

A high-angle, blurred photograph of a crowd of people walking on a light-colored pavement. The motion blur gives a sense of a busy, active environment.

Research on 'Youth in Action' projects in Luxembourg: the variety of learning effects on participants

Presentation at The Annual Conference of
Youth Studies 2016
Helsinki, 7.-8.11.2016

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INSIDE

INTEGRATIVE RESEARCH UNIT
ON SOCIAL AND INDIVIDUAL
DEVELOPMENT

The logo for the University of Luxembourg, consisting of the letters "uni.lu" in a stylized, colorful font (red, blue, and orange). Below it, the text "UNIVERSITÉ DU LUXEMBOURG" is written in a black, sans-serif font.

UNIVERSITÉ DU
LUXEMBOURG

Content

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1. “Youth in Action” Programme and RAY-Network
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2. What did the participants learn?
3. How did the participants learn?

D. Conclusions

A.1. “Youth in Action” Programme and RAY-Network



- Programme of the EU to support European youth projects (2007-2013)
- Programme objectives: acquisition of competences of young people by offering opportunities for non-formal and informal learning with a European dimension
 - active citizenship and European citizenship;
 - solidarity and tolerance to reinforce social cohesion in the EU;
 - mutual understanding between young people in different countries;
 - quality of support systems for youth activities and civil society organisations in the youth field;
 - European cooperation in the youth field
- ec.europa.eu/youth/tools/youth-in-action_en.htm
- RAY = **R**esearch-based **A**nalysis (and **M**onitoring) of **Y**outh in Action
- Network of the YiA National Agencies and their research partners (actually 29 countries) founded in 2008
- Objective:
 - permanent evaluation of the projects within YiA Programme and research on the effects of the programme;
 - gain knowledge on the processes and effects of non-formal learning
- Coordination: Institut für Erziehungswissenschaften, Uni Innsbruck and Austrian National Agency (Interkulturelles Zentrum)
- www.researchyouth.net/

A.2. Research done in Luxembourg in the framework of RAY

- Quantitative surveys (2011-2014):
 - **Online questionnaires** for all project participants and project leaders in projects funded by Luxembourg from 2011 to 2014
 - **Different questionnaires** for project participants and project leaders in the **official languages** of the country
 - Special study on **non-formal learning** in 2012 with a specific questionnaire
 - **Sample** for Luxembourg: 580 project participants and 252 project leaders
- Qualitative study on non-formal learning (2013):
 - Focus: What is learned? How is it learned?
 - Guided **qualitative interviews** with 8 project leaders
 - **Focus groups** with 20 project participants
 - Analysis of 9 projects: 2 youth exchanges, 2 youth initiatives, European Voluntary Service, 4 Training & Networking

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B. Theoretical concepts

- Lifelong learning
 - “all purposeful learning activity, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence” (Commission of the European Communities, 2000)
- Learning contexts – the learning continuum
 - “Formal, non-formal and informal learning are ultimately neither discrete nor mutually exclusive. They comprise aggregated positions along a multi-dimensional and continuous continuum between informality and formality” (Chisholm, 2008)
- Learning outcomes in an active learning paradigm (Cedefop, 2008)
 - “Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do after completion of learning.” (European Commission, 2010)
 - European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning: Knowledge, skills and competences
 - Four pillars of learning from Unesco (1998): Learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, learning to be
- Validation of learning outcomes (Council of Europe, European Union, 2011)
 - Different validation and recognition of non-formal learning in the youth field: formal, political, social or self recognition

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C.1 Profile of the participants

- Description of the sample:
 - 35% Luxembourgish residents, 57% EU-28 residents, only 7% outside the EU
 - 61% respondents from projects with young people (Youth exchanges, Youth initiatives, Youth Democracy Projects, Structured Dialogue), 10% from EVS, 30% from projects with youth workers (Training and Networking, Training and Cooperation Plans)
 - Mostly female (59%)
 - Mostly pupils or students (59%)
 - Highly educated
 - International mobile
- Young people with fewer opportunities (YPFO)
 - Difficult to find out how many participants in the projects are YPFO
 - objective and/or subjective indicators
 - Missing answers
 - About 11-13% in the sample are YPFO (combination of subjective and objective indicators)
 - ➔ YPFO are a target group, but are probably underrepresented in the sample and in the population

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C.2. Questions on learning effects in the online survey

Knowledge / Learning to know

- Knowledge acquired (18 items e.g. Europe, Youth and youth policies)

Skills / Learning to do

- **Skills for eight competences for lifelong learning** (21 items e.g. how to cooperate in a team; to get along with people who have a different cultural background)

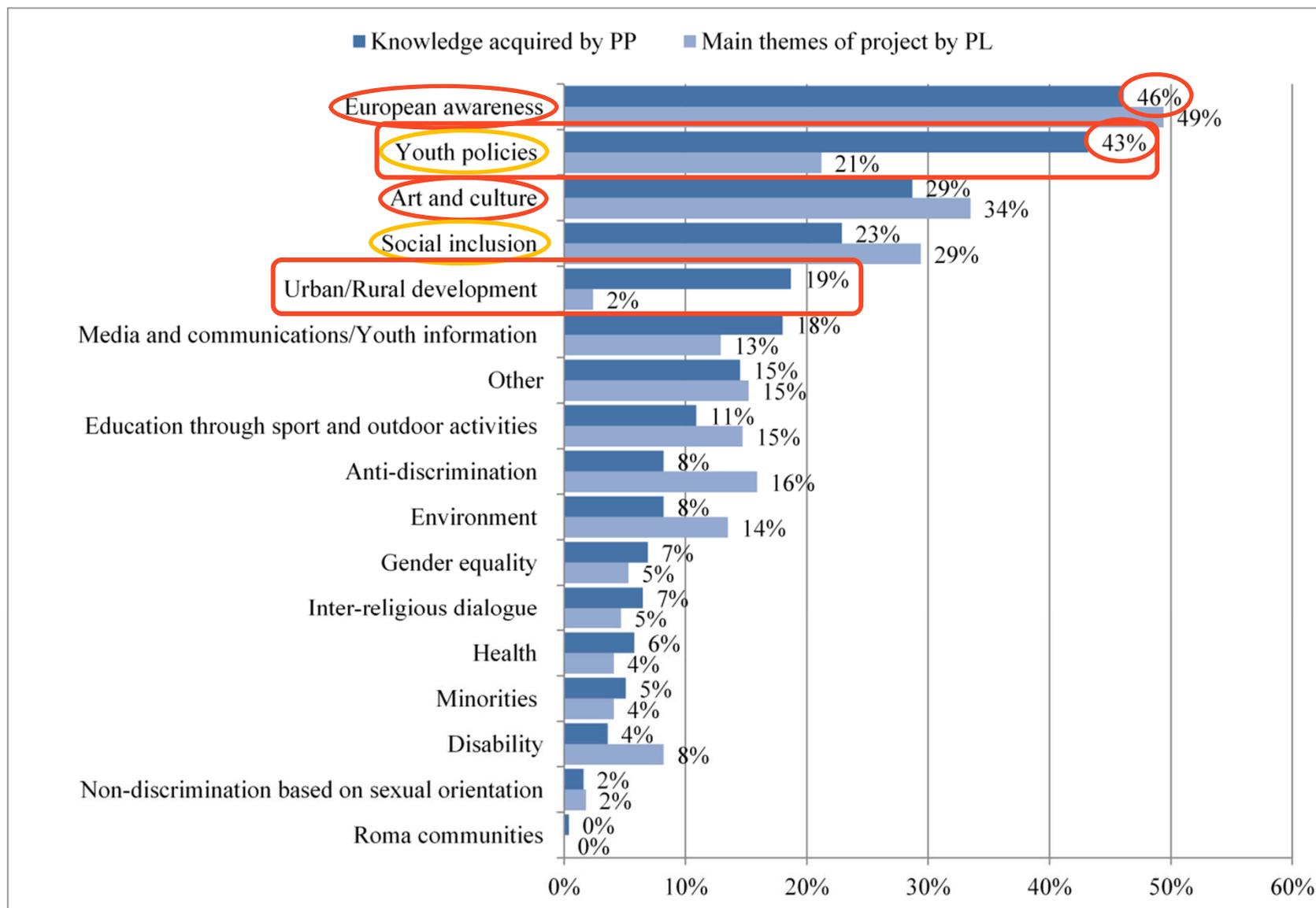
Values / Learning to live together

- **Values** (12 items e.g. respect for other cultures, solidarity, tolerance)

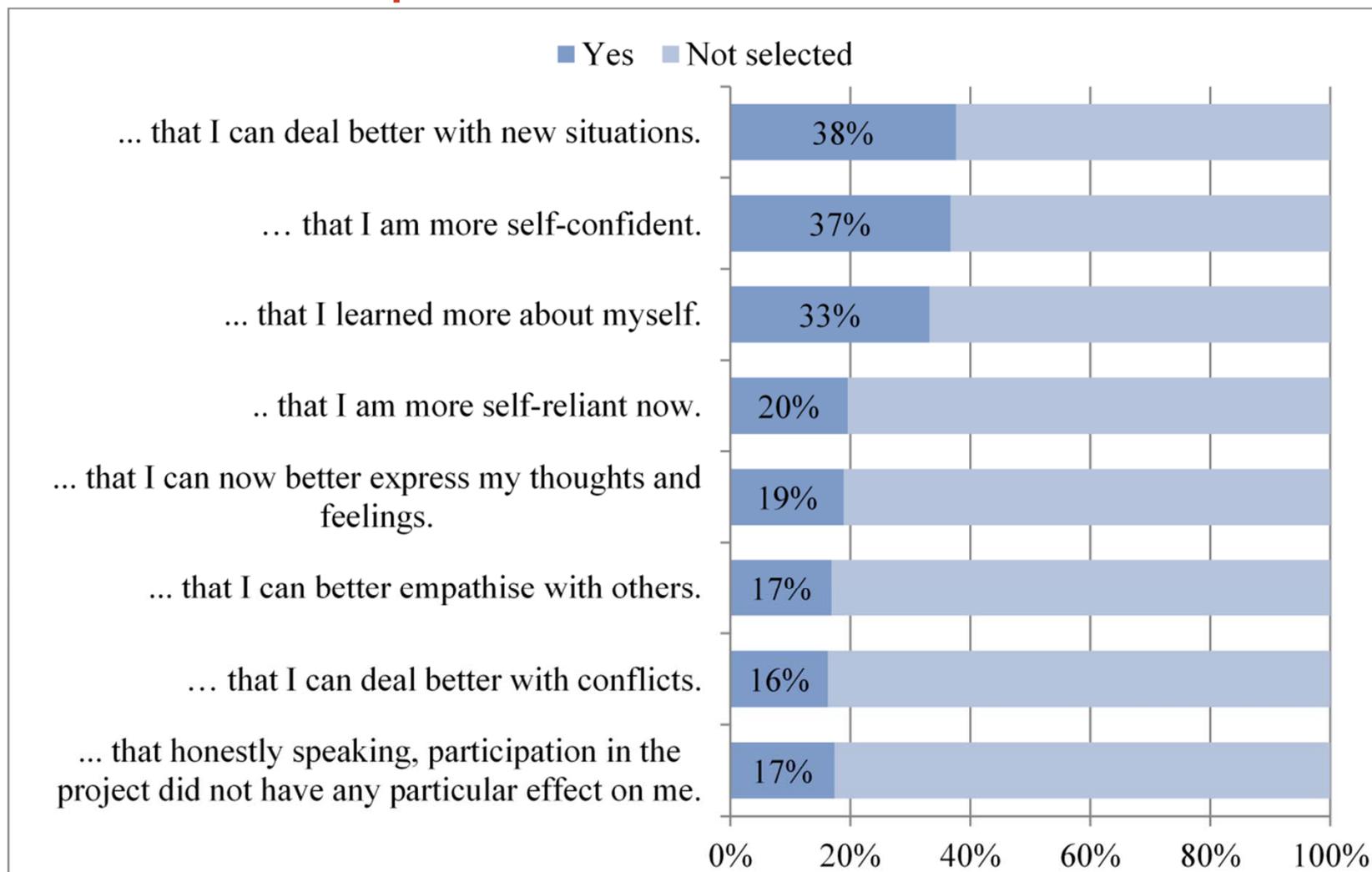
Competences or Attitudes / Learning to be

- **Concerning Youth in Action objectives** (4 items e.g. I am interested in European issues; I am committed to work against discrimination, intolerance, xenophobia or racism)
- **Concerning educational or professional future** (6 items e.g. I now really intend to develop my foreign language skills; I am planning to engage in further education and training)
- **Other effects** (10 items e.g. The participation in the project has contributed to my personal development; I got to know people from other countries with whom I am still in touch)
- **Personal attitudes** (8 items e.g. I can deal better with new situations; I am more self-confident)

C.2. Knowledge



C.2. Self-development



C.2. Factor analysis on skills, values and competences

- Factor analysis to group a lot of variables that measure the same effect into a small number of independent new variables or factors
 - 36 items
 - Principal components analysis with a varimax rotation
 - Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy 0,904 («marvellous»)
 - 62% of total variance explained by 8 factors
1. Strengthening of social and democratic **values**
 2. Improvement of **language** and **intercultural** competences
 3. Better use of **media**, better learning and planning
 4. Better social **networking**
 5. Better **social skills** and entrepreneurship
 6. Clearer idea about **personal future**
 7. Better **participation** and interest in Europe
 8. More support and work for **disadvantaged** people

C.2. Factor analysis on skills, values and competences

- Participants of an **EVS** report the most effects on language and intercultural competences and on getting a clearer idea about personal future
- Participants in **projects with young people** learned the most on participation and interest in European issues and on strengthening of social and democratic values, also some effect on language and intercultural competences
- Participants in **projects with youth workers** report the most effects on social networking
- Effects of language learning and intercultural competences as well as networking are bigger if the participant went **abroad**
- The **age group 18 to 25** benefitted the most in the projects with young people and with youth workers

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C.3. Learning in YiA compared to learning in everyday life

	in everyday life		in the project	
to say what I think with conviction in discussions	9,5%	1	8,4%	4
to identify opportunities for my personal or professional future	8,3%	2	6,8%	10
to think logically and draw conclusions	8,2%	3	7,1%	8
to develop a good idea and put it into practice	8,1%	4	8,2%	5
to cooperate in a team	7,9%	5	8,9%	3
to communicate with people who speak another language	7,5%	6	10,2%	1
to negotiate joint solutions when there are different viewpoints	7,3%	7	7,6%	7
to get along with people who have a different cultural background	6,9%	8	9,1%	2
to achieve something in the interest of the community or society	6,7%	9	7,8%	6
to improve learning or to have more fun when learning	6,6%	10	5,6%	11
to express myself creatively or artistically	6,4%	11	6,9%	9
to plan and carry out my learning independently	6,1%	12	4,9%	12
to produce media content on my own (printed, audio-visual, electronic)	5,6%	13	4,1%	14
to discuss political topics seriously	5,0%	14	4,4%	13
	100%		100%	

- The learning in YiA projects is different, because...
- it complements learning in everyday life by promoting other skills
 - it demarcates itself from formal learning settings
 - it allows new experiences and authentic encounters

C.3. Results from the qualitative surveys

- Methods and activities in the projects
 - „mix of methods“, a diverse spectrum of different methods and exercises (44% non-formal methods, 22% formal, 22% informal, 12% other)
 - „classical“ and „innovative“ methods
 - Informal phases are especially useful for intercultural competences
 - ➔ Combination of different activities favourable to learn competences
- Peer Learning and group processes
 - Social learning through interaction in heterogeneous groups
 - Democratic learning
 - Exchanges with peers esp. for EVS
 - Positive group atmosphere procures security and trust
 - Positive interactions continue even after the project

C.3. Results from the qualitative surveys

- Effective learning possibilities
 - Participation and responsibility of participants
 - Implication in the preparation
 - Practical work where something is created
 - Unplanned situations and difficulties

„the concept (of the project) is, that we say, we are going to do something that goes approximately in that direction and the young people can handle this, prepare something; they are the creators of the activity, the owners of that activity and this means that, as the young are the creative, they can also cope when the activity turns out to be different,, (project leader of a youth exchange)
- The role of the project leader
 - Influence through methodical and didactic conception and pedagogical acting
 - Project leader see themselves as „enabler“, responsible, contact person

“Surely I see my role as (...) facilitator, someone who facilitates things and makes things possible (...) Create a playground, a forum where young people can bring their competences in, according to a concept or an idea; allow them to experiment, not blindly, but rather with an idea in mind” (project leader of a youth exchange)

 - Participants see project leader as contact person and facilitator

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1. In YiA projects a **very diverse learning** of project participants is taking place: acquisition of knowledge, personal development and development of very diverse competences and skills. The learning outcomes are different depending on the project type.
 2. The YiA projects combine different elements of formal, non-formal and informal learning -> **holistic learning concept** (Council of Europe; European Union, 2011) which is best to develop not only cognitive learning but also emotional, social and practical aspects of learning.
- ➔ Explore further:
- What do YPFO learn? Is it different from young people with most opportunities?
 - What is the effect of long-term / short-term projects?
 - Are there long-term effects on participants?
- ➔ Triangular Summit in Vienna 24.-26.04.2017

Thank you for your attention!

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