



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Directorate-General for education and culture
Youth, sport and citizenship
Youth in Action

YOUTHPASS - STATE OF PLAY

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the first years of implementation of Youthpass under the Youth in Action Programme as well as to put forward proposals for future developments.

1 INTRODUCTION

In July 2007, the Youth in Action Programme Committee expressed a favourable opinion with regard to launching Youthpass as a tool to recognise and validate knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired or improved within Youth in Action projects.

Youthpass is part of a wider European Commission's strategy aimed at fostering the recognition of non-formal learning among young people and youth workers, thus supporting their employability and active citizenship, as well as strengthening the social recognition of youth work Europe-wide.

Youthpass was initially conceived for and launched under sub-Action 1.1 (Youth Exchanges), Action 2 (European Voluntary Service) and sub-Action 4.3 (Training and Networking; training courses only) of the Programme; it was later on extended to encompass sub-Action 1.2 (Youth Initiatives) and 3.1 (Cooperation with Neighbouring Partner Countries). It was also made available at centralised level under sub-Action 4.6 (Partnerships).

The Youthpass certificate is a comparable Europe-wide instrument which allows young people and youth workers to confirm their participation in a Youth in Action project and describe the carried-out activities as well as the developed competences. The certificate allows including data about the project - its aims, activities and actors involved - and its relation with the objectives of the Youth in Action Programme. Additionally, it offers participants the opportunity to look back at their experience and carry out a self-assessment exercise focussed on analysing the degree of acquisition of the eight key-competences defined at EU level¹.

Youthpass certificates are not compulsory; they are generated by the project promoters, in cooperation with the participants and upon their request.

Although released at different stages in the last years, all Youthpass certificates have a retroactive validity; all projects granted under the Actions and sub-Actions concerned since the beginning of the programme are entitled to propose Youthpass certificates to their participants.

¹ Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning (OJEU L 394 of 30.12.2006)

2 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF HOW YOUTHPASS IS IMPLEMENTED

The European Commission implements Youthpass via the support of the SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre, who coordinates the communication between the structures and actors of the Youth in Action Programme involved and organises the development of the validation instrument. The activity of the Commission and SALTO Training and Cooperation RC is supported by a Youthpass Advisory Group, composed of representatives of Commission, National Agencies, SALTOs and experts.

Despite the fact that Youthpass certificates are generated by promoters through a dedicated website, the National Agencies of the Youth in Action Programme also play an essential role in raising awareness and know-how about Youthpass among their stakeholders. A network of contact persons within the Agencies has been established for the purpose of improving the implementation of Youthpass in each national context by exchanging information and practices.

3 MAIN RESULTS OF THE FIRST YEARS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The results presented in this document illustrate the main quantitative results of the Youthpass implementation in the period 2007-2009. These results take stock of a more extensive set of data collected by the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC and contained in the document "Analysis of results on Youthpass developments" elaborated together with the Youthpass Advisory Group.

Global figures

Until now, more than 50 000 Youthpass Certificates were generated by beneficiaries of the Youth in Action Programme. This represents a good result, if considering that one participant out of three decided to generate a certificate to validate and recognise her/his experience. The lower figures for 2009 are due to the fact that a significant number of projects selected in 2009 are still ongoing. Figures are therefore supposed to increase in the coming months when these projects will end.

Since August 2007, more than 3 450 promoters registered in the Youthpass website in order to be able to issue certificates. This is an indication that NGOs and public bodies growingly recognise the value of Youthpass as a tool to be offered to their participants.

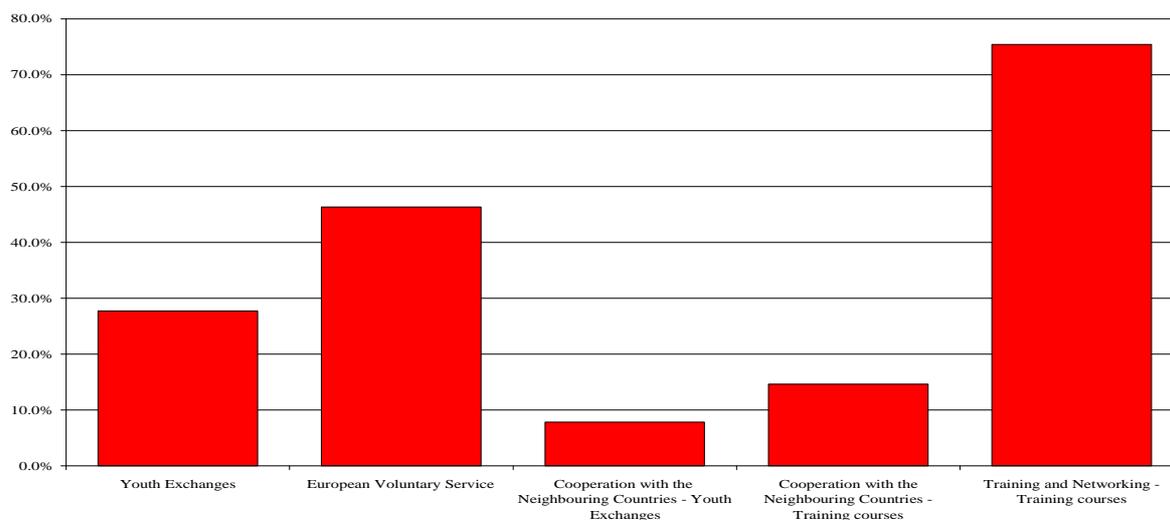
	2007*	2008*	2009*
Number of certificates issued	10,739	22,414	19,087
Percentage of eligible participants	17.6%	35.1%	31.9%

* year when the project was selected

Figures per Action

The following chart shows the results of the Youthpass implementation by Action/sub-Action concerned. Figures are expressed as a percentage of participants who received a Youthpass out of the total number of participants in Actions and sub-Actions where they were entitled to. The very good results under sub-Action 4.3 Training courses give a positive indication of how Youthpass is on track in being recognised as a tool for the strengthening of social recognition of youth work in Europe. Promising results can be noticed as well in European Voluntary Service, also considering that still ongoing long-term projects are not yet finalised.

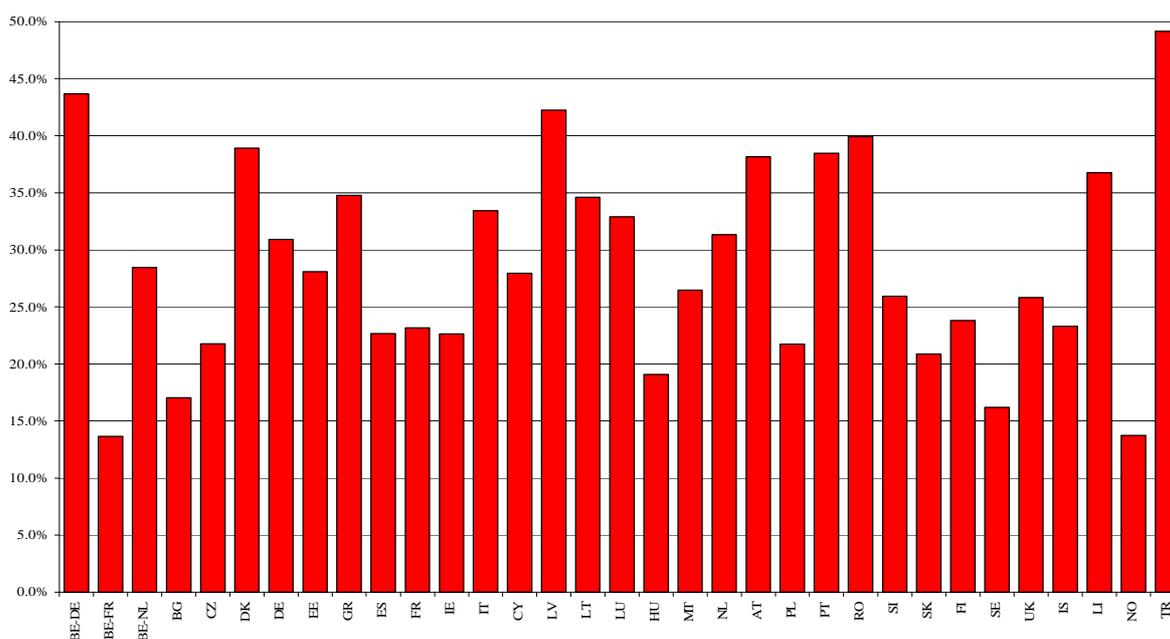
Graph 1. Percentage of eligible participants receiving Youthpass per strand of the programme



Figures per National Agency

National Agencies have made efforts in promoting and supporting Youthpass. That results in many activities reaching different targets, as it appears from the analysis of the Work Plans and Activity Reports submitted to the Commission. However, as shown in the chart below, some differences still remain in terms of number of certificates issued at national level. National Agencies are invited to pursue their efforts in order to promote a more homogeneous implementation of Youthpass in the countries participating in the programme.

Graph 2. Percentage of eligible participants receiving Youthpass per National Agency

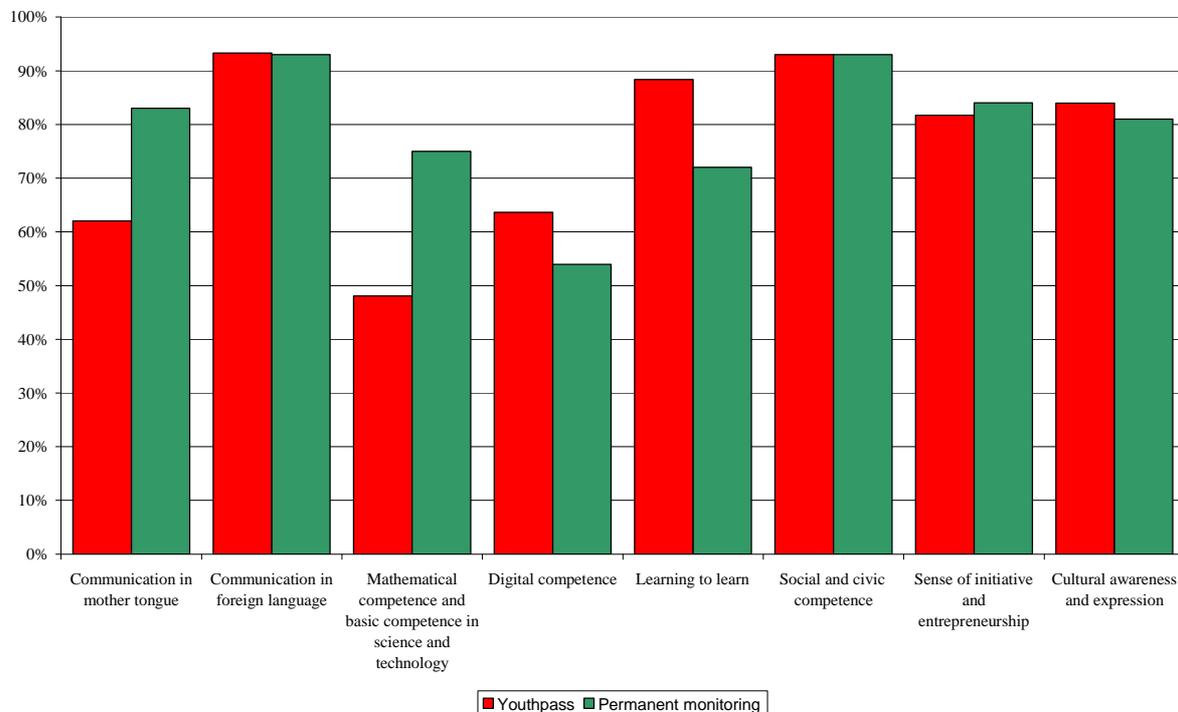


Figures on learning outcomes

The quantitative analysis of the self-assessment sections in Youthpass certificates shows that, until now, more than 9 500 participants reported the acquisition or improvement of at least one of the key-competences defined at EU level. This figure represents 60% of Youthpass certificates generated in those Actions and sub-Actions where the self-assessment section has been introduced (i.e. European Voluntary Service and Training Courses certificates).

The figures in Youthpass certificates have been analysed in comparison with the qualitative outcomes of the European monitoring survey launched by the Commission end of 2009. As shown by the chart below, the results of the two sources are coherent, thus offering a positive indication on the capability of the Youthpass certificates to track down knowledge, skills and attitudes developed or improved under the Youth in Action Programme.

Graph 3. Key competences development



Activities in support of the Youthpass implementation

Further efforts were made in order to ensure a progressive development of Youthpass, and notably:

- **Trainings:** since 2007, 10 international Youthpass training courses were carried out with the aim of providing knowledge and skills to various stakeholders in the Youth in Action Programme and to support the implementation of Youthpass and its related topics. Furthermore, Youthpass "modules" were included in more than 150 non-specific trainings organised at European and national level.
- **Communication and information:** the Youthpass website, currently available in 24 languages, was the main entry point for Youthpass beneficiaries and other stakeholders. In 2009, more than 120 000 users visited this website and used its

functionalities. Among other information tools, a Youthpass Guide was developed in view to providing useful background information and educational support for implementing the Youthpass process. Furthermore, a specific booklet "Youthpass for all" was elaborated in cooperation with the SALTO Inclusion RC to support the beneficiaries who wish to generate Youthpass certificates in projects targeting young people with fewer opportunities.

- Technical support: a help-desk was set-up within SALTO Training and Cooperation RC for the support and counselling to National Agencies. Such help-desk is also supporting Youth in Action promoters and participants wishing to generate certificates.
- Contributing to processes of recognition of learning outcomes at EU and national level: the preliminary results and lessons learned from the Youthpass implementation have fed the discussions on the integration of a non-formal learning dimension in Europass. The Youthpass results also constitute evidence which could be taken into account in the definition and improvement of National Qualification Frameworks.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND POSSIBLE FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The first years of implementation of Youthpass provide overall positive results in terms of efficient organisational set-up, methods and formats envisaged, as well as in terms of quantitative results.

The Commission proposes to pursue the Youthpass implementation until the end of the Youth in Action programming period, along the lines followed, and to further consolidate its achievements in close cooperation with the National Agencies and the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC. In particular, efforts would be made in activities aimed at decreasing country differences in implementing Youthpass.

The Commission also envisages taking actions to further develop Youthpass. With this regard, the Commission would explore the possibility to extend Youthpass certificates to possibly all Actions of the programme. In this sense, a specific focus would be given to sub-Actions 1.3 (Youth Democracy Projects) and 5.1 (Meetings between young people and decision-makers), as well as to actions promoting the mobility of youth workers.

Furthermore, activities aimed at gathering qualitative evidence about the Youthpass achievements at individual and at organisational level would also be envisaged. A qualitative analysis of Youthpass may further support the processes of recognition of non-formal learning both at European and national level, with particular emphasis on young people and youth workers.

A stronger link to Europass and synergies with the process of defining a European Skills, Competences and Occupations framework (ESCO) would also be sought, as a way to further reinforce the recognition of non-formal learning Europe-wide.

Finally, the Youthpass' processes, models and practices would be put forward in national, regional and local contexts in order to be used as inspiration for the development of similar tools outside of the Youth in Action Programme.