

SALTO-YOUTH
EASTERN EUROPE AND CAUCASUS
RESOURCE CENTRE



Education and Culture

SALTO-YOUTH EASTERN EUROPE AND CAUCASUS RESOURCE CENTRE

**Workshop for NA Staff responsible for
International Cooperation**

&

**Evaluation of co-operation with
Eastern Europe and Caucasus**

29.09 - 02.10.2005, Warsaw, Poland

REPORT

THE CONTENT

THE CONTENT	2
1. AIM OF WORKSHOP	3
2. WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAMME	3
3. WORKSHOP VENUE AND PARTICIPANTS	3
4. INTRODUCTION TO WORKSHOP	3
5. PLENARY SESSIONS	4
5.1 <u>Update</u> on the YOUTH programme.....	4
5.2 <u>'Youth in Action'</u> Programme (2007-2013)	5
5.3 <u>SALTO-YOUTH</u> Resource Centre for EECA	6
5.4 <u>Youth Policy</u> in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus.....	7
6. WORKING GROUPS	7
6.1 <u>Working Group I</u> - An exchange of experiences on cooperation with the EECA Region.....	7
6.2 <u>Working Group II</u> - How to improve cooperation with the EECA Region?.....	9
6.3 <u>Working Group III</u> - Evaluation the RC's Work Plan and recommendations on it.....	11
6.4 <u>Working Group IV</u> - Brainstorming on the various components of Youth of the World (Action 3) and on EVS (Action 2.1) of the future 'Youth in Action' programme.....	13
7. OPEN SPACE	15
8. EVALUATION OF WORKSHOP	16
9. SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATION	17
ANNEXES	18

1. AIM OF WORKSHOP

The main aim of the Workshop was to share information and experiences on cooperation with the Eastern Europe and Caucasus Region (EECA) within the International Cooperation of the YOUTH programme.

2. WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAMME

- To provide an update on the YOUTH and future 'Youth in Action' programmes
- To evaluate the SALTO Resource Centre's (RC) activities and performance and provide orientations for future cooperation
- To share and evaluate experiences gained by participants to projects organised in partnership with NGOs from EECA countries
- To provide background information on youth structures in the EECA Region
- To promote networking and future cooperation among present actors - NA, RC and NGO representatives

The programme consisted of plenary presentations on the YOUTH and 'Youth in Action' programmes; on the activities of the Resource Centre; and an introduction to Youth Policy in the EECA Region.

In addition, to facilitate interaction between NA and NGO representatives, working groups met to discuss issues relevant to the workshop as well as to share experiences and ideas among themselves and to make recommendations.

During an intercultural evening, the partner NGOs had the opportunity to briefly present their projects. The presentations were followed by a sharing of various national foods and drinks.

The workshop programme is attached (Annex I).

3. WORKSHOP VENUE AND PARTICIPANTS

This year the annual workshop, which aimed at bringing together NA staff responsible for International Cooperation with Partner Countries and project organisers, was hosted by the SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centre for Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. The previous two annual workshops had been hosted by SALTO-YOUTH South East Europe.

The workshop, held in Warsaw, was attended by 17 NA representatives and 18 NGO representatives (9 from Programme and 9 from EECA - in most cases project partners from Programme and EECA countries). The list of participants is enclosed (Annex II).

4. INTRODUCTION TO WORKSHOP

Renata Sobolewska, Director of the Polish YOUTH National Agency, welcomed participants to this first workshop hosted by SALTO EECA. She outlined that geographically and strategically the Resource Centre was well based within the Polish NA due to Poland's historical background and contacts with its neighbours within the Region. The NA had expressed its long-term interest in developing partnerships and projects with its eastern neighbours since the period of Preparatory Measures.

The Resource Centre had been established in October 2003 and officially launched in 2004 with its first contact-making activity. Since then a number of encounters, training events and study visits had been organised. She stressed that the aims of the Resource Centre were to help develop long-lasting partnerships and facilitate an exchange of youth work expertise and know-how between governmental as well as non-governmental structures in the EU and EECA countries. To respond to an increase in demand for assistance from NAs and NGOs and for new activities, the Resource Centre was now managed by two full-time members of staff with a recently recruited part-time help. She wished participants an interesting exchange of views and ideas during the workshop.

5. PLENARY SESSIONS

5.1 Update on the YOUTH programme

Giorgio Guazzugli-Marini, from the Commission's Youth Programmes Unit (Directorate General Education and Culture) informed participants that this workshop was part of the Unit's strategy for training and information workshops/seminars on the YOUTH programme Actions and on International Cooperation (formerly known as cooperation with Third Countries) which had been organised and hosted by various NAs on an annual basis. Earlier training events for NA staff responsible for international cooperation, which also included NGO representatives, had been held in Brussels hosted by the Commission. Since 2002, it had been agreed that the respective regional Resource Centres would host the workshops on international cooperation, with a focus on the relevant host Region, bringing together NA staff and project partners.



Participants were brought upto-date on the following issues:

The centralised decision-making process of projects with Partner Countries had followed a cycle of first semi-decentralisation and then of full decentralisation to NAs with a 'screening' period by the Commission. Since the February 2005 deadline, NAs were fully responsible in the decision-making process for projects with all Partner Countries. Selection of multilateral projects submitted by Euro-wide Youth NGOs remained centralised. At the November 2005 application deadline, NGOs from the South East Region would be able to submit to the Commission applications for projects as a pilot phase.

Restructuring had taken place within the former YOUTH Unit of the Directorate General Education and Culture (DG EAC), resulting in two Units: Youth Programmes and Youth Policy.

An Executive Agency had been established, which would be operational from early 2006, taking over the tasks currently carried out by the Technical Assistance Office (TAO) as well as additional responsibilities to be delegated by the Commission.

Visas remained one of the main obstacles to mobility with EECA countries; the Commission had drafted some general recommendations for visa/residence permit applications, copy of which was included in the workshop information pack and was also accessible on the YOUTH programme website. Reference was also made to the *Directive*, adopted in December 2004 by the European Council of Ministers, on the conditions of admission of third-country nationals for the purpose of studies, exchanges, non-remunerated training or voluntary service. The Directive had to be transposed into national law by January 2007, which would coincide with the launch of the 'Youth in Action' programme. However, the transposition of the Directive into national law was compulsory only for students and would remain optional for the other target groups.

The Commission had appealed to national youth authorities to ensure that the Directive was applied also for the other target groups, in particular to volunteers. Therefore NAs should continue to lobby their relevant authorities.

Statistics on projects supported in 2004, compiled by the TAO on basis of data input on Youthlink by NAs, and data on centralised projects, were provided (Annex III). An increase of approximately 30 to 40 % in the number of supported projects was noticeable. It was stressed that these statistics were accurate only if all NAs had correctly input and updated relevant information. Statistics on projects supported by NAs varied. However, as stressed by some NAs, these statistics had to be compared not only on the number of projects supported but also on the basis of the budgets allocated to each NA, as smaller NAs did not have the budgetary resources to support more than one or two projects with Partner Countries annually.

Background information was presented on the '**European Neighbourhood Policy**' (ENP), a framework for the development of new relationships as well as enhanced cross-border cooperation and cultural relations with neighbouring Partner Countries. The aims of ENP, built on existing Association Agreements (AA) and Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA), were to share the benefits of enlargement; promote reform and good governance; create a 'ring of friends', an area of peace, stability and prosperity based on shared values and common interests. Copy of the presentation slides is enclosed (Annex IV).

5.2 'Youth in Action' Programme (2007-2013)

A brief update on the forthcoming new Programme was presented by **Giorgio Guazzugli-Marini** (Annex V). This single Programme, bringing together the activities implemented under the current YOUTH programme and of the support to European Youth NGOs, proposes to cover a wider geographical scope and an enlarged age bracket (13-30).

Countries participating to the Programme would include the 25 EU Member States, EFTA/EEA and candidate countries including Croatia; depending on specific agreements, the other West Balkan countries and Switzerland would also participate.

Within the framework of 'Youth of the World' Action 3 of the Programme, Partner Countries would include all those countries integrated in the 'European Neighbourhood Policy' (Neighbouring Countries) as well as cooperation activities with other Regions such as ACP (Africa, Caribbean, Pacific) countries, Asia, Latin America, and on basis of co-funding joint agreements the industrialised countries (e.g. Canada; Japan).

5.3 SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centre for EECA

Tomek Bratek gave an update on the SALTO activities organised since the RC's launch in 2004 and of the successful outcomes, which were reflected in the provided statistics: over 500 participants to events and about 30 projects submitted to NAs resulting from RC events, out of which 18 were currently being implemented. The emphasis had been on organising contact-making seminars to facilitate the development of partnerships, and study visits to the Ukraine and to Russia for the benefit of youth workers, NA and NGO representatives from Programme Countries.

A network of 20 Multipliers from the EECA countries had been trained to facilitate the promotion of the YOUTH programme within their respective countries, in cooperation with the RC.

As part of the RC's information strategy, bilingual information leaflets had been produced on the aims and objectives of the RC as well as of the YOUTH programme, in English and in each of the relevant national languages of the EECA countries. A quarterly newsletter was produced, and a Magazine would be published in the near future, to which workshop participants were asked to contribute articles on their projects and their own experiences. In addition, an '*International Cooperation*' Kit was in the process of being drafted by an editorial working group comprising representatives from both Programme and EECA countries, and which would also include material on Action 2 (EVS) produced by SALTO South East Europe. The Kit would be published in English and Russian.

Training events on the Programme Actions, contact-making seminars and study visits both to and from EECA would continue to be organised in 2006. Copy of the presentation slides is attached (Annex VI).



5.4 Youth Policy in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus

Yarna Borenko, from the European Dialogue Society in the Ukraine, gave an interesting overview on the history and development of youth policy, youth work and structures from the Soviet times to the current day. She outlined the main youth structures, such as the *Pioneers* and the *Komsomol* of the Soviet era, and referred to the 'paternalism' of the Soviet state youth policy and its ideological role in promoting the active participation of young people, such as the summer brigades (squads of young volunteers sent to rural areas to help in agricultural cooperatives) as imposed by the state; and participation in after school activities provided by the Pioneer Palaces.

She presented the post-soviet institutional transformations in each of the EECA Partner Countries. She highlighted the role of the YOUTH programme as one of the instruments promoting international cooperation with the Region. The presentation slides are enclosed (Annex VII). This was a very useful introduction to the youth policy realities in the Region.

6. WORKING GROUPS

6.1 Working Group I - An exchange and sharing of experiences on cooperation with the EECA Region

This working group brought together NA and NGO representatives, within three different groups, to share experiences on the successes as well as difficulties encountered in the planning and implementation of projects with a focus on the following issues:

- **Partnership** - how did cooperation progress from the moment of identifying partner groups to deciding the project theme and programme, methodology, division of tasks, preparing and implementing the project?
- **Implementation** - how did it work? what worked out according to plans and what were the difficulties/obstacles/challenges, if any, encountered? what kind of support was provided by the NA/Commission/other institutions or experts?
- **Follow-up** - any planned new activities with the partners?

The following points are a summary of comments resulting from discussions held within the three working groups on the above issues.

Partnerships:

- Total involvement of all partner groups at each stage of the project planning, preparation, application, implementation, evaluation and follow-up is essential
- All partners involved in the project should have the same areas of interest; therefore a good understanding of each other's views and reasons of interest in the project is important
- The most successful ways of identifying compatible partners are: contact-making seminars; short study visits; NA and SALTO databases; relying on links existing through town-twinning, or local



- authority, regional or cross-border contacts
- Communication among partners at the planning stage is crucial; keeping in touch through e-mail and/or yahoo groups; regular updates on the project preparation progress (e.g. through newsletters)
- Feasibility visits, advance planning visits (APV) and training events facilitate face-to-face encounters among partners and lead to a more efficient communication and cooperation
- Sharing of responsibilities and tasks
- Establishing partnership agreements (in addition to the agreement forms signed for project applications) which clearly outline each partner group's responsibilities, sharing of the tasks and of the funds available through the YOUTH grant and other sources of co-funding
- Challenges: how to sustain long-term partnerships and how to diversify existing partnerships by introducing new partners?

Implementation:

Challenges:

- Language and communication difficulties
- Discrepancies in the reciprocal understanding of the YOUTH programme criteria and objectives (e.g. differing views on the concept of volunteering)
- Procedures for visas and residential permits, in particular when a Programme Country has no Embassy in one of the EECA countries
- Confusion on whether to apply for a tourist or business visa
- Rules and regulations which affect the transfer of funds to partners in EECA countries
- National regulations in some of the Partner Countries which are not compatible with the YOUTH programme guidelines and procedures (e.g. insurance rules in the Ukraine are not compatible with the AXA insurance policy provided by the Commission in the case of EVS; costs incurred in obtaining invitation letters for, and registration of, partner groups hosted in Russia; pocket money allocated to EVS volunteers higher than local salaries in EECA countries)
- Travel costs - difficulty for EECA partners to find the 30% co-funding
- Lack of funds and co-funding
- Limited human resources within NAs to follow-up/monitor the progress of projects
- Application deadlines
- Obstacles to maintaining long-term partnerships (e.g. withdrawal of grants to projects organised by long-standing partnerships)

Successes:

- Intercultural learning
- Sharing of experiences and skills
- Understanding and respect of national realities and cultural diversity
- Realisation of similar perspectives, values and ideas as well as of similar difficulties
- Impact at local and regional level
- Increase in motivation, excitement
- New friendships and networks
- Overcoming language and communication difficulties through various activities (arts, sports, etc)
- Discovery of new horizons, interests

- Development of new projects, opportunities for the future

Follow-up of projects:

- Continuous evaluation of projects (before, during and after) is essential
- EVS projects should involve not only the relevant NA but also coordinating body as well as host project
- Collaboration of all partners in the preparation of the final report is important
- Publicity to raise an awareness of outcomes and impact of projects at local and national level has a multiplying effect
- Partners should aim at keeping in touch after the end of their project (challenge: depends on success of project as well as on good will and motivation...)
- Planning of next stage (who? what? where? how? why?) should be considered and discussed among partners
- A successful project leads to new opportunities and projects (e.g. EVS project resulting from a youth exchange)



Summary of recommendations resulting from the deliberations of the three working groups:

- A youth platform for the EECA Region, similar to the 'Mediterranean Youth Platform', should be launched
- Make EECA 'sexy' for Programme Countries
- Proposals and partnerships resulting from contact-making seminars should be monitored/followed up by NA/SALTO and/or seminar organisers
- Facilitation of visa applications which are an obstacle to mobility: letters of support from Commission, EU Delegations and NAs; lobbying of relevant national authorities
- Overcome difficulties by keeping communication channels open among partner groups; stimulate creativity by finding alternative solutions to overcome obstacles
- Sharing of information on partnerships: regular consultation among NAs/SALTO/NGOs and updating of existing databases; informing volunteers of other EVS projects within the Region to facilitate contact-making and sharing of experiences/difficulties
- Study Visits to EECA countries to promote an understanding of national realities
- Importance of keeping a balance between QUALITY and QUANTITY

6.2 Working Group II - How to improve cooperation with the EECA Region?

Within two separate working groups, the NA staff and the NGO representatives were given the task of discussing the following points, on basis of a **SWOT** exercise:

- * What makes cooperation between Programme and EECA countries attractive? (Strengths, Opportunities)
- * What makes it challenging/difficult? (Weaknesses, Threats)
- * Why and how to promote such cooperation?

The following is a summary of comments resulting from both groups' discussions (NAs and NGOs):

Strengths:

- good and strong partnerships based on mutual interests
- intercultural learning and experience
- interest in cooperating with partners from EECA Region
- exchange and sharing of experiences and ideas
- creativity and motivation
- identification of historical and cultural identity
- unity in diversity
- challenges: overcoming of fear, prejudices, stereotypes
- active involvement of young people
- multiplier/spin-off effect of the YOUTH programme - facilitates access to other opportunities, activities and funding sources

Opportunities:

- access to SALTO EECA
- big demand for partnerships from EECA countries
- open mental barriers
- wider knowledge, better understanding of EECA Region
- new trainers from the EECA Region
- visiting new countries, discovering new cultures and improving language skills
- exposure to different nationalities and cultures through multilateral events
- involvement in historical and social changes
- cooperation with a wide range of organisations and institutions
- opportunity to organise low cost activities
- establishing long-term partnerships and cooperation

Weaknesses:

- different working methods and interpretation of youth work terminology
- lack of linguistic skills
- challenge of EECA infrastructures
- lack of adequate funds and resources for the support of a larger number of projects as well for the monitoring of projects
- unequal partnerships, discrepancy in the number of Programme and EECA countries
- YOUTH programme rules (e.g. not being able to mix partnerships from different Regions)
- limited information on the YOUTH programme in EECA countries
- lack of communication, regular information, updates, access to internet
- attitude of Programme Countries towards EECA: i.e. lack of information, knowledge and understanding of the Region
- limited application deadlines (should be 5 deadlines instead of 3)
- lack of trainers and support systems within EECA
- lack of officially recognised national coordinators in EECA
- difficult for first time applicants

- legal obstacles to mobility: visa procedures and expensive fees; taxation on funds received from EU (up to

15% in some of the EECA countries); residence permits; transfer of funds to partners in EECA (in Belarus, Council of Ministers' permission is required to receive funds from EU)

Threats:

- unreliable partners; lack of trust
- creation of 'Fortress Europe'
- national rules and regulations
- changing situations
- diversity

6.3 Working Group III - Following the plenary presentation on the EECA Resource Centre, workshop participants were asked, within three working groups bringing together NGO and NA representatives, to evaluate the RC's work programme and to make a number of recommendations on its:

- * Information strategy
- * Training courses
- * Support provided to NAs and NGOs

Working group members summarised their views and recommendations on a set of colour-coded cards: **Green: to be improved; Yellow: satisfactory; Red: good**

Information strategy

To be improved:

- user-friendly and up-to-date newsletter, distributed on a frequent and regular basis, with concrete but brief information on forthcoming opportunities; events; developments
- publication of an annual magazine to promote examples of quality projects and best practices
- a regularly updated home page, format of which should be improved for easy access to latest up-to-date information
- target umbrella youth organisations and youth councils to reach a wider network of NGOs
- clarification of NAs and Resource Centre's respective role for the benefit of beneficiaries
- calls for participation to events/meetings/workshops should be publicised well in advance and not at short notice

Satisfactory:

- recruitment of participants to various activities through the network of NAs - should be continued
- study visits to EECA countries for participants from Programme countries; however, participants from the other EECA countries should also be invited on such study visits



Good:

- availability of bilingual information leaflets in English and the relevant national languages (these were rated as excellent)
- network of Multipliers within EECA countries
- cooperation with other SALTOs and projects (e.g. youthnet/CIS; training course on 'Diversity' organised in cooperation with SALTO Cultural Diversity)
- annual evaluation workshop involving all actors (NAs, NGOs and Commission)

Training Courses**To be improved:**

- calls for participation to various events should be more specific on the target groups
- training courses on Action 5 to improve project quality
- provision of training modules
- training for trainers from EECA
- more follow-up on outcomes from organised activities
- some SALTO events could be outsourced to NAs or NGOs

Satisfactory/Good:

- reasonable balance in contact-making seminars and training courses
- action orientated training events
- on-line application
- calendar of annual events

Support to NAs/NGOs**To be improved:**

- too short notice in communication of information on forthcoming events, which limits well-targeted publicity and recruitment of participants
- a network of multipliers within Programme Countries
- NA websites to provide a link to the Resource Centre's home page
- NA/SALTO consultation strategy on project partners
- regular updates of database facilitating partner-finding
- support to NAs' information strategy to promote cooperation with EECA Region
- less activities and more support to NAs/NGOs
- monitoring of quality and follow-up of outcomes of projects and SALTO activities

Good:

- direct support to NGOs
- publication of reports on study visits
- Resource Centre managed by expert staff

6.4 Working Group IV - Within two separate groups, NA and NGO representatives brainstormed on the various components of Youth of the World (Action 3) and on EVS (Action 2.1) of the future 'Youth in Action' programme.

Both groups came up with very similar comments and proposals. The following is a general summary of comments made by members of both working groups.

Action 3.1 - Cooperation with Neighbouring Countries

Youth Exchanges

- More flexible geographical balance with possibility of mixed neighbouring regions taking part in projects
- Bilateral exchanges with Neighbouring Countries should be possible
- NGOs from Neighbouring Countries should be able to submit applications
- One set of application deadlines for projects organised with Neighbouring Countries and for those projects organised among Participating Countries
- Neighbouring Countries should be able to participate in youth encounter projects
- A balance in the age range of participants; projects with younger age participants should involve a larger number of leaders; in principle, 16 could be lowest age for participation in projects with Neighbouring Countries
- Maximum age 25
- Small grass-root youth groups should be given the opportunity to participate in projects and not only large youth NGOs

Youth Initiatives

- Cross-border initiatives involving Participating and Neighbouring Countries
- Local projects organised on similar themes in different Participating and Neighbouring Countries, coordinated by one NGO
- Adequate training and support to local projects should be available
- Age limit of 18 is too high, could be 15 or 16
- Networking and capacity building
- Youth initiatives should remain local projects at national level; making them international alters their objectives and confuse them with exchanges



Networking and capacity building of NGOs; training of youth workers

- Focus on developing networks of qualified trainers in Neighbouring Countries
- Projects based on mixed neighbouring regions
- Training of, and support to, a network of multipliers within EECA
- Training of Trainers (TOT) in Participating Countries; trainers should have adequate and relevant competences, know-how and qualifications
- Accessible to small NGOs and not mainly to INGYOs
- Focus on development of civil society
- Enhance cross-border cooperation

Innovation and Quality

- Easy access to compendium of realized projects
- Higher percentage of funding to facilitate involvement of small NGOs
- Bilateral projects, especially at cross-border level
- Involvement of public authorities
- More training opportunities for young people and not only for youth workers
- Priority to dissemination of examples of good practice

Information activities for young people and youth workers

- Re-inforce the role of the SALTO Resource Centre
- Improve and enhance NAs and SALTO's proximity to grass-root groups
- Create Resource Centres within the EECA region
- Continue to provide bilingual information, in simple language and user-friendly documents
- More information focused on the Programme's priorities and not only on its Actions
- Focus should be on information and training
- TCP (training and cooperation plans) should remain as an important cooperation tool among NAs and with the youth field
- Innovative information tools (different from CDs; websites) and activities

Activities promoting cooperation in the field of youth

- Promote cross-border cooperation
- Activities should help develop national youth policies in Neighbouring Countries as well as recognition of non-formal education (e.g. volunteering)
- Access to information on youth realities in Neighbouring Countries
- Active involvement of different actors from the youth field and not only of youth NGOs

Action 3.2 - Cooperation with other countries

(only the NA representatives brainstormed on this component of Action 3)

- Focus on youth workers
- Cooperation on basis of mixed regions
- Bilateral or trilateral rather than multilateral projects would better promote Europe, involve local communities and better facilitate exchange of good practices
- Each Participating Country should prioritize its Region/s of interest
- Focus on North/South cooperation
- Priority to thematic approach
- Projects should be well justified to be eligible
- Why not USA?

Action 2.1 - EVS (individual)

- EVS with Neighbouring Countries - why not a sub-action of Action 3 Youth of the World?
- HEIs for host projects in Neighbouring Countries could be a good tool to attract volunteers from Participating Countries; could be accredited by contact points/multipliers in EECA or Executive Agency
- Develop tools to motivate more young people with fewer opportunities to become volunteers

- Focus on short-term EVS up to 3 months (with EECA countries)
- Back-up facilities in Neighbouring Countries responsible for on-site visits and accreditation
- EVS as a job-shadowing activity

7. OPEN SPACE

Prior to the workshop evaluation session, and within the 'Open Space' forum, participants were given the task of:

- * identifying ideas for future activities;
- * developing new partnerships;
- * put forward proposals for a more efficient cooperation with the EECA Region within the framework of the YOUTH programme and recommendations on what could be improved.



During this session, information was circulated on two forthcoming events:

1. Information and training hosted by the Ukrainian Youth Forum in Kiev in mid-October 2005, organised by the youthnet/CIS project (contact person: Gerhard Mosshammer, Austria)
2. Contact-making seminar and training course on outdoor education with participation of EECA countries in July 2006 (organiser: Luxembourg NA)

The following is a summary of proposals for future cooperation and recommendations put forward by the workshop participants:

- Proposal for a contact-making seminar in one of the EECA countries (proposed by BIJ - Belgian NA French speaking community); a good opportunity for NAs which have no, or only limited, contacts/projects with EECA to be involved in this seminar
- Training course for trainers: capacity building and future networking (Youth for Understanding, Lithuania/Georgia/Azerbaijan)

- Promotion of YOUTH programme in the Caucasus countries
- Exhibition of project posters (to be submitted by each organised project) to increase visibility of the YOUTH programme (itinerant?)
- NAs to invite to information and promotion events leaders of successful projects with EECA to inspire future project organisers
- Research on ideas for co-funding
- Project organisers to send to SALTO examples of good practice and outcome/impact of projects (for publication in newsletter/Magazine)
- Less regulations
- Create a centre for youth cooperation in northern Russia
- More training courses for EVS host organisations from EECA countries
- Resource Centre to keep a databank on EVS host projects and EVS volunteers hosted in EECA countries as contact points for NAs, Multipliers, SALTO, other volunteers
- More information events on YOUTH programme in EECA regions
- List of NA staff responsible for cooperation with EECA should be made available on the SALTO website (Commission to provide) and should be updated on a regular basis
- Avoid involving always same facilitators/trainers and NGOs in training events

During this session participants were also informed that visas for entry into the Ukraine had been abolished for the European Union citizens.

8. EVALUATION OF WORKSHOP

Participants confirmed that the workshop had fulfilled most of their expectations and that they were satisfied with the programme and outcomes of discussions. The workshop was assessed as being an efficient and effective way of networking among NAs and with, and among, NGOs.

The workshop had also helped promoting the role and activities of the Resource Centre, which were much appreciated by all participants. It became obvious that the RC had played a major role, during the two years of its existence, in promoting contacts with, as well as enhancing an understanding of, the EECA Region. Similarly it had played a major role in promoting the YOUTH programme and its objectives within the Region. NA representatives felt they got a much better understanding and perspective of the Resource Centre's work and of how they could best cooperate with SALTO in the future.

Workshop participants reiterated that the workshop for EECA should remain an annual event, which would facilitate assessing and evaluating progress made between each workshop.

Participants thanked the workshop organisers (***Tomek Bratek, Andrij Pavlovych, Karolina Rutkowska***) and the workshop facilitator, ***Marta Medlinska***, for their efficiency in the organisation and running of the workshop and for their efforts in trying to respond to participants' requests as well as for their warm hospitality.

In addition to the informal plenary evaluation session, participants were also asked to complete an evaluation questionnaire (Annex VIII). Outcomes of the questionnaire highlighted and reinforced comments and recommendations made during the open space and plenary evaluation sessions.

9. SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promotion of, and development of partnerships and contacts with, the EECA Region within the Programme Countries should be enhanced
- SALTO Resource Centre should continue to give priority to providing information and support to NAs/NGOs by producing and disseminating frequent newsletters with up-to-date and current information on events focusing on the EECA Region and an annual magazine with articles on projects with EECA, highlighting examples of good practice, impact on young people, local community and the Region
- Increase the number of multipliers within the EECA as well as enhance the role of, and support to, the existing network
- The European Commission, NAs and national authorities/Ministries of Youth should intensify their lobbying to facilitate visa procedures
- More focus on targeting smaller youth NGOs rather than INGYOs
- Inclusion should remain an important element in the future 'Youth in Action' programme
- More visibility and transparency in project selection procedures
- Discussion on 'what is a good quality project?'
- Priority to the recognition of non-formal education
- Workshops bringing together NA staff responsible for EECA and representatives of project beneficiaries from the Region should become an annual event and should not be alternated with encounters in other Partner regions.



ANNEXES:

- I Workshop Programme
- II List of Participants
- III International Cooperation with EECA - Statistical Overview 2004
- IV European Neighbourhood Policy
- V Youth in Action 2007 - 2013
- VI SALTO-YOUTH EECA Resource Centre - achievements and future plans
- VII Youth Policy in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus Region
- VIII Workshop Evaluation Form