



where is my coach?

COACHING YOUTH PROJECTS
within the
YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME

BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

SALTO-YOUTH Participation together with National Agencies of the Youth in action programme has developed a European Coaching Strategy over the past few years developing tools, publications and training activities focused originally on Youth Initiatives and then on any youth projects within the Youth in action programme.

In May 2008, SALTO-YOUTH Participation initiated a European Coaching Working Group composed of National Agencies interested in reflecting on the coaching of youth projects. The National Agencies from Austria, France, Germany, the UK and Poland have accepted the invitation and contributed to this working group.

5 years have gone by since coaching was promoted as a way of supporting Youth Initiative projects. The time has now come to take a look at national practices in programme countries, to share them between us and to see how coaching could improve youth participation in any youth projects within the frame of the Youth in action programme.

A questionnaire aimed at providing a European overview of national developments and practices has been sent to National Agencies .

This report is based on the answers to the questionnaire, formulated by 15 National Agencies from: Austria, Cyprus, France, the French-speaking Community of Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK.

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May I COACH ?

Coaching as a European strategy

* HOW TO SUPPORT AND NOT TAKE OVER?

The Youth in action programme intends to promote the participation of young people, including young people with fewer opportunities, in European activities.

The Youth in action programme youth initiatives give young people the opportunity to plan and run their own projects. However, at the beginning of a Youth Initiative, National Agency officers have to reflect not only on the quantitative aspects (ie: how many projects) but also the qualitative. How to improve the quality of Youth Initiative projects? How to support young people and to make them active throughout the whole project? How to offer the needed support in each step of the project? How to ensure a good balance between support and autonomy?

Coaching as a way of support was identified as the most appropriate answer for all those questions. Therefore the coaching of youth initiatives for ex-beneficiaries and 'youth workers' has been promoted.

Different tools and training courses have been developed to reach this objective:

- Publication of the Coaching Guide aimed at providing good practices, concrete hints and guidelines to support youth initiatives and youth projects
- Training opportunities on coaching skills – 2 modules:
 - o Peer 2 Peer addressing young people, ex beneficiaries of Youth Initiatives
 - o and Coach 2 Coach addressing youth workers experienced or/and active in the field of Youth Initiatives

* HOW TO INITIATE AND DISSEMINATE

The Coaching strategy has been developed at European level, initiated by SALTO-YOUTH Participation (at that time SALTO - Youth Initiatives) based on the needs identified by National Agencies and implemented in close cooperation with them. The Coaching Guide is a real European project since it was written as a collaboration between 8 authors from 7 Member States. It is also intended to be "multi facted" since the team included both youth workers and youth coaches as well as National Agency Officers, pedagogical professionals and inclusion officers.

The concept of transferability is at the core of the strategy. Based on the first experimental courses, improvements have been made based on evaluation outcomes published in comprehensive reports entitled "Learning Process and Results"¹.

¹ Those reports are available on request at: participation@salto-youth.net

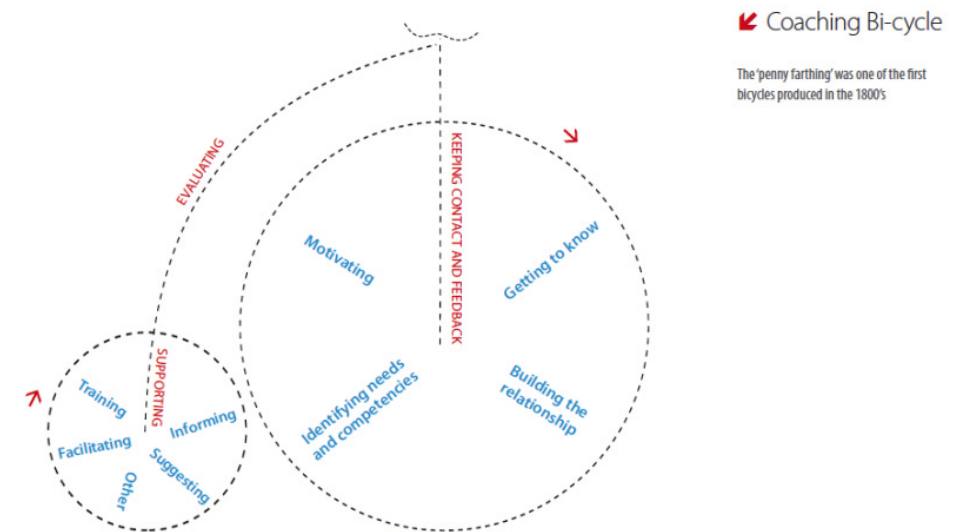
Then based on the concept training modules «Peer 2 peer» and «Coach 2 Coach» (similar or adapted versions), several training courses have been developed by National Agencies at national level. For instance Coach 2 Coach has been adapted to national real life situations:

- in Norway within the format of a local 1 day seminar on Youth Initiatives and Coaching,
- in Austria, within local 2 day training courses on participation and coaching
- in Poland, within local Training courses on Coaching Youth Initiatives and Action 1 projects
- in the UK, within a 4 day format, a module quite similar to Coach 2 Coach but in a shorter version.

As for international „Coach 2 Coach“, there have already been 4 modules in Italy, Austria, Norway and Poland. Some adapted modules inspired by the concept have also been developed such as the shorter training course „Developing coaching skills“ developed by the British Council in the UK. The concept of „peer coaching“ as promoted throughout the „Peer 2 Peer“ training modules has proved to be quite difficult to implement for several reasons which are explored in the chapter „Give me, give, give give me inspiration“(p.39).

The Coaching Guide has been widely used, disseminated and sometimes translated in countries such as France, Spain, The Czech Republic, and is soon to come to Poland and Hungary...

Many of its tools are used in seminars or training tools such as the very popular Coaching Bicycle¹ :



The Coaching bi-cycle model aims to provide a guide to the main coaching phases and help with managing the coaching process.

¹The Coaching Bi-cycle is presented pp. 46-49 in The Coaching Guide.



* THINKING TOGETHER AND IMPROVING

After the experimental activities, the time had come to bring together all the actors concerned to further develop and improve the coaching support. In 2006, "Feedback on Youth Initiatives"¹ gathered young beneficiaries, coaches and National Agency officers to evaluate the impact of Youth Initiatives. Similarly the "Seminar on Support and Coaching"² gathered coaches and National Agency officers and intended to work on developing coaching as part of the support systems set up by National Agencies.

2 years later, it seemed relevant to gather together again those officers in National Agencies in charge of developing support and coaching and interested in contributing to a reflection group. The European Coaching Working Group was launched in 2008 composed of a SALTO-YOUTH coordinator, NA officers from Austria, France, Germany, the UK and Poland and an external facilitator. This report is the result of their reflections and of the questionnaire filled in by National Agencies end of 2008.

¹ This seminar was organised by SALTO-YOUTH Participation in cooperation with NAs from Poland, Germany, the UK and France

² This seminar was organised by the German National Agency, in cooperation with SALTO YOUTH Participation and National Agencies from Lithuania, Poland, the French Speaking Community of Belgium and Austria.

What's coaching within the youth field?

* CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

Needless to say, the activity of coaching is quite well known in the fields of sport and business. Nowadays, coaching is a fairly fashionable concept applied in many different sectors:

- in the professional world to release the potential of workers, to work on conflict resolutions in enterprises...
- in the personal sphere to help people deal with individual blockages, difficulties...

In the business field, coaching is a very codified working methodology with very specific rules included in a contract between the coach and the client, related to the means, duration, space, session preparation, objectives to be reached, financial fee, deontology, etc.

In the youth field, we do not aim at any specific or highly technical approach, often reserved for ex-perts in suits. Nevertheless, our main interest is to get inspired by the theory and methodology of professional coaching and to adapt and promote methods and tools for supporting young people in a non directive, non dominating way. It is not a very fixed methodology as such but rather a way of support adapted to a pedagogical and participative framework.

The Coaching Guide explains in a clear way what is meant by coaching in the field of European youth work¹. The introduction of the term 'coaching' was also aimed at stressing the importance of increasing active youth participation through a non directive approach; it is not about taking the lead in the project in order solely to improve the quality of the project outcome. The process is therefore very much valued. Rather than giving the right answers, a coach tries to ask the right questions in order to help the youth group. He/she creates a good space for possible activities and project implementation but is not involved in the project implementation itself. It is usually more than just an emergency help, as opposed to the business sector where the coach is hired to sort out a specific problem at the moment the difficulty arises.

How much the quality of the project product matters to the young people themselves and to an external audience, eager to see a 'nice' project should be recognised. Nevertheless, the real challenge is not simply to have the best, most effective project. Never forget that we work within the frame of an educative programme and that young people should therefore learn to participate, make decisions and take responsibilities along the way.



¹Cf. The Coaching Guide, pp.30-31 & pp.141-143.

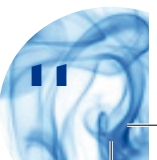
What's UP in Europe?

* WHO?

The most common profile of the coaches is «youth workers», (ie professional workers or volunteers working) in the youth field. Freelancers or youth trainers also coach youth projects but are not in the majority. In bigger countries (France, Poland, the UK ...), a «decentralised system» is usually organised to provide this support, National Agency officers do not coach projects directly since they usually do not have time to follow projects due to the amount of projects they have to deal with.

In smaller National Agencies or in the case of specifically difficult projects like in Hungary, it is mostly the National Agency officers themselves who coach projects or who propose a resource person in case

Most frequently, it is the youngsters who propose and choose their coaches, usually people that are close to them and that they feel they can trust: a youth worker, neighbour, teacher, someone from an association or a youth centre... For information on the status of the coach, please take a look at the section "I'm a coach: what am I supposed to be and to do!?" p.29.



FOCUS ON EX BENEFICIARIES

Young people definitely appreciate being advised and supported by people they feel close to: other young people. Similarly, National Agencies usually greatly value the support brought by ex beneficiaries and peers. Some National Agencies like in Sweden or in Norway are willing to develop a pool of ex beneficiaries or to work on the concept of peer support.

Peer support is rarely very structured though in Europe and National Agencies often ask ex beneficiaries to join meetings and training courses to provide a live testimony about their own experience, the challenges they met or to provide information about the action they have been involved in.

Their testimonies are very effective in terms of motivating other youngsters to carry out projects. Yet, usually they do not truly support the beneficiaries throughout their project in a coaching process. This word of mouth is greatly valued by young people but does not intend to be a long term support process.

For more information on peer support and coaching, the German National Agency has structured a system that might be of inspiration, cf. p.40.

* HOW?

The countries with a kind of “decentralised system” working on the Youth in action programme with regional offices have delegations in charge of providing different kinds of support to young people: information, advising, counselling, and sometimes coaching...

This is also the case in other countries that have a strong experience of support, especially for youth initiatives, such as Austria, Lithuania and others.

Coaching is being promoted by National Agencies throughout their decentralised offices which act as multipliers on the ground. The support that has been initially provided by those regional officers now includes more and more non directive ways of support inspired by coaching practices as promoted by National Agencies.

In some smaller countries, such as Switzerland or Cyprus, direct meetings are the most relevant way to support young beneficiaries so far.

Since 2001, in Lithuania for instance, there is a counselling service for Youth Initiatives that supports young beneficiaries during every phase of their projects: application, preparation, implementation and evaluation. This network of regional counsellors consult & coach Youth Initiatives projects with thematic workshops for improvements.

-- Collective information sessions / training courses

In many countries coaching is directed towards young people as early as the application stage or at the beginning of the project throughout collective meetings, information days or training courses; this is the case for Ireland, Lithuania and Poland for example.

There are more and more training courses aimed at experienced people who are likely to coach youth initiatives like in Poland, France, the Netherlands, the UK, Norway and Austria; these countries have developed a special training module for coaches of Youth Initiative projects or other youth projects (for more information, please read the chapter "Give me, give me, give me inspiration", section "Let's look at good practices" – "Training modules" p.42)

And finally, as previously mentioned, international training courses on coaching (either Coach 2 Coach training courses or modules inspired by it) have already been organised in Italy, Austria, Norway, Poland, the UK and Hungary over the past 5 years.

-- Coaching pools developments

Poland has a project to create a focus group on coaching and then an academy of coaches: this pool should gather coaches to be trained every year. The Estonian National Agency launched a national pool of coaches with 20 coaches at the end of 2008: coaches indicated which sub action they were willing to coach and their availability.

Similarly, in Germany a Coaching pool was also set up at the end of 2008 with 8 people highly skilled in coaching support since they all completed a special coaching training course. This pool is quite innovative since it will be the space for testing a new concept of empowerment: to try to evaluate the possibility of replacing collective training courses related to all the actions of the Youth in action programme with personal coaching support.

«The coaching offer is dedicated to all granted projects. A project promoter him/herself can individually ask a coach in his region (or nearby) for coaching and contacts directly. After the coaching, the coach sends us an invoice describing the activities/themes/methods used but without giving us information about the promoter (the coaching process must be confidential).

We describe our coaching offer as an additional individual offer for support in the form of coaching.»

-- More details about coaching support

For more information concerning the coaching support offered by National Agencies all over Europe, please find below the answers of the National Agencies in their questionnaires:

AUSTRIA

COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED

- Providing personal contact and support for certain projects or interested coaches
- Promoting the idea of coaching throughout our regional multipliers/offices.
- Training youth workers and especially youngsters themselves (so far in international Training courses such as C2C)
- Connecting projects or their promoters with each others

WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED CONCRETELY

- International trainings
- Evaluation meetings / multipliers meeting (autumn 2008)
- Using the new webpage to promote coaching and give information about the meaning
- So far, we don't have any special tools

 **CYPRUS****COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED**

- No

WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED CONCRETELY

- Meet directly with Beneficiaries

 **FRENCH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY OF BELGIUM****COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED**

Yes, for YOUTH INITIATIVES. We also started to discuss the possibility for YE but this is still on-going. Nevertheless, there is one experience of coaching for an application process for a youth exchange in progress.

WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED CONCRETELY

Two years ago, we tried to launch a national (French speaking Community) training on coaching but it was a failure. When there is a coach for a YOUTH INITIATIVES, we meet him/her and discuss his/her tasks and his/her vision of this job. We follow what she/he is doing and eventually correct.

 **FRANCE****COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED**

- To train youth workers and youth leaders on coaching and especially on specificity of Youth Initiatives
- To develop quality and numbers of YOUTH INITIATIVES projects
- To provide approachable coaching method/position and documents
- To concretely promote Youth Initiatives projects and means of these action within YOUTH IN ACTION programme.

WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED CONCRETELY

- 3 or 4 Coaching courses at regional level (4 or 5 regions cooperate to organize a training course on coaching and to train youth workers and youth leaders on National and Transnational Youth Initiatives within the Youth in Action programme.
 - Web page on Action 1.2 and on coaching (tools, testimonies, good projects and good practices, official documents with tips and methodology comments, maybe a forum and a FAQ on YOUTH INITIATIVES subject,...).
 - To translate as much as possible (in FR) documents on coaching (coaching guide, Leaguas guide on ex-Action 3,...) to create more approachable documents and European reports in on these subjects.
 - To communicate and promote concrete projects, production, results of YOUTH INITIATIVES projects and training course opportunities on NA web pages and mailing lists.
 - To organize somenational meetings with ex beneficiaries to evaluate action 1.2 and to help them to improve the dissemination of their projects.
- And also more widely:
- National meeting to prepare and evaluate action 1.1
 - Training for new mentor on EVS
 - Network of 26 Regional officers who directly advise youth leaders, youth promoters.

 **GERMANY****COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED**

- Coaching support has always existed even though it was previously known by that name. There is a will to include ex beneficiaries in the support provided to new beneficiaries. Coaching as a way of support might be extended and replace some current training course.

WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED CONCRETELY

We have developed a special coaching training for our "peer-group" of ex-beneficiaries (Europeers) to give them more competences in supporting youth initiatives

At the end of 2008 we started to implement a coaching pool of 8 people who can coach projects granted within the YOUTH IN ACTION program and who are paid by the agency.

These coaches have to fulfil the basic criteria of coaching and they all completed a special coaching education. This is a pilot phase for those experienced coaches who will coach any projects with a participative dimension. Individual coaching might replace some collective training courses.

 **HUNGARY****COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED**

For some applicants we offer support, if the application is lacking some basic information, but still reaches the eligible level (we call it "experimental projects"). It's not exactly coaching, more like high support during the realisation of the project (in all Actions, if needed).

WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED CONCRETELY

There was a seminar on coaching & mentoring in 2008. The participants found it interesting and useful. But no further steps yet.

 **IRELAND****COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED**

- Financially - €1000 is awarded in justified cases. We are careful that this funding is not allocated when it is the role of youth workers to facilitate the group as part of their job.

- Technically – Youth initiative applicants are directed to the Coaching Guide as a resource.

WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED CONCRETELY

We host national information days on the Youth in Action (4 per year on a regional basis) Youth Participation & Youth Initiative workshops form part of the day. At application stage, we request further detail on the role of the coach in the youth initiative project & direct them to the coaching guide.

 **The NETHERLANDS****COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED**

We offer coaching support for both action Youth Exchanges, Youth Initiatives and EVS

WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED CONCRETELY

For Youth Exchanges and EVS we offer a national training session (one day) concerning coaching in combination with the key competences of Youthpass. These sessions are for EVS mentors and youth workers that coach youth exchanges. For youth initiatives we organised in 2008 a one day training for youth workers who already coached one or more youth initiatives



LITHUANIA

COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED

Ensuring the quality of national and transnational youth initiatives projects, since 2001 our National Agency is developing a strong counselling capacity and expertise with regard to activities eligible under this action, in order to help youth groups to define their project, prepare their application, implement and monitor their projects.

WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED CONCRETELY

The network of regional counselors was established within the YOUTH program in 2001 with the aim to raise quality of local youth initiatives and youth work in general. The National Agency has prepared more than 30 youth workers and leaders to consult and coach local youth groups implementing their projects in the frame of YOUTH and YOUTH IN ACTION programmes.

In 2007 the National Agency was working informing the network of counselors about the changes in YOUTH IN ACTION programme, new criteria and quality standards.

In 2008 The NA was organizing thematic workshops and meetings for counselors to share experience and practices, sending them to international training events, working meetings etc.

Following good practice the NA offered beneficiaries the possibility to gain new knowledge and skills at a 5 day introductory training course for the organizers of youth initiative projects. As a new improvement, in 2008 the coaches (accompanying youth initiative groups) were invited to join the course for one programme day. This is aimed to introduce the coaches to the newest information on Programme and Action particularities, discussing project improvement, planning issues.



SWEDEN

COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED

No we don't. We don't have any kind of coaching in any of the sub-actions. We are thinking of creating an ambassador's pool with former Youth Initiative project leaders. The idea is to have them as coaches for future projects within the sub-action.

WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED CONCRETELY

We have some national training within action 1.1 and 2. But the trainings are more focused on new beginners that are interested in creating projects, it is not coach based.



NORWAY

COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED

We offer support to the users of the program before each deadline.

WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED CONCRETELY

- We have organized 5 regional 1-day coaching-seminars held by different trainers.
- We have sent two youth workers to GIN (one had already applied for a transnational youth initiative).
- We were hosting the international Coach 2 coach September 2007 in Tromsø.
- We are developing a youth initiative guide.
- We are developing a 2-day seminar where the focus is creative and innovative youth initiative. It is also possible to obtain and develop peer-peer coaching or to increase the amount of transnational youth initiatives.
- Information to our local contacts who can offer their support as coaches.





POLAND

COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED

Coaching has been developed throughout some actions undertaken to promote coaching as a method to support young people: training courses, materials and soon to come professional coaches

WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED CONCRETELY

- Promotion of coaching during national courses for Youth Initiative beneficiaries.
- Organisation of 2 local Training courses on coaching Youth Initiatives and Youth for Europe (Action 1) projects, based on Coach 2 Coach
- Creation of a polish version of the coaching guide.
- To be created: an Academy of Coaching to prepare a group of professional coaches; a forum gathering young people, youth workers, representatives of different organisations who work with youth to exchange need and expectation in the are of coaching.



PORTUGAL

COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED

Actually the Portuguese NA hasn't offered any direct coaching support activity until now.



SWITZERLAND

COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED

The situation in Switzerland is still a little bit special as we are not yet a member of the program. Our office is still very small but on the other hand the number of projects is still very limited.

We try to provide coaching wherever this is needed.

WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED CONCRETELY

This starts from motivating a group to take part in an action, help in administrative purposes like for example filling out the inscription forms etc. We make at least one personal meeting with every group, where we do discuss topics like safety, responsibility, legal questions etc. Further coaching depends on the maturity of the group. It can be done with additional meetings but also counselling through telephone or email. All the coaching is done by the two employees of the coordination office (= Swiss "NA"), we do not have any additional coaches.



The UNITED KINGDOM

COACHING SUPPORT OFFERED

The support is traditionally offered through youth workers that we would call more mentors than coaches. There is a strong existing network of youth organisations in the UK (youth clubs, youth service in city councils) on which we rely. They are available for young people to develop youth projects (from many different sources and YOUTH INITIATIVES are not really visible)

WHAT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED CONCRETELY

- Organisation of a TRAINING COURSE in March 2008 'developing Peer Training skills' (indirectly linked to coaching)
- Organisation of a TRAINING COURSE "developing coaching skills" in June 2008"
- Spread the Coaching Guide (but no strategy for spreading tools at the moment)



* TRANSFERABILITY

Some support directed at young beneficiaries is very much needed in Youth Initiatives since it is the young people themselves who run the projects, as opposed to most of the projects in other actions. Coaching is very much adapted to the support directed at young beneficiaries within this sub action since it is intended to allow young people to remain “master” of their own projects.

Recently, many National Agency officers have found it useful to transfer coaching methods to other actions.

In the Netherlands, a national training session is offered concerning Youth Exchanges and the European Voluntary Service about coaching in combination with the key competences of Youthpass. These sessions are for the European Voluntary Service mentors and youth workers that coach Youth Exchanges.

The French speaking Community of Belgium has used coaching as a means of support for Youth Exchanges as a pilot test. The Coach 2 Coach training course has been widened to include Youth Exchanges as well as Youth Initiatives and, more widely, to include any participative youth projects. Youth Exchanges are usually taken over by youth leaders, yet for some NA officers coaching should indeed be helpful in trying to have youngsters take a greater role and bigger responsibilities in the project management and the preparation included. Of course, many of the reflection, methods and tools presented in the Coaching Guide would be very helpful for Youth workers/leaders interested in providing the group of youngsters with a greater space for active participation¹.



¹ Cf. the practical chapters of the 'Coaching mirror' pp.28-41, and the 'The Coaching bi-cycle' pp.42-73; 'Bi-cycle tools' pp.106-135, Coaching Guide.



Yet coaching as a means of support is not the only means of support. For instance in Youth Exchanges, there is often a great need to improve the European dimension and the intercultural learning methods of the projects; this has nothing to do with coaching but resorts more to training methodology related to international projects and intercultural cooperation for instance.

Coaching seems to be particularly relevant for long term projects and when participative approaches are used or promoted. This is especially the case for Youth Democracy Projects.

These projects are usually carried out by big experienced organisations and some National Agencies identify inexperienced beneficiaries as the main target group to be coached and supported. Yet, coaching is above all focused on processes and is intended to increase young peoples' participation and not only to improve the project outcomes. In this area, even big organisations might benefit from using greater participative approaches with the young people they work with. Without prejudicing any bad intentions, it has to be admitted that it is often very tempting to take over the projects of inexperienced young people to prevent the project from ending in a failure or to make them solely participate in a project of ours. It is definitely very challenging to have young people actively run a project and getting truly involved in decision making. Coaching in youth work is about enhancing the personal development of young people through progressive participation¹.

¹ Cf. the 'Increasing the velocity of participation' chapter; Coaching Guide pp. 75-81

For the European Voluntary Service (EVS) some well structured support has already been developed through mentoring according to the specific needs of EVS: individual project, strong intercultural dimension (another country, speaking another language, being integrated in another culture...), socialising aspect, personal reassuring role (being far away from home, losing one's bearings...).

Yet the reflection on the role of the coach or the mentor in EVS is quite similar: "what would you expect from the person in front of you if you were looking for advice", "what is your own motivation for supporting others"¹... The necessity to look at yourself in the mirror in order to identify your own competences and limits². Some tools can also be used such as analysis of the support needed, inspired by the 'Analysis of coaching needs'³ adapted to individual support. The non directive methods of coaching could also be used as a source of inspiration for mentors to try to increase the learning dimension and personal development of young people while leaving as active a role as possible for the young people in the support provided to them, asking for instance the right questions instead of trying to give answers, etc...

Cf. the 'Clarifying your coaching role' section, Coaching Guide pp. 34-35
Cf. the 'Identifying your Competences and experiences' section, pp. 35-39 and 'My competences as a coach' pp. 120-121, Coaching Guide.
Cf. the 'Analysis of coaching needs' section, Coaching guide pp. 116-118.



Is it that easy to implement?

* MONEY, MONEY, MONEY...

Providing coaches with financial support is widely felt to be positive. It is positive "to honour the work of the coaches" and was requested by coaches a few years ago¹. It is valued as an encouraging factor for coaching over such a long term process as required by youth projects.

Yet, many National Agencies are vigilant that the money should not be the 'wrong' motivation' for people only interested in the financial aspect. Furthermore, most National Agencies consider the amount of 1000€ not as a fixed lumpsum, but as a maximum to be provided. Some National Agencies have difficulties therefore to fix the amount to be given and ask for assessment guidelines.

During the "Seminar on Support and Coaching for Youth Initiative" in 2006 and Coach 2 Coach training courses, many coaches kept asking for some official recognition for the support provided through a kind of certification and a financial remuneration/reimbursement of costs

We could take as an inspiring model the different factors provided by the Irish National Agency: a calculation assessed according to the input provided. The percentages are given as a pure example and are only meant to give an idea of how the amount to be granted might be assessed:

Input in terms of coaching	Project being coached	
Duration of Project		Up to 25 %
Time to be spent with the group		Up to 25 %
Role played		Up to 20 %
Experience in youth work		Up to 20 %
Experience in coaching / Training received		Up to 5 %
Follow up planned		Up to 5%
Etc.		...
TOTAL (Deserves X % of the 1000€)	Total in %	Total in Euros

Positive but...The financial aspect is felt to be the main difficulty in France. The lumpsum pays for what used to be provided by youth professionals within their working schedule. Some experienced youth worker would feel uncomfortable about being paid by the group of youngsters...
An additional financial difficulty is felt in Germany related to the money provided to coaches: it simply means even fewer projects in an envelope already not big enough for the needs.

* I'M A COACH: WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO BE & TO DO?!

The main problem seems to be linked to the role of the coach. It seems that the role of the coach re-mains unclear for some participants. Since we don't know precisely what to expect from the coach, neither do we know what his/her profile should look like. We lack a competence profile: what soft competences should we demand from him/her (for instance communication skills...) and what coaching literacy should we expect (being interested in coaching, having completed a special education on coaching, having followed the National Agency training courses...).

There is clearly a misunderstanding of the status of the coach on the part of applicants for coaching. Sometimes the coach is presented as a "Youth leader" in the literal sense of the word ("project leadership") as the one who manages the projects and gives the right directions to the projects over a group that is expected to follow. This is precisely what coaching is NOT.

In this case, it is easy to understand that in some countries the introduction of 'coaches' can somehow put into question the ability of young people to run a project by themselves without any 'adults'.

Another misunderstanding would lie in the technical aspect of the support in one specific field: to take a dance coach, a music coach (ie 'teacher') to improve one's performance. This is not what is meant by being the coach of a youth project within the Youth in action project.

Yet, as mentioned in the coaching profile, some technical support in a specific field (dance, theatre, music...) can be provided by professionals and paid for within the project but those technical professionals should not be the one coaching the process of the project¹.

There are several actors in a Youth Initiative project. Could they play different roles and take over the role of the coach?

Status in the project	Coaching role?
The contact person	He/she should not be the coach of the project since he is part of the youth group, he is inside the project; the coach should be external to have enough distance. The risk would be that this person leads the project in a dominant way.
The legal representative	He/she could take over the coaching role if he/she is more than somebody able to sign legal papers... cf. "the coaching profile" proposed p.18.
The coach	He/she should not be the one delivering the Youthpass. He/she can support the process of the Youthpass, but his/her neutral position needed to coach the project is contradictory to the responsibility/authority to deliver or not an official reward document. Youthpass should rather be through "self assessment".

The "Coach profile" developed by the Coaching group should definitely be helpful in clarifying what is roughly expected from a coach in terms of experience, skills, behaviour etc. Please read the section "Basic Quality Standards" p.33.

¹Remark formulated by a National Agency officer in addition to the previous explanation: "the coach can also be dance/sport/cultural and etc. professional by nature ("specific worker"), but in terms of coaching they should not provide "technical" support during that project, but lead the group through the process".

* IS "OBLIGATION" A PROBLEM?

The vast majority of National Agencies find it useful to make coaching obligatory for very young participants (underaged) or those with fewer opportunities as mentioned in the User's guide. Yet, it has been said that a specific attention should be given so that the youngsters feel that they are treated equally no matter what difficulty they might face...

For those youngsters who are reluctant to receive ongoing support, coaching should be felt as a positive resource if more temporary, to be used in case of need or difficulty: like a 'pocket insurance' or 'sounding board'.

Yet, what has proved to be a real problem is when the National Agency imposes a coach of its choice. One of the keys to success is trust. The trust young people can have in the coach is essential; if the National Agency imposes someone, this person would be seen as a controlling eye. The 'social aspect' is also fundamental in the relationship, not every personality, behaviours match: 'if the face doesn't fit, find another one'!

In short, the beneficiaries usually understand that the National Agency might request some external support to grant the project, so as to carry out the project in proper conditions; but always tries to leave the choice about the person that will support them to the youngsters!

* ASSESSMENT

The majority of the National Agency officers recognise that coaching brings positive achievements even though not all of them have elaborated a formal way of assessing its impact. The main visible impact seems to be that coaching has proved to be a push to overcome difficulties and to allow the beneficiaries to properly finish their projects. It has definitively improved as a whole the quality of the projects being coached. It is widely recognised that coaching is the support most adapted to helping increase young people active participation in projects.

* TIME DURATION

The long duration of coaching a youth project is still felt as a difficulty, according to a couple of National Agency officers and coaches themselves; yet it has to be said that the lumpsum given to the coach helps to improve his/her motivation until the end of the mission.



Give me, give me, give me, give me... INSPIRATION

Basic quality standards

It has been widely said that it is difficult for potential coaches to know WHO COULD BE and WHO COULD NOT BE A COACH within Youth Initiatives projects most specifically. A need to propose basic quality standards was identified some years ago during the Seminar on Coaching and Support in Bonn in 2006. The Coaching group has made a proposition that has been enriched by NA officers thanks to their contribution in filling in the questionnaire sent by SALTO-YOUTH Participation.

Please note that the following proposition:

- is meant for NA officers as a source of inspiration to assess whether the coach pro-posed fit the expected role
- has been proposed for coaches of Youth Initiatives but could be widened to any youth projects and should be completed with other National Agencies and coaches
- is not intended to become obligatory criteria or to be in the Programme guide
- should be adapted specifically according to the national context in

The Coach PROFILE

His/her background

- should better have an overall knowledge of the Youth in Action programme: philosophy, objectives, priorities...
- should have experience in youth projects (not Youth Initiatives exclusively) & might have managed his/her own youth projects
- should be experienced in supporting youth participation by the means of active methods & through a participative approach¹
- have training in young people protection / have police clearance for working with young people

His/her skills

- communication skills
- project management skills
- facilitation skills
- group dynamics skills
- time management skills
- self reflection ability
- capacity for distance

His/her attitude

- should be supportive & not directive
- should be using active listening (questioning & not answering)
- should show patience & feel empathy with the beneficiaries
- should be flexible in terms of time and space (availability & proximity)

His/her tasks

- to provide neutral support
- to support the process (and not only the outcomes of the project)
- to be present, to support when needed & to remain outside the project

What a coach is not

- a project leader²
- a member of the group carrying out the project (not the 'contact person' included)
- a dance / sport professional coach/teacher: some technical support in a specific field (dance, theatre, music...) can be provided by professionals and paid for within the project but those technical professionals should not be the one coaching the process of the project

(1) or ready to progress in this way

(2) ie. he is not acting as a leader of the project instead of supporting the young people

* OTHERS

The Lithuanian NA has already reflected on basic standards of quality required of coaches :

«The coach should be directly working with young people and have knowledge/experience in YiA or should have youth initiative implementation experience. He/she must support the initiative group during the whole project, meeting them at least 3 times and providing consultations by telephone or e-mail for ensuring good team work, sharing responsibilities, helping to solve conflicts, continually evaluate and support non formal learning, active participation, impact on local community, European dimension, visibility and follow up. A coach can't be a project leader, or a member of the group.

Tips and tricks

You are still wondering ...

... whether you are going to develop a pool of coaches or train local youth workers to coach?

... when coaches should start their support?

... what are the outcomes you would like to assess ...???

Please find below a synthesis table inspired by input collected in the questionnaires on coaching support sent by SALTO-YOUTH Participation to National Agencies in 2006 and 2008 and some reflections by participants during the Seminar "Coaching and Support in Youth projects" held in 2006.

SUPPORT / COACHING SYSTEM within Youth Initiatives

Key points to be considered while setting up a system / strategy to support/ coach young beneficiaries of Youth Initiatives projects

Expertise	To set up a pool of coaches (experts)	Properly trained & experienced	Lack of proximity
	To have a resource person close to the group informed / trained to the methods of coaching	Proximity, relation of trust Set up a short info/training session with the support person coach	Lack of experience / "professionalism"
Mode of support	Voluntary basis: young people can be supported by a coach if/when needed	Coach seen as a resource, encouragement, motivation	Young people don't feel the need to be coached
	Obligatory: for projects that need a specific support (underage or young people with fewer opportunities)	Leave the choice of the coach to the group, never impose someone not close to the group that they wouldn't trust	Young people see the coach as 'controller'
When to coach	From the beginning, before applying, until the evaluation (+ referent reference person for Youth pass)	Supporting the process Be present on a regular basis but don't be part of the project, be available when needed	Time consuming for coaches / great availability
	Once there is a need, a difficulty	Not time consuming	Difficulty to be accepted
Peers	Peers can be coaches of youth initiative projects	A lot of practical & updated experience	Difficulty to keep one's distance, not to step inside the project
	Peers can be key supporters	Very efficient for peer education, as supporters (to provide info, tips, to motivate...)	Need some time investments for National Agencies if youngsters provide more than simple testimonies: training, follow up, recognition ...

Funding	Coaching are paid through with a lumpsum	Easy to apply	Not fair since does not take into account the amount of work
	a fee adapted to the support provided	Reflect the real quality and quantity of support	An assessment grid should be developed
	a fixed amount per month	Easy to apply	Does not take into account the intensity and the quality of the support provided
Outcomes expected	Product	It is important that the beneficiaries feel proud about of their projects; easier to promote & disseminate	Not the most important: success of coaching is not equal to the quality of the product, final result
	People	Motivation, group dynamic & conflict management are key elements of coaching	Not visible and not enough sufficiently acknowledged by an external audience
	Process	It's essential that the support/coaching focuses since the learning so as to allow the learning dimension of the project	Not visible and not enough sufficiently acknowledged by an external audience

Let's look at good practices

* SUCCESSFUL STORIES OF COACHING

KEEPING THE GROUP TOGETHER!

Coaching young people towards a greater group cohesion. A few years ago in the Netherlands, there was a small group of four young guys who wanted to develop a project, which mainly consisted of a football tournament. A youth worker in the neighbourhood, who already had lots of experiences with Youth in action, noticed their ideas and offered them a little support.

First of all, they sat together to discuss the project ideas. The coach made the youngsters realize that they could broaden their project, to have more local impact and to be eligible for Youth in action funding. Furthermore, she assisted the youngsters in preparing the grant application. The second major task of the coach was to keep the youngsters motivated and to contribute to team building and more cohesion in the group. The coach told us that the youngsters were very intelligent and they really knew what they wanted to achieve with their project and how. In this respect, they didn't need a lot of coaching.

BEING INCLUSIVE!
Coaching young people at application stage

In Lithuania, after receiving an application from the prison which didn't pass the eligibility check, an inclusion coordinator and trainer experienced in working with young people from "risk groups" went there. He provided for the young girls a half day seminar about Youth initiatives with brainstorming ideas and counselling about the application procedure.

The trainer became the coach for the group which decided to develop the concrete project idea. After a couple of months of coaching and NA counselling, the application was received and granted. The project was implemented successfully, especially in terms of impact on participants.

But they did need coaching on team building, since the characters in the group were quite different. This caused some friction in the group, some of the youngsters were too dominant, some others got a little less enthusiastic, etc. The coach supported the group in realizing that they needed to work together, in a constructive way, by listening to and respecting each other. This type of coaching was essential for this specific group, and resulted in a very successful youth initiative!

Two years later, the group is still together, and they are still developing projects...

* YOUNG PEOPLE SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE

The German National Agency has a strong interest in peer support. Take a look at the different activities developed over the years...

Phase 1

Germany had developed a 3 year pilot project in 2001 entitled YOUTH BANKS. It greatly valued the plus value of peer 2 peer education in the youth field: Service Points for Youth Participation had been created. It was regional structures run by young people themselves and in charge of informing other young people of the opportunities that were available to them.

Phase 2

They have now developed an interesting concept: 'EUROPEERS'. The youngsters in this pool provide a lot of informal support, they promote the Youth in action programme and encourage the creation of new projects. They are trained and receive a certificate after having completed their first self organized event. Here is a short explanation of the concept:

English Summary

EuroPeers - a short summary

Who are EuroPeers?

EuroPeers are young people who have participated in the YOUTH IN ACTION programme and want to share their European experiences with their peers.

They inform young people in schools, youth clubs, culture centres or on the street and talk about their experiences. They inform about the YOUTH IN ACTION programme and its possibilities as well as other mobility programmes. By leading workshops or lessons and by organizing exhibitions, they motivate young people to become active and explore Europe.

There are about 180 EuroPeers in this growing network and the EuroPeers-project has become an example for Best Practice for the European Commission.

How to invite a EuroPeer?

Teachers or youth leaders are welcome to invite a EuroPeer to their schools or youth clubs. With the help of the map on this website (**Landkarte**), they can find out which EuroPeers are living in their region and are welcome to contact them via email to plan an event, a workshop or a lesson together.

In prior consultation with the EuroPeer the school or organization arranges the general conditions for the event (room, technology etc.). It is the teacher's or youth leader's responsibility to carry the direct costs that occur with the EuroPeer-activity (travelling costs, food costs if necessary and maybe a representation allowance). The EuroPeers will come with many ideas, European experiences, information, information material and much energy.

No more costs will occur for the organizations. The education and training of the EuroPeers and the information material about the YOUTH IN ACTION programme will be provided for free by JUGEND für Europa, the German National Agency for the YOUTH IN ACTION programme.

How to become a EuroPeer?

All young people who have participated in any Action of the YOUTH programmes can become a EuroPeer. They will receive a 5-day-long training, learning a lot about the planning of events, press and public relations, European youth policy and working with young people.

Thereafter they organize their own events or are invited to arrange events. All activities organized by EuroPeers are listed in the calendar on this website (**Veranstaltungskalender**).

EuroPeers can participate in the annual EuroPeer meeting in spring and further trainings provided by the National Agency and are usually not charged for all these trainings.

They gain experiences in organizing events and find new friends/build networks with other EuroPeers and organizations in the Youth field. After having completed their first self-organized event they receive a certificate for becoming a EuroPeer.

“Europeers go coaching!”

Training course for Europeers & active youngsters in Youth Initiatives in coaching & counselling competence for youth projects

Programme

DAY 1

Until 5.00 pm arrival

5.00 - 6.00 pm Presentation of the programme, team, logistical aspects, context of the training course...

6.00 – 7.30 pm Dinner

7.30 – 9.00 pm Reflection and exchange on personal project experiences

DAY 2

8.00 – 9.00 am Breakfast

9.00 – 10.00 am Political background to youth participation at European level

10.00 – 11.00 am Coaching – a short introduction (basics and methods)

11.00 – 11.15 am Break

11.15 – 1.00 pm Quality criteria of projects within the Youth in Action programme

1.00 – 3.00 pm Lunch

3.00 – 4.00 pm Personal competences & motivations

4.00 – 6.30 pm Difficulties met in projects. How to react & overcome difficulties? Tips & methods of coaching & counselling.

6.30 – 7.30 pm Dinner

From 7.30 pm Tour visit

DAY 3

9.00 – 10.00 am Breakfast

10.00 – 11.30 am Action planning: how to implement gained competences in reality?

11.30 – 11.45 am Break

11.45 – 1.00 pm Evaluation methods & how to use them for coaching projects?

1.00 pm End of training course

Phase 3

They also eventually launched an experimental training course on coaching meant for the Europeers to coach youth projects (cf Programme of the 3 days training course). This was an interesting pilot module with positive results but also with difficulties encountered:

- _ The participants were very satisfied with the training course
- _ On the one hand, the participants did not feel like 'coaches' after a 2 day training course, but on the other hand they felt much more competent in supporting other youngsters
- _ The difficulties identified were: the lack of experience of youngsters in supporting other youngsters, the difficulty of taking some distance from the project, the difficulty of having youngsters on a long term basis at a period of time in their life where they move a lot



CRASH COURSE IN COACHING YOUTH INITIATIVES -- "CRASH, BURN AND LEARN..." --



* TRAINING MODULES

Please find below concepts of national training courses focused on Youth Initiatives coaching as developed by the Norwegian, Austrian and French National Agencies and the British Council.

The British training course is a 4 day module with objectives very similar to the Coach 2 Coach training course: to reflect and share coaching understanding and experiences, to be able to identify and improve knowledge, skills and attitudes of coaching, to be able to identify available support and resources required for the coaching process.

The Norwegian example is a one day format which intends to give participants some knowledge, attitudes and skills in coaching, but due to the time constraints, it aims mainly to inspire the participants to try out coaching in their work and learn from their experience.

The Austrian module is a 2 day training course; it is intended to reach participants who are running projects in the youth field but who are not connected with the Youth in Action Programme. The idea of the coaching trainings is to qualify youth workers and peers as coaches, in order to promote the idea of youth-led projects to people working with the target group of the Programme.

The French module is a 3 day format, it aims to train coaches of youth projects and help participants to develop, share and better understand methods and skills around coaching and promotes the development of a coaches' network.

Background

There are great differences in youth participation in different parts of Norway. The concept of coaching is quite new to youth work in Norway, but we believe that it can help raise the quality of Youth Initiatives and the participation of young people in society.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of promoting coaching in Youth Initiatives is to raise the quality of Youth Initiative projects and increase the participation of young people in these projects. The objectives of this specific "Crash Course in Coaching Youth Initiatives" are:

- i) Increase the participants understanding of quality in Youth Initiatives,
- ii) Increase the participants knowledge of coaching youth groups,
- iii) Give participants some practical tools to use in coaching young people and
- iv) Inspire a coaching attitude to developing youth projects and motivate the participants

Target group

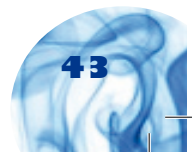
Contact persons in the Youth Program, municipal youth workers, youth leaders, trainers.

Additional comments

We suppose that participants have some background in project management or that they will acquire this knowledge from other courses offered by the NA. We will try to give participants some knowledge, attitudes and skills in coaching, but there are severe limits to what we can do in one day. Therefore this crash course can only serve as inspiration for the participants to try out coaching in their work and learn from their successes and failures. In order to make people try out coaching techniques we must supply the participants with further resources to the topic and the facilitators must exhibit a coaching attitude throughout the course in order to motivate and support the participants.

Soundtrack for the course

- "Get up, stand up" (Bob Marley)
- "Bicycle riding" (Queen)
- [your suggestion here]



Programme

10:00 OPENING:

Welcome, Getting to know each other; Why this course? Program for the day
Description: Round of presentations, throwing ball to each other; passing the rope
Program on screen

10:45 QUALITY IN YOUTH INITIATIVES/YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Description: Short presentation on quality in Youth Initiatives
Group work on reviewing applications
Ordering definitions of participation

11:45 INTRODUCTION TO COACHING

Description: What is coaching?
"stand on own feet", quotes,
Who is the coach?
"job ad"
What experiences do the participants have with coaching in their organisations/work places?

12:30 LUNCH

13:15 THE COACHING PROCESS

Description: The Coaching bicycle is drawn on the wall.
Main titles are given, but participants fill in the spokes in the wheels.
Facilitator relates the bicycle to the coaching process and the role(s) of the coach.

14:00 ATTITUDES IN COACHING

Short input on attitudes in coaching and different coaching-styles.
Practical exercise in coaching (coach, coachee, observer)
Refer participants to inventory in "the Coaching Guide"

15:00 EVALUATION

Description: questions and post-its OR "hot chair/take a stand"

15:30 CLOSING:

Coaching in the new YOUTH-program, resources on coaching, Q & A, "We want you!",
Participants are given "The Coaching Guide"

CONCEPT OF REGIONAL TRAINING COURSES ON „COACHING“ IN AUSTRIA

Background

In past years „youth participation“ has been the keyword not only in youth policy but also in the open youth- and community work in Austria. In the framework of "Youth in Action", participation of young people is a priority of the Programme and is seen as a prerequisite of active European Citizenship.

Reaching young people directly and empowering them to hand in an application by themselves has been a big challenge for the Austrian NA. In 2007 and 2008 most applications for youth initiatives were handed in by adults or professional associations, targeting young people rather than from the target group themselves. The idea of the coaching trainings has been to qualify youth workers and peers as coaches in order to promote the idea of youth-led projects to people working with the Programme's target group.

We started a pilot-phase with three Training Courses in autumn 2008 in rural areas of Austria (related to our national priority "rural areas"). A duration of 2 days was chosen in order to accommodate people's work schedules— active youth workers are usually busy people who don't have time to attend longer training courses.

Aim and Objectives

- Increasing active participation of young people in Youth Initiatives
- Raising awareness of differences between a Coach and a project leader.
- Networking
- Connecting the (already existing) project work of youth centres with "Youth in Action"

Target group

- Youth workers and young people with project experience who want to learn about the following topics:
- How can I support youngsters doing projects and increase their participation in their social environment?
 - Which methods and tools can I use to offer adequate support in a certain phase of a project?
 - How to apply for grants in the Youth in Action programme?

Content

- Introduction, getting to know each other, making experiences and resources visible.
- Non formal education and the Youth in Action programme
- Participation and motivation of youngsters
- Project management with special focus on Youth Initiatives – What is special? (Teamwork, local impact, European Dimension, Coaching)
- “The Coaching Experience” – Exercise to be a Coach and a Coachee.
- Definition: role, tasks, knowledge skills and attitude of a Coach
- Personal competences motivation and needs – Me as a Coach
- Coaching process in a project (Coaching bicycle)
- “Tips and Tricks”, Guidelines, “Do’s and don’ts”
- Follow Up, Coaching Guides, Evaluation

«TRAINING ON COACHING YOUNG PEOPLE’S PROJECTS WITHIN YOUTH INITIATIVES» FRANCE

Aim and Objectives

- How to train coaches of youth projects in the frame work of the Youth in action Programme, and especially within Youth Initiatives
- How to help participants to develop, to share and to better understand methods and skills involved in coaching
- To create an interregional network and define a territorial strategy to develop European « Youth Initiatives »

Target group

- Youth workers (professional or volunteer) : youth leader, coordinator of pedagogical staff,...
 - Ex beneficiaries of the European YOUTH programme (Youth Initiatives Action), who will be able and would like to transmit their competences to young people and/or to future stake holders.
- Criteria to select participants will be based on:
- The wish to develop coaching with groups of young people in action 1.2 within the Youth in Action programme
 - Their direct relationship with young people

Content

- Presentation of the « Youth in Action » Programme and « Youth Initiatives » Action
- Project methodology
- Coaching methods
- Testimonies and Exchange of practices

Practicalities

- The French national agency covers all the accommodation and travels costs
- Accommodation : 2 to 4 people per room

Deadline

Application should be sent until the (...) to your regional correspondent in charge of the « Youth in Action » programme, to DRDJS (by mail to XXXXX or by fax to XX XX XX XX XX).

Inter Regional training on coaching - Project of Youth Initiatives » - PROGRAMME -

Day 0

Arrival of participants
Regional Buffet/Cocktail
Welcome evening : "Ice breaker activities" workshops and games

Day 1

- Hopes of participants
- Official Introduction : The context of this training course and this action in national field/practices ; objectives and programme of this training course
- Global and Brief presentation of 'Youth in Action' Programme/ An European programme base on value
- Action 1.2 : Main characteristics: European dimension/ Coaching/ F.A.Q.
- Simulation Workshops on applications forms and fundamentals points
- Free evening – application form reading

Day 2

- Simulation – Part II (the cycle of selection of projects)
- Visibility - Exploitation & Dissemination of results of young peoples' projects
- Recognition – Exploitation and dissemination of young people competences
- The coaching on 'Youth Initiatives'– Part I
- Testimonies of ex-beneficiaries on Action 1.2

Day 3

- The coaching in 'Youth Initiatives'– Part II
- Which process & pedagogical approach? Role of the coach / of young people
- Individual action plan + consultation with regional officers & trainers
- Individual & collective evaluation
- Departure of participants

Timetable : 9h-12h30 / 14h – 18h 30 maximum/ Evening up to 20h30

DEVELOPING COACHING SKILLS BRIGHTON (UK) – 9 TO 13 JUNE 2008

Background

The UK National Agency organised in June 2008 a 4 days training course aimed at developing coaching skills. The training course gathered 20 youth workers and youth leaders (9 male and 11 female) from 15 different European countries.

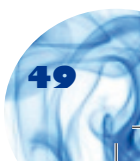
Aim and Objectives

The objectives were very similar to the Coach 2 Coach training course:

- to reflect and share coaching understanding and experiences
- to be able to identify and improve knowledge, skills and attitudes within coaching
- to be able to identify available support and resources required for the coaching process

Content

The training course was mainly based on a simulation exercise where participants took turns in the role of a coach supporting a group of young people at different stages of a youth initiative project. After each session, the participant with the coaching role received feedback from peers and an observer (trainers or NA officer). A range of non formal methods were used to enable participants to interact and participate actively in the training course.



Day 1

Welcome evening

Getting to know each other

Day 2

Intro of the course: -To enable participants to feel relaxed and involved
-To establish atmosphere and learning context
-To enable participants to feel safe and informed

Expectations and learning objectives: -To establish and share participant's expectations

Presentation of the course: -To present the development of the course programme and the content of the day

Group contract: -To establish and agree group contract

Market place: -To enable participants to share information about their youth organisations.

Lunch

What is youthpass? -To introduce the Youthpass process

Squares activity: -To enable participants to explore personal roles in group situations

Communication activities: -To explore the concept of communication

Listening and feedback skills: -To explore listening and feedback skills
-To formulate the DOs and DON'Ts in giving feedback

Day 3

Intro of the day: -To enable participants to feel relaxed and involved
-To present the content of the day

I wanna be a coach: -To explore and share participant's personal motivation in being a coach

Sketch: different styles of coaching: -To introduce participants to a coaching situation

Styles and methods of coaching: -To introduce the DIGP styles of coaching

Communication styles: -To explore different communication styles

Lunch

What is a youth initiative? -To introduce the main characteristics of youth initiatives

Youth initiatives steps: -To give examples of projects
-To enable participants to understand youth initiatives as a series of

steps

The youth initiative coach competition: -To explore youth initiatives more in detail
-To introduce the role of the coach in the process

of a youth initiative project

Simulation exercise part I – idea stage: -To enable participants to practise and experience coaching using a youth initiative scenario
-To share feedback



Day 4

Intro of the day: -To enable participants to feel relaxed and involved
-To present the content of the day

Simulation exercise part II – Content 1: -To enable participants to practise and experience coaching using a youth initiative scenario
-To share feedback

Simulation exercise part III – Content 2: -To enable participants to practise and experience coaching using a youth initiative scenario
-To share feedback

Simulation exercise part IV – Evaluation: -To enable participants to practise and experience coaching using a youth initiative scenario
-To share feedback

Lunch

Simulation exercise part V – Follow up: -To enable participants to practise and experience coaching using a youth initiative scenario
-To share feedback

Debriefing: -To share experience of role plays

Personal coaching style: -To review learning of personal coaching style

Participation of young people: -To review degree to which participation of young people takes place

Tools: -To present tools and resources

Day 5

Forum: - Consultancy for future projects and all questions about the course, youth initiatives, coaching.

Evaluation and youthpass process: -To evaluate the training

What's next?

It seems that quite some work remains in order to further develop coaching, but mainly at national level: adaptation of tools, training courses to be developed, 'academy of coaches' to be set up, net-work of coaches to be strengthened... Yet some European cooperation would be most welcome to answer the following needs:

Developments needed in terms of coaching at international level

A small resource pack could be created to hand out to potential or identified Youth Initiative beneficiaries; «What is a coach? Am I a coach? Training I may need? Where to find this training? Explaining the difference between a Coach and Youth worker...».

The Coaching Guide team and the European Coaching Group¹ did not wish to standardise the coach's role and tasks, preferring to leave it more open and free to the will, inspiration and vision of coaches. Yet, a great need has been expressed to clarify the coach's role in the support provided. We hope that this report will be helpful in promoting a better understanding of the overall role of the coach and his/her status. Yet, it still might be useful to create a more detailed, comprehensive tool listing the different tasks a coach could/should fulfil in the preparation phase/ implementation phase and evaluation phase. An interesting example is already provided in the Coaching Guide presenting the different coaching phases of a Youth Initiative and the project coaching methods used.²

¹European Coaching Group set up in May 2008 by SALTO-YOUTH Participation.
²Cf. The Coaching scenery from another view point, The Coaching Guide pp. 136-139

The concept of youth participation and coaching as a means of support in youth work should be more transversally spread in the Programme development: a session could be included in every training courses of the Youth in action programme.

According to some NA officers, a more detailed coaching plan should be requested in the application forms. Similarly, the support provided by the coach throughout the project might be further de-scribed in the final report.

A special Staff Training for National Agency officers in charge of coaching has been requested in the questionnaire. It seems difficult to gather enough participants on this very specific theme, therefore, SALTO-YOUTH Participation:

- reminds any National Agency officer of the possibility of joining the European Coaching group (meeting on a yearly basis),
- could integrate a coaching session in the Staff Training for Action I officers
- has set up a National Agencies working group on youth participation (cf. proposition of the European Coaching Group below).

Action plan of the European working group on coaching: ideas for next steps

Organisation of a joint European forum/ seminar, including National Agencies & coaches: to share practices, to self assess the impact of their work, to make some recommendations for improvements

To reflect on the best way to assess the quality of support provided by coaches and to create an evaluation format to assess the impact of the coaches' work; the assessment should be included in the final report.

Creation of a T-Kit on coaching?

SALTO PARTICIPATION is willing to contribute to the extended Coach 2 Coach training course module in 2009: could be widened to youth participation

Clarification of the role of coaches regarding the Youthpass (to be discussed in the working group on Youthpass and Youth Initiatives): the coach should not be the person providing the certificate but should be supporting the self assessment

A National Agencies working group to be set up on youth participation including coaching, overall support (guidance, counselling, evaluation...), inclusion etc.

Organisation of a National Agencies Staff meeting for Action I officers

This working group is willing to stay active, to contribute to the European thought process and take concrete action: contribution to the SALTO publication, sharing of national experiences at European level (cf. Pilot evaluation run by the German National Agency with the German coaches, training courses...), collection of testimonies, etc.

Annexe

QUESTIONNAIRE: DEVELOPMENTS by NATIONAL AGENCIES REGARDING THE COACHING OF YOUTH

Overall presentation of your national situation

Do you offer any coaching support for:

- Youth Initiatives?
- other Actions? If yes, which other Actions?

What have you developed as a NA to frame/ develop coaching (activities, meeting with group leaders/ youth groups, seminars, training sessions meant for coaches - meant directly for beneficiaries, tools?...)

Have SALTO-YOUTH Participation activities & tools related to coaching (The Coaching Guide, Coach 2 Coach / Peer2Peer training courses, The European seminar on Coaching) been useful for your National Agency? Have you adapted them to your national reality and how (translation of the Coaching guide, adaptation of training modules...)?

Who coaches youth projects: NA officers? youth workers? trainers? free lance coaches? any resource person? ...

Do you find it useful to make coaching obligatory for specific target groups (under-aged youngsters, young people with fewer opportunities) and why?

Are ex beneficiaries providing support to their peers? What kind of support: informing, counselling, coaching ... ?

Do you consider the lump-sum for coaching to be positive or negative, and why?
Have you assessed positive achievements in terms of coaching?

What are the difficulties related to coaching you are dealing with?

According to you, would it be relevant to transfer coaching methods to other Actions and which ones (Youth Exchanges? Youth Democracy projects? EVS? ...) Why?

What are the future developments you would need in terms of coaching at national & at European level?

Would you have any recommendation for improvements related to coaching mentions in the User's Guide, in application forms, reports...?

FOCUS on GOOD PRACTICES: 1 or 2 activities or tools presented into details

Background, aim and objectives, target group, methodology, format, duration/size, programme/content, evaluation, comments.

QUALITY STANDARDS

Have you set up basic quality standards that have to be respected by coaches? If yes, could you present them?

Please take a look at the proposition of basic quality standards hereby elaborated by the Coaching working group.

Please make any comments, changes, suggestions:

Please note that the following proposition:

- is meant for NA officers as a source of inspiration to assess whether the coach proposed fits the expected role
- has been proposed for coaches of Youth Initiatives but could be widened to any youth projects and should be completed with other National Agencies and coaches
- is not intended to become obligatory criteria or to be in the Programme guide
- should be adapted specifically according to the national context in youth work.



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