

Youth policy: Youth in action programme for 2007-2013

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In accordance with the requirements of Decision N° 1719/2006/EC, the Commission presents an interim evaluation of the 'Youth in Action' Programme, which aims at developing cooperation in the field of youth in the EU and covers the years 2007 to 2013. The interim evaluation is based on• evaluation reports from Member States and other participating countries, and a report drawn up by an external independent evaluator.

The evaluation presents a positive assessment which backs up the results of the monitoring survey launched in 2010 among the various categories of beneficiaries of YiA, which demonstrated inter alia that:

77% of young participants learned better how to identify opportunities for their personal or professional future and 66% believe that their job chances have increased thanks to the project experience; 88% of youth workers consider that they gained skills and knowledge which they would not have been able to gain through projects organised at national level;

92% of youth organisations consider as "very true" or "somewhat true" that participating in a project supported by Youth in Action increased their project management skills.

The main quantitative outcomes of YiA over the three years 2007-2009 are the following:

- more than 380 000 persons (278 000 young people and 102 000 youth workers) have participated in YiA;
- 21 800 projects were granted out of 42 700 (an increase by 14% from 2007 to 2008 and by 18% from 2008 to 2009) projects submitted;
- YiA has involved annually around 20 000 promoters presenting a significant renewal rate from year to year (only 28% of the 2009 beneficiaries were already beneficiaries of YiA in 2008).

The operational appropriations allocated to YiA from 2007 to 2009 amounted to EUR 405.4 millions (EUR 360.9 millions from the annual EUR27 budget and EUR 44.5 millions corresponding to additional appropriations including contributions from the EFTA/EEA and candidate countries) and have been fully used.

Given the high number of projects and the need for close proximity to the beneficiaries, YiA is largely (81% of the budget) managed in a "decentralised" manner by national agencies (NAs) established in the participating countries.

Main recommendations: the evaluators made a series of recommendations and the Commission response may be summarised as follows:

Improve the rationale of a future Programme: the Commission intends to reduce the number of Actions proposed in a future Programme, with a view to streamlining and simplifying it, to increasing its readability and visibility and to making its results more easily measurable. **Consider an increased focus on employability:** in the context of [Youth on the Move](#) and the [Europe 2020 Strategy](#), the Commission intends to reinforce the focus of the activities proposed for young people on their learning dimension, with a view to supporting in the most effective way the acquisition of skills and competences through such non formal activities.

Keep the mix of support to youth organisations and youth workers and direct grants for young people: the Commission shares the view that a future Programme should continue to target young people themselves, taking into account the effectiveness of the activities and the fact that they are in certain countries the only transnational opportunities offered. On the other hand one has to consider the extent to which a wider impact can be reached by enhancing the support to youth work. The future Programme will have to strike the right balance between these two objectives.

Further promote Youthpass: in order to increase the value of Youthpass, more promotion and awareness-raising activities should be used.

Youthpass was introduced for the first time in 2007 and applied in the beginning to a limited number of Actions of YiA. The Commission now intends to promote it more widely.

Further promote and define costs covered for "youth with fewer opportunities": the additional financing opportunities proposed for youth with fewer opportunities could be better promoted and defined. The Commission intends to take this recommendation into consideration when defining the future funding rules.

Improve the targeting of youth through additional communication strategies: the visibility and promotion of YiA should be channelled through additional channels in order to reach out to a wider group. Suggestions include promotion through schools, better Internet use and the use of social media. The Commission intends to follow this recommendation on both aspects: better dissemination and exploitation of the results of the projects granted (notably through a platform aimed at showcasing the outcomes of various European programmes in the field of Education and Culture); enhanced visibility of YiA (possibly by recourse to new social media).

Consider measures to reduce the administrative burden: the financing of relatively small projects involving grass root organisations is an explicit choice made within YiA according to its legal basis and contributes to capacity building on the one hand but entails a relatively high administrative burden and management costs on the other. It is recommended that an investigation is undertaken as to whether these can be reduced by implementing some efficiency measures. The implementation of the future Programme should be simplified by various means

(streamlining the actions proposed, striking the optimal balance between costs and benefits of controls, enhancing the recourse to simplified forms of flat rate financing...) with a view to making it more user-friendly for its beneficiaries but also less consuming in terms of administrative resources for the implementing bodies. Some measures will already be introduced under the current Programme.

Improve the monitoring system: the Commission has already launched the process aimed at defining a more suitable management and monitoring system for the future Programme.

The Commission **intends to implement all the recommendations** issued by the evaluators with a view to further improving the effectiveness and efficiency of a Programme which receives, year after year, an increased number of grant requests. Some of these recommendations will lead to an action plan aimed at already improving the management of the current Programme, while others will contribute to the definition of the actions to be proposed for young people at European level after the current Youth in Action Programme comes to an end.