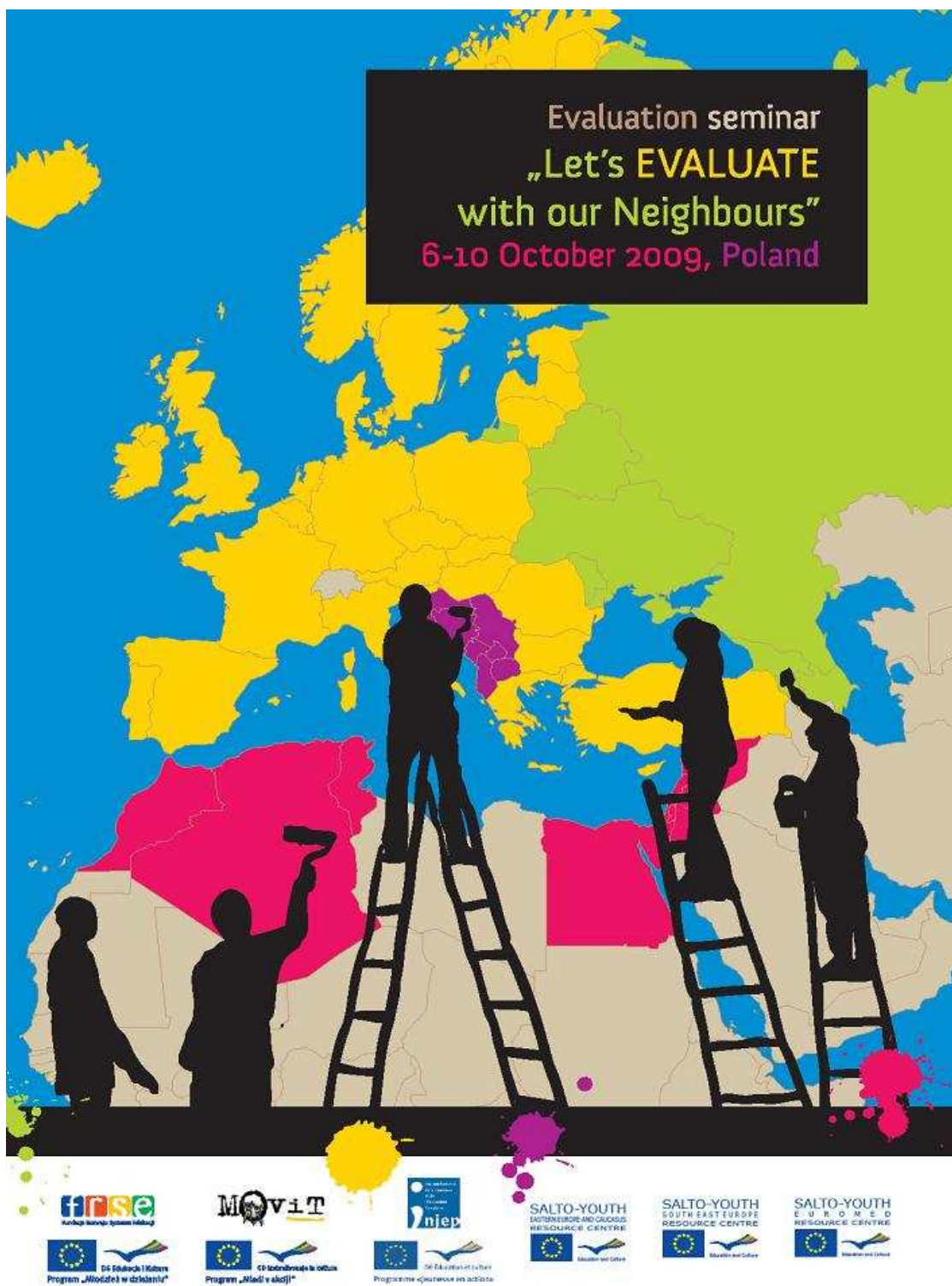


Let's Evaluate with our Neighbours



Konstancin-Jeziorna, Poland, 6nd – 10th of October 2009

FINAL REPORT

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1. BACKGROUND OF THE SEMINAR

Let's Evaluate with our Neighbours was an event organised in the frame of a long term strategic cooperation that Regional SALTOs (EuroMed, SEE and EECA), together with European Commission as well as French, Slovenian and Polish National Agencies of the Youth in Action programme, have been implementing for the last two years towards an active cooperation with the Neighbouring Partner Countries (NPC).

During this period, two previous events were organised, actively involving partners from the three Neighbouring regions and Programme countries, in the frame of the Youth in Action programme, specifically:

- **Let's Meet our Neighbours and the World (2007)**: the first event in Marly le Roi, France, was a **meeting point**. More than 120 representatives of youth NGOs as well as stakeholders from Programme countries and from the three Neighbouring Regions met together in order to share, get involved and promote the European neighbouring cooperation.

- **Let's Work with our Neighbours (2008)**: the second cross-regional event in Velenje, Slovenia, gathered more than 75 practitioners of European youth work and policy to continue the process initiated in 2007, in order to strengthen the links and create a **platform for working together**. This was a contact and project oriented event and a number of multilateral new partnerships were set up at the end.

As a third step of this strategy came **Let's evaluate with our Neighbours (2009)**, which was an **evaluation meeting** that gathered different stakeholders, from practitioners to representatives from National Agencies and SALTO resource centres actively involved in activities with the three neighbouring regions. It was organised by the Polish National Agency in cooperation with the three regional SALTOs, the Slovenian and French National Agencies and became another important step stone in this cooperation strategy.



The institutions promoting "Let's Evaluate with our Neighbours"

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

“Let’s Evaluate with our Neighbours”, being the third step of the Let’s long term strategy starting in 2007, aimed at assessing the cooperation (2007-2009) between Programme and Neighbouring Partner Countries in the frame of the Youth in Action programme.

This Seminar brought together a significant number of stakeholders: a total of 72 participants, including youth workers, project managers, trainers, National Agencies and SALTO representatives, coming from Programme and Neighbouring Partner countries, that had the opportunity to exchange, reflect and assess together the outcomes and challenges of the work in progress.

The specific objectives of the Seminar were:

- To promote the QUALITY in the cooperation with the Neighbouring Partner Countries by evaluation/research of results.
- To evaluate cooperation between youth organisations by presenting good practices and sharing experiences.
- To collect, highlight and disseminate good practices.
- To create a kind of a 'List of recommendations' for future project partners and coordinators.
- Additionally to evaluate the cooperation between National Agencies' officers responsible for Neighbouring Partner Countries, regional SALTOs and European Commission.

3. PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

Participants of this Seminar were:

a) practitioners active in the field of the Youth in Action programme, namely youth workers, trainers and project managers coming from Programme as well as from Neighbouring Partner Countries – EuroMed, South East Europe and Eastern Europe and Caucasus. The Seminar aimed at selecting practitioners that were experienced in youth work and had a concrete view on challenges and good practices regarding the cooperation strategy within the Programme;

b) representatives of National Agencies of the Youth in Action programme and representatives of the three Regional SALTO Resource Centres.

The call for participants and information about this event was spread by the Programme countries' National Agencies (coordinated by the Polish National Agency, which hosted the Seminar) and the Regional SALTOs to their own information networks.

Selection of participants was made giving priority to those who had followed already a previous stage of the "Let's" process, who were encouraged to apply in project couples. The selection procedure involved also the collection of information on projects considered good practices by participants, which were integrated in a compendium.

The selection criteria aimed at keeping a geographical balance but also keeping in mind the different types of activities represented during Seminar and in the future publication: Youth Exchanges, European Voluntary Service, Training and Networking.

The final group of participants was composed by:

Total number of participants:	72
From Program Countries:	28
From EECA:	8
From Meda:	6
From SEE:	9
From NAs:	11
From SALTO RCs:	5
Team of facilitators:	4
Reporter:	1

In the group were represented:

Countries: 28 - Albania, Armenia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Morocco, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom

National Agencies: 8 – Austria, F.Y. Republic of Macedonia, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Turkey

SALTO Resource Centres: 3 – SALTO EECA, SALTO EuroMed, SALTO SEE Resource Centres.

4. METHODOLOGY USED

According to the philosophy of the Youth in Action programme, this Seminar was based on non formal education methods, aimed at creating a good atmosphere and group dynamics which supported the development of the objectives to be achieved.

The main idea was to create a flow for self reflection on projects, sharing of good examples, analysis of difficulties and positive results, construction of recommendations and good practices to disseminate.

We used different methods for stimulating the individual reflection/work, the sharing in small groups of discussion/work, the analysis/synthesis for production, the creation of a space to get inspired for future cooperation, in order to facilitate the learning from each others' experiences and the formulation of significant recommendations for future projects and for the overall policy of cooperation with Neighbouring Partner countries in the framework of the Youth in Action Programme: socio-metric exercises, creativity moments, assessment and evaluation activity, exhibition gallery of good practices, project group discussions to create recommendations and good practices templates, spices for Regional cooperation, self organised space for further discussions and projects, inputs from institutions' representatives.

This process took place not only between peer groups but also among different stakeholders: we had sessions in parallel for practitioners and institutions in their own group and other sessions in which they were working and sharing together: consultations between practitioners and representatives of National Agencies and of SALTOS, both formal and informal, were meeting specific needs of participants.



The group building process and the intercultural learning were ongoing through the whole Seminar and they both contributed to create a trustful and productive learning environment. Working

together and exchanging, participants benefited from each others' experiences and knowledge, thus enlarging their own ideas on the work for cooperation with Neighbouring Partner countries.

In specific moments of the programme, presentations were done by the staff of National Agencies and SALTO Resource Centres, in order to share with participants important information regarding the NPC cooperation process, the Let's process, and also to update the group about the work in progress in this field.

Wherever possible the working process was organized in dynamic and interactive ways (we had from quiz, to interactive art museum, or even dynamic tours to get to know the surroundings, among other methods), which has given the participants an opportunity to reflect, exchange experiences, identify good practices and challenges in the work and finally formulate recommendations.

Complementary to the process of the group of practitioners, representatives of NAs and SALTO Resource Centres had also the occasion to meet and discuss their challenges and perspectives for the future in what concerns the NPC cooperation.

In the strategy of this Seminar is also included the future publication of a document which aims at making visible the results of this strategic cooperation process.

The first stage of this publication process was the compilation of a compendium, which contains both statistics related with the implementation of Action 3.1 and Action 2 with Neighbouring Partner Countries as well as examples of good practices, proposed by participants in the Seminar and by the National Agencies. The draft version of this compendium was presented in the beginning of "Let's Evaluate with our Neighbours" Seminar, and information was completed together with the participants during the days together.

During 2010, the goal is to print a publication consisting of:

- a general overview of the EU's youth policy in the context of NPC, including YIA Programme, Regional specificities and future trends, with a preface written by a representative of the European Commission;
- an introduction to the publication: why this publication appeared;
- the history, aims and objectives of SALTOs' and NAs' cooperation: why the Let's strategy
- statistics and analysis of the period 2007-2009 with common data on YiA actions and regional data;

- good practices collected regarding EVS, youth exchanges and training and networking activities;
- recommendations elaborated in the “Let’s Evaluate with our Neighbours” Seminar

5. THE PROCESS

Framed by the general process of the Let’s... events, the building of this Seminar began with the preparatory visit, which gathered the organisation and facilitation team in Poland in March 2009. During this meeting it was discussed the framework, aims and objectives, target groups, publications and promoters’ cooperation. From this, some key points were further detailed, regarding the programme of activities, the methodology to be implemented, the resources needed and available as well as the use of the publications.

Immediately from the **application phase**, and in order to have a good basis for the work, participants were asked to contribute with the presentation of examples of projects they considered being a good practice, thus beginning the collection in a compendium of experiences and the process of individual reflection on positive examples and challenges in project implementation in the frame of the cooperation with NPC.

In the period before the Seminar, participants were asked to commit to their **preparation** by continuing the reflection on their good practice project together with the team they implemented their project with. Apart from the good results, participants were asked to identify clearly also the challenges/difficulties faced in the cooperation process with Neighbouring Countries. These reflections that participants brought to the Seminar became the basis for the recommendations. Further to this, they were invited to bring as well all the information about their Neighbouring cooperation projects, their organizations and about new project ideas.

Also in the preparation phase, participants were provided with links to documents containing relevant background information about the Youth in Action programme, as well as other support material in the field of youth work, namely the Programme Guide, application and report forms for all Actions of the Programme, as well as a short and simple overview of Action 3, links to SALTO Resource Centres, to the website of the EACEA and of the Partnership on European Youth Worker Training between the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

The programme of **activities of the Seminar** was organised in order to address the objectives previously defined and to create a fruitful and cooperative working environment.

The flow of the programme addressed four main areas: the assessment of cooperation with NPC, a view on quality in youth projects, creating a rich group atmosphere and looking into the future. The Seminar (see the programme in the annex) was developed as follows:

Tuesday, 6 October

✓ **Arrival of participants**

Participants arrived to **Konstancin-Jeziorna**. Upon arrival, participants checked in at reception desk and received a welcome letter prepared by the team with all the necessary information, from practical logistical issues to meeting point hours.

✓ **Welcome and getting to know each other**

After dinner it came the first moment of meeting the group and getting to know a little bit about the others.

It started in plenary room (or “Let’s room”) with a few words of welcome by the organisers and by the team, instructions for the day after and an introduction to the informal “welcome cocktail”, a short group dynamic which aimed at breaking the ice between participants and learning something about the others. It took place in the bar of the hostel where a welcome drink was served and during this “cocktail” participants were challenged to begin the sharing by exchanging interesting questions they prepared to ask each other with someone they would meet randomly. The format was very open in order to give freedom for each individual to manage their level of energy and leave when they wanted.

RESULTS OF THE DAY:

Participants got the welcome information and started to get to know each other. This part of the programme was designed mainly as an icebreaker and a possibility to meet the participants present in the Seminar. It was a first step of group building.

Wednesday, 7 October: meeting with neighbours

✓ **Reconnecting**

The first moment of the morning was dedicated to (re)connect. In plenary, participants were invited to group themselves in silence according to the region of origin, followed by a quick checking of names and countries.

The same task was given again but they had to group according to their experience, identifying who had participated in “Let’s meet”, who had participated in “Let’s work”, who was applying for projects, and who was working together previously.

The purpose of this exercise was getting to know - in an interactive and dynamic way - the background of participants and diversity present in the group. At the same time to visualize the experience of participants and their involvement in the Let’s process, as well as to create a light and engaging atmosphere.

✓ **Official opening**

After the initial introduction and reconnecting, took place the official opening of the Seminar, with a short introductory speech by the head of the Polish National Agency for the Youth in Action Programme, and welcome words by a representative from the Ministry of Education of Poland.

✓ **Cooperation with Neighbouring Partner Countries**

To complete the introduction phase, there was a presentation of the situation regarding the cooperation with Neighbouring Partner Countries made by representatives of Regional SALTO Resource Centres. A large map with the different regions was introduced as well as a presentation of what took place in the last 2 years and half not only in the process of “Let’s” Seminars, but also information and statistics regarding the European Neighbouring Policy. Updated statistics were shared in a creative “quiz” dynamic, informing participants more in detail about the scenario at this point. Finally, there was a brief introduction to the compendium that compiles statistics of the granted projects within Action 3.1 and Action 2 with Neighbouring Partner Countries as well as examples of the good practices that participants submitted upon their application for this Seminar.

✓ **Let’s hunt a treasure!**

The second half of the morning was dedicated to get to know the space, the facilitation team, the promoter institutions, and to share the framework of the Seminar.

In six different mixed groups, participants were challenged to fulfil a mission which led them to: first, introduce each other in the small groups; secondly, to complete a small puzzle with the map of the Programme and Neighbouring Partner Countries regions; and afterwards to explore the different locations and working spaces of the venue in a creative way that fostered the group building process. In each place, the groups could find a “treasure”: members of the team and of promoter institutions explained highlights about the Seminar (aim, objectives,

methodology, Warsaw night, “pa-pa” intercultural farewell evening) and introduced themselves and their role in the Seminar.

The morning ended with a view of the short movies of the past “Let’s” Seminars and a more detailed presentation of the working flow for the following days.

✓ **Introduction to Let’s steps and to “Let’s evaluate with our Neighbours”**

The afternoon started with a contextualization of the process of Let’s and linking it to the assessment of the cooperation with NPC.

✓ **Assessment of projects by participants**

The session started with an input on what evaluation means, what it is for and why it is relevant. This first contribution created an environment for self reflection and assessment.

Afterwards participants started working on the assessment of their projects that involved cooperation with neighbouring countries. They had to recall the project they had presented when applying to this event and which they had considered as a successful example in cooperation with the neighbouring countries and represent it through two “products”: a three dimensional tower and a poster. Between these two elements was summarised the basic information of the project: title, theme, needs addressed, aim, methods and tools used during the preparation, during the implementation and evaluation and follow up of the project, as well as the countries involved and the results achieved.

After this first part, each participant or project team had to visit 3 different "corners" where they filled in information for a visual and quantitative evaluation: on the large map, they pointed where the project partners were from and where the project took place; on a dartboard, they marked which action of the YiA programme they applied for, and on curve they marked which YiA programme priorities were addressed. This gave an overview of the diversity and major tendencies of the projects selected.

After the break, the group came back to the plenary and moved from a more individual reflection to the meeting with peers. Each participant had to find a colleague/project team from a different region and together started “hunting for pearls”.



Visiting the towers and going back to the reflection on their projects, participants together identified the challenges (black pearls) and good practices (white pearls) regarding the following aspects of their projects:

- a) partnership,
- b) impact in the local community
- c) learning outcomes (both for participants and for promoters/organizations),
- d) any other important/useful aspect

Outcomes of this work were summarized in the poster of each project.

✓ **Assessment of cooperation by institutions**

In parallel, institutions, namely representatives of SALTO Resource Centres and National Agencies present, were developing a process of assessment of the work carried out in the field of cooperation with Neighbouring Partner countries.

The goals here were to work on:

- evaluation of Youth in Action programme implementation in the Neighbouring regions in the period 2007-2009, particularly with action 2 and 3.1.
- evaluation of institutional cooperation between National Agencies, Regional SALTOs, European Commission and Beneficiaries, looking into obstacles and possible improvements.
- follow-up and future strategies in the cooperation.

✓ **Interactive Museum of Precious Pearls**

In the evening there was a visit to the “Museum of Precious Pearls”, where participants could visit the towers and posters prepared during the afternoon and get to know the outcomes of the reflection. There was a first moment to get an overview of the different “towers” and later on an open space to exchange more in detail.

RESULTS OF THE DAY

Participants connected or reconnected to the process of Let’s seminars. They were introduced to the aim of evaluating and assessing the cooperation. The programme of the Seminar was presented: aims and objectives, ways to contribute, facilitation and logistic teams, promoting institutions were introduced. During the process participants also got acquainted with the space of the venue and learnt important technical issues regarding the Seminar.

Participants got information on the situation of the cooperation with Neighbouring Partner countries in the frame of the Youth in Action Programme.

The assessment process began by relating with practice and starting from concrete examples of successful projects to analyse the aspects that went well or less well. Thus, by the end of the day projects were presented and “black and white pearls” were identified, which later served as a basis for conclusions.

In the same time, institutions present had the opportunity to meet, discuss about the cooperation and plan future strategies.

During the Museum of Precious Pearls participants provided information on their specific project selected and had the chance to exchange freely their experiences. Throughout the day, there was creativity and enjoyable methods that supported the development of the group atmosphere.

Thursday , 8 of October

✓ **Introduction of the day**

The day started with a plenary presentation of a selection of photos from the previous day. Just after there was the day introduction with a connection with the programme flow, followed by a short feedback to practitioners on the outcomes of the institutions’ meeting of the previous afternoon.

✓ **Assessment of support (from institutions) and feedback (from practitioners)**

The first part of the morning was dedicated to establish a space for direct exchange between institutions and beneficiaries present. For that, each participant was given pieces of paper where they had to write down the most relevant aspects regarding the relationship between institutions and beneficiaries for what concerns:

- a) What difficulties exist/what can be improved?
- b) What are the strengths in this cooperation?

In small mixed groups representatives of institutions and practitioners had an overview of the issues pointed out and then a discussion and systematization of the results on a poster that was shared in plenary later on.

✓ **White and black pearls: working on good practices**

The morning followed with a general introduction on what is a good practice, regarding a project or activity, having in mind aspects like: relevance, concrete outcomes achieved, information & awareness raising, promotion of YIA values, partnership, transferability of results and originality. In 8 cross-regional groups participants were invited to go over the posters which resulted from the work done so far and identified a short list of good practices to promote. After working on them and consulting with the facilitators and institutions present, it was produced a final collection of good practices referring to the cooperation with Neighbouring Partner Countries.

✓ **White and black pearls: working on challenges and solutions**

After transforming the “white pearls” into “good practices“, the work continued with the extraction of challenges from what was previously identified as “black pearls“. In the small groups participants short listed and prioritized the “challenges” to be worked on, through the silent floor method followed by a group discussion. Afterwards the challenges identified have been clustered in thematic areas: financial issues, technicalities and procedures, inclusion, support, content and methodology, partnership and visa.

A group dynamic outdoor was helpful to refresh the energies of the group.

✓ **White and black pearls: working on challenges and solutions, elaboration of recommendations**

Towards the last part of the afternoon, it came the moment to transform the challenges into recommendations for the future neighbouring cooperation in the frame of the YiA programme. Another separation in groups allowed participants to contribute according to their interest towards specific challenge clusters and from there they developed recommendations on how to deal with them in other realities.

When finalizing one recommendation participants were advised to consult with representatives of institutions in order to have their input and feedback and then the final version of the recommendation was elaborated.

Recommendations were addressed either to colleagues, if participants could recommend a practical solution, or to institutions as support structures or to European Commission, if they involved a more political dimension.

As closure of the day it was organized a session of sharing of the outcomes.

✓ **Let's...Warsaw?**

After a hard working day, the evening was dedicated to discover Warsaw, in a cool joyful atmosphere.

RESULTS OF THE DAY

Promoters and institutions had the chance to sit together and exchange on strengths and challenges of their own cooperation. This proved to be a very useful moment for direct contact and feedback, favouring a closer and more fruitful relationship.

During the day participants were also able to deepen and refine the reflections initiated in the previous day. From the good and bad experiences in their implemented projects, participants formulated good examples and challenges they faced concretely and after refined them into more general good practices and recommendations to be addressed to different stakeholders.

A contact with the local environment of Warsaw was also a relaxing moment for the participants.

Friday , 9 of October

✓ Sharing and finalizing recommendations and good practices

After the introduction of the day, time was dedicated to finalize and type in templates the work of the previous day.

After there was a moment of gallery presentation of the 24 good practices and 25 recommendations elaborated and everyone could give a contribution and a feedback to the good practices and recommendations produced.

✓ Spices for Regional cooperation

In plenary there was an input on features of general interest made by Regional SALTO Resource Centres representatives. The presentation included specificities of regional features and about SALTOs' plans for the regions.

✓ Space for further discussions and new ideas

This session was foreseen to fulfil the need of participants to have an open space for self organised discussion. Three spaces were created where participants could share among them: one for "ideas on the air", another for "concrete work on future projects", and another to discuss "issues related with the partnership strategy". Discussions were self-managed in order to have full flexibility to meet participants' needs.

✓ Evaluation

The evaluation moment assessed the achievement of the objectives planned for this Seminar. This session was designed using a combination of different methods, visual, quantitative, written, in a dynamic and creative structure.

Aims of the Seminar, achievement of objectives, learning environment in terms of logistic and practical support, outcomes produced (good practices and recommendations) and concrete learning achievements were assessed through a written questionnaire.

A poster on the wall, where participants could write their conclusions, was addressed to evaluate the methodology used during the Seminar (with respect to the objectives), the group and the Seminar as a whole. Through a more visual method, specifically a dartboard divided in 4 sections, participants marked how they perceived the level of support from the team, support from the group, support from institutions and their own contribution. In a closed mailbox were collected short messages from the participants regarding general aspects or things they would like to add for the future. Creative drawing was another method used to assess the general feeling of the group.

✓ Closure with “Let’s” future strategy

The Seminar was closed with a short movie collecting the most significant moments of “Let’s Evaluate with our Neighbours”. After it the promoting institutions (the three Regional SALTOs and the three promoting NAs) introduced the next step of their cooperation strategy with Neighbouring Partner countries: three thematic training courses (in the framework of “Let’s train”) to reinforce the quality in the cooperation.



Representatives of SALTOs and National Agencies working together

✓ **Intercultural “Pa Pa party”**

Organised by a group of participants who took the initiative, this was an intercultural moment where all participants shared the traditional items from their countries, but also created interactive dynamics that, with the flavour of different cultures, involved the group and created a fun atmosphere.

RESULTS OF THE DAY

The work on recommendations was finalized and the group of participants, with the support of institutions present, formulated 24 good practices and 25 recommendations directed at colleagues, at SALTO Resource Centres and National Agencies and at the Executive Agency.

There was a sharing also of the future plans for the next steps of “Let’s” and time for participants to further discuss on project ideas or topics that were still open.

The evaluation closed the day and gave an idea of the satisfactory level of achievement of the Seminar’s objectives.

“Pa Pa Party” was a creative and funny moment of closure of the Seminar.

Saturday, 10 of October

Departure

6. THE TEAM

The facilitation team was composed by:

Areg Tadevosyan, International Centre for Intercultural Research, Learning and Dialogue, Armenia

Lidija Burič, free lance trainer, Croatia

Cláudia Fernando, free lance trainer, Portugal

The team was coordinated by Davide Tonon, free lance trainer, Italy-Spain

The facilitation team was composed in the sequence of the work previously carried out, with a small change of one of the facilitators due to personal reasons. Still there was the concern to respect a balance between different aspects, like specific expertise, regional background, gender, etc.



The facilitation team

7. RESULTS

General feedback

The biggest challenge for the team was to ensure a programme flow addressing different needs of a big and diverse group of participants, providing activities matching different backgrounds: activities for practitioners, space for representatives of institutions, activities combining practitioners and representatives of institutions. The challenging factor was also to provide within only 3 days assessment of the projects, production of good practices and recommendations as well as looking to the future cooperation.

Nevertheless, we managed to create a programme coherent with the objectives, participants were committed to the process and were following, even if for some of them it was difficult to concentrate only on one project example and some would have used different methods. The coherence of the approach helped to have everybody on board and to achieve the expected results. Coherent with the initial commitment was also the engagement of representatives of National Agencies and SALTO Resource Centres, which in different ways gave their consistent contribution to the process. Big support was given from the logistic team of the Polish NA.

Due to the short duration of the Seminar, the group was stimulated by the training team and, in general, gave a high level of response to the stimulus received, both in quantity and quality.

Participants valued the support received from the team, from the institutions and from the group itself (in terms of peer learning). In general, they appreciated also the methods used.

In the team we have the impression that this activity might be a big and important step in the process of evaluation of the Youth in Action programme. The outcomes should be taken into consideration and influence the further development of European Union policies in this field.

This activity, among previous Let's seminars, might contribute the most to the future developments but for sure it would not have been possible without previous events.

Achievement of the objectives:

1 To promote the QUALITY in cooperation with the Neighbouring Partner Countries (NPC) by evaluation/research of results.

This objective was achieved to a big extent (participants rated it at 79%). It was important to create before the Seminar a Compendium with statistics and examples. It was fundamental to organise a Seminar like "Let's evaluate" to share the results of cooperation. But it's considered

as crucial the next phase with the dissemination of these results through the Publication (including good practices and recommendations produced during the Seminar).

2 To evaluate cooperation between youth organisations by presenting good practices and sharing experiences.

It was appreciated the possibility to meet people from different regions, to share their stories of projects, to assess their cooperation, deepen their good practices. Everybody (practitioners and representatives of institutions) managed to have an insight vision of what happened in the neighbouring cooperation. In their evaluation participants rated the achievement of this objective at 73%.

3 To collect, highlight and disseminate good practices.

Previous to the Seminar it was prepared a Compendium including statistics from cooperation in 2007-2008 and a collection of examples of projects of the participants of the Seminar. This work was helping very much, not only to have a vision of the whole set of good practices within the neighbouring cooperation, but also to see a concrete tool to disseminate them. During the Seminar the work was focused on deepening both on the challenges and on the good practices, which gave value to the fact of learning also from difficulties. This objective was achieved to a big extent (in the evaluation participants rated the achievement at 83%).

4 To create 'List of recommendations' for future project partners and coordinators.

This objective was achieved (participants rated it at 92%). 25 recommendations have been submitted during the Seminar, on different areas: financial issues, technicalities and procedures, inclusion, support, content and methodology, partnership, visa. In the annex is possible to see the collection of recommendations to be disseminated to practitioners and institutions in the field.

5 Additionally to evaluate the cooperation between National Agencies' officers responsible for NPC, Regional SALTOs and European Commission.

The presence and commitment of representatives of SALTO Resource Centres and National Agencies (only the representative of European Commission couldn't take part) was valuable and contributed to the overall success of the event.

The objective was achieved (in the evaluation the achievement was rated at 88%).

The representatives of the three Regional SALTO Resource Centres and of the 8 National Agencies:

- evaluated Youth in Action Programme implementation in the neighbouring regions 2007-2009 (action 2 and 3.1), deepening presentations of data collected by regional SALTOs, discussing on strong and weak points of Programme implementation in the regions;
- evaluated institutional cooperation between National Agencies – regional SALTOs – European Commission – Beneficiaries, discussing on obstacles and possible improvements and giving a feedback to beneficiaries during a session were they were working together;
- worked on follow-up and on improving the cooperation.

Minutes from this institutional evaluation are available upon request (eeeca@salto-youth.net).

8. EVALUATION

- ✓ Summary of the evaluation questionnaires
- ✓ Evaluation data and charts
- ✓ Messages of participants

Summary of the evaluation questionnaires

1. In your understanding, to what extent this seminar contributed to the aim “to evaluate the cooperation within the Youth in Action Programme between programme and Neighbouring Partner Countries (NPC)?

0% 50% 100%
 (not at all) (fully)

						X			
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47 participants answered on this question

Some of the comments for low rates:

- 1) some of it was achieved, but I still have the feeling that “big” issues remained only preserved but not discussed
- 2) not enough openness to listen to recommendations from the NGOs
- 3) too much stress to concentrate only on one project, that we've applied with

2. Objectives of the seminar were achieved. 48 participants did this assessment!

OBJECTIVE	YES	NO	COMMENT
To promote the quality in cooperation with the neighbouring countries by evaluation/research of results	79%	21%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – compendium and internet portal are great tools for promotion – very important – positive/negative examples were shared – promoting and encouraging cooperation – the promotion has to follow now after the Seminar, I hope that outputs will be helpful for that – the methodology could be different
To collect, highlight and disseminate good practices	83%	17%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – compendium is great tool for that
To evaluate cooperation between youth organisations by presenting good practices	73%	27%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The exhibition was quite good – it was good to meet people from

and sharing experiences			different regions and to hear their stories – not enough time
To create a kind of a 'List of recommendations' for future project partners and coordinators	92%	8%	– I hope that they will be really taken into consideration – they should be available electronically – this was the best element of this course – this was really good but only if the “policy paper” that will come out of it will be really used – the challenge is now to spread it – the process was a bit too long but necessary – too abstract
(only for institutions represented – 9 submitted evaluation form)) To evaluate the cooperation between National Agencies' officers responsible for NPC, regional SALTOS and EC	88%	12%	<i>No comments expressed</i>

3. Please share your thoughts by finishing following sentences

a) I found out

- needs
- challenges
- a big amount of NGOs from EU work with neighbourhood
- common problems of YiA promoters
- some NAs were not very interested, but some were very committed
- that NA people are normal humans
- about functioning of Macedonian NA
- more about realities within EuroMed region
- different initiatives
- some potential partners
- good practices
- that my organisation is using a lot of good practices in our work
- that we are missing innovation in our NGO
- new tools to work on in trainings, evs and youth exchanges
- that black pearls can also be whit pearls
- the reason to continue working in the youth field

b) I learned

- about SALTOS
- about EVS and Youth exchanges
- about managing seminars with big number of participants
- about work of NAs

- about situations in different regions
- about different quality aspects in projects
- more about cooperation with Euromed countries
- from my mistakes, and now I feel more sure in my work
- how to make a good evaluation process

c) I made progress

- in promotion of my project
- in evaluating
- in analysing details
- in my knowledge of the project management
- in finding new partners
- in expressing my experiences

d) I have more clear view now

- how to solve black pearls
- about SALTOS
- about Compendium
- what problems are in the air
- about youthwork done in different countries
- how NAs are working
- on what was good and what was not so much in my project
- on situation in Meda countries
- on working process before, during and after project
- about quality measuring
- about future possibilities

e) The good practices and recommendations produced in this seminar...

- ...will hopefully be implemented.
- ...should be included in the report and sent to EACEA and other NAS.
- ...gave me lots of ideas for the future work.
- ...I found unbelievably helpful in organising of my future projects.
- ...are very useful and a good basis to work on.
- ...hope it will be taken into the consideration.
- ...is something I really hope will have some effect.
- ...hopefully will be considered by all stakeholders.
- ...needed to be well presented.
- ...are not really useful, they are too abstract,
- ...made me more confident in what I can do in the future.
- ...will support good neighbourhood projects.
- ...will help me if they will be send on my e-mail.
- ...must reach the top of structure.
- ...are very useful.
- ...gave me energy to create new standards in our projects.
- ... will be hopefully considered by NAs, SALTOS, EA and us.
- ...are very impressive
- ...should have impact on the stakeholders from the YiA programme

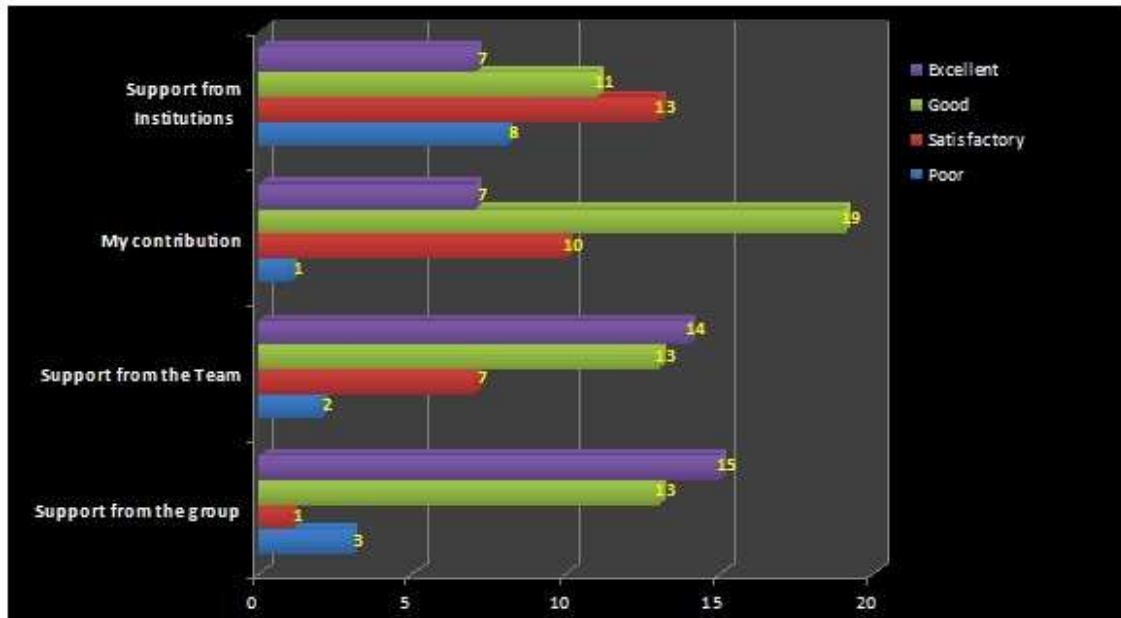
- ...will help me in many ways.
- ...are clear and interesting.
- ...will be helpful for organisations which are planning Action 3.1. projects.
- ...will help my organisation to make better projects.
- ...needs to be worked more on afterwords.
- ...were satisfactory.
- ...will be my compass for my future work.
- ...will be very useful for future children of YiA programme.
- ...were cooperative work.
- ...should be used and regularly updated online.
- ...were the essence of the seminar.
- ...were very useful in transmitting new ideas.

4. Express your satisfaction with following elements – 47 participants answered this question

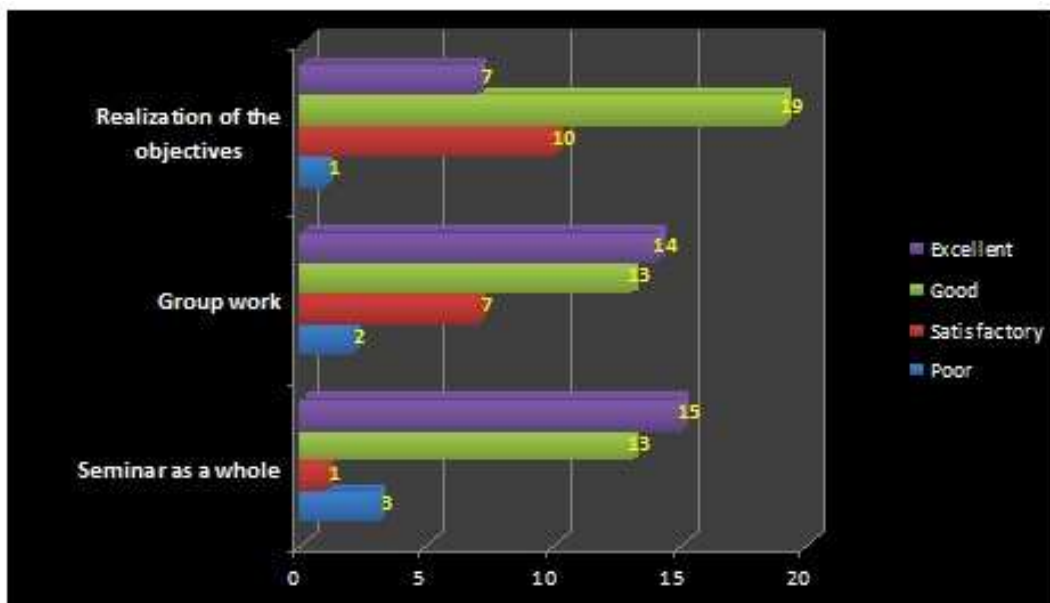
	Very good	Good	Average	Not very good	Bad
The preliminary information about the seminar and the general information	51%	34%	11%	4%	0%
The facilities	55%	45%	0%	0%	0%
Timing of the seminar	26%	34%	28%	12%	0%

Evaluation data and charts

1) Support and Contributions



2) Effectiveness of the applied methods for:



Messages of participants

- To use the materials we have developed (good practices and recommendations)
- Trainers should be more sensible about the disabled persons (in the preparation phase)
- I guess only now I understood the purpose of our meeting here. Good luck with the future”
Let’s...”
- Place with something outside of the building (park, bar etc...)
- See you again...
- It might be better not to “break” the working process of proposal development by rearranging the groups
- I hope I will organize a Youth in Action project with the new partners found here
- Let’s evaluate how many of our recommendation has been applied by the NAs, Executive Agency and Commission in future.
- Strategy for quality and networking between approved YiA projects will contribute to achieve more synergy
- Hope for new and more multiplication
- Longer time for future meetings
- Let’s create a mailing list and stay in touch
- Let’s meet again
- More structured activities to get to know the participating organizations
- Let’s not forget what we’ve learned here...and that we met here...
- The tower did not work well, maybe to do it in groups
- Not getting deep into the subjects, because of lack of time
- I hope to meet some of you in the future
- More time and attention for the future projects development
- Wish you lots of love, money 😊 partnership and better life than the one you have now
- Important to keep in this type of seminars the “Institutions”
- My wish for the future “Don’t stop!”
- Better methodology.
- Everything was well done!
- Keep up with the programme 😊
- More projects 😊
- Let’s Activities.. more time to work on them
- Thank you Institutions (SALTOs, Nas) for interest and support, thank you trainers fro energy, intelligence and commitment. Good job!
- Looking for productive cooperation and hoping for improvement on the basis of recommendations and real needs identified.
- Full fine!
- Cooperation and Partnership
- Better timing (in order to keep the flow) next time
- SALTOs should organize more activities bringing together youth workers from all regions
- More time fro bilateral meetings for NGOs

- Results of other groups not visible
- We don't know who will seriously benefit from our recommendations and will they be available from us too?
- No towers, not useful.
- 4 trainers are too much (better quality not quantity). Not everybody was engaged in the work.
- More youth exchange
- High quality projects in the future
- Presentations of each other's projects and organizations
- Push NAs to fund more projects for non program countries

9. ANNEXES

✓ Programme of the Seminar

Let's evaluate with our Neighbours					
Day	Tuesday 6 October	Wednesday 7 October	Thursday 8 October	Friday 9 October	Saturday 10 October
Breakfast		08:00-09:00	08:00-09:00	08:00-09:00	08:00-09:00
9.30	Arrival of participants	Official opening	Assesment of support from stakeholders and feedback from participants	Sharing and finalizing recommendations	Departures
		Cooperation with Neighbouring Partner Countries			
Break		11:00 - 11:30	10:30 - 11:00	11:00 - 11:30	
	Getting to know and group building activity, introduction to the Seminar	Sharing good practices	Spices for Regional cooperation		
Lunch	13:00-15.00	13:00-15.00	13:00-15.00	13:00-15.00	
15.00	Welcome tasks	Assesment of projects by participants Assesment of cooperation by stakeholders	White and black pearls: work on good practices and challenges, development of hints and recommendations	Space for further discussion and new ideas	
Break		16:30 - 17:00	16:30 - 17:00	16:00 - 16:30	
		Assesment of projects by participants Assesment of cooperation by stakeholders	White and black pearls: work on good practices and challenges, development of hints and recommendations	Evaluation Closure with the "Let's" future strategy	
Dinner	19:00 - 20:30	19:00 - 20:30	19:00 - 20:30	19:00 - 20:30	
20.30	Welcome and getting to know each other	Projects' Market	Let's...be surprised!	Bye bye	
	Group/atmosphere	Assessment	Practices and recommendations	Future	

✓ List of participants

Participants from Programme Countries

No	First name	Last name	Sex	Country	Organisation	Organisation website	E-mail
1	Marcus	Vrečer	M	Austria	Freelance trainer		arus.work@gmail.com
2	Garba	Diallo	M	Denmark	Crossing Borders	www.crossing.borders.org	garba@crossing-borders.org
3	Anna	Korjakina	F	Estonia	Life Zone	www.lifezone.ee	anna@lifezone.ee
4	Deniss	Jershov	M	Estonia	Estonian UNESCO Youth Association		deniss.jershov@euya.ee
5	Jamel	Elgouille	M	France	Hometown OF MAZAN		jah_mel@hotmail.fr
6	Sylvain	Bardy	M	France	Fla Kultur association	www.fla-kultur.org	flakultur@gmail.com
7	Manuella	Portier	F	France	Maison de l'Europe des Yvelines	www.maisoneurope78.eu	manuella.portier@maisoneurope78.eu
8	Ingrid	Leinus	F	France	ADICE	www.adice.asso.fr	volontaire@adice.asso.fr
9	Aristodimos	Paraschou	M	Greece	United Societies of Balkans	http://usbngo.blogspot.com	arisparashou@yahoo.gr
10	Ines	Gast	F	Germany	JugendSozialwerk Nordhausen e.V.	www.jugendsozialwerk.de	i.gast@jugendsozialwerk.de
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15	Lorenzo	Nava	M	Italy	Multiregional networks YouthNET		lorenzonava@hotmail.com
16	Maja	Selan	F	Poland	The Polish Robert Schuman Foundation	www.schuman.org.pl	m.selan@schuman.org.pl
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Participants from EECA Countries

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4	Rusudan	Kalichava	F	Georgia	Association ATINATI	www.atinati.org	atinati@iatp.org.ge
5	Giorgi	Kikalishvili	M	Georgia	Youth Association DRONI	www.droni.org.ge	giokika@yahoo.com
6	Natalia	Nikitina	F	Russian	SFERA interregional voluntary movement	www.dobrovolets.ru	development@nnvs.ru
7	Olena	Yaremko	F	Ukraine	Academy of Ukrainian Youth		olena_yaremko@yahoo.com
8	Mykola	Pekh	M	Ukraine	Institute of Ukrainian Studies	www.ius.lviv.ua	mpekh@mail.lviv.ua

Participants from Meda countries

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1	Reem	Abdel-Hadi	F	Jordan	youth of SIGI (Sisterhood Is Global Institute)		reem_268@yahoo.com
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4	Hmida	Chayet	M	Morocco	Association bassin guir de développement et	www.bassinguir.ma	skandaria_chayet@yahoo.fr
5	Nizar	Said	M	Palestine	Abna' albalad Society	www.abnnaalbalad.org	nizar_210@hotmail.com
6	Mohamed	Kamoun	M	Tunesia	BRAACV SOUSSE		MKAMOUN2003@yahoo.fr
7	Bechir	ben Nahia	M	Tunesia	Ajmec Association	www.ajmec.org	imamb@voila.fr

Participants from SEE countries

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8	Dubravka	Obradovic	F	Serbia	Vega Youth Center	www.vega.org.rs	vegayc@gmail.com
9	Ivana	Stanojev	F	Serbia	Center for nonviolent resistance	www.cno.org.rs	oceanide@gmail.com

Representatives of the National Agencies of the Youth in Action Programme

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Team of facilitators

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3	Gilles	Baccala	M	French NA	www.jeunesseenaction.fr	baccala@injep.fr
4	Primož	Ferjančič	F	Slovenian NA	www.mva.si	Primož.Ferjancic@mva.si
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8	Sonja	Mitter	F	SALTO SEE	www.salto-youth.net/see	see@salto-youth.net
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Let's Evaluate with Our Neighbours - RECOMMENDATIONS

Starting from challenges identified from projects implemented, participants in the “Let's Evaluate with Our Neighbours” propose a set of recommendations to be addressed to different stakeholders: practitioners active in the Youth in Action Program, SALTO Resource Centres and National Agencies, and the Executive Agency of the European Commission. Recommendations have been numbered and grouped in thematic areas for easier consultation:

Nr	CHALLENGE	RECOMENDATION ADDRESSED TO:		
		Practitioners	SALTO RCs & NAs	European Commission
FINANCIAL ISSUES				
1	Insufficient flat rate sums in youth exchanges	✓	✓	✓
2	EVS final evaluation meeting in EECA countries not granted	✓	✓	✓
3	Different interpretations of financial issues		✓	✓
4	Division of EVS grant among partner organizations		✓	✓
5	Problems in currency exchange and bank procedures	✓	✓	✓
TECHNICALITIES & PROCEDURES				
6	Language obligations in application procedures		✓	✓
7	Lack of common standards of NAs and EACEA related to procedures in application process, implementation and reporting		✓	✓
8	Legal differences between promoters	✓	✓	✓
9	Sharing of information on implemented projects		✓	✓
10	Sharing information on the quality of projects through online procedures		✓	✓
11	Differences in national laws		✓	✓
12	Lack of cooperation with Scandinavian organizations		✓	✓
INCLUSION				
13	Finding suitable partners to work with a specific target group		✓	✓
14	Lack of support of public bodies for the work towards inclusion	✓	✓	✓
15	Language barriers in the work with youngsters with fewer opportunities	✓		
SUPPORT				
16	Lack of feedback and recognition for the implemented activities under YiA		✓	✓
17	Sustainability - lack of support in the follow up of the project	✓	✓	✓
18	Unclear and insufficient complaint and problem solving mechanism by EACEA and NAs		✓	✓
CONTENT & METHODOLOGY				
19	Quality of trainers	✓	✓	
20	Limitations in Advance Planning Visits in EVS projects			✓
21	Youth in Action “tourism”	✓		
PARTNERSHIP				
22	Partnership in the preparation phase	✓		
23	Equality in Partnership	✓	✓	✓
24	Quality in the selection of participants in multilateral training and networking projects	✓	✓	✓
VISA				
25	Problems related to ViSA		✓	✓

R1. INSUFFICIENT FLAT RATE SUMS IN YOUTH EXCHANGES

Summary

In some countries daily flat rate sums correspond to the level of life and costs of services; in other countries flat rates determined by the Youth in Action Program are insufficient and sometimes it forces organizations to ask participants to pay a participation fee to take part in youth exchanges in their own country (eg. Germany).

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To EC:

- to revise and resubmit flat rates in the new Program (after 2013), based on revised costs of living and services, since such changes can no longer be implemented in the existing Youth in Action Program.

To NAs:

- to adopt and optimize sums within country budgets in order to meet real project needs;
- to create a database of “youth exchange friendly” venues which can provide appropriate prices and services.
- to create a list of other institutions which may have capacities for co-financing.

To colleagues:

- to develop campaign and lobby mechanisms with support of EC and NAs directed at local governments in order to promote at local level the recognition of projects developed within the YiA Program, thus facilitating the allocation of local government’s budget lines to support part of the costs (co-financing).

R2. EVS FINAL EVALUATION MEETING IN EECA COUNTRIES NOT GRANTED

Summary

In the application phase, costs for the final evaluation meeting of EVS volunteers from EECA region which participate in EVS in Program countries are planned by the promoting organization, but later they are not granted by NA. So, volunteers have no opportunity to participate in the final evaluation meetings, which are organized by the network of EVS trainers in EECA on behalf of SALTO EECA RC.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To EC:

- to encourage NAs to support the training cycle in EECA until SALTO EECA RC will be in charge of EVS trainings cycle organization (including financing the trainings) in the region.

To NA:

- to allocate in the budget costs for EVS trainings in EECA and support final evaluation costs for projects /volunteers from EECA if they are planned.

To colleagues:

- to plan costs for EVS trainings (pre-departure, final evaluation if you host volunteer from EECA and on-arrival, mid-term if you send volunteer to EECA country) and contact SALTO EECA RC to get more information about EVS trainings in EECA region.

R3. DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS OF FINANCIAL ISSUES

Summary

Different NAs have different interpretations of the financial criteria, which creates unequal situations for the organisations using the Programme.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To NAs:

- to fine-tune a common strategy and rules to be worked out on meetings of the representatives of the NAs, with a focus on a general more flexible attitude.

R4. DIVISION OF EVS GRANT AMONG PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Summary

NAs obviously do not make proof if their beneficiary organisations really transferred the money to the partners in an EVS project. Additionally, financial agreements in Activity Agreements are very different and often do not include the really important regulations. Partner organisations are sometimes limited in what they can do if the applicant partner does not fulfil his financial duties.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To EC and NAs:

- To be required by the NAs a proof that their applicant transferred the money to the partner, and set clearer and common rules for the payments to the partners.

R5. PROBLEMS IN CURRENCY EXCHANGE AND BANK PROCEDURES

Summary

It happens that NGOs lose money on bank transfers & currency exchanges, sometimes up to three times in a project, which creates an impact on the financial management of the project.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To institutions:

- to pay the grant in EURO; to set up an 'emergency fund' to deal with eventual significant differences in currency rate, etc.

To colleagues:

- to bear in mind the risk connected with that problem and to find solutions such as the division of the costs by all partners;

TECHNICALITIES & PROCEDURES

R6. LANGUAGE OBLIGATIONS IN APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Summary

Some National Agencies such as Turkish and Latvian, among others, require to fill out applications exclusively in their national languages. This prevents organizations from other states to equally participate in writing application in cooperation with the partner from that specific country. This specifically relates to the partners from the Neighbouring Countries. This affects negatively the cooperation in the frame of the Youth in Action Program.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To institutions:

- We recommend that National Agencies recognize English as an official second language for application purposes, particularly in the states where NAs require that application should be filled out in their National Languages.

R7. LACK OF COMMON STANDARDS OF NAS AND EACEA RELATED TO PROCEDURES IN APPLICATION PROCESS, IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING

Summary

Often different National Agencies and the Executive Agency introduce specific procedure rules apart from what is provided by the Program guide, concerning the application process, the amount and terms of funding or the reporting procedures. For instance, some NAs don't accept scanned or fax versions of Part 3, some other accept. They have different approaches to project promoters – some are open for the communication, give feedback of project proposals, on the reports, visit the projects – some of them don't. The process with EACEA is different too. Such situation creates conditions where it is very difficult for youth organizations to know exactly what the requirements will be, leading to unnecessary mistakes by the youth organizations in the cooperation with all National Agencies and Executive Agency.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To EACEA and NAs:

- to unify as much as possible the procedures and have common standards.
- to include procedures, requirements and priorities that are specific to a country should be in the program guide and on the web sites of all NAs.
- to create an Ethic Charter for officers in EACEA and NAs about relationship and attitudes towards projects promoters and beneficiaries of the program.
- to establish a "Consultation desk" in the period of a couple of weeks before each deadline, so people could ask questions. Those questions and answers should be included in FAQ lists, available to be downloaded, and updated after every

deadline.

- to organise, at least once a year, an “Info day” by NAs in Neighbouring countries and one person from the EACEA should lead the Info day, answer questions, give clarifications etc.

R8. LEGAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PROMOTERS

Summary

There is in some situations the existence of a legal gap, where financial rights of the parties (applicant, host, promoters) are not protected. NAs have weak instruments to intervene next to the applicant NGO, and to demand or influence them to be fair and transparent, making them fulfil their commitments.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To institutions:

- to include an additional paragraph in part 2 or 3, where the applicant organization is obliged to reimburse travel costs to all participant organisation, in case they participate and fulfil all their duties in the project. In extreme situations, NAs should reimburse partner organizations travel and other costs directly if necessary.

R9. SHARING OF INFORMATION ON IMPLEMENTED PROJECTS

Summary

Many organisations are working in the youth field and with the Youth in Action Programme, but there is a lack of information about who they are, what they are doing, which good practices exist.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To institutions:

- to set a common platform of information that can be used by all the partners of a formal or informal network, where they can find information for a good base of future cooperation. In this platform could be shared the information on organisations, as well as methods of work, pedagogical skills, thus creating a common “treasure” of information to help the mutual understanding among partners.

R10. SHARING INFORMATION ON THE QUALITY OF PROJECTS THROUGH ONLINE PROCEDURES

Summary

There are cases where organizations issue a call for trainings or youth exchanges on certain topics, but when participants arrive they meet low quality projects, sometimes on a different topic than what was promoted.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To institutions:

- To create an online questioner that each participant of the training courses and youth exchanges will have to fill out upon return to his / her home country. This would allow a clearer assessment of the quality of the project by the NA and adequate reactions towards the situation.

R11. DIFFERENCES IN NATIONAL LAWS

Summary

There are plenty of differences in different Programme countries, different rules, procedures and practices that NAs implement. We do understand some of them might be connected with the internal laws of the specific country. What leads to unnecessary problems in cooperation between youth organisations from different countries is the fact that organizations don't know about these differences and it's therefore difficult to follow and adapt.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To institutions:

- to have at least a meeting once a year between the representatives of all NAs to exchange the practices and experience, and from there create a joint list of differences and specifics of individual NAs that could be shared with organisations.

R12. LACK OF COOPERATION WITH SCANDINAVIAN ORGANIZATIONS

Summary

There is a lack of cooperation between Scandinavian Organisations and Neighbouring countries.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To institutions:

- to organize some PBAs, Study visits in and with Scandinavian organizations, in order to increase joint projects with EU Neighbouring countries.

INCLUSION

R13. FINDING SUITABLE PARTNERS TO WORK WITH A SPECIFIC TARGET GROUP

Summary

There are no specific details in the EVS database nor a common database for organisations working with youth exchange in what concerns the specific work with youngsters with fewer opportunities. Therefore it is more difficult to find the right partners for a specific inclusion project.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To institutions:

- to develop a database for organizations that work with young people with fewer opportunities, where information on their work and target group could be displayed.

R14. LACK OF SUPPORT OF PUBLIC BODIES FOR THE WORK TOWARDS INCLUSION

Summary

To involve young people with fewer opportunities there is a general lack of human resources (to motivate, prepare and support young people), of financial support and also of recognition of the work done.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To EC and NAs:

- to give more priority for projects involving young people with fewer opportunities.

To colleagues:

- to implement actions that promote the valorisation of the result of their projects with youngsters with fewer opportunities, in order to increase the overall recognition.
- to focus on receiving financial and moral support on the local level.
- to reinforce cooperation with organizations who are in direct contact with young people with fewer opportunities (social centres, youth centres etc).
- to develop strong partnerships with international partners to work effectively with available resources.

R15. LANGUAGE BARRIERS IN THE WORK WITH YOUNGSTERS WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES

Summary

Generally, young people with fewer opportunities have fewer language skills, which creates specific challenges in the context of international youth projects.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To colleagues:

- To organize activities where language skills are not essential (photo, video, art, outdoor games and so on)
- To use the help of an interpreter (and consider exceptional costs for this)
- To use the help from former participants, dictionaries, websites to prepare participants.
- To mix participants in groups of activities and rooms to motivate them to practice the common language.
- To let the youngsters decide the rules for using their mother languages.

SUPPORT

R16. LACK OF FEEDBACK AND RECOGNITION FOR THE IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES UNDER YIA

Summary

Very often when organisations send a report of a project, they don't get any feedback from the institutions. When everything is OK and there was a good work done, there is usually no comment or recognition for the work, neither recommendations for improvements. On the other side, if there is even a small mistake in the financial part, there is immediately a contact to request clarifications. This raises questions on the real importance given by the EACEA and some NAs to narrative reports and content outcomes.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To EC and NAs:

- To put more focus on the content of narrative reports of the projects implemented, and not only on the administrative part, because then they would be more aware of the quality of the projects. This can also contribute to a better understanding of the work done by promoters, of the level of achievement of the program goals, which would lead to a better quality of the granted projects. The approach to monitoring and evaluation from the EACEA and NAs should not be focused merely on "finding a financial mistake", but rather as a definitely needed and positive element of supporting youth work in EU and other regions. If there is no capacity for that (human resources e.g.) institutions should consider the possibility to engage one extra person, or a consultant, an evaluator or regional advisor to perform this task.

R17. SUSTAINABILITY - LACK OF SUPPORT IN THE FOLLOW UP OF THE PROJECT

Summary

Ideas that are developed as follow up of implemented projects are not always sufficiently recognized as positive outcomes and very often are not approved when submitted as a new project. This has a negative impact on the motivation of individuals and organizations involved, and projects lose a long-term dimension and the full potential of their results.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To EACEA and NAs:

- to open the possibility for multi-measure projects within Action 3.1, in order to have a longer term commitment and better results. Also, there should be a "positive discrimination approach" in the selection process for projects applications that are follow up of already implemented projects.

To colleagues:

- to have a long term perspective when they planning projects, and not make only pilot projects.

R18. UNCLEAR AND INSUFFICIENT COMPLAINT AND PROBLEM SOLVING MECHANISM BY EACEA AND NAS

Summary

It is unclear to whom, how and when to complain and report misuse of funds or any lack of standards in the implementation of the activities. Furthermore, EACEA and NAs apparently have a weak system of regulation, tools and instruments for reaction on problems in project implementation.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To EACEA and NAs:

- to clarify which are the mechanisms for complaining that will deal with the misuse of funds by partners in a project or other type of implementation problems. These mechanisms could be: a contact/information person, a standard form for complaints, an engaged legal advisor, the possibility to have an emergency monitoring visit, among other.

CONTENT & METHODOLOGY

R19. QUALITY OF TRAINERS

Summary

Finding good trainers with the necessary intercultural awareness and professional and technical skills is extremely important for achieving the goals of the training. One of the challenges is how to find the financial resources to build pool of trainers.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To NAs:

- to build a pool of national trainers and gather a data base from other NAs.

To SALTO:

- to organize Training of Trainers and standardize the profiles for trainers.

To colleagues:

- to use the existing data base of trainers locally, nationally and regionally and also to use the Salto Resource Centres.

Both to colleagues and institutions:

- to help develop participatory, multi-sensor tools and training materials.

R20. LIMITATIONS IN ADVANCE PLANNING VISITS IN EVS PROJECTS

Summary

At the moment APV exists only for EVS projects with youngsters with fewer opportunities. This brings limitations for new projects with different target groups.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To EC:

- to create the possibility to implement APV for EVS projects with Neighbouring partner countries, regardless of whether or not young people involved have fewer opportunities.
- to introduce a standardised partner accreditation system across all regions.

R21. YOUTH IN ACTION “TOURISM”

Summary

Many organisations have problems with participants that are more interested in tourism than in the project itself. This compromises the commitment to the project and therefore the outcomes.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To colleagues:

- to invest in a good preparation phase: for a youth exchange for example, create a process in each partner organisation that involves and motivates participants from the beginning (for instance, sending out a call for participants, participants writing down their motivations, national group meetings from preparation, etc).
- to ensure a close cooperation between all partners organisations, so that they are all committed to a good selection and motivation of participants.
- to invest in good and challenging contents of the activities, which should motivate participants who are not so tuned in.
- to focus on inclusion of disadvantaged young people, for whom these opportunities are very important.
- to let the participants create their own products/outcomes of the project in order to increase their sense of ownership of the project.
- to get information on partners that are reliable and committed to the project, by using the own network of contacts, or by asking NAs or SALTO for information about a partner organisation
- to sign a contract between hosting and sending organisation in order to not reimburse money for participants who are not fully attending the project.

PARTNERSHIP

R22. PARTNERSHIP IN THE PREPARATION PHASE

Summary

The shared ownership of the project among all partners is often not taken enough into account in the writing, preparation and implementation and this is many times the origin of all the problems than may arise later.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To colleagues:

- to invest in long term partnerships.
- to share and write together with all partners the application form many months before the deadline.
- to establish a social contract between partners with all the rules, duties of partners and responsibilities of leaders.

R23. EQUALITY IN PARTNERSHIP

Summary

There is a need to reinforce reciprocal respect and recognition between Programme and Partner organizations in implementing Youth in Action activities in order to perceive partners as equal with shared responsibility.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

Both to colleagues and institutions:

- To create a handbook for disseminating good practices in partnership work between Partner and Programme countries, focused not only on Action 3 but also Action 2.
- To establish the use of contract templates between partners as a rule and good practice on the side of NGOs.
- NAs' Action 3 officers should include Hosting organizations for the event in the communication procedure.
- To reinforce the funding to SALTO-YiA, specifically to Action 3, in order to improve the quality, to create a network of Partner countries partnership cooperation in Programme countries sustained by NAs and Action 2 officers.
- To create cultural ambassadors, trained by SALTO cultural diversity and supported by NAs.

R24. QUALITY IN THE SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS IN MULTILATERAL TRAINING AND NETWORKING PROJECTS

Summary

In training and networking projects - as in all other Youth in Action projects - the philosophy of the programme requires that a project be developed, implemented, monitored and followed-up with the involvement of ALL partner organisations.

In case of multilateral training and networking projects involving a high number of partner organisations (e.g. more than 5), a couple of problems can arise:

- on one hand, it is illusory to think that all partner organisations together can or will develop the project. As a matter of facts, there will be a limited group of core partners, and a remaining group of further beneficiaries with a more passive role in the development and shaping of the project;
- on the other hand, if each partner organisation only sends one or two participants, often not the most suitable ones are found. This is especially the case when the project is based on needs or competences of individuals rather than on the needs of specific organisations. Furthermore, partner organisations usually only nominate one participant, thus no real selection by the trainer team can take place. When nominated participants are not suitable, in practice there are only two options: you can either reject the not-suitable ones, which reduces the number of participants and jeopardizes the implementation, financial viability and quality of the project. Or you accept also the not-suitable participants, and have later to deal with a heavily inhomogeneous group of participants, in totality not corresponding to the desired profile of the target group, again heavily jeopardizing the quality of the project.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:

To EACEA and NAs:

- to create the exceptional possibility to make open calls for participants in the case of Training and Networking projects involving 10 or more partner organisations (including hosting and applicant/coordinating organisation). For the funding application, 5 international core partners must be fixed (part III) and should not be changed. For the remaining partners, only the countries must be indicated (similar to the procedure of the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe). It must clearly be indicated why there is an exceptional need for an open call instead of the usual procedure of having partner organisations nominating the participants. Furthermore, it must be convincingly shown what will be the selection criteria for participants, how they will be selected, and most importantly, how the selected participants will be involved at all stages of the project, including the design.

To colleagues:

- to use a very detailed application form for participants
- to do the selection of participants as early as possible (eg shortly after the approval of the project by the donor)
- to use all the data received from the application forms of participants (needs, expectations, contributions, etc) to fine-tune the programme.

R25. TITLE OF THE CHALLENGE: PROBLEMS RELATED TO VISA**Summary**

Visa related problems are one of the major difficulties when cooperating with neighbouring countries as they often get delayed or even rejected.

Recommendation addressed to

Colleagues for usage SALTO RCs and NAs European Commission

Recommendation:**To EACEA:**

- to interfere in the process of the liberalisation of visa for practitioners, informing governments about the YiA program and put stronger accent in this issue.
- to request National Agencies and SALTOS to inform ministries of their respective countries about the Youth in Action Program in general and specifically about the European Voluntary Service.

To NAs:

- to have regular correspondence with its Ministry of Foreign Affairs which could support visa procedures for YiA projects.
- to invite the cultural services of the embassies to keep them informed and updated on what the different organizations do in the program.
- to produce a document annually and send it to the embassies informing them about the YiA program.