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Inclusion Strategy

of the « Youth in Action » programme (2007-2013)

The Inclusion Strategy of the Youth in Action programme is based on two converging aims:

1. to **ensure the accessibility of the Youth in Action programme** for young people with fewer opportunities (both those organised in youth organisations, youth councils, etc, as well as those not formally organised);
2. to stimulate the use of the Youth in Action programme as a **tool** to enhance the **social inclusion, active citizenship and employability** of young people with fewer opportunities and to contribute to **social cohesion** at large.

Inclusion is a **priority** of the Youth in Action programme. Therefore, all activities led under the programme may benefit from a **special inclusion-related support** (mainly through exceptional costs). The Commission has also created a **Resource Center: SALTO for Inclusion**, that provides resources (training tools, publications, information...) to National and Executive Agencies, inclusion workers, youth and social workers, etc. and offers opportunities for training, exchange and reflection on their inclusion practice.

The Inclusion Strategy is the common framework for the **particular efforts and actions**, which **Commission, Member States, National and Executive Agencies** have to undertake according to the legal basis in order to include young people with fewer opportunities in the Youth in Action programme and to use this programme as a tool for inclusion of all in society.

1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

The Parliament and Council have adopted the Youth in Action programme on 15th November 2006. The programme supports non-formal learning activities for young people aged between 15 and 28 (and in certain cases also from 13 to 30 years), and puts a strong emphasis on the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities.

General objectives¹ specify:

“The general objectives of the programme shall contribute to the development of the EU policies, in particular with regard to the recognition of cultural and multicultural and linguistic diversity in Europe, to fostering social cohesion and combating all discrimination based on sex, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, and with regard to sustainable development.”

Specific objectives² include:

- promoting the fundamental values of the EU among young people, in particular respect for human dignity, equality, respect for human rights, tolerance and non-discrimination;
- facilitating participation in the programme by young people with fewer opportunities, including young people with disabilities;
- ensuring that the principle of equality between men and women is respected in participation in the programme and that gender equality is fostered in the actions;
- contributing to the improvement of information for young people, while paying special attention to the access of young people with disabilities;
- facilitating the recognition of young people's non-formal learning and skills acquired through participation in the programme.

Access to the programme³ states:

“The programme is intended for young people aged between 15-28, although certain actions are open to young people aged as young as 13 or up to the age of 30.”

"All young people, without discrimination, shall be able to have access to the activities of the programme, subject to the provisions of the Annex. The Commission and the participating countries shall ensure that particular efforts are made with regard to young people who have particular difficulties taking part in the programme for educational, social, physical, psychological, economic or cultural reasons or because they live in remote areas."

¹ Article 2.3 of the Parliament and Council Decision n°1719/2006/CE

² Article 3, idem

³ Article 6, idem

Consequently, the Youth in Action programme is conceived as an important instrument for inclusion, notwithstanding its general openness to all young people. It complements the inclusion efforts made in other areas and notably in the European political cooperation in the field of youth, including the four priorities of the Open Method of Coordination, the European Pact for Youth and the mainstreaming of youth in other policies. In this framework inclusion is a transversal aspect of all other political instruments.

2. DEFINITION OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES

“Young people with fewer opportunities” are young people that are at a disadvantage compared to their peers because they face one or more of the situations and obstacles mentioned in the non-exhaustive list below. In certain contexts, these situations/obstacles prevent young people from having effective access to formal and non-formal education, trans-national mobility and from participation, active citizenship, empowerment and inclusion in society at large.

- ***Social obstacles:*** young people facing discrimination (because of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc.), young people with limited social skills or anti-social or risky sexual behaviours, young people in a precarious situation, (ex-)offenders, (ex-)drug or alcohol abusers, young and/or single parents, orphans, young people from broken families, etc.
- ***Economic obstacles:*** young people with a low standard of living, low income, dependence on social welfare system, long-term unemployment, homelessness, poverty, young people in debt or with financial problems, etc.
- ***Disability:*** young people with mental (intellectual, cognitive, learning), physical, sensory or other disabilities.
- ***Educational difficulties:*** young people with learning difficulties, early school-leavers and school dropouts, lower qualified persons, young people with poor school performance, etc.
- ***Cultural differences:*** young immigrants or refugees or descendants from immigrant or refugee families, young people belonging to a national or ethnic minority, young people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion problems, etc.
- ***Health problems:*** young people with chronic health problems, severe illnesses or psychiatric conditions, young people with mental health problems, etc.
- ***Geographical obstacles:*** young people from remote or rural areas, young people living on small islands or peripheral regions, young people from urban problem zones, young people from less serviced areas (limited public transport, poor facilities, abandoned villages), etc.

National and Executive Agencies shall address all of these situations/obstacles, without excluding any particular target group. However, it is possible that young people confronted by one specific situation/obstacle face a disadvantage compared to their peers in one country/region, but not in another one. Therefore, when necessary, National and Executive Agencies will further detail the importance of the above-mentioned situations/obstacles in their contexts, but always in the spirit of the legal basis of the programme.

These details, relating to the European, National or regional contexts, need to be public and communicated to the Commission and to a wider audience (e.g. website of the Agency) in order to ensure the transparent and coherent application of this Inclusion strategy and prevent financial incentives for inclusion projects being granted on an arbitrary basis.

3. DEFINITION OF INCLUSION PROJECTS

Inclusion projects are of two types:

- **A-Inclusion projects:** consciously including young people with fewer opportunities as active participants in projects (providing tailor-made preparation, support, monitoring and follow-up for them).
- **B-Inclusion projects:** have a clear thematic focus on inclusion (on one or more of the situations/obstacles described above) and aim to improve the situation through awareness-raising, or working towards projects with young people with fewer opportunities (e.g. in Action 4.3 Training and networking), exchange of good practices, etc.

These two types of projects are both of high importance but they have to be counted and monitored separately, as well as projects being of A and B nature at the same time (**AB-inclusion projects**).

4. NON-FORMAL LEARNING – AN OPPORTUNITY FOR INCLUSION

The persistently high level of youth unemployment in the EU is a serious problem. Labour market entrants with the lowest levels of educational achievement face the highest risks of unemployment. The European Youth Pact therefore encourages a cross-sectoral approach that provides a better coordination of formal, non-formal and informal learning and -as a consequence- would facilitate smoother transitions from school to work.

As a result of inequities in earlier education stages, pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds often do not achieve the level of qualifications needed to access easily the labour market or higher education. Policies to reinforce efficiency and equity of education systems therefore have to combine all available forms of learning to facilitate easier access and thus to contribute to social inclusion.

Non-formal and informal learning in the Youth in Action programme help making learning attractive, developing readiness for lifelong learning and promoting social integration, in particular of young people with fewer opportunities. Projects in the framework of the Youth in Action programme have a participative and learner-centred approach. They are carried out on a voluntary basis and are therefore closely linked to young people's needs, aspirations and interests. Key elements are peer learning, learning environments and inclusion of all young people. Formal learning emphasises cognitive learning, non-formal settings often complement cognitive aspects by emotional, social and practical levels of learning.

By providing an additional source of learning and offering a route into formal education and training, such activities are particularly relevant to young people with fewer opportunities. The non-formal learning opportunities provided and supported through the Youth in Action

programme can therefore be considered as an important complementary tool to social inclusion efforts at national, regional and local levels.

5. AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE STRATEGY

Aims and Objectives

1. To ensure a **common vision and commitment** among the different actors of the programme in defining the target group and implementing the strategy;
2. To **make it easier** for youth workers working with young people with fewer opportunities to develop and implement inclusion projects within the Youth in Action programme;
3. To support the **quality and quantity of the projects** involving young people with fewer opportunities and to maximise their impact;
4. To promote the use of the Youth in Action programme as an opportunity for **self-development and learning for young people** with fewer opportunities and as a possible stepping stone in their personal pathway;
5. To **stimulate diversity** and to counter mechanisms of exclusion and discrimination.

Expected Outcomes

The proposed key lines of action within this Inclusion Strategy should contribute to:

- A **high quality of projects** including young people with fewer opportunities;
- A **strong commitment** of National and local Authorities as well as of National and Executive Agencies to make use of the Youth in Action programme as tool for the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities;
- A **high number of inclusion projects** involving young people with fewer opportunities;
- A **high number of projects with a thematic focus** on inclusion;
- A **high share of young people with fewer opportunities** taking part in the Youth in Action programme;
- A **minimum of obstacles** in the programme for young people with fewer opportunities and youth workers in setting up or participating in inclusion projects;
- A **maximum number of inclusion-related tools and resources** that youth workers, young people, National Authorities and National and Executive Agencies can use;
- A maximum of **synergies with other youth inclusion programmes and policies** at all levels;

- A **positive impact** on young people with fewer opportunities in terms of increasing key competencies, active citizenship and employability, thus contributing to their social inclusion.

6. KEY LINES FOR ACTION

6.1. Keys for success

- A Youth in Action project with young people with fewer opportunities should be **embedded in a process** before and after the actual project and not remain an isolated event. The Youth in Action programme could be used for different steps in a young person's **pathway**;
- When preparing and implementing inclusion projects, particular emphasis needs to be put on the analysis of the profile and special needs of the young people and a corresponding **tailor-made and supportive approach**;
- Inclusion projects should focus on young people's **competences** and aim at developing their **potential**, rather than focussing on deficits and problems;
- A **solid partnership** between the organisations and individual youth workers involved in a project should be established, based on commonly agreed objectives, concepts and methods;
- Projects should possibly be implemented **in association** with other national, regional or local inclusion programmes and persons and institutions outside the project context (family, school, etc.);
- The **step-by-step approach** should be encouraged for young people with fewer opportunities, for instance starting with a youth initiative or youth exchange, then continuing with the voluntary service, moving on from a short-term EVS to a long term EVS etc;
- Depending on its aims, inclusion projects could either bring together young people from **different backgrounds** (socio-economic, educational, cultural, religious, geographical, dis-ability, sexual orientation, gender) to promote diversity and counter intolerance and discrimination, or target **one particular "homogenous" target** group (a particular immigrant community, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth, girls only, etc.). The latter approach may be beneficial for working on sensitive topics (identity, personal development, violence, etc.) and shall also be supported when justified.

6.2. Action-specific features to increase accessibility

Inclusion being a horizontal priority of the programme, each of the different Actions and sub-Actions of the programme contains certain features in order to increase social inclusion, accessibility of the programme, and participation of young people with fewer opportunities. Projects targeting youth workers and aiming at preparing and developing further inclusion activities are also essential, and thus supported by the programme. All details are described in the Programme Guide and specific Calls for Proposals.

6.2.1. Action 1 – Youth for Europe

Youth for Europe is most easily accessible for young people with fewer opportunities. Beneficiary organisations and groups have the possibility to combine up to five similar or different activities of Youth for Europe in one project (so-called Multi-measure agreements).

Youth Exchanges: In addition to multilateral youth projects, the possibility for bilateral youth exchanges exists in order to include young people with fewer opportunities and small, local organisations. The rather short-duration of the activity makes the involvement of this target group appropriate. Advance planning visits are an excellent means to build up a solid partnership before the project starts and to actively involve the young person. Exceptional costs related to the special needs of young people with fewer opportunities can be reimbursed up to 100%.

Youth Initiatives: Youth Initiatives are most suitable for young people with fewer opportunities because they can be implemented also by informal groups of young people and without necessarily having partners from other countries. They are geared to participation of young people in society at large. Advance planning visits are possible for Transnational Youth Initiatives. 15-17-year old youngsters may participate if accompanied by a youth worker or a coach. Generally, a coach (with youth work or youth initiative experience) may accompany and support the group from the outside when necessary. Financial support for the coach can be granted.

Youth Democracy Projects: this sub-Action aims specifically to increase the political participation of young people. It is therefore a welcome tool also for the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in policy-making at various levels. All costs directly related to the realisation of the project can be co-financed.

6.2.2. Action 2 – European Voluntary Service

Through **European Voluntary Service**, structured and pedagogically supported short-term and long-term voluntary activities are offered to young people between 18-30 years, and in the case of volunteers with fewer opportunities also to 16-17-year old.

Volunteers participate in different volunteer training sessions and receive tailor-made personal, linguistic and task-related support. Participation in EVS is free for the volunteers and full insurance cover is provided. An EVS activity can be as short as 2 weeks for volunteers with fewer opportunities or Group EVS activities. A special procedural flexibility for short-term projects between 2 weeks and 2 months is authorised. Group EVS activities complement traditional individual EVS activities. In the volunteer recruitment criteria and process, the general accessibility has to be ensured. Crisis prevention mechanisms need to be in place. Advance planning visits facilitate the establishing of a solid partnership and the active involvement of young people with fewer opportunities. A reinforced mentorship is granted for the additional personal support of this target group and exceptional costs related to the special needs of young people with fewer opportunities can be reimbursed up to 100%. Follow-up activities are possible and structures of former EVS volunteers offer interesting opportunities for former volunteers to share their experiences and engage in new activities.

In the online-database of EVS organisations (Commission's website > http://ec.europa.eu/youth/program/sos/hei/hei_en.cfm) accredited organisations based in Programme Countries and South East Europe are published. The search mask allows identifying organisations willing to work with young people with fewer opportunities. The published information usually contains relevant information concerning the specific target group and available facilities and experience of the organisation. Accreditation itself is an easy and ongoing process.

6.2.3. Action 3 – Youth in the World

Action 3 represents the **international cooperation** strand of the programme, alongside with the international cooperation possibilities within European Voluntary Service. It might be helpful for example in establishing projects involving young people from immigrant communities and young people from the culture of origin.

6.2.4. Action 4 – Youth Workers and Support Systems – Training and Networking

Action 4.3 – Training and Networking: the various activities under Action 4.3 are useful tools for organisations to help making (inclusion) projects real and developing European cooperation in youth work in general. They can be a valuable instrument to support the creation and preparation phases of an inclusion project.

A positive and open attitude is essential for setting up inclusion projects that involve young people with fewer opportunities, but the youth workers coaching these projects also need specific skills. Given the diversity in Europe, not all youth workers are educated and prepared to face challenges related to inclusion projects. Action 4.3 of the Youth in Action programme can be particularly useful for training youth workers to work with young people with fewer opportunities in a non-formal learning setting and at international level. Youth workers can learn from their colleagues from other countries and exchange ideas about their respective realities and approaches towards inclusion through job-shadowing, seminars, study visits, training courses, etc.

In an inclusion project, it is vital for the organisations to know the partners and people they are working with. Young people from precarious situations need all the more reassurance that their project is going to be a positive experience. Strong partnerships and thorough planning are criteria for beneficial inclusion projects. Feasibility Visits, Partnership-Building Activities and Networking activities and other meetings are therefore an ideal means to strengthen the partnership and cooperation between organisations working with vulnerable groups with special needs.

Many youth workers gather and have gathered valuable experiences in working with young people with fewer opportunities and the YOUTH (in Action) programme. Action 4.3 allows youth workers to pass on skills, knowledge and adequate attitudes to their colleagues.

The SALTO Inclusion Resource centre also offers different tools to spread good practice: project organisers can upload their methods in the SALTO toolbox for Training (www.salto-youth.net/toolbox/); experienced inclusion workers who are also active in training can list themselves in the TOY-database (Trainers Online for Youth) > www.salto-youth.net/toy/

youth.net/toy/; SALTO can spread good project examples and innovative inclusion ideas via its Inclusion Newsletter > www.salto-youth.net/inclusionNewsletter/ , etc.

Through their Training and Cooperation Plans, National Agencies offer interesting opportunities for organisations and youth workers to become familiar with the programme, find partners and further increase the quality of youth work. Special adapted information and targeted training will increase the accessibility to the Youth in Action programme for young people with fewer opportunities and those working with them.

Action 4.4 – Projects encouraging innovation and quality (centralised annual call for proposals): Action 4.4 allows for experimentation of new approaches, methodologies and project formats. This may contribute significantly to the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities. **Thematic focus** may also point directly to inclusion projects. It is the case in **2007** with the priority theme being: integration of young people with fewer opportunities coming from European suburban areas.

6.2.5. Action 5

Meetings of young people and those responsible for youth policy: This sub-Action promotes European cooperation in the youth field by enhancing **structured dialogue between policy-makers and young people**. It covers the European Youth Week, youth events organised by the EU Presidencies and youth seminars that take place at national, regional and local level. This sub-Action supports in particular the aims pursued by the Open Method of Coordination in the youth field and the European Youth Pact. The Commission, the responsible national youth authorities and National Agencies will ensure that participants in the above mentioned activities also include young people with fewer opportunities and those who are not formally organised in youth organisations, youth councils etc., and to provide appropriate support to them. The objective must be that they can fully participate in the structured dialogue and voice their wishes and concerns.

Support for activities to bring about better understanding and knowledge of the field of youth: this sub-Action, among others, contributes to collect information and evidence on the situation of young people with fewer opportunities and how to improve their social inclusion.

Cooperation with international organisations: the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe implies a wide range of activities related to European Citizenship, regional cooperation in the youth field, youth research and youth policy. A website, the magazine *óCoyoteô* and so-called T(raining)-kits were created to distribute and multiply the outcome of these events > <http://www.training-youth.net/>. The aspect of social inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities is systematically treated in the framework of the Partnership.

6.3. Recognition

The learning achievements of young participants and those involved in youth work are

recognised by means of a **Youthpass** that will be implemented as from 2007. This document attests to the active participation of young people in the programme and serves to enhance the value and visibility of the learning achievements. The Youthpass should be given due consideration by employers, formal education and civil society in general.

6.4. Tools and Training

Youth organisations, youth service providers and National and Executive Agencies are warmly invited to use and to promote the following useful tools and activities:

- Youth workers (social workers, peer educators) can apply for training courses or seminars to **improve their international project management and other skills**. SALTO Inclusion organises specific training courses > www.salto-youth.net/inclusion/. Furthermore, you can find an overview of training activities in the European Training Calendar > www.salto-youth.net/training/.
- Youth workers can apply for existing Partnership-Building Seminars, Study Visits or organise their own projects under Action 4.3 of the Youth in Action programme (Training and Networking) to **find and get to know partners** for their inclusion projects.

A list of seminars and study visits can be found in the European Training Calendar > www.salto-youth.net/training/. You can also list your partner-request in one of the partner-finding databases > www.salto-youth.net/partnerfinding/.

- Youth workers can download or order specific educational publications on Inclusion, which aim to **inspire and improve international projects** with specific target groups > www.salto-youth.net/InclusionPublications/ or browse through the online information relevant to setting up projects with specific target groups > www.salto-youth.net/InclusionGroups/
- Youth workers can browse through the SALTO Toolbox for Youth Work and Training to find methods and exercises for their projects > www.salto-youth.net/toolbox/. Youth workers and National and Executive Agencies can also contribute with useful inclusion methods they use in their work and translate/distribute relevant methods to their target groups.
- People working in the Youth in Action programme or in the field of inclusion in general can register for the SALTO Inclusion newsletter to **stay updated** about new initiatives, resources, good practice and training in the field of inclusion > www.salto-youth.net/InclusionNewsletter/.

6.5. Cross-programme dimension

The likelihood of a sustainable positive impact of the inclusion efforts to be made within the Youth in Action programme is higher if **bridges** are created towards other European, national, regional, local programmes and policies in favour of young people and their social inclusion.

Best practice examples on existing synergies should be collected and new bridges and partnerships be built.

6.6. Implementing Guidelines for National Agencies and the Executive Agency

Inclusion is a priority of the Youth in Action programme. The national authorities, National Agencies and Executive Agency have a high responsibility for its success as well as for the overall European coherence and a joint commitment towards inclusion. The following are guidelines for the implementation of the Inclusion Strategy by the National and Executive Agencies:

National and Executive Agencies shall address all obstacles and situations mentioned in the definition of young people with fewer opportunities (point 2 of the present document), without excluding any particular target group.

Project cycle

National and Executive Agencies shall provide systematic and tailor-made support to the promoters of inclusion projects at all stages of the project cycle. To do this effectively, National and Executive Agencies must have the expertise in a wide range of special needs (socio-economic, educational, disability, social exclusion, discrimination, etc.) or be able to access it externally.

The National and Executive Agencies shall ensure that the Evaluation committee has good knowledge of the different groups of young people with fewer opportunities.

The selection committees shall treat the applications for inclusion projects as a priority. National and Executive Agencies can choose to give higher priority to projects involving young people who face several obstacles.

When assessing grant applications, particular emphasis needs to be put on:

- analysis of the profile and special needs of the young people
- a corresponding tailor-made approach
- learning potential
- linguistic support
- pedagogical competence and/or inclusion experience of the promoter
- involvement of the young person
- solid partnership between all project partners
- thorough follow-up plan which could benefit the young persons' personal and professional pathways.

The National and Executive Agencies shall monitor which types of groups with fewer opportunities apply and which groups are not reached yet. They are encouraged to make special efforts to reach out to underrepresented groups with fewer opportunities.

Similarly, National and Executive Agencies shall monitor the range of inclusion themes addressed in Youth in Action inclusion projects, and could stimulate and/or prioritise inclusion projects about unaddressed topics.

The National and Executive Agencies shall keep statistics on:

- number of inclusion projects within the Youth in Action programme
- number of young people with fewer opportunities that participated
- kind of obstacles/situations faced by these young people

The National and Executive Agencies shall pay special attention to the evaluation and follow-up of projects involving young people with fewer opportunities, to identify success factors and encourage long-term approaches.

Programme Guide

All criteria for the different Actions are laid down in the Programme Guide or in specific Calls for proposals, which are the basis for the grant application. Inclusion-related flexibility (e.g. in terms of age, procedures, etc.) as well as financial incentives are clearly defined in the Programme Guide.

Exceptional costs are designed to provide extra support for the special needs of young people with fewer opportunities and/or with special needs in Youth in Action projects. There is no exhaustive list of what can be considered as eligible exceptional costs, but they may cover, for example, medical attendance, health care, additional linguistic training/support, additional preparation, special premises or equipment, additional accompanying person, additional personal expenses in the case of an economic disadvantage, translation/interpretation. They cannot cover bank loans interest. Up to 100% of exceptional costs can be supported by the grant, provided they are clearly linked to the implementation of the project, necessary and justified in the application form. All exceptional costs must be actual costs, properly supported and justified. National and Executive Agencies have to seek a maximum of transparency in granting exceptional costs and ensure equal treatment of all applicants who are in the same situation.

The step-by-step approach, which encourages subsequent participation in projects in different Actions or which creates a link from short-term to long-term EVS for instance, is strongly recommended.

Work organisation

National and Executive Agencies shall continue dedicating sufficient human and financial resources for support, advice and training of inclusion projects.

The Inclusion Strategy should be well known and implemented by all Agencies' staff members.

National and Executive Agencies shall appoint one staff member to coordinate the implementation of inclusion as a horizontal priority across all Actions, and to be the Agency's contact person for inclusion projects and Commission/SALTO communications regarding inclusion, etc.

They shall contribute to set up networks of experts and resource people, which expertise they can benefit from.

National and Executive Agencies are requested to make the best possible use of the SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre publications, resources and training courses on setting up projects with young people with fewer opportunities: www.salto-youth.net/inclusion/ and promote them to relevant organisations and youth workers. National and Executive Agencies can contribute to the inclusion resources online (add inclusion and youth work methods in the toolbox, enter training courses in the training calendar, etc.).

Special orientation and guidance for organisations and informal youth groups involving young people with fewer opportunities should be organised on a regular basis by National and Executive Agencies and/or their partners.

Training and Cooperation Plan of National Agencies

Training for organisations/projects on how to establish adapted educational content and which methods to use when doing activities with young people with fewer opportunities should be organised by the National Agencies within the context of the Training and Cooperation Plans.

Complementarity

Bridges to other European and national programmes and policies related to social inclusion should be established wherever possible. It is particularly recommended that national authorities explore possibilities to complement activities supported under the European Social Funds (ESF) through activities supported under the Youth in Action programme. These synergies could then be described in the national strategic documents for the ESF. Employment agencies, competence centres and other private and public bodies providing advice and orientation to young people could inform about the Youth in Action programme. They would also conceive different formal and non-formal learning opportunities in a holistic way targeted to the individual needs of young people with fewer opportunities. Best practice in this regard should be documented and disseminated.

6.7. Dissemination and Exploitation of results of Youth in Action projects (Valorisation)

Youth in Action projects lead to very positive results and it is important to multiply these outcomes as much as possible. Actually, with relatively little extra investment, the impact of a project can be proportionally much bigger. Therefore, all project promoters are requested to focus on valorisation (giving more value) through a well planned dissemination and exploitation of results.

Disseminating results

Inclusion projects mostly have a great impact on the lives of young people with fewer opportunities or lead to a wide variety of useful outcomes. Some of these project outcomes can be tangible products (a magazine, new youth work methods, art work, a collection of good practice, etc.) but many are also "intangible" (the personal development of the young people, a change in attitude, a new youth work approach, etc.). Nevertheless it is essential to document these outcomes and to spread information about them to relevant stakeholders.

This is important for inclusion organisations (sharing the good work they are doing), for young people with fewer opportunities (giving them recognition and positive attention) but also for the Youth in Action programme (showing the effect that Youth in Action projects can have on people, organisations and society).

There are a wide variety of dissemination mechanisms that projects can use: paper publications, mailing lists, websites, databases, CD-Roms, audio-visual, media. It is important to plan the dissemination of the results from the very beginning of the project and adapt it to the intended target groups.

Communicate the benefits of Youth in Action

In general, the possibilities available for inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in the Youth in Action programme should be spread to relevant networks at EU level, like for example the networks of the European Commission's Directorates General on employment, social affairs and equal opportunities, and health and consumer protection, the Fundamental Rights Agency, as well as to relevant national Ministries or organisations working with these target groups. Furthermore, the benefits (for organisations and young people) should be communicated more explicitly, as well as good examples from previous projects.

Possible communication activities are:

- Develop lists/publications with the **potential benefits and possibilities** of the Youth in Action programme for young people with fewer opportunities and spread them using media, places and formats **adapted to different target groups**.
- Develop lists/publications documenting the **potential** of the Youth in Action programme as a **tool for youth work** and an **overview of the support** available and spread this to the organisations working with young people with fewer opportunities.
- **Information moments and meetings** (involving former participants) for organisations working with young people with fewer opportunities should be organised to give them the opportunity to get more information and inspiration and possibly network with former project organisers.
- **Good examples need to be documented** in an accessible and attractive way and **spread** to relevant organisations using appropriate channels and methods so that they could get a clear and realistic picture about what a Youth in Action project could look like and what it involves.
- When producing **information material for specific target groups**, youth workers or young people from this target group should be actively involved to ensure the relevance of this material.
- The **National and Executive Agencies**, in cooperation with their regional networks (if any) and other structures like the **SALTO** Resource Centres and **Eurodesk network** should adapt these information tools to their own local reality and to the target groups (language, youth work concepts, support systems for the excluded, etc.). They should reach out actively (via appropriate channels) relevant youth workers from organisations that are working with young people with fewer opportunities.

- National and Executive Agencies should spread the information about the possibilities within the Youth in Action programme to different levels, not only targeting umbrella organisations but also a diverse range of local and regional target groups (including young people who are not formally organised in youth organisations, youth councils, etc.) and institutions as well as national, regional and local policy-makers.

Exploiting the results

Valorisation goes further than only giving information about the outcomes of a project, it is also about making its impact reach as far as possible. Youth workers working on inclusion projects should spend time and effort on multiplying their results to other projects, people and spheres. The impact of the project should not stop at the last project-day, but should continue to have spin-off effects.

For instance:

- Youth workers could document the lessons learned from a project and coach similar projects with their expertise to increase their quality. The learning from a project would thus also benefit other projects and young people with fewer opportunities.
- Specific findings from organising an inclusion project could be communicated to policy makers, and lobbying for increased accessibility and inclusion for specific target groups could be done based on the concrete project experience.
- If an inclusion project aims specifically at stimulating the personal development of the young people with fewer opportunities, measures should be in place to safeguard the sustainability and continuation of this change process, also after the project.
- National Agencies could collect good inclusion practices and organise forums where inclusion organisations can learn from each other ñ a coaching system could be developed in which experienced organisations (youth workers, young people) are teamed up with beginning inclusion organisations, so that their experience is transmitted to others.
- Expert inclusion organisations can be used as resource persons for information meetings, training courses, seminars, etc. so that they can pass on their experience.
- Information could be spread to the Fundamental Rights Agency in Vienna.
- Information about inclusion projects' good practices could be fed into events like for instance: the European Years for Equal Opportunities (2007) and Intercultural Dialogue (2008), which both mainstream youth, and in the campaign "All different-all equal".

7. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The Commission, National Authorities and National and Executive Agencies monitor and evaluate the outputs and impact in terms of inclusion and accessibility of the programme.

The National and Executive Agencies will report annually on their implementation of the Inclusion Strategy and progress made. These reports will include detailed statistics on Inclusion projects, that are now made possible in particular through the information provided in the application forms. Each Agency will include details on at least 3 examples of high-quality inclusion projects run during the year.

On the basis of the reporting of National and Executive Agencies, the Commission will take appropriate measures to insure adequate and fair implementation of the Strategy in all countries. On the other hand, the Commission, together with SALTO Inclusion, will also identify good practices and communicate them to the Agencies.

The Commission will insure that inclusion is considered as a priority in all relevant documents produced to implement the programme.

The Commission, together with SALTO Inclusion, will ensure that the staff of National and Executive Agencies receive training on inclusion, as well as regularly meet in order to exchange good practice, share ideas and give feedback on inclusion.

The Commission and SALTO Inclusion will work in close collaboration and keep a constant information flow. They will meet at least three times a year.

The Commission, together with SALTO Information, will create an Inclusion section in the online tool of the Agencies' network, Youthnet by the end of year 2007. This tool will then be used by the Commission and the National and Executive Agencies to document good practices and projects, to collaborate and to discuss on inclusion. Thematic sub-sections, as for instance: Inclusion in the European Voluntary Service (Action 2), may also be created if relevant.

ANNEX

EXAMPLES OF INCLUSION PROJECTS

There have been a wide variety of inclusion projects within the YOUTH programme (2000-2006), which can give inspiration for supporting projects with young people with fewer opportunities in the Youth in Action programme. Herebelow are a few examples of good practices.

Many good practices exist within the network of National Agencies and at centralised level. Inspirational projects are documented:

- on the Commission's website, YOUTH programme examples of past projects > http://ec.europa.eu/youth/program/examples_en.html
- in the Commission's inspirational booklet 'Including ALL with the YOUTH programme' > www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionInspiration/
- in the Youth Initiatives Compendium > www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/YIcompendium/
- in the Innovative projects database > www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionProjects/

As far as possible, National and Executive Agencies should present a small set of very good inclusion projects for each action every year, to be published on their website and/or on the SALTO website and Inclusion newsletter.

EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS

European centralised project - YOUTH EXCHANGE (ACTION 1) 2006

"Special Olympics – European Youth Games"

This project has been organised in the framework of the major event 'Special Olympics - European Youth Games' that has taken place in Rome and has involved hundreds of young people with and without intellectual disabilities in sport activities with the further aim to break down barriers, to remove obstacles and change attitudes. The event provided opportunities for the athletes involved to demonstrate courage, experience joy and share their skills and friendship with the world.

In such framework a youth encounter has been organised, gathering 200 young participants with and without intellectual disabilities, coming from Finland, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Romania, Turkey and UK, to promote an intercultural exchange "on and off the playing field". Throughout six days of activities, the young participants had the opportunity to know better each other, to discuss about issues connected to intellectual disability and to explore the intercultural potentials of sport activities. A monitoring visit has shown an optimal implementation of the activity and a high impact of the initiative. It represents an excellent example of good practice in terms of inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities.

FINLAND - YOUTH EXCHANGE (ACTION 1) 2006

"Baxan" (in Engl. *Justice*)

The youth exchange "**Baxan**" (in Engl. *Justice*) involved 56 young women with Somali backgrounds from Finland and Great Britain, majority of them aged between 18-25 years. The idea of the youth exchange on this theme came from the Finnish participants, who had taken part in a seminar concerning this subject in Great Britain. During the youth exchange in Vantaa (FIN) in February 2006 the participants explored and discussed on the history of girls' circumcision, its impact to health and psychological and traumatic effects on a woman. They also learned and discussed on the legislation in Western societies concerning the subject and compared women's rights in Western and Islamic societies. After the youth exchange many of the participants felt that their little sisters, and in the future their own children, should not go through circumcision as they had. They want to take forward the experiences they had in the youth exchange and raise discussion with their parents on the brutality of circumcision.

Given the success of this project, another Youth Exchange on the same subject is to be organised in 2007 by other girls and young women from the Finnish organisation.

BELGIUM-FLANDERS - EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE (ACTION 2) 2004

« Summer Tandem/Hesbaya Summer »

With the aim of making EVS projects more accessible for young people with fewer opportunities, the National Agency of Belgium/Flanders developed the concept of the « Summer Tandem » : to link a young person with fewer opportunities with a long term volunteer, being a permanent partner in the same EVS hosting project, during summer holiday season.

In EVS it is possible for vulnerable young people to step into an EVS project with a short duration (min. of two weeks) instead of a long term project (min. 2 months).

The Municipal Youth Service of Nieuwerkerken, a small community in the Hesbaya region of Flanders, hosted during six weeks a handicapped young man coming from an orphanage in Slovakia. The current long term volunteer was Slovakian too. She stayed 12 months.

They both worked in a typical Belgian/Flemish youth work environment and organised or participated in playground activities, workshops, pop music policy, environmental projects, etc.

For the young volunteers themselves, it meant an intensive, but overall positive and enriching experience. Both coming from the same country, the language meant a less obstacle for the young man, being able to express his needs and wishes in a more accurate way.

On the other hand, he now understands the advantage of being able to communicate into another language when meeting other cultures. He decided to take English class back home in Slovakia.

Since the long term volunteer was already active in the project since a few months, it helped him to integrate easier into the small local community: everybody did extra efforts to communicate with him and to overcome physical obstacles linked with his handicap. The « Slovakian way of life » had no secrets anymore for the inhabitants of the community, due to the stay of the long term volunteer.

All these efforts brought to him a new experience, since life in an orphanage is very limited. It gave him the opportunity to discover new skills and competences and make a step forward in his personal

life. New opportunities and respect from local inhabitants were a boost for his self esteem. The impact of this project for the short term volunteer was more intense during a shorter period, due to the tandem with the long term volunteer.

For the hosting organisation, this concept meant less obstacles in implementing a short term volunteer project:

- They could rely on their previous experience in EVS, the responsibilities, the importance of setting up a support structure, the impact of EVS, etc.
- The presence of a long term volunteer meant an important extra support for the short term EVS volunteer in integrating him in the local community, as a guide in the free-time, as a support person in the work, as she had experienced herself what it meant to live in a new cultural setting, leave friends and family behind.
- Linking a short term volunteer to a long term volunteer was an important tool in breaking down the potential stigmatisation of the short-term volunteer, as both volunteers form a kind of equal tandem or pair.

ESTONIA - YOUTH GROUP INITIATIVE (ACTION 3 YOUTH) 2006

"Why have things turned out that way?"

In 2005 Estonian National Agency launched a long-term training programme for people working in prisons to develop their skills in youth work and project management. As one of the results of training, in Murru prison, a group of seven young people in the age of 20-26 started their initiative supported by prison social worker and psychologist. All of the core group members are serving long sentences of seven until eighteen years and not being able to turn back time or things they did, they aimed to target youngsters with high risk of offending in order to help them to make better choices for their lives - hopefully through that also to give their contribution to prevention of youth crime.

With the help of prison officials, local juvenile commissions and social workers the boys have organised eight workshops for risk youth, hosting them in prison, showing the prison reality and sharing their life-stories "Why have things turned out that way?" All workshops and preparation activities have been recorded by professionals in order to compile a film which could be used for dissemination of this innovative initiative and group's project experience.

The project has brought great impact both to core group as well as participants of workshops. In order to be able to run such project the boys have gone through a very challenging process of becoming a team but also preparing themselves to share some very personal experiences which they otherwise would rather prefer not to be part of their life. The feedback from workshops' participants shows that the project has given food for thinking to many young people who say that before they somehow had rather idealised and biased image of prison.

Given the predominantly preventative objectives of youth work as a general approach, it is a shame that information and the chance to participate failed to reach these young people of core group while they were still at liberty. But now, being in prison and meeting their first opportunity to make something of their ideas and gain valuable experience from it for the future, it may help them to develop their coping skills remarkably. And thus the project has shown that there is great potential for expansion of non-formal education to those areas where the Youth In Action programme is not yet that actively present, including prisons.

BELGIUM FLANDERS - YOUTH GROUP INITIATIVE (ACTION 3 YOUTH) 2005

"Me & the world"

Making mainstream youth organisations accessible to 'specific target groups' was one of the priorities of the city's youth council. This was the starting point from which 'Jong & HiB' developed a project about diversity. A group of Jong & HiB members established a project entitled 'Ik & De Wereld' (Me & the World). This project received funding from the European YOUTH programme as a Group Initiative since inclusion and diversity are priority topics of the programme. The aim of the Group Initiative was to develop tools and methods for young people and youth workers from different youth organisations to work on themes like gender, sexuality and diversity within their organisations. There were 11 participants, from Belgium Flanders.

They developed a set of fun activities to stimulate young people (14-17 year olds) to think about issues such as cultural difference, racism, sexual orientation, gender and what it means to be accepted or excluded. Activities included preparing a dish, a scene from a play, a scene from a film, a photo game and an obstacle race. Following the activities time was put aside for feedback and reflection. Youth organisations were able to reserve the 'Ik & De Wereld' activity carousel for their members free of charge. The Jong & HiB volunteers ran these sessions, accompanied by professional workers from specialised organisations. It was possible to adapt the activities to the needs and interests of the organisation, and youth workers of mainstream organisations were also allowed to take part in training sessions to learn how to organise the 'Me & the World'-activities themselves.

These activities gave the young people in the youth organisations an opportunity to reflect on their own stereotypes and prejudices. They had to come to their own conclusions when confronted with different situations in the activity carousel. This often increased their tolerance levels and one of the outcomes of the project was that young people had more acceptance of their peers. In each case, it raised many different issues that otherwise would never have been discussed.

GERMANY - SEMINAR (ACTION 5 YOUTH) 2004

"Don't be afraid of gender politics - the connection between gender politics and democracy"

During the seminar 25 participants coming from Poland, Ireland, Sweden, Greece, Cyprus, Belgium, France, Slovenia and United Kingdom, dealt with the connection of gender-policy and democracy. The seminar aimed at analysing the own societies and organisations with regard to gender democracy and developing common perspectives for further action. Elements of the programme were e.g. an exchange of experiences regarding the relation between men and women and their respective role in society in their countries as well as in the political area, a gender-analysis of their organisations, exercises on discrimination, inputs and discussions about feminism and socialism and exercises aiming at overcoming discrimination and inequalities.