

CZECH UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES PRAGUE

FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT



Bachelor Thesis

EUROPEAN FUNDS AND THEIR MANAGEMENT IN THE CZECH
REPUBLIC

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Affirmation

I hereby declare that I have worked on my Bachelor Thesis titled completely on my own and that I have marked all quotations in the text.

The literature and other material I have used is mentioned in the References section of the Thesis.

Praha, 20.3. 2011

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Barbora Jeslínková

Acknowledgement to the supervisor:

I thank Ing. Mansoor Maitah Ph.D. et Ph.D for technical advice on the thesis and for leading during thesis elaboration.

Souhrn: Bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na programy Evropské Unie které dotují práci s mládeží. V neposlední řadě se také zabývá neziskovými organizacemi a možnostmi čerpání zdrojů v oblasti mládeže z grantů Evropské Unie, speciálně z Programu Mládež v Akci kterému se také věnuje jedna z kapitol a několik podkapitol této práce. Tento program se soustředí na mladé lidi ve věku 14-26. Na tuto cílovou skupinu byl kladen důraz při výzkumu zabývajícím se vzorkem absolventů Programu Mládež v Akci. Šlo především o průzkum klíčových kompetencí, které jsou v bakalářské práci definovány. Práce poukazuje i na další programy Evropské Unie, kterým byl například Evropský rok dobrovolnictví. Role České národní agentury pro mládež popisuje práci na projektech, typy a formy vzdělávání. Poslední kapitola v literární rešerši se věnuje evaluaci neformálního vzdělávání týkajícího se mládeže, kterému se říká pas mládeže. Celá práce je doplněna o statistiky, rozpočty a již zmíněné dotazníkové šetření.

Klíčová slova: Akce, dobrovolnictví, Evropská komise, EU, klíčové kompetence, Nezisková/nevládní organizace, dobrovolnictví, Program Mládež v Akci, pas mládeže

Summary: This Bachelor thesis is focused on programmes of the European Union that subsidize youth work. Last but not least deals with non-profit organizations and opportunities for applying for the support from the European Union, especially of the Youth in Action Programme to which one chapter and some sub chapters are devoted. This Programme focuses on young people aged 14 to 26. That illustrates the same target group of the Questionnaire Survey that is dedicated to the observation of development of key competences of the young people that took part in Youth in Action Programme. The key competences are also defined in the thesis as well as the non-formal education. The work also describes other programs of the European Union, particularly European Year of Volunteering. Role of the Czech National Agency for Youth in Action Programme is described as well. The last chapter in the literature review focuses on the evaluation of non-formal education among youth field, called Youthpass. The work is supplemented by statistics, budgets and the already mentioned survey.

Key words: Action, EU, European commission, NGO, volunteerism, non-formal education, key competences, volunteerism, Youth in Action Programme, Youthpass

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1 INTRODUCTION

The European Union acts as an organization gathering many different European countries which joined it to share goals and priorities and to try for rebuilding Europe according to a common vision. The policy makers of the European Union realized that the young people are going to be one day the ones who will be shaping the future of this institution. Therefore there have been many programmes for them established during the years of its functioning. Some of them are focused on formal education and some of them are focused on non formal education of these young people or their educators in the both field. Some of them are famous and very well known among their target groups but some of them are not that common. The thesis is specially focusing on one programme that is covering the possibilities of non formal education for its participants and this programme is called Youth in Action Programme. This thesis also describes all the possibilities that this Programme offers to the young people and how is possible to apply. This Programme is not beneficial just for the young people that are taking part in the international activities but it also manage to help the members of the entire society that is affected by these activities. As we live in very diverse society and there are many of misunderstandings and prejudices that could sometimes even lead to the xenophobia and racisms. This Programme helps to the appreciation of the diversity among the cultures and also people in general by trying to support a sense of overcoming the possible prejudices. As we live in the rush era where the people are you usually thinking just about the profits for them there is very important to mention that fortunately there are still the people that care about the society and want to participate even they do not benefit from their activities directly in terms of money but indirectly in creating the human values and these people called volunteers give some of their free time to the others.

2 OBJECTIVES OF THE THESIS AND METHODOLOGY

Objective of thesis

This Bachelor Thesis focuses on the description of the youth field in the area of European Union and on the familiarization with the Youth in Action Programme and the mission of each action because each of them has its own mission and usage area. Moreover there is a brief description on the project life cycle that means how it works in practice to apply for a support under the Youth in Action Programme. This Bachelor Thesis is also focused on how the Youth in Action Programme is working in the Czech Republic.

Accompanied with that there is a brief description of the main phenomenon that are connected with the youth work.

The Objective of the Thesis is to introduce the role of the Non-governmental/non-profit organization in the society as well as the importance of volunteerism.

Moreover it should to describe the importance of non formal education within the youth work as well as describing the key competences that are the part of life learning process. In the practical part there is a Questionnaire Survey that is focusing on how the participation in the Youth in Action Programme can help to develop the key competences.

Methodology

The data in the thesis were collected in order to introduce the picture about the situation. The date concerning the Youth in action Programme were chosen by purpose because the data of the statistics that are available yet for the Youth in Action Programme cover just the mapping of the years 2007 and 2008.

In the practical part the Questionnaire Survey was distributed between the young people aging 14-26 in order to reach the target group that was needed. Moreover these young people took part in the Action 1 particularly International Youth Exchange under the Youth in Action Programme during the time period of 2010. All of them were from the Czech Republic. At the beginning there was said that 100 answers would mean a

satisfactory number because it can represent a picture of the situation. The questionnaires were distributed by e-mails each of the people should to mark the answer they felt to be most possible to be truth. Accompanied with the survey the people who were answering the questionnaire were sent the information with the description of the Key competences in order to be more able and easier to answer the questions.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. EU AND PROGRAMMES

European Union includes 27 countries. Since it has been created it focused on bringing prosperity and stability to the citizens that live on the areas that are covered by European Union. The policy makers that are working within the European Union realized that is very important to invest into young people living within its area because they are going to be the one who will be shaping the picture of this institution. Therefore European Union and its three pillars representing by European Parliament, Council of European Union and European Commission and introduced many programmes and instruments that are supporting the youth field and youth work. [8]

Examples of the programmes:

- COMENIUS
- ERASMUS
- LEONARDO DA VINCI
- GRUNDTVIG
- EUROPE FOR CITIZENS
- EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND
- YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME

Some of them are focused on formal education institution and are supporting the educators and the young people that are the receivers of the formal education. On the other hand there are also the mechanisms and programmes that are focused more on non formal education of the youth and youth workers as well as the programmes that combine both types of education. [10]

3.2 NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

The non-profit organization is characterized as non-governmental organizations and civil associations, which is generally beneficial to society. It is a voluntary pooling of people who have common goals and are willing to cooperate in filling the needs and interests of either themselves or other people that are the part of the society. Civil society is called because they fulfill and promote the general interest of society. Non-profit Organizations is an association of members of the NGO sector, who make decisions for themselves, while the decisions that are made in public sector are more made by Professional. Non-profit organizations operate independently of the state and are focusing on benefits on the welfare of society.

Non-governmental sector is a grouping of private charitable organizations and civic associations. Also the service of church conducts their activities without state support. The advantage of the NGO sector is a fast response to changes in society, flexibility and creativity. Associated with non-governmental sector is the community work and the the substantial work of volunteers. [3]

3.2.1. Non-Profit Organizations/Non-governmental Organizations In the Czech Republic

In the Czech Republic there are four types of non-profit organizations with a wide range of representatives:

- **Civic Association**

Examples: The Salvation Army, Victim, Arnika, Czech Red Cross

According to law: Act No. 83/1990 Coll. on Association of Citizens, as amended

- **Foundations and endowment funds**

Examples: Drop of Hope, Foundation, Foundation for Civil Society Development Foundation, Charter 77, Our Child

According to law: Act No. 227/1997 Coll. foundations and endowment funds and amending some related Acts, as amended

- **Church legal entities established by churches or religious organizations**

Example: Caritas Czech Republic

According to law: Law No. 3 / 2002 Coll. on religious freedom and the status of churches and religious societies and on amending some laws, as amended

- **Public benefit society**

Examples: People in Need, Finale Plzen, Prague Philharmonic Children's Choir

According to law: the Act No. 248/1995 Coll. generally beneficial companies and amending certain laws, as amended [11]

3.2.2 Example of NGO

Czech Youth Programme The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (EDIE)

The Duke of Edinburgh Award is a voluntary non-competitive program that helps young people 14 to 25 years of personal development and active use of leisure time. The program was founded in 1956 Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, husband of Queen Elizabeth. Since then, over 6 million young people participated in this Programme in more than 120 countries around the world. The philosophy of the program is based on the ideas of German educator Kurt Hahn, a key figure in experiential learning. Kurt Hahn had the ability to empathize with the minds of teenagers and was a good mentor for them. The principle of the program lies in the positive direction and sensitive motivating of young people who are reaching their personal goals in the frame of the set of rules. Young people in the program are improving in four fields:

- through recreational sports and
- practical skills
- community service
- expedition

The program is not based on monetary rewards or harsh competition. Everything takes place in a friendly spirit of cooperation. The reward is that a young people improve themselves.

Czech Youth Program The Duke of Edinburgh's in the Czech Republic is a civic associations working on the basis of volunteerism. That is a part of International organization called Award International.

Thanks to the huge number of organizations in many countries around the world the Organization in the Czech Republic has a possibility of many contacts abroad for cooperation. This is also one of the reason why the participants of Czech Youth Programme The Duke of Edinburgh's Award has the chance to participate in many projects abroad. As well as organizing some projects in the Czech Republic under the Youth in Action Programme. [7]

Example:

United Colours 2006

International Youth Exchange under the Action 3 funded by Youth in Action Programme

Countries involved: Czech Republic, Jordan, Egypt, Malta, The Netherlands, and Italy

Brief description: the project was designed to deal with perception of colors and to experience color meaning in different cultures. Using colors, flowers, plants, textiles, clothes, food and various objects to evoke deep perception of colors experience and explore the impact of colors on peoples' senses and to use it as a tool for intercultural learning. [14]

3.3 VOLUNTEERISM

The year 2001 was announced by United Nations Organization as the International year of volunteers. The Japanese government with the cooperation with the international volunteer's organizations came up with this idea because they wanted to appreciate the role of thousands of volunteers coming from all over the world that participated in helping with withdrawing of consequences destructive earthquake that affected Japan in 1995. In a human society the term volunteerism is not something new. In every culture there has been helping the ones that needed help. Solidarity and cooperation are bases of the human society and all religions. [4]

There has been the new phenomenon of the organizations and individuals that are engaged professionally in volunteerism. This phenomenon has unobtrusively manifested in connection with the International year of volunteerism 2001. Sounds paradoxical but in order to achieve the affectivity of voluntary help professional organization is needed.

Volunteerism in the world reached the huge extent that lead to formation of new field called Volunteer Management. [3]

The fact that the level of technical development is very high nowadays and the World is globally interlinked in spite of the fact that it is still full of enormous differences the volunteerism presents the phenomenon that exceeds the borders of the countries, religions, social groups and shows the possibility of coexistence on the bases of cooperation and solidarity. [4]

3.3.1. European Year of Volunteering

Ten years later The European Commission proposed that 2011 is designated the "European Year of Volunteering". In the European Union, millions of citizens are volunteering. People of all ages make a positive contribution to their community by giving some of their free time in civil society organizations, in youth clubs, in hospitals, in schools, in sport clubs, etc. For the Commission, volunteering is an active expression of civic participation and strengthens common European values such as solidarity and social cohesion. Volunteering also provides important learning opportunities, because involvement in voluntary activities can provide people with new skills and competences and can even improve their employability. This is particularly important in this time of economic crisis. Volunteering plays an important role in sectors as varied and diverse as education, youth, culture, sport, environment, health, social care, consumer protection, humanitarian aid, development policy, research, equal opportunities and external relations. [9]

The objectives of the Year of Volunteering are according to European Commission as following:

- Work towards an enabling and facilitating environment for volunteering in the EU
- Empower volunteer organizations and improve the quality of volunteering
- Reward and recognize volunteering activities
- Raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering

The European Year of Volunteering should help volunteers and volunteering organizations from everywhere in Europe to meet others working in the same field and exchange the information and best practices. The European Year of Volunteering is also focused on the promotion of volunteerism in the society. [9]

3.4. YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME

Youth in Action is the EU Programme for young people aged 15-28 (in some cases 13-30). The main aims of this Youth in Action Programme are:

- developing a sense of active citizenship
- empowering of tolerance and solidarity among young people who live in Europe
- increasing of the involvement of young people in shaping the future of the European Union

Youth in Action Programme stresses the fact that it is a programme designed for integration of all young people despite the background they are coming from. It means that there is a space for cultural, social and educational differences. The Youth in Action programme also stresses the importance of intercultural dialog and usually uses the non-formal education and learning as a tool to reach it. Moreover this programme promotes mobility within and beyond the EU borders.

Youth in Action Programme is designed in its form for the years (2007-2013). It has been working on the similar basis with the different name in the years (2000-2006). The previous name was Youth Programme.

The Youth in Action Programme is the outcome from the experience of the Youth Programme as well as other programmes for youth. It has been widely consulted with the different stakeholders in the youth field. It focuses on responding to the evolutions and needs of young people at European level.

The Youth in Action Programme gives a chance of supporting a wide scope of activities for young people and youth workers. [16]

For seven years (2007-2013) it has a budget that can operate with of 885 million euro. Very important is also a geographic reach of this programme because it does not include just the Member States of EU but also Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Turkey, the EU neighbours (Eastern Europe and (Eastern Europe and Caucasus, the Mediterranean region, South-East Europe) and other partner countries in the world. [16]

The Youth in Action Programme is divided into **five** actions.

Through these five actions this programme directs to reach the following general objectives:

- promote young people's active citizenship in general and their European citizenship in particular;
- develop solidarity and promote tolerance among young people, in particular in order to foster social cohesion in the European Union;
- foster mutual understanding between young people in different countries;
- contribute to developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organizations in the youth field
- promote European cooperation in the youth field

Who can participate:

- a non-profit or non-governmental organization
- a local, regional public body
- an informal group of young people
- a body active at European level in the youth field having member branches in at least 8 Programme Countries
- an international governmental non-profit organization
- a profit-making organization organizing an event in the area of youth, sport or culture. [16]

Programme Countries:

27 Member States of the European Union

Participating countries of the EFTA members of the EEA: Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway

Candidate countries for accession to the European Union: Turkey

Neighboring Partner Countries:

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

Source: <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/programme/who_participate_en.php>

Firstly there is brief description of each action followed by detailed introduction to every action. Every Action has its own rules and application form as well as the time period, the number of participants, the area of coverage and the target group.

3.4.1.Actions

Action1

Youth for Europe includes youth exchanges, youth initiatives and youth democracy projects and motivates young people to be more active citizen. Focuses also on increasing participation of young people as well as their creativity.

Action 2

European Voluntary Service is an action that focuses on unpaid voluntary activities abroad in non profit sector that helps young people to develop their sense of solidarity.

Action 3

Youth in the World promotes partnerships and exchanges among young people and youth organizations across the world.

Action 4

Youth Support Systems includes various measures to support youth workers and youth organizations and improve the quality of their activities.

Action 5

Support for European co-operation in the youth field facilitates the dialogue between young people and policy makers at European level. [16]

Action 1 - Youth in Europe

Action 1 of the Youth in Action Programme offers a stimulating way for youth to become involved in debating and promoting active citizenship and democracy.

This Action supports three main types of activities:

- Youth Exchanges
- Youth Initiatives
- Youth Democracy Projects

Youth Exchanges get groups of young people from different countries together so they can explore their social and cultural differences and similarities. Youth Exchanges are targeted at young people between the age of 13 and 25. They receive the unique opportunity to experience significant mutual learning situations and to strengthen their feeling of being Europeans.

Each exchange must have a theme that is relevant to the daily experiences of the young people involved but also has a clear European dimension. Themes could cover numerous issues, such as young people in society, racism and xenophobia, local heritage, drugs, the environment, intercultural dialogue, etc.)

Youth Initiatives are projects entirely devised, planned and implemented by young people at local, regional or national level. The goal of these important non-formal learning experiences is to stimulate young people's creativity, enterprise and initiative. Youth Initiatives are aimed primarily at 18-30 year olds, but 15-18 year olds can take part if accompanied by a coach or youth worker.

Youth Democracy Projects aim at boosting young people's involvement in the democratic process at local, regional and European level.

The objective is to provide young people with ideas about and experiences of democracy, to spark new national and transnational networks and exchanges of good practice. Youth Democracy Projects improve young people's understanding of how democracy works, helping them to make the most of their right to participate in the

decision-making structures of a democratic society. Target group is 18 – 30 years old.
[16]

Action 2 - European Voluntary Service

The European Voluntary Service (EVS) provides young Europeans with the unique chance to express their personal commitment through unpaid and full-time voluntary activities in a foreign country within or outside the EU. In this way, it seeks to develop solidarity, mutual understanding and tolerance among young people, thus contributing to reinforcing social cohesion in the European Union and to promoting young people's active citizenship. [16]

Action 3 - Youth in the World

Action 3 of the Youth in Action programme opens up new horizons to European youth and youth organizations beyond the EU's borders.

Youth in Action features a strong international dimension. Through the 'Youth in the World' Action, it helps strengthen relations between the EU and its neighbours, as well as the rest of the world by providing young people and youth workers from Europe with the opportunity to take part in exchanges and other non-formal education activities with their peers living outside the Union.

In this way, 'Youth in the World' seeks to deepen mutual understanding, tolerance and intercultural awareness among young people within the Union and beyond.

- Eastern Europe and Caucasus
- the Mediterranean region
- South-East Europe

Reinforcing youth co-operation in these regions will ultimately also contribute to boosting democracy and civil society in the involved countries, as well as to empowering young people to play an active role in their societies.

Youth in the World includes free types of activities:

- Youth exchanges
- training and networking projects
- Co-operation with other Partner Countries of the world

The aim is to promote the exchange of experience and good practice in the field of youth and non-formal education, as well as to develop lasting partnerships and networks between youth organizations from across much of the globe. [16]

Action 4 - Youth Support Systems

Action 4 of the Youth in Action Programme is specifically targeted at building the capacity of youth workers and organizations to develop quality activities, thus improving the overall quality of the Programme.

This is done, primarily, by providing these important actors with opportunities to develop co-operation and partnerships, to exchange youth work good practice, as well as to receive training. This will strengthen the impact of European co-operation in the field of youth policy and will also support project development under the Youth in Action Programme.

- job shadowing
- feasibility visits
- evaluation meetings
- study visits
- seminars
- training courses
- networking [16]

Action 5 - Support for European co-operation in the youth field

Through its Action 5, the Youth in Action Programme has become a tool to support youth policy development at European level.

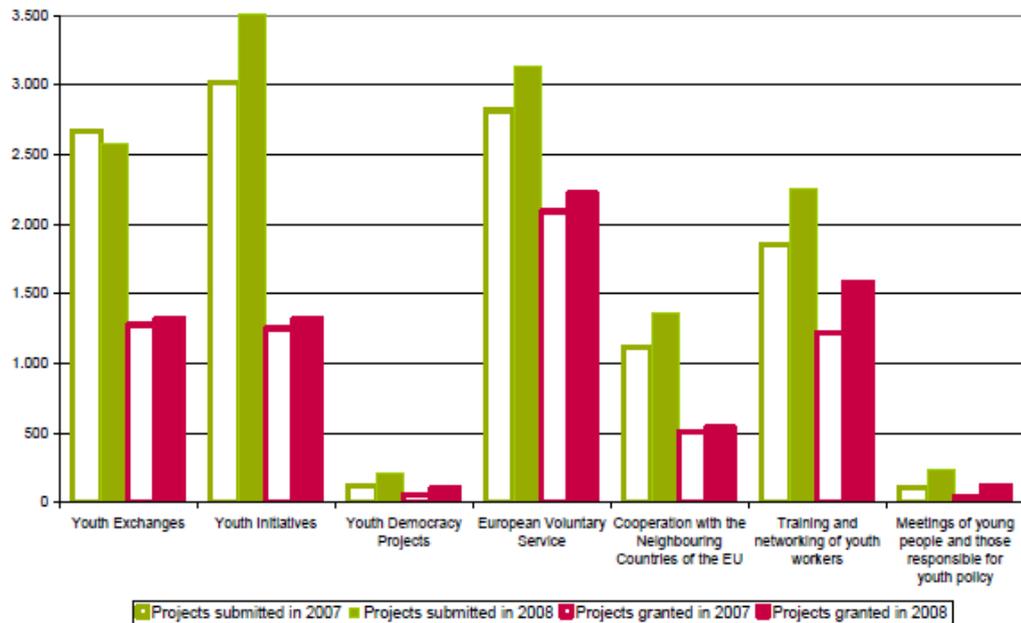
The main aim of Action 5 is to promote European co-operation in the youth field through the dialogue between the young people, youth workers and the Policy makers.

Firstly, co-funding grants can be given to the setting up of meetings between young people and those responsible for youth policy.

Targeted at young people aged 15-30, these meetings can take place either at national or transnational level. They should aim at promoting the exchange of good practice and ideas in relation to important topics in the field of European youth policy or the priority themes of the Youth in Action programme and structured dialogue. Additionally, national youth seminars may consist of gatherings at local, regional and national level in preparation for the youth presidency events in the Member State holding the EU's rotating presidency. [16]

3.4.2. General statistics for 2007 and 2008

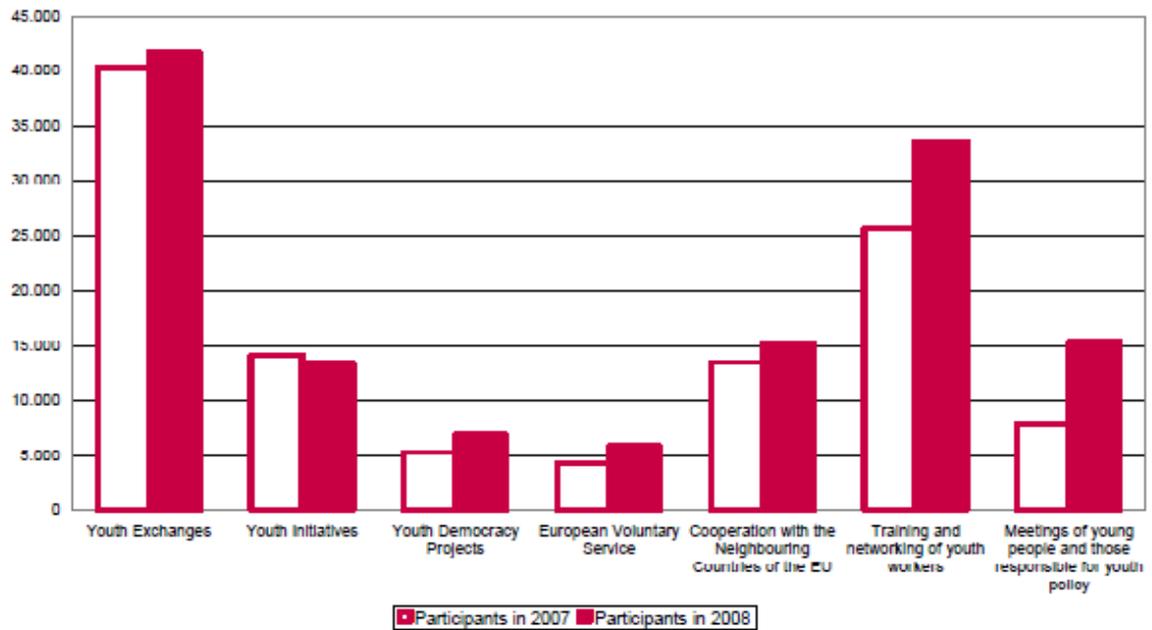
Projects Submitted and granted per Action



Source: <http://ec.europa.eu/youth/glance/doc/youth_in_action_figures/eac_statistics_yi_a_2008.pdf>

From this chart it is very significant, that the amount of money invested into the Youth in Action Programme increased in 2008 compared to the previous year. There is also an evidence of the better promotion of the Programme because the National Agencies received more applications in 2008 comparing with the year 2007. Moreover it is transparent that the both years the smallest percentage of the chance to get supported was among the Youth Initiatives on the other hand the easiest way to success in getting the grant was the European Voluntary Service and Youth Democracy projects. [18]

Number of participants per Action



Source: <http://ec.europa.eu/youth/glance/doc/youth_in_action_figures/eac_statistics_yi_a_2008.pdf>

From this chart it is very significant that the most participants during both years 2007 and 2008 participated in Youth Exchanges and in Training and networking of youth workers. And the smallest number took part in European Voluntary Service. The reason is quite obvious. Youth Exchanges and Training and networking activities are usually short term oriented and take place more or less a week in comparison with European Voluntary Service that is long-time oriented and take place from six months up one year. [18]

Budget for year 2007

Action	MioEUR	% from year budget
Action 1 - Youth for Europe	43,572	33,9
Action 2 - European Voluntary Service	40,434	31,4
Action 3 - Youth in the World	9,791	7,6
Action 4 - Youth Support Systems	30,917	24
Action 5 - Support for European cooperation in the youth field	3,999	3,1
Total Budget	137.335	100,0

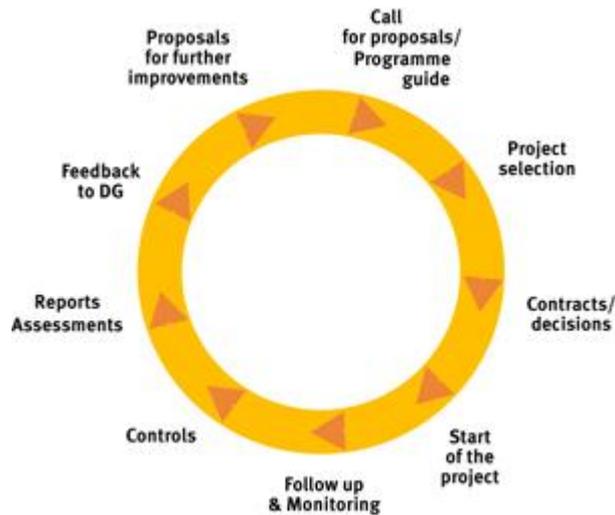
Source:<http://ec.europa.eu/youth/glance/doc/youth_in_action_figures/eac_statistics_yi_a_2007.pdf>(own contribution)

Budget for year 2008

Action	MioEUR	% from year budget
Action 1 - Youth for Europe	44.149	32,1
Action 2 - European Voluntary Service	42.966	31,3
Action 3 - Youth in the World	10.586	7,7
Action 4 - Youth Support Systems	34.992	25,5
Action 5 - Support for European cooperation in the youth field	4.642	3,4
Total Budget	137.335	100,0

Source:<http://ec.europa.eu/youth/glance/doc/youth_in_action_figures/eac_statistics_yi_a_2008.pdf>(own contribution)

3.4.3. Project life cycle



Source:<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/programme/project_life_cycle_en.php>

Application

Group of young people or the organization has an idea for a project, which they think may qualify for funding. The first step is to read the documents published on the website of Youth in Action Programme inviting projects to apply. There are specific application forms for each Action. The second step is to complete the relevant application package, taking care to ensure all information requested is provided. The third step is to submit the application to the correct address before the deadline.

The deadlines are provided in the guide of Youth in Action Programme as well, but are better to check by the applicants with the National Agency of the Programme in the country where the applications are submitted because there can be some exceptions from time to time.

Anyway the applications deadlines are usually the first of February, April, June, September and November.

Selection

The project selection procedure takes place in three stages:

- Project applications will be checked to ensure that they fully comply with the general and specific eligibility criteria outlined in the documents inviting projects to apply.
- Evaluation
Evaluation Committee, which will evaluate the eligible applications. This Committee is composed of members from the and National Agencies (of Youth in Action Programme, sometimes also experts from European Commission) and are assisted by external independent experts from the youth field.
- Selection
Grants will be awarded taking into account the selection and award criteria defined for each action, and the available financial resources.

Contracting Successful applicants in the selection process will receive a Grant Agreement from the National Agency. The Grant Agreement indicates the grant awarded and sets out the financial rules to be applied.

Monitoring and reporting The National Agency monitors the implementation of the project throughout its life cycle. Sometimes the people from National agency go to visit the projects in order to check if the money distributed are used in the proper way.

After the project finishes applicants are required to submit a progress or final report providing information on project implementation, results achieved and expenditure incurred. Only after the report has been approved can the intermediate or final payment be made. Usually it is about 30% of all costs that has to be covered by organization itself. The organization receives the money after submitting the final report. [12]

3.4.4. Youth in Action Programme in the Czech Republic

Youth in Action Programme in the Czech Republic is managed by Czech National Youth Agency. Czech National Youth Agency is a member of a network that includes 35 partner organizations in 33 European countries.

The main purpose of Czech National Youth Agency is to help young people and youth workers in the Czech Republic to participate in the educational program of the EU Youth in Action Programme and contribute to the fulfillment of its objectives. [6]

3.4.5. Role of Czech National Youth Agency

The Czech National Agency is focusing on:

- placing a great emphasis on young people's own initiative
- supporting young people in realizing their own ideas and visions that make use of intercultural learning, partnership and teamwork, and creative types of meetings
- seeking to mediate access to the Youth in Action Programme and offering it to young people who have no or only very limited opportunities to gain international experience

The Responsibilities of the Czech National Agency are:

- allocating the grants for all the project under the 5 Actions
- advising to engaged young people and youth workers to plan and implement projects under the Youth in Action Programme
- For those interested in the program help with finding contacts of foreign partners.
- Through training improving the skills of youth workers and young people to facilitate access to the program.
- publish the information and methodological publications that focuses on youth work

- coordinating a network of regional consultants operating in the individual regions

The key partners of Czech National Youth Agency are the European Commission, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the National Institute of Children and Youth. [6]

3.5 NON FORMAL EDUCATION

"Nonformal learning is purposeful, but voluntary learning that takes place in a variety of environments and situations in which education, training and learning are not necessarily the sole or main activity. This environment or situation may be temporary or may rotate and the activities or courses can lead professional learning facilitators (instructors), but also the volunteers (youth group leaders). Activities and classes are scheduled, but rarely structured as a traditional lesson or subjects. ., [2]

The non formal education is one component of lifelong learning and its characteristic features are:

- voluntariness
- accessibility everyone (ideally)
- application process with educational objectives,
- focus on those learners and their active participation,
- focus on acquiring skills for life and preparation for active citizenship
- based on the fact that it includes both individual and group learning with a collective approach
- holistic and focused on the learning process,
- based on experiences and activities based on needs of participants [2]

3.5.1. Types of education

Formal, nonformal and **informal** education should inspire and complement each other so that together constitute a viable and evolving process of lifelong learning which will encourage personal and professional development of each individual.

Formal education refers to a structured educational system, which includes all schools from primary to university, including specialized programs of vocational and professional training.

Nonformal education refers to all scheduled programs, personal and social education for young people to develop a wide range of skills and competencies outside formal education curriculum.

Informal education refers to the lifetime in which every individual adopts certain attitudes, values, skills and knowledge under the influence of various educational resources in their surroundings and from everyday experience (at home, a neighborhood library, media, experience gained at work, at play, etc.). [2]

3.5.2. Key Competences

“a specific range of skill, knowledge, or ability” [13]

The Key competences are defined as the combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. Key competences are those which all individuals need for personal and development as well as the fulfillment of their lives, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment. [1]

The **eight** key competences are:

- Communication in mother tongue
- Communication in foreign languages
- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology

- ability to work with digital technologies
- ability to learn
- social and civic competences
- sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- cultural awareness and expression [1]

As the European Commission started to put great emphases on the development of these eight key competences also in the frame of non formal education via many of programmes there is the space to explain each of the competences little bit further. [5]

Communication in the mother tongue

is the ability to express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and an appropriate and creative way to interact linguistically in all situations of social and cultural life in education and training, work, home and leisure. Simply said it is about interpreting the world and relating to others. Communication in the mother tongue is includes the knowledge of vocabulary, functional grammar and language functions. It includes an awareness of the main types of verbal interaction, a variety of literary and non-literary texts, the main features of different styles and registers of language and variability of language and communication in different situations. Skills that are needed for communication in mother tongue are communication in oral and written forms in different situation, monitoring and adapting own communication requirements to the particular situation. Part of this ability also includes searching, collecting and processing of the particular information. Moreover it includes the skill to express own opinion and convince the others with individual's argument. [15]

Communication in foreign languages

it is based on the ability to understand, express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in the social and cultural situations in training and training, work, home and leisure. Communication in foreign languages also requires the skill to understand the other cultures. Knowledge that is needed for communication in foreign languages

includes the knowledge of vocabulary and functional grammar and an awareness of the main types of verbal interaction, knowledge of societal conventions, cultural and linguistic aspects and language diversity. Skills for communication in a foreign language is the ability to understand spoken messages, initiate, maintain and conclude conversations and to read, understand and create texts to suit to the particular situation. Attitudes involve the appreciation of cultural diversity and an interest in languages and intercultural communication, and curiosity. [11],

Mathematical competence basic competences in science and technology

is the ability to develop and apply mathematical thinking to solve problems in different everyday situations. Mathematical competence involves various levels of ability and willingness use mathematical thinking (logical and spatial thinking) and presentation (formulas, models, shapes, graphs and charts). Knowledge in mathematics includes a sound knowledge of numbers, measures and structures, basic operations and basic mathematical presentations, an understanding of mathematical terms and concepts, and awareness of issues to which mathematics can provide the answers. Skills that individuals should be able to apply the basic mathematical principles and practices in everyday situations home and work and ability to follow and assess chains of arguments. Skills for science and technology are the main principles of the natural, basic scientific concepts, principles and methods, technology and technological products and processes, as well as understanding the impact of science and technology Nature. Subsequently, these capabilities should enable individuals to better understand the progress, constraints and risks of scientific theory and technology in society at large (in relation to decision-making, values, moral issues culture, etc.). Skills include the ability to use and manipulate technological tools and machinery, and scientific data to achieve a goal or a decision or conclusion based on evidence. Individuals should also be able to recognize basic features of scientific inquiry and the conclusions and reasoning that led to these conclusions. Attitudes in mathematics are based on respect for the truth and willingness to look for reasons and to assess their force. Sense of critical reasoning and curiosity, an interest in ethical issues and respect safety and sustainability, especially as regards scientific and technological progress in relation to their own personal, family, community and global issues. [15]

The ability to work with digital technologies

includes ability to work with digital technology to the confident and critical use of Information Society Technologies (hereinafter referred to as the "IST") at work, leisure and daily communication. Concerning IT and communication technologies can be mentioned the use of computers to retrieve, assess, store, create and exchange information and to communicate and participate in collaborative networks via the Internet. Knowledge of the basic computer applications such as word processing, spreadsheets, databases, storage systems and management, and understanding of the opportunities and potential risks of Internet and communication via electronic media (e-mail, network tools) to bring work, leisure, information sharing and collaboration, learning and research networks. Individuals should also understand how IST can support creativity and innovation. The users should be also aware of the potential problems that are related to validity and reliability of information available and should know the legal and ethical principles to be followed in the interactive use of IST. Skills include ability to search, collect and process information and use it critical and systematic way, assessing relevance and distinguishing between real and virtual while recognizing the relationship. Individuals should be able to use tools to create and present. information and should be able to obtain internet services, search and use, there should Use of IST requires a critical and reflective attitude towards available information and the responsible use of interactive media; with the ability development by interest in engaging in communities and networks for cultural, social or professional purposes. [15]

Learning to learn

is the ability to pursue and persist in learning and the ability to organize learning process and effective time management as well as the ability to work with the information in an effective way, both individually and in groups. This ability includes awareness of own learning processes and own needs, the ability to identify available options and overcome obstacles to success in learning. That means to acquire, to process and assimilate the new knowledge and skills, to seek for them and use them at the final stage. In the process of learning how to learn, it is necessary for learners to build upon the experience from previous learning and life experiences and knowledge and skills used in different situations for example at home, at work, in education and

training. Crucial aspects to these abilities are individual's motivation and confidence. Learning to learn requires an individual to know and understand their preferred learning strategies, strengths and weaknesses of their skills and qualifications, and to be able to search options of possible education and training available to help and support them. Ability to learn is to be able to master the fundamental basic skills such as reading, writing, numeracy and information and communication technologies, which are necessary for further learning. On the basis of an individual should be able to acquire new knowledge and skills, process and assimilate. This is necessary for effective management of learning, career and work, and in particular the ability to learn to persevere, to concentrate in extended periods and to reflect critically on the purposes and aims of learning. Individuals would have to prove themselves dedicated to time to learning and discipline, but also to the learning process should be able to work with others to use heterogeneous group, and share with others what they have learned. Individuals should be able to organize their own learning to evaluate their own work and to seek advice, information and support. [15]

Social and civic competences

include competences that are on many levels such as personal, interpersonal, intercultural, social and civic. These skills cover all forms of behavior that prepare individuals for an effective and constructive participation in social and working life taking into consideration that we live in increasingly diverse societies and therefore should be able to resolve any possible conflicts. Civic competence equips individuals to full participation in civic life, based on knowledge of social and political concepts and structures. These competences also lead to active and democratic participation.

Social skills are closely linked with personal and social well-being. To reach the personal and social well-being is necessary to understand how individuals can achieve optimal physical and mental health that leads to the wealth of their own as well as the wealth of their closest family and social environment. It is also very important to know how a healthy lifestyle can contribute to the overall wealth. For successful involvement in society is essential to understand the behavior and manners, which are generally accepted in different societies and environments. Equally important is to know the basic concepts relating to individuals, groups, labor organizations, equality

between men and women and non-discrimination, society and culture. Understanding the multi-cultural and socio-economic dimensions of European societies, and how national cultural identity interacts with the European identity.

Civic competence is knowledge of the concepts of democracy, justice, equality, citizenship and civil rights, including how they are expressed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and international declarations and applied by various institutions at the local, regional, national, European and international level. These skills include knowledge of current events, and major events and trends in national, European and world history. It should be further developed awareness of the objectives, values and strategies of social and political movements. It is also important and knowledge of European integration structures, key objectives and values of the Union and raise awareness of diversity and cultural identity in Europe. Skills for civic competence relate to the ability effectively with others in the public, display solidarity and interest in solving problems affecting the local and wider community. Require critical and creative thinking and constructive participation in local activities as well as decision making at all levels from local to national and European level, particularly participation in elections. A positive attitude is full respect for human rights, including equality as a basis for democracy, appreciation and understanding of differences between value systems of different religious or ethnic groups. This means that both expression of belonging to a particular place, country, EU and Europe in general (or parts) and willingness to participate in democratic decision-making at all levels. [15]

Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship

This competence means by easy words how the people are able to turn their ideas into the specific action. For this competence is very important to have the skills of creativity. Then there is a focus and innovation and ability to bear risk and to plan and manage projects in order to achieve certain goals. This ability is not only beneficial for individuals in their everyday life at home and in society, but also in the workplace, helps to understand the context of their work and allows them to recognize their opportunities. For a specific field of work there are a specific field of knowledge and skills that the people should to gain. For example the people engaged in social or

business activities should to be aware of ethical values and promote good governance. Necessary skills include the ability to recognize opportunities for personal, professional or business activities, including knowledge of the issues that provide the context in which people live and work, as a general understanding the economy and the opportunities and challenges that are faced in specific field. Skills related to proactive project management (involving skills such as planning, organization, management, leadership and delegation, analysis, communication, consultation and evaluation and reporting), effective representation and negotiation and the ability to work both independently and in teams. It is important ability to assess and identify one's strengths and weaknesses and assess risks and, if so, where appropriate, to bear those risks. [15]

Cultural awareness and expression

Recognizing the importance of creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in various forms, including music, theater, literature and visual arts. Cultural knowledge includes awareness of local, national and European cultural heritage and its place in the world. It includes basic knowledge of major cultural works, including contemporary popular culture. It is important to understand cultural and linguistic diversity in Europe (and in other regions of the world), the need to preserve and understanding importance of aesthetic factors in daily life. Skills relate to both appreciation and expression: self-expression through various forms of expression abilities of individuals and their sense of artistic works and performances. Cultural expression is also important in the process of development creative skills that can be can be applied in many professional activities. Based on respect and open mind to the diversity of cultural expression it can lead to better understanding of each culture and a sense of individual identity. A positive attitude also covers creativity, ability to develop the aesthetic expression personal artistic expression and participation in cultural life. [15]

3.6. Youthpass

Youthpass is the certificate that is serving the recognition of non-formal learning. It makes visible the learning outcomes that people managed to reach during projects under the Youth in Action Programme.

Participants of projects have the possibility to describe what they have done in their project and which competences they have developed. They are filling the document accompanied with the leaders of their group so the Youthpass supports the reflection upon the personal non-formal learning process.

The Youthpass is Europe-wide evaluation instrument for non-formal learning in the youth field and it contributes to strengthening the social recognition of youth work.

The idea of the Youthpass is to make visible the key competences that the people gained by participating in the projects of Youth in Action and should to support their employability. [19]

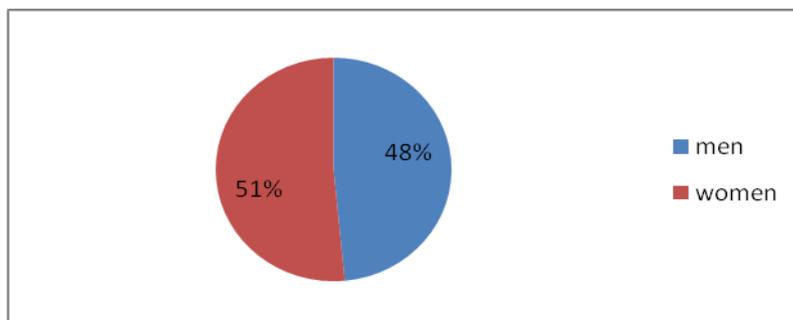
4 QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

The survey was focused on target group of young people aged 14-26 years that participated at least once in the International Youth Exchange (that belongs to the Action 1 under the Youth in Action Programme. All of them were young people from the Czech Republic that went abroad during the year 2010. The countries they went to are not closer specified because it is not seen as a crucial factor as the principles of Youth in Action Programme should be similar regardless of the place the Youth Exchange is held.

Research is focused on Key competencies and their development after the participation in Youth Exchange under The Youth in Action Programme.

With the Questionnaire the young people received the description of all Key competences in order to answer to all questions easier.

Graph 1: Gender of respondents



Source: Author's source

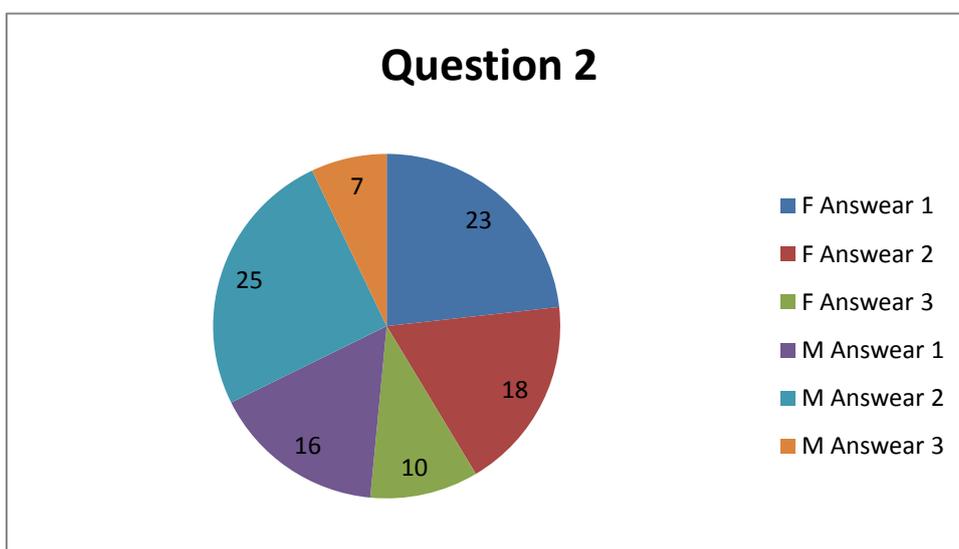
The number of people that have answered the questionnaire was 100.

In the Questionnaire survey there took part in 51 women and 48 men. This distribution could almost ideally describe the gender balance. Anyway there is a small significance of the general truth that usually there is a majority of women taking part in projects under the Youth in Action Programme.

Why you have decided to participate in a Youth Exchange?

- 1) It's an interesting experience, I wanted to get to know another country, culture, people, get a basic knowledge of local conditions, I like to meet new people.
- 2) I like to travel.
- 3) I was convinced by my friend, who wanted to participate in.

Graph 2: Reason for participation:



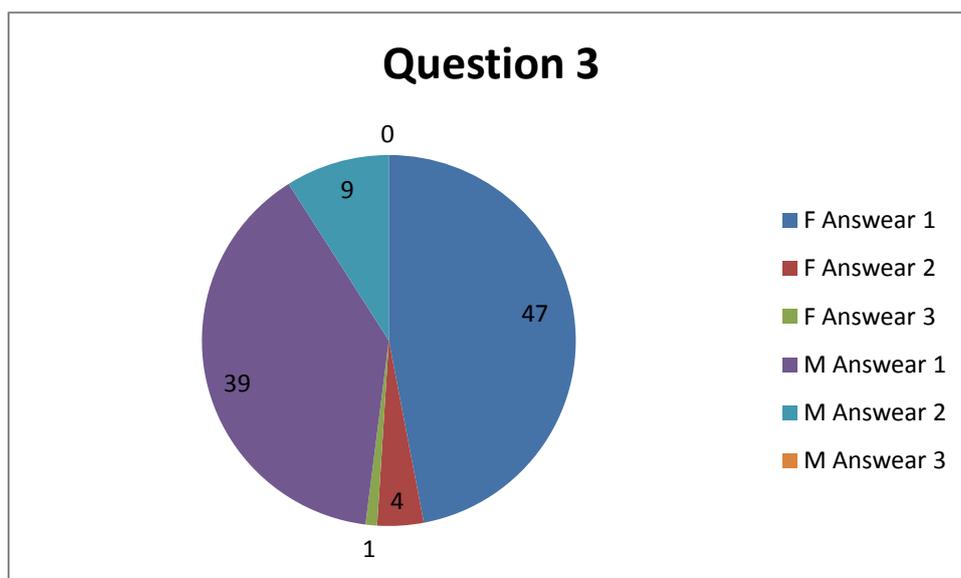
Source: Author's source

The second question was more about the motivation that made young people to take part in the Youth Exchange under the Youth in Action Programme. From the results it is significant that unfortunately there are the same numbers of the people who took part in from the perspective of interests in other cultures (and the majority is represented by women) and the people who took part in because they just like to travel (and the majority was represented by men). It means that the policy makers should to more focus on the ways how to motivate young people (and again specially men) in order to be more eager to meet new people and explore new cultures rather taking part just from the reason to visit some places.

How did you improve your language skills in the mother tongue?

- 1) I am more communicative, more able to use those words in a certain situation, I more listen to others.
- 2) There has been no improvement.
- 3) My communication skills are rather worse; in this environment I have found out that and that I am ashamed to express my thoughts and opinions to the group.

Graph 3: Development of first competence



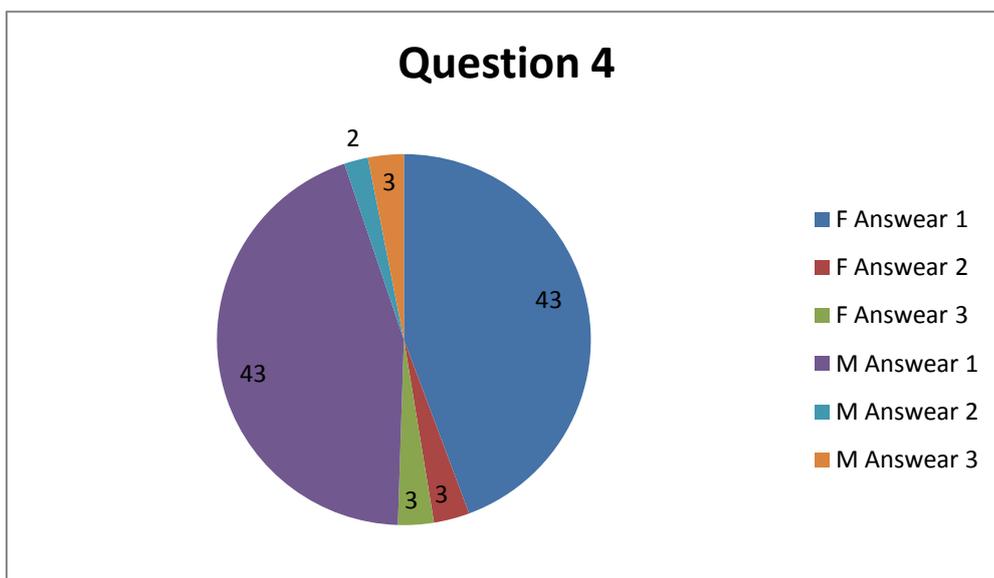
Source: Author 's source

From the answers it is very significant that even the official language of Youth Exchange is English the people that have this international experience can also improve the skills of the communication in the mother tongue as the majority of young men and women did. It would be also interesting to mention that in the unfamiliar place the women adapt better than men and men are shyer than women if they have to speak in front of the public. To conclude the improvement in this competence we can say that 86 people no matter the gender it were successful in improving this competence.

Did your communication in foreign languages improved?

- 1) Yes, the frequent use of foreign languages, there was a greater mastery of language to extend vocabulary, I am able / or a foreign language to better communicate, read and write.
- 2) No, I do not feel any difference in the quality of my communication.
- 3) I do not know.

Graph 4: Development of second competence



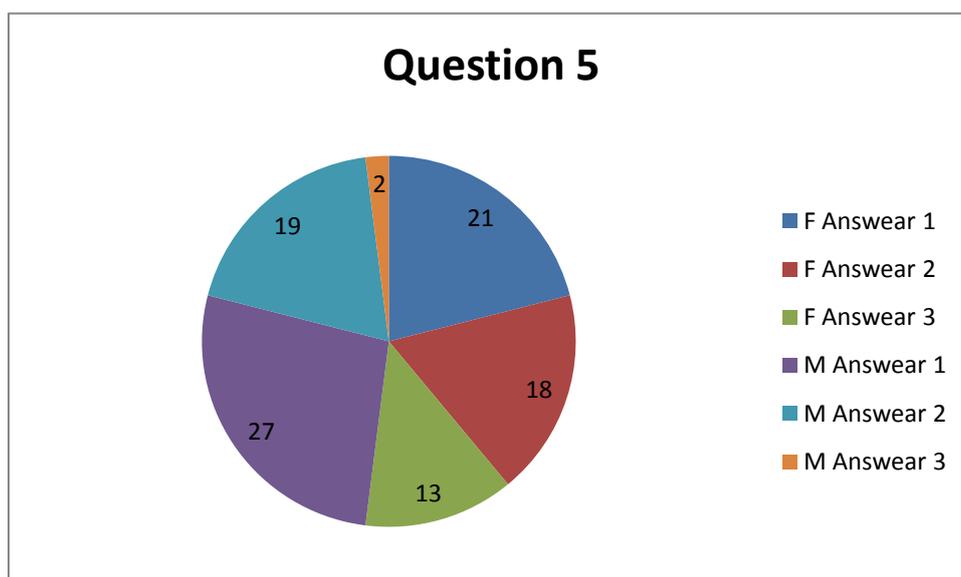
Source: Author's source

From this chart it is significant that the same number of both genders improved their communication in foreign language and the overall number is 86.

Do you feel that you developed your mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology?

- 1) Yes, learned, and I use mathematical thinking to solve problems while I realized that each individual is responsible for his behavior in society.
- 2) I'm not aware of the development of these abilities in my case.
- 3) I do not know, I can not judge it.

Graph 5: Development of third competence



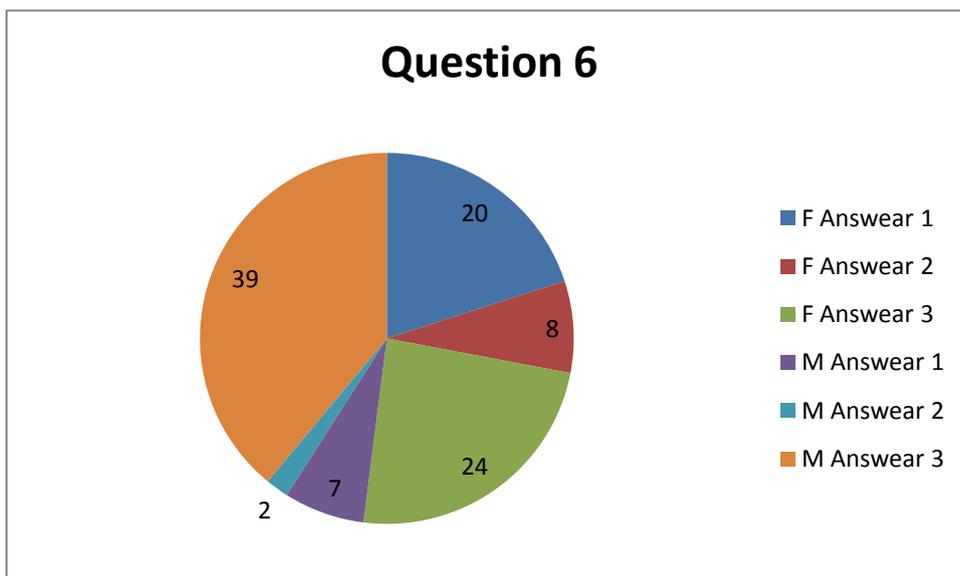
Source: Author's source

From this chart it is significant that 47 people developed their mathematical competence and competences in science technology. The second remarkable group was not aware of any development and this is described by 37 people.

Can you make better use of their digital technology work?

- 1) Yes, they were part of the youth exchange.
- 2) No, digital technology was done by other participants.
- 3) Yes, but with the use of digital technology, I met in the past, so I've learned nothing new.

Graph 6: Development of fourth competence



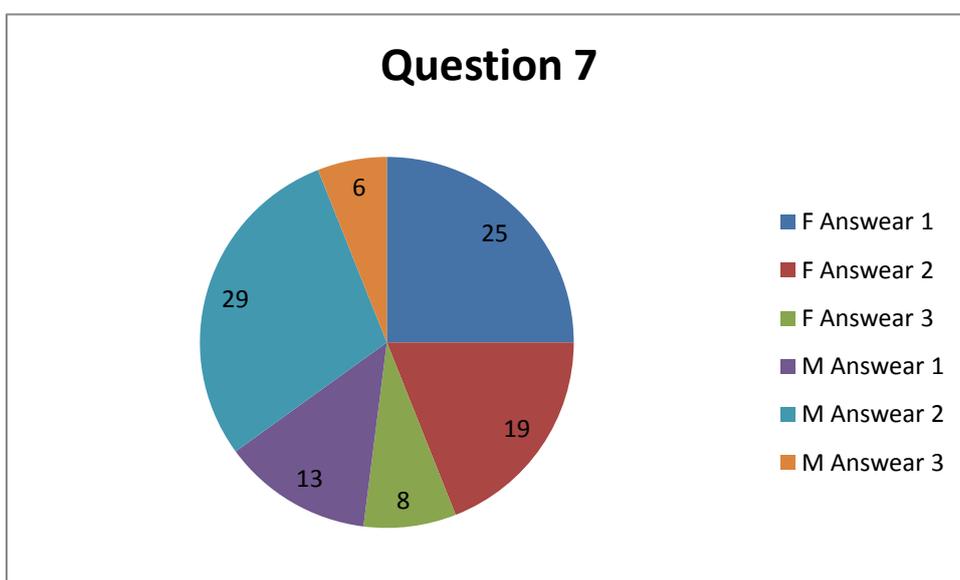
Source: Author's source

In the case of improving skills in the digital technology work was improved in 27 cases. It could represent quite a low number, but we have to take into consideration the fact that there are also 63 people that wrote that they are use to work with digital technology and their skills could be already developed.

Did you improve your ability to learn?

- 1) Definitely yes.
- 2) It affected me rarely.
- 3) I do not feel any change.

Graph 7: Development of fifth competence



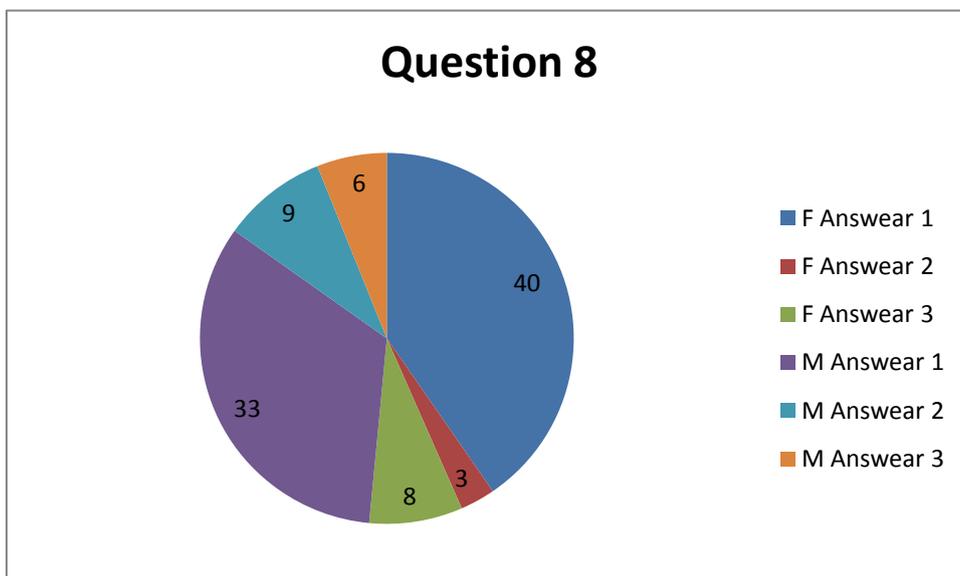
Source: Author 's source

Concerning this competence there has been a significant improvement in 38 cases and some improvement least in 48 cases. If we put the numbers together we can have about 86 of at least some improvement and it can also be taken as a satisfactory amount.

There has to develop your social and civic skills?

- 1) I have learned, and I give space to others for their communication, ideas, creativity, understanding their values, political and religious orientation.
- 2) I'm not sure that my previous values in any way changed.
- 3) I do not know.

Graph 8: Development of sixth competence



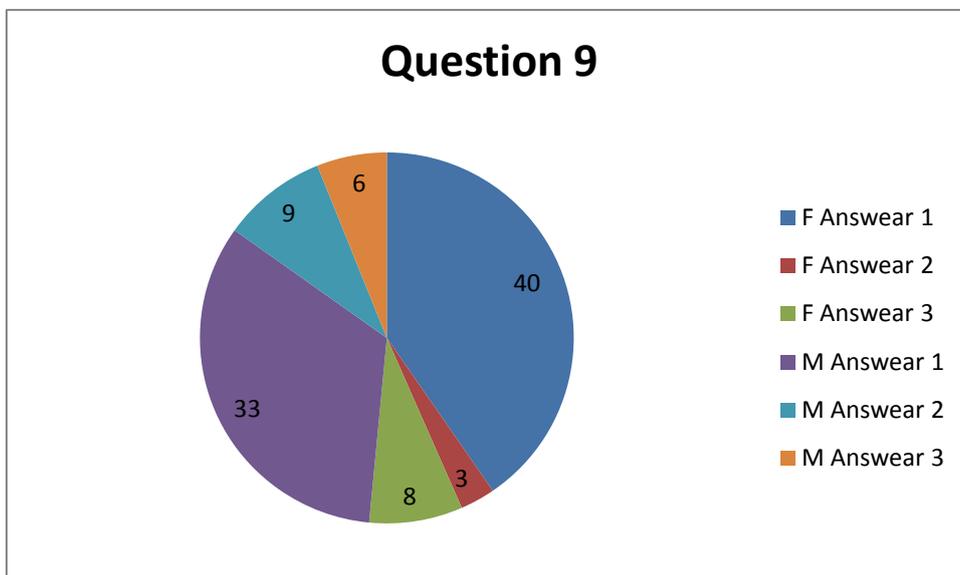
Source: Author's source

Concerning the development of social and civic skills in 73 cases there has been a remarkable improvement. That means almost three quarters and could be taken as satisfactory number.

Did your sense of initiative and entrepreneurship improve?

- 1) No, I gave the space to others, who were more aggressive and proactive.
- 2) Yes, learned, I have become more initiative and managed to apply my ideas and opinions in practice and also to share them with others.
- 3) My sense of initiative and entrepreneurship is still the same.

Graph 9:Development of seventh competence



Source: Author 's source

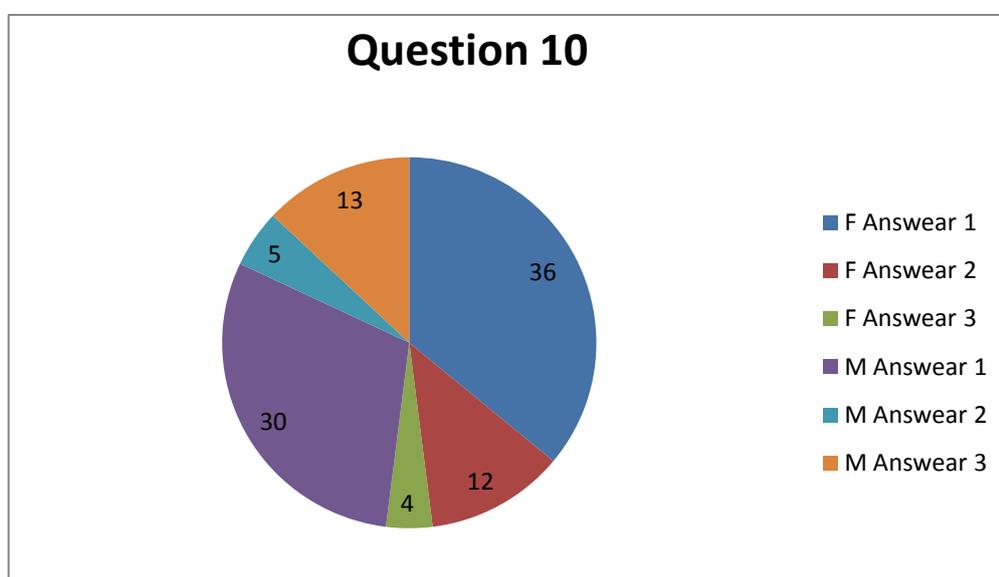
The sense of initiative and entrepreneurship was improved in 12.

It shows the picture of young people that the majority of them rather prefer to be lead by others. This is the point where the policy makers should to think more about successful tools to evoke the sense of initiative and entrepreneurship among young people participating in Youth Exchanges. Also the organization that is preparing the concrete projects should to implement more activities that could lead to higher development of this competence.

How do you consider your cultural awareness and expression?

- 1) My cultural awareness and expression is enhanced by the summary of the information, I can better express artistically.
- 2) I do not feel any change in my case; my cultural awareness is still the same.
- 3) I do not know.

Graph 10: Development of eight competence



Source: Author's source

Concerning the last competence of cultural awareness and expression it has been improved by 66 participants. This result could illustrate two things. The first is that the rest of the people gained this competence in the previous activities and they do not need more development. The second thing can mean that organizers of Youth Exchanges should to focus little bit more on Intercultural dialogue between the participants in order to achieve higher improvement.

5 CONCLUSION

As this Bachelor thesis is describing the possibilities of the funding from European Union and its community programmes in the youth field with the example of Youth in Action Programme and areas that are possible to fund through this Programme. As well as how this Programme is divided with the little overview of the statistics. Accompanied with this the introduction into the non governmental sector with the focus on the non-profit/non governmental organization has been done. Also the introduction of the important meaning of the volunteerism and the fact that the three pillars of European Union are working together in order to support the volunteer work specially in 2011 and the following years starting with the International year of Volunteering have been introduced. Last but not least the non formal education has been discussed and the key competences were described.

The Questionnaire Survey was the practical part of this Bachelor thesis and was focused on the development of the key competences of the young people that participated in the Youth Exchanges under The Youth in Action Programme. The results showed that there is a significant evidence of the improvement within the majority of the respondents. Almost all out of eight key competences have been developed among the majority or close to the majority of the people. There was just one key competence where the development was made just in the minority cases of the respondents. It was the sense of initiative and entrepreneurship. So for the organizations that organize the Youth Exchanges under the Youth in Action Programme would be essential to implement more activities and tools of non formal education to achieve the higher development of this key competence.

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7.SUPPLEMENTS

Questionnaire survey

The survey was focused on target group of young people aged 14-26 years that participated at least once in the International Youth Exchange (that belongs to the Action 1 under the Youth in Action Programme. All of them were young people from the Czech Republic that went abroad during the year 2010. The countries they went to are not closer specified because it is not seen as a crucial factor as the principles of Youth in Action Programme should be similar regardless of the place the Youth Exchange is held.

Research is focused on Key competencies and their development after the participation in Youth Exchange.

1) What is your gender?

- Male (48)
- Female (52)

2) Why you have decided to participate in a youth exchange?

- It's an interesting experience, I wanted to get to know another country, culture, and people, get a basic knowledge of local conditions, I like to meet new people. (16 M, 23 F)
- I like to travel. (25 M, 18 F)
- I was convinced by my friend, who wanted to participate in. (7 M, 10 F)

3) How did you improve your language skills in the mother tongue?

- I am more communicative, more able to use those words in a certain situation, I more listen to others. (39 M, 47 F)
- There has been no improvement. (9 M, 4 F)
- My communication skills are rather worse, in this environment I have found out that and that I am ashamed to express my thoughts and opinions to the group. (0 M, 1 F)

4) Did your communication in foreign languages improved?

- Yes, the frequent use of foreign languages, there was a greater mastery of language to extend vocabulary, I am able in a foreign language to better communicate, read and write. **(43M, 43F)**
- No, I do not feel any difference in the quality of my communication. **(2M,3F)**
- I do not know. **(3M,3F)**

5) Do you feel that you developed your mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology?

- Yes, learned, and I use mathematical thinking to solve problems while I realized that each individual is responsible for his behavior in society. **(27M,21F)**
- I'm not aware of the development of these abilities in my case. **(19M,18F)**
- I do not know, I can not judge it. **(2M,13F)**

6) Can you better use the digital technology?

- Yes, they were part of the youth exchange. **(7M,20F)**
- No, digital technology was done by other participants. **(2M,8F)**
- Yes, but with the use of digital technology, I met in the past, so I've learned nothing new. **(39M,24F)**

7) Did you improve your ability to learn?

- Definitely yes. **(13M,25F)**
- One effect it had on me. **(29M,19F)**
- I do not feel any change. **(6M,8F)**

8) There has to develop your social and civic skills?

- I have learned, and I give space to others for their communication, ideas, creativity, understanding their values, political and religious orientation. **(33M,40F)**
- I'm not sure that my previous values in any way changed. **(9M,3F)**
- I do not know. **(6M,8F)**

9) Did your sense of initiative and entrepreneurship improve?

- No, I gave the space to others, who were more aggressive and proactive. **(11M,21F)**
- Yes, learned, became be more initiative person, I managed to apply my ideas and opinions in practice and also share them with other people. **(26M,29F)**
- My sense of initiative and entrepreneurship is still the same. **(13M,3F)**

10) How do you consider your cultural awareness and expression?

- My cultural awareness and expression is enhanced by the summary of the information, I can better express artistically. **(30 M, 36F)**
- I do not feel any change in myself, my cultural awareness is still the same. **(5M,12F)**
- I do not know. **(13M,4F)**