest that Action 5 does. This could indicate that these Actions are successful and the National Agencies and Authorities want to expand them, or that there is a clear need for the activities under these Actions. At the same time, in light of the conclusions on the effectiveness of the training for youth workers for instance,

the evaluators are of the opinion that the execution and financing of Action 5 needs adjustments, mainly in terms of meeting the needs of the beneficiaries.

In terms of attracting good applications, the National Agencies indicate that Action 1 and 3 are more successful than Action 2, the European Voluntary Service. Hence, there does not seem to be a need to increase the budget for Action 2. At the same time, as the EVS is such an important part of the YOUTH Programme, the evaluators consider that this issue needs to be addressed further in the mid term review of the new Youth in Action Programme.

- *Sufficiency Operating Grant differs per country, but in general some activities require more resources*

The different opinions held by the National Agencies and their corresponding National Authorities differs per country. This is an issue that should be examined at the level of the individual countries. Whether the operating grants are sufficient should be closely monitored for the new programme, as the administrative burden for the National Agencies has increased, especially for the new programme period.

At the same time, it becomes clear for the evaluators that for certain activities more resources are needed. This is also indicated by the National Agencies and Authorities. These findings are largely coherent with the main weaknesses found in the implementation of the programme, namely monitoring and dissemination of information and the advising of project managers, which are all markers of the efficiency of the programme. The evaluators consider it important to ensure sufficient resources for these tasks.

- *In general more human resources at national level are needed to guarantee sufficient monitoring, publication and support to applicants.*

Most National Agencies indicate that the human resources available are hardly sufficient. This issue is closely related to the finding that some activities need more attention, such as monitoring, publication and support to applicants. In general, there is not enough capacity for these activities. According to the Agencies, in the course of the programme, the capacity for these activities came under further pressure because of the increased capacity needed for the administrative procedures.

9.1.8 Efficiency of procedures

In order to examine the efficiency of the procedures, we have examined different aspects of administration and management procedures, the criteria and funding rules, the frequency of calls for proposals and the duration of the selection process, the payment process and the influence of the management changes throughout the lifetime of the programme for the decentralised procedure. For the centralised strand we have examined the procedures. Unfortunately, we did not have much feed back from applicants on the centralised procedure.

Overall conclusion on the efficiency of the decentralised procedures is that they function well, but the difficulties with the application procedure for organisations negatively affects the accessibility of the programme. Issues for attention are the difficulties that less experienced organisations encounter in the application procedure. There are some indications that only a select group of organisations are benefiting from the programme. However it must be noted that for the new programme attempts have been made to simplify the procedures. It could be worthwhile to closely monitor the effectiveness of this simplification. Another issue for attention is the late payments by the Commission.

This conclusion is based on the following sub-conclusions:

- *In general the decentralised procedures are fine, but attention is needed for the administrative burden on the National Agencies*
Although in general the procedures are judged to be adequate, several National Agencies mention the administrative burdens, especially in relation to the new programme. Although the new programme is out of the scope of this evaluation, the evaluators are of the opinion that remarks on the administrative burden calls for further monitoring of this aspect in the new programming period. This is also related to the earlier indicated lack of resources for monitoring, publicity and guidance for applicants.
- *The accessibility of the programme for organisations seems to be negatively influenced by the application procedure*
The length of the application procedure is negatively judged by the organisations. Also the surveys by questionnaires, national reports and country studies show that the application procedure is difficult for newcomers. The evaluators point out that the risk of having a difficult application form and procedure is that only a select group of organisations benefit from the programme, because they know how to apply. This picture was confirmed by the country studies, where it was mentioned that the programme is often used by the same established youth organisations. This is not considered desirable. At the same time, the assistance provided by the National Agencies to the organisations is judged to be helpful, but for this the National Agencies do need to have sufficient resources. Combined with the earlier remarks, the evaluators are of the opinion that this continues to be a subject for further monitoring and, where necessary, improvements be made.
- *Late payments by the Commission sometimes hinder the efficient implementation of the programme*
Based on the outcomes of the surveys by questionnaires and some national reports, it seems that in several cases late payments by the Commission hinder the efficient implementation of the programme. It is very much dependent on the willingness of the national authorities to pre-finance the activities, and problems are mainly found in pre-accession countries and New Member States, probably as these countries have less opportunities to pre-finance. The late payments for the New Member States can be partly explained by the fact that in the Accession period, these countries could only be paid by the Commission after their payment of the so called entry ticket (the contribution of the country to the general budget of the Commission). The evaluators

consider this to be a point of attention, especially in those cases where the implementation of the programme is hindered or delayed.

- *The centralised procedure seems to be improved in terms of efficiency; exchange of information National Agency and the Executive Agency could help in mutual learning.*

Based on a comparison between the procedures by the evaluators, the changes within the centralised procedure seem to contribute to a more efficient procedure. To what extent the applying organisations are satisfied with the new structure and procedure is not known, as there were not enough respondents that applied centrally. This aspect could be a subject of further evaluation in the mid term evaluation.

The evaluators agree with remarks made by National Agencies and Authorities that exchange of information between the National Agencies and the Executive Agency might be useful and could lead to better implementation (procedures) at both central and national level.

9.1.9 Efficiency of structures

The efficiency of structures is examined on the basis of the opinion of different stakeholders on the functioning of the bodies involved (EC, Technical Assistance Office/Educational & Culture Executive Agency, National Agencies, National Authorities, Salto Resource Centres and Eurodesks) and the organisational difficulties reported by those institutes.

The structures are, in general, appropriate and efficient The European Commission is quite efficient, although there are some points for improvement. It is still too early for a judgement on the efficiency and appropriateness of the Executive Agency. Nevertheless, it is concluded that the Executive Agency clearly has an added value in terms of streamlining procedures and policies for the different programmes. The National Agencies are considered to be appropriate structures. The organisations are very satisfied with the functioning of the National Agencies, but there are some concerns about the human resources and budget available for certain tasks (see before).

There are some reasons for concern regarding SALTO and Eurodesk. Although these institutes are seen as appropriate, the following concerns deserve attention:

- *The resources available for the SALTOs.*
- *The tuning of the (training) activities to needs.*
- *The extent to which the target groups are reached (despite several communication tools, potential beneficiaries do not seem to be aware of the opportunities).*

Regarding Eurodesk, the major concern is the added value of the information they provide and the connection of their activities to the YOUTH programme. These concerns might lead to consideration about a further review of the functioning of SALTO and Eurodesk and the identification of measures for improvement

This overall conclusion is based on the following sub-conclusions:

- The European Commission is relatively efficient, but there is room for improvement*
 In general, the Commission is seen by the different stakeholders (based on outcomes of the surveys by questionnaires and country studies) as relatively efficient. However, there are certainly points for improvement, relating in particular to the time needed to respond to questions, but also in providing clear instructions. Also, improvements could be made regarding timely payments and contracts. This is an issue that according to the evaluators, is important to improve as it will ensure a more efficient and coherent programme implementation.
- Technical Assistance Office and Executive Agency*
 The opinions regarding the Technical Assistance Office (TAO) and Executive Agency need to be put into perspective, as most respondents did not have contact with the Executive Agency and the Executive Agency only started up in 2006. Some concerns are expressed by the different stakeholders about the efficiency of the TAO and Executive Agency. The evaluators consider it too early to draw any conclusions from these figures and it might be more useful at this stage, for the Executive Agency to learn from the responses related to the efficiency of its predecessor – the Technical Assistance Office. The concerns expressed by the different stakeholders related to monitoring and response time to questions, should be noted from a ‘lessons learned’ perspective, as they could have implications for the work of the Executive Agency. Clearly, the efficiency of the Executive Agency will need to be examined in the mid term review of the new Youth in Action Programme.

The National Agencies and Executive Agency indicate that there is little contact between them. The evaluators agree with remarks made by National Agencies that exchange of information between the National Agencies and the Executive Agency might be useful and could lead to improved implementation (procedures) at both central and national level.

- National Agencies*
 The National Agency structure is generally seen as an appropriate and efficient structure by the different stakeholders. The National Agencies themselves however, do have some concerns that might influence the efficiency and effectiveness of their organisation, especially related to staff resource capacity. This point is related to the already identified need for more resources for monitoring, information and advice to project promoters.

The evaluators are of the opinion that the concern about the administrative and financial / audit burden reported should be a point for attention and monitoring, or even for reviewing. Although this burden is partly caused by factors outside the YOUTH programme such as the financial regulation, at least, attention should be paid to this aspect in the mid term evaluation. The results could be reported to the appropriate decision making level.

- *Need for review activities SALTO and Eurodesk*

SALTO

The surveys by questionnaires, country studies and national reports show that in general, the SALTOs are seen as appropriate structures and the importance of their work is acknowledged. However, with regards to their functioning, several concerns are expressed, mainly relating to:

- The resources available for the SALTOs;
- The tuning of the activities in relation to needs (which is underlined by the fact that especially youth workers and the National Agencies have indicated that there is much room for improvement in this respect as well as for limiting the overlap of the training activities with other activities);
- Strengthened cooperation between the National Agencies and the SALTOs.

Furthermore, the outcomes of the youth workers survey by questionnaire indicate that a large number of youth workers are not aware of the (training) opportunities offered. According to the evaluators, this implies that there is room for improvement. Although the SALTOs employ several methods of communication, they do not sufficiently reach this group. This asks for more targeted communication activities.

The above concerns might demonstrate the need for a further review in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the SALTOs.

Eurodesk

Although the Eurodesks are generally seen as an efficient structure, major concerns are expressed within the surveys by questionnaires and country studies about the added value of the information provided by them. Furthermore, it seems that the role of the Eurodesks within the YOUTH programme and the connection of their activities with the YOUTH programme is limited, or at least not clear. This is also indicated in the national reports. Just as for the SALTO, the evaluators consider that a review of the activities of Eurodesks could be necessary in order to make improvements in the relevance of their work.

9.1.10 Visibility

Visibility and publication not optimal, there is room for improvement

Based on the survey by questionnaire with National Agencies/Authorities it is concluded that there seems to be a limit to the role of the National Agencies and Authorities in enhancement of the political visibility of the programme. The meaning of political visibility may have different connotations both within and between the various country groupings, as well as between the Member States and the Commission. It also presupposes a desire on the part of the National Agencies and Authorities to enhance the political visibility of the programme. If the challenge is to increase the political visibility of the Youth in Action Programme, strategies need to be developed to facilitate the enhancement of visibility of the new programme.

Furthermore, as the programme has difficulty in efficiently reaching disadvantaged young people and less highly educated people, it is difficult to conclude that the programme has achieved optimum effectiveness through its publicity in reaching its target groups

9.1.11 Monitoring arrangements

Basic monitoring arrangements are in place, but no efficient use is made of the available information; there is considerable room for improvement

The organisations put quite a lot of energy into their reporting of results. However, these reports are not systematically used for monitoring purposes, neither are uniform criteria (indicators) used to report upon.

Hence the evaluators are of the opinion that within the YOUTH programme no efficient use is made of the information that is available at different levels. This is caused by the fact that the monitoring procedures and tools are not streamlined and a coherent set of indicators, used by all stakeholders involved, is missing. The organisations monitor different outputs and results, which makes it impossible to aggregate the data to a higher level (e.g. data per Action).

Furthermore, different monitoring systems are in place at the central and decentralised levels, which does not facilitate obtaining a good overview. On top of this, the monitoring system at the decentralised level is not used by all National Agencies, as there are problems with the user friendliness of the system. As a consequence, the programme suffers from a lack of adequate information on the achievements and progress at EC level, but probably also at national level. The evaluators find that there is considerable room for improvement.

9.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the evaluators make the following recommendations:

9.2.1 Relevance

Ensure relevance by sound needs assessment

Especially for training activities for youth workers, the evaluation shows that there is a need for an improvement in their relevance. The effectiveness of the activities can be increased by better targeting the needs of participants. For this purpose, more and better needs assessment are recommended, which would form a base for the tailored development of training programmes.

9.2.2 Effectiveness

Develop a strategy to reach youth groups other than just the higher educated youth

The programme mainly reached higher educated young people, and this does not reflect the composition of the population. The reasons for this bias could be analysed along with the possibilities to involve a greater number of young people with a lower education level. This would provide a good basis for the development of a strategy and

accompanying measures, to involve other youth groups. This issue is also related to the need for a publication strategy that targets potential participants as directly as possible.

Consider more involvement of young people in the preparation of projects

The evaluation shows that the effectiveness for young people in terms of active citizenship is greater in those cases where they have co-organised the project. Hence, in order to strengthen the effectiveness of the programme in this respect and to facilitate the further development of skills of young people, it is recommended that young people be involved more often in project preparation and implementation. This is an issue that is also raised within the national reports. Providing specific training on issues related to project preparation, organisation and implementation may support the learning effect.

In designing new programmes, attention needs to be paid to the intervention logic

One of the conclusions pointed at problems related to the internal coherence of objectives and measures. The hierarchy of objectives and corresponding measures could be better articulated, just as could measurable indicators and targets. The use of the Logical Framework Approach could be helpful in this respect.

9.2.3 Efficiency

Improve monitoring especially through a more systematic use of the already available information and streamlining of existing procedures and system.

The efforts already undertaken in collecting monitoring data can be streamlined. The first priority is the development of a coherent set of monitoring indicators (input, output and result) to be used at all levels (from project level to EC level). This will allow all actors involved to collect data that is standardised, comparable and that can be aggregated at higher levels (from project level to Action and programme level). The definition of the indicators should be clear, as should their way of measurement. Furthermore, the development of common measurement tools would be beneficial, using the indicators at the start and end of the project so that the direct results of participation within the programme can be measured. The outcomes could be entered into the monitoring system, so that the results could be aggregated to a higher level. Such a system allows for active monitoring, especially if indicators per activity are defined. It will also enhance the efficiency.

Moreover, the reporting system could be improved through better reporting requirements and formats that are applicable for the total programme period with a close link to the monitoring data. A suggestion is to include in those reports the output and result indicators that need to be reported upon, as well as standardised financial tables that can be generated from the IT monitoring system. Other possibilities are related to further streamlining of the monitoring efforts by the various bodies. This could be done by integrating the data for the centralised and decentralised strand in one system and by further tuning the monitoring efforts of the SALTOs and National Agencies. This could also be linked to monitoring of the functioning of the implementing bodies.

Improve the visibility of the programme

Improvement of the visibility of the programme is closely related to the need for more resources (next recommendation) and the need for a strategy to reach a broader range of young people and to inform more youth workers on the opportunities of the programme. There is a clear need for more focussed information, channelled by targeting specific organisations such as the formal education system and organisations connected to the specific target groups. This especially counts in relation to reaching young people with fewer opportunities. This is an issue that is also raised within the national reports. Alongside this, the visibility of the programme and the professional improvement of stakeholders involved might be facilitated by increased attention for the exchange of good practices. This aspect could also be taken up in relation to a possible review of the tasks of SALTO and Eurodesk.

Ensure sufficient guidance to project promoters

It is suggested that the administrative rules and application procedures hinder less experienced organisations from applying for a project. In this light, it is important that all National Agencies are aware of the fact that they have an important role to play in providing guidance and assistance to applying organisations. At the same time, it is clear that some National Agencies might not have sufficient resources to fulfil this task (see also next recommendation) Furthermore, it might also be useful to monitor the main obstacles in the application procedure, so that targeted information on the common bottle necks can be made, as well as a source for identifying possibilities for improvement (within the scope of the programme, or within the Regulations at a higher level outside the scope of the programme).

Consider the possibility of making more resources available for monitoring, dissemination and publicity and providing guidance to project promoters

The evaluation clearly shows that there is a need for more resources for monitoring, dissemination of information and guidance to project promoters. It is indicated that with the increased administrative burden on the National Agencies, these activities are under pressure and there is a clear need for more attention on those issues (see recommendations above). It is recommended to monitor this issue closely, taking measures if necessary in order to maintain and preferably increase the quality of the programme implementation.

Examine solutions for the relatively late transfers of money to the implementing bodies

The late payments of the Commission have consequences for the organisations implementing the projects, as some countries do not pre-finance the activities if the Commission has not paid. The late payments also have consequences on the efficient and effective implementation of the training programmes, as all programmes are only launched after receipt of the Commission's payment. Hence, the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme could be improved by solving this issue.

Consider a review of the supporting structures SALTO and Eurodesk

In the conclusions, the concerns related to the supporting structures of SALTO and Eurodesk were mentioned, a review of these structures is recommended. In particular, the training activities provided could be better tailored to the needs (of the youth workers).

Better needs assessments and involvement of the potential beneficiaries in the design phase could probably enhance the relevance and added value.

