

Youth Mobility Programmes and its compatibility with Europe 2020 strategy

Diploma Thesis

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Abstract

MIKŠÍKOVÁ, Tereza. *Youth Mobility Programmes and its compatibility with Europe 2020 strategy*. Diploma thesis. Brno: Mendel University, 2015.

The objective of this thesis is to investigate if youth mobility programmes, such as Youth Exchanges, are compatible with Europe 2020 strategy and if they fulfil its aims. Youth Exchanges were previously classified under Youth in Action Programme, but since 2013 they are classified under Erasmus+ Programme. Theoretical part describes European strategies and these programmes while the practical part offers the analysis of financial and statistical data and results of a survey gathered between organizations running Youth Exchanges.

Keywords

Europe 2020 strategy, Youth in Action Programme, Erasmus+ Programme, Youth Exchanges, quota sampling

Abstrakt

MIKŠÍKOVÁ, Tereza. *Mládežnické programy mobility a jejich kompatibilita se strategií Europe 2020*. Brno: Mendelova Univerzita v Brně, 2015.

Cílem této práce je zjistit, zda jsou mládežnické programy mobility, jako Výměny mládeže, kompatibilní se strategií Europe 2020 a zda naplňují její cíle. Mládežnické výměny byly dříve zařazeny pod programem Mládež v Akci, od roku 2013 přešly pod program Erasmus+. Teoretická část práce popisuje evropské strategie a tyto programy, zatímco praktická část nabízí finanční a statistické výsledky a výsledky dotazníku sbíraného mezi organizacemi, které Výměny mládeže provádí.

Klíčová slova

Strategie Europe 2020, program Mládež v Akci, program Erasmus+, Výměny mládeže, kvótní výběr

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1 Introduction

Youth Mobility programmes such as Youth Exchanges and others play an important role in today's life of young people. Probably all university students think about going to study abroad at least once. However, there are also other interesting and valuable programmes supported by EU, which are worth mentioning.

This diploma thesis will deal with Youth Exchanges, its role within Youth in Action Programme and Erasmus+ Programme and its compatibility with Europe 2020 strategy.

Youth in Action was a seven years lasting programme focused on the area of youth. In 2013 it was included into Erasmus+ Programme which brought some negative and some positive reactions. The structure of the programme is huge and it can seem very difficult to find information you need. On the other side, it enables organizations to apply for some actions together and it certainly brings some positives as well.

There are of course dozens of youth mobility programmes which youngsters can be attending, Youth Exchanges are just one of them. It is however certain that the area of youth is crucial for European Union and youth programmes are enjoying a high support from European Commission, not only financial one.

I have decided to analyze this topic for couple of reasons. One of them is the fact, that I have been an organizer of one of those projects and I have been both amazed and confused about the structure of grant period and project life itself. Another reason is the popularity which Youth Exchanges enjoy, however I am not sure that many participants really know, why they are attending such a project. For many of them it is just a cheap holiday paid by EU.

My personal experience with Youth Exchange is mainly positive and I have to admit that it enriched me in many ways. I have developed new skills and I have made new important contacts which I am using and I will be using in the future.

More than 25 participants from various European countries created an unique environment which was based on the respect between participants from various countries and the idea of sharing knowledge.

Youth Exchanges should increase the ability of participants to move within the borders of Europe and it also should increase their ability to work in international environment.

European Commission is increasing the budget for Youth Exchanges every year and also the number of projects organized and number of participants attending is increasing every year. However the question is if the strategies which were stated by European Union somewhere "up there" are compatible with real happening projects "down here". That is the big question which will be answered by this thesis.

2 Objectives and Methodology

2.1 Objectives

Youth Exchanges, as one of many forms of youth mobility programmes, became very popular especially among university students, who mostly see it as a way of cheap holiday abroad. These programmes, however, have its aims which should be fulfilled. These aims follow strategies stated by EU, e.g. Europe 2020 strategy. Objective of this thesis is to find whether Youth Exchanges under Youth in Action Programme and Erasmus+ Programme really fulfil aims stated in Europe 2020 strategy and give recommendations on what could be improved.

To fulfil the objective of this thesis, **research questions** will be as follows:

1. Are youth mobility programmes, concretely Youth Exchanges under Youth in Action and Erasmus+ Programme, compatible with aims of Europe 2020 strategy?
2. Which improvements should be done?

To be able to answer research question, following partial aims will be stated.

Partial aim 1: Define and describe Youth Exchanges covered by Youth in Action programme and Erasmus+ programme, define strategies which stand above aims of these programmes, such as Youth on the Move and Europe 2020 strategy.

Partial aim 2: Create a survey to collect a primary data from youth NGOs, which will bring the perspective from organizers on decentralized level. These unique opinions will serve to answer first research question. Define relevant basic financial results.

Partial aim 3: Find if youth organizations preparing those international programmes were invited to contribute with their suggestions to creation of new Erasmus + programme and if these organizations have any power to influence the proposed strategy of those programmes which they have to follow afterwards.

Research questions will be answered in chapter Conclusion of this thesis.

2.2 Methodology

In order to achieve the objective of thesis, the data has been collected from various publications, statistical data, official programme guides, legislative documents, long-standing emails with different organizations and European bodies, official websites, especially from European Commission, National

Agencies of EU countries as well as from the results from the survey organized by the author hence this thesis will work both with secondary and primary data.

Thesis is mainly divided into two parts. First part covers Literature Overview, where basic information needed for practical part are provided, second part is covered in Own Research, where author performs, among others, research from primary data as well as analysis of financial structure based on secondary data. Second part also covers the evaluation of results and recommendations.

The thesis always proceeds from the general to specifics. All the programmes and strategies descriptions start with the general information, moving to more concrete ones regarding the interest of this thesis.

Literature overview firstly defines the basic terms which are used in whole the thesis. Historical development of youth mobility programmes is explained as well as legislative framework. Official portal of European Commission as well as documents from EUR-LEX became an important source in this case. Europe 2020 strategy is then described with special focus on the area of youth followed by description of the initiative Youth on the Move.

Youth in Action Programme and Erasmus+ Programme are both separately described. First, the programme as a whole with its general objectives, structure, implementation, responsibilities, eligible participants, promoters and countries. Then Youth Exchanges under each programme are described separately, because programmes differ hence its sub-action Youth Exchanges differ as well under each of the programmes. Official guides for Youth in Action and Erasmus+ allow us to compare changes made from one programme to another and give us basic parameters of Youth Exchanges and its specifics.

Diverse books or articles have been examined to provide sufficient amount of various sources and opinions. Official guides for youth mobility programmes served as an important source of information as well as monitoring reports and other document provided by European Commission.

Own research includes mainly financial framework of the programmes and survey made by the author.

Financial framework firstly describes funding rules of Youth Exchanges, separately for Youth Exchanges under Youth in Action Programme and Erasmus+ Programme, because it is important to understand the changes that have been made. Official guides helped to describe the structure properly.

Another part of financial framework focuses on actual analysis of financial results. Youth in Action Programme is examined first, as the programme is already finished, followed by data from first year (2014) of Erasmus+ Programme. Between analyzed secondary data belong especially budgets for Youth Exchanges in different countries, number of organized projects and development of these data in time.

Important statistical figures were obtained from Unit C.1 – Youth policy and programme of European Commission. After a long-term communication, it was possible to get even some preliminary data or unpublished data which helped to assemble all the information needed. Information were also gathered

from National Agencies from each country separately hence the author had to make a big effort in contacting a high number of different institutions.

Another part of Own research describes detailed survey methodology, the research sample, hypotheses, survey itself and the results. Author has decided to use quota sampling for the survey and this decision with explanation of the process is described in this part as well. Results are organized into plain and clear charts followed by written explanation.

Supporting materials for survey were not easy to obtain, because it was necessary to contact each National Agency in each member state country separately via email or phone. This process was very long and complicated, because it required constant online communication with more than 20 National agencies simultaneously.

The primary data itself were gained from the survey made among various international youth organizations (122) in each selected country obtaining financial support from Youth in Action Programme or Erasmus+ programme.

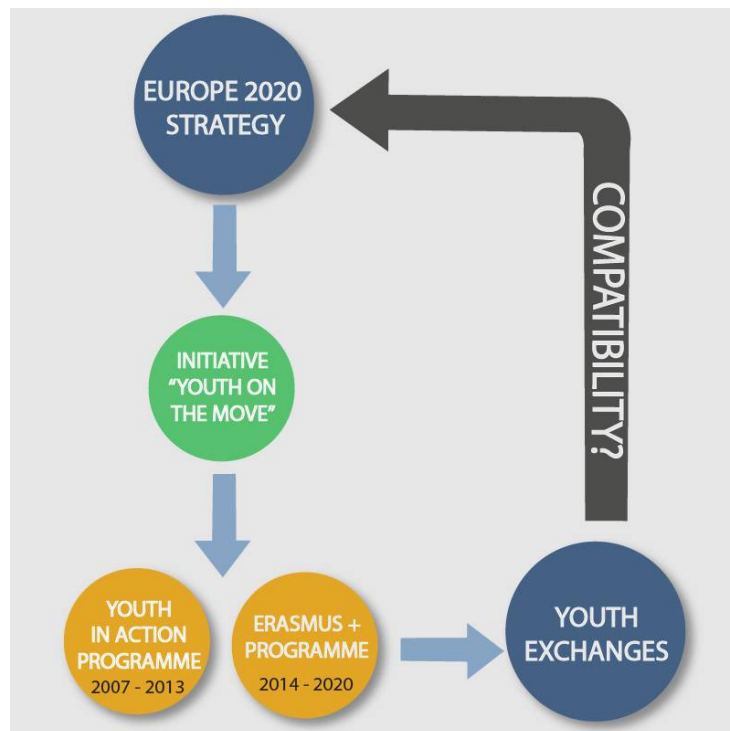
Results of the survey are organized into tables (Appendix B) and charts which are commented. Evaluation of whole the survey is made as well as answering hypotheses stated at the first part of survey methodology.

In chapter Discussion, the author compares results with different studies made on the same topic as well as reveals obstacles faced during the elaboration of the thesis.

On the basis of gained theoretical knowledge, financial analysis and evaluation of the survey in practical part, research questions are answered in chapter Conclusion of this thesis as well as recommendations for improvements are given.

3 Literature Overview

Chapter Literature overview focuses on basic description of some of European strategies as well as basic description of youth mobility programmes. Picture below helps to understand which basic information has to be put together in theoretical part in order to be able to analyze information in practical part and draw a conclusion afterwards.



Pic. 1 Route from Europe 2020 strategy to Youth Exchanges (Source: Author's own elaboration)

3.1 Youth Mobility

This diploma thesis is dealing with topic of youth mobility. It is crucial to define terms youth and mobility properly and put them in a context of the topic hence these terms can be used appropriately in the following text.

Youth can be defined as:

"Youth is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community. Youth is a more fluid category than a fixed age-group...Therefore "youth" is often indicated as a person between the age where he/she may leave compulsory education, and the age at which he/she finds his/her first employment..." (UNESCO,2014)

"The UN Secretariat uses the terms youth and young people interchangeable to mean age 15-24 with the understanding that member states and other entities use different definitions." (UN, 2001)

Mobility can be defined as:

„The ability to move or be moved freely and easily.“ (Oxford Dictionaries, 2015)

„The ability to move between different levels in society or employment.“ (Oxford Dictionaries, 2015)

„The ability to travel from one place to another.“ (Macmillan Dictionary, 2015)

„The tendency to move between places, jobs, or social classes.“ (Macmillan Dictionary, 2015)

Youth Mobility is also a relevant topic for European bodies which regularly cover the issue into their discussions, e.g. in the Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on 21 of November 2008 on **Youth mobility** (2008/C 320/03).

Conclusion (2008/C 320/03) on **Youth mobility** states that:

„The mobility of young people is essential in promoting a sense of belonging to Europe, enhancing social and occupational integration, and ensuring a competitive European economy. However, the mobility of young people is not widespread, regardless of the success of the Erasmus programme.

All young people in Europe should have opportunities for mobility. This should consist of physical mobility, whereby the young person will stay in another European country to study, do an internship, volunteer or carry out other training....Through mobility, young people may develop their skills and competences, thus improving their versatility and employability.“ (Conclusion 2008/C 320/03)

Conclusion on Youth mobility also appeals on member states ¹:

- Every young person should have the opportunity to participate in some form of mobility, whether during their studies or training, in the form of a work placement, or in the context of voluntary activities.
- Every university student should have the opportunity to study abroad

¹ This is not a complete list of recommendations, the list includes recommendations relevant for the topic of this thesis.

- It's necessary to increase the development of new mobility opportunities as an increase of new partnerships, support of exchanges between young people or an increase of the use of cultural and linguistic programmes.
- It's necessary to provide better information about existing mobility programmes.
- It's necessary to raise awareness on advantages of youth mobility. (Conclusion 2008/C 320/03)

3.2 Framework of youth mobility programmes

3.2.1 Historical development

To better understand the structure of today's youth mobility programmes, it's necessary to make a short overview of evolution of these programmes.

The **Erasmus Programme** (European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) was established in 1987 after the proposal of European Commission and other bodies. The way to establish the programme however wasn't easy at the beginning, because some of the western countries weren't in favour of the idea. The programme was established with the aim of supporting student mobility (Erasmus, 2015).

In 1995, Erasmus became a part of educational programme **Socrates** while the spectrum of activities included in the programme was broadened. It was followed by **Socrates II**. programme from 2000 to 2007 (Teicher, 2002).

In 2007, the programme was incorporated into **Lifelong Learning Programme** (LLP) which included programs Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig and Jean Monnet. There was also **Youth in Action** Programme existing separately from Lifelong Learning Programme (Pépin, 2007).

The newest form of the programme is called **Erasmus+** Programme and was established since 2014. This programme included some of previous separately existing programs and made only one from them. Sub-chapter 3.6 describes it more concretely (Erasmus, 2015).

Historical development of youth mobility programmes²	Duration
Erasmus Programme	1987-1994
Socrates Programme	1995-1999
Socrates II. Programme	2000-2006
Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) Youth in Action Programme	2007-2013
Erasmus+ Programme	2014-2020

Tab. 1 Historical development of youth mobility programmes (Source: Author`s own elaboration)

Tab.1 shows the evolution of relevant youth mobility programmes for better understanding of forthcoming text.

3.2.2 Legislative framework

Erasmus Programme

Decision No 87/327/EEC: of 15 June 1987 adopting the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (Erasmus)

Socrates Programme

Decision No 819/95/EC of the European Parliament and of the council of 14 March 1995 establishing the Community action programme 'Socrates'

Socrates II. Programme

Decision No 253/2000/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 January 2000 establishing the second phase of the Community action programme in the field of education 'Socrates'

Lifelong Learning Programme

Decision No 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 establishing an action programme in the field of lifelong learning

Youth in Action

Decision No 1719/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 establishing the 'Youth in Action' programme for the period 2007 to 2013

² It is not a complete list of mobility programs within the EU, table only shows programs relevant for purposes of this thesis.

Erasmus+ Programme

Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing 'Erasmus+': the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport and repealing Decisions No 1719/2006/EC, No 1720/2006/EC and No 1298/2008/EC Text with EEA relevance

3.3 Europe 2020 Strategy

This subchapter will present the Europe 2020 strategy, focusing especially on sections dedicated to youth.

3.3.1 About the strategy

Europe 2020 is a ten year strategy, from 2010 to 2020, presented by European Commission following the Lisbon strategy, from 2000 to 2010. It is a strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth proposed on 3.3.2010. Strategy is presenting several priorities, targets and challenges as well as flagship initiatives, which describes more concretely how to deal with given issues (European Commission, 2015).

This strategy was created to help the EU countries to adapt to globalisation and economic challenges countries are facing these years. It stresses the cooperation between countries and collective aims as a Union, setting out a vision of European economy for the 21st century, especially achieving high levels of employment, a low carbon economy, productivity and social cohesion (Europe 2020, 2010).

Three reinforcing priorities are defined as follows:

- **Smart growth:** developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation.
- **Sustainable growth:** promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy.
- **Inclusive growth:** fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion (Europe 2020, 2010).

The EU needs to define where it wants to be in 2020 hence the five proposed targets have been introduced:

- 75% of the population aged between 20-64 should be employed.
- 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&D.
- The "20/20/20" climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right).

- The share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have tertiary degree³.
- 20 million less people should be at a risk of poverty (Europe 2020, 2010).

These targets are interrelated and critical to overall success. To stress the importance of those targets, European Commission suggested to engage them into national targets (European Commission, 2015).

The Commission has also decided to underpin existing priorities with seven flagship initiatives:

Smart Growth

- "Innovation Union" - to improve framework conditions and access to finance for research and innovation so as to ensure that innovative ideas can be turned into products and services that create growth and jobs.
- "Youth on the Move" - to enhance the performance of education systems and to facilitate the entry of young people to the labour market.
- "A digital agenda for Europe" - to speed up the roll-out of high speed internet and reap the benefits of digital single market for households and firms.

Sustainable Growth

- "Resource efficient Europe" - to help decouple economic growth from the use of resources, support the shift towards a low carbon economy, increase the use of renewable energy sources, modernize our transport sector and promote energy efficiency.
- "An industrial policy for the globalization era" - to improve the business environment, notably for SMEs, and to support the development of a strong and sustainable industrial base able to compete globally.

Inclusive growth

- "An agenda for new skills and jobs" - to modernize labour markets and empower people by developing their skills throughout the lifecycle with a view to increase labour participation and better match labour supply and demand, including labour mobility.
- "European platform against poverty" - to ensure social and territorial cohesion such that the benefits of growth and jobs are widely shared and people experiencing poverty and social exclusion are enabled to live in dignity and take creative part in society (Europe 2020, 2010).

³ Tertiary education - education at a college or university (MacMillian Dictionary, 2015)

These seven flagship initiatives will be included in strategies of Member countries, where stronger governance will be needed. A promising change and improvement can be also seen in operational level such as monitoring on growth enhancing reforms or the European semester. The Commission will be monitoring the progress towards targets, the European Parliament will be a driving force to mobilize citizens and the European Council will have full ownership of the new strategy (Marlier and Natali, 2010).

Europe 2020 strategy wants to react on recent economic crisis which has no precedent in our generation. Several weaknesses have been exposed such as growth rate lower than our main economic partners, lower levels of investment in R&D and innovation. Situation deteriorated on labour market as well - employment rates for those aged between 20-64 are significantly lower than in other parts of the world, we are also facing problems with demographic ageing where the number of people aged over 60 is now increasing twice as fast as it did before 2007. However, there are also optimistic facts such as openness of European economy or coordination within the EU which is often criticized, but together, we are certainly more effective (Europe 2020, 2010).

3.3.2 Youth within Europe 2020 strategy

The issue of youth is covered in Europe 2020 strategy more than once. Probably the most important mention is one of the flagship initiatives "Youth on the Move", which will be described below more precisely.

However, it is not only the initiative Youth on the Move where Youth plays an important role within the strategy. We can find it in the priority of Smart Growth and Inclusive Growth (Europe 2020, 2010).

Smart Growth priority stresses the importance of quality of education, research performance, innovation and knowledge transfer throughout the Union, where Youth Exchanges can be especially beneficial (European Commission, 2015).

Inclusive Growth focuses on empowering people through high levels of employment, investing in skills and modernising labour markets. Europe has been hit by the crisis and it caused several changes on labour markets. Unemployment rate among young people was over 21% during 2010. By 2020, 16 million more jobs will require high qualifications, while the demand for low skills jobs will be decreasing. Action under this priority will require empowering of people through the acquisition of new skills, ability to move to future workspace as well as adaptation to new conditions. Youth Exchanges are a way, of course not the only one, how to develop these skills and fight with asymmetric shocks (Europe 2020, 2010).

While considering **asymmetric shock** occurred in two countries, where one of the countries is facing reduced output and higher unemployment and the other one is experiencing boom and pressures on its price level, we can present two mechanisms which can help to adjust to the situation. First of them is **wage flexibility** where workers experiencing higher unemployment reduce their

wage claims, in the second country the wage rate will increase. In first country, the price of output will decline, making their products more competitive when in the second country happens the opposite (Grauwe, 2012).

Second mechanism, more interesting for us now, is the **mobility of labour**. This mechanism presents the idea that workers from one country will move to another one for higher wages or higher demand for labour. Thus, there is no such a high pressure to lower wages in one country and increase them in the other one, because unemployment problems in first country will disappear while inflation pressures vanish in the second country (Grauwe, 2012).

Mobility of labour can be highly beneficial in balancing different job situations on job markets of European countries. One of the reasons of the European Commission for supporting youth mobility programmes is the future ability of participants to move to different country or region for job opportunities, hence to help to balance asymmetric shocks and improve discrepancies in labour markets (Hollifield, 2014).

3.4 Youth on the Move

As mentioned above, Youth on the Move, an initiative to unleash the potential of young people to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the European Union, is part of Europe 2020 strategy and one of the flagship initiatives proposed in Brussels on 15th September 2010 which focuses on potential of young people who represent a fifth of total European population (Youth on the Move, 2010).

In order to reach 75% employment target, the transition of young people to the labour market should be radically improved. Initiative also stresses the importance of tertiary education and lifelong learning. Youth on the Move aims to improve young's people education and employability and also increase the youth-employment rate. Initiative wants to focus especially on:

- making education and training more relevant to young people's needs
- encouraging more of them to take advantage of EU grants to study or train in another country
- encouraging EU countries to take measures simplifying the transition from education to work (European Commission, 2015).

Youth on the Move contains four main actions including topics as tackling the high level of school leavers, supporting the European Year of Volunteering, promoting vocational training and high quality traineeship. Another area is intention to support young entrepreneurs and to raise the percentage of young people participating in higher education, especially for purposes of competing with foreign markets and innovations (Youth on the Move, 2010).

Particularly interesting for us is the area of mobility through programmes and initiatives. Europe 2020 supports the aspiration that all young people in Europe should have the possibility to spend part of their education abroad or

participate on vocational trainings, such as Youth Exchanges (Europe 2020, 2010).

It is expected that around 50% of all jobs in 2020 will be highly dependent on qualifications provided through vocational education and training⁴ (VET). As this initiative stresses, experiences gained by various traineeships has brought an importance for young people in adjusting to needs of today's labour market demands. Another important aspect is the international framework which via multicultural trainings raises the ability of participants to adjust to new conditions in foreign countries hence their chance to be more successful on foreign labour markets (European Commission, 2015).

An important part of the initiative is section 4.1 Promoting learning mobility which emphasizes the key idea that Europeans who are mobile as young students and learners are more likely to be mobile as workers in their future professional life. That's why the support of youth mobility programmes can bring us great benefits in the near future. This section covers former programmes such as Erasmus, Erasmus Mundus, Marie Curie, Leonardo, Comenius, Grundtvig, Youth in Action, Voluntary Service, Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs and others. Most of these mentioned programmes are today included in Erasmus+ programme (Youth on the Move, 2010).

The Green paper on Learning Mobility promotes the boost of learning mobility in all parts of education system such as schools and vocational education and training, but also in non-formal learning areas (Green Paper, 2009).

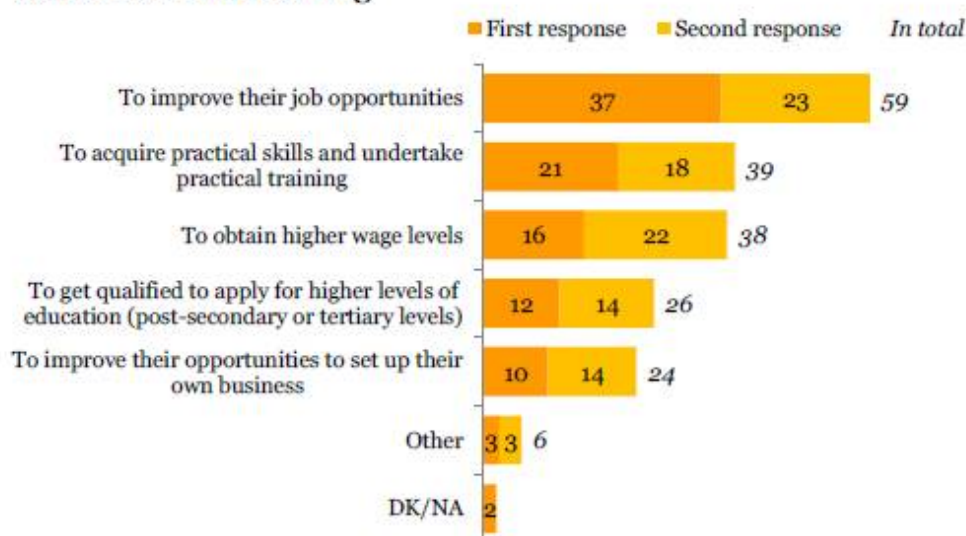
Several existing programmes have already supported aims of Youth on the Move such as Lifelong Learning programme, **Youth in Action**, Erasmus Mundus and others. *“Teachers, trainers, researchers and youth workers can act as mobility multipliers at different levels...In the next generation of mobility programmes, the Commission will propose a greater focus on increasing mobility of multipliers, such as teachers and trainers, to act as advocates for mobility”* (Youth on the Move, 2010).

To draw a better picture, we can present here one of the results of extensive study made by the Gallup Organization as an Analytical Report on Youth on the Move. The survey⁵ was requested by Directorate-General Education and Culture and coordinated by Directorate-General Communication.

⁴ „Education and training which aims to equip people with knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences required in particular occupations or more broadly on the labour market.“ (Terminology of European education and training policy, 2008)

⁵ The survey obtained phone interviews with nationally representative samples of young people (aged between 15 and 35) living in the 27 EU Member States, as well as in Croatia, Iceland, Norway and Turkey...in total, 30,312 interviews were conducted by Gallup's network of fieldwork organisations between 26 and 30 January 2011. (.....)

Most important reasons for young people to go into vocational education and training



Q2. In your opinion what is the most important reason for young people to go into vocational education and training? And the second most important reason?
Base: all respondents, % TOTAL

Pic. 2 Most important reasons for young people to go into vocational education and training (Source: Youth on the Move - Analytical Report: Flash EB Series #319b, 2011)

It is easy to see that vocational education and training are seen as an important way of improving job opportunities and acquiring practical skills, hence we could conclude that support the VET gets from EU is justified (Youth on the Move - Analytical Report: Flash EB Series #319b, 2011).

To make a conclusion, we can boldly declare that Europe 2020 strategy puts young people in the centre of its interest. By creating an economy based on knowledge, research and innovation, high levels of education and trainings, creativity and adaptability, the strategy, hence the initiative as well, defines one the ways how to improve the economic situation in Europe (Europe 2020, 2010).

3.5 Youth in Action Programme

Youth in Action is a programme endorsed by Decision N^o1719/2006/EC of 15th November 2006 where the European Parliament and the Council adopted the Youth in Action programme for period of 2007-2013 to create a legal framework to support non-formal learning activities for young people⁶. This programme had an overall budget of 885 million euros for seven years of its

⁶ See more information about legislative framework in sub-chapter 3.2.2

action. The annual budget has been decided by the European Parliament and the Council (Youth in Action, 2013).

Youth in Action programme was also one of programmes which was supporting the initiative Youth on the Move, hence the Europe 2020 strategy. The general **objectives** stated in the legal basis are following:

- to promote young people's active citizenship in general and their European citizenship in particular
- to develop solidarity and promote tolerance among young people, in particular in order to foster social cohesion in the European Union
- to foster mutual understanding between young people in different countries
- to contribute to developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field
- to promote European cooperation in the youth field (Interim evaluation of the Youth in Action Programme, 2011).

Except the objectives, important priorities have been stated as well. We can mention at least some of them, e.g. encouraging young people to be active citizens including the importance of possibilities of various forms of learning, the respect for cultural diversity, inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities, not meaning only people with physical or mental disabilities, but also people with social obstacles, economic obstacles or geographical obstacles (Youth in Action, 2013).

European Commission also wants to provide measurable results of Youth in Action projects. **Youthpass** is an European recognition tool for non-formal and informal learning in youth work. With Youthpass the participants of these projects can describe what they have done and show what they have learnt. Reflection of the learning process and outcomes increases the ability of participants to keep some physical results of what they have improved, to use newly gained knowledge and competences and to enhance the quality of the projects (Youthpass, 2015).

Youthpass certificate has a common structure and coherent layout containing:

- personal details about the participant
- general description of the relevant Action of the Programme
- key information concerning the project and the activities realised by the participant
- description and assessment of the participant's learning outcome during the project (Youth in Action, 2013).

Through Youthpass, European Commission ensures that the participation on Youth in Action projects is recognized as an educational experience and form of informal learning. However good is the idea, organizations are not forced to use Youthpasses, hence many of them don't use it always or not at all.

OVERVIEW OF YOUTHPASS IN NUMBERS			
YEAR	CERTIFICATES	PROJECTS	ORGANISATIONS
Total*	409,173	32,643	15,615
2015	18,885	1,396	1180
2014	86,654	6,821	4,675
2013	97,973	7,363	4,858
2012	69,387	5,809	3,823
2011	49,182	4,777	3,006
2010	38,208	3,887	2,436
2009	27,131	2,989	1,879
2008	19,197	1,968	1,331
2007**	2,577	200	172

Pic. 3 Overview of Youthpass in Numbers, * State of affairs in March 25, 2015, ** Youthpass was launched in July 2007 (Source: Youthpass, 2015)

We can see on Picture 3 that the number of organizations using Youthpass is not very high (Youthpass, 2015).

Structure of Youth in Action programme is divided into 5 Actions. This thesis focuses especially on Sub-Action 1.1 Youth Exchanges, however for better understanding of the programme, all Actions are listed below:

1. Action – Youth for Europe

Sub-Action 1.1 – Youth Exchanges

Sub-Action 1.2 – Youth Initiatives

Sub-Action 1.3 – Youth Democracy Projects

2. Action – European Voluntary Service

3. Action – Youth in the World

Sub-Action 3.1 – Cooperation with the Neighbouring Countries of the European Union

Sub-Action 3.2 - Cooperation with Other Countries of the World

4. Action – Youth Support System

Sub-Action 4.1 - Support to bodies active at European level in the youth field

Sub-Action 4.2 - Support to the European Youth Forum

Sub-Action 4.3 - Training and networking of those active in youth work and youth organisations

Sub-Action 4.4 – Projects encouraging innovation and quality

Sub-Action 4.5 - Information activities for young people and those active in youth work and youth organisations

Sub-Action 4.6 - Partnerships

Sub-Action 4.7 - Support for the structures of the Programme

Sub-Action 4.8 - Adding to the value of the Programme

5. **Action - Support for European cooperation in the youth field**

Sub-Action 5.1 - Meetings of young people and those responsible for youth policy

Sub-Action 5.2 - Support for activities to bring about better knowledge of the youth field

Sub-Action 5.3 - Co-operation with international organisations (Marek, 2011).

Full description of all of the Actions can be found in official guide for Youth in Action programme.

Implementation and responsibilities are divided among number of entities.

The European Commission is responsible for running the programme, setting up the budget, priorities and targets. It monitors the general implementation and provides overall evaluations at European level. It also supervises National Agencies and delegates management of projects at centralised level to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)(European Commission, 2015).

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) which was established by European Commission is mainly responsible for implementation of centralized actions of Youth in Action programme. It is in charge of complete lifecycle of the projects meaning considering the grant applications and monitoring running projects. It is also responsible for specific open calls for selected projects. EACEA is also involved in management of insurance for volunteers and finances of selected supporting organizations (EACEA, 2013).

Crucial role in running the projects have **National Agencies** of project countries. The majority of projects is decentralized, hence National Agencies are those who decide about granting the projects. The aim of this decentralization is to let each country to accept projects while considering specifics, differences and needs of each country separately. National Agencies also promote the programme itself and act as a link between the European Commission, promoters on local, regional or national level and young people themselves. Among their other responsibilities are administration and selection of projects to be granted on decentralized level, provide effective and transparent administration process, seek cooperation with external bodies, provide support to project applicants, create an useful network between organizations and

National Agencies and the European Commission and provide training and share experiences (Youth in Action, 2013).

Not everybody can participate on Youth in Action projects hence we should define those who can. **Eligible participants** are young people aged between 13 and 30 or somebody active in youth organization or youth work, they have to fulfil the condition of being a resident of one of the programme or partner countries as well. **Eligible promoters** are responsible for managing the event while granted. You can become promoter if you are legally established in one the programme or partner countries and you are:

- a non-profit or non-governmental organisation
- a local, regional public body
- an informal group of young people
- a body active at European field in the youth field (ENGO), having member branches in at least 8 Programme countries
- an international governmental non-profit organisation
- a profit-making organisation organising an event in the area of youth, sport or culture (Youth in Action, 2013)

Participation and involvement in projects via Youth in Action are limited by classification. **Eligible countries** are divided into three groups – Programme Countries, Neighbouring Partner Countries and Other Partner Countries of the World (EACEA, 2013).

A crucial distinction is made between Programme Countries and Neighbouring Partner countries:

- Participants and promoters from **Programme Countries** can participate in all Actions of the Youth in Action Programme.
- Participants and promoters from **Neighbouring Partner Countries** can participate in Action 2 and sub-Action 3.1 of the Youth in Action Programme.
- Participants and promoters from **Other Partner Countries** of the World can participate in Action 2 and sub-Action 3.2 of the Youth in Action Programme (EACEA, 2013).

Member States of the European Union (EU) ⁷			
Austria	Finland	Latvia	Romania
Belgium	France	Lithuania	Slovak Republic
Bulgaria	Germany	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Cyprus	Greece	Malta	Spain
Czech Republic	Hungary	Netherlands	Sweden
Denmark	Ireland	Poland	United Kingdom
Estonia	Italy	Portugal	

Programme Countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA)			
Iceland	Liechtenstein	Norway	Switzerland

Programme Countries which are candidates for accession to the European Union	
Croatia	Turkey

Pic. 4 Programme Countries of Youth in Action programme (Source: Youth in Action, 2013)

We can see that Programme Countries include not only member states of the EU, but also EFTA countries and candidates for accession to the EU. Croatia joined the EU on 1th July 2013 and for this reason is included in official guide as a candidate for accession, the last official guide for YiA programme was made on January 2013 (Youth in Action, 2013).

South East Europe	Eastern Europe and Caucasus	Mediterranean Partner Countries
Albania Bosnia and Herzegovina Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) Kosovo, under UNSC Resolution 1244/1999 Montenegro Serbia	Countries of the Eastern Partnership: Armenia Azerbaijan Belarus Georgia Moldova Ukraine Other countries: Russian Federation	Algeria Egypt Israel Jordan Lebanon Libya Morocco Palestinian Authority of the West Bank and Gaza Strip Syria Tunisia

Pic. 5 Neighbouring partner countries of Youth in Action programme (Source: Youth in Action, 2013)

Neighbouring partner countries include 3 sections – South East Europe, Eastern Europe and Caucasus and Mediterranean Partner Countries. As much as we can see these countries at the edge of our interest, the opposite is true. Neighbouring partner countries are highly active in YiA and both organize and participate on many events (EACEA, 2015).

Other partner countries include 118 countries outside the Europe which have limited possibilities in participation on the programme (EACEA, 2013).

3.5.1 Youth Exchanges under Youth in Action Programme

Youth Exchanges are classified under the Action 1 Youth for Europe, Sub-action 1.1. - Youth Exchanges. These exchanges offer an opportunity for group of young people from different countries to meet and learn about each other's cultural differences. The project is built around a participant's mutual topic considering their country of residence (European Commission, 2015).

Youth Exchange brings together groups of young people from at least 2 countries giving them the opportunity to discuss various topics while learning from each other. A Youth Exchange has three phases:

- planning and preparation
- implementation of the Activity
- evaluation (EACEA, 2013).

Criteria for assessing the applications are following⁷:

Eligible promoters: A non-profit or non-governmental organisation or a local, regional public body or an informal group of young people or a body active at European field in the youth field; each promoter must be from a Programme country.

Eligible participants: Participants aged between 13 and 25 and legally resident in a Programme country (up to 20% of participants may be aged between 26 and 30).

Number of participants: The project must involve a minimum of 16 and a maximum of 60 participants.

Venue of the activity: The Activity must take place in the country of one of the promoters.

Duration of the project: Maximum 15 months.

Duration of the Activity: From 6 to 21 days, excluding travel days.

Selection criteria: Applicants has to prove their financial and operational capacity meaning sufficient and stable sources of funding and necessary competencies and motivation.

Award criteria: Awards criteria consist of Relevance to the objectives and priorities of the Programme (30%), Quality of the project and methods proposed (50%) and Profile of participants and promoters (20%) (European Commission, 2013).

Example of an Youth Exchange:

"A multilateral Youth Exchange titled "Slainte agus An Oige" took place in Omagh, Northern Ireland, and involved 40 young people from Ireland, Lithuania, Poland and United Kingdom. The exchange aimed at providing

⁷ Complete criteria can be found in official Guide for Youth in Action (2013), page 30

young people with a framework for a healthy lifestyle by focusing on the benefits of participating in outdoor activities. The programme was a combination of practical activities where young people worked in teams trying out different sports, complemented with a number of workshops centred on the debate around the advantages of sport on the body. The project also allowed for each country group of participants to make a presentation on their countries culture and history. The emphasis of the programme was to build self-esteem, acceptance of other people, open their minds, learn about other cultures and value different countries (Youth in Action, p.27, 2013)."

3.6 Erasmus +

Erasmus+ is a programme of EU on fields of education, training, youth and sport for period of 2014-2020. It was established by Regulation (EU) No 1228/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on 11th November 2013. The programme aims to boost skills and employability and to support the aims of Europe 2020 strategy. Erasmus+ programme disposes of the budget of 14.7 billion euros for seven years of its action (European Commission, 2015).

Erasmus+ Programme brings together:

- The Lifelong Learning Programme (Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius, Grundtvig and Jean Monnet)
- The Youth in Action programme
- Five international cooperation programmes (Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, Alfa, Edulink, the programme for cooperation with industrialised countries)
- The new sport action (EACEA, 2015).

General **objectives** of Erasmus+ should contribute especially to achievement of:

- the objectives of Europe 2020, including the headline education target⁸
- the objectives of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020), including the corresponding benchmarks
- the sustainable development of Partner Countries in the field of higher education
- the overall objectives of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018)

⁸ The headline education target is to reduce early school leaving to less than 10% and increase attainment in tertiary education to at least 40% by 2020 (Europe2020, 2010)

- the objective of developing the European dimension in sport, in particular grassroots sport, in line with the EU work plan for sport
- the promotion of European values in accordance with Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (Salto Youth, 2015).

Erasmus + uses various tools for skills and qualifications to be measured. One of them is also Youthpass described in sub-chapter 3.5, among others we can name e.g. Europass, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) and others. All these tools were developed to ensure that skills and qualifications gained via Erasmus+ projects are recognised internationally fulfilling the aims of Europe 2020 strategy (Erasmus+, 2014).

Structure of Erasmus+ Programme is divided into 5 areas. The thesis focuses especially on Key Action 1, more precisely Youth Exchanges, however for better understanding of the programme, all areas covered are listed below:

1. **Key Action 1 – Mobility of Individuals**

- Mobility of learners and staff – students, trainees, volunteers, teachers, youth workers etc.
- Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees – high-level integrated international study programmes
- Erasmus+ Master Degree Loans – loans backed up by the programme for students on full master degrees abroad

2. **Key Action 2 – Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of good practices**

- Transnational Strategic Partnerships – developing initiatives in field of education, innovation, exchange of knowledge between different types of organizations
- Knowledge Alliances – cooperation between higher education institutions and companies with aim to foster innovation
- Sector Skill Alliances – focused on joint training in specific sector
- Capacity Building – cooperation with Partner Countries in fields of higher education and youth
- IT support platforms – virtual collaboration spaces, online services for teachers, trainers, youth workers etc.

3. **Key Action 3 – Support for Policy Reform**

- Knowledge in the fields of education, training and youth – monitoring policy in the framework of Europe 2020 strategy
- Initiatives for policy innovations – to stimulate innovative policy
- Support to European policy tools

- Cooperation with international organizations
 - Stakeholder dialogue, policy and Programme promotion
4. **Jean Monnet Activities**
- Academic Modules, Chairs, Centres of Excellence
 - Policy debate with academic world
 - Support to institutions and associations
 - Studies and conferences
5. **Sport**
- Collaborative Partnership
 - Non-profit European sport events
 - Strengthening of the evidence base for policy making
 - Dialogue with relevant European stakeholders (Erasmus+, 2015).

Full description of all of the areas can be found in official guide for Erasmus+ Programme.

Implementation of the programme is divided mainly into two entities - European Commission and National Agencies.

The European Commission is responsible for running the Erasmus+ Programme as a whole. It manages the budget, sets the priorities and ensures overall progress in the programme. It guides and monitors the implementation as well as provides the evaluation. European Commission also supervises the implementation of the programme on national level (European Commission, 2015).

Similar to Youth in Action Programme, Erasmus + also entrusts a big power into hands of **National Agencies** which are responsible for granting the projects and managing them on national level. The reason is again to bring the power of decision as close as possible to local level of the projects and to adapt the diversity of nations, education systems or different approaches to trainings. National Agencies act like a link between European Commission and local organizations. Among their others responsibilities belongs administration of selection process, monitoring and evaluating the programme on national level, providing support to local organizations helping them to solve obstacles connected with E+ projects and promoting the programme in general on various occasions (European Commission, 2015).

There are also other bodies participating on implementation of the programme, however their role is not as crucial as of the European Commission and National Agencies (Salto Youth, 2015).

Defining eligible participants for Erasmus+ is more complicated than with Youth in Action, because Erasmus+ covers many “old” programmes together and there is a wide variety of people who can participate on them. We can always divide them into participants and participating organizations (Erasmus+, 2015).

In general, **eligible participants** have to be established in one of the programme countries and conditions for them change with type of action attending. However, we can say that participants are mainly higher education and vocational education students, teachers, trainers, participants for youth projects are mainly young people between 13 and 30, youth workers and leaders. All specific conditions for all actions can be found in official programme guide with each separate action of the programme (Erasmus+, 2015).

Erasmus+ projects are organized by organizations who are selected through their application and granted with support from National Agency. **Eligible participating organizations** have to be again based in one of the programme countries. In general, the programme is open for organizations focusing on education, youth, sport or training (Salto Youth, 2015).

Eligible countries are divided according to the region and their opportunity to participate on various actions. We can divide them into Programme Countries, Partner Countries and Other Partner Countries (Erasmus+, 2015).

- Participants and promoters from **Programme Countries** can participate in all Actions of Erasmus+ Programme.
- Participants and promoters from **Partner Countries** can participate in certain actions of the programme which are specified for each action separately.
- Participants and promoters from **Other Partner Countries** of the World can also participate in some of the actions, however because of their geographical location and lower accessibility, number of actions is limited (EACEA, 2013).

Member States of the European Union (EU)⁶			
Belgium	Greece	Lithuania	Portugal
Bulgaria	Spain	Luxembourg	Romania
Czech Republic	France	Hungary	Slovenia
Denmark	Croatia	Malta	Slovakia
Germany	Italy	Netherlands	Finland
Estonia	Cyprus	Austria	Sweden
Ireland	Latvia	Poland	United Kingdom

Non EU Programme Countries		
former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Iceland Liechtenstein	Norway Turkey

Pic. 6 Programme Countries of Erasmus+ Programme (Source: Erasmus+ Official Guide, 2015)

Picture 6 shows that all EU countries are included in programme countries of Erasmus+ programme as well as 5 other European countries. All of these countries can be using advantages of all actions of Erasmus+ in all its breadth.

PARTNER COUNTRIES NEIGHBOURING THE EU⁷

Western Balkans (Region 1)	Eastern Partnership countries (Region 2)	South-Mediterranean countries (Region 3)	Russian Federation (Region 4)
Albania Bosnia and Herzegovina Kosovo ⁸ Montenegro Serbia	Armenia Azerbaijan Belarus Georgia Moldova Territory of Ukraine as recognised by international law	Algeria Egypt Israel Jordan Lebanon Libya Morocco Palestine ⁹ Syria Tunisia	Territory of Russia as recognised by international law

Pic. 7 Partner Countries Neighbouring the EU (Source: Erasmus+ Official Guide, 2015)

We can see four regions on Picture 7 which are included in Partner Countries which can participate on selected actions of Erasmus+ Programme. However we can think that these countries are at the edge of the activities, opposite is true. All four regions are participating regularly on activities provided by Erasmus+ Programme (Erasmus+, 2015).

Last category of Other Partner Countries covers more than 100 countries which have limited possibilities on participation on Erasmus+ Programme (Erasmus+, 2015).

3.6.1 Youth Exchanges under Erasmus+

Youth Exchanges under Erasmus+ are classified under the Key Action 1, Sub-action Mobility of young people and youth workers. Youth Exchanges are provided for people from Programme countries as well as from Partner countries and allow groups of young people from different countries to share a knowledge, learn new things and create new ideas by workshops, exercises, debates, outdoor activities etc. Exchanges support discovering new cultures, common values, habits and many others. Learning process is held by methods of non-formal education. Exchanges are based on transnational cooperation between two or more participating organizations from different countries (Salto Youth, 2015).

A Youth Exchange has three phases:

- planning and preparation
- implementation of the Activity
- evaluation (EACEA, 2013).

Criteria for assessing the applications are following⁹:

Eligible participating organizations: A non-profit or non-governmental organisation or a local, regional public body or an informal group of young people or a body active at European field in the youth field; each participating organization must be from a Programme country or a Partner country neighbouring the EU (regions 1 to 4).

Eligible participants: Participants aged between 13 and 30 resident in the country of sending and receiving organization.

Number of participants: The project must involve a minimum of 16 and a maximum of 60 participants.

Venue of the activity: The Activity must take place in the country of one of the participating organizations.

Duration of the project: From 3 to 24 months.

Duration of the Activity: From 5 to 21 days, excluding travel days.

Selection criteria: Applicants has to prove their financial and operational capacity meaning sufficient and stable sources of funding and necessary competencies and motivation.

Award criteria: Awards criteria consist of Relevance to the objectives and priorities of the Programme (30%), Quality of the project design and implementation (40%) and Impact and dissemination (30%) (Erasmus+, 2015).

⁹ Complete criteria for Youth Exchanges can be found in official guide for Erasmus+, page 74

4 Own Research

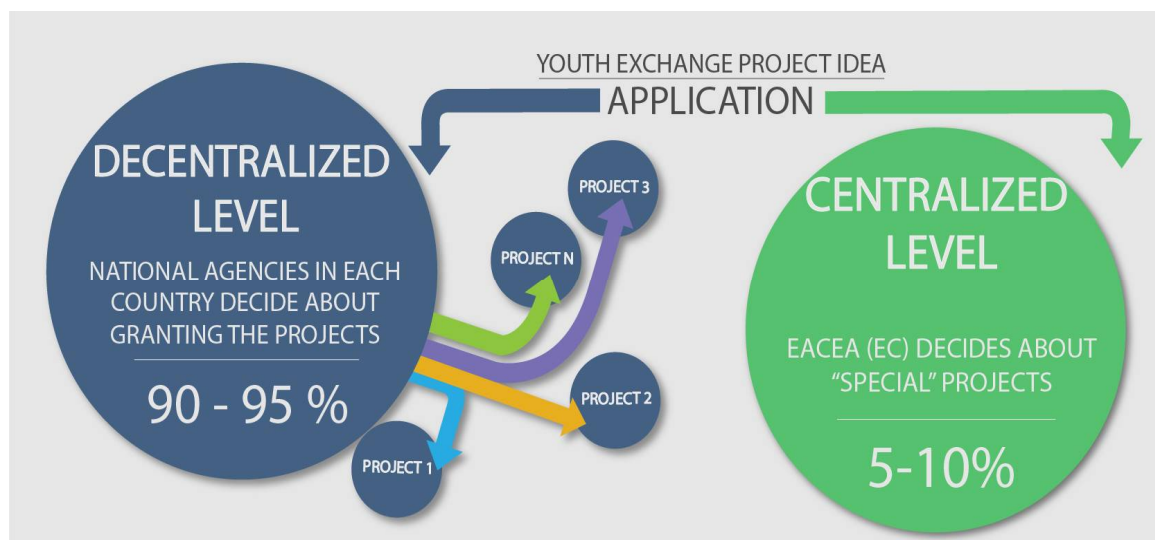
Chapter Own Research focuses on financial framework of Youth Exchanges as well as on analysis of financial results. Second part is dedicated to the survey distributed between youth organizations.

4.1 Financial Framework of Youth in Action and Erasmus+ Programme

Sub-chapter Financial Framework of Youth in Action and Erasmus+ Programme firstly describes the difference between the funding rules under each programme. It is important to understand these funding rules and changes which have been made, because some of the respondents of the survey commented on these recent changes.

Another part of this sub-chapter deals with actual budgets and statistics which help us to draw a better picture about number of Youth Exchanges and its financial demands.

To understand properly the process of grant application, following picture explains the basic structure of the application process.



Pic. 8 Youth Exchange project award system (Author's own elaboration, 2015)

4.1.1 Funding rules for Youth Exchanges under Youth in Action¹⁰

The budget of the Youth Exchange has its rules and has to be drafted according following rules and follow a given structure.

¹⁰ Detailed information can be found in official guide for Youth in Action Programme, p.28

Travel costs from home to the venue where the activity is held and back are eligible costs. It is required to use the cheapest means and fares (2nd class train tickets, economy class flights etc.). For reimbursement and justification of actual travel costs, the copy of travel tickets and invoices are required, 70% of costs are reimbursed automatically (Youth in Action, 2013).

There is as well the possibility of 100% reimbursement of travel costs for Advanced Planning Visit however the means of the visit has to be justified already in the application form (Youth in Action, 2013).

Project costs cover the costs directly linked to the implementation of the programme (preparation of activities, food, accommodation, venues, material, follow up activities etc.). The amount is automatically adjusted according to number of nights, number of participants and the country where the activity takes place. Scales of unit costs moves between 32-40 EUR per day, depending on the country where the event is held (Youth in Action, 2013).

Exceptional costs cover some additional costs, e.g. visa and visa-related costs, accommodation and food for participants on Advanced Planning Visit or costs related to young people with fewer opportunities or special needs. The request for exceptional costs has to be drafted in the application form as well, if accepted, 100% of eligible costs are covered after all the necessary copies of tickets and invoices are delivered (Youth in Action, 2013).

The amount of **grant money is distributed** between host organization(s) and sending organization(s). Sending organization (organization which sends the participants on the event) receives between 5-15% of the amount for preparation of participants, practical arrangements, insurance etc. Host organization (organization which hosts the event in its country) receives 85-95% of the amount for food, accommodation, preparation of the programme, material, local transport, evaluation, administration etc (Youth in Action, 2013).

4.1.2 Funding rules for Youth Exchanges under Erasmus+¹¹

As well as in the case of Youth Exchanges under YiA, the budget of the Youth Exchange under Erasmus+ has its rules and has to be drafted according following rules and follow a given structure.

Travel costs are reimbursed in a way of unit costs. According to official distance calculator¹² from European Commission, the distance is precisely determined and according to the following table, the amount for a round trip is given (Erasmus+, 2015).

¹¹ Detailed information can be found in official guide for Erasmus+ Programme, p.79

¹² http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/tools/distance_en.htm

Amount
For travel distances between 10 and 99KM: 20 EUR per participant
For travel distances between 100 and 499 KM: 80 EUR per participant
For travel distances between 500 and 1999 KM: 170 EUR per participant
For travel distances between 2000 and 2999 KM: 270 EUR per participant
For travel distances between 3000 and 3999 KM: 400 EUR per participant
For travel distances between 4000 and 7999 KM: 620 EUR per participant
For travel distances of 8000 KM or more: 830 EUR per participant

Pic. 9 Calculator for travel distances (Source: Erasmus+ Official Guide, 2015)

Organizational support covers the costs directly linked to the implementation of the mobility activity itself. It is calculated by unit costs per participant and per day. Scales of unit costs move between 28-40 EUR per day, depending on the country where the event is held (Erasmus+, 2015).

Special needs support are additional costs 100% eligible related to participants with disabilities. It has to be motivated in the application form beforehand (Erasmus+, 2015).

Exceptional costs cover visa and visa-related costs, insurance or vaccinations. It also covers the participation of young people with fewer opportunities, costs connected to lodging of participant during the Advanced Planning Visit. These costs are again 100% eligible, but have to be motivated in the application form beforehand (Erasmus+, 2015).

4.1.3 What has been changed?

The most significant change has been made in terms of calculating the travel costs. Youth Exchanges under Youth in Action Programme covered 70% of participants travel costs, however Youth Exchanges under Erasmus+ Programme use distance calculator, which then determines unit costs for a round trip.

There are also minor changes in internal structure of the budget however the new system of calculating travel costs is the biggest one. Some of the respondents of the survey covered in this thesis made a comment about distance calculator, it can be found in the survey evaluation further in this text.

4.1.4 Budget of Youth in Action

Youth in Action Programme had the **overall budget of 885 million euros** for whole period of the project (2007-2013).

Table 2 shows financial structure of the Youth in Action Programme divided in years. Table also shows presumed budget and actual outturn for operational budget, administrative expenses and then both all together.

We can clearly see that the actual outturn is significantly higher than presumed budget. Between 2007 and 2009, the outturn was lower than the budget, but since 2010 the outturn was always higher than expected.

in EUR	Youth in Action Total Operational Budget		Administrative Expenditures		Total	
	Budget	Outturn	Budget	Outturn	Budget	Outturn
2013	211 000 000	212 862 685	4 689 016	4 424 880	215 689 016	217 287 565
2012	184 000 000	185 131 720	4 623 392	4 279 004	188 623 392	189 410 724
2011	150 567 720	156 112 924	4 379 880	4 379 237	154 947 600	160 492 161
2010	141 800 000	143 347 926	4 335 089	4 516 255	146 135 089	147 864 181
2009	141 398 544	139 328 944	4 517 256	4 188 080	145 915 800	143 517 024
2008	137 753 594	137 335 077	4 561 516	4 143 077	142 315 110	141 478 154
2007	128 889 490	128 713 011	5 419 670	4 360 251	134 309 160	133 073 261

Tab. 2 Operational, administrative and total budget and outturn of Youth in Action Programme between 2007-2013 (Source: YiA - Extracts from the successive annual reporting, 2015)

Following Table 3 shows financial results only for the Sub-Action 1.1 (Youth Exchanges) on centralized and decentralized level.

The thesis is mainly focusing on decentralized actions, which are granted by National Agencies. For comparison the next table shows results on centralized level as well, granted by The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).

in EUR	Sub-Action 1.1 (Youth Exchanges) Decentralized level (NAs)		Sub-Action 1.1 (Youth Exchanges) Centralized level (EACEA)	
	Budget	Outturn	Budget	Outturn
2013	39 441 270	39 871 816	250 000	291 489
2012	34 461 300	34 434 993	250 000	459 087
2011	29 096 043	30 609 895	245 322	404 926
2010	28 526 416	28 921 561	300 000	307 650
2009	28 219 253	27 902 094	1 100 000	240 077
2008	27 296 811	27 296 811	1 100 000	164 899
2007	25 514 058	25 514 056	1 342 841	149 835

Tab. 3 Budgets and outturns for Sub-Action 1.1 (Youth Exchanges) under Youth in Action Programme between 2007-2013 (Source: YiA - Extracts from the successive annual reporting, 2015)

It is very obvious that number of Youth Exchanges granted on centralized level is greatly lower than for Youth Exchanges on decentralized level. The reason for this, which is also described in theoretical part of this thesis, is that whole the programme is trying to bring activities as closer to local needs as possible. For this reason, vast majority of Youth Exchanges is granted on purpose on decentralized level by National Agencies in each country.

As with the overall budget for whole the programme, here we can see that the actual outturn for Youth Exchanges is again higher than the budget in years 2010-2013.

Table 3 also enables us to calculate that **each year it was between 18% and 20% of the overall budget** for Youth in Action Programme **which was used on Youth Exchanges** on decentralized level.

in MioEUR	Amount used for Sub-Action 1.1 (Youth Exchanges) on decentralized level						
	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
Country ¹³							
Belgium	1,026	0,764	0,600	0,635	0,520	0,587	0,594
Bulgaria	0,969	0,877	0,752	0,792	0,567	0,571	0,467
Czech Republic	0,689	0,696	0,575	0,557	0,533	0,665	0,674
Denmark	0,612	0,576	0,407	0,405	0,578	0,305	0,494
Germany	5,215	4,280	3,216	3,045	2,809	2,850	2,859
Estonia	0,854	0,569	0,458	0,505	0,467	0,407	0,359
Greece	0,951	0,828	0,765	0,571	0,445	0,684	0,684
Spain	2,473	2,171	1,988	1,907	1,787	1,855	1,944
France	3,814	2,956	2,479	2,806	2,226	2,323	2,245
Croatia	0,623	0,353	0,179				
Ireland	0,598	0,371	0,292	0,362	0,243	0,296	0,284
Italy	3,299	2,355	2,414	1,848	1,720	1,841	1,245
Cyprus	0,693	0,393	0,431	0,256	0,090	0,395	0,294
Latvia	0,725	0,572	0,514	0,421	0,411	0,467	0,372
Lithuania	0,689	0,613	0,612	0,549	0,553	0,510	0,510
Luxemburg	0,337	0,320	0,301	0,197	0,102	0,097	0,256
Hungary	0,942	0,783	0,653	0,755	0,757	0,722	0,627
Malta	0,470	0,307	0,093	0,041	0,227	0,180	0,137
Netherland	1,090	1,012	0,724	0,761	0,771	0,859	0,629
Austria	0,720	0,550	0,563	0,524	0,631	0,560	0,653
Poland	2,767	2,622	2,437	2,344	2,070	2,296	2,122
Portugal	1,244	0,904	0,820	0,744	0,755	0,746	0,713
Romania	1,843	1,533	1,295	1,280	1,236	0,456	0,506
Slovenia	0,726	0,554	0,486	0,472	0,399	0,414	0,345
Slovakia	1,025	0,652	0,650	0,577	0,375	0,426	0,499
Finland	0,929	0,630	0,710	0,620	0,699	0,690	0,512
Sweden	0,925	0,710	0,558	0,660	0,661	0,494	0,653
United Kingdom	2,177	1,552	1,698	1,436	1,503	1,205	1,805
Iceland	0,345	0,427	0,259	0,341	0,219	0,102	0,222
Lichtenstein	0,102	0,037	0,055	0,014	0,043	0,090	0,026
Norway	0,788	0,566	0,489	0,512	0,260	0,294	0,387
Switzerland	0,117	0,058	0,089				
Turkey	3,791	4,103	2,773	2,187	2,341	2,121	0,858
Total	43,568	35,694	30,335	28,124	25,998	25,508	23,975

Tab. 4 Amount used for Sub-Action 1.1 (Youth Exchanges) on decentralized level in Programme countries (Source: YiA - Extracts from the successive annual reporting, 2015)

¹³ Countries written in bold were included in the survey of this thesis

Table 4 shows detailed allocation of money on decentralized level in each programme country during the period of Youth in Action Programme. It can be seen that countries with the highest used amount are Germany, Turkey, Poland, United Kingdom, Italy, France and Spain which reflects the density of population.

However when we calculate the amount per capita, we can find that the countries with the highest support per capita are Lichtenstein, Iceland, Ireland, Malta, Luxemburg and Estonia.

	Sub-Action 1.1 (Youth Exchanges) on decentralized level						
	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
Number of projects granted	2 183	1 878	1 701	1 564	1328	1 314	1 272
Number of participants	79 285	66 968	60 172	46 951	41 051	41 303	40 068
Used by NAs (in MioEUR)	43,568	35,694	30,335	28,124	25,998	25,508	23,975

Tab. 5 General statistics for Youth Exchanges between 2007-2013 (Source: YiA - Extracts from the successive annual reporting, 2015)

Table 5 gathers information about number of projects granted on decentralized level each year. During the years, the number of project raised about 1000 from 2007 to 2013 and number of participants on Youth Exchanges raised almost twice as well.

	Sub-Action 1.1 (Youth Exchanges) on decentralized level						
	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
Average funding per project (in EUR)	19 958	19 006	17 834	17 982	19 577	19 412	18 890
Average funding per participant (in EUR)	550	533	504	599	633	618	599

Tab. 6 Average funding of Youth Exchanges per project and participant (Source: YiA - Extracts from the successive annual reporting, 2015)

Table 6 summarizes average values. Average funding per project is not gradually increasing, instead it can be seen than in 2011 and 2010 it was significantly lower than in other years. The highest average funding per project was in 2013.

Average funding per participant varies as well, the highest average costs per participant were measured in 2009, the lowest in 2011.

4.1.5 Budget of Erasmus+ Programme

Erasmus+ Programme has the **overall indicative frame of 14.774 billion euros** for whole the period of the project (2014-2020).

Since the programme is still very new and only the first year of the programme has been finished, gathered data are less extensive than in case of finished Youth in Action Programme. Vast majority of the date has been acquired directly from European Commission and it consists of preliminary data as well, since all the financial results for 2013 aren't closed yet.

Activity	Year 2014
Budget for Erasmus+ programme (in EUR)	1 450 995 606
Budget for KA1 - Youth (in EUR)	171 073 902
Budget for Youth Exchanges on decentralized level (in EUR)	52 758 000
Number of projects awarded in KA1 - Youth	5 780
Number of Youth Exchanges awarded in programme countries on decentralized level	2 351

Tab. 7 Summary of basic data for Youth Exchanges under Erasmus+ Programme (Source: Second amendment of the 2014 annual work programme for the implementation of Erasmus+, 2014)

In case of Youth in Action Programme and its results, we can already compare budget and actual outturn, however in case of Erasmus+ Programme, these data are not available yet hence we can only work with amounts which have been allocated to different actions.

Table 7 also shows the amount which was allocated to Youth Exchanges under the new programme. The amount for Youth Exchanges in 2014 under Erasmus+ Programme is almost 10 million higher than in 2013 under Youth in Action Programme.

The number of Youth Exchanges organized in 2014 is again higher than in 2013 however the increase of number of the projects is not as significant as the increase of allocated amount. As a result we can observe an increase in average funding per project in 2014.

The amount allocated to Youth under KA1 action of Erasmus+ Programme cannot be directly compared to amounts allocated to Youth in Action Programme, because the structure of both programmes is a bit different. The number is included in the table, as well as the amount for whole the project, to give an idea about the overall structure of distribution.

Results for year 2014		
Programme Country	Budget for Youth Mobility KA1 (Youth Exchanges) on decentralized level (in EUR)	Number of Youth Exchanges granted
Belgium	1 346 690	51
Bulgaria	1 213 403	66
Czech Republic	1 293 360	55
Denmark	956 591	24
Germany	5 060 808	252
Estonia	803 686	54
Greece	1 227 818	39
Spain	3 417 936	147
France	4 107 771	163
Croatia	882 812	64
Ireland	889 101	13
Italy	3 742 456	151
Cyprus	703 258	32
Latvia	789 894	37
Lithuania	956 773	81
Luxemburg	508 644	13
Hungary	1 326 141	69
Malta	506 012	20
Netherland	1 697 658	42
Austria	1 071 787	48
Poland	3 473 671	211
Portugal	1 289 247	63
Romania	2 139 185	148
Slovenia	766 153	57
Slovakia	1 011 017	43
Finland	960 235	46
Sweden	1 275 659	35
United Kingdom	4 158 939	83
Iceland	502 760	16
Lichtenstein	128 795	1
Norway	949 979	19
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	105 495	5
Turkey	3 494 266	203
Total	52 758 000	2351

Tab. 8 Youth Exchanges in Programme countries (Source: Erasmus+ detailed activities KA1, 2015)

Table 8 shows the distribution of the amount allocated to programme countries in 2014. Right column shows the number of projects awarded in this year.

4.2 The Survey Process

Survey was made to help to answer main research question from the point of view of organizations which are or were preparing Youth Exchanges.

4.2.1 Research Methodology

Quantitative collection of data was chosen for survey in practical part of this thesis, because its use is the most suitable form of data gathering for purposes of collection of this type of data among higher number of respondents.

Chraska states several interdependent and interconnected steps which are intersecting during the academic research. He also states basic scheme of individual activities:

- Problem determination
- Formulation of hypothesis
- Testing (verification, authentication) of hypothesis
- Conclusions and their presentation (Chraska, 2007).

Problem determination mostly focuses on gathering all the information possible from the area of interest. As a main source mostly serves the internet (also books, academic publications, official reports etc.), e.g. official websites of the programmes and European bodies, as it was the case in this thesis. Problem determination also focuses on precise definition of terms, which are used during the research. (Chraska, 2007).

Formulation of the hypotheses should be stated in notification sentence and should be expressing the relationship between two variables, e.g. the argument on differences, relations or consequences (Chraska, 2007).

Verification of the hypotheses and conclusion are the last steps of the research. During verification, it's examined if the hypothesis can be accepted or not. On the basis of these hypotheses, conclusions and recommendations are drawn (Chraska, 2007).

All the relevant information needed for understanding the results of the survey are elaborated in chapter Literature Overview of this thesis.

4.2.2 The Creation of the Survey

Survey was being created for couple of weeks, because it was necessary to examine the theoretical background for questions as well as to gather all necessary supporting materials in order to ask questions which will help to answer research questions of this thesis.

Created questions are based on study of official programme guides, information based on data obtained separately from National Agencies, aims of Europe 2020 strategy and authors own experience when organizing Youth Exchange supported by Youth in Action.

After several consultations with research assistants on Marketing department of Mendel University in Brno, number of required responses was set for at least 100 successfully completed surveys. This number is sufficient for purposes of this thesis and quota sampling method also increases the representativeness of the survey, however the number of responses is not extremely large. Survey is also conducted internationally among organizations (not persons) in 20 countries which puts high demands on the author and his ability to gather all responses and make contacts with selected organizations.

Important aspect of the survey is the attractiveness of the questions asked as well as the introductory text with explanation about the research. It is also important not to discourage the respondent by complicated-looking structure of the survey (Kozel, 2006).

Survey is basically divided into 5 areas and contains 21 questions. Questions start with the general information about the organization followed by questions about Europe 2020 strategy and Youth on the Move, then the survey moves to the third area about Youth in Action programme and Erasmus+ programme, fourth area covers National Agencies and last area focuses on the goal itself of youth mobility programmes.

Aim of the survey is to explore opinions and attitudes of youth organizations which actively organize or have been organizing Youth Exchanges via Youth in Action and Erasmus+.

Collected opinions will be used for recommendations and analysis of compatibility of the programme with Europe 2020 strategy.

Survey works with hypotheses mentioned below, for successful acquisition of results, it is important to concentrate on those partial aims especially:

- Do organizations know Europe 2020 strategy and Youth on the Move initiative? Do they consider them when writing grant application?
- Do organizations see a difference between Youth Exchanges under Youth in Action and Erasmus+?
- Do organizations cooperate with National Agencies?
- Do organizations think that Youth Exchanges contribute to higher mobility of young people within Europe?
- Have organizations been questioned about finished Youth in Action programme and their opinions could have helped to improve new Erasmus+ programme? Did they have any influence on possible changes?

Following **hypotheses** were determined:

1. More than 70% of organizations know Europe 2020 strategy and Youth on the Move initiative.
2. More than 50% of organizations see a difference between Youth Exchanges under Youth in Action and under Erasmus+.
3. More than 50% of organizations were asked on their opinions on Youth in Action programme to improve new Erasmus+ programme.
4. More than 70% of organizations think that Youth Exchanges contribute to higher mobility of young people within Europe.

Survey was formed in electronic form in English. English language was chosen, because it is an universal language used among youth organizations as well as grant application is always available in English. Electronic survey was chosen for its easy accessibility. Survey was created via Google Form which is widely used when organizing international projects hence the vast majority of organizations use it on daily basis.

Organizations were approached via email, official page on social network or personally.

4.2.3 Quota selection of respondents

Quota selection of respondents has been chosen for purposes of this thesis. This subchapter explains, why this approach was used and why it is suitable for needs of this survey.

Quota sampling is one of intentional techniques (non-probability techniques) and is mostly used when we want to keep parameters of a core set. However, the condition is that we have to know distribution of selected parameters in a core set (Kozel, 2011).

Since the author established the core set at the Table 9, we could have determined percentage distribution of responds needed for this survey. Quota sampling is an acceptable alternative to probability sample surveys which requires higher number of respondents than quota sampling (Cumming, 1990).

Quota sampling is usually used by market research companies which select subjects into sub-groups depending on selected criteria. These criteria are mostly age and sex, however the choice of criteria is given to researcher. Quota sampling provides representativeness in terms of quota controls, but mostly widely used statistical theory cannot be applied on quota sampling as well as we also cannot calculate response rates. Despite these problems, Kish concedes that quota sampling is generally superior to other forms of non-probability sampling (Kish, 1995).

When establishing **criteria for quota sampling** in this thesis, it was essential to gather information about projects in each of Youth in Action Programme

Countries, especially Member states of European Union¹⁴. Results of granted projects should be published on websites of National Agencies of each country separately. However some of the countries don't provide these information anymore since the programme is finished or it is very difficult to find these results on web pages in national languages.

Results of granted projects has been gathered by researcher herself from official web pages as well as by long-standing email and phone communication with National Agencies from all the Member States. Long-term communication with European bodies such as European Commission brought results, however it is surprising that results of activities are not published on their official portals and it is so difficult to gather them!

It was possible to obtain results of granted projects and organizations providing these Youth Exchanges from 20 countries. Countries and number of projects for each year of programme are summarized in table below.

¹⁴ Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom, added also Norway from EFTA

	Youth in Action (1.1) projects							
Country	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	Total
Bulgaria	56	53	51	53	35	33	26	307
Czech Republic	45	43	43	37	33	37	44	282
Denmark	24	20	16	14	21	13	17	125
Germany	211	188	152	143	133	124	137	1088
Estonia	50	31	28	29	28	25	21	212
Spain	148	126	125	110	99	102	93	803
France	191	146	128	148	107	113	111	944
Ireland	32	23	18	20	14	12	15	134
Italy	184	128	138	101	85	93	57	786
Cyprus	28	19	17	10	4	14	11	103
Latvia	44	39	33	21	23	28	22	210
Hungary	45	42	42	48	42	42	38	299
Malta	21	17	5	2	11	11	9	76
Poland	182	174	161	166	125	141	139	1088
Romania	124	105	96	87	76	29	31	548
Slovenia	41	36	29	28	24	23	21	202
Slovakia	67	43	42	32	23	23	32	262
Sweden	44	31	29	36	29	23	22	214
United Kingdom	90	62	80	77	68	59	93	529
Norway	28	14	23	23	9	11	15	123
Total								8335

Tab. 9 Youth in Action (1.1) granted projects in selected countries 2007 - 2013 (Source: Author`s own elaboration)

Table 9 serves as a core set of total number of projects in selected countries. This set was used to establish quota sampling.

After the consultations on Department of Marketing and study of literature, number of responds needed was established at more than 100. Author decided to gather 120, resp. 122 responds. Since the survey is gathered internationally in 20 different countries and it is only the author who is working on this research, established number of responds is sufficient both for quota sampling and purposes of this thesis.

The process of calculation is described in table 10 below.

Country	Total projects	Average per Year	% from Total	Responses needed
Bulgaria	307	43,9	3,7	4
Czech Republic	282	40,3	3,4	4
Denmark	125	17,9	1,5	2
Germany	1088	155,4	13,1	16
Estonia	212	30,3	2,5	3
Spain	803	114,7	9,6	12
France	944	134,9	11,3	14
Ireland	134	19,1	1,6	2
Italy	786	112,3	9,4	11
Cyprus	103	14,7	1,2	2
Latvia	210	30	2,5	3
Hungary	299	42,7	3,6	4
Malta	76	10,9	0,9	1
Poland	1088	155,4	13,1	16
Romania	548	78,3	6,6	8
Slovenia	202	28,9	2,4	3
Slovakia	262	37,4	3,1	4
Sweden	214	30,6	2,6	3
United Kingdom	529	75,6	6,3	8
Norway	123	17,6	1,5	2
Total	8335	1190,9	100%	122

Tab. 10 Quota sampling process (Source: Author's own elaboration)

The number of responds needed was calculated in a few steps. Firstly, it was necessary to calculate total number of granted projects in selected countries per whole term of Youth in Action programme (2007-2013), the average number of granted projects per year was added to the table to inform the reader about basic parameters of the core set.

Next step was to calculate the percentage of projects for selected country from total number of the projects (fourth row of the table).

The last step was to calculate the number of responds needed from each of the selected countries (last row). This number was obtained by simple calculation – 120 responds needed was multiplied by percentage of projects per certain country and this whole number was then divided by 100(%). When we calculated and rounded this number per all 20 countries, we got 122 as a number of total responds needed.

4.2.4 Survey Results

The process of collecting surveys lasted seven weeks, from 2.3.2015 till 20.4.2015 and 122 responses were obtained according to needs of quota sampling. The survey contained of 21 questions. Cover letter sent by email,

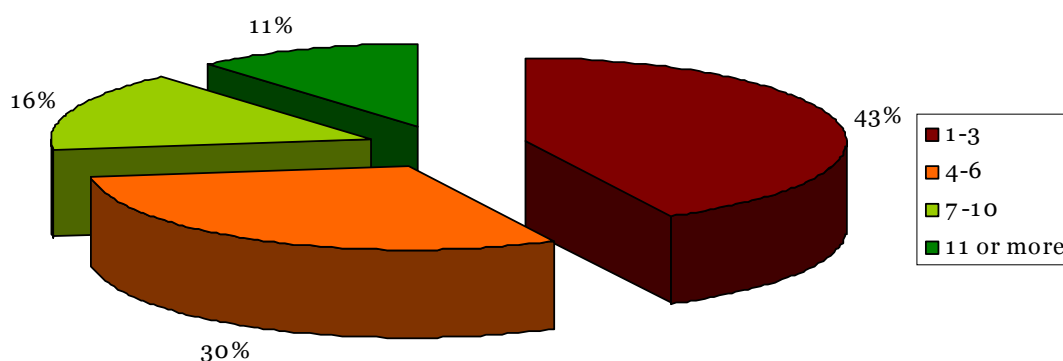
complete survey structure and tables with results can be found in Appendix A and B of this thesis.

Identification questions

Since the survey is filled in by organizations and no persons, identification questions were absent of questions about age or gender. The crucial information however was identification of the country and name of the subject. Nationalities were gathered exactly according the quota sampling structure. Names of organizations are not published anywhere and serve mainly as an identification of the subject among others as well as it helps in the communication between the researcher and organization in terms of further questions.

How many Youth Exchanges granted via Youth in Action (1.1) has your organization organized between 2007-2013?

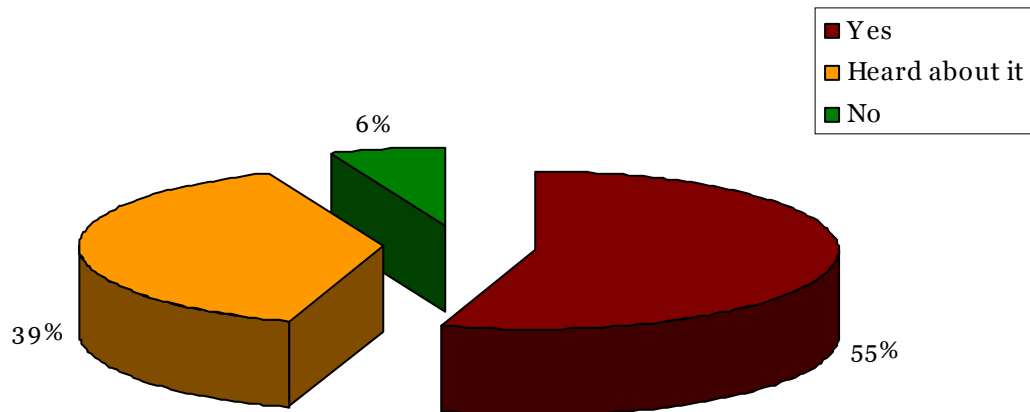
Youth Exchange basic criteria: duration 6-21 days, 16-60 participants aged mostly between 13-25 (20% aged between 25-30)



Pic. 10 Number of Youth Exchanges organized by organizations between 2007-2013
(Source: Author's own elaboration)

We can see that 43% of respondents have organized 1-3 Youth Exchanges, however more than half of the respondents have organized more. Structure of organized projects will help us to better understand personal comments of some organizations and their reasons, why they have decided to start to organize more projects and develop their skills in this area or why they have decided not to do Youth Exchanges any more.

Youth in Action and Erasmus+ wants to fulfil the aim of Europe 2020 strategy. Do you know this strategy?



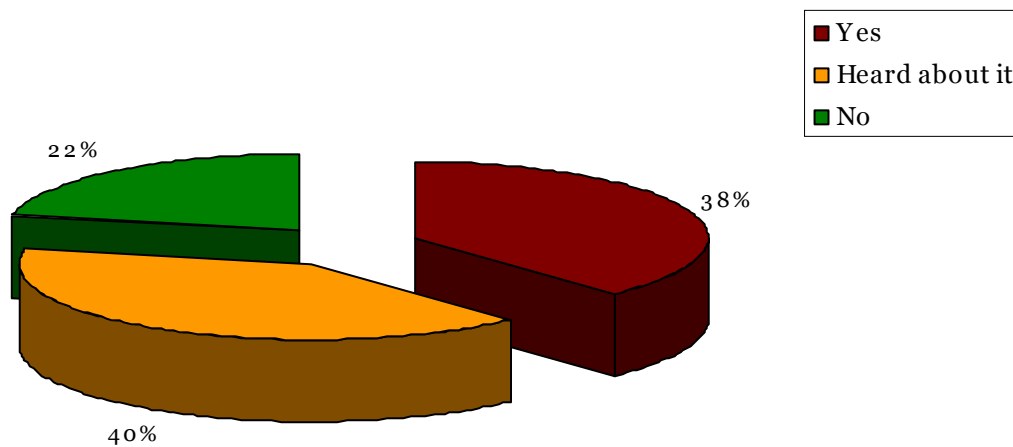
Pic. 11 Awareness of the Europe 2020 strategy (Source: Author's own elaboration)

Results are showing that 55% of respondents are confident about their knowledge of Europe 2020 strategy, however almost 40% only heard about it and 6% do not know it at all.

It is questionable if workers who are responsible for youth programmes should know strategies like this one which is not directly essential for success in their work. On the other side, as is shown in structure on Picture 1, Europe 2020 stands at the beginning of youth programmes and somehow stands above it.

The question arising from this result is if Youth Exchanges can be actually successful even when their organizers don't know properly the strategy itself?

Do you know the initiative Youth on the Move?

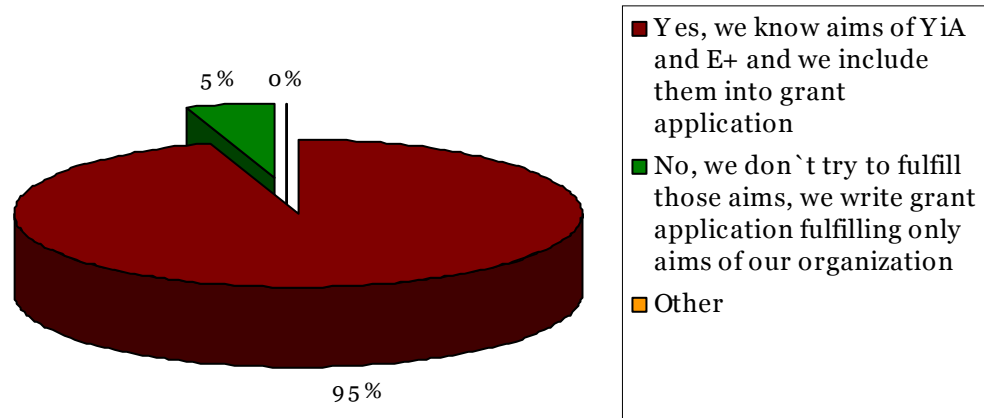


Pic. 12 Awareness of the Youth on the Move strategy (Source: Author's own elaboration)

We have seen in previous question that knowledge about Europe 2020 strategy wasn't enormous, but here we can see that with Youth on the Move it's much worse. Strategy is not very well known itself even though it should serve as a flagship initiative of Europe 2020 strategy which should bring more concrete aims in area of youth.

There is quite a lot of space in raising awareness of Youth on the Move strategy as organizations don't know it properly and results of the survey also shows that their official website is the less visited from other official web pages offering information about youth programmes.

When writing grant application, do you consider aim of Youth in Action or Erasmus+ programme?



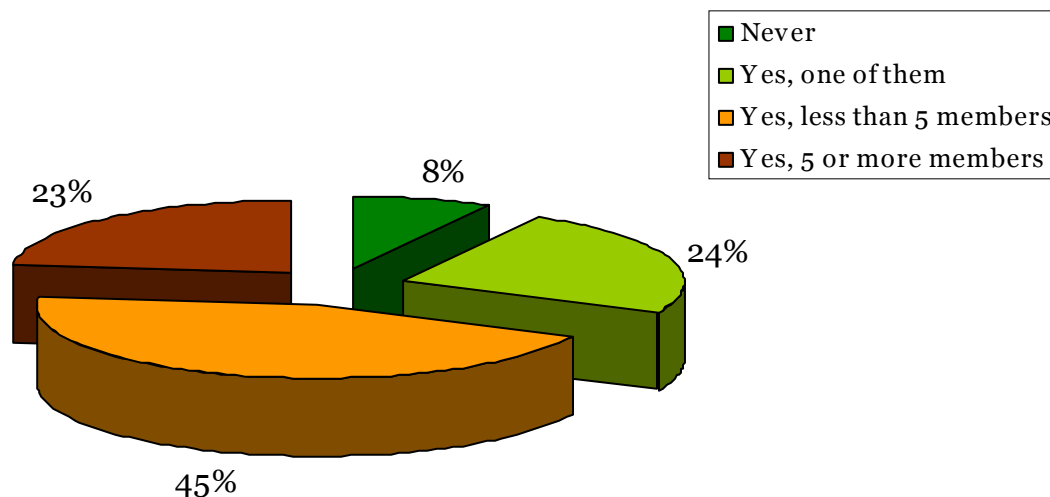
Pic. 13 Consideration of aims of Youth in Action and Erasmus+ Programme
(Source: Author's own elaboration)

This chart shows optimistic result that 95% of respondents know aims of Youth in Action and Erasmus+ including them in their grant applications. It also, in fact, shows that many organizations know for them important parts of Europe 2020 strategy and Youth on the Move without even noticing it, because these parts are covered in aims of Youth in Action and Erasmus+ Programme.

Especially with new Erasmus+ programme, the importance of involvement of these aims became even more essential than before, hence it is understandable that organizations which wish to be successful in application procedure has to study these aims and involve them in grant application.

The problem which many organizations are facing though is the fact that applications are very often valuated considering highly these aims and the programme of Youth Exchange becomes less important.

Have members of your organization participated in any trainings focused on Youth Exchanges via YiA (1.1) or E+ (KA1) programme?



Pic. 14 Participation on trainings for Youth in Action or Erasmus+ Programme
(Source: Author's own elaboration)

Only 8% of respondents never sent some of their members to any training about Youth Exchanges which means that 92% did it or do it, for 68% of responding organization it is a regular thing.

This is a very positive result, because proper knowledge about Youth Exchanges is beneficial for both sides – organizers, who are better prepared for applications and whole project cycle as well as project itself and National Agencies, which can receive higher quality applications and evaluate projects with higher quality outcomes.

By whom was this training provided?

Voluntary question which was filled in by 59 respondents (nearly half of them) was included to get information about providers of trainings.

- In 37 cases respondents got the training from their or even foreign National Agencies.
- In 12 cases the training was provided by various organizations as a form of international cooperation between organizations.
- In 10 cases the training was provided by Salto-Youth.

Salto-Youth is a network of 8 research centres focusing on European priority in the area of youth. It provides wide network of organizations and ensures the cooperation between European bodies, National Agencies and youth

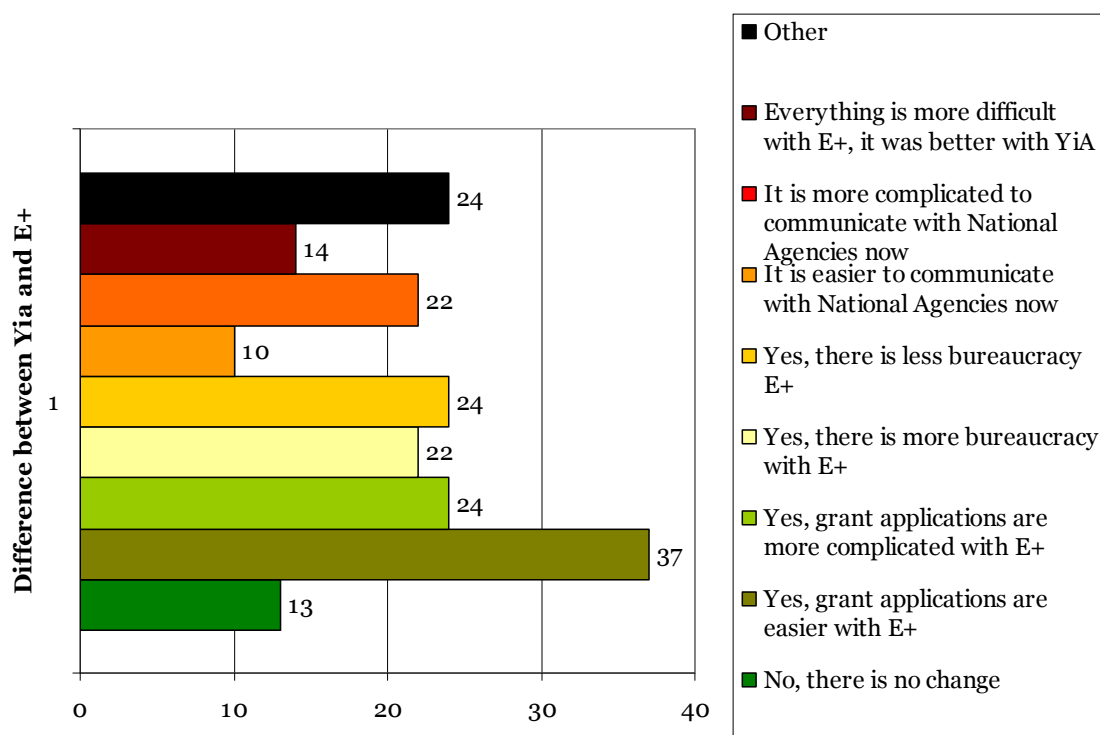
organizations. Salto-Youth is part of European Commissions` s Training system within the Youth in Action and now Erasmus+ Programme (Salto Youth, 2015).

Do you see a difference between Youth Exchanges under Youth in Action Programme (1.1) and Erasmus+ Programme (KA1)?

Do you see a difference between Youth Exchanges under YiA (1.1) and E+ (KA1)?			
	Number of responses	% of total number of responses	% of total number of respondents (122)
No, there is no change	13	6%	11%
Yes, grant applications are easier with E+	37	19%	30%
Yes, grant applications are more complicated with E+	24	13%	20%
Yes, there is more bureaucracy with E+	22	12%	18%
Yes, there is less bureaucracy E+	24	13%	20%
It is easier to communicate with National Agencies now	10	5%	8%
It is more complicated to communicate with National Agencies now	22	12%	18%
Everything is more difficult with E+, it was better with YiA	14	7%	11%
Other	24	13%	20%
Total	190	100%	

Tab. 11 Difference between Youth in Action Programme and Erasmus+ Programme
(Source: Author's own elaboration)

This question was offering multiple answers and 190 responses were collected. Table 11 shows number of responses in absolute numbers, as a percentage of total number of responses from this question (190) and also the percentage of total number of respondents (122).



Pic. 15 Difference between Youth in Action Programme and Erasmus+ Programme
(Source: Author's own elaboration)

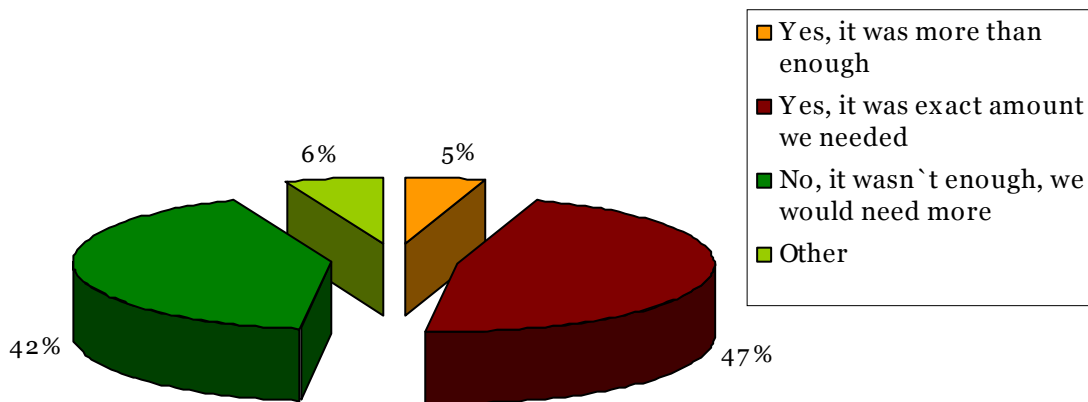
Responses on the Picture 15 differ quite a lot. We can see that no response is significantly higher or lower than others. Picture shows that 37 people responded that applications are easier with Erasmus+, but 24 people responded the opposite, that applications are more complicated than before.

Another example provided says that 24 respondents think that there is less bureaucracy with Erasmus+, but again, 22 respondents says the opposite.

Question about communication with National Agencies is also not absolutely clear, however here only 10 respondents think that it is easier to communicate with National Agencies than before and 22 respondents think that it is more complicated now. It can be caused by the association of many projects under the Erasmus+ Programme which was described in the chapter Literature Overview of this thesis. National Agencies are now responsible for a lot of administration under one programme and even for them it is a big change. Their websites can also be now more filled with information and it takes more time to find a concrete one.

In option Other appeared a few responses from organizations which haven't applied for Erasmus+ yet or they were discouraged by a new system and how complicated it seemed to them as well as responses that there are changes and some of them made it better than before and some of them worse.

Did you find the grant money sufficient for your project(s)?

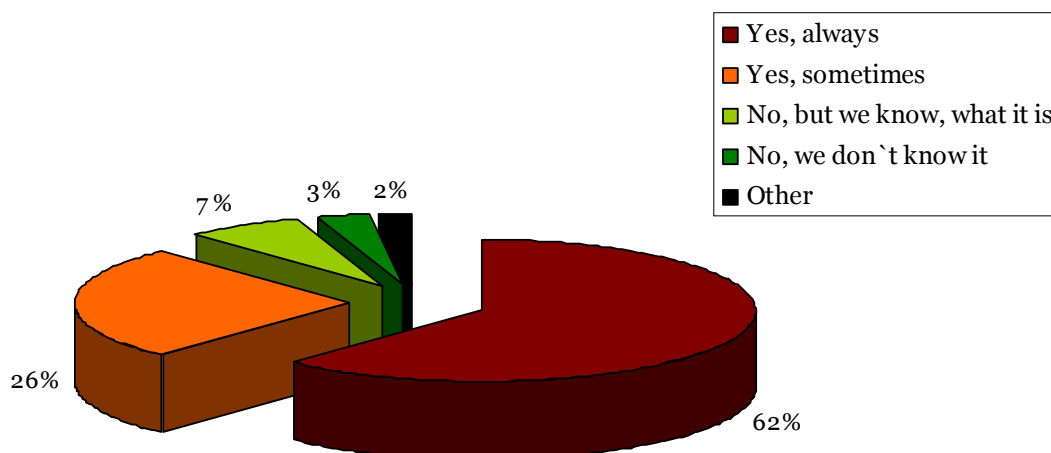


Pic. 16 Grant money sufficiency for the projects (Source: Author's own elaboration)

Responses for this question are again inconsistent, because 47% of respondents believe that they have got the exact amount of money needed, however 42% of respondent identify it as insufficient. Only 5% of respondents got more money than they needed which is positive answer in terms of misuse of grant financing.

In option Other respondents mentioned that they liked the system for Youth in Action more, especially because of the new travel calculator of Erasmus+ which was criticized couple of times in the survey. Respondents were complaining about the amount of money for some participants which are not sufficient as well as they have troubles to cover expenses for trainers and workers of their own organization.

Do you use Youthpass on your projects?



Pic. 17 Use of Youthpass on the projects. (Source: Author's own elaboration)

Youthpass as a tool was described at the sub-chapter 3.5 in chapter Literature Overview of this thesis. Results show that 62% of organizations always use it in their Youth Exchanges projects and 26% of responding organizations use it sometimes. Only 10% of respondents either don't use it, but at least know the term or don't know the term at all.

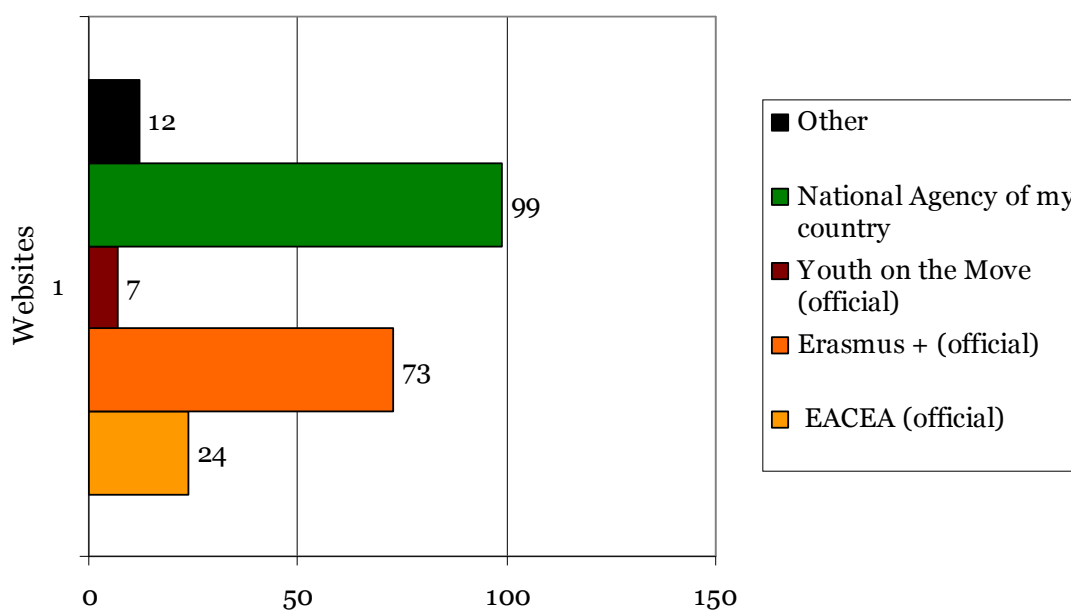
European Commission is trying to encourage more organizations to use a Youthpass, because it gives participants some measurable result of their gained knowledge from the project. The use of Youthpass is still only voluntary and organizations don't have any benefits from using it, hence many of them decide not to do it at all. Some organizations however make certificates issued by the organization which provides the training.

On which websites do you look for information about Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1) (deadlines, grant applications, aims etc.)?

On which websites do you look for information about Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1) (deadlines, grant applications, aims etc.)?			
	Number of responses	% of total number of responses	% of total number of respondents (122)
EACEA (official)	24	11%	20%
Erasmus + (official)	73	34%	60%
Youth on the Move (official)	7	3%	6%
National Agency of my country	99	46%	81%
Other	12	6%	10%
Total	215	100%	

Tab. 12 Information about Youth Exchanges on websites (Source: Author's own elaboration)

Respondents had again the possibility of multiple answers and 215 responses were gathered.



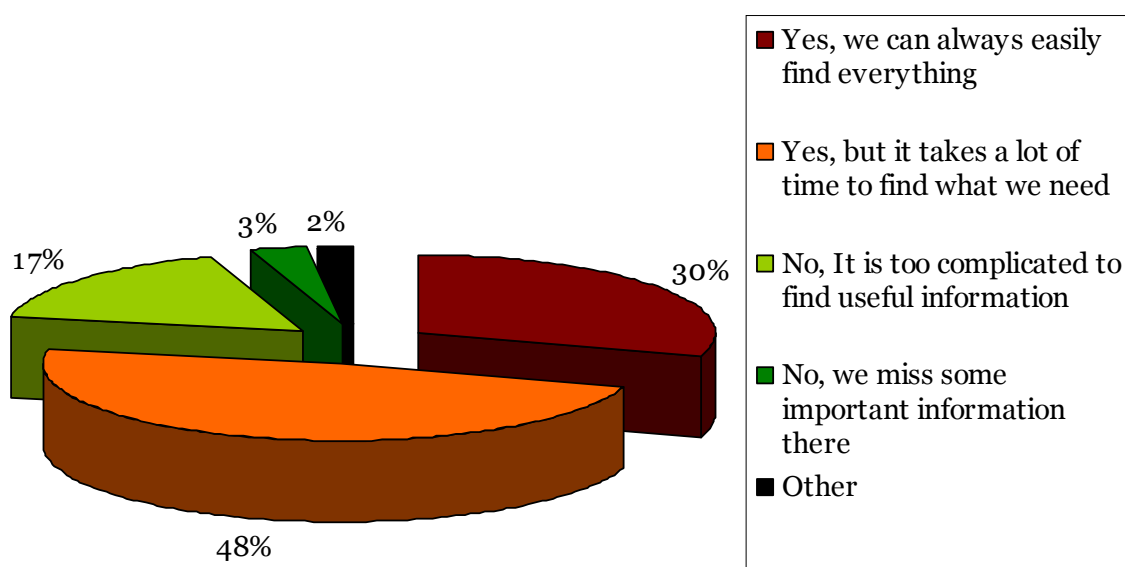
Pic. 18 Information about Youth Exchanges on websites (Source: Author's own elaboration)

Differences between answers are very obvious in this case. Vast majority of organizations are looking for information on official website of their National

Agency (each country has its own National Agency) or on official website of Erasmus+ Programme as well. Web page of EACEA is not often used, but official page of Youth on the Move is used very rarely.

Organizations also mentioned that they are looking for information on Facebook, web pages of other organizations, Eurodesk and also Salto-Youth page. They are also using their network of international contacts to gather and share useful and important information.

Are you satisfied with information provided online on official websites?



Pic. 19 Satisfaction with information provided on official websites (Source: Author's own elaboration)

Almost 50% of respondents are satisfied with provided information however claiming that it is complicated to find information they need and it takes a lot of time, 30% of respondents can always easily find everything and only 20% of respondents claims that the website is too complicated or that they cannot find important information there at all.

What do you miss on official websites?

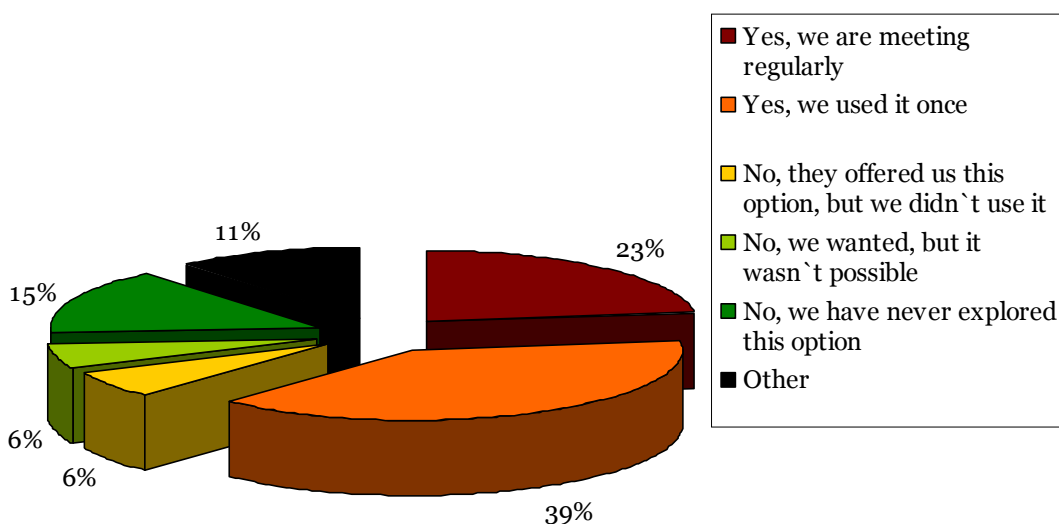
Voluntary question with free field for the response which was answered by 26 organizations. Respondents are missing especially:

- practical advices
- practical guidelines about lose/get points

- tutorials for the process of building youth exchanges and testimonies of organisation about difficulties and success
- more information about the budget
- more information about priorities and aims of the programmes
- instructions or best practises on what to write in all the forms
- a young people friendly approach in communication
- user friendly approach for interested applicants
- clear deadlines of all youth programs
- tables dedicated to the level of organizations knowledge of E+

From the comments of organizations is very obvious that many of them are missing especially practical information about what to cover into the application form, some advices from other organizations as well as some platform for sharing these experiences. Many responses strictly used word “practical” as a missing element on the websites. Organizations are also missing more friendly and young approach which should be considered when communicating with youth workers.

Did your organization receive or was offered any kind of support from National Agency like workshops about grant applications, consultations etc.?



Pic. 20 Support from National Agencies (Source: Author's own elaboration)

Not even a half of the organizations, 39%, used once the possibility of consultation from National Agency, 23% use it regularly and 27% either didn't

want to use it, never explored this option by themselves or wanted to use it, but it wasn't possible.

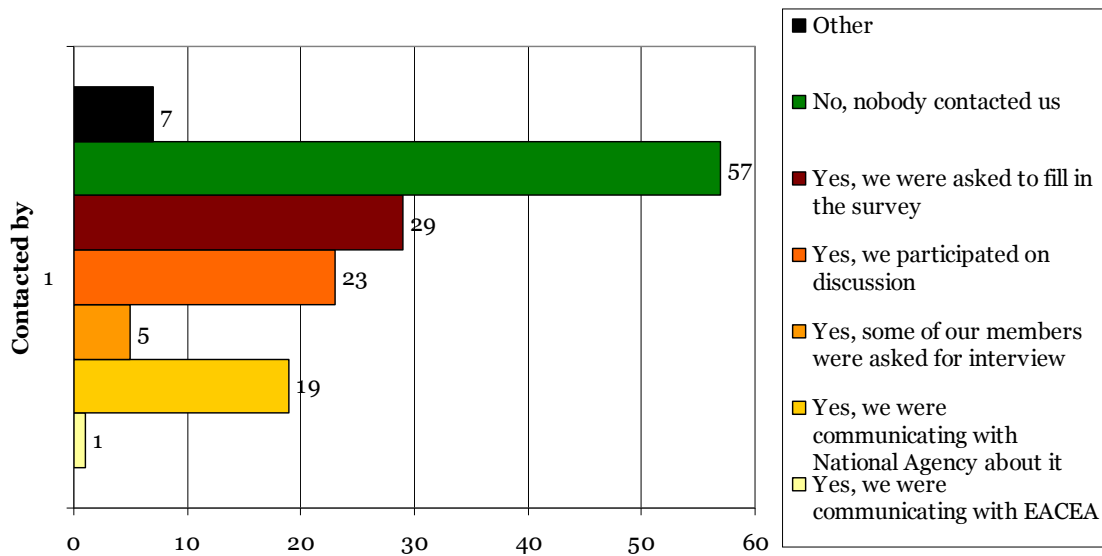
The option Other with a free space for the answer was chosen by 11% of respondents who mentioned opposing views. Some of them commended National Agency and their cooperation, but some of them on contrary criticized the National Agency for lack of useful information or level of information provided. It can be caused by differences between all the National Agencies, because each country has its own, the approach to applicants can differ a lot.

Was your organization somehow invited/questioned to work on transition of Youth in Action programme (1.1) into Erasmus+ (KA1)?

Was your organization somehow invited/questioned to work on transition of Youth in Action programme (1.1) into Erasmus+ (KA1)?			
	Number of responses	% of total number of responses	% of total number of respondents (122)
Yes, we were communicating with EACEA	1	1%	1%
Yes, we were communicating with National Agency about it	19	13%	16%
Yes, some of our members were asked for interview	5	4%	4%
Yes, we participated on discussion	23	16%	19%
Yes, we were asked to fill in the survey	29	21%	24%
No, nobody contacted us	57	40%	47%
Other	7	5%	6%
Total	141	100%	

Tab. 13 Questioning about transition of YiA into E+ (Source: Author`s own elaboration)

Question with possibility of multiple answers was filled in with 141 responses.

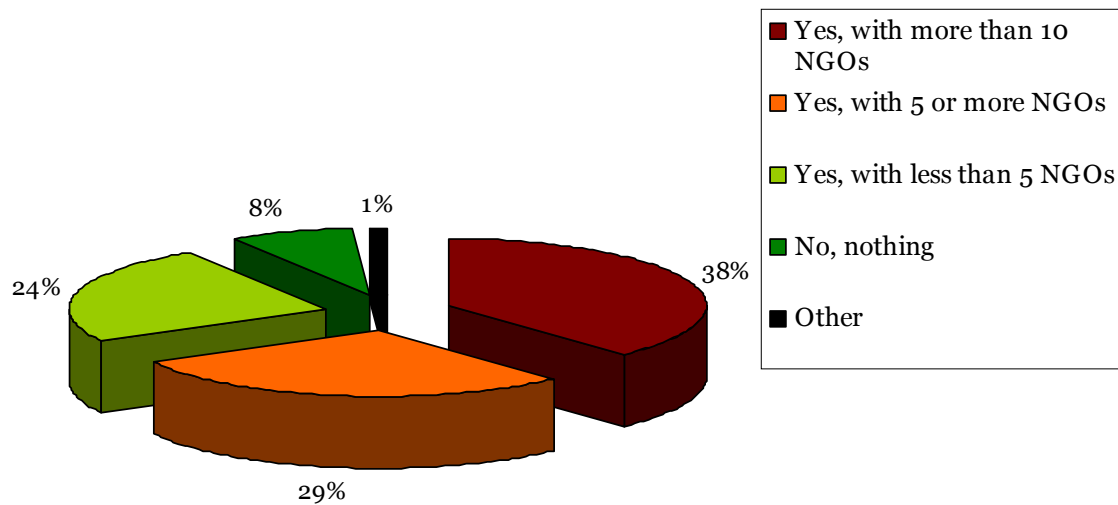


Pic. 21 Questioning about transition of YiA into E+ (Source: Author's own elaboration)

This is a crucial question, because one of the aims of the thesis is to examine if organizations had any power to influence the change of Youth Exchanges from Youth in Action to Erasmus+.

From the results we can see that almost a half of organizations were not contacted at all. On the other side, the other half was contacted, mostly with a survey or in a form of discussion. Not many members were asked for interview. Basically nobody was communicating with EACEA, most of the questioning was gathering from the side of National Agencies. National Agencies work as a conjunction between organizations on a local level and European bodies, however there is a question how much were the comments from local organizations considered on European level.

Has your organization developed partnerships with other NGOs during organization of Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1)?



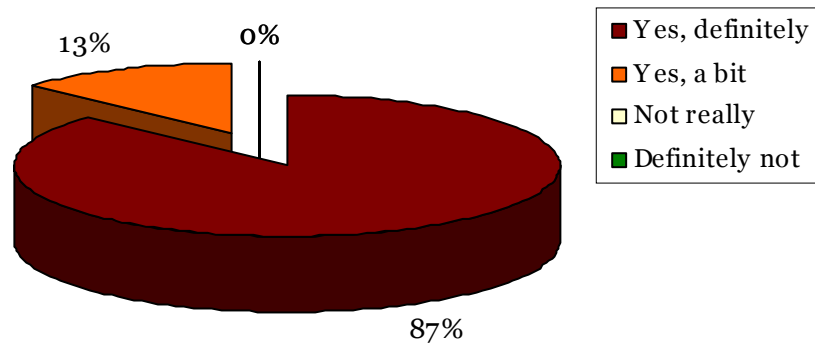
Pic. 22 Development of partnership with other NGOs (Source: Author's own elaboration)

This is a very positive result, establishing the cooperation with other NGOs and organizations is an important part of Youth in Action and Erasmus+ Programme.

We can see that 38% of respondents established cooperation with more than 10 other organizations, 29% of respondents with 5 or more. Only 8% of organizations didn't establish any kind of cooperation with others.

Cooperation of organizations focusing on same area, youth in our case, is very beneficial and considering responses from other questions, we can see that many organizations provide trainings for their partners, share information or create a new projects together. These activities create a network which is also less dependent on information and support only from National Agency and can very well solve many obstacles with support of other organizations.

Do you think that Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1) contribute to higher mobility of young people within Europe?

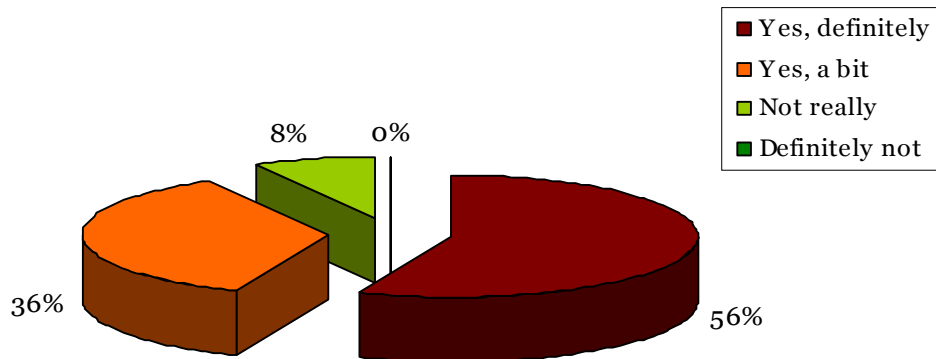


Pic. 23 Contribution to higher mobility of young people within Europe (Source: Author's own elaboration)

Responses to this question are very convincing. Vast majority of organizations, 87% of them, believe that Youth Exchanges contribute to higher mobility of young people, 13% of respondents think that it helps a bit, but more important is that nobody thinks that it wouldn't help a bit or not at all.

This is an optimistic result when we put it in the context with asymmetric shocks. As mentioned in the theoretical part of this thesis, European Union supports programmes which can help people to be more flexible to move for a job not only in their own country, but also within the borders of European Union. We can see that Youth Exchanges raise the ability of participants to look for a job on more favourable labour markets.

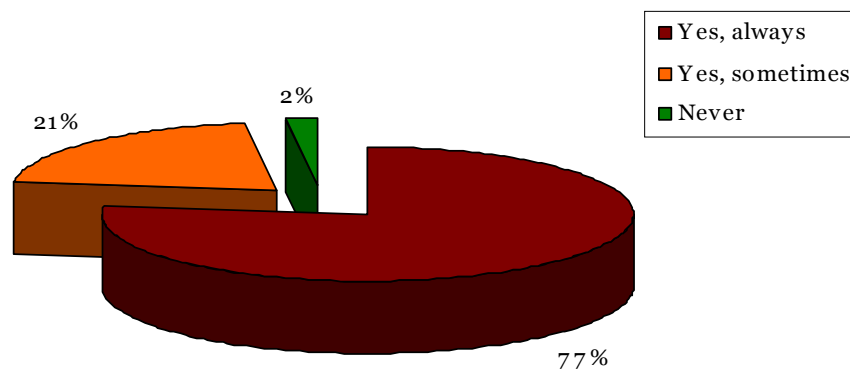
Do you think that Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1) organized by your NGO help participants to be more successful on labour market?



Pic. 24 Success of participants on the labour market (Source: Author's own elaboration)

Results of this question are not so clear as in the previous one, however it still give us a very convincing result. More than half of organizations are confident that Youth Exchanges can help participants to be more successful on the labour market and 36% of them think that it will help them a bit. Nobody is definitely against the statement and only 8% is “not really” in favour.

When organizing Youth Exchange (1.1, KA1), do you create evaluation form to measure impact of the project on participants?



Pic. 25 Use of evaluation forms measuring the impact of the projects (Source: Author's own elaboration)

Evaluation forms are very important part measuring the success and usefulness of the event and they should be always used. There are 77% of organizations

which use it always, 21% of organizations which use it sometimes and 2% which don't use it at all. However it may seem that many organizations use evaluations, it is a part which should always be covered in the life-cycle of the event and which should never be missing.

When it comes to Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1), what do you see as a crucial problem which should be solved and nobody pays attention to it?

Last question in the survey was again voluntary and with a free space for an answer. This particular question was covered mainly to give organizations the possibility to express their opinion on topic which might have not been covered in other questions in the survey. It was filled in with concrete comments by 44 organizations and it brings unique perspective from their side. Their comments were divided into 4 areas which can be interconnected and which can be seen in following text, answering the question "When it comes to Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1), what do you see as a crucial problem which should be solved and nobody pays attention to it?":

Financial area

- *I do not think the daily sum per participants matches economical reality, quality exchanges need more funding.*
- *Leaders should be experienced and also paid.*
- *Higher cost of inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities i.e not enough money to fund workers.*
- *Core staffing costs are underfunded which are needed to develop disadvantaged young people's full participation in KA1. Also, I think that more training opportunities need to be provided in regards to completing the final report as this is a bit of a nightmare!*
- *The applicant organization should get some money. The civil sector is weak. €1000 or 500 would help a lot to those organizations which are really small.*
- *Distance Calculator. The money are not enough to cover tickets. Usually in order to flight to Cyprus participants don't come direct from their country and they must transit flights. so the distance is bigger and the cost more expensive.*
- *Travel costs reimbursement related to actual costs.*
- *At the moment we think the biggest issue is the distance calculator, and the activity costs which are really low and don't help the "inclusion&participation" of young people, especially with fewer opportunities, which should be a main aim of the Program.*
- *With Erasmus + the travel grant is sometimes too low.*

- *The costs for personal assistant for group leader, if he is a person with disabilities.*
- *That if you want a professional project facilitated by professional leaders that you need to pay for more than just the travel and accommodation costs of the young people. Pay for salary costs of the host organisation. Otherwise you have low quality projects run by volunteers (as was our experience of a project we visited in another country).*

Administrative area

- *There is a different understanding of what is youth exchange, also in level of different National Agencies.*
- *Length of time from application to receiving funding. Also grant givers not understanding youth work.*
- *Using our past knowledge to create better working structure.*
- *It would be good to include a follow up questionnaire 1 year later!*
- *Delay from National Agency.*
- *It is very difficult for youngsters to deal with the application.*
- *The incapacity of the National Agency.*

Content of Youth Exchanges

- *The access of all young people to youth exchanges is becoming less and less, although on paper there is more money.*
- *How to evaluate skills/competences of the participants after a project.*
- *Active involvement of the leaders in the youth's learning process.*
- *There are too many exchanges organised by some countries where nothing happens and the level of work is low. More checking should occur.*
- *The content of exchange in many organizations aren't aimed at making the volunteers more successful on labour market.*
- *Problem of weak bond between participants and 'searching' organization. It's almost impossible to 'force' the participants to really attend Youth Exchange one they applied - very often they reject few days before and organizers can do nothing about it and must search for last minute proper alternative.*
- *Groups should be of only 1 or 2 participants. Big groups of 5 spoil the Youth Exchange.*
- *Prepare youngster well before departure.*
- *It is difficult to make planning trips.*
- *Quality of learning process.*

- *Partnership regulations, sometimes partners don't send participants or send participants with the profile which wasn't established within Partnership Agreement between organizations. There are no regulations on the consequences in these situations the Coordinating organization takes whole responsibility (also financial).*
- *It is very hard to find organisation which has really a mission to work for young people. On our Youth Exchanges there are some rules (no alcohol, no drugs), because of this I have a problem to find good partners and most of them would like to have participants from 18 years old up!*
- *Long term impact of the mobility experience on young people.*

Fewer opportunities

- *Visa issues.*
- *The question of people with special needs is very vague.*
- *How could we include more Youngsters with fewer opportunities.*
- *In Scotland nobody knows about Youth Exchanges and when they begin, the first stage of starting and finding partners is very hard and we help to play a part in making sure organizations in Scotland know of these opportunities.*

4.2.5 Evaluation of the Survey

Evaluation of the survey will cover the evaluation of hypotheses as well as overall evaluation of results which bring an interesting result.

Determined **hypotheses** were as follows:

1. More than 70% of organizations know Europe 2020 strategy and Youth on the Move initiative.
2. More than 50% of organizations see a difference between Youth Exchanges under Youth in Action and under Erasmus+.
3. More than 50% of organizations were asked on their opinions on Youth in Action programme to improve new Erasmus+ programme.
4. More than 70% of organizations think that Youth Exchanges contribute to higher mobility of young people within Europe.

Hypothesis 1 is rejected, because results of the survey show that only 55% of organizations know Europe 2020 strategy, however another 39% at least heard about it. Initiative Youth on the Move is known only for 38% of organizations and 40% of respondents heard about it.

Hypothesis 2 is accepted, because only 11% of organizations responded that they don't see any change between Youth Exchanges under Youth in Action and Erasmus+ Programme. However other responses to this question are bit contradictory. For 30% of respondents grant applications seem easier with

Erasmus+ Programme when for 20% it seemed easier with Youth in Action Programme. Bureaucracy seems now easier for 18% of respondents and for 20% of them was easier with older programme.

Hypothesis 3 is accepted, however the result is not absolutely convincing. There were 47% of organizations which weren't contacted, 25% of them were contacted with a survey to fill, 19% of them participated on the discussion, 16% of organizations communicated with National Agency and only 4% were asked for an interview. Most of the communication, when carried out, was made from the side of National Agencies, which brings the question if the results of discussions made it to European Commission as well.

Hypothesis 4 is accepted and the result is very convincing in this case, because 87% of organizations definitely think that Youth Exchanges contribute to higher mobility of young people, another 13% think that it helps a bit.

Except the evaluation of hypotheses, the survey brought some other interesting results.

Among **positive results** belong the fact that 95% of organization know the aims of Youth in Action and Erasmus+ Programmes and they cover them in their grant applications, only 8% of organization have never sent any of their members to the training about Youth in Action or Erasmus+ Programme, which indicates that majority of organization train their employees in understanding of these programmes. Most of the trainings were provided by domestic or even foreign National Agency which shows that decentralized approach works in this case. Youthpass is always used by 62% of organizations and number of organizations which start to use it are increasing every year, however there is still a bit of criticism if this tool is really effective and beneficial as a tool of measurement of gained knowledge on Youth Exchanges.

When it comes to websites which are visited by organizations, most of them visit web pages of their National Agencies or official portal of Erasmus+ Programme. Even though they are mostly satisfied with information provided, they stated that sometimes it's very difficult to find concrete information. Another positive information is that 92% of organization developed some new partnerships with other NGOs which brings a positive result in knowledge sharing and mutual cooperation. Vast majority of respondents is also convince that Youth Exchanges contribute to higher mobility of young people within Europe and 56% says that in also definitely increase their success on the labour market, 38% stated that it helps a bit.

Among **negative results** we can cover very low knowledge about the initiative Youth on the Move which is a flagship initiative of Europe 2020 strategy aimed directly at the area of youth. There were also some personal comments made about the websites. On official websites organizations miss especially practical advices, guidelines about grant applications with advices of what to cover and what don't, more information about the budgets, information about priorities of the programmes, a tool for sharing the best practices and also

a better approach from National Agencies which are often not on the “youth wave”.

Respondents also used the possibility to comment on **what should be solved and nobody pays attention to it** and there are results worth mentioning. One of the most discussed topics is the distance calculator which wasn't used under Youth in Action programme, but is used now with Erasmus+ Programme. Many organizations don't see the financial support sufficient or fair. Among other comments we can mention different approaches of National Agencies in different countries as well as different level of approach to professional level of Youth Exchanges in different countries. Some organization were complaining about insufficient preparation of participants from sending organization before they arrived at Youth Exchange or missing internal structure where information could be shared between organizations.

Another problem marked by many organizations is the involvement of people with fewer opportunities or disabled participant. Organizations claim that financial support or support for people accompanying them is not sufficient.

The survey had in general very good reactions. There were hundreds of emails sent to organizations all over the Europe and many of them came back with personal comments, suggestions for cooperation, questions about publishing results and words of support.

5 Discussion

This diploma thesis deals with a crucial question whether youth mobility programmes, more precisely Youth Exchanges, are compatible with Europe 2020 strategy. Different sources were examined to gather sufficient amount of information for comparison and new conclusions.

When we look at the objectives and aims of **Europe 2020 strategy**, we can see a big interest in increase of employability, where the strategy seeks for at least 75% of employed population between 20-64 years old. Interim evaluation made within Youth in Action Programme in 2011 puts also a big focus on increase of employability and puts it in its sphere of interest.

Europe 2020 strategy also aims to increase labour mobility within Europe and modernize labour markets. As one of the ways how to deal with asymmetric shocks, it is important not to underestimate this aim. Results of the survey made for purposes of this thesis brought a result which seems optimistic, 87% of organizations definitely think that Youth Exchanges contribute to higher mobility of young people within Europe. Similar result was obtained in the monitoring survey of Youth in Action programme in 2011, where 65,5% of participant of Youth in Action projects feel more confident to move around on their own in foreign countries and feel more confident to search for international job opportunities. Organizers questioned by this survey also agreed that participants are more prepared to study, work or live in another country.

Youth on the Move is the initiative focused on the area of youth coming directly from Europe 2020 strategy. It is focusing especially on making the education and training more relevant to young people's needs, encouraging more of them to take an advantage of EU grants to study or train abroad. It brings out the idea that who is mobile as a student will be more likely mobile as an adult as well. It also support the idea of VET training and other forms of addition training abroad, which is exactly what are Youth Exchanges about.

So far strategies seem compatible with its "products", e.g. Youth Exchanges, however what the survey of this thesis, made between organizations organizing Youth Exchanges, discovered is that only 55% of organizations knows Europe 2020 strategy and even less, 38% know the initiative Youth on the Move. The question arising is if organizations can be preparing quality programs supported by EU funding when they don't know aims of the strategy which arch over these programs? Is it necessary to be aware of European strategies to prepare a training which will be beneficial to its participants from European perspective?

This thesis described **Youth in Action** as European program focused on the area of youth. Whole the structure was explained with particular interest in Youth Exchanges. Youth in Action follows objectives of promoting active citizenship between young people, developing solidarity and promoting tolerance, fostering mutual understanding between youngsters. Another

important task was to develop some structure of organized youth as well as promote European cooperation in the youth field.

Results of the survey made for purposes of this thesis show that 92% of organizations organizing Youth Exchanges developed partnerships with other NGOs. Interim evaluation report from 2011 shows the same, organizations claim that contacts with other international organizations has increased. Contacts were also developed on personal level between participants from various countries and organizers of youth projects.

Interim evaluation in 2011 stated areas which should be improved in the future. Increase of focus on employability was mentioned, as well as increase of measurability of results of participants, higher promotion of Youthpass, improving funding rules for people with fewer opportunities, higher use of social media or reduce of administrative burden.

Administrative burden wasn't increased, as we can see in financial table provided in this thesis from statistics obtained from European Commission, however we can also observe that except one year, it never exceed the given budget. The rest of mentioned areas will be commented together with Erasmus+ Programme and it will be put in a context with the survey made for this thesis.

New **Erasmus+ Programme** was described in the thesis as well, including its objectives, structure and particularly the activity of Youth Exchanges. It was mentioned in both strategies for purpose, because programs have changed, hence the sub-actions have changed as well.

Among objectives of Erasmus+ belongs the aim to boost skills and employability and support the aim of Europe 2020 strategy, to use Youthpass as a measurement of gained results on trainings, such as Youth Exchanges, to create more opportunities for VET and mobility of trainers. In the area of youth we can mention especially the aim to improve the level of key competences and skills of young people, including those with fewer opportunities, to enhanced cooperation between organizations in the youth field, support the development of knowledge and evidence-based youth policy as well as the recognition of non-formal and informal learning and to enhance the international dimension of youth activities.

Already here we can partly answer our question from previous page. Results of the survey show that 95% of responding organizations know aims of Youth in Action Programme and Erasmus+ Programme, hence they are actually partly aware of aims of Europe 2020 strategy which are incorporated in both programs as well.

Interim evaluation from 2011 already showed that Youthpass has to be promoted more and needs to get higher attention. Results from the survey made for this thesis show that 62% of responding organizations use it always, however the rest use it sometimes or not at all. In the picture in theoretical part of the thesis, we can see that number of organizations using Youthpass are increasing except the last year, however since the tool is optional, organizations are not obliged to use it. Some of them even consider it as a useless tool.

Situation of participants with fewer opportunities was often criticized in the survey claiming that the financial support or promotion of programme possibilities are often not sufficient. Youth in Action Programme as well as Erasmus+ Programme made it as one of their priorities to include these people more into the programme. However this aim seems to be unfulfilled at the moment.

Considering the aim of knowledge based system of sharing, survey also showed that there would be a wish to create a platform where best practices could be shared. It would of course as well increase the cooperation of organizations on international level.

The aim of enhancing the international dimension of youth activities seems to be on a good path, because as we can observe in financial tables in this thesis, the number of organized Youth Exchanges is increasing every year and the trend is to continue. Financial support for youth under Erasmus+ Programme has increased dramatically comparing to Youth in Action Programme, hence the higher number of activities organized, participants involved and higher financial support go hand in hand.

Survey has also showed that only 11% of respondents don't see any change between Youth in Action and Erasmus+ Programme, however the opinion about positive and negative changes is very diverse.

Between obstacles when writing this thesis definitely belonged the low accessibility of centralized data. After many emails to wrong places, it was finally possible to establish fruitful cooperation with Youth policy and programme unit of European Commission which brought many important financial and statistical figures.

Since Youth Exchanges are managed mainly on decentralized level, it was necessary to look for many information on national web pages of each country separately which took a lot of time and effort, however some national agencies were very helpful when asked for help.

There were also fears about how the survey will be accepted by youth organizations and if it will be possible to gather necessary number of responses. This fear became unwarranted, because many organizations put a lot of effort in responses and because of them the survey brought some interesting and beneficial results.

There are still some question unanswered and there is certainly a room for more extensive research which wouldn't be possible to make considering the length of diploma thesis, however it would be interesting to repeat the survey in the future or extended it with more questions.

6 Conclusion

The main objective of this thesis is to find whether Youth Exchanges under Youth in Action Programme and Erasmus+ Programme fulfil aims stated in Europe 2020 strategy and to give recommendations on what should be improved.

To fulfil main objectives, partial aims were stated which helped to achieve the main objective and respond research questions settled in Objectives of this thesis.

Partial aim 1 was focused on basic information, definition, strategies and summary of programmes which were clearly described in theoretical part of this thesis. Particular interest was given to Youth Exchanges which were described separately under each program, because there were certain changes made and it is necessary to understand them before reading results of the survey.

Information were gathered from various sources, often from official programme guides or official portals of European Commission as well as from literature or from monitoring reports from EUR-LEX.

Financial tables in practical part of the thesis offered results obtained from European Commission directly. We can see that operational budget is increasing every year as well as number of participants and granted projects. The average per project and participant varies every year. We can also see that financial support for Youth Exchanges increased about almost 10 million euro from 2013 to 2014, hence EU is really serious about an increase of support for the area of youth.

Partial aim 2 was focused on creating a survey which would make a research between youth organizations which provide or provided Youth Exchanges. Their opinion is needed to be able to answer the main research question and fulfil the objective of this thesis.

Survey gathered primary data from 122 youth organizations and brought some interesting results which are commented in detail in sub-chapter 4.2.4. The most important results are summarized in sub-chapter 4.2.5 and stated hypotheses are either accepted or rejected. Recommendations arising from the survey will be commented further in this chapter.

Partial aim 3 examined if youth organizations organizing Youth Exchanges were involved in the process of creating a new Erasmus+ Programme, if they were asked about their opinions and if they had any power to influence a new structure.

Results have showed that 47% of respondents were not contacted by anybody, 24% were contacted with the survey, 19% of them participated on the discussion, 16% were communicated with National Agencies and only 4% were asked for an interview.

It is of course difficult to keep in contact with all the youth organizations, because there are thousands of them in Europe, however it would be beneficial

to hear a feedback from them when creating a structure of a new programme whose aims will be fulfilled by these organizations afterwards.

Partial aims were stated to help to develop a structure which could provide complex answers for following research questions.

Are youth mobility programmes, concretely Youth Exchanges under Youth in Action and Erasmus+ Programme, compatible with aims of Europe 2020 strategy?

We can answer this research question as **yes**. It was proved in various parts of the thesis that concretely Youth Exchanges help to fulfil aims of Europe 2020 strategy, however there is a room for improvement. Suggestions will be given further in this text.

Europe 2020 strategy wants to increase the number of employed population including youth. As was discovered in the survey, only 8% of responding organizations think that Youth Exchanges don't help participants to be more successful on the labour market. Europe 2020 strategy also puts a big importance on labour mobility. Survey supports this statement with 87% positive answers about Youth Exchanges contributing to higher mobility of young people within Europe.

Initiative arising from Europe 2020 strategy focused especially on youth, Youth on the Move, focuses on promoting mobility programmes more, because who is mobile as a student will more likely be mobile as an adult as well. After analysis of financial and statistical results, we can confirm that the number of projects and participants is increasing every year since at least 2007.

Youth in Action Programme which was incorporated as one of the programmes into the initiative Youth on the Move focuses on increasing the European cooperation on the youth field, which we can confirm as happening. Results from the survey show that only 8% of organizations didn't develop any new relations with other NGOs, the majority of organizations developed new contacts with five or more organizations, 38% with more than 10 organizations.

However there are as well results of the survey, which could be improved in the future as inclusion of people with fewer opportunities and use of the Youthpass or other tools for measurement of achieved results of participants.

Erasmus+ Programme also seeks for larger cooperation between organizations as well as supporting some form of knowledge transfer system.

Another change coming with Erasmus+ Programme is the increase of financial support, 10% of it should be dedicated only on youth activities. Results of the survey show that 47% of responding organizations were satisfied with the grant amount, however 42% claim they would need more. It is not likely that the increase of financial support will reflect in higher financial support of the projects, but more likely on increase of the projects organized.

Which improvements should be done?

Mainly the survey made for purposes of this thesis serves here as a source of information on what should be improved. However it is put into a context with financial results, monitoring results and other relevant information.

1. Format of **Youthpass** should be changed. It serves as a tool for measurement as well as some kind of a proof for participants on what they have achieved in the Youth Exchange. However the number of organizations which use it was every year increasing, in 2014 it has decreased. Until it is an obligatory part of every Youth Exchange, Youthpass doesn't have a big value in the professional life of participants hence some obligatory form of an international certificate would be beneficial and it would certainly make Youth exchanges more valuable from professional point of view.
2. Improvement of **involvement of people with fewer opportunities** should have a bigger importance. We are not talking about people with disabilities, but more with social, economical or geographical obstacles. **Distance calculator** seems very unfair to many of respondents and they are demanding a **change** which would bring more fair rules for people from hard to reach areas.
3. **Visibility of the programme** should be improved, especially in areas less occupied than by thousands of university students, where the impact on a change of some of the local young people can bring a huge change to the environment. Youth Exchanges are pretty well known among young people volunteering in various NGOs however general awareness among young students is not very high. Use of more social media would be beneficial and friendly to youngsters.
4. **A platform for sharing experiences** should be created. There are certainly ways on how to contact organizations in other countries however a platform where organizations could share their tips about different topics could be highly beneficial. Not only it would improve the international cooperation itself, but it would also help in solving problems which are repeating, it would help to share useful strategies on how to work with participants or deal with bureaucracy and project life cycle.
5. **Higher transparency of data from European Commission** would be needed. It is surprising that it is so difficult to get complex data about European programmes, even if they are already finished. When gathering complex data about youth programmes, it was necessary to either contact National Agencies in each country separately or to have a bit of luck in contacting people in European Commission. Results of centralized actions are published on official portals of EACEA, general statistical results about Youth in Action and Erasmus+ should be there as well.

6. **Organizations should be sending more of their members** involved in the organization of projects **to trainings organized by National Agencies**. Trainings would not only help to improve the projects itself, but also ensure that organizations have relevant information about European strategies and its aims and that they are in contact with their National Agency on a regular basis.
7. **Transparency of regular evaluations is needed**. It is possible, more precisely desirable, that National Agencies and European Commission make regular evaluations of Youth Exchanges and other youth mobility programmes however to get to these results and its methodology is almost impossible which doesn't allow us to see how effectively are financial amounts used.

There are also other blind spots where is more difficult to find a general solution. As Youth Exchanges are organized on decentralized level and supervised mostly by National Agencies from given country, the approach, demands for communication, control or strictness can very differ. On the other side, these projects are decentralized because European Union wants to respect national variations as much as possible. Hence we can see that this problem is double-edged.

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Appendixes

A The Survey

Dear Madam/Sir,

I am conducting a survey on „Youth Exchanges via Youth in Action and Erasmus+“ and I would like to ask you to participate within this survey for purposes of my diploma thesis. I am also a president of student organization AEGEE-Brno in Czech Republic, so this topic is „close to my heart“.

The survey should take no longer than 3 minutes to complete it. Required questions are not opened, so you can only click on satisfactory answer. The survey is safe and your responds will serve only for the purpose of the thesis, name of your organization is there only for identification of your survey among other organizations and it will not be mentioned anywhere!

The link to the survey: <http://goo.gl/forms/oU5qb5RsBV>

In case you are not able to fill in this survey, please forward this message to the person that could do it. In case you are interested in having a copy of the thesis, please respond to this message with email information.

Thank you for your cooperation and see you somewhere in Europe!

*Yours sincerely,
Tereza Mikšíková*

1) Country:

- Bulgaria
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Germany
- Estonia
- Spain
- France
- Ireland
- Italy
- Cyprus
- Latvia
- Hungary
- Malta
- Poland
- Romania
- Slovenia
- Slovakia
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- Norway

2) Name of organization:

Survey reflects situation in your organization, more people can participate in completing. Name of your organization will not be published anywhere!

3) How many Youth Exchanges granted via Youth in Action (1.1) has your organization organized between 2007-2013?

Youth Exchange basic criteria: duration 6-21 days, 16-60 participants aged mostly between 13-25 (20% aged between 25-30)

- 0
- 1-3
- 4-6
- 7-10
- 11 or more

4) Youth in Action and Erasmus+ wants to fulfill aim of Europe 2020 strategy. Do you know this strategy?

- Yes
- Heard about it
- No

5) Do you know the initiative Youth on the Move?

- Yes
- Heard about it
- No

6) When writing grant application, do you consider aim of Youth in Action or Erasmus+ programme?

- Yes, we know aims of YiA and E+ and we include them into grant application
- No, we don't try to fulfill those aims, we write grant application fulfilling only aims of our organization
- Other

7) Have members of your organization participated in any trainings focused on Youth Exchanges via YiA (1.1) or E+ (KA1) programme?

- Never
- Yes, one of them
- Yes, less than 5 members
- Yes, 5 or more members

8) By whom was this training provided?

Voluntary question

9) Do you see a difference between Youth Exchanges under YiA (1.1) and E+ (KA1)?

Multiple answers possible

- No, there is no change
- Yes, grant applications are easier with E+
- Yes, grant applications are more complicated with E+
- Yes, there is more bureaucracy with E+
- Yes, there is less bureaucracy E+
- It is easier to communicate with National Agencies now
- It is more complicated to communicate with National Agencies now
- Everything is more difficult with E+, it was better with YiA
- Other...

10) Did you find the grant money sufficient for your project(s)?

- Yes, it was more than enough
- Yes, it was exact amount we needed

- No, it wasn't enough, we would need more
- Other...

11) Do you use Youthpass on your projects?

- Yes, always
- Yes, sometimes
- No, but we know, what it is
- No, we don't know it
- Other...

12) On which websites do you look for information about Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1) (deadlines, grant applications, aims etc.)?

Multiple answers possible

- EACEA (official)
- Erasmus + (official)
- Youth on the Move (official)
- National Agency of my country
- Other...

13) Are you satisfied with information provided online on official websites?

- Yes, we can always easily find everything
- Yes, but it takes a lot of time to find what we need
- No, It is too complicated to find useful information
- No, we miss some important information there
- Other...

14) What do you miss on official websites?

Voluntary question

15) Did your organization receive or was offered any kind of support from National Agency like workshops about grant applications, consultations etc.?

- No, we have never explored this option
- No, we wanted, but it wasn't possible
- No, they offered us this option, but we didn't use it
- Yes, we used it once
- Yes, we are meeting regularly
- Other...

16) Was your organization somehow invited/questioned to work on transition of Youth in Action programme (1.1) into Erasmus+ (KA1)?

Were you asked about what should be improved etc.?

Multiple answers possible

- No, nobody contacted us
- Yes, we were asked to fill in the survey
- Yes, we participated on discussion
- Yes, some of our members were asked for interview
- Yes, we were communicating with National Agency about it
- Yes, we were communicating with EACEA
- Other...

17) Has your organization developed partnerships with other NGOs during organization of Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1)?

E.g. ongoing cooperation, mutual projects, exchange of knowledge etc.

- Yes, with more than 10 NGOs
- Yes, with 5 or more NGOs
- Yes, with less than 5 NGOs
- No, nothing
- Other...

18) Do you think that Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1) contribute to higher mobility of young people within Europe?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, a bit
- Not really
- Definitely not

19) Do you think that Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1) organized by your NGO help participants to be more successful on labour market?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, a bit
- Not really
- Definitely not

20) When organizing Youth Exchange (1.1, KA1), do you create evaluation form to measure impact of the project on participants?

- Yes, always
- Yes, sometimes
- Never

21) When it comes to Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1), what do you see as a crucial problem which should be solved and nobody pays attention to it?

Voluntary question

B Tables from the Survey

How many Youth Exchanges granted via Youth in Action (1.1) has your organization organized between 2007-2013?		
1-3	52	43%
4-6	37	30%
7-10	19	16%
11 or more	14	11%

Youth in Action and Erasmus+ wants to fulfill aim of Europe 2020 strategy. Do you know this strategy?		
Yes	67	55%
Heard about it	48	39%
No	7	6%

Do you know the initiative Youth on the Move?		
Yes	46	38%
Heard about it	49	40%
No	27	22%

When writing grant application, do you consider aim of Youth in Action or Erasmus+ programme?		
Yes, we know aims of YiA and E+ and we include them into grant application	116	95%
No, we don't try to fulfill those aims, we write grant application fulfilling only aims of our organization	6	5%
Other	0	0%

Have members of your organization participated in any trainings focused on Youth Exchanges via YiA (1.1) or E+ (KA1) programme?		
Never	10	8%
Yes, one of them	29	24%
Yes, less than 5 members	55	45%
Yes, 5 or more members	28	23%

Do you see a difference between Youth Exchanges under YiA (1.1) and E+ (KA1)?			
	Number of responses	% of total number of responses	% of total number of respondents
No, there is no change	13	6%	11%
Yes, grant applications are easier with E+	37	19%	30%
Yes, grant applications are more complicated with E+	24	13%	20%
Yes, there is more bureaucracy with E+	22	12%	18%
Yes, there is less bureaucracy E+	24	13%	20%
It is easier to communicate with National Agencies now	10	5%	8%
It is more complicated to communicate with National Agencies now	22	12%	18%
Everything is more difficult with E+, it was better with YiA	14	7%	11%
Other	24	13%	20%
Total	190	100%	

Did you find the grant money sufficient for your project(s)?		
Yes, it was more than enough	6	5%
Yes, it was exact amount we needed	58	47%
No, it wasn't enough, we would need more	51	42%
Other	7	6%

Do you use Youthpass on your projects?		
Yes, always	76	62%
Yes, sometimes	32	26%
No, but we know, what it is	9	7%
No, we don't know it	3	3%
Other	2	2%

On which websites do you look for information about Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1) (deadlines, grant applications, aims etc.)?			
	Number of responses	% of total number of responses	% of total number of respondents
EACEA (official)	24	11%	20%
Erasmus + (official)	73	34%	60%
Youth on the Move (official)	7	3%	6%
National Agency of my country	99	46%	81%
Other	12	6%	10%
Total	215	100%	

Are you satisfied with information provided online on official websites?		
Yes, we can always easily find everything	36	30%
Yes, but it takes a lot of time to find what we need	58	48%
No, It is too complicated to find useful information	21	17%
No, we miss some important information there	4	3%
Other	3	2%

Did your organization receive or was offered any kind of support from National Agency like workshops about grant applications, consultations etc.?		
Yes, we are meeting regularly	28	23%
Yes, we used it once	48	39%
No, they offered us this option, but we didn't use it	7	6%
No, we wanted, but it wasn't possible	7	6%
No, we have never explored this option	18	15%
Other	14	11%

Was your organization somehow invited/questioned to work on transition of Youth in Action programme (1.1) into Erasmus+ (KA1)?			
	Number of responses	% of total number of responses	% of total number of respondents
Yes, we were communicating with EACEA	1	1%	1%
Yes, we were communicating with National Agency about it	19	13%	16%
Yes, some of our members were asked for interview	5	4%	4%
Yes, we participated on discussion	23	16%	19%
Yes, we were asked to fill in the survey	29	21%	24%
No, nobody contacted us	57	40%	47%
Other	7	5%	6%
Total	141	100%	

Has your organization developed partnerships with other NGOs during organization of Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1)?		
Yes, with more than 10 NGOs	46	38%
Yes, with 5 or more NGOs	36	29%
Yes, with less than 5 NGOs	29	24%
No, nothing	10	8%
Other	1	1%

Do you think that Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1) contribute to higher mobility of young people within Europe?		
Yes, definitely	106	87%
Yes, a bit	16	13%
Not really	0	0%
Definitely not	0	0%

Do you think that Youth Exchanges (1.1, KA1) organized by your NGO help participants to be more successful on labour market?		
Yes, definitely	68	56%
Yes, a bit	44	36%
Not really	10	8%
Definitely not	0	0%

When organizing Youth Exchange (1.1, KA1), do you create evaluation form to measure impact of the project on participants?		
Yes, always	94	77%
Yes, sometimes	25	21%
Never	3	2%