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signed by Mr Jordi AYET PUIGARNAU, Director

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To: Mr Jeppe TRANHOLM-MIKKELSEN, Secretary-General of the Council of  
the European Union

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EVALUATION of the EU Youth Strategy

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**COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT**

**EVALUATION  
of the EU Youth Strategy**

{SWD(2017) 280 final}

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## 1. Introduction

This staff working document describes the methodology and findings of the interim evaluation of the current European Union (EU) Youth Strategy.

### *Purpose*

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide an interim evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy, or framework for European youth cooperation<sup>1</sup> which includes the Council Recommendation on the Mobility of Young Volunteers across the European Union ('the Recommendation')<sup>2</sup>.

The results will be used as input to developing and adapting initiatives undertaken in the context of the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy and the Recommendation until 2018. The results will also inform the further development of the EU youth policy cooperation for action after 2018.

### *Scope*

In accordance with the EU better regulation agenda<sup>3</sup>, the evaluation covers the period from 2010 to mid-2015<sup>4</sup>:

- The entire scope of the EU Youth Strategy, including the Recommendation, the mechanisms for cooperation, the implementation instruments and the activities carried out by Member States and stakeholders under and outside of EU cooperation.
- The links between the EU Youth Strategy and the Recommendation and relevant EU programmes such as Erasmus+, Youth in Action and the Structural Funds.
- Geographically, the evaluation covers all EU Member States.

## 2. Background to the initiative

### Renewed framework for European youth cooperation (2010-2018)

Further to a Commission proposal, the Council adopted the Resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field for 2010-2018 ('the EU Youth

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<sup>1</sup> **Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018)** OJ C 311, 19.12.2009.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 319/8, 13.12.2008.

<sup>3</sup> Commission communication *Better regulation for better results — An EU agenda*, COM(2015)215, and *Better regulation guidelines* (Commission staff working document), SWD(2015) 111.

<sup>4</sup> The evaluation does not cover most of 2015 or 2016 and does not include the latest improvements, such as the 2016-2018 EU work plan for youth.

Strategy'), on 27 November 2009. The strategy sets the framework for cooperation on youth issues between the Commission and the Member States.

The strategy has two overall objectives: to create more and equal opportunities for all young people in education and the labour market and to promote active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity of all young people. It has youth-related aims and sets out possible initiatives to be taken in eight fields of action: education and training, employment and entrepreneurship, health and well-being, participation, voluntary activities, social inclusion, youth and the world, and creativity and culture.

In full observance of the Member States' responsibility for youth policy and of the voluntary nature of the cooperation, the strategy is implemented through a dual approach. This consists of:

1. specific youth initiatives - i.e. policies and actions specifically targeted at young people in areas such as non-formal learning, participation, voluntary activities, youth work, mobility and information;
2. mainstreaming - i.e. initiatives pursuing a cross-sectoral approach where youth issues are taken into account when formulating, implementing and evaluating policies and actions in other policy fields with a significant impact on young people.

The strategy includes the following instruments for implementation: knowledge and evidence-building, mutual learning, progress reporting, dissemination of results, monitoring of the process, structured dialogue, mobilisation of EU Programmes and Funds. These instruments should be used both to implement specific youth initiatives and support the inclusion of a youth perspective in other policy fields.

The strategy operates in 3 three-year cycles. For each of these cycles, the Council of the EU adopts a number of priorities for European cooperation<sup>5</sup>, in cooperation with the representatives of the two EU Presidency trios covering the cycle in question.

At the end of each three-year cycle, the Commission and the Council jointly adopt an EU youth report on progress made on the overall objectives of the framework, and on the priorities set for the most recent work cycle. These reports also serve as the basis for deciding on a set of priorities for the following work cycle.

#### Council Recommendation on the Mobility of Young Volunteers across the EU

The Recommendation was adopted in 2008 and is the only Recommendation on youth. It recommends that Member States promote the mobility of young volunteers across the EU by improving the conditions for cooperation between the organisers of voluntary activities in

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<sup>5</sup> Priorities for 2013-2015 and for 2016-2018 can be found in the EU youth reports 2013 and 2015 respectively.

different countries, whether civil society or public authorities. The aim is to give every young person the opportunity to volunteer in Europe.

It also recommends that Member States help to develop actions in the following areas: raise awareness about cross-border volunteering, develop opportunities for cross-border volunteering, assure quality by developing self-assessment tools, recognise the learning outcomes of voluntary activities through instruments such as Europass and Youthpass, promote cross-border mobility of youth workers and young people in youth organisations, in particular young people with fewer opportunities.

The Recommendation's implementation has been included as one of the EU Youth Strategy's field of action ('voluntary activities') and its progress is addressed in the EU youth reports.

To help implement the Recommendation, the Commission set up an expert group to encourage and organise, with the Member States, the exchange of information and experience about cooperation between organisers of voluntary activities. The Commission also developed an online youth volunteering platform as part of the European youth portal.

*Intervention logic – the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018) including the Recommendation*

Problems addressed	General objectives	Specific objectives	Instruments	Governance
Youth unemployment Insufficient participation in education & training Poverty among youth Low levels of youth participation and representation in democratic processes Health problems	(i) to create more and equal opportunities for all young people in education and in the labour market,  (ii) to promote the active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity of all young people.	To develop initiatives to be taken in eight fields of action <sup>6</sup> through a dual approach:  <b>1. To take specific youth initiatives</b> - i.e. policies and actions specifically targeted at young people in areas such as non-formal learning, participation, voluntary activities, youth work, mobility and information.  <b>2. To develop mainstreaming</b> - i.e. initiatives pursuing a cross-sectoral approach where youth issues are taken into account when formulating, implementing and evaluating policies and actions in other policy fields which have a significant	Knowledge building and evidence-based policy-making  Mutual learning  Progress reporting  Dissemination of results  Monitoring of the process  Consultations and structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations  Mobilisation of EU programmes and funds	Council of the EU (both at ministerial and youth working party level) and EU Presidencies  Member States  Open Method of Coordination (OMC) expert groups  Structured dialogue with young people  Partnership with the Council of Europe on youth issues

<sup>6</sup> Education and training, employment and entrepreneurship, health and well-being, participation, voluntary activities (including the implementation of the Recommendation), social inclusion, youth and the world, creativity & culture.

		impact on young people.		
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<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Intermediate outcomes</b>	<b>Final outcomes</b>
EU Council policy documents Joint EU youth reports EU dashboard of youth indicators Outputs of OMC expert groups (reports, exchange of good practices) Outputs of structured dialogue (joint conclusions of EU youth conferences, steering committee meetings...) European youth portal Studies and surveys Funding (including Youth chapter of the Erasmus+ programme)	EU, Member States (MS) and stakeholders reporting policy learning, positive influence, adoption of good practice approaches and principles, specific new tools or approaches adopted  MS taking account of the strategic objectives or the tools of the EU Youth Strategy when shaping youth and other policies  New/improved dialogue between youth stakeholders at MS and EU level  Inclusion of youth into other EU and MS policy areas  Better knowledge of the situation of youth  Higher profile for youth and youth stakeholders and greater capacity to advocate for the sector at EU / MS level	More opportunities in education and in the labour market for young people  Active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity of young people promoted

### ***Baseline***

The baseline for the evaluation was the situation in 2009. A European youth cooperation framework was set up from June 2002 until the end of 2009, by way of an open method of coordination (OMC) focusing on the active citizenship of young people. This was complemented in 2005 by the European youth pact – an intergovernmental instrument dedicated to the social and vocational integration of young people under the Lisbon strategy. Other aspects, such as mainstreaming activities (taking account of the 'youth' dimension in other policy initiatives), knowledge tools, structured dialogue with young people and peer learning, have been progressively developed within the youth cooperation framework.

The 2002-2009 youth cooperation framework had three pillars: the OMC on the active citizenship of young people, the European youth pact which aimed to promote the social and vocational integration of young people, and mainstreaming activities. Member States' cooperation on the active citizenship of young people would have ended in 2010 had specific action not been taken to continue it.

An impact assessment<sup>7</sup> was conducted in 2008-2009 to design the continuation of the OMC in the youth field. It underlined that the assessment of the previous cooperation by the different players involved in the process had shown positive impacts. However, it also highlighted a range of difficulties or limitations, particularly when tackling the problems affecting young people in a deteriorating economic situation. At national level, the profile of youth as a priority area in other areas such as employment policies had increased. However, youth ministries were not sufficiently involved in the process, and coordination on youth issues between the relevant policies was insufficient in many Member States. There was therefore a strong sense that a more cross-sector framework was needed to encourage national-level action in this direction. More generally, the 2002-2009 cooperation framework had not always proved effective or capable of delivering and was not coordinated enough to tackle all challenges. Not all Member States had set up national youth strategies<sup>8</sup> and the EU Member States' youth policies were at very different stages of development.

The impact assessment tested four policy options<sup>9</sup>. The most wide-ranging policy option, the 'global strategy', was selected. This policy option sought to strengthen the OMC on youth by introducing new cooperation instruments such as reporting, structured dialogue with young people, knowledge instruments such as peer learning, and mobilisation capacities, and also, to support the development of a cross-sectoral approach to youth issues. The cross-sectoral approach aimed to integrate youth issues in education, employment, entrepreneurship, inclusion, health, and participation policy and activities, and to create synergies between them.

Based on this impact assessment, the Commission proposed a revised open method of coordination in its Communication 'Investing and Empowering'<sup>10</sup>. According to the impact assessment, the OMC was expected to produce indirect effects on young people's employment and education, on economic growth and fundamental rights. However, these effects cannot be verified, as they are too remote from what the EU Youth Strategy can concretely achieve.

The Recommendation was the first instrument of its kind for youth policy. Before it was adopted, youth volunteering across the EU Member States was only promoted through the OMC and the youth programmes, which have included the European Voluntary Service since 1996.

Another impact assessment report<sup>11</sup>, which supported the elaboration of the Council Recommendation, was submitted in 2008. It aimed to support EU policy action for more

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<sup>7</sup> SEC(2009) 545.

<sup>8</sup> No national youth strategy was in place in 2010 in the following countries: BG, CZ, HR, LT, LV, RO, SK.

<sup>9</sup> Option 1: status quo (baseline scenario); Option 2: a reinforced youth open method of coordination; Option 3: a developed cross-sectoral approach; Option 4: a global strategy.

<sup>10</sup> COM(2009) 200.

<sup>11</sup> COM(2008) 2174.



cross-border volunteering by young people<sup>12</sup>. The second option on improving interoperability between the existing national youth volunteering schemes was selected. The aim of this option is for national voluntary schemes to open up 'slots' for volunteers from other Member States and to keep the specific needs of such 'visiting volunteers' in mind when designing their activities. The legal form chosen for this was a Council recommendation.

### **3. Evaluation questions**

The evaluation logic was framed under six different categories: relevance, coherence, EU added value, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. For each of these categories, a series of evaluation questions were given, based on the objectives listed in the evaluation roadmap<sup>13</sup>, and then specific evaluation questions were developed. The first question covers the strategy as a whole, followed by specific questions on the Recommendation.

#### **Relevance, coherence and added value**

##### *EU Youth Strategy*

To what extent are the objectives of the EU Youth Strategy relevant to the needs and problems of young people today and to activities of youth policy-makers? To what extent are they relevant to and coherent with broader EU policy aims, notably those of the Europe 2020 strategy?

To what extent are the activities implemented under the eight fields of action of the EU Youth Strategy relevant and coherent driving forces in support of creating more and equal opportunities for young people in education and the labour market and to promote active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity?

To what extent are the instruments for the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy across the EU relevant and coherent tools in meeting the general objectives of the EU Youth Strategy?

To what extent does action at EU level add value in addressing the objectives of the EU Youth Strategy, beyond what individual Member States could achieve on their own?

##### *Council Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers*

To what extent are the objectives of the Recommendation relevant to the needs and problems of young people today? To what extent are they relevant to and coherent with broader EU policy aims, notably those of the EU Youth Strategy?

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<sup>12</sup> Option 1: status quo; Option 2: improving the interoperability of existing schemes in the Member States; Option 3: expansion of the European Voluntary Service; Option 4: harmonisation of national youth volunteering schemes.

<sup>13</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2015\\_eac\\_011\\_evaluation\\_youth\\_strategy\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2015_eac_011_evaluation_youth_strategy_en.pdf)

To what extent are the action lines of the Recommendation relevant and coherent driving forces in support of promoting cross-border volunteering of young people?

To what extent are the instruments for the implementation of the Recommendation relevant and coherent tools in meeting the general objectives of the EU Youth Strategy?

To what extent does action at EU level add value in addressing the objectives of the Recommendation, beyond what individual Member States could achieve on their own?

## **Effectiveness**

### *EU Youth Strategy*

To what extent has the EU Youth Strategy proven to be an effective strategic framework in the sense of turning the objectives, fields of action and action lines into concrete and sustainable achievements at European and national levels? What are the actual effects achieved, at EU and Member State level? To what extent has it influenced Member States' youth policies? Have there been any unintended/unexpected effects? What has contributed/stayed in the way to the achievement of objectives?

To what extent have the implementation instruments proven to be effective in implementing the EU Youth Strategy? To what extent have they supported the mainstreaming of youth issues into other policy fields?

### *Council Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers*

To what extent has the Recommendation proven to be an effective strategic framework in the sense of turning the objectives and action lines into concrete and sustainable achievements at European and national levels? What are the actual effects achieved, at EU and Member State level? What has contributed/stayed in the way to the achievements? To what extent has it influenced Member States' policies on youth cross-border volunteering? Have there been any unintended effects?

To what extent have the implementation instruments proven to be effective in implementing the Recommendation?

## **Efficiency**

### *EU Youth Strategy*

To what extent have the instruments, structures, processes and other activities put in place at EU and national level in the context of the EU Youth Strategy proved efficient, non-burdensome and cost-effective for their implementation?

### *Council Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers*

To what extent have the instruments, structures, processes and other activities put in place at EU and national level in the context of the Recommendation proved efficient, non-burdensome and cost-effective for their implementation?

## **Sustainability**

### *EU Youth Strategy*

Are the implementing tools regarded as sustainable and thus apt to continue facilitating the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy?

### *Council Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers*

Are the implementing tools regarded as sustainable and thus apt to continue facilitating the implementation of the Recommendation?

## **4. Method**

A steering group of relevant Commission departments oversaw the evaluation. As provided for in the mandate, an external consultant performed an **independent study** in support of the evaluation. This external study was carried out between February 2015 and March 2016.

Mixed methods of data collection were used for the external study. They consisted of:

- **The mapping** of activities conducted at national and EU level under the strategy and/or Recommendation and their outputs and outcomes;
- Two **online surveys of:** (i) young Europeans aged 15-30, with 719 respondents; and (ii) youth organisations, with 250 organisations responding;
- **Interviews with 126 national stakeholders** in 28 EU Member States (ministries in charge of youth, other relevant ministries, Erasmus+ National Agencies, national youth councils and volunteering organisations) and with **25 EU-level stakeholders** (from the European Commission, Council of Europe, European Youth Information and Counselling Agency, European Youth Card Association, European Youth Forum and other European federations of youth organisations);
- Ten **case studies** involving 36 other stakeholder interviews and covering eight countries with different approaches to youth policy and volunteering, and two EU-level initiatives under the EU Youth Strategy or the Recommendation.

The methodological approach chosen sought to capture examples of systemic effects of the EU Youth Strategy and gather data on the perceived relevance of the strategy and on the opinions about the processes and implementation instruments. The methodology relied on a combination of qualitative and quantitative sets of data. The main system-level results of the

strategy were measured in qualitative terms only. No quantitative indicators were selected, because:

- the strategy is not expected to have a direct effect on the situation of young people which could be captured through quantitative indicators; and
- a broad range of effects is expected at system level and capturing all influences systematically would not have been feasible because of the very nature of such an open method of coordination and its broad scope.

Indeed, one of the issues about the way in which the EU Youth Strategy is formulated (broad objectives and many actions) is that it is not possible to monitor clearly the progress made and the strategy's contribution, as the evaluation found out. In 2009, the impact assessment supporting the revised cooperation framework already underlined that it was difficult to anticipate the direct impact of the renewed EU cooperation framework on young people because of the many factors that help to improve policy outcomes for young people.

Therefore, the evaluation looked more openly at the extent to which the strategy directly supported any changes at national level and whether any clear influences could be identified.

Following the adoption of the better regulation agenda, it was decided to complement the external study with a **public online consultation**<sup>14</sup>. It was published on EUSurvey between 16 July and 16 October 2016 in 23 EU languages. A total of 269 replies were received. The consultation had 15 questions, on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and EU added value of the EU Youth Strategy and the Recommendation. It also included questions on cooperation after 2018 to avoid survey fatigue. As the other parts of the evaluation methodology had already covered a thorough investigation of other stakeholder views, the online public consultation was meant for the general public. However, all other interested stakeholders were encouraged to reply as well.

In total, 175 individuals and 91 organisations replied to the public online consultation, which roughly represents a 2/3 – 1/3 distribution. Additionally, three organisations sent written comments via email. The group of individuals covered almost all EU Member States, although to a varying extent. Most individual respondents were between 15 and 29 years old (46 %). Another 33 % were between 30 and 44 years of age. While 43 % of them were members of a youth organisation, 48 % of them were not (and 9 % did not answer).

The mix of methods led to the collection of evidence from various stakeholder groups and sources. It then allowed for the triangulation of data.

### **Limitations – robustness of findings**

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<sup>14</sup> As the online public consultation was not a mandatory part of evaluations at the time when the study contract was prepared, the consultation was not covered by the contract and was conducted independently by the Commission itself. Consequently its results are not reported in the final report of the study but are instead available in Annex 2 of this document.

Some challenges to data collection were encountered; however, these have not resulted in major obstacles to the quality of the evaluation. The main limitations are presented in the table below.

### Limitations to the methodology

Key limitations	How they were addressed
In the desk research, the data from the 2012 and 2015 national reports which fed into the EU youth reports was analysed. The reports were of a varied level of quantity and quality.	The EU youth reports have been complemented and cross-checked with country-specific information collected in the in-depth interviews and data collected during the review of the documents and case studies about the instruments.
The youth organisations or individuals responding to the surveys did not cover all EU Member States in a balanced manner.	Statistical checks were made to ensure that the over-representation and under-representation in a few countries did not significantly skew the overall results towards more positive or more negative findings.
Some survey respondents did not properly distinguish the EU Youth Strategy from the EU funding programmes for youth. Therefore some of the views of youth organisations and young Europeans on the EU Youth Strategy's relevance, effectiveness and EU added value may have been tainted by their perceptions and knowledge of the Youth in Action and Erasmus + programmes.	Caveats have been included in the interpretation of responses.
Assessing the efficiency of the EU action has been challenging. It is hard, if not impossible to quantify the outcomes of the strategy, and to have data on benefits (because it is not possible to assign the benefits directly).	<p>The efficiency analysis has been built on the basis of various items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- information budgets allocated to three EU cooperation instruments and activities, and on costs;</li> <li>- stakeholder views on level of burden associated with the implementation of inputs, i.e. policy cooperation and implementation instruments, structures, processes and other activities;</li> <li>- comparative data on funding allocated to instruments used under other OMCs (Education and Training 2020 and employment under the support of the EASI - Employment And Social Innovation programme) and which are somewhat comparable to those used under the youth</li> </ul>

	OMC.
The strategy has been only one of several factors affecting developments and it cannot be determined to what extent something is due to the strategy or to other factors.	Specific findings related to the EU Youth Strategy itself have been extracted when possible.
It is difficult to distinguish between the extent to which activities undertaken on the basis of the Recommendation have influenced national developments in the field of cross-border volunteering (e.g. agenda-setting or on opening up of national volunteering schemes) and the extent to which volunteering activities undertaken under the strategy have had an influence (more so as the Recommendation was included in the cooperation framework).	Specific findings related to the Recommendation itself have been extracted when possible.
The online public consultation received a limited number of replies, probably due to survey fatigue, as the external contractor had undertaken surveys on the same issues less than one year earlier. As in all online consultations, the respondents cannot be considered to be a representative sample of the population because they are 'self-selective'.	The data coming from the online consultation was cross-checked with the results from various surveys by the contractor, in order to ensure triangulation of the different sources.  This online consultation included some questions for the future. This was to avoid having to conduct again a similar consultation in 2017 (to prepare for cooperation after 2018).

## 5. State of play of implementation (results)

The strategy is an open method of coordination, which mainly depends on the good will of the Member States to commit to common objectives and respect them when acting at their level and at the European level. The method brings flexibility to the cooperation process, but there are also limits as to the direct impact the method can have on young people.

As explained in the introduction, it includes several instruments for implementation: progress reporting, knowledge and evidence-building, as well as monitoring of the process, mutual learning, dissemination of results, structured dialogue, mobilisation of EU programmes and funds. The strategy operates in 3 three-year cycles. At the end of each cycle, the Commission and the Council jointly adopt an EU youth report, to 1) evaluate progress made on the framework's overall objectives and on the priorities of the most recent work cycle, and 2) set priorities for the following work cycle.

### Progress reporting

The 2012 EU youth report<sup>15</sup> confirmed the strategy's robustness and relevance and its overall objectives, provided specific assessments of progress in the eight fields of action and its instruments for implementation, and gave indications on future priorities. It stressed that emphasis should continue to be on employment and entrepreneurship. This meant increasing young people's access to work, and developing their innovative and creative capacities. The report also stressed the need to increasingly focus on young people's social inclusion, health and well-being.

The Commission and the Member States continued working together in 2013-2015, to improve young people's employability and help them enter the labour market, and ensure more social inclusion and participation. Member States are increasingly pursuing transversal youth policies, with employment, social and civic inclusion among the primary concerns. They have taken many measures to bring young people into the labour market, often as part of youth guarantee schemes with EU funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI). The youth guarantee has provided an impetus for reforms and policy innovation. Among others, coordination among the employment, education and youth policies has increased and new partnerships were set up with social partners and youth services<sup>16</sup>.

The ESF 2014-2020 invests €6.3 billion directly in youth employment measures and around €27 billion in education measures and reforms. In addition, the €6.4 billion YEI<sup>17</sup>, set up in February 2013<sup>18</sup>, has been used by Member States to provide direct support to young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs)<sup>19</sup>.

The 2015 EU youth report<sup>20</sup> underlined that the economic crisis had hit young people particularly hard and widened the gap between those with more and those with fewer opportunities. It stressed that for the 2016-2018 period, the cooperation framework for youth should aim to empower more and diverse young people, especially those at risk of exclusion. It should help them find quality jobs and improve their social inclusion.

In response to concerns about the growing social exclusion of young people, nearly all Member States took measures for greater inclusion of NEETs, responding also to the 2013 Council Recommendation on establishing a youth guarantee<sup>21</sup>, and with the support of the ESF and the YEI. Most took steps to improve young people's access to quality services and to

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<sup>15</sup> COM(2012) 495, joint report adopted in November 2012:

[http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/reports/eu-youth-report-2012\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/reports/eu-youth-report-2012_en.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> The youth guarantee and the YEI three years on, COM(2016) 646 final.

<sup>17</sup> Given the continued high unemployment rates, on 14 September 2016 the Commission proposed to increase the YEI budget by €2 billion. As of beginning of April 2017 the European Parliament and the Council of the EU have agreed to an increase of €2.4 - from €6.4 to €8.8 billion- still subject to formal adoption by Council.

<sup>18</sup> Council Conclusions of 7/8 February 2013, EUCO 37/13.

<sup>19</sup> Living in EU regions with unemployment rates higher than 25% in 2012.

<sup>20</sup> COM(2015) 429, joint report adopted in November 2015

[http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/reports/youth-report-2015\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/reports/youth-report-2015_en.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> Council Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee of 23 April 2013 (2013/C 120/01).

support youth work and youth centres (even if youth work has suffered from budget cuts across Europe).

Member States were particularly active in promoting youth participation: 27 developed mechanisms for dialogue with young people, 25 provided public support for youth organisations and two thirds promoted the use of online media and provided greater opportunities for debate. Member States have sought to involve young people across the socio-economic spectrum. However, given the persistently lower participation rate among some groups, policy-makers at all levels can still do more to involve under-represented groups.

Acknowledging the need to address new challenges following the crisis, the Council adopted EU Work Plans for Youth (the first plan for 18 months: mid-2014 – 2015, the second plan for 3 years, during the 2016-2018 period). These plans help to implement the EU Youth Strategy, giving further impetus and prominence to EU-level work in this field.

Member States' reports on the cooperation framework's implementation which fed into the 2015 EU youth report, provide a solid basis on which to continue EU youth cooperation. The framework gave strong impetus to national youth agendas. Since 2010, nearly all Member States have launched youth initiatives or tools. In two thirds of the 28 Member States, the framework strengthened national youth policy priorities and in one third it even influenced the local and regional level. Eleven Member States stated that they reoriented their national youth policy to bring it in line with the framework. There is a general movement across EU Member States to adopt the principles and objectives of the EU Youth Strategy, e.g. participation and consultation of young people.

The framework encouraged cross-sectoral cooperation. Nearly all Member States now have institutionalised mechanisms to ensure a cross-sectoral approach to youth policy, such as inter-departmental structures and regular inter-ministerial meetings.

### **Knowledge and evidence-building – Monitoring**

For evidence-based policy-making, studies have been conducted on youth indicators (2011), youth participation (2013) and the value of youth work<sup>22</sup>. Also, the youth monitor<sup>23</sup> provides user-friendly online access to data; and the youth wiki, under preparation since 2015 and to be launched in 2017, will provide up-to-date information on national youth policies, legislation and programmes. Furthermore, the Commission regularly conducts specific Eurobarometer surveys on European youth<sup>24</sup>.

The Commission also produces evidence through its Eurydice and Policy Support Unit of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), such as the report on

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<sup>22</sup> ICF-GHK, 2014.

<sup>23</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/dashboard/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/dashboard/index_en.htm)

<sup>24</sup> Flash Eurobarometer Survey 375, TNS, 2013.



'Youth Social Exclusion and Lessons from Youth Work'<sup>25</sup> or the report 'Political Participation and EU Citizenship'<sup>26</sup>.

The EU seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration activities supported 20 large-scale, multi-stakeholder European research projects on youth. These projects received about €63 million EU financial support for their activities. In addition, one of the first calls for proposals under Societal Challenge 6 of the Horizon 2020 Programme addressed 'the young generation in an innovative, inclusive and sustainable Europe'. The call funded eight research projects which started in 2015 (with about €20 million EU financial contribution) and four which started in 2016 (about €9.5 million EU financial contribution). These projects are producing highly relevant research results for the eight fields of the EU Youth Strategy from a multidisciplinary economic and social perspective<sup>27</sup>.

Finally, the Commission helps to produce research, good practices and country-specific information through its partnership with the Council of Europe in the field of youth. This partnership includes the European Knowledge Centre on Youth Policy<sup>28</sup>, which has developed country-specific information and a collection of good practice examples and a Pool of European Youth Researchers.

### **Mutual learning**

Member States have learned from each other, primarily by participating in expert groups<sup>29</sup>. In 2010-2011, experts devised a dashboard of 41 EU youth indicators to measure the situation of young people in the EU regularly<sup>30</sup>. Expert groups also addressed ways to encourage cross-border volunteering in support of the Recommendation, support the creative and innovative potential of young people, promote quality youth work, and define its contribution to addressing young people's challenges in the crisis. The findings of the experts groups feed into work in the Council of the EU. For instance, the 2015 report on quality youth work<sup>31</sup> informed Council conclusions on reinforcing youth work to ensure cohesive societies<sup>32</sup>. These conclusions called for a reference and guidance tool on quality for national youth work organisations.

Member States also learned from each other through activities organised in partnership between the Commission and the Council of Europe. Smaller groups of Member States organised specific exchanges on matters of common interest, such as local youth work.

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<sup>25</sup> EACEA, 2012.

<sup>26</sup> EACEA, 2013.

<sup>27</sup> *Their future is our future – youth as actors of change* [http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/project\\_synopses/kina27205enc.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none](http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/project_synopses/kina27205enc.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none)

<sup>28</sup> <http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/ekcyp/index>

<sup>29</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/peer-learning\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/peer-learning_en)

<sup>30</sup> SEC(2011) 401.

<sup>31</sup> *Quality Youth Work - A common framework for the further development of youth work*, [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/quality-youth-work\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/quality-youth-work_en.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> May 2015.

## **Dissemination**

The results achieved through EU youth policy cooperation are publicised in various ways, from publications and presentations at meetings, to the internet. Publications include the EU youth reports, studies, Eurobarometer surveys and leaflets on topics of interest to young people. Results have also been disseminated via regular stakeholder meetings organised in the frame of EU youth cooperation (for instance, directors general for youth meet every six months; the Council youth working party meets between 10 to 12 times a year).

The European youth portal<sup>33</sup> was re-launched in May 2013 and provides information and opportunities for young people in the eight fields of action. A new volunteering platform was added to the portal in 2014. The Eurodesk network manages the information on the portal and also provides information through complementary, offline, activities<sup>34</sup>.

The EU youth website is another dissemination tool<sup>35</sup> which mainly targets policy-makers, youth representatives, researchers, youth workers and other youth policy stakeholders.

European youth weeks<sup>36</sup> have become regular events of the EU Youth Strategy, used to raise awareness on the core themes of EU youth cooperation and on its links with the EU programme for youth; they now take place every two years.

## **Structured dialogue**

The EU structured dialogue between policy-makers, young people and their representatives is widely seen as a key tool for listening to young people. During the period evaluated, four themes were chosen for this dialogue: 'youth employment' (2010 - mid-2011), 'youth participation in democratic life' (mid-2011 - 2012), 'social inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities' (2013 - mid-2014) and 'youth empowerment' (mid-2014 - 2015). The first 18-month cycle ended in 2011 and helped to shape subsequent EU initiatives on youth unemployment. In 2013-2015, the structured dialogue addressed social inclusion and youth empowerment and its recommendations have subsequently been addressed in the Council of the EU.

The structured dialogue has evolved since 2010 and is better anchored in the youth policy agenda. The number of participants is continuously increasing and some 70 000 young people responded in the last cycle, many of them on behalf of larger groups. National dialogue processes are drawing inspiration from the EU process and beginning to emerge.

## **Mobilisation of EU Programmes and Funds**

To reach the strategic objectives of the EU Youth Strategy, Member States have also been invited to make use of other EU funds, such as the Structural Funds, in particular the ESF and

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<sup>33</sup> <http://europa.eu/youth>

<sup>34</sup> <http://eurodesk.eu>

<sup>35</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.htm)

<sup>36</sup> [www.youthweek.eu](http://www.youthweek.eu)

the YEI, or programmes such as Lifelong Learning (now replaced by Erasmus+); Culture and Media (now replaced by Creative Europe), Progress (now replaced by EaSI), Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs and Competitiveness and Innovation programmes. For example, the YEI has been used by Member States to provide direct support to young NEETs<sup>37</sup>, and to thus help implement the youth guarantee. In addition, the ESF reaches out beyond supporting individual young people by helping to reform Member States' institutes and services relevant for young NEET integration into the labour market.

A number of research projects targeting youth have been funded under the Seventh Research Framework Programme and Horizon 2020, the Research and Innovation Framework Programme<sup>38</sup>. As part of its research policy, the Commission has also published a policy review with the results of youth research in the field of social sciences and humanities<sup>39</sup>. However, Member States mainly made use of Youth in Action and the successor programme Erasmus+ to reach those objectives and support youth participation. They used grants to support national working groups for structured dialogue, evidence-based policy-making and volunteering and mobility initiatives.

Within the Health programme, actions with a link to youth have been carried out in areas regarding alcohol, nutrition and physical activity, mental health and sexual health for young people.

## **6. Answers to the evaluation questions**

### **6.1 Relevance**

For the period 2010-2014, the EU Youth Strategy was overall been relevant to the needs and problems of young Europeans and to the activities of youth policy-makers in all EU Member States. Over 80 % of the youth organisations surveyed considered that all of the EU activities they participated in, under the EU Youth Strategy, had been relevant to their work. Similarly, two thirds of the policy-makers interviewed at national level considered the objectives and areas covered by the strategy to be relevant to their needs and priorities. The results of the online public consultation are also very positive for the relevance of the strategy. 84 % of the respondents believed that the objectives of the EU Youth Strategy are generally in line with national policies. A solid majority of respondents also agreed that the strategy addresses young people's needs in all eight priority areas<sup>40</sup>.

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<sup>37</sup> Living in EU regions with unemployment rates higher than 25 % in 2012.

<sup>38</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/project\\_synopses/kina27205enc.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none](http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/project_synopses/kina27205enc.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none)

<sup>39</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/policy\\_reviews/policy-review-youth\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/policy_reviews/policy-review-youth_en.pdf)

<sup>40</sup> For six of the fields of action, the agreement rate is well above 70 %; the general approval rate is only lower for the areas 'health and well-being' and 'awareness of global challenges and contact with regions outside Europe' (57 % for the former, 58 % for the latter).

A key feature of the EU Youth Strategy is that it provides a broad and flexible framework for youth cooperation. It covers youth specific issues but also promotes the inclusion of youth in eight fields of action. Given the high number of possible actions proposed by the strategy, the vast majority of those interviewed found at least some of the topics to be of relevance to their own agenda and needs. For example, the strategy's thematic priority of youth participation was consistent with Belgium and Luxembourg's orientations; Italy and Austria mentioned the same for youth employment and social inclusion. However, none of the Member States worked on all of the issues covered. Thus, the relevance of the EU Youth Strategy might have stemmed from the fact that countries see it as an *à la carte* approach to the OMC rather than a focused set of common objectives that all Member States would be working towards. One policy-maker interviewed referred to it as a 'universal and usable strategy despite the local conditions'. The common priorities of the trio presidency addressed this issue to a certain extent by focusing on selected aspects of the strategy for 18 months. However, this meant that there was a certain lack of continuation in the EU-level commitment to the strategy's priorities.

Among the strategy's eight fields of action, some were considered more relevant to the needs of young people, youth policy-makers and stakeholders than others. Education and employment seem to be relevant to most of the young people surveyed (93 % rated education and 75 % rated employment as of high or medium relevance). However, at policy level, the relevance of the areas varies across EU Member States. Some want to keep a high focus on issues of burning importance, such as employment, education and training. Others believe more attention should be paid to core youth areas, such as youth work, volunteering and participation. The economic crisis overshadowed these areas, but the youth cooperation framework can most meaningfully contribute to them.

The EU Youth Strategy's priorities and activities are not of equal relevance for all Member States. In 2010, EU countries less aligned with the principles of the renewed EU youth cooperation framework (i.e. where no national youth strategy was yet in place: Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Czechia, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary) perceived the strategy as being more relevant (because it brought something new to national debates) than Member States whose approaches and objectives were already close to or had gone beyond the framework's objectives (Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Luxembourg).

New societal challenges have emerged since the EU Youth Strategy was designed in 2009, and some have remained very prominent<sup>41</sup>. According to the online consultation, the areas most frequently selected for youth cooperation in the future are 'lowering youth unemployment and inactivity' and 'improving the social situation of young people at risk of poverty or exclusion'. Respectively 83 % and 79 % of the total respondents indicated that these areas should be of 'high priority'. Other areas come closely after this. These are areas,

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<sup>41</sup> According to Eurostat data, the EU youth unemployment rate for the 15-24 in 2008 was 15,3 %; it increased continuously until 2013 (23 %) and since then has been decreasing (18,1 % in 2016) but still stays above 40 % in Greece and Spain.

such as 'supporting and developing youth work and non-formal learning' (73 % of total respondents), 'preventing marginalisation or violent radicalisation among young people' (72 %) and 'supporting the involvement of youth organisations and young people in policy-making and other democratic processes' (70 %). Other surveys confirm the identification of emerging needs that stakeholders wish to see appear more prominently in the cooperation framework, namely: radicalisation, integration of migrants and digitalisation.

The Recommendation has also been relevant to the needs of young volunteers and of volunteering organisations. However, the latter considered that the Recommendation could have been more ambitious and links to funding programmes made more explicit. The evaluation found that some of the needs identified in the Recommendation remain relevant. Indeed, there continues to be real need to spread information about cross-border volunteering opportunities, make volunteering mobility more accessible to young people with fewer opportunities, reduce barriers to volunteering mobility and improve the quality of systems managing volunteers. For instance, according to 72 % of the respondents of the online public consultation, the Recommendation's objectives are still relevant to the needs of policy-makers (fully for 37 %, somewhat for 35 %); and 82 % believe that these objectives are still relevant to the needs of youth organisations. Individuals who are members of youth organisations are even more convinced of the relevance of the Recommendation's objectives, in particular for youth organisations and young people.

## 6.2 Coherence

Views are divided on the **internal coherence** of the EU Youth Strategy. 22.1 % of the stakeholders interviewed for the evaluation see the strategy's activities as inter-related and building on each other while 20.6 % see the need to better connect its different parts, which they currently view as 'stand-alone' or 'fragmented'.

As for **external coherence** at EU level, there is evidence<sup>42</sup>, both from document analysis and stakeholders interviews, that the EU Youth Strategy has complemented EU initiatives in other policy fields over the 2010-2014/15 period<sup>43</sup>. Overall, the EU Youth Strategy's objectives and priorities seemed to be consistent with the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy. However, this was mainly due to the broad topical coverage of the youth cooperation framework. The stakeholders interviewed often perceived the two as separate approaches, each with their own objectives, rather than part of an integrated long-term plan of the EU. Some interviewees pointed to the missing link between the EU Youth Strategy and the European Semester country-specific recommendations process. More generally, many of the stakeholders knowledgeable about EU-level initiatives<sup>44</sup> considered that the EU Youth Strategy had not been sufficiently complementary to other EU youth-related policies. Despite the increasing

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<sup>42</sup> See Annex 4

<sup>43</sup> For instance, in the area of employment, the idea of a 'youth guarantee' and the idea of 'a quality framework for traineeships' were put forward as recommendations in the structured dialogue on youth employment in 2011.

<sup>44</sup> See Annex 2

number of EU initiatives touching on young people, references to the EU Youth Strategy were few in the period covered by the evaluation.

EU priorities in the youth field have broadly been consistent with national youth orientations in most Member States. For example, the EU Youth Strategy's thematic priority of youth participation was coherent with Belgium and Luxembourg's orientations; Italy and Austria mentioned the same with regards to youth employment and social inclusion. Some interviewees stressed that the strategy covered the 'right areas and priorities' and made those needs at national level more concrete, with a structured approach and helped policy-makers focus on 'what really matters'. However, despite the fact that the strategy was broad and covered many themes, some Member States followed in the period analysed other priorities not covered by the strategy's areas of action.

In the Member States where youth policy is decentralised, the stakeholders interviewed considered the EU approach to youth policy to be less consistent with the diverse nature of devolved youth policy. Concerns were raised in several EU countries with decentralised youth policy that the regional and local topics were not sufficiently reflected in the EU youth cooperation framework. A need was seen for a stronger engagement of local and regional-level policy players in EU cooperation.

The EU Youth Strategy builds on the action lines of the 2008 Recommendation and even goes further. The volunteering organisations interviewed confirmed that the objectives for voluntary activities were consistently included within and across borders.

### **6.3 EU added value**

For the Member States more particularly, and according to the interviews, the key added value of the EU Youth Strategy was that it provided them with:

- Inspiration, knowledge and expertise (via exchange of good practices, data produced, etc.)

For example, Slovenian debates on youth have been influenced by the compilation of good practices, which have helped to develop Slovenian youth policies, as the case study produced for this evaluation shows<sup>45</sup>.

- Leverage and legitimacy to make claims consistent with the EU Youth Strategy, such as promoting youth work, youth participation and the inclusion of young people

According to Romanian stakeholders, the fact that many EU Member States had a law on volunteering was another reason to move ahead. Other Member States such as Austria or Bulgaria indicated that reform processes would have occurred but at a much slower pace had there not been the EU Youth Strategy.

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<sup>45</sup> Annexes of external report, page 45

[http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/dgs/education\\_culture/more\\_info/evaluations/docs/youth/youth-strategy-2016-annexes\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/dgs/education_culture/more_info/evaluations/docs/youth/youth-strategy-2016-annexes_en.pdf)

- Opportunities and resources (including financial ones) to move towards the commonly-agreed objectives within the EU youth cooperation framework

In Germany, a Transfer Agency was set up to help the federal states (the Länder) and the federal government implement the EU Youth Strategy and make the transfer of youth policy initiatives between Germany and Europe easier. The representatives of the federal and regional ministries of youth and family in Germany help to implement the EU Youth Strategy. For this, there is a German 'OMC' to ensure coordination between the federal states, peer-learning activities and intensified trans-regional cooperation<sup>46</sup>. The potential benefits to be gained from peer learning – both amongst federal states and with other EU Member States – have been identified, in interviews and reports, as the biggest benefit of the EU Youth Strategy for Germany. Thus, peer learning was an incentive to set up the transfer agency.

When asked about the EU Youth Strategy in the online public consultation, a majority of respondents saw it as adding value to local, regional or national measures in every aspect mentioned. Respondents were most positive about three aspects: for 79 % of the respondents, the EU Youth Strategy helps develop a youth strategy or a consistent approach to young people and youth policy at national level. Around three quarters believed that the strategy made national/regional and EU-wide youth related measures more coherent (75 %) and that it helps to put young people higher on the EU political agenda (74 %).

Over 70 % of the responses to the online public consultation consider the Recommendation to have added value (compared with actions at lower level), mainly because it helps to develop and raise awareness of opportunities to volunteer abroad. When asked about the Recommendation and the value it adds to the local, regional or national level, 73 % of the respondents believe that it helps to develop opportunities for cross-border volunteering within and beyond the European Voluntary Service, 72 % point out to the fact that it helps to raise awareness of opportunities to volunteer abroad, and 62 % reply that it promotes recognition and validation of the skills gained through volunteering experience.

However, some of the youth stakeholders surveyed considered that the Recommendation could have been more ambitious and that links to funding programmes could have been made more explicit.

## **6.4 Effectiveness**

The evaluation found that the EU Youth Strategy was successful in triggering concrete changes at national and organisational level and leading to the adoption of common approaches and principles across the Member States. Member States whose youth policies did not have clear frameworks in this area now do. The number of institutional mechanisms aimed at cross-sectoral youth policy was doubled between 2010 and 2015; there are now 35 in 26 EU Member States (some of these countries mention several of these mechanisms). There

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<sup>46</sup> See case study done in external report: [http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/dgs/education\\_culture/more\\_info/evaluations/docs/youth/youth-strategy-2016-annexes\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/dgs/education_culture/more_info/evaluations/docs/youth/youth-strategy-2016-annexes_en.pdf), page 26.



was a general movement across EU Member States to adopt the principles and objectives of the EU Youth Strategy, such as the participation and consultation of young people. The strategy had some direct influence on the policy agenda in most Member States, although the level and strength of influence varied – recognising it was not the only contributing factor as national and contextual factors were also influential. For instance, in the case of volunteering, stakeholders reported the combined influence of the EU Youth Strategy and the European Year of Volunteering.

In Ireland, participation in EU mutual learning activities on youth work under the Belgian Presidency in 2010<sup>47</sup> and activities organised under Ireland's Presidency in 2013 increased awareness of youth work. The work then carried out at EU level on youth work (including during the Irish Presidency<sup>48</sup>) reportedly acted as a big stimulus to include youth work in the country's youth framework for 2014-2020.

In Austria, a group was set up in February 2012 to develop the national youth strategy on 'strengthening youth work'. The framework and objectives of this national strategy were formulated on the basis of the eight fields of action of the EU Youth Strategy. This helped to develop the first measures for youth participation. According to the interviewees, the EU Youth Strategy was a big source of inspiration, and is also referenced in the national youth strategy.

**Level of influence of the EU Youth Strategy during 2010-2014, as reported by stakeholders interviewed in the evaluation process**

In some countries the strategy was more influential than others, as elaborated in the table below. This is the case where the baseline was further away from the EU approach, in particular when there were not yet clearly formulated youth policy and legal frameworks.

	<b>Countries reportedly most concerned</b>
Influence on some policy agenda issues	All countries reported influence except four (ES, EL, FI, MT).
Main driver of change	BG, CY, LT, PL <sup>49</sup> , RO
Key driver of change	AT, BE, CZ, DE, DK, EE, IE, IT, FI, FR, HR, HU, LV, LU, PT, SI, SK
One of the drivers of changes in the content of strategies, policies or legal developments	AT, BE, BG, CZ, CY, EE, HR, RO, LT, PL, PT, SI
Driver of change in policy-making processes and approaches	- AT, BE, BG, CZ, FR, HR, IT, IE, HU, LT, LV, LU, PL
- cross-sector policy	- AT, CY, CZ, DE, EE, DK, HR, LT, PT, RO
- youth involvement in policy-making	
Influence limited by national or external factors	EL, ES, NL, PL, UK

<sup>47</sup> [http://www.eutrio.be/files/bveu/Factsheet\\_EU\\_youth\\_EN.pdf](http://www.eutrio.be/files/bveu/Factsheet_EU_youth_EN.pdf)

<sup>48</sup> Adoption of Council conclusions on the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people.

<sup>49</sup> At the start of the evaluation period, until strategic changes in this country after 2011.



The evaluation findings are very much in line with the findings Member States reported for the 2012 and 2015 EU youth report exercises. For instance, the Flemish report in 2015 indicated that 'the current Flemish Youth Policy Plan 2010-2014 is the result of the interaction between policy-making in Flanders (in cooperation with Flemish youth organisations) and the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy'. They also confirm an assumption made in the 2009 impact assessment, as the strategy contributed to the adoption of national youth strategies or even legal frameworks on certain aspects of the youth agenda in some countries. The EU Youth Strategy therefore supported the development of tools and strategies which in turn should help young people.

Most changes identified were in areas that are at the core of youth policy. This is probably because these are the policies directly under the responsibility of youth policy-makers and youth organisations who are the primary target group of the EU Youth Strategy activities: volunteering, internationalisation and mobility, youth work and cross-sectoral approach to youth policy. Influence was also reported, but less frequently, on the areas of recognition of non-formal and informal learning, health and well-being, youth entrepreneurship and measures to address those not in employment, education or training. The synthesis report of the 2016 update of the European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning describes how in the third sector, youth organisations play a role in 73 % of countries (16 countries) with validation arrangements<sup>50</sup>.

A precondition for the EU Youth Strategy to be effective is to ensure that it is known. However, this is not always the case, even in the youth field. Under the online public consultation, 93 % of the responding organisations and 89 % of the individuals were already aware of the EU Youth Strategy. However, the respondents to such a consultation are likely to be already acquainted with EU youth activities (this is confirmed by the fact that two thirds of these respondents had already participated in at least one activity under the strategy since 2010).

Taking part in an activity under the EU Youth Strategy was considered by almost all the online consultation respondents to have a general positive impact on themselves or on those involved in the activity. 95 % believed that it strengthens peer-to-peer learning and 87 % that it is beneficial for networking; 80 % agreed that it allows making one's voice heard. Furthermore, at least 7 out of 10 respondents believe that the strategy has helped national and regional policies as well as youth organisations and young people in some way.

However, the EU Youth Strategy could still be more influential if key stakeholders were better acquainted with and understood it.

During the evaluation, not all youth policy-makers interviewed were aware of the strategy's objectives and instruments. Policy-makers from other policy sectors were even less aware.

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<sup>50</sup> [www.cedefop.europa.eu/validation/inventory](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/validation/inventory)

Only a small share of youth organisations surveyed reported having a good basic understanding of the strategy. Similarly, only a small share of young people surveyed were aware of the EU Youth Strategy while many more were aware of the EU programme for young people (the former Youth in Action programme and its successor Erasmus+ since 2014).

Among the youth organisations involved in activities under the EU Youth Strategy, the vast majority reported that their participation led to changes in how they learned and built knowledge, created new partnerships, developed new initiatives or activities and networked with other youth organisations, other stakeholders and policy-makers. They also saw, at least to a certain extent, broader effects on youth policy, recognition of youth work and of volunteering as well as on stakeholders' understanding of youth issues. They also said it improved the participation of youth stakeholders and increased the cross-sectoral perspective.

On the EU youth cooperation **instruments**, the evaluation found that the most influential tools have been the structured dialogue and the mobilisation of EU funds as well as, to a certain extent, mutual learning and knowledge-building. The structured dialogue instrument led to the creation or 'upgrading' of national youth councils, bringing together youth organisations at national level in all EU Member States. For instance, the Polish Federation of Youth Organisations (PROM) was founded in 2011 to implement the EU structured dialogue, before Poland held the EU Presidency. The structured dialogue also inspired the creation of the Youth Expert Coordination Forum in Hungary, which informs the Government's actions on youth matters.

When different instruments and tools were joined together and built on each other's results, they were most effective in helping to catalyse efforts and initiate change. For instance, the discussion on youth work progressed as it built on several tools (mutual learning activities with expert groups and conferences, Youth in Action/Erasmus+ programmes, studies, work of the Council of the EU, etc.). This was not systematically the case, however, as some initiatives were perceived as 'stand-alone' or 'fragmented'.

About half of the young people surveyed find some of the tools of the EU Youth Strategy very useful: they are able to find the information they are looking for and stay up to date on EU youth news and events. In particular, various respondents mention that the Eurodesk(s) and the youth portal helped them find information about volunteering opportunities abroad. For the other half, there was concern that young people are not very familiar with the tools – i.e. the tools are not sufficiently publicised. Those respondents considered that the tools are not user-friendly and that information is not sufficiently up to date.

Although the reporting of progress under the EU youth report is of benefit to Member States (because of stock-taking and self-evaluation), they also consider it burdensome and believe that benefits could be achieved through a more focused approach to reporting. The main monitoring mechanisms – the dashboard of youth indicators and the reporting every three years by Member States – did not capture fully the actual contribution of the EU Youth

Strategy to youth policy. During the period covered by the evaluation<sup>51</sup>, the expert groups did not always have mandates that were sufficiently clear and specific.

The EU Youth Strategy did work on topics relevant to employment, education, social inclusion, health and research. However, stakeholders interviewed were rather critical about the extent to which the strategy succeeded in creating an integrated approach to young people at EU level. Although a number of EU initiatives relevant to the strategy were taken, there are only few cross-references with the strategy. Stakeholders who observe the EU activities from the outside have the feeling that the youth sector is not always involved in decisions made or it is involved rather informally.

The Recommendation's implementation clearly benefited from being included in a long-term youth cooperation framework. This made it possible to keep cross-border volunteering in the permanent cycle of priorities and instruments of EU youth cooperation. However, this makes it even more difficult to distinguish between how the Recommendation affects cross-border volunteering and how the EU Youth Strategy affects volunteering.

The assumptions made about the expected positive effects of the Recommendation in the 2008 impact assessment cannot be clearly verified. The Recommendation only has an indirect positive effect on the aspects identified in the impact assessment (young people's outcomes, solidarity of participants in volunteer mobility schemes). The Recommendation aims to directly influence national structures and frameworks for transnational volunteering which in turn can affect the scale and quality of transnational volunteering. In the period covered by the evaluation there was some increase in transnational volunteering through national volunteering schemes. National volunteering schemes, such as International Citizen Service in the United Kingdom, National Civic Service in Italy, or the National Civic Service in France have also become involved in cross-border volunteering activities (for instance the IVO4All project<sup>52</sup>). It is not clear whether the Recommendation influenced this opening up of national schemes but it could have contributed to the national decisions in this area.

## 6.5 Efficiency

The resources allocated to EU youth cooperation activities are generally small, even compared to other open methods of coordination. For instance, 2014 planned budget for knowledge building and evidence was around €560 000 for the EU Youth Strategy, while it was above €16 million for Education and Training 2020 and for the Employment open method of coordination<sup>53</sup>.

Considering the breadth of the strategy and the number of issues covered, the resources are spread across activities covering a large number of fields of action. Nonetheless, even with a

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<sup>51</sup> This has been modified since 2015. See more at [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/peer-learning\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/peer-learning_en).

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.ivo4all.eu>

<sup>53</sup> €62 250 for the EU Youth Strategy, €17.8 million for ET 2020 and €16.2 million for the Employment OMC.

relatively low budget, EU youth cooperation was successful in triggering changes at national and organisational level.

Instrument	Activities	Budget 2010	Budget 2011	Budget 2012	Budget 2013	Budget 2014	Total 2010-2014
<b>Knowledge building and evidence-based policy-making</b>	Support to activities to bring about better knowledge of the youth field	543 788	0	0	155 721	112 250	811 759
	Cooperation with the Council of Europe	625 000	600 000	600 000	600 000	450 000	2 875 000
<b>Total Knowledge building and evidence-based policy-making</b>		1 168 788	600 000	600 000	755 721	562 250	3 686 759
<b>Dissemination of results</b>	European youth portal <sup>54</sup>	86 775	150 342	376 784	596 320	373 586	1 583 807
<b>Consultations and structured dialogue with youth</b>	Meetings of young people and those responsible for youth policy – Youth conferences	500 000	477 000	483 000	474 000	410 230	2 344 230
	European Youth Weeks	0	238 527	0	515 385	0	753 912
	Grants to support national working groups <sup>55</sup>	na	na	na	na	1 033 000	1 033 000
<b>Total consultation and structured dialogue</b>		500 000	715 527	483 000	989 385	1 443 230	4 131 142
<b>Mutual learning</b>	Expert group on mobility of young volunteers	32 500	32 500	27 000	27 000	na	119 000
	Expert group on EU youth indicators	38 000	17 100	17 100	14 350	14 350	100 900
	Expert group on quality of youth work	na	na	na	na	29 200	29 200
<b>Total Mutual Learning<sup>56</sup></b>		70 500	49 600	44 100	41 350	43 550	249 100

*Budget (€) committed to three of the seven cooperation instruments of the EU Youth Strategy under Youth in Action (2010-2013) and Erasmus+ (2014) – source: contractor's final report.*

The cost of EU youth cooperation was overall found to be reasonable in relation to the expertise and tools accessed, and to the inspiration provided and its effects on policy reorientations, based on the comparisons mentioned above and on stakeholders' views. For instance, most of the European youth organisations surveyed agreed that the cost of participation in all EU activities (e.g. in terms of human resources, time spent, other resources needed) was reasonable in relation to the results/effects produced.

Some room for improvement was identified in the course of the evaluation. The resources available at national level were limited, which meant that it was not possible to take full advantage of the EU cooperation structures. Indeed, youth stakeholders often have limited resources to take part in EU activities. The units/departments responsible for youth policies in the ministries tend to be relatively small compared to other policy areas, and youth organisations also have limited capacity. Some stakeholders pointed out to efficiency issues for volunteering, mainly linked to application procedures for cross-border volunteering and visa regulations.

<sup>54</sup> Figures for the European youth portal include budget committed under the Youth in Action programme as well as budget committed under a separate administrative line which complements it for the technical part mostly.

<sup>55</sup> New action from 2014 onwards to support to National working Groups, following structured dialogue reform.

<sup>56</sup> Calculated based on the number of meetings and experts per expert group in 2010-2014.

## **6.6 Sustainability**

The EU Youth Strategy did have a number of long-lasting effects in several Member States with the adoption of new frameworks and, in some instances, legislation. The strategy helped to strengthen and clarify the framework for youth policy in those countries where it was further away from the strategy's principles. Consultation structures were created, strategies adopted and certain laws, mostly for volunteering, were revised.

The evaluation found that overall the EU Youth Strategy's structures, processes and instruments are sustainable both directly and indirectly. It attributes this to the sustainability of the national youth laws, strategies and policies that the EU Youth Strategy inspired.

There is a strong interest among youth policy-makers (youth ministries interviewed), implementing bodies (national agencies that implement the Erasmus+ youth chapter) and youth organisations (i.e. national youth councils and European federations of youth organisations interviewed) to continue the cooperation. Out of 136 stakeholders interviewed at Member State level and at EU level, a vast majority (115 or 84.6 %) expressed strong interest in continuing participation in the EU youth cooperation framework.

The implementation instruments are generally considered as sustainable and thus apt to continue facilitating the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy. Structured dialogue is largely considered as the most sustainable instrument, given that it has led to the establishment of more or less permanent structures and processes of youth participation in the Member States.

Most of those involved in volunteering expressed strong interest in continuing their involvement in cross-border volunteering opportunities and implementing the action lines of the Council Recommendation, despite some limitations to funding and capacity.

## **7. Conclusions**

### **Relevance**

Most of the stakeholders interviewed welcome EU cooperation on youth issues. They consider that during the period 2010-2014, overall it was relevant to the needs and problems of young Europeans and to the activities of youth policy-makers in all EU Member States, given that it is a very broad framework. Several of the key needs which the Recommendation addresses have been identified as still relevant, particularly the need to disseminate information, reach young people with fewer opportunities, reduce barriers to mobility and improve quality.

The relevance of the EU Youth Strategy's priorities and activities is not at the same level for all Member States. The strategy was perceived as being more relevant in those countries which, in 2010, were further away from alignment with the EU youth cooperation principles

than in those Member States with policies close to – or even beyond – the objectives of this framework.

### **Coherence**

At EU level, the objectives and priorities of the EU Youth Strategy seemed overall consistent with the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy. During the evaluation period (2010-2014) the EU Youth Strategy did work on topics that were relevant to other policy areas such as employment, education, social inclusion, health and research agenda. The coherence between the strategy and the Recommendation was recognised.

### **EU added value**

The main EU added value for Member States was that the strategy provided them with policy inspiration, knowledge and expertise, leverage and legitimacy, as well as opportunities and resources. The strategy helped develop a consistent approach to young people and youth policy at national level. The starting point today for countries is thus different from the period when the strategy was adopted, because national youth policies have also progressed. The Recommendation's added value was mainly that of helping to develop and raise awareness of opportunities to volunteer abroad; but it could have been more ambitious, and links to funding programmes could have been made more explicit.

### **Effectiveness**

The evaluation found that the EU Youth Strategy was successful in triggering concrete changes at national and organisational level and leading to the adoption of common approaches and principles across the Member States. Countries whose policies did not have clear frameworks in this area now do. The most influential tools to implement the strategy have been the structured dialogue, the mobilisation of EU funds, and, to a certain extent, mutual learning and knowledge building. However, stakeholders interviewed were rather critical about the extent to which the EU Youth Strategy succeeded in creating an integrated approach to young people at EU level.

The evaluation does not cover most of 2015 or 2016. Therefore, it does not include the latest improvements, the most notable being the 2016-2018 EU work plan for youth, the expansion of mutual learning activities, the development of cross-sector work, the reform of structured dialogue, and the upcoming launch of the youth wiki project. Thanks to these improvements, the instruments of the strategy can be linked in a more coordinated way, and there can be a focus on specific themes. Besides these internal improvements, there is also the December 2016 initiative 'Investing in Europe's youth', which develops a strong cross-sectoral dimension.

### **Efficiency**

The relatively low cost of the EU Youth Strategy has meant that the cost has been found to be reasonable in relation to the results it helped to achieve (expertise and tools accessed,

inspiration provided and policy reorientations). Nevertheless, there is room to improve. For example, the capacity at national level (for youth organisations, small ministries) to take advantage of the opportunities EU youth cooperation offers. The monitoring framework did not fully capture the achievements of the EU youth cooperation and evaluate its impacts.

### **Sustainability**

The Member States continue to show interest in cooperating on youth issues at EU level. The vast majority of stakeholders show a continued willingness to participate in EU youth cooperation activities. This also applies to continuing their involvement in cross-border volunteering opportunities and implementing the action lines described in the Recommendation.

There is also quite a wide consensus on less positive aspects highlighted in the evaluation, which calls for simplifications and improvements. This is the case, for instance, for the mechanisms the Member States have used to report on the strategy's implementation and which have been found burdensome in the past. This should already be remedied to a large extent in the final cycle (2016-2018) thanks to the setting-up of the youth wiki<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>57</sup> Future online compendium on national youth policies, to be launched in 2017.

## **ANNEX 1. Procedural information (process)**

**Lead Directorate-General:** European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Culture and Sport, DG EAC

**Agenda planning reference:** EAC/2015/011

**Organisation:** Preparations for the evaluation started in 2014. The initial phase of the evaluation involved preparing the terms of reference for a supporting service contract ('the service contract'). Its implementation started in February 2015 (n°EAC-2015-0147). ICF international was in charge of the service contract.

Although the better regulation guidelines were not adopted until May 2015, when the evaluation was already under way, every effort was made to abide by the guidelines after they were developed. The originally drafted evaluation mandate was therefore redesigned as the evaluation roadmap, which the steering group approved, and was subsequently published<sup>58</sup>. The contractor conducting the service contract was made aware of the better regulation guidelines and asked to abide by them.

The findings come from several major sources: the EU youth reports, the final report of the service contract supporting the evaluation, and an online public consultation. As the latter was not a mandatory part of the evaluations when the service contract was prepared, the consultation was not part of the contract and was conducted independently by the Commission. The full final report of the service contract has been published and is available [here](#). The summary of the online public consultation has also been published and is available [here](#). The staff working document integrates the findings from these sources.

A steering group of relevant Commission departments was set up to oversee the evaluation and met regularly throughout the entire evaluation process. Its mandate was to check key parts of the service contract, support and monitor the evidence gathering and stakeholder consultation process, review the draft and final evaluation report as well as the Commission staff working document and to assist with the quality assessment of the contractor's evaluation report. The steering group was composed of representatives from Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Culture and Sport, Directorate-General Migration and Home Affairs and Secretary-General.

### **Timing:**

<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>DATE</b>
<i>First steering group meeting</i>	11 November 2014
Signature of contract for external study	12 March 2015

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<sup>58</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2015\\_eac\\_011\\_evaluation\\_youth\\_strategy\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2015_eac_011_evaluation_youth_strategy_en.pdf)



<i>Second steering group meeting: kick-off meeting</i>	24 March 2015
Inception report	5 May 2015
<i>Third steering group meeting</i>	19 May 2015
Delivery of interim report	8 September 2015
<i>Fourth steering group meeting</i>	8 October 2015
Draft final report submitted by external contractor	31 December 2015
<i>Fifth steering group meeting</i>	15 January 2016
Second version final report	19 February 2016
<i>Email feedback from steering group</i>	3 March 2016
Third version final report	17 March 2016
<i>Final version of final report approved</i>	April 2016
Exchanges with steering group and youth interservice group about the online consultation questionnaire	April 2016
Online public consultation conducted	15 July-16 October 2016
Interservice consultation launch for staff working document	4 April 2017
Publication of staff working document	July 2017

## **ANNEX 2. Stakeholders consultations**

Various consultations have been conducted within the context of the interim evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy (the framework for European cooperation in the youth field for 2010-2018<sup>59</sup>) and of the Council Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers across the European Union which has been integrated into this framework<sup>60</sup>. These consultations have consisted of interviews, online surveys to young people and youth organisations, case studies interviews, and of an online public consultation.

### **Overall approach**

In accordance with the better regulation guidelines, the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Culture and Sport ('DG EAC') developed a consultation strategy for the evaluation which the steering group approved.

The collection and analysis of stakeholders' experiences and views was one of the core parts of the evaluation methodology, as section 4 of the staff working document demonstrates.

Moreover, throughout the evaluation, DG EAC representatives discussed the evaluation at all stakeholder events which they attended. This was to ensure that the stakeholders understood its aims and objectives and that they were informed of all avenues for contributing to the evaluation.

### **Consultation methods**

#### **1. Interview programme**

The contractor under the service contract supporting the evaluation interviewed 151 stakeholders. The interviews were designed to be geographically balanced and a representative sample of relevant stakeholder groups. DG EAC supported the contractor in reaching all relevant stakeholders by providing a letter of introduction and encouraging Member States representatives to cooperate with the contractor. The full list of interviewees can be found in annexes 2 and 6 of the final report of the service contract supporting the evaluation.

In total 151 interviews were conducted, out of which:

- 25 in-depth interviews were conducted with EU-level stakeholders (various directorates-general of the European Commission, European federations of youth organisations or international youth organisations, the European Youth Forum, the European Youth Card Association, the European Youth Information and Counselling

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<sup>59</sup> Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) OJ C 311, 19.12.2009.

<sup>60</sup> OJ C 319/8, 13.12.2008.

Agency, representatives of the Council of Europe and of the partnership with EU in the field of youth);

- 126 in-depth interviews with national stakeholders in 28 EU countries. On average four interviews were conducted per country. In larger countries or decentralised countries, more were conducted. These stakeholders included ministries in charge of youth, other relevant ministries, Erasmus+ national agencies, national youth councils and volunteering organisations.

## **2. Online surveys**

The contractor under this service contract launched two surveys with this evaluation to collect perceptions from youth organisations and young people (aged 15 to 30) across the EU. The focus was mainly on how relevant they thought the EU Youth Strategy was to their needs and interests.

The surveys were produced in English and translated into five other EU languages (French, German, Italian, Polish, and Spanish). They were launched on 17 July and closed on 21 September 2015. In total, 250 youth organisations and 719 young people responded.

## **3. Case studies interviews**

Besides the interview programme detailed under point 1, the contractor carried out another 34 stakeholders interviews for the 10 case studies presented in the final report of the service contract supporting the evaluation. The full list of interviewees can be found in annex 6 of the final report.

## **4. Online public consultation**

An online public consultation<sup>61</sup> was made available in 23 languages from 16 July 2016 to 16 October 2016. As the other parts of the evaluation methodology had already covered a thorough investigation of other stakeholders' views, the online consultation targeted primarily the general public. However, all other interested stakeholders were encouraged to reply as well.

A total of 269 replies were received (175 individuals and 94 organisations). A full report on the online consultation is available on the DG EAC website.

## **Results of consultations**

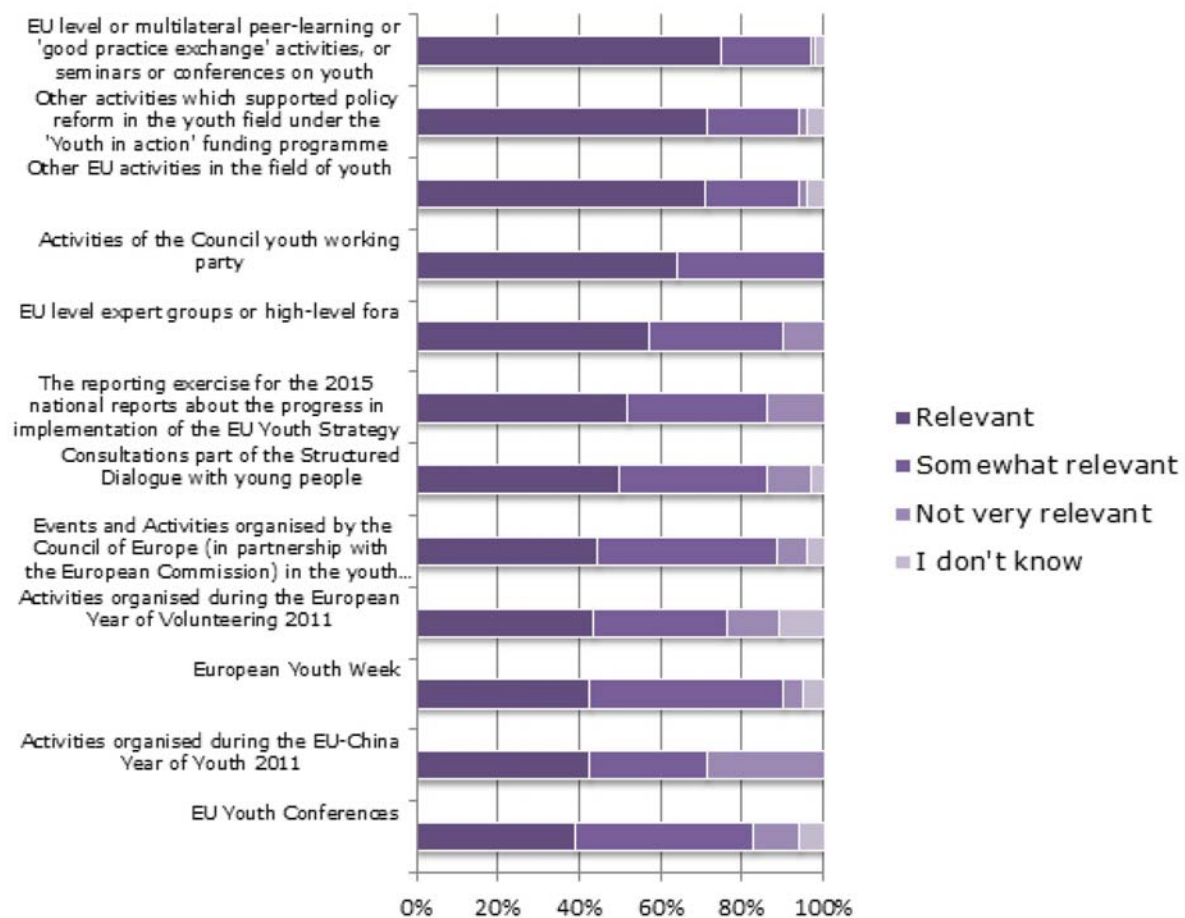
### **Relevance**

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<sup>61</sup> As the online public consultation was not a mandatory part of the evaluations when the evaluation contract was prepared, the consultation was covered by the contract and was conducted independently by the Commission. Therefore, its results are not reported in the final report of the study but are instead available in annex 2 of this document.

In the *survey of youth organisations* by the service contractor, the organisations that participated to specific activities were asked to rate the degree of relevance of the activities they participated in, according to the national agenda and the work of their organisation. Respondents reported multilateral peer-learning activities as opportunities to exchange good practices, increase knowledge on youth issues and develop new connections with potential partners. Most of the organisations that took part in structured dialogue considered it relevant or somewhat relevant (86 %). They also found that the EU activities have been relevant to the agenda in their country.

### Relevance to the work of youth organisations



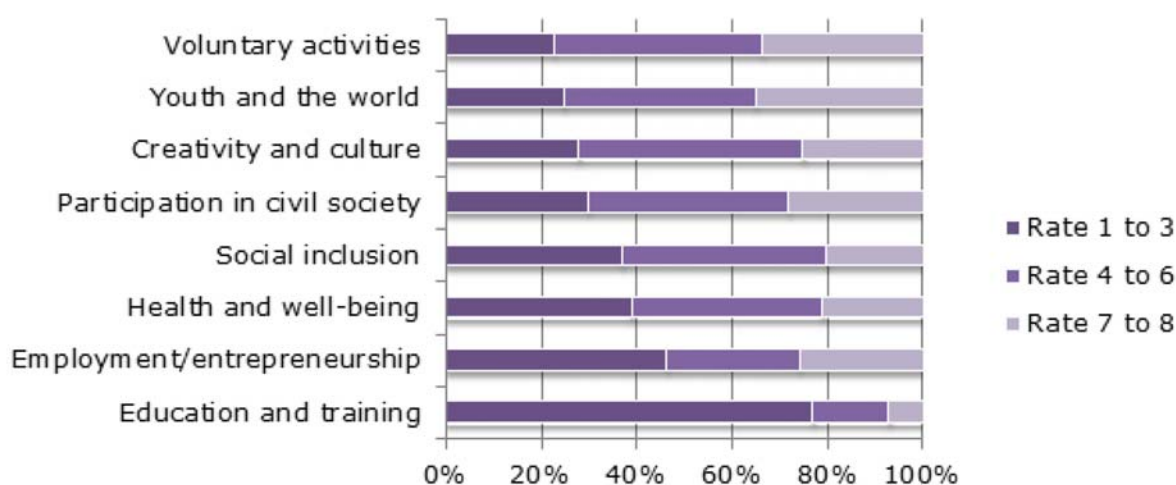
Source: Survey of youth organisations

84 % of the respondents to the *online public consultation* also believe that the objectives of the EU Youth Strategy are generally in line with national policies. Organisations tend to be more positive than individual respondents: 91 % agree that the strategy is (either completely or somewhat) in line with national policies. In comparison, the percentage of individuals who believe that the EU Youth Strategy is either completely or somewhat in accordance with national policies is 81 %.

Two thirds of the *policy-makers* interviewed at national level (31 interviewees, representing 65 % of the ministries' interviewees) consider the objectives and areas covered in the EU youth cooperation framework to be sufficiently broad and flexible to fit every Member State's context, needs and priorities.

The objectives and areas covered by the EU Youth Strategy continue to be relevant to young people's needs. The survey of *young people* found that most respondents see the priorities of the strategy as still being relevant to the needs of young people in their countries.

**How relevant the following areas of activity are to your own interests and needs (1=most relevant; 8=least relevant, N=422)**



Source: Survey of Young Europeans

The young people surveyed were also asked to list priorities they wished to see included in a future EU cooperation framework. The top three priorities mentioned by young people correspond to issues already covered under the strategy's current objectives. They were 1) Better access to employment and job stability; 2) Better access and opportunities for education and training and 3) More cross-border volunteering opportunities.

*Youth stakeholders* consulted in the 28 Member States and at EU level also confirmed the match between the objectives of the strategy and the current problems of young people. 82 % of the interviewees believed that the EU Youth Strategy was relevant to the needs of young people.

All eight fields of action as well as their inter-connectedness were found overall to be relevant to the needs of young people and to the work of youth policy-makers by all groups of stakeholders consulted – policy-makers and youth representatives interviewed at national and EU level, youth organisations surveyed and young Europeans surveyed, as well as respondents to the public online consultation. They also confirmed that *youth employment, education and training* as well as *participation* are highly relevant areas of action.

In the public online consultation, respondents were asked what the main areas of youth policy are that the EU should contribute to in the future. The areas with the highest support overall are 'lowering youth unemployment and inactivity' and 'improving the social situation of young people at risk of poverty or exclusion'. Respectively 83 % and 79 % of the total respondents have indicated that these areas should be a 'high priority'. Other areas come closely after this. These are areas, such as 'supporting and developing youth work and non-formal learning' (73 % of total respondents), 'preventing marginalisation or violent radicalisation among young people' (72 %) and 'supporting the involvement of youth organisations and young people in policy-making and other democratic processes' (70 %).

Looking at high and medium priorities together, the field of action which received the highest support is 'improving the social situation of young people at risk of poverty or exclusion' with 98 %, followed by 'lowering youth unemployment and inactivity' (97 %), 'supporting and developing youth work and non-formal learning' and 'supporting young people's access to information and knowledge of their rights' (each 96 %).

All the actions lines of the Recommendation are still highly relevant to the current needs and problems of *young volunteers* and to those of *volunteering organisations*, although the latter considered that the Recommendation could have been more ambitious. In the *online public consultation*, views were also positive on the Recommendation's relevance: respectively 82 % and 72 % of respondents believed that its objectives are still relevant to the needs of youth organisations and policy-makers.

## Coherence

Most youth *policy-makers* interviewed at national level appreciated the goal of a holistic approach to youth policy and the focus on mainstreaming as 'the most important part of the strategy'.

On the **external coherence** of the strategy, compared to those who did see coherence, twice as many *stakeholders knowledgeable about EU-level initiatives*<sup>62</sup> considered that the EU Youth Strategy had not been sufficiently complementary to other EU youth-related policies. The *youth stakeholders* interviewed by the contractor who had knowledge about the link between the EU Youth Strategy and the Europe 2020 strategy stated that both strategic frameworks of action were often considered separate approaches. They were each seen to have their own objectives, rather than be part of an integrated long-term plan of the EU. Some interviewees pointed to the missing link between the Youth Strategy and the European semester, and felt that country-specific recommendations on youth policy and systems could be formulated.

Views were divided on the **internal coherence** of the EU Youth Strategy. Of the 136 stakeholders interviewed, 22.1 % see activities of the strategy as inter-related and building on

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<sup>62</sup> 24 of the people interviewed by the contractor in its interview programme.

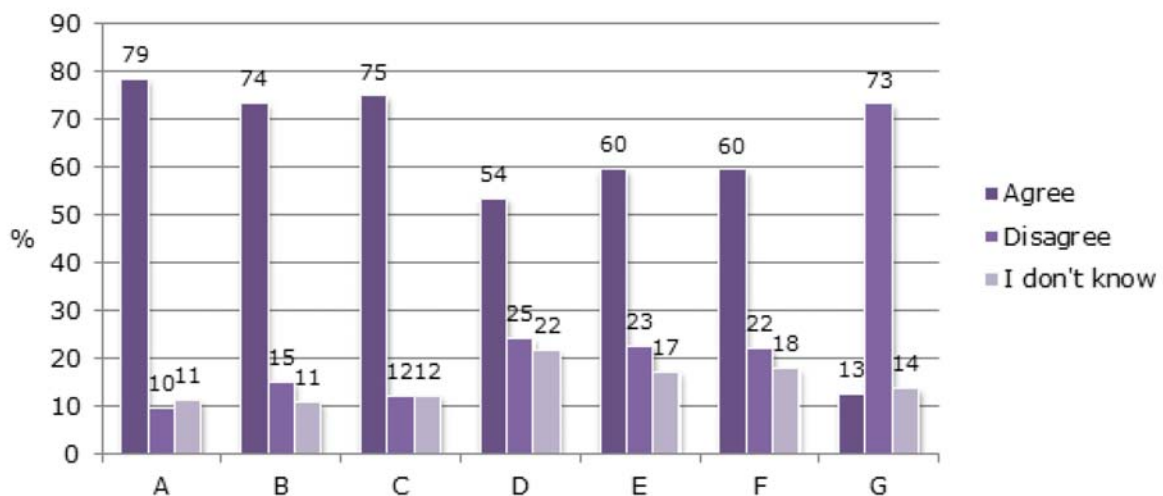
each other while 20.6 % see the need to better connect its different parts, which they currently view as 'stand-alone' or 'fragmented'.

### EU added value

In the *public online consultation*, 79 % of the respondents agreed that the EU Youth Strategy helps develop a youth strategy or a consistent approach to young people and youth policy at national level. Around three quarters agree that the EU Youth Strategy helps to improve coherence between national/regional and EU-wide youth related measures (75 %). and that it helps to put young people higher on the EU political agenda (74 %).

The number of those agreeing with 'it helps allocate more national public funding to specific activities or initiatives in the youth sector', 'it helps to encourage young people to take part in the decision-making process at all levels' and 'it helps to make young people's voice heard in the European policy-shaping process' drops to 60 % or less. Around three quarters of the total respondents agree that the strategy adds value to national/regional/local measures while 13 % disagree.

### Added value of the EU Youth Strategy compared with local, regional or national level measures



Source: Public online consultation

- A. It helps develop a youth strategy or a consistent approach to young people and youth policy at national level
- B. It helps to put young people higher on the EU political agenda
- C. It helps to improve coherence between national/regional and EU-wide youth-related measures
- D. It helps allocate more national public funding to specific activities or initiatives in the youth sector
- E. It helps to encourage young people to take part in the decision-making process at all levels
- F. It helps to make young people's voice heard in the European policy-shaping process
- G. The strategy has no added value over national/regional/local measures

Still in the *online public consultation*, over 70 % of the responses found that the Recommendation had added value (compared with actions at other levels) because it helped to develop and raise awareness of opportunities to volunteer abroad.

### Added value of the Council Recommendation



Source: Public online consultation

When interviewed for the survey of *youth organisations*, these organisations underlined the EU added value in particular for

- financial support;
- the existence of a common legal framework that gives space to national and local differences and ensured long-term stability to youth action;
- the “EU brand” that empowers youth actions and messages launched by youth organisations.

### Effectiveness

Most of the *youth organisations* interviewed in the specific survey by the service contractor and involved in activities under the EU Youth Strategy considered that their participation in EU activities mostly helped them to network with other youth organisations (94 %), build knowledge, learn (90 %), development of new activities or initiatives (84 %), or create new



partnerships (84 %). More than 90 % of the youth organisations responding considered the effects of participation as 'useful' or 'very useful' for their organisation's work. They also saw broader effects on youth policy, recognition of the value of youth work and of volunteering, a better understanding of youth issues among stakeholders and improved youth participation, among others.

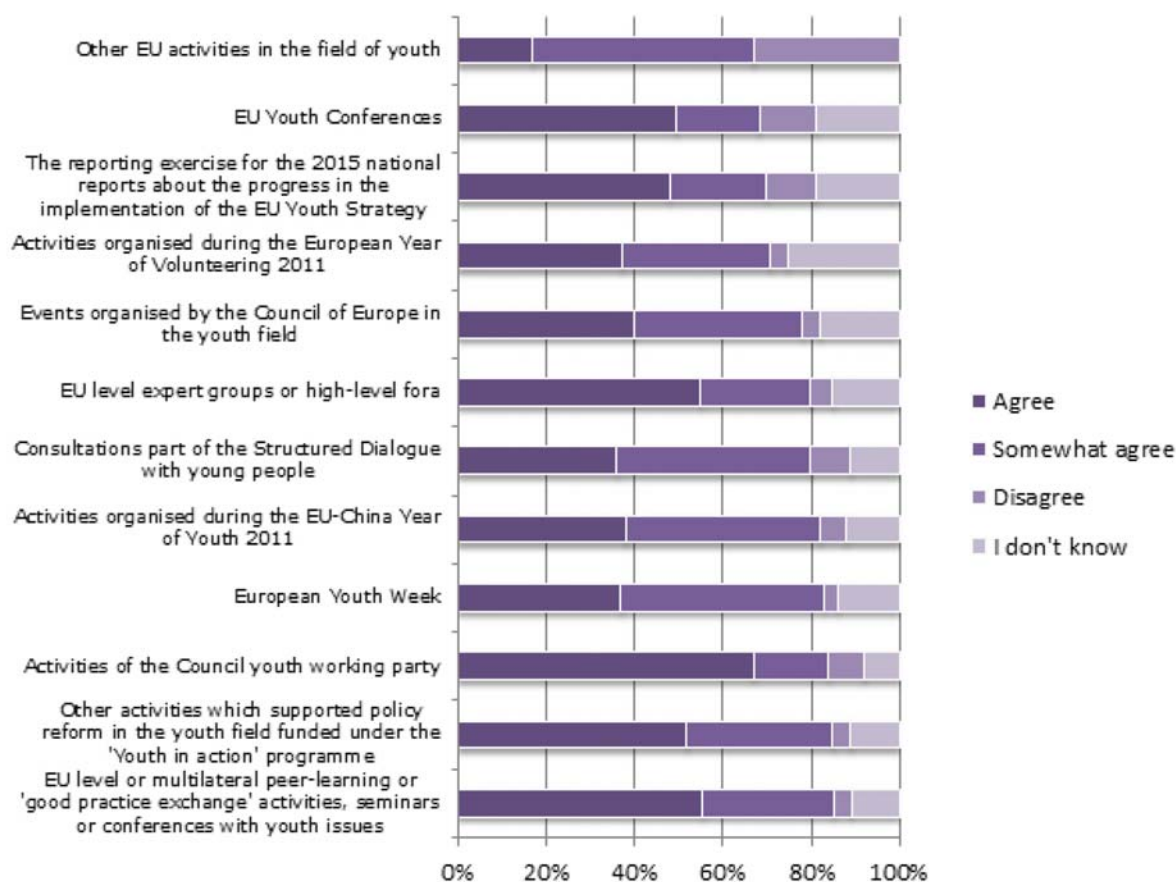
Among the *young people* whom the service contractor surveyed in 2015, about half of the respondents found the tools of the EU Youth Strategy very useful: they are able to find the information they are looking for and stay up-to-date on EU youth news or events. In particular, several of them said that the Eurodesks and the youth portal helped them find information about volunteering opportunities abroad. The other half of the respondents seems unhappy about the tools. A major concern expressed is the fact that young people are not very familiar with the tools – i.e. the tools are not sufficiently advertised. Those respondents considered that the tools are not user-friendly and that information is not sufficiently up-to-date. These concerns referred mainly to the Eurodesks and youth Portal.

A high number of respondents to the *public online consultation* was rather positive about the impact of the EU Youth Strategy on national and regional policies (73 %) and the impact on youth organisations and young people (81 %). Organisations tend to be slightly more positive than individuals: 80 % of the organisations and 86 % of the youth organisations chose either 'very much' or 'somewhat' for the EU Youth Strategy's impact on national/regional policies. In comparison only 70 % of individuals replied this way for national/regional policies and 78 % replied this way for youth organisations and young people.

### **Efficiency**

In the contractor's specific survey on *youth organisations*, they were asked to what extent they agreed with a series of statements about the cost of their participation in the EU-level activities (e.g. in terms of human resources, time spent, other resources needed) and the extent to which it was a reasonable cost, given the results/effects produced. Most of the respondents agreed that the cost of participation in all EU activities was reasonable in relation to the results/effects produced. The cost of peer-learning activities and activities funded by the Erasmus+ and Youth in Action programmes was considered the most reasonable in relation to the results/effects achieved. On the other hand, the 2015 reporting exercise and the activities organised during the 2011 EU-China Youth Year were considered less cost-effective, given the results/effects achieved.

### Cost of participation to the following EU activities were reasonable in relation to results/effects produced



Source: Survey of youth organisations

### Sustainability

The evaluation found that there is a strong willingness amongst *youth stakeholders* to continue participating in cooperation activities under the EU Youth Strategy over the next cycle in the 2016-2018 period. The sustained high interest in EU youth cooperation is shared among youth policy-makers (i.e. youth ministries interviewed), implementing bodies (i.e. national agencies that implement the Erasmus+ youth chapter) and youth organisations (i.e. national youth councils and European federations of youth organisations interviewed). Out of 136 stakeholders interviewed at Member State level and at EU level, a vast majority (115 or 84.6 %) expressed a strong interest in continuing participation in the EU youth cooperation framework. Only three interviewees (2.2 %) said they were reluctant to continue their involvement while another three (2.2 %) have stated that their participation would depend on the focus of EU cooperation and whether or not the cooperation was aligned with national priorities. In addition to the strong interest in place, most interviewees mentioned that they also have the resources to continue participating in youth cooperation activities. Overall, there is a broad consensus among the stakeholders interviewed that there should be an EU Youth Strategy after 2018.

### **ANNEX 3. Reference and data sources**

(Documents listed per policy instrument)

#### **Knowledge building and evidence-based policy-making**

##### **EU YOUTH STRATEGY**

'Assessing practices for using indicators in fields related to youth', 2011

<http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/assessing-practices-for-using-indicators-in-fields-related-to-youth-pbNC0113223/>

Flash Eurobarometer 319a – 'Youth on the move', analytical report, 2011

[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/flash/fl\\_319a\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_319a_en.pdf)

'Youth participation in democratic life' London School of Economics for Executive Agency for Culture, Education and Audiovisual and European Commission, 2013

[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/tools/documents/lse\\_study\\_on\\_youth\\_participation\\_2013.pdf](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/tools/documents/lse_study_on_youth_participation_2013.pdf)

Flash Eurobarometer 375 – 'European Youth: Participation in democratic life', report, 2013

[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/flash/fl\\_375\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_375_en.pdf)

'Working with young people: the value of youth work in the EU', GHK for Executive Agency for Culture, Education and Audiovisual and European Commission, 2014

[http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/study/youth-work-report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/study/youth-work-report_en.pdf)

Reports produced by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency:

- 'Youth social exclusion and lessons from youth work', 2013

[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/tools/documents/social\\_exclusion\\_and\\_youth\\_work.pdf](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/tools/documents/social_exclusion_and_youth_work.pdf)

- 'Political participation and EU Citizenship: Perceptions and behaviours of young people, Evidence from Eurobarometer Surveys', 2013

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/tools/documents/perception-behaviours.pdf>

'Policy Brief on Youth Entrepreneurship - Entrepreneurial Activities in Europe', OECD and European Commission, 2012

[http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/Youth%20entrepreneurship%20policy%20brief%20EN\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/Youth%20entrepreneurship%20policy%20brief%20EN_FINAL.pdf)

EU-Council of Europe youth partnership

<http://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership>

Evaluation of the Partnership grant agreements 2007-2011-12, conducted in 2013

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/more\\_info/evaluations/docs/youth/partner2013\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/more_info/evaluations/docs/youth/partner2013_en.pdf)

Project compendia, Eastern Partnership Youth Window and the Western Balkans Youth Window, of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, 2007-2013  
[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/results\\_compendia/compendia\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/results_compendia/compendia_en.php)

### **COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION ON THE MOBILITY OF YOUNG VOLUNTEERS**

'Volunteering in the European Union', GHK for the Educational, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency and European Commission, 2010  
[http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1018\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1018_en.pdf)

'Recognising and promoting cross-border voluntary activities in the EU', report, European Parliament, Committee on Culture and Education, Rapporteur: Marco Scurria, 2011  
[http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/european-year-of-volunteering/european-year-of-volunteering-2011-documents/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/european-year-of-volunteering/european-year-of-volunteering-2011-documents/index_en.htm)

EU Policies and Volunteering: Recognising and promoting cross-border voluntary activities in the EU, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions; COM(2011) 568 final  
[http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1311\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1311_en.pdf)

Recognising and Promoting Cross-border Voluntary Activities in the EU, Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee, Rapporteur: Pavel Trantina, 2011  
[http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/opinion\\_28\\_march\\_2012\\_final\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/opinion_28_march_2012_final_en.pdf)

### **Mutual Learning**

#### **EU YOUTH STRATEGY**

Youth conferences of the EU Presidencies

Developing the creative and innovative potential of young people through non-formal learning in ways that are relevant to employability, Expert group report  
[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/news/2014/documents/report-creative-potential\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/news/2014/documents/report-creative-potential_en.pdf)

Defining the specific contribution of youth work and non-formal and informal learning to address the challenges young people are facing, in particular the transition from education to employment, Expert group, first meetings in October and November 2014, next meetings in January 2015

First European youth work convention, 2010  
[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Documents/2010\\_Declaration\\_European\\_youth\\_work\\_convention\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Documents/2010_Declaration_European_youth_work_convention_en.pdf)

Building Tomorrow's Europe – Perspectives for young people, conference on youth work and youth policy in Europe, 07.-08.05.2013 in Bonn, Germany, celebration of 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jugend für Europa, Germany's National Agency for the EU

<https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de/veranstaltungen/building-europe/>

Think European – Act Local, Conference for the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy, 7-8 May 2013, Bonn

<https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de/veranstaltungen/europaeisch-denken-lokal-handeln/>

Mobility Spaces, Learning Spaces – Linking Policy, Research and Practice, International conference of the European Youth Mobility Platform, 20-22 March 2013, Berlin

<https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de/veranstaltungen/platformlearningmobility/>

10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Forum on perspectives on European youth work, Implementation of the EU Youth Strategy, 2010, 2011 and 2013

<https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de/veranstaltungen/10-forum/>

<https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de/veranstaltungen/11-forum/>

<https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de/veranstaltungen/12-forum/>

A new youth policy for Europe: towards the empowerment and inclusion for all young people – European Peer Learning on Youth Policy 2011-2013 – Documentation

[https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de/downloads/4-20-3495/MKP\\_NewYouthPolicy\\_Screen.pdf](https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de/downloads/4-20-3495/MKP_NewYouthPolicy_Screen.pdf)

Opening Seminar of the European Peer Learning on Youth policy: Designing Youth Policy in Europe – what is the role of the regions and municipalities? Documentation

[https://www.jugendpolitikineuropa.de/downloads/4-20-3278/JfE\\_Doc\\_MKP\\_gold.pdf](https://www.jugendpolitikineuropa.de/downloads/4-20-3278/JfE_Doc_MKP_gold.pdf)

Inter CITY – European Peer Learning on Local Youth Policy, European Conference 10-12 October 2012, Leipzig- Documentation

<https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de/ueber-jfe/publikationen/intercity-european-peer-learning-on-local-youth-policy.3446/>

2<sup>nd</sup> Inter CITY Conference, 2013, Helsinki

3<sup>rd</sup> Inter CITY Conference, 9-11 November, 2014, s-Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands:

Launch of a European network of Local Departments for Youth Work – InterCityYouth

<http://ec.europa.eu/youth/news/2014/documents/icy-press-release.pdf>

<http://ec.europa.eu/youth/news/2014/documents/icy-common-grounds.pdf>

<https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/european-training-calendar/training/intercity-iii-european-peer-learning-of-local-departments-for-youth-work.4489/>

Research-based analysis of the Youth in Action Programme, Research-based Analysis of Youth in Action network (RAY), 2013

[http://www.researchyouth.net/documents/ray\\_summary\\_overview.pdf](http://www.researchyouth.net/documents/ray_summary_overview.pdf)

Good Practice Series, case study documents, European Youth Card Association (EYCA)  
<http://www.eyca.org/youth-mobility/GPS>

YouthPart project, best practices on e-participation and set of guidelines and tools,  
International Youth Service of the Federal Republic of Germany (IJAB), funded by the  
German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth  
<http://youthpart.info>

### Youth Guarantee

Youth Guarantee: Making it Happen conference calls on Member States to do more for  
delivery, 2014

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1036&eventsId=978&furtherEvents=yess>

Working and learning seminar on Practical support for the design and implementation of  
Youth Guarantee Schemes, 2013

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1036&eventsId=931&furtherEvents=yess>

### **COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION ON THE MOBILITY OF YOUNG VOLUNTEERS**

Expert group on the mobility of young volunteers across the European Union

Czech seminar on youth volunteering with Visegrad and Eastern Partnership countries

EU kick-off conference for the implementation of the Council Recommendation on the  
Mobility of Young Volunteers across the EU in Prague 2009

Czech conference 'Voluntarily across the Border – cross-border volunteering in Central  
Europe', 2011

Cooperation with United Nations Volunteers: <http://www.unv.org/>

### **Progress-reporting**

2012 joint report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the renewed  
framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-18), 2012/C 394/03, of  
20.12.2012

[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52012XG1220\(01\)&from=EN](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52012XG1220(01)&from=EN)  
[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/eu-youth-report-2012\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/eu-youth-report-2012_en.pdf)

Commission staff working document accompanying document to the Communication from  
the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social  
Committee and the Committee of the Regions 'Youth – Investing and Empowering', EU

youth report, SEC(2009) 549 final, of 27 April 2009

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental\\_health/eu\\_compass/reports\\_studies/youth\\_report\\_final.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/eu_compass/reports_studies/youth_report_final.pdf)

## **Dissemination of results**

### **EU YOUTH STRATEGY**

European youth portal: <http://europa.eu.youth>

European Commission youth website: [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.htm)

Publications: [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/pub/publications\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/pub/publications_en.htm)

Young citizens of Europe, Youth in Action Programme, European good practice projects, 2013

<http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/publications/young-citizens.pdf>

Young people and entrepreneurship, Youth in Action Programme, European good practice projects, 2013

<http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/publications/youth-entrepreneurship.pdf>

Youth employment, Youth in Action Programme, European good practice projects, 2012

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/publications/youth-employment\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/publications/youth-employment_en.pdf)

Youth volunteering, Youth in Action Programme, European good practice projects, 2011

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/publications/youth-volunteering\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/documents/publications/youth-volunteering_en.pdf)

EU-Council of Europe youth partnership

<http://pjp-eu.coe.int/web/youth-partnership/publications>

National agencies and SALTO Resource Centres

<https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/european-training-calendar/help/national-agencies/>

### **COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION ON THE MOBILITY OF YOUNG VOLUNTEERS**

The European youth portal fully integrated the database of EVS accredited organisations in February 2014, then launched the database in October 2014.

[http://europa.eu/youth/evs\\_database](http://europa.eu/youth/evs_database)

[http://europa.eu/youth/vp/opportunity\\_list](http://europa.eu/youth/vp/opportunity_list)

European Year of Volunteering 2011

[http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/european-year-of-volunteering/european-year-of-volunteering-2011-documents/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/european-year-of-volunteering/european-year-of-volunteering-2011-documents/index_en.htm)

Voluntary activities 2011-12, Information sheets on voluntary activities, drafted by the national EKCYCYP-correspondents

<http://pjp-eu.coe.int/web/youth-partnership/voluntary-activities1>

International voluntary service, T-Kit for trainers and young people interested and/or involved in international voluntary service activities and projects, EU-CoE youth partnership

<http://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/t-kit-5-international-voluntary-service>

Coyote, magazine, EU-CoE youth partnership

<http://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/issue-17-july-2011>

### **Monitoring of the process**

Commission staff working document on EU indicators in the field of youth, SEC(2011) 401 final

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/publications/indicator-dashboard\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/publications/indicator-dashboard_en.pdf)

Dashboard of Youth indicators

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth/data/eu-dashboard>

### **Consultations and structured dialogue**

Presentation of structured dialogue

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/dialogue\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/dialogue_en.htm)

Structured dialogue projects

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/programme/support-for-policy-reform/structure-dialogue-projects\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/programme/support-for-policy-reform/structure-dialogue-projects_en.htm)

Overview of the structured dialogue between young people and EU institutions on youth employment, Information from the Presidency, 27 April 2011

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST%209170%202011%20INIT>

Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the structured dialogue with young people on youth employment, OJ C 164, 2.6.2011

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:164:0001:0004:EN:PDF>

Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the overview of the structured dialogue with young people on youth participation in democratic life in Europe, OJ C380/01, 11.12.2012

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:380:FULL:EN:PDF>



Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the overview of the structured dialogue process including social inclusion of young people, OJ C183/1, 14.6.2014  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C:2014:183:FULL&from=EN>

Online participation platform for structured dialogue European youth portal  
[http://europa.eu/youth/EU/participation/structured-dialogue\\_en](http://europa.eu/youth/EU/participation/structured-dialogue_en)

Structured dialogue stakeholders network, Yammer (social media tool of the European Commission)

Implementation plans of the structured dialogue for each cycle

European Youth Week: <http://www.youthweek.eu/>

## **Mobilisation of EU programmes and funds**

### **EU YOUTH STRATEGY**

Erasmus+ programme, youth chapter  
[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.htm)  
[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus\\_en](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus_en)

Youth in Action (former programme 2007-2013)  
[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/tools/youth-in-action\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/tools/youth-in-action_en.htm)  
[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus\\_en](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus_en)

Structural Funds

Increased support for young entrepreneurs via the European progress microfinance facility  
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=836>

European Social Fund (ESF)

EU measures to tackle youth unemployment, factsheet  
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1036>

Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)

The Youth Employment Initiative  
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1829&furtherNews=yes>

Eastern Partnership Youth Window

ENPI Regional East Action Programme, 2012, part III, concerning the allocation of €29 million to the Eastern Partnership Youth Window

[https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/aap-youth-enpi-regional-east-p3-af-2012\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/aap-youth-enpi-regional-east-p3-af-2012_en.pdf)

Action Fiche for ENPI Regional East Action Programme 2011, part II; concerning the allocation of €5.5 million to the Eastern Partnership Youth Programme

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/aap/2011/af\\_aap\\_2011\\_enpi-e\\_p2.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/aap/2011/af_aap_2011_enpi-e_p2.pdf)

First Eastern Partnership Youth Forum, Lithuanian EU-Presidency, 2013

<http://www.youthforum2013.eu/>

### **COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION ON THE MOBILITY OF YOUNG VOLUNTEERS**

European policy experimentations in the fields of education and training and youth: transnational cooperation for the implementation of innovative policies under the leadership of high-level public authorities (priority themes encouraging the development and internationalisation of young people's volunteering)

[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-3-support-for-policy-reform/prospective-initiatives\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions/key-action-3-support-for-policy-reform/prospective-initiatives_en)

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Working together for Europe's young people, A call to action on youth unemployment COM(2013)447 final

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=celex:52013DC0447>

### **Other elements**

#### **a) Council conclusions or resolutions in the youth field, 2010-2014**

##### **Italian Presidency of the Council of the EU**

Council conclusions on promoting access by young people to rights in order to foster their autonomy and their participation in civil society

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST%2015613%202014%20INIT>

##### **Greek Presidency of the Council of the EU**

Council conclusions on promoting youth entrepreneurship to foster social inclusion of all young people

[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52014XG0614\(04\)&rid=3](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52014XG0614(04)&rid=3)

Council resolution on the overview of the structured dialogue process including social inclusion of young people

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST%209026%202014%20INIT>

Council resolution on a European Union work plan for youth for 2014-2015

[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:42014Y0614\(02\)&rid=4](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:42014Y0614(02)&rid=4)

### **Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU**

Council conclusions of 25-26 November 2013 on enhancing the social inclusion of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs)

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/139721.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/139721.pdf)

### **Irish Presidency of the Council of the EU**

Council conclusions of 16-17 May 2013 on the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:168:0005:0009:EN:PDF>

Council conclusions of 16-17 May 2013 on maximising the potential of youth policy in addressing the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/137146.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/137146.pdf)

### **Cypriot Presidency of the Council of the EU**

Council conclusions of 27 November 2012 on the participation and social inclusion of young people with emphasis on those with a migrant background

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:393:0015:0019:EN:PDF>

Council resolution of 27 November 2012 on the overview of the structured dialogue with young people on youth participation in democratic life in Europe

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:380:0001:0004:EN:PDF>

### **Danish Presidency of the Council of the EU**

Council conclusions of 11 May 2012 on fostering the creative and innovative potential of young people

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:169:0001:0004:EN:PDF>

### **Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU**

Council conclusions of November 2011 on the eastern dimension of youth participation and mobility

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:372:0010:0014:EN:PDF>

### **Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the EU**

Council resolution of May 2011 on encouraging new and effective forms of participation of all young people in democratic life in Europe

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:169:0001:0005:EN:PDF>

Council Resolution of May 2011 on the structured dialogue with young people on youth employment

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:164:0001:0004:EN:PDF>

### **Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU**

Council conclusions of 19 November 2010 on access of young people to culture

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:326:0002:0003:EN:PDF>

Council conclusions of 19 November 2010 on the European and International Policy Agendas on Children, Youth and Children's Rights

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:326:0001:0001:EN:PDF>

Council resolution on youth work

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:327:0001:0005:EN:PDF>

### **Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU**

Council resolution on the active inclusion of young people: combating unemployment and poverty

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:137:0001:0006:EN:PDF>

### **b) Recent examples of national youth strategies inspired by the EU Youth Strategy**

FRENCH PRIORITE JEUNESSE

<http://www.jeunes.gouv.fr/actualites/actualites-interministerielles/article/le-gouvernement-se-mobilise-pour>

CZECH YOUTH CONCEPT 2020

<http://www.msmt.cz/mladez/koncepc-podpory-mladeze-na-obdobi-2014-2020?lang=1>

### **c) Complementary information on youth inclusion**

Inclusion strategy under Youth in Action

<https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-1294/InclusionStrategyYiA.pdf>

Inclusion and diversity strategy under Erasmus+ (for the Erasmus+ youth chapter)

[http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/reports/inclusion-diversity-strategy\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/reports/inclusion-diversity-strategy_en.pdf)

### **d) Complementary information on youth mobility**

Youth mobility – underpinning the whole of the EU Youth Strategy

ERYICA (European Youth Information and Counselling Agency) – 'Youth on the Move: InfoMobility' project funded by the Youth in Action programme to investigate the particular information needs of mobile young people and set quality standards and design training for the delivery of such information across all themes of the EU Youth Strategy

<http://eryica.org/page/youth-move-infomobility-yomim>

**e) Information on cooperation with China in the youth field**

2011 EU-China Year of Youth: new horizons for cooperation and dialogue

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-11-19\\_en.htm?locale=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-11-19_en.htm?locale=en)

EU-China High level People-to-People dialogue

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/international-cooperation/china\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/international-cooperation/china_en.htm)

EU-China High level People-to-People dialogue September 2014, youth session

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/events/2014/06092014-hppd\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/events/2014/06092014-hppd_en.htm)

EU-China Joint Seminar on youth entrepreneurship, November 2013

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/events/2014/eu-china-seminar\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/events/2014/eu-china-seminar_en.htm)

EU-China Policy and Expert Seminar on mobility and youth social inclusion, December 2014

## ANNEX 4. Key EU-level youth-related policy initiatives in 2010-2014

Year	Title of policy initiative	Main objective(s)	Reference to EU Youth Strategy
2010	European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion	It aims to help EU countries reach the headline target of lifting 20 million people out of poverty and social exclusion, many of whom are young people.	One reference <sup>63</sup> to EU Youth Strategy
2010	Digital Agenda for Europe	It aims to better exploit the potential of ICTs in order to foster innovation, economic growth and progress. One of its action lines is promoting digital literacy, skills and inclusions, which touches directly on young people.	No reference
2011	Youth Opportunities Initiative	Aims to mobilise resources – mainly through better use of ESF – and increase efforts to drive down youth unemployment and develop employability of young people. Targets in particular a) early school leavers and b) graduates who have still to get a first work experience.	No reference
2011	Promoting youth employment to achieve the 'Europe 2020' objectives	Council Conclusions adopted on 17 June 2011 on promoting youth employment to achieve the Europe 2020 objective.	Reference to EUYS and to structured dialogue on youth employment in the preamble
2012	Your First EURES job	Job mobility scheme to help young people find a job, traineeship or apprenticeship in other EU countries. As such, it promotes the mobility of young job-seekers across the EU.	No reference
2012	Recommendation on the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning	Member States are invited to put validation arrangements in place by 2018 in order to make it visible and value the full range of knowledge and competences held by an individual, irrespective of where or how they have been acquired. This policy adopted in the education sector acknowledges youth organisations as important providers of non-formal learning opportunities among others.	Reference to EUYS in the preamble
2013	Youth Employment	The initiative supports young people in regions with youth unemployment rates above 25% by	No reference

<sup>63</sup> 'Worrying trends in the number of young people who are NEET underline the need to step up the broader range of policies supporting young people as agreed in the European Youth Strategy 2010-2018', COM(2010) 758, p. 8.

Year	Title of policy initiative	Main objective(s)	Reference to EU Youth Strategy
	Initiative	reinforcing EU financial support for youth employment measures.	
2013	Council Recommendation on a Youth Guarantee (YG)	Aims to get young people under 25 back to work or study within four months of losing a job or leaving education. Tops up national spending on these schemes with EUR 6bn through the European Social Fund.	No reference to the EUYS, but mention of need to ensure the consultation or involvement of young people and/or youth organisations in designing and further developing the YG
2013	European Alliance for Apprenticeships	Aims to improve the quality and supply of apprenticeships across the EU and to change mind-sets towards apprenticeship-type learning.	No reference
2013	Social Investment Package	It aims to integrate packages of benefits and services that help people achieve lasting positive social outcomes. It calls for investing in children and youth to increase their opportunities in life.	No reference
2014	Rethinking Education	It refers to non-formal and informal learning as a complementary tool, in order to acquire the cross-cutting skills youth need on the labour market.	No reference
2014	Quality Framework for Traineeships	Aims to enable trainees to acquire high-quality work experience under safe and fair conditions and to increase their chances of finding a good quality job	Reference to structured dialogue on youth employment
2015	Joint report on implementation of ET 2020 <sup>64</sup>	The report proposes six new priorities, including improving people's skills and employment prospects, and calls for better aligning ET 2020 with the EU's political term and priorities.	Reference to OMC in the youth field in a footnote

Source: ICF international

<sup>64</sup> The 2015 joint report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020), OJ C 417.