# European youth: grants to bodies active at European level, 2004-2006 action programme

2003/0113(COD) - 26/06/2008 - Follow-up document

The Commission presents the final evaluation of the "Youth" Community action programme (2000-2006) and of the Community action programme to promote bodies active at European level in the field of youth (2004-2006). The final evaluation of the "Youth" programme is based evaluation reports from the Member States and other participating countries, and a report drawn up by an external evaluation service.

**Main findings**: the "Youth" programme corresponded well to overall EU youth policy. It is considered to have been very successful in improving the sense of **citizenship** of the young participants, in particular in terms of attitude, communication and social skills. 90% of the participants in exchanges declare that they have become more tolerant. The programme effectively strengthened participants' feeling of belonging to the EU. Participation in the programme affects the employability of young people, particularly young volunteers. 62% of volunteers report an influence on their professional career. However, the programme was only moderately successful in reaching out to young people with fewer opportunities. The participants generally have a high level of education. The programme was effective in terms of gender equality.

Among **youth workers**, the programme created greater awareness of the intercultural dimension and contact with new working methods. 91% of youth workers who participated in the programme report added value over other training which they have received. However, greater attention to the needs of youth workers would increase the practical use of the knowledge acquired.

While the funding allocated to the decentralised parts of the programme is generally considered to be appropriate, around 50% of the national authorities and the national agencies (NAs) deem it necessary to increase the budget earmarked for youth exchanges and around 33% want to see an increase in the budget for accompanying measures. The external evaluators consider that more funding should be allocated to the functioning of the national agencies to develop activities such as their advisory role, important if project submission procedures are to be kept from having a negative effect on the accessibility of the programme.

The main recommendations are as follows:

- **ensure the greater inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities:** the Commission has developed an inclusion strategy to increase the participation of more disadvantaged young people; their involvement is identified as an award criterion for the actions concerned;
- **ensure more involvement of young people in the preparation of projects:** participants should be involved in preparing the projects more often. Offering training focused on the preparation, organisation and implementation of projects would support this objective;
- **provide better support for youth workers:** improved evaluation of the needs of training providers is recommended The Commission will take account of this recommendation in its reflections on the SALTOs (Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities) and will examine how to ensure better consultation of youth workers on the format, content, methodology, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the training courses;
- **improve support for promoters:** the Commission has reasserted the "supportive approach" principle, through which the national agencies provide assistance to the promoters, so that the programme is accessible to as many people as possible and achieves the aim of being open to young people with fewer opportunities;

- **strengthen the efficiency of NGO and European Youth Forum (EYF) action:** reports on the activities of the NGOs and the EYF should focus on the measurement and evaluation of practical details;
- **improve project monitoring:** the Commission will develop a strategy for the continuous evaluation of the programme, identifying indicators to be monitored. It has undertaken to improve the IT tools which the NAs are required to use;
- **raise the profile of the programme:** the Commission is developing an information strategy to make the programme more widely known;
- **more resources for the NAs:** some NAs lack the means to offer sufficient support for promoters. The Commission, while taking care to limit the administrative costs of the programme, will examine how to act on this recommendation when preparing the 2009 budget;
- **accelerate the disbursement of funding to the NAs:** it is recommended that the Commission disburse funds to the NAs without delay;
- **re-examine the activities of the SALTOs:** the SALTOs are generally considered to be appropriate structures, although certain aspects should be reviewed. The Commission will think about adjustments which should be made;
- **re-examine the activities of the Eurodesks:** although the Eurodesks are generally considered to be efficient, there are doubts concerning the added value which they bring to the programme. A review of their activities would make their work more relevant. The Commission agrees to this recommendation, although it points out that the usefulness of the Eurodesks is not determined solely by the information they provide on the programme.