

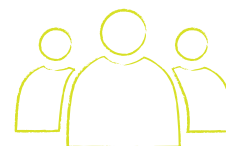


Erasmus+



# Developing quality of youth work in Europe

The European Training Strategy of the  
Youth in Action Programme (2007-2013)



salto|youth

## Editorial information

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### Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily express the official views of the European Commission or the German Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

### Hints for reading

The digital version offering links to certain documents online is available at [www.salto-youth.net/download/3003/ETS-Journal-2007-2013.pdf](http://www.salto-youth.net/download/3003/ETS-Journal-2007-2013.pdf).

The ETS 2014 – 2020 is work in progress. While producing the ETS 2007-2013 Journal, certain elements of the ETS from 2014 might differ from the next steps ideas presented in this Journal.

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## Introduction

The European Training Strategy (ETS) in the area of youth and non-formal learning has been implemented, since its launching in 2000, under the framework of the former EU YOUTH and Youth in Action (YiA) programmes.

Ten years after its launching, the ETS needed to be revised to meet the challenges of the new EU Youth Strategy, better reflect the developments in the area of youth work, and take stock of the lessons learned during the first years of implementation.

This revision also aimed at optimising and further increasing the impact of the YiA programme in the development of youth work, capacity building and recognition and at bringing the YiA and the future generation of programmes in the field of youth even further in line with the renewed framework for European Cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018).

The process led to the renewed European Training Strategy of the YiA Programme, adopted at the end of 2010. This strategy contains revised implementation measures and tools as well as improved management systems. Thus, it could better serve the YiA in terms of quality development and assurance. Furthermore, the achievements could build a solid basis for further developments under the new Erasmus+ programme.

The frameworks for training and networking under the Erasmus+ programme will offer new opportunities for actors in the youth field. The ETS will serve as a common platform for the programme and will continue supporting quality of youth work and innovative developments in training and networking.



**Pascal LEJUENE**

Head of Unit - Youth; Erasmus+  
European Commission  
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This journal provides the readers with a comprehensive overview of examples of achievements, products developed and synergies amongst the different ETS stakeholders. It raises visibility and awareness of ETS and supports exploitation of results. The ETS journal also gives some outlines of future directions of the strategy and possible implementation measures, taking into consideration the wider context of Erasmus+.

We would like to thank all actors who supported the implementation of the ETS for their engagement and contributions. Through their efforts, further steps for the development and quality assurance of youth work in Europe have been made.

Enjoy reading! I hope you find interesting aspects for further discussions within Erasmus+.

## Political framework of ETS

2009

In 2009, the EU Member States and the European Commission agreed on the [EU Strategy for Youth: Investing and Empowering \(2010-2018\)](#) in which youth work plays an important and new role: "Together with families and with other professionals, youth work can help dealing with unemployment, school failure, and social exclusion, as well as provide leisure time. It can also increase skills and support the transition from youth to adulthood. Despite being 'non-formal', youth work needs to be professionalised further. Youth work contributes to all fields of action and their identified objectives." Furthermore, "Youth work should be supported, recognized for its economic and social contribution, and professionalized. Actions by Member States and Commission within their respective spheres of competence (should be amongst others):

- Equip youth workers with professional skills and promote their validation through the appropriate European instruments such as Europass, EQF, ECVET, and Youthpass
- Develop mobility of youth workers as indicated in the Treaty of Maastricht
- Develop innovative services, pedagogies and practice of youth work."

2010

In July 2010, under the Belgium EU Presidency, the [1<sup>st</sup> European Youth Work Convention](#) took place. The event sought to connect the past, present and future thinking and practice of youth work. Over 400 participants from 50 countries took part in an intensive debate, concluded in a common [Declaration](#). Amongst other issues, the quality of practice as well as the competences, training, recognition, mobility and networking of youth workers were raised by the participants as important aspects to support quality in youth work, also tackled from the perspective of the professionalisation of the youth worker.



As a follow-up of the Convention, the [Council resolution on youth work \(2010\)](#) agreed upon by the EU Member States is to be seen as a very important political step for the definition and for the recognition of youth work at policy level, as highlighted in the [EU Strategy for Youth: Investing and Empowering \(2010-2018\)](#).

Youth work is defined as: A broad term covering a large scope of activities of a social, cultural, educational or political nature both by, with and for young people. Increasingly, such activities also include sports and services for young people. Youth work belongs to the area of 'out-of-school' education as well as specific leisure time activities, managed by professional or voluntary youth workers and youth leaders and is based on non-formal learning processes and on voluntary participation.

Amongst other issues, the [Council resolution on youth work](#) supports the development of quality in youth work by inviting the European Commission and the Member States:

- To enhance the quality of youth work, the capacity building and competence development of youth workers and youth leaders and the recognition of non-formal learning in youth work by providing learning mobility experiences for youth workers and youth leaders.
- To provide sufficient and appropriate European platforms such as databases, peer-learning activities, and conferences for the continuous exchange on innovative research, policies, approaches, practices and methods.
- To enable youth work to further develop its quality.

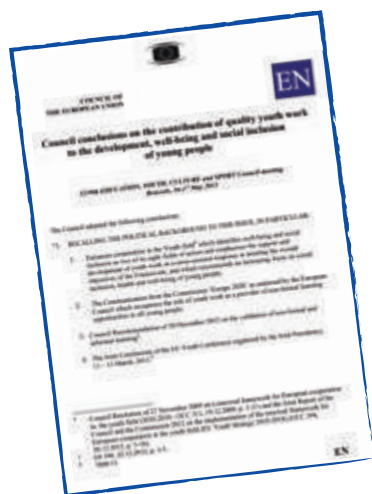


- To support the development of new strategies or enhance existing ones for the capacity building of youth workers and youth leaders and to support civil society in the implementation of appropriate forms of training for youth workers and youth leaders.
- To identify different forms of youth work, competences and methods that youth workers and youth leaders share, in order to develop strategies for enhancing the quality and recognition of youth work.
- To promote the employability of youth workers and youth leaders and their mobility through a better knowledge of their qualifications and the recognition of the skills acquired from their experiences.

# 2013

A latest milestone in the European youth policy developments, agreed upon under the Irish EU Presidency in May 2013, is the [Council conclusions on the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people](#). It acknowledges amongst other aspects that:

- Quality youth work may include appropriate assessment systems, based on self-assessment or peer-assessment, and where feasible, validated by external assessment. Such systems assist youth work organisations, programmes and activities, and can improve organisational capacity and effectiveness, and provide clarity to the public regarding the offer and impact of youth work.
- Quality systems assist youth workers in improving their practice and skills development through creating a structure and space for reflection, dialogue and action.



The Conclusions invite EU Member States and the European Commission to “encourage, through the relevant programmes, platforms and resource repositories, the European and international exchange of good practices, training, skills acquisition and peer-learning in relation to quality focused youth work.” It also led to the establishment of a Thematic Expert Group to “examine youth work quality systems in EU Member States and explore how common indicators or frameworks may be developed.”

At European level, the YiA programme (2007-2013) responded to the needs of young people. It made an important contribution to the acquisition of competences through non-formal learning as well as to the promotion of young people's participation in society. It supported the implementation of [EU Strategy for Youth: Investing and Empowering \(2010-2018\)](#) which outlines a cross-sectorial approach to youth issues with a view not only to create more and equal opportunities for all young people in education and in the labour market (the “employability dimension”) but also to promote the engagement, social inclusion and solidarity of all young people (the “diversity, participation and citizenship dimensions”).

The ETS is an important element to support the quality implementation of the past and present Erasmus+ YiA programmes, if not its overarching European umbrella for the different stakeholders active in this field. Its main focus is to contribute to the development of quality support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field as well as to the promotion of European cooperation in the youth field. The strategy brings together different stakeholders active in the field of training and networking of past and present YiA programmes and beyond, fosters synergy effects and cooperation amongst them, and carries out tailor-made projects of added value for them.

## **Quality in youth work - Professionalisation of youth workers**

Under the YiA programme, the ETS supported first and foremost the mobility possibilities for youth workers to develop competences and herewith the quality of youth work projects offered for young people. The network of the YiA NAs (National Agencies) in cooperation with the SALTO-YOUTH RCs (Resources Centres) and the EU-CoE youth partnership offered a large amount of national and European training and networking opportunities for youth worker and other actors through the Actions 4.3/3.1, Training & Networking projects and training courses. Many seminars, conferences, partnership building activities, job shadowing, etc. supported competence development, exchange of experiences, development of youth organisations and the Europeanisation of youth work.

## Support offers for youth workers by the YiA programme

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013*	Total
<b>Training &amp; Cooperation Plan of NAs</b>								
Funds used (in MioEUR)	5,630	7,475	7,335	7,948	8,545	11,071	11,162	59,166
Projects granted	714	1.115	1.395	1.405	1.801	2.061	1.975	10.466
Participants**	15.548	24.320	19.611	20.906	23.287	25.821	37.593	167.086
<b>sub-Action 4.3</b>								
Funds used (in MioEUR)	6,863	6,721	6,502	7,506	8,822	10,327	9,133	55,874
Projects granted	506	470	430	481	544	647	705	3.783
Participants	10.121	9.255	9.458	10.611	13.840	17.235	19.682	90.202
<b>sub-Action 3.1 T&amp;N</b>								
Funds used (in MioEUR)	3,104	3,483	3,610	3,193	4,525	6,626	7,991	32,532
Projects granted	174	178	189	172	241	330	389	1,682
Participants	3.408	3.672	4.087	3.615	6.520	9.285	11.694	42,281
* for 2013 the figures are preliminary (no checks made yet) and only for decentralised level ** including large scale national TCP events involving large number of participants for a shorter duration, such format was not eligible in Action 4.3 & 3.1 T&N								

Overall, ca. 147 million Euros were invested between 2007 and 2013 for youth workers training offers which were used by ca. 300.000 participants in ca. 16.000 projects carried out by NGOs, NAs and SALTO-YOUTH RCs. This is an average of ca. 490 Euros per participant or ca. 9.200 Euros per project including travel costs for participants.



To support the visibility and accessibility of the various training projects for youth workers and funded by the YiA and Erasmus + YiA programme, the SALTO-YOUTH RCs website provides a [European Training Calendar](#), managed and developed by the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC. The aim is to provide a place where youth workers / youth leaders who want to develop their competences to work with and for young people, can find European training courses, can share experiences and make contacts for common future projects.

### By March 2014

- Ca. 2.300 training offers were published in the calendar
- Ca. 36.000 of the ca. 130.000 registered users of the SALTO-YOUTH RCs website subscribed to the newsletter to be informed about new calls.
- More than 4 million searches were carried out in the calendar between 2007 and 2013.

Organisers of training courses launched in the calendar can choose between different application procedures of which one is the online application form generator offered at SALTO-YOUTH RCs website. For the courses using this feature, ca. 79.000 different applicants submitted in total ca. 88.000 online applications.

A large proportion of these training courses was developed and implemented by many different youth [work] organisations and institutions from all over Europe and the Neighbouring Partner Countries. Those courses are usually tailor-made to fit the specific needs of the staff of these organisations and tackle a wide variety of competences, themes and youngsters they work with.

The NAs Training and Cooperation Plans offered the opportunity to pilot training courses to be further developed over time in order to offer high quality standardised training courses, providing support in certain areas of the Programme. The following examples highlight some of the good practices carried out within YiA for supporting the quality of youth work and thus the competence development of youth workers:



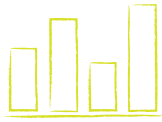
The ["Appetiser - An introductory training on how to use the YiA programme for international youth work"](#) coordinated by SALTO Training and Cooperation RC on behalf of the network of NAs was offered 29 times since 2004, reaching in total ca. 700 youth workers from all over Europe. The course brought together practitioners who work locally with young people across Europe, in order to give them a first strong positive experience of international youth work and to introduce the possibilities of working in an international setting, making use of the YiA programme. The large majority of the participants were confident after the course to be able to now start implementing international youth projects.



The [“Power of Non Formal Education”](#) was a training course offered 15 times since 2009 by the network of NAs, involving ca. 350 youth workers and teachers from all over Europe. The course aims at improving the quality impact of Non Formal Education (NFE) in youth work, its principles as well as methods to empower young people as real actors of the society (from local to European level). Participants of the training course are either coming from countries with an extensive experience in using NFL or from countries where that educational approach is in early development stage.

The course stimulates participants to, for example, reflect about the power of non-formal education by experimenting different kind of non-formal educational methods and to analyse the role and reception of NFE in different countries.

In 2007, taking into consideration the potential of YiA's influence on the cooperation with the Programme's neighbouring partner country regions on youth policy development and recognition of non formal learning, the regional [SALTO Euromed, South East Europe and Eastern Europe and Caucasus RCs](#) together with European Commission, and the French NA organised a seminar “Let's Meet our Neighbours and the World”. This seminar was kick-off for the long-term [“Let's strategy”](#) which supported the sustainable and quality cooperation of youth organisations from YiA programme countries and neighbouring partner countries and the development of youth workers working in and with the neighbouring countries.



As part of the “[Let’s strategy](#)” the [evaluation study was carried out by the three regional SALTO-YOUTH RCs](#). It showed that the courses and conferences organised, as well as the publications produced, were very important for the development of quality in YiA projects and for the youth work development in many EU Member States and Neighbouring Partner Country regions. The overall aim of the evaluation was to assess the impact of the YiA programme in the 3 regions (EuroMed, SEE and EECA). It also focused on the specific relevance of cooperation for project beneficiaries based in Programme countries with partners from the region. It thereby supplements the existing YiA evaluation studies which focused mainly on the Programme’s relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability in the Programme countries. The specific objectives of the evaluation were to provide an assessment of the impact of the YiA programme with: a particular focus on possible effects on the organisational, youth work and youth policy level; to highlight benefits and challenges of cooperation; and to provide an assessment of sustainability of possible positive effects of the YiA programme. Considering the outcomes of the evaluation, it seems that the YiA programme has influenced the youth field mainly indirectly through capacity building of young people, youth workers and organisations, and that these improvements had a trickling effect on other organisations and subsequently the youth field in general. Although it might not be the main impact from the point of view of the partners interviewed, implementing YiA in Neighbouring Partner Country regions had an effect on the development of youth work and the methods applied therein.

Being thematic priorities of the YiA programme, the [SALTO Inclusion, Cultural Diversity and Participation RCs](#) supported the network of NAs in carrying out a lot of training courses, seminars and conferences for thousands of youth workers for contact making and the development of competences in these thematic areas. As one example amongst many and as part of SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion RC’s strategy to combat youth unemployment, the [Bridges to Work Conference](#) was organised in October 2011, linking the youth (work) practice and the role of youth workers with the challenges of youth employment and the promotion of entrepreneurship.





In addition to the various training offers developed and implemented within the YiA programme, many publications providing support for youth workers' competence development were produced by various stakeholders:

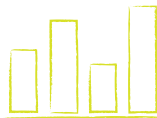
- The network of NAs produced mainly publications in national languages which can be found at NAs' websites.
- Throughout the YiA programme, three of the [12 T-Kits \(Training-Kits\)](#) were produced by the EU-CoE youth partnership, translated in several languages with the support of many stakeholders.
- The network of SALTO-YOUTH RCs developed various publications supporting competence development of youth workers for different subjects related to the YiA programme implementation, all available at the [SALTO-YOUTH RCs Publication website](#).

By January 2014 more than 1200 tools for learning developed and used in youth projects can be found in the [SALTO-YOUTH RCs Toolbox](#). The Toolbox is managed and developed by the SALTO EuroMed RC. Ca. 1.1 million searches were carried out in the Toolbox since 2007.



Since 2006, the [Tool Fair](#) took place 8 times, offering in total almost 1.000 youth workers the chance to run a workshop and share tools for learning with international colleagues as well as to reflect on tools, give and receive feedback and pave the way for their transferability and further development. During the Tool Fair 2013 in Greece a new process for the recognition of the competences of youth workers and trainers was implemented, using Youthpass for describing the competence development of the presenters of educational tools. Since 2012, the Toolbox, the Tool Fairs and a newsletter on educational tools were gathered together and are being further developed under the [Tools for Learning Strategy](#).

In 2011, the Steering Group of the ETS agreed on developing two sets of competences: for youth trainers and for youth workers working at international level and to support young people in their learning mobility projects; seen as a contribution from the YiA programme for the development of youth trainers/workers competences and thus quality in (European) youth projects. Defining the set of competences aims at supporting youth trainers and youth workers to develop these specific competences and training providers and the network of NAs and SALTO-YOUTH RCs in developing tailor-made training courses and other support measures.



In 2012, on behalf of the EU-CoE youth partnership, Maria Carmen Pantea carried out the study ["Mapping of competences needed by youth workers to support young people in international learning mobility projects"](#) and it became clear that the object of the study is a "very specialised field which attracted little studies, and largely based on anecdotal evidence."

As a consequence, the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC with the support of Gisele Evrard and Arturas Deltuva supported by quality criteria and indicators and a manual (currently under development) developed the already mentioned 'set of competences for trainers working at international level'. A draft proposal was presented at the end of 2013; after a further consultation with experts the whole competence model will be finalised end of 2014.

The formal education sector at national level is an additional and important provider to train youth workers – not offered in all European countries and not only in youth work studies, but often in combination with social or community studies. With the purpose of motivating and inspiring training providers in the field of non-formal education, as well as higher and secondary education and vocational training to establish cooperation projects to train youth workers, the ETS Steering Group launched a mapping exercise of good practice cooperation projects between youth work actors and formal education and vocational training sector.



The brochure ["Reinforcing links - Experiences of cooperation between the formal and non-formal sector in training youth workers"](#) (written by Reet Kost – Head of the Estonian Youth in Action National Agency, Miguel Ángel García López – free lance trainer & writer and Udo Teichmann – Project officer SALTO Training and Cooperation RC) explores through 10 experiences from 10 different countries the key potentialities and achievements of that cooperation.

Anticipating the cross sectorial approach of Erasmus+ from 2014 onward, Archimedes - the Estonian, Slovakian and UKYiA NAs - organised the seminar ["We don't need no education! Or do we...?"](#), Tallinn, 14.-17 Oct 13. While considering the challenges of working in the youth field and exploring how education and training can help to address these challenges, the qualitative lessons of the experiences described in the ["Reinforcing links"](#) brochure served as inspiration for the participants of the seminar. Participants contributed to and learnt from the diversity of educational practices supporting quality in the youth field - from formal to non-formal education settings at their various levels.



## Steps for further development

- [Erasmus+ YiA \(2014-2020\)](#) offers: in Key Action 1 support for the mobility of youth workers; in Key Action 2 Strategic Partnership projects; for the network of NAs the “Transnational Cooperation Activities” (formerly Training and Cooperation Plan – TCP, now TCA) allows NAs to support quality development of youth work within Erasmus+ and beyond. The ETS could continue to support the monitoring and development of these instruments to train youth workers and training providers. Where appropriate the ETS could also continue to identify, develop, test and implement suitable European level instruments in cooperation with various stakeholders.
- The set of competences for youth workers could be better linked to Youthpass, the 8 Key competences for lifelong learning, the European/National Qualification Frameworks, Europass and ESCO (European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations). Therefore there might be a need to identify and explain quality criteria and indicators. To what extent it will be also possible to describe the competences related to the levels of EQF/NQFs needs to be discussed. In the long run this would stimulate the debate on formal recognition of youth workers as a profession/occupational profile if not exist already in certain countries (in addition to profiles of trainers).
- Consequently, a new strategic cooperation within the network of NAs could be started, offering tailor-made courses and other support measures for youth workers to develop specific competences needed to work internationally and to support young people in their learning mobility projects.
- Cooperation and synergies with the ongoing process revision of the [European Portfolio for youth leaders and youth workers offered by the Council of Europe](#) should be considered.

- Being highlighted by the Programme Guide 2014, Key Action 2 – Strategic Partnerships - of the Erasmus+ YIA programme can be an excellent space to explore possibilities of cross sector cooperation to train youth workers. There are many possible future directions which could be taken to carry on with the promotion of Cross Education Sector cooperation to train youth workers: [the brochure of good cooperation practices](#) could be extended (quantitatively and qualitatively); debates could be promoted on the existing cooperation experiences to overcome the identified obstacles; cooperation could be extended to other youth policy areas.

After all these achievements made at European level one of the main challenges is to link the developments and debates at European level to the EU Member States level and each of their strategies to train youth workers:

- The [EU Strategy for Youth: Investing and Empowering](#) will end in 2018. A revision of the strategy might start in 2016, allowing new views on the subject of quality in youth work and professionalisation of youth workers across the EU Member States.
- Both the [Council resolution on youth work](#) and the [Council conclusions on the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people](#) might allow further steps in the quality development of youth work during the coming years. An evaluation / summing up exercise of the results achieved at EU Member State level as well as at European level could be considered; maybe as part of the foreseen EU Youth Report under the EU Youth Strategy.
- Since the [1<sup>st</sup> European Youth Work Convention](#) organised under the Belgian EU Presidency in 2010 managed to give powerful impetus to develop youth work in Europe; first reflections in the above proposed directions could be on the agenda of 2nd European Youth Work Convention, taking place under the Belgian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe in April 2015

## Professionalisation of trainers in the youth field



Within the ETS one of the first milestones towards the professionalisation of trainers in the youth field was the [European stakeholders meeting on European-level Training of/for Trainers](#). It was organised in Budapest, Hungary, in June 2007 by the EU-CoE youth partnership in cooperation with the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC for 30 trainers and institutional representatives. Taking as starting point a '[mapping exercise](#)' of [European-level training/of for trainers](#) carried out by Miguel Angel García López, participants representing different stakeholders exchanged their motivation and strategies to train trainers (investigation and stock-taking of what exists already in the field, in terms of aims, objectives, target group, format, methodology, curriculum, etc.). The participants managed to get an overview of developments made in the field, shared experiences and used the meeting as starting point for further initiatives.



As an important follow-up and fundamental work after the Budapest meeting, two studies were carried out by the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC to further explore different aspects of trainers' competence development:

- The study on the [“Quality in non-formal education and training in the field of European youth work”](#) by Helmut Fennes and Hendrik Otten (2008)
- The study on the [“The eight key competencies for lifelong learning: An appropriate framework within which to develop the competence of trainers on the field of European youth work or just plain politics?”](#) by Hendrik Otten and Yael Ohana (2009)

Both studies served as a basis for the further debate in the topic of qualification and recognition of trainers in the field of European youth work and supported the different organisers of training of and for trainers at European and national level.

Between 2007 and 2013, different ETS stakeholders organised European level training of trainer courses incorporating renewed frameworks of competences. Some examples are:

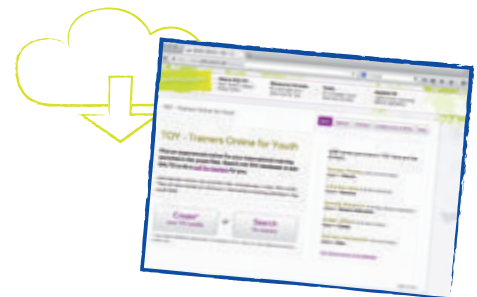


- [TALE - Trainers for Active Learning in Europe](#): At above mentioned stakeholder meeting in June 2007, the European Commission and the Council of Europe decided to develop together a new long-term Training Course for Trainers to train 30 trainers. The course was carried out by the EU-CoE youth partnership in cooperation with the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC between 2008 and 2010. During the preparation phase, the two European institutions agreed on a set of competences to be tested during TALE.



- [ToT - Training of Trainers](#) (ToT): The Training of Trainers for European YiA Projects organised by the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC on behalf of the YiA NAs network since 1999 took place 13 times with in total ca. 300 participants, coming nowadays mainly from national YiA NAs trainer pools. The network of YiA NAs decided to continue using ToT as main European level training of trainers for Erasmus+ YiA to develop the competences of their NAs trainers' pool members. The call for ToT 2014-2015 was launched in spring 2014; this course edition fully incorporates the set of competences developed under ETS.
- [TOTEM - Training of Trainers in EuroMed](#) supported the growing needs and expectations of the EuroMed programme and particularly the increasing need for the competent trainers who could support, facilitate and drive youth workers with this ever-changing geopolitical context. Following the development of a set of competences for trainers as part of the ETS and in the frame of the evaluation process of TOTEM, the specificities of trainers' competences in EuroMed were explored. The results of this exploration were published in the report "[Training of Trainers in EuroMed2](#)".

Since 2004, the [TOY - Trainers Online in Youth](#) acts as consolidated European trainers' database. TOY has been constantly incorporating new competences and quality criteria following the quality development in this area. TOY is managed and developed by the SALTO Inclusion RC. In January 2014, 380 trainers were registered in TOY. The online trainers received from 2007 to 2013 calls for 502 trainer positions on a variety of courses and publications. Website visitors carried out ca 1 million searches in TOY between 2007 and 2013.



In 2011 the Steering Group of the ETS requested Rita Bergstein from the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC to coordinate the development of a set of competences for trainers working at international level in the youth field. The following aims were agreed on:

- to enhance quality training focusing on the ones who provide training in the youth field namely trainers, or on those in charge of organising non formal education training activities namely institutions and organisations;
- to provide a common reference when developing training courses for trainers when looking for further advanced training.

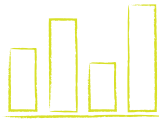
Considering the dynamic youth field being closely connected to societal development at large, a set of trainers' competences is work in progress. However, after desk research (on currently used competences frameworks and training of trainers courses) and consultations with stakeholders, the Steering Group of the ETS agreed on a [Set of Trainer Competences](#) ordered in 6 competence areas:



- Understand and facilitate individual and group learning processes
- Learning to learn
- Design educational programmes
- Cooperate successfully in teams
- Communicate meaningfully with others
- Intercultural competence

Hence, the “Set of competences for trainers working at international level” consists of the six presented competence areas with competences listed underneath. In order to make these competences operational and start working with them in-depth and in practise, each competence is presented with quality criteria and indicators which makes it possible to go step by step and make them more applicable. A Manual on how to use this overall competence model is currently being developed.

Since 2012, the network of NAs and SALTO-YOUTH RCs increased the cooperation about working with their trainer pools. In 2012 and 2013, the network organised three meetings of responsible staff of NAs/SALTO-YOUTH RCs together with trainer pool representatives to share and learn from each other on how different pools are functioning and how the quality development of the pools and trainers involved is supported.



In 2013 and beginning of 2014 a study was carried out with quantitative and qualitative parts asking responsible NA/SALTO-YOUTH RCs staff and members of Pools of trainers about the quality implementation and functioning of the pools. First results proved that there was already high quality implementation. The study will be launched mid 2014 with further recommendations for working with trainer pools.



Since 2013, smaller networks of NAs and SALTO-YOUTH RCs with similar interest and needs are establishing cooperation to develop support measures with regards to the development of trainer competences. One network consists of NAs from Austria, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Poland, the United Kingdom and the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC, which agreed to work on a long-term partnership in order to test and further develop the ETS “Set of competences for trainers working at international level” and related criteria, indicators and assessment instruments and to offer on a regular basic training for trainers and every 2 years a European conference for trainers: [Bridges for Trainers](#).

## Steps for further development

- The “Set of competences for trainers working at international level”, its supporting quality criteria and indicators and the Manual should be disseminated to the broader public, inviting different stakeholders to apply the developments in their various areas of work with trainers, and motivating trainers to use it for personal development.
- The “Set of competences for trainers working at international level” should be linked more to Youthpass, the 8 Key competences for lifelong learning, the European/National Qualification Frameworks, Europass and ESCO (European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations) to be able to identify and explain quality criteria and indicators. To what extent it will be also possible to describe the competences related to the levels of EQF/NQFs needs to be discussed. In the long run this would stimulate the debate on formal recognition of trainer as a profession/occupational profile.
- Other possible developments could be to develop (external) assessment and validation of competences – in the context Youthpass till 2020 and to explore the possible links to the European agenda of adult education development.



From 8-10 December 2014, the NAs of Austria, Germany, Ireland, Poland, UK in cooperation with the SALTO-YOUTH T&C RC will organise the first [Bridges for Trainers](#) conference in Bonn, Germany to discuss and explore with a group of ca. 150 experts the current development and suitable next steps to be taken in this area during the coming years.

## Recognition of achievements of youth work



At the beginning of 2011 the EU-CoE youth partnership, in cooperation with the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC and the European Youth Forum published the [Pathways paper 2.0](#) aiming for better recognition of non-formal learning/education and of youth work in Europe. Based on the first version published in 2004 the revised version provides a new vision and an outline on how to sustain and to foster the progress made until today and, even more, to go beyond the achievements made so far in the recognition of youth work. It also includes 10 important strategic elements which need full attention and engagement during the coming years.

[The symposium on Recognition of Non-formal learning and youth work](#), organised by the EU-CoE youth partnership in co-operation with JUGEND für Europa - the German NA of the YiA programme, the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC and the European Youth Forum in November 2011 in Strasbourg, France carried on the agenda of recognition. More than 100 participants developed a common statement and plan of action, based on the strategic elements and needs identified in the Pathway Paper 2.0. The results of the Symposium are also gathered under the publication [“Getting There”](#). Within the statement and action plan, the items of quality assurance and development of youth work are mentioned and thus the competences of youth workers and trainers are identified as very relevant in future strategies. [The Expert Group on the recognition of youth work and non-formal learning](#) follows up the results of the Symposium and the implementation of its Plan of Action, and the Pathways paper 2.0.





In December 2012, the [Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning](#) was adopted, acknowledging the important role of non-formal learning and the youth field as an important environment for young people and those working with and for young people to develop their competences. In particular the conclusion acknowledges Youthpass as a recognition tool for participants in projects funded by the YiA programme. Employers, youth organisations and civil society organisations should promote and facilitate the identification and documentation of learning outcomes “acquired at work or in voluntary activities, using relevant Union transparency tools such as those developed under the Europass framework and Youthpass.” Consequently Youthpass became an official recognised recognition instrument of the programme Erasmus+ YiA (2014-2020)

## Youthpass certificates

[Youthpass](#) was launched in 2007 and aims at supporting the reflection upon the personal non-formal learning process, it supports active European Citizenship, strengthens the social recognition of youth work and promotes the employability of young people and youth worker.

In cooperation with the Steering Group of the ETS and the Youthpass Advisory Group, the SALTO- Training and Cooperation RC developed during the YiA programme (2007-2013) Youthpass certificates for participants of YiA Training and Networking projects carried out by project promoters or the network of YiA NAs and SALTO-YOUTH RCs. Youthpass for trainings was offered in 2009, Youthpass for other formats eligible under Training and Networking projects was introduced in 2012. Overall statistical data of the use of Youthpass can be found at [www.youthpass.eu/en/youthpass/statistics/](http://www.youthpass.eu/en/youthpass/statistics/). By March 2014, 3253 organisations issued 135182 Youthpass certificates for youth workers and youth leaders for 6343 YiA Training and Networking projects. Just for your curiosity, the overall numbers of the Youthpass certificates issued for all projects so far is (318 027). The Youthpass certificates were mainly issued in English, although some participants also took advantage of the option to receive them in other languages.



[The Youthpass Impact Study](#) carried out by the European Commission in 2012 and 2013 showed that Youthpass helps to communicate the importance of non-formal learning and increases the usefulness of the project for participants (stated by 80% of YiA participants). Participants conclude as well that Youthpass fosters the individual recognition of non-formal and informal learning by offering support to project participants and organisers in releasing the full learning potential in international non-formal learning activities. Youth organisations stated that the quality of their work was increased through the structured reflection process that Youthpass offered during the projects and herewith the recognition of the project and youth work as such could be raised. Further detailed information can be learned by watching the [Youthpass Impact Study video](#).



Within the study it was proved that youth workers and trainers need to assist young people in identifying and describing their learning. The role of qualified youth worker, youth leader and trainer is essential in the Youthpass process.

## Youthpass training courses

Within the development and implementation of Youthpass in the YiA programme, many training courses for different target groups were implemented. The main aim of the international Youthpass training courses was to train youth workers and trainers, who are planning to integrate Youthpass in their projects, on the issue of recognition of non-formal learning in general and on the reflection of learning process and outcomes in specific project types. There were specific training courses for specific actions and target groups of the YiA programme such as:

- [“Youthpass, yes we train”](#) – a specific training course for youth workers and youth leaders implementing projects on Action 4.3 and 3.1 (training & networking) in the YiA programme
- [“Competences for all”](#) - a specific training course format (several editions between 2011 and 2013) for youth workers and youth leaders working directly with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.



## Youthpass publications



Besides training courses, Youthpass publications were also developed and disseminated, supporting youth workers and trainers in the understanding and implementation of the Youthpass concept, such as:



[Youthpass unfolded](#) - Practical tips and hands-(written by Darko Markovic - Trainer, coach, psychologist and psychodrama therapist, Juan Ratto-Nielsen - freelance trainer and coordinator of INTER-ACCION and Paul Kloosterman - freelance trainer and writer) on methods for youth workers and youth leaders for making the most of the Youthpass process.



[Unlocking Doors to Recognition](#) - Handbook for setting up strategies for the better recognition of youth work and non-formal education in different contexts.

The SALTO Training and Cooperation RC offers an up-to-date document around developments within recognition of non-formal learning and youth work: [At a glance: Recognition of youth work and non-formal and informal learning within the field of youth](#). It is published at the SALTO-YOUTH RCs website for the further use of actors within the youth field. Readers are invited to support updating and completing the document and to promote its usage.

## Steps for further development

- Youthpass certificates for youth workers and trainers in respective actions need to be revised for use in Erasmus+ YiA.
- Currently many youth workers and trainers own several Youthpass certificates for the different projects they participated in. A further developed concept could allow listing youth workers and trainers projects in one compiled Youthpass. This might include competence development gained through leading certain longer term/multi-measure projects.
- It might be interesting to link and cross fertilise the further developments of Youthpass with the [European Qualification Framework](#) and with the development of [Europass](#).
- Developing cooperation with the formal education sector might be interesting to further explore the development and usage of Youthpass, such as within the formal education sector to train youth workers or social workers, or by linking competence and skill development to curricula.
- Using the Youthpass concept beyond those projects funded by the EU youth programmes to support recognition of competences of youth workers and trainers is under testing. Additionally, there are developments in some Member States to develop Youthpass further and use the concept and the content as official instrument of recognition of non-formal learning in youth work at the national level.

## Knowledge about training and youth workers in YiA

The Steering Group of the ETS gathered data from researches and studies in the youth field carried out by different actors. In general the focus is on young people themselves, the impact of youth work on young people, and in some cases on youth workers and other experts in the youth field working with and for young people.

It was therefore challenging to gather results of researches and studies in the development of strategies and projects supporting the competence development of youth workers through training and thus the quality development of youth work. Nevertheless, some very relevant findings could be identified within European level studies. It is worth to make them visible, underlining the qualitative level of training offered within the YiA Programme.

### European Commission's YiA monitoring

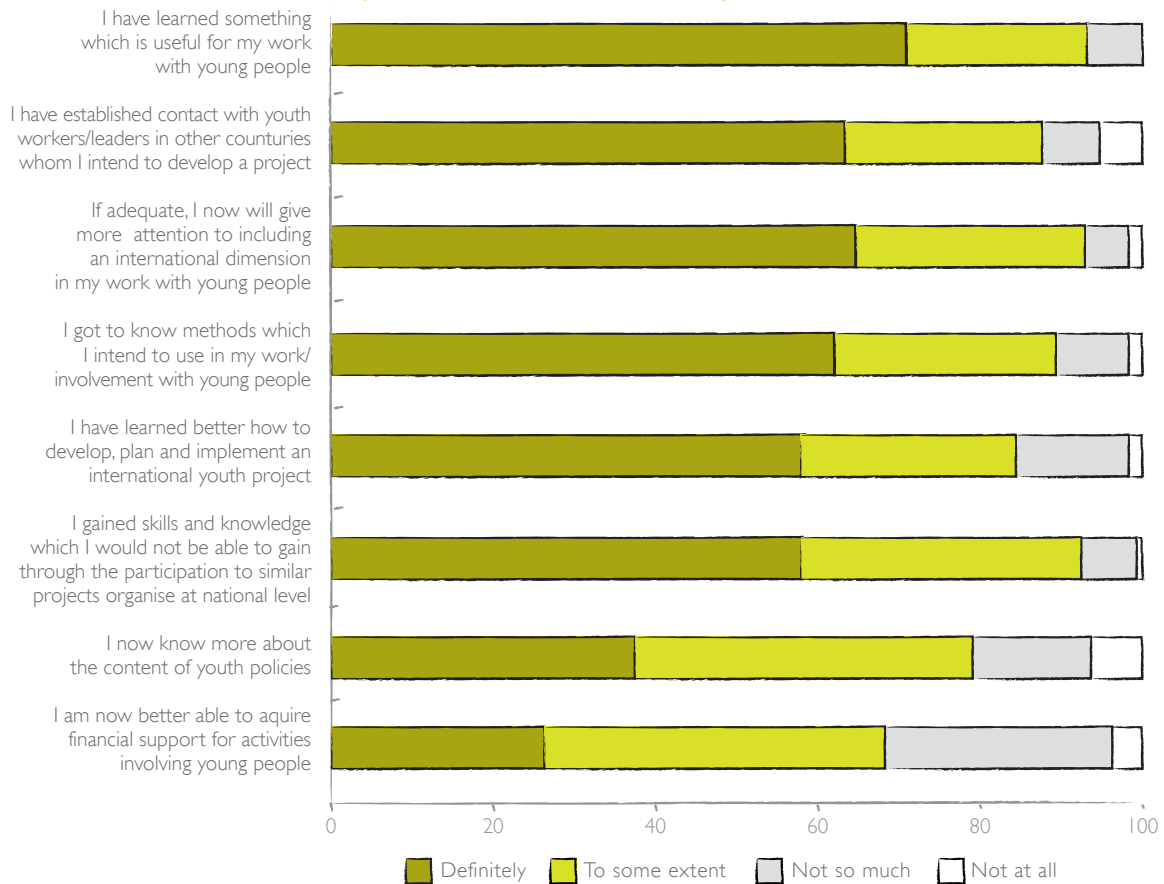
The European Commission carried out a [YiA 2011 survey](#) amongst youth worker participants supported by the YiA programme, mainly in Training & Networking projects in Action 4.3 and 3.1 as well as projects within the Training and Cooperation Plans of NAs.



Certain results from the survey give an impression on the usefulness of participating in trainings funded by YiA:

## Impact on youth workers

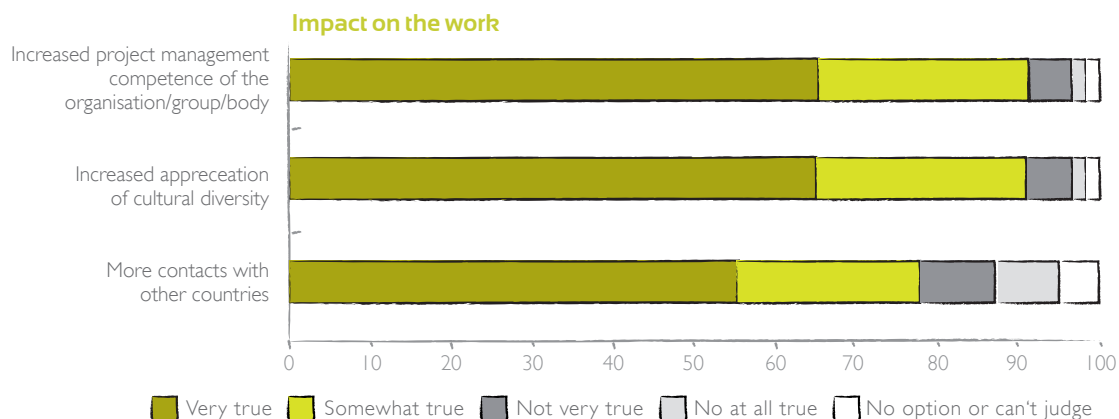
### Impact on work/involvement in the youth field



- definitely: 77%
  - to some extent: 18%
- "As an individual, I have become more aware of how important foreign language skills are for my personal and professional development"
- definitely: 56%
  - to some extent: 33%
- "As an individual, I have become more aware of common European values (e.g. human rights, democracy, peace, tolerance, gender equality etc.)"
- definitely: 94%
  - to some extent: 6%
- "I would recommend participation in a similar project to other youth workers"

Also the benefit for youth organisations developing and implementing projects funded by YiA are promising:

### Impact on youth organisations



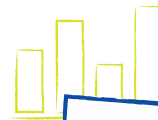
- very true: 57%
  - somewhat true: 32%
- "The project was perceived as enrichment by the local environment/community"
- definitely: 83%
  - to some extent: 14%
- "My organisation/group/body plans to participate in a similar project in the next years"

## Research-based Analysis of NA Network of YiA

The [Research-based Analysis and monitoring of YiA Network](#) (RAY Network) involved by January 2014 the NAs and their research partners from 16 countries: Austria, Belgium (Flemish-speaking community), Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and Turkey. Supported by the researchers, the NAs implement national research-based analysis of the impact of YiA.



In 2012, a [Transnational Analysis](#) was made available with the main findings of the analysis and proved the huge impact of YiA / ETS on the development of youth work in Europe.



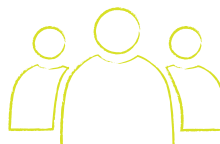
The main conclusions of this analysis are:

- The involvement in YiA projects contributes to the development of citizenship competences in a broad sense, in particular interpersonal, social, intercultural and foreign language competences of both participants and project leaders.
- The participation in YiA projects contributes to the development of all key competences for lifelong learning.
- YiA projects also have an effect on the development of the organisations, groups and bodies involved, thus contributing to the creation of 'learning organisations'.
- The involvement in YiA projects stimulated both participants and project leaders to consider or concretely plan further educational activities and their professional development. Furthermore, a large majority of participants and project leaders believe that their job opportunities have increased to some extent



- A large proportion of project leaders report a relatively high educational achievement and share a European identity. Many of them are involved in YiA projects on a voluntary basis, which indicates that they are highly motivated.

The Conference ["International youth work and mobility as learning contexts: Research evidence for policy and practice"](#) took place in September 2013 in Vienna, organised by Interkulturelles Zentrum, the Austrian YiA NA. The research findings of the network were presented as a starting point for an informed discourse for youth work practice and youth policy development and to start a research strategy and agenda for Erasmus+ YiA 2014 to 2020.



## The value of youth work in the European Union

In February 2014 the Commission launched the Study ["Working with young people: the value of youth work in the European Union"](#), which aims at improving our understanding of socio-economic relevance and the visibility of the youth work sector in the EU. The chapter devoted to youth workers maps in a very comprehensive way their different profiles, educational pathways, qualifications and competences and level of professionalization in the different Member States. Beside others aspects, the summary of this chapter concludes:



“...The exact population of youth workers in the EU remains unknown, though estimates show that the number of volunteers greatly outweighs the number of paid youth workers in the sector. Calculations on the basis of a select number of countries in the EU estimate over 1.7 million youth workers with this figure likely to be higher for the whole EU. Fundamentally, youth workers typically carry out the same roles and functions regardless of their status as volunteer or paid.

The status of youth workers is increasingly becoming understood as a distinct profession but professionalism is not only about formal qualifications. Volunteer youth workers also integrate a professional approach to their work with young people. Youth workers are often qualified and/or specifically trained to carry out the activities they are involved with. Whilst there is evidence of some government support through training opportunities, recognition and validation of learning for youth workers, most commonly it is the youth work organisations themselves which are active in offering training or development opportunities for youth workers.

Given the prevalence of in-house training, there is a need for greater external recognition of youth workers skills and competences, based on quality criteria against which skills and competences can be recognised. There are also some initiatives for clarification of common minimum competence standards for youth workers across the different organisations and roles. **It is equally important to support youth workers as it is to support young people involved in youth work.** A lack of adequate support in combination with the pressures on the sector can discourage those who are working with young people and, in some cases, lead to high turnover. This has the potential to damage the established relationships between youth workers and young people which are fundamental to successful practice. Therefore, support for youth workers (paid and voluntary) to recognise the experience, professionalism and contribution they bring to their work with young people is an important identifiable need.”

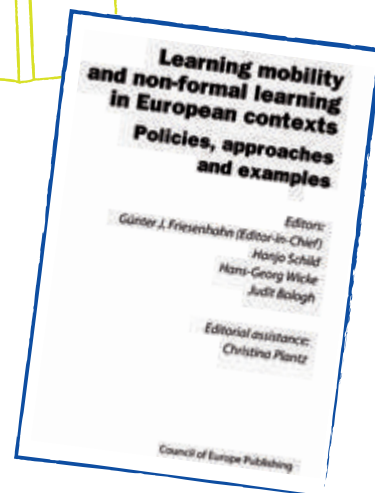
## European Platform on Learning Mobility in the youth field

An additional interesting European level development is the [European Platform on Learning Mobility in the youth field](#). The platform explores on the learning mobility of 13 to 35-year old and of practitioners in the youth field. It is a space for exchange and cooperation of researchers, policy makers and practitioners within Europe. By practitioners the platform means programme staff, trainers and consultants, youth workers and other multipliers in the youth field. The platform focuses on non-formal learning with links to informal learning as well as to formal education.



The 1st European conference [“Mobility Spaces, Learning Spaces - Linking Policy, Research and Practice”](#) took place in March 2013 in Berlin and was the starting point for a sustainable dialogue.

The publication [“Learning mobility and non-formal learning in European contexts – Policies, approaches and examples”](#), published by the EU-CoE youth partnership in May 2013 with the aim to better know and understand the different dimensions of learning mobility in the youth field: historical developments, the political framework, concepts and approaches concerning mobility and learning, contributed to the debates of the conference participants.



## Steps for further development

Adequate financial resources would be needed for the European Training Strategy 2014-2020 to undertake its own research activities in a relevant and meaningful way.

However, the following initiatives might be of interest for the European Training Strategy:

- The exploration of the quality of learning mobility projects for youth workers and their trainers, and to learn what this means for the design of training offers to develop competences of youth workers and trainer done by the [European Platform on Learning Mobility in the youth field](#).
- A closer cooperation between the ETS and the [Research-based Analysis and monitoring of YiA Network](#) might allow developing special RAY surveys throughout 2014-2020 understanding better the impact of training for youth workers and trainers provided within Erasmus+ YiA.
- For Key Action 1, 2 and TCA, it would be beneficial for the qualitative development of training funded by Erasmus+ YiA in case Erasmus+ monitoring / mid-term evaluation activities carried out by the European Commission would consider a special focus on the impact of projects for youth workers
- The [European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy \(EKCYP\)](#), developed in the framework of the EU-CoE youth partnership, might well support a certain coordination function in the ongoing mapping of relevant up-to date knowledge about training strategies for youth worker applied in EU Member States and beyond.
- At an even larger scientific frame the European Commission could reflect on using a potential [Seven Framework programme](#) bundling all the research-related EU initiatives together under a common roof and providing resources to implement studies on the impact and quality of youth work and the competence development of actors in the youth field.

## Management of the European Training Strategy

As part of the renewed ETS of YiA from 2011, the management structure of the strategy was further developed, too:

- The SALTO Training and Cooperation RC was nominated in 2011 to support the European Commission to ensure continuity and stability of the actions of the ETS. This is with a view to achieve better results and to encourage and support the cooperation within and between the different ETS partners.
- A European Training Strategy Steering Group (ETS SG) was established representing the different partners in the field of Training and Networking within YiA. The Steering Group was chaired by the Directorate General for Education and Culture, Unit D.1 – Youth. The meetings were managed by SALTO Training and Cooperation RC.

Between 2011 and 2013, the ETS SG members met 4 times to:



- Support the European Commission in defining the priorities and general orientation of the ETS;
- Endorse action plans, procedures and tools for the implementation of the ETS;
- Monitor the overall implementation of the ETS;
- Ensure coordination with and information transfer from and to the different ETS stakeholders;
- Develop strategies and measures for the overall dissemination and exploitation of ETS results.

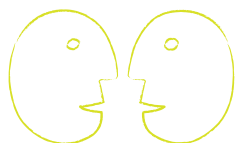
The SG was composed of:

- The Unit D.1 – Youth in DG Education, Audiovisual and Culture (EAC)
- The EAC Executive Agency in charge of the decentralised strand of Training and Networking within Action 4.3 and 3.1.
- The network of NAs represented in the Steering Group by:
  - The Coordination Group of NAs, representing the network of heads of NAs during the bi-annual Business Meetings for heads of NAs;
  - The Knowledge Management and Staff Training (KMST) Working Group with which the European Commission, NAs and SALTO-YOUTH RCs developed the common European strategy to train NA and SALTO-YOUTH RCs staff;
  - The Training and Cooperation Plan (TCP) Working Group composed by NATCP officers and SALTO-YOUTH RCs staff to support the European development and implementation of the decentralised TCP of NAs; and
  - The Youthpass Advisory Group which supported the European Commission and the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC in the development and implementation of Youthpass.
- The network of SALTO-YOUTH RCs as well
- The EU-CoE youth partnership secretariat
- Other experts in the youth field were invited to support certain projects with inputs and contributions. In cooperation with the network of NAs, a group of expert trainers were nominated to support the ETS SG on request in certain activities carried out under the ETS: Andreas Karsten (Germany), Sakis Krezios (Greece), Gisele Evrard Markovic (Belgium), Gulesin Nemutlu Unal (Turkey), Ekaterina Sherer (Russia), Laimonas Ragauskas (Lithuania), Mieke Neven McMahon (Ireland), Miguel Angel Garcia Lopez (Spain), Paola Bortini (Italy), Paul Kloosterman (Netherlands), and Yael Ohana (Ireland).

## Knowledge Management and Staff Training Strategy

Although not being explicitly implemented as management structure, but being an important pillar of ETS, the Knowledge Management and Staff Training (KMST) Strategy should be mentioned under this chapter as very important contribution to the success of the objectives of ETS.

The network of NAs employed roughly 600 staff to develop and implement the YiA programme in the Member States other Programme Countries and Neighbouring Partner Country regions. Between 2007 and 2013, the European Commission and the network of NAs agreed to implement per year ca. 10-15 European level training courses for NAs staff, very often in cooperation with certain SALTO-YOUTH RCs, in order to ensure a qualitative and coherent implementation of the Programme. The trainings supported for example the development of certain Actions and YiA priority themes and often trained NA staff how to consult and advise beneficiaries to use YiA in a qualitative way - and thus support quality of youth work through quality in YiA projects.



Quality standards for NAs staff events were developed by the KMST WG and applied by the diverse organisers of KMST trainings. An impact survey carried out in 2012 showed the additional value of European level training of NAs staff, as a complement to training at national level.

As a standard and where appropriate, the NA staff trainings were also used to develop common European level training strategies and courses for youth workers across Europe and beyond within the NAs TCPs. Participants of these courses learned: to work internationally; how to use certain Actions of YiA in their work with young people, and to reflect on support through YiA projects for youth policy priority themes. Although without available scientific proof, but looking at the dynamic increase of training offers provided by the network of NAs and SALTO-YOUTH RCs under TCP between 2007 and 2013, the logical connection can be made that through the development of competences of NAs staff within the KMST strategy, the quality of training offers for youth workers were very positively affected.

## Steps for further development

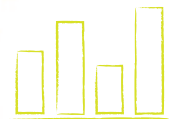
- The implementation of ETS between 2014 and 2020 should be supported by a well-designed management system. New challenges offered by Erasmus+ need to be embedded such as supporting Key Action 2 - Strategic Partnership projects and Key Action 3, offering much more prominent role of youth policy development in Europe in the Programme.
- The cross education sector approach of Erasmus+ needs to be reflected and considered in a proper management structure of ETS for Erasmus+ YiA, seeking for potential synergy effects with the other educational sectors supporting the quality assurance and development of youth work in Europe.
- The new challenges, as well as the experiences made since 2011, require reflections on the composition and mandate of a revised Steering Group and its partners being represented in it. Also a reflection is needed on the role, tasks and resources of SALTO Training and Cooperation RC, being in the past 3 years the coordination body for the ETS SG, and more or less the only body with resources available to carry out common ETS projects agreed by the ETS SG.
- And last but not least, the new challenges within Erasmus+ require continued implementation of tailor-made European NA staff trainings including supporting NA cooperation to develop common strategies and projects offering training for youth workers in the Members States and with the Neighbouring Partner Countries. For the start of Erasmus+ a special focus might be needed for a new strong link between Erasmus+ YiA and the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018.



Expert meeting



Web site



Study



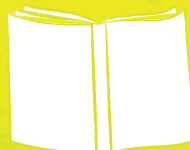
Training course



Big event



Political document



Publication

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Erasmus+