Exploring Erasmus+ Youth in Action

RAY-LTE: Long-term Effects of Erasmus+ Youth in Action on Participation and Citizenship

Final Transnational Analysis 2019

Research Report on Interviews and Surveys between 2015 and 2018

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'Erasmus+ Youth in Action' (E+/YiA) is part of the *Erasmus+ Programme* of the European Union supporting international projects in the youth field. The *'Research-based Analysis of Erasmus+ Youth in Action' (RAY)* is a research programme conducted by the RAY Network, which includes the National Agencies of Erasmus+ Youth in Action and their research partners in currently 33 countries*.

This RAY study on *Long-term Effects of Erasmus+ Youth in Action on Participation and Citizenship (RAY LTE)* presents a final transnational analysis of the results from surveys and interviews between 2015 and 2018 with project participants and project leaders/team members involved in E+/YiA projects. The study was designed and implemented by the *Institute of Educational Science* at the *University of Innsbruck* and the *Generation and Educational Science Institute* in Austria in cooperation with the RAY Network partners in Austria**, Czechia**, Estonia**, Finland**, Germany**, Hungary, Italy, Malta**, Slovenia** and Sweden.[1] It was co-funded within the Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCA) of E+/YiA.

This report reflects the views only of its authors, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use, which may be made of the information contained therein.

Where available, national research reports can be requested from the respective National Agencies and their research partners (see http://www.researchyouth.eu/network). Further RAY publications can be retrieved from http://www.researchyouth.eu/results-erasmus-youth-in-action.

* As of August 2019: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom.

** Members of the RAY LTE research project working group

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[1] The RAY partner from the Netherlands was a RAY LTE project partner in 2015/2016 and contributed contact data of projects funded by them.

Acknowledgements

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Abbreviations and explanations

EU   European Union
E+   European Union Programme Erasmus+ (2014-2020)
E+/YiA   Erasmus+ Youth in Action (2014-2020)
YiA   European Union Programme 'Youth in Action' (2007-2013)
PP   Project participants
PL   Project leaders/members of project teams: youth workers, youth leaders, trainers or other actors who play a supporting/leading role in preparing and implementing E+/YiA projects together with/for the participants. In general, and depending on the type of project, each project partner is represented in the project team by at least one member.
RAY   Research-based Analysis of Erasmus+ Youth in Action. The RAY Network consists of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action National Agencies and their research partners involved in the RAY project.
LGBTQI*   Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex or other gender identity
LTE   RAY research project on Long-term Effects of Erasmus+ Youth in Action on Participation and Citizenship
NA   National Agency

Project   This term is used in the text in accordance with the official project lifetime and refers to the whole duration of the financially supported project; this includes all phases and activities during the project lifetime, in particular also preparation and, if applicable, follow-up activities as well as reporting.
Activity   This term – also referred to as 'core activity' or 'intensive phase' of the project – is used throughout the text in reference to the non-formal learning activities within the aforementioned projects. In particular, it refers to those activities, in which young people, youth workers, youth leaders and other actors come together and work on the project theme(s).

Type of activity (also 'activity type')
YE   Youth Exchanges (Key Action 1)
EVS   European Voluntary Service (Key Action 1)
SD   Structured Dialogue – meetings between young people and decision-makers in the field of youth (Key Action 3, now called 'Youth Dialogue'))
YWM   Mobility of youth workers (Key Action 1)
TCA   Transnational Cooperation Activities (Key Action 2)

Residence country   Country of residence at the beginning of the project (the country of the partner organisation who the participant was part of)
Funding country   Country in which a project was funded through the respective National Agency of E+/YiA
Venue country   Country in which one or more core activities within a project – in particular meetings of young people or of youth workers/leaders (in most cases from different countries of origin) – took place; also referred to as 'hosting country'

Sending   This refers to PP or PL who came from a 'sending' partner, i.e., they went to another country for their project.
Hosting   This refers to PP or PL who came from a 'hosting' partner, i.e., they were involved in a project taking place in their residence country.
+/++   Sum of positive responses ('agree' plus 'strongly agree')
-/--   Sum of negative responses ('disagree' plus 'strongly disagree')

AT	Austria
CZ	Czechia
EE	Estonia
FI	Finland
DE	Germany
HU	Hungary
IT	Italy
MT	Malta
NL	Netherlands
SI	Slovenia
SE	Sweden

Readers' Notes

The RAY LTE Report, apart from various abbreviations listed above, uses several terms in very specific contexts. Before reading the report it is vital to explain these.

Terminology

In the literature and in policy documents, the main terms with respect to the topics of this research project – participation and citizenship – are used sometimes with different meanings and together with different attributes and adjectives, again with sometimes different meanings. The research team attempts to use a terminology, which is clear in its meanings as much as possible, even if abstract, and to avoid terminology, which might be ambiguous and is used with different meanings in different contexts.

'Participation' can be understood in a very broad sense, from participation in the life of the local community by contributing to a peaceful, respectful and constructive coexistence in the community, to political participation by running for office in an institution of a democracy – with many facets in between like living in an ecological way, standing up against racist or sexist behaviour in an everyday life situation, signing a petition supporting respect for human rights issues, participating in a demonstration for measures against climate change, engaging in an NGO, voting in democratic elections at any level etc.

Due to this broad scope of facets, the term 'participation' is often used in connection with an attribute, e.g. participation in political life, which in this study is understood as engagement in activities aimed at political consequences (including participation in political institutions), or participation in democratic life, which is overlapping with political participation, but having a focus on fostering democracy at all levels, or participation in civil society, which in this study is understood as participation in society at large from contributing actively to a peaceful, respectful and constructive coexistence in society to engaging in civil society organisations and actions. The terms 'civic participation' and 'civil participation' are avoided in this study since they are understood differently in different contexts.

Citizenship, as elaborated in chapter 1 implies a membership in a community with a sense of identity with that community and with shared values; rights and obligations within a community, which are equal for all members of the community; and active participation in that community, while the extent of being active is not defined. In view of this, 'active citizenship' could be considered to be a pleonasm, as is the case for democratic citizenship. Nevertheless, both terms are used in this study in order to emphasise that being active and democratic is inherent to citizenship.

For details on the concepts behind the terms outlined above see chapter 1.

'Survey waves'

The research design includes multilingual online surveys addressed to project participants and project leaders/members of project teams at the following 4 stages of their project:

- Before the core activity of the project (e.g. the actual meeting of young people from different countries in case of a youth exchange)
- Two to three months after the end of the core activity

- One year after the end of the core activity
- Three years after the end of the core activity

These four surveys are referred to as 'survey waves'. The responses are analysed in order to explore shifts for participants over the four survey waves.

Project participants and project leaders

Project participants as well as project leaders/project team members answered the questionnaires. For all analyses, these two subsamples are held separate, since they include different types of respondents. For the test and control group comparisons (see below) only responding participants are used.

'Objective' and 'subjective' measurement techniques used in the questionnaires

Questions in the questionnaire are constructed in two different ways. The first way constitutes a direct question on the desired topic, for example 'I am familiar with the youth policies of my country.'[2] In the report, this approach is called a 'subjective measurement', since it gives the respondents an opportunity to consciously adjust the answer. It is a self-assessment question for which the purpose is clear to the respondent.

Another way to ask a question is to present a series of statements and ask participants with no obvious or direct link to the measured phenomena to receive an assessment, which is not influenced by the subjective opinion of the respondent. For example, asking a series of questions on the preferences of the respondent may provide a sound basis for the examination of the respondent's value system but without asking the respondent explicitly about his/her values, such as 'My respect towards people around me depends on their background' or 'I believe that claiming state benefits, which one is not entitled to, can be justified.'[3] This approach is called an 'objective measurement', since these findings are less prone to be knowingly influenced by the respondents as they do not provide obvious links to what is being scored.

Abovementioned questions are specifically designed to be used in all four survey waves.[4] Therefore, questions remain the same in each of the questionnaires and are not related directly to the project processes. Rather it aims at mapping the attitudes, values, knowledge and practice of the participants at the given points in time. Both test group and control group filled in these questions. These questions provide a basis for score comparisons over time, as well as between the test and control group in areas connected to the participation of young people in civil society and political life.

There are also questions that are only asked during the second, third and fourth wave of the survey, which directly aim at exploring project-related details and participants' views of the projects. An example of such a question is 'The following activities, exercises, games and methods were part of the programme of the project

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[2] The question was introduced as follows: '*Please assess the following statements for yourself by ticking between 0 (= does not apply at all) and 5 (= fully applies).*'
[3] The question was introduced as follows: '*Please assess the following statements for yourself by ticking between 0 (= does not apply at all) and 5 (= fully applies).*'
[4] For detailed information about the survey waves and further aspects of the methodology see Appendix A – Methodology.

in which I participated: presentations/input by experts/project leaders; discussions; role plays, simulations.'[5] or 'How did the project affect you in the end? I engage in civil society.'[6] Such questions are only asked to the test group respondents, since they would be meaningless in the case of the control group. These questions serve as a basis for further analyses aiming at the influences of the projects to the participants.

Test and control group data

Since one of the fundamental aims of this research project is to outline possible areas of impact of the E+/YiA projects on their participants in the area of participation in civil society and political life, a group of young people without participation in a similar project was assembled. Referred to as the 'control group', this group took part in parallel surveys to the ones addressed to participants and consists of young people who were not exposed to the aforementioned experience, i.e. they did not take part in an E+/YiA project between the first and the second survey. In terms of research terminology, the surveys filled in by the participants are referred to as the 'test group' sample, since these include young people taking part in a project between the first and the second survey.

In theory, only those respondents who took part in no E+/YiA project in the control group sample would be included into the analyses, as well as only participants from the test group who have not engaged in further E+/YiA activities would be taken into account when calculating the resulting scores. This would ensure that the only difference between the test and the control group samples is the project participation between the first and the second wave, which would occur in the test group and would be absent in the control group. Comparisons of such groups would allow for a clear distinction between the influence of the E+/YiA participation and other events.

In practice, such a distinction is only partially possible. Neither control, nor test group respondents have participated in any E+/YiA activity prior to the first survey, however, eliminating also the respondents who have taken part in an E+/YiA project later on during the surveys (i.e. from the third wave onwards) would result in lowering the numbers of the units of analyses beyond statistically sound levels. For these reasons, the test and control group used in this study have the properties outlined in the table below.

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[5] Respondents were asked to mark all applicable options.
[6] The question had the following answer options: 'Less than before the project'; 'To the same extent (as before the project)'; 'More than before the project'.

Table 1: Development of the project participation experience of the test and control group samples

Experience with Traveling Abroad	Test Group	Control Group
International YE, EVS, SD, YWM etc. at time of 1st survey wave **Yes**	100.0% (Previous experience: 0.0%)	0.0%
Number of such Projects: Mean Value	1.0	0.0
Wave 1: How often have you been abroad? **Mean Value**	11.7	15.6
Wave 2: Have you participated in YE, EVS, SD, YWM etc. since wave 1? **Yes**	Not asked	11.4%
Wave 3: Have you participated in YE, EVS, SD, YWM etc. since the project (test group)/wave 1 (control group)? **Yes**	33.8%	22.6%
Wave 4: Have you participated in YE, EVS, SD, YWM etc. since the project (test group)/wave 1 (control group)? **Yes**	36.7%	30.0%

Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Difference between the index and the item

There are two fundamental ways in which the questions from the questionnaire are used throughout this report. The first, straightforward way is to analyse and subsequently describe the question as such. In this case, the question is referred to as 'a questionnaire item' or simply 'an item', and single questions from the questionnaire are analysed.

Secondly, since there are many questions (items) in the questionnaire, some of them are combined in order to provide a wider view of the respondents' opinions, which are called 'indexes'. Indexes are created as sums of several items (questions) and therefore provide more general information than the items themselves. Whilst an answer to an item 'I am very interested in social issues.'[7] provides very specific information, combining answers to several items, such as 'I am very interested in … social issues; political issues; economic issues; European issues.' can provide a broader view of respondents' 'Interest in the World'. This way, particular statements of the respondents can be transformed to give more general information on values, practices, attitudes, etc.

Statistical significance

Statistical significance refers to the certainty with which a conclusion based on the data analysis outcomes can be made. A statistically significant result is very likely to be found also in the basic population and not only among the respondents of the survey. In this case, the statistically significant result means that it is applicable to all participants of E+/YiA projects that are similar to the projects the respondents took part in. In this report, only statistically significant findings are reported, i.e. all

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[7] The question was introduced as follows: 'Please assess the following statements for yourself by ticking between 0 (= does not apply at all) and 5 (= fully applies).'

changes described below are statistically significant and applicable to all participants of E+/YiA projects similar to those the respondents participated in.

Factual significance: use of the terms 'small', 'medium' and 'profound' shift

Factual significance means that the finding is significant in terms of its content. This means that a difference in, such as, income is high or low. This is a matter of interpretation and is not dependent on statistical significance described above. Factual significance differs depending on the audience. For example, an additional income of €500 per month would be significant to some people, conversely millionaires would not consider it significant at all. In this report, scales are used, usually ranging from 0 to 10. Shifts in the mean or median values are being interpreted by authors of this report based on their understanding of the phenomena in question as follows: a difference smaller than or equal to 0.49 is considered a 'small shift'; a difference between 0.50 and 0.99 is considered a 'medium shift'; and a difference equal to or greater than 1.00 is considered to be a 'profound shift'.

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1 Introduction and theoretical background

Aims and objectives of this study

A main objective of the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth[8] is to empower and encourage young people to participate actively in society through the promotion of active citizenship and participation in society and democratic life in Europe[9] in line with the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty (European Parliament and Council, 2013). Projects funded through E+/YiA should contribute to the development of competences relevant for participation and active citizenship as well as to the engagement of young people as active citizens in society.[10]

In this context, this study aims to explore long-term effects of projects funded through E+/YiA on project participants and project leaders, in particular with a particular focus on active citizenship and participation in society and in democratic life.

This interest develops two specific research questions:

- How does E+/YiA contribute to the development of citizenship competence and the ability to participate as active citizens? [11]

- What are long-term effects related to participation and active citizenship on participants and project leaders resulting from their involvement in E+/YiA?

Policies

The promotion of participation and active/democratic citizenship has been a main objective of European youth policies and programmes since more than 20 years – in the context of both the European Union and the Council of Europe. In the European Union context, the first policy directly emphasising the promotion of active citizenship was established in the youth field, with the adoption of the Resolution of the Council and the Ministers of Youth on youth participation (Council of the European Union, 1999). The YOUTH Programme (2000 to 2006) (2000) was the first EU youth programme referring to active citizenship to be fostered as one of its aims – which remained an aim for all following EU youth programmes. A milestone for promoting participation and citizenship in youth policy is the White Paper – A New Impetus for European Youth (European Commission, 2001), placing active citizenship and participation of young people in the development of civil society and in the renewal of a democratic society at the core of youth policies in Europe.

At present, the main policy reference to participation and active citizenship is the EU Youth Strategy – Engaging, Connecting and Empowering young people (European Commission, 2018), which links 'engaging' strongly to participation in civil society and democratic life and 'empowering' to provide opportunities to develop the necessary competences to do so. The E+/YiA programme and the European Solidarity Corps as

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[8] Hereafter referred to as Erasmus+ Youth in Action (E+/YiA)
[9] Furthermore, a number of other specific objectives of E+/YiA can also be linked to active citizenship and participation in civil society and democratic life, e.g. fostering solidarity, respect for cultural diversity, inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities or special needs as well as working against discrimination, intolerance, racism and xenophobia. Indirectly, such links can also be found for objectives related to capacity building, quality development and European cooperation in the youth field as well as for objectives related to education and work.
[10] Erasmus+ Programme Guide, Version 2 (2019): 15/01/2019
[11] In particular in the framework of youth exchanges, European voluntary service projects, structured dialogue projects (only projects funded in a decentralised way by National Agencies) and youth worker mobility projects.

well as the next generation of EU youth programmes starting in 2021 are considered to be important vehicles to implement the EU Youth Strategy.

While the terminology of policies related to participation and active citizenship has not been consistent over the past two decades, with changing terms, often not defined accurately and leaving room for interpretation what they mean, these policies were becoming more elaborate and expanding with respect to content – and they were linked to other policy objectives, such as the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities, solidarity etc.

Participation

Participation as understood in this study can take place in a broad spectrum of domains. It can be participation in society at large, simply by actively doing more for the society than one is obliged to, e.g. by living in an ecological way and using public transport, avoiding pollution and waste, minimising CO2 emission or by actively supporting people in need etc. This could be referred to 'participation in public life' – a term frequently used – in a sense that it is in the 'third sector', thus distinct from government and business. In this respect, it could also be referred to as 'participation in civil society'. While 'civil society' can also be understood as the collective of non-governmental organisations, institutions and movements engaging in order to contribute to society at large, this term is understood for this study in a broader sense, thus participation in society as described above. Participation can also take the form of 'participation in political life' or 'political participation', which can be conventional political participation (voting in elections or running for an office) or non-conventional political participation, such as participating in demonstrations, signing petitions or collecting signatures for petitions, donating to a social, humanitarian, environmental or political cause etc. A term frequently used in policies is 'participation in democratic life', which overlaps with political participation but also can be interpreted in a broader sense, referring to any behaviour or action contributing to a democratic society, such as fostering values and principles inherent to democracy, such as equal rights, freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of assembly, non-violence, respect for human rights etc.

Citizenship

There is no single and universally valid definition of citizenship (see also Crick, 2000 p. 3; Marshall, 1977): constructions of citizenship are influenced by specific historical, social, cultural and political contexts. The various elements and dimensions of citizenship can well overlap, especially in regions sharing histories and cultures. This is the case for countries in Europe, which share a common cultural heritage and history to a relatively high degree. Nevertheless, also in this region notions of citizenship differ noticeably (see Hoskins & Mascherini, 2008).

A literature review on concepts of citizenship allows a consolidation into the following core features of citizenship (see Fennes, 2009):

A central conclusion emerging from the literature is that active participation in society is inherent to citizenship, although authors differ in the scope of active participation, i.e. to which extent it implies political participation, participation in civil society, at the workplace or in private life (see Bîrzéa, 2005; Cogan, 2000; Holford & van der Veen,

2003; Kubow, Grossman, & Ninomiya, 2000; Veldhuis, 1997). This shows a direct link between participation as outlined above and citizenship.

Citizenship implies a membership in a community with a sense of identity with that community and shared values. While the scope of such a community would traditionally be limited to a state, it can also have a local, regional, national or international dimension. Furthermore, these different dimensions can overlap and result in multiple identities.

Citizenship involves rights and obligations within a community, which are equal for all members of the community, regulating the relationships between members of the community as well as between citizens and the community. These rights and obligations, which can have both a formal as well as an informal quality, provide for people living together in a community in a peaceful and constructive way.

As indicated above – active participation being inherent to citizenship – citizenship implies participation in community life, which can be related to different domains such as participation in political life, in civil society at large, at work and in private life, with friends or in the family – the latter linking the socialisation of children in families as well as the relations in private life to community life (see Fennes, 2009).

In view of this, 'active citizenship' could be considered to be a pleonasm. Similarly, this is the case for 'democratic citizenship', since free participation in a non-democratic entity would, most likely, not be possible. Nevertheless, these terms are used in this study since they are used in the respective policies.[12]

Fennes (2009) proposes a three-dimensional reframing of citizenship that could be relevant for citizenship education and learning, conceptualising citizenship in terms of three interrelated dimensions with community membership linking them:

- citizenship as a way of being – referring to an identity as a citizen with values, beliefs, attitudes and a view of life and the world;
- citizenship as a way of relating – relating to other members of the community and to the community as such;
- citizenship as a way of acting – citizenship as a practice.

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[12] The term 'active citizenship' is used in policies of the European Union. The term 'democratic citizenship' is used in policies of the Council of Europe. A comparison of respective policy documents shows that the meaning of the two terms are synonymous to a high degree (see Fennes, 2009).

Citizenship as a
way of being

Community

Citizenship as a way
of relating

Citizenship as a way
of acting
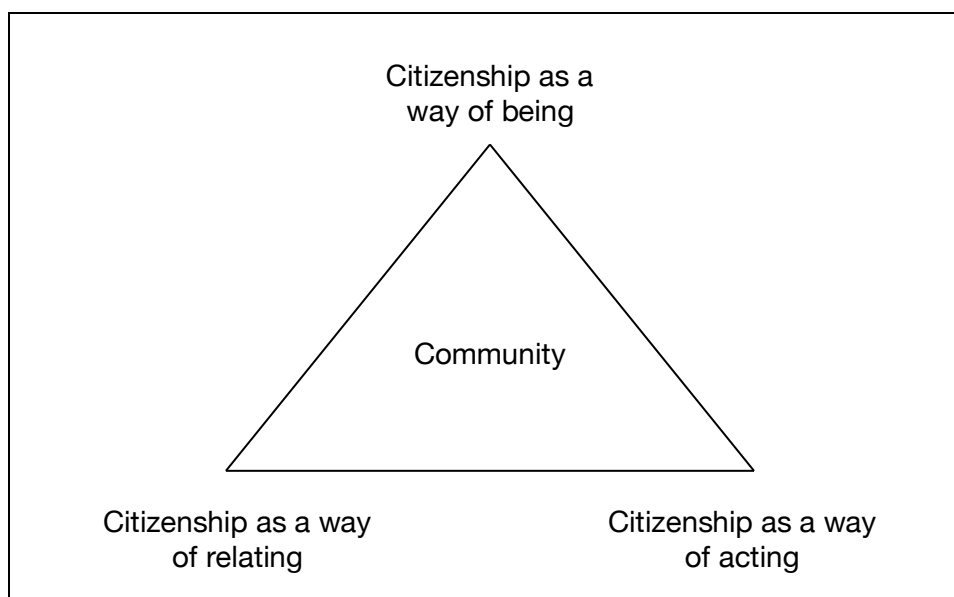
Figure 1: Citizenship as a way of being, relating and acting (Fennes, 2009)

In line with the theories outlined above, indicators for citizenship competence and practice were established (see chapter 6.1).

Citizenship competence

In accordance with Hoskins and others, competence is defined as a "complex combination of knowledge, skills, understanding, values, attitudes and desire which lead to effective, embodied human action in the world, in a particular domain."[13] Furthermore, it can be defined as "the ability to apply knowledge, know-how and skills in a habitual or changing situation (see Tissot, 2004 p. 47).

Models of citizenship competence found in the literature have the following in common:

- they refer to knowledge, skills, attitudes and values – sometimes also using different terms such as awareness, understanding, insight, aptitudes, capacities, abilities, dispositions, virtues;
- they refer to knowledge, which is required for action and empowers for active participation, thus practical knowledge;
- they refer to skills, which are directly or indirectly necessary for active participation, at least in political life;
- they refer to core values, attitudes and principles such freedom, equality, solidarity, democracy and the rule of law (Fennes, 2009; Hoskins & Campbell, 2008; Hoskins et al., 2006; Hoskins & Mascherini, 2008).

In line with the reviewed literature on this subject [14], knowledge, skills, values and attitudes as four main areas and complemented by identity[15], are operationalised in concrete indicators for this study (see chapter 6). The identity of the individual is taken into account, specifically looking into the sense of national identity of the

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[13] Hoskins & Crick 2008a: 4; cf. Crick in Hoskins & Crick 2008b: 313
[14] Fennes 2009; Hoskins et. al 2006; Hoskins et. al 2008; Hoskins in Hoskins & Crick 2008b
[15] Hoskins & Crick 2008a: 8

respondents[16] as well as of their allegiance to their community, their country, the European Union, Europe and beyond.

Citizenship practice

In the area of citizenship practice, habits and activities connected to being an active citizen are explored, such as voting, participating in a peaceful demonstration, signing a petition etc. represents political participation. Keeping oneself informed about social and political affairs, discussing social and political issues, living in an environmentally friendly way, volunteering in the interest of the community, engaging in civil society organisations or acting as citizen responsibly in the closer or wider communities they feel being part of etc. represents other ways of participation in society. As for political participation, conventional and non-conventional political participation are taken into account[17]. Conventional political participation includes voting and running for an office. Non-conventional political participation aims at activities such as signing a petition, participating in demonstrations, making donations etc.[18]

The outlined theory helps to capture the very complex phenomena of participation, active citizenship and citizenship competence. The development of these has to be seen as a life-long and life-wide process, which includes a variety of influences at play. Therefore, the participation in an E+/YiA project has to be taken as one potential influence alongside others.

Research methodology

The research questions are addressed through a mixed-method approach using quantitative and qualitative social research methods. Standardised multilingual online surveys were conducted with project participants and project leaders/team members[19] as well as with a control group[20] at four stages: before the core activity/the intensive phase of the project[21], two to three months after the end of the activity, one year after the end of the activity and again two to three years after the end of the activity. At each of the four stages ('survey waves' or 'measurements'), the participants and project leaders were asked the same questions, including the same answer items in order to assess their participation/citizenship competences and practices in each survey wave and, thus, the change between the surveys. In addition, questions related to their profile and previous activities outside the project context were also addressed.

In parallel, complementary qualitative interviews were conducted at three different stages: before the core activity/the intensive phase of the project, one year after its end and again two to three years after its end.

In addition, a conference was held in Strasbourg in May 2018, that brought together project participants, who had been interviewed as part of this study, project

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[16] cf. Hoskins & Crick 2008a: 8

[17] cf. Marquart-Pyatt 2013, Hoskins & Mascherini 2008

[18] Table 4 and Table 5 show in detail all items of the different main areas as well as the indexes created for the quantitative data analysis.

[19] Previous RAY surveys indicate that also project leaders/team members develop citizenship competences through their involvement in YiA projects. They participated in the same surveys as project PP, with some adaptation to their specific role.

[20] The control group was composed of young people with characteristics as similar as possible to those of the test group, but NOT going through an experience similar to a E+/YiA project during the study.

[21] In the case of a youth exchange, the 'activity'/'intensive phase' is the international encounter; in the case of an EVS, this would be the stay abroad; in the case of a training activity, this would be a seminar/workshop; etc.

leaders/team members of projects explored through this study as well as researchers and representatives of E+/YiA National Agencies involved in this study. In total around 90 persons attended the conference, in which interim findings of the study were presented and discussed. The conference also provided a space for dialogue between researchers and the actors having been involved in the projects explored through this study, thus becoming part of the research process and contributing to the research findings.

Interviews and surveys took place between 2015 and 2018. In Spring 2018, before the fourth survey and the third interview were implemented in autumn and winter 2018, an interim report was published in May 2018. The interim report presented the results of the first, second and third survey waves as well as of the first and second interviews.

This study involving ten RAY partners is complementary to and intended to be a thematic deepening of the Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of Youth in Action, which is the main activity of the RAY Network from 2009 to present.[22] These results aim to contribute to practice development, improve the implementation of E+/YiA and the development of the next programme generation.[23]

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[22] Bammer, Fennes & Karsten 2017.
[23] For detailed information about the methodology of the study see Appendix A – Methodology.

2 Main conclusions

In the following subchapters, conclusions are presented that address the effects of projects funded through E+/YiA on competence and practice development with respect to active citizenship and participation in civil society and democratic and political life. In line with the theoretical background, the report addresses key elements of participation and citizenship competence (values, attitudes, knowledge and skills) and participation and citizenship practice, which are interrelated and overlapping due to the complexity of the researched phenomena.

This chapter provides a synopsis of the results of both quantitative and qualitative research strands. Both strands focus on the same subject; they share the basic structure with the abovementioned main areas of participation and citizenship competence and practice and were implemented in parallel. The synopsis has been carried out with the required care, which presents synergies or contradictions in possible interpretations, not least because there are surveys at four stages and interviews at three stages.[24]

In summary, E+/YiA projects do exhibit effects on their participants in certain areas related to participation and active citizenship. This is elaborated below in more detail.

Synopsis of the findings from qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys

The responses to the surveys and interviews before the project show relatively high levels for most areas of participation and citizenship competence and practice, partly higher than the control group. This suggests that participants in E+/YiA projects are already quite competent and engaged with respect to civil society and democratic life before the project.

An increased knowledge relevant for participation and active citizenship resulting from project participation can be observed, in particular on how to engage in civil society as well as environmental protection and sustainable development. Furthermore, an increased knowledge is visible for various groups of participants.

Development of participation and citizenship skills resulting from the project participation can also be observed, in particular communication, negotiation and cooperation skills, which are relevant for participation and active citizenship. There are indications that these skills are developed mutually with the increased knowledge outlined above.

The three interview waves also indicate a development of various values inherent to democracy and the attitudes relevant for participation and citizenship, in particular through an increased willingness to contribute to society, an increased interest for social and political issues, as well as protection of the environment and sustainable development.

The three interview waves also show that the projects result in an increased participation in civil society and democratic life for various groups of participants.

For most areas of participation and citizenship competence and practice, which show an increase as outlined above, the respective developments are observed

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[24] See chapter 1 and Appendix A – Methodology.

mostly for participants in projects focussing on or explicitly addressing participation and citizenship.

For some areas of participation and citizenship competence and practice, an increase resulting from the project can be observed for various sub-groups. On the one hand, these sub-groups include participants who have a higher educational achievement or are more experienced with participation and citizenship. This could be interpreted as a 'Matthew effect' – those who are already competent are able to increase their competences more than others. On the other hand, these sub-groups also include participants who are less experienced, they did not attend any special courses on this subject or they participated in E+/YiA for the first time. This indicates that young people with fewer opportunities also benefit from E+/YiA projects.

There is strong evidence for these findings described above, which show an increase of levels for some areas of participation and citizenship competence between the surveys before and two to three months after the project. These findings do not appear for the control group and are persistent throughout the surveys waves. This indicates participants' self-perceptions of their competences have increased through their project participation. This is verified through some questions of the RAY LTE surveys, as well as other RAY research projects, which take a cross-sectional research approach (i.e. RAY Monitoring surveys).

For some areas of participation and citizenship competence and practice, the qualitative interviews show a sustainable increase. In most cases, the increase is still present two to three years after the project, however it is not confirmed by the analysis of the surveys, at least not through a statistically significant increase. This is the case, for example, for participation and citizenship values and attitudes as well as for participation and citizenship practice. A possible explanation is that the changes observed in the interviews are too small or did not apply to enough participants to be measured through the surveys. Another possible explanation is that the self-assessment of the participants was already very high before the project for a number of areas (see above) and could hardly be increased.

There are some examples in the interviews of participants who were able to apply acquired new skills or knowledge when back at home or started to engage in civil society because their respective attitude was fostered through the project. However, there are also statements of participants who were not able to follow up on what they had learnt and experienced in the project. This was due to their social environment at home (friends, colleagues in their organisation or at work etc.) whom did not understand their interest in becoming more engaged in society and democratic life, or the participants simply did not find like-minded people. The empowerment and the self-perception to be able to be an active citizen gained through the project were lost in this way.

Whilst some participants in the interviews report an increased engagement in participation and citizenship, there are also participants who engaged less in civil society two to three years after the project. This was due to a transition into a new phase of their lives, in particular focusing on education, training, work etc. or giving priority to their children, family or partners. In the case of general participation in civil society, this decrease of engagement becomes visible also in the analysis of the

surveys. This might also be the case for young people not participating in E+/YiA, but unfortunately the respective data was not collected from the control group.

This is just one example of influences external to the E+/YiA projects, which participants are experiencing. During the up to three years between the first and last interview, participants simply became older. Over time, they most likely had other powerful experiences and developed their identity, attitudes, interests, competences, knowledge, skills and their way of living. All of these factors can influence the engagement of the interviewees in civil society and democratic life. Additionally, the interviews also show that social and political developments play a role. Interview partners repeatedly mention refugee movement, Brexit as well as the growth of extremist parties and movements. These topics influence their attitude with respect to participation and active citizenship, sometimes towards increased motivation and engagement, and sometimes towards resignation.

With regard to approaches, contexts, settings, learning methods and activities that contributed to the development of participation and citizenship competence and practice, participants indicate that the learning through experiences in and related to the projects was stronger than the learning through experiences after and with no link to the E+/YiA project, such as studies, work, activities with peers and other projects. This suggests that the measured effects are likely to be caused by the E+/YiA projects. The responses also show that non-formal and informal learning played a prominent role in developing participation and citizenship competence and practice. In particular, peer learning in informal settings, the participatory approach applied in the projects, experiential learning and learning by doing, applying competences developed during and after the project, and reflection on the project experience were indicated in responses.

Differences of findings compared to the interim transnational analysis

Across various areas, this final transnational analysis shows different results for the quantitative surveys than the interim transnational analysis. One reason for this could be, in addition to the data of the first, second and third survey waves used for the interim transnational analysis, the final analysis also includes the data of the fourth survey two to three years after the project.[25] Multiple interviews with the same individuals over a longer period of time, in this case three years, naturally lead to a decreasing number of respondents from wave to wave. The sample of the interim analyses included responses of participants who responded to the first three surveys. The sample of the final analysis only includes responses of participants who responded to all four surveys. The latter is smaller since not all respondents of the first three surveys also completed the fourth survey. An assumption could be made that the sample of those responding to all four surveys is not representative for those who only answered the first three surveys. Those who responded to all surveys are most likely more interested and engaged[26] and therefore, results could vary between the interim and final report. Furthermore, a stricter sampling is applied to the sample of respondents of all surveys, which excludes respondents who had

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[25] In the qualitative study the data of the 1st and 2nd interviews are used in the interim analysis, whilst the final analysis also includes the results of the 3rd interview.

[26] This effect is confirmed by the interviews: There is a clear tendency, that the ones who participated in all three interviews, were rather informed and engaged in respect of participation and citizenship already before the project, and that those, who do not take part in the 3rd interview, are rather less informed and/or engaged.

taken part in similar projects before the first survey in order to provide a meaningful comparison between the control and the test groups (see Readers' Notes for more information).[27]

In the following sections, the research findings with respect to values and attitudes, knowledge, skills and practice are elaborated in more detail.

2.1 Values and Attitudes

'Democracy values'[28]

The quantitative and qualitative study both show similar tendencies and can be interpreted similarly with respect to democracy values shared by the participants.

In the first wave of surveys before project participation, respondents score rather high in the 'democracy values' index[29], which includes among others, the importance of voting, freedom of assembly, gender equality, equal rights, solidarity etc.[30] Most interviewees express a high awareness and appreciation of democracy in their first interviews, they mostly indicate the importance of voting, equality, solidarity or freedom as values that are relevant to them. The high level of democracy and values inherent in the responses could be explained by the socialisation of the participants in states with stable democracies and thus, the respective values that are learnt through the obligations and rights linked with democracy. Likewise, attendees of the Strasbourg Conference (see chapter 1) referred to the profile of 'typical' E+/YiA participants as strongly convinced democrats and informed active citizens whom take part in projects in order to follow up on their social and political interest and/or engagement. As can be seen from the interviews, this type of participant indeed exists. However, there are also young people who exhibit other motivations for participating in E+/YiA projects, such as getting to know new people, going abroad, gaining new inspirations or bridging time until their studies commence. As shown below, the interest of participants in social and political issues ranges from 'very interested' to 'not interested at all'. Therefore, a mixture of young people can be assumed to be part of the participant sample, and mostly share a basic approval of democracy and 'democracy values' due to their background as citizens of democratic states.

Throughout the entire measurement period, the results for 'democracy values' were the same. Due to the low numbers of units of analysis, it is not possible to calculate 'democracy values' scores for the control group. In contrast, a comparison can be presented with project leaders, who are involved in the projects not only in different roles than the participants, but also (as can be seen in Figure 7) during later stages of their lives. Yet the levels of 'democracy values', as measured by the index in this study, do not differ between the participant and project leader samples across any of the survey waves. In other words, the participants are just as developed in terms

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[27] Additionally, the data used for the interim transnational analysis included a distortion due to a coding error in one of the areas; this was discovered and corrected after the 4th survey wave data merge.

[28] Values, which are inherent to democracy – in the following referred to as 'democracy values'; see Appendix A – Methodology.

[29] The responses show rather high median levels around 8 on an eleven-point scale between 0 and 10.

[30] Similarly, the indexes 'fairness towards the state' and 'fairness towards the world' show rather high median levels around 8 on an eleven-point scale between 0 and 10.

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of the 'democracy values' as the project leaders who take up the role as their educators.

The analysis of the second interviews, around one year after the project, shows that many interviewees report a revival or renewal of their previous or existing awareness with respect to many single 'democracy values', such as the protection of human rights or the principle to always see people in the centre of a democratic state. This happens by discussing or applying these values in the project. Additionally, practical experiences contribute to the awareness-raising process. Some participants report of their experiences in project venue countries that do not fully comply to democratic achievements; some participants meet people in their project who come from such countries and others get to know minorities, for whom democratic rights have only a limited meaning in their everyday life.

There is no visible effect in the third interviews with regard to the slightly stronger awareness of democracy and 'democracy values' found in the second interviews. Nevertheless, it can be stated that the interviewees are still aware that the project showed them how essential 'democracy values' are.

From the synopsis of the results of quantitative and qualitative research with respect to 'democracy values', it could be assumed that the effects found in the interviews are too small to appear in the instrument of a survey. 'Small' in this context refers to the fact that existing values are taken up and are renewed, but no new values are developed. Furthermore, the appreciation of 'democracy values' is already high before the project participation, a further increase seems to be less likely than in cases where the values would have been at a lower level before the project. Within this context, values are deeply rooted and profound and therefore, rather stable. As can be seen in the interviews, even impressive events such as radical political developments or refugee movements during the research project period leads to a fostered awareness of democracy values only in a few cases. Finally, the interviews before the activity show that very young participants in particular have problems articulating values that are important to them. The term or concept of values is too abstract for them, and respectively they have not yet reflected on this question from a meta-level. Also, rather young respondents of the online surveys perhaps had similar problems answering the value-related questions. Whilst in conversation with the interviewer the meaning of terms could potentially be clarified, the respondents of the online survey only had the text of the questionnaire itself to rely on.

Attitudes related to participation and citizenship

In the quantitative study, an index 'Responsibility for the world' combined items referring to attitudes with respect to participation and citizenship. In general, the measured median levels of the 'responsibility for the world' index are again rather high in the participant sample, around 7.0[31] in all four survey waves with constant levels across gender, age, education and other background variables. The control group exhibits the same characteristic.

In the first interview, almost all interviewees express their conviction, that it is important and desirable that everyone feels responsible for and contributes to society and politics, regardless of whether they practice it or not. According to the

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[31] On an eleven-point scale between 0 and 10.

interviewees, a relatively small number of projects explicitly addressed the topics of participation and citizenship. In the second interview, participants primarily from these project report that they were influenced positively by their project youth respect to their attitude towards participation and active citizenship. This indicates that these attitudes are primarily developed in projects with a focus on participation and citizenship. The reported positive effects include a fostered willingness to give something back to society, a strengthened appreciation of being informed and bringing facts into debates. Two to three years after the project, and in accordance with the results of the second interview, small effects of the E+/YiA projects on the understanding and appreciation of participation and active citizenship become apparent. A few interviewees report in the third interview, that as a result of the project, they started to think more about what it means to be an active citizen. The effects of the project on several interviewees on their appreciation of participation and citizenship described in the second interview are confirmed by several of them in the third interview. They are encouraged to have a more proactive attitude towards society and the community.

Concerning attitude towards participation and active citizenship, the quantitative findings could be interpreted that participants of E+/YiA projects are not disimular to other young people in terms of levels or development of this particular attitude area. However, the synopsis of the findings of the qualitative research shows effects for some participants and offers a more detailed picture, which is similar to that in 'democracy values'. The qualitative findings might be too subtle or limited within a too small number of participants to be detected via the objective questions in the surveys. Furthermore, and as indicated above, it is rather difficult to influence attitudes and values, particularily within a comparatively short project.

As seen in the second and third interviews, E+/YiA projects can convey an idea of what participation and active citizenship mean, whereby (additionally) a learning effect through being asked about this in three interviews must be assumed.

The project leader sample shows rather high median levels between 8.0 and 8.7 across all survey waves both in general and in detailed analyses of subgroups. No effect could be observed through the quantitative surveys.

Interest in social, political, economic and European issues

Whilst the respondents of the survey scored rather high in the area of 'Interest in social, political, economic and European issues' (as index named 'Interest in the world') before the project, the answers of the interviewees[32] did not show such a consistent picture. Their answers range from 'very interested' to 'not interested at all'. Findings in the qualitative study show that it was considerably hard for very young participants to talk about their values and attitudes with respect to their personal preferences and in general. According to these finding, perhaps very young respondents of the surveys had problems to clearly understand the meaning of 'Interest in social, political, economic and European issues' and rated themselves too high. Similarly, it could also be assumed that they may have thought the item 'Interest in social issues' referred to their social life in the sense of meeting friends, going out etc. This is not unlikely since a finding of the qualitative study reveals that

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[32] According to the guidelines for the qualitative interviews, the interviewees were not asked about their interest in economic issues but in social, political and European issues.

most participants are eager to talk about and discuss youth life, youth culture and youth affairs in general, but mostly with references to their own and their friends' everyday lives. This could be an explanation on the one hand, for the rather high scores the respondents gave in the area of 'interest in the world' in the quantitative study, and on the other hand for the heterogeneous findings with regard to respective interests in the qualitative study.

The quantitative analysis shows no change between the four waves for participants in general, the subgroups (e.g. age groups, gender, etc.), the control group or the project leader sample. Project leaders exhibit higher median scores in 'interest in the world' in comparison to participants. Furthermore the analysis of the single items about 'interest in social issues' and 'interest in political issues' of participants, project leaders and respondents in the control group[33] show consistent results.

The qualitative findings show that there are very interested and well informed participants. Whilst many of them say the project had no effect on their interest in social, political and European issues, some of them clearly report in the second interview that their participation in the project resulted in an interest for new topics in the area of social, political and European issues. In particular, interest increased concerning the venue country of their project as well as current developments in their countries and in Europe. The latter applies especially to interviewees with interest in social, political and European issues before the project. All in all, interest in both social and political issues is supported through the project. As a result, a more conscious attitude and higher awareness is gained of a wider range of social issues such as equality, racism, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBTQI*) persons and topics in public discourse. Interviewees also acknowledge the need to learn more about such issues, develop a stronger desire to dig deeper into public matters and to explore these issues in more detail.

Some interviewees report in the second interview they had to focus on school, apprenticeship, work or study after the project. This is a main interest of young people and they dedicate their energy to building their future. At the same time, school and work are often linked with high pressure and therefore, the interest in social or political issues of some interview partners might in fact have decreased, at least temporarily. Other participants are not aware that their interest in social or political issues might have increased. They describe explicitly that they searched for information about a specific political topic as a consequence of their project participation (for example about politics in Turkey), however they do not consider this as an interest in politics. There are also young people with no interest in social or political issues, neither before nor after the project. All in all, interest in social (and political) issues was supported through the project, especially in the case of those participants who were interested and partially interested in these matters before the project.

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[33] The tested items are 'interest in social issues', 'interest in political issues', and 'interest in European issues'.

The results of the quantitative study show no shift for 'Interest in European issues'[34] and for the identification with Europe[35]. At the same time, around one third of the interviews show examples of a fostered interest/identification in/with Europe. With regard to interest in European issues and identification with Europe, social and political developments in Europe and beyond described in the introduction to this chapter might have had a stronger influence on participants than the projects. In fact, these social and political developments are often indicated in the interviews as triggers for encouraging people to fight for Europe and its values or, less often, also for a declining identification. According to the third interview, these reported effects seem to be very persistent.

Almost all interviewees say that the perceived effects of the project are not only still present, but also still valid. This seems to underline the strong influence of getting in contact with people from different countries and their specific backgrounds, as well as becoming acquainted with these countries and their social and political issues. As a consequence of this fostered interest, a fostered mobility within Europe can be observed in the third interviews.

There is a clearly expressed increase of interest of the interviewees in the protection of the environment and in a sustainable development. This is more than confirmed in the third interview. In addition to the interview partners who reported an increased interest due to the project in the second interview, more interviewees are reporting this in the third interview. Some participants at the Strasbourg Conference also confirm the general high interest of young people in this topic. Even in projects not focussing on this issue, it emerges again and again. Nevertheless, within the quantitative research strand, the ratings of both the 'Interest in environmental issues'[36] and the 'Responsibility for contributing to sustainable development of Europe'[37] stay at the same level.

Conclusions

The responses to the surveys and the interviews before the project show a relatively high level of values and attitudes related to participation and citizenship for both the participants and the project leaders. Obviously, participants in E+/YiA projects are already quite aware of and agree to values related to democracy and have attitudes reflecting that they are, in a certain way, active citizens participating in civil society and democratic life.

The three waves of qualitative interviews indicate effects of the project on various values and attitudes of different groups of project participants:

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[34] The analysis of the item 'I am very interested in European issues.' shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the initial and subsequent measurements: The median in all four waves are stable at 4.0 (N=66) on a 6-point scale where 0 stands for 'does not apply at all' and 5 stands for 'fully applies'.

[35] The analysis of the item 'I strongly feel as European.' shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the initial and subsequent measurements: The median values in all four measurements are stable at 4.0 (N=63) on a 6-point scale where 0 stands for 'does not apply at all' and 5 stands for 'fully applies'.

[36] The analysis of the item 'I am very interested in environmental issues.' shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the initial and subsequent measurements: The median values in all four measurements stay consistently at 4.0 (N=67) on a 6-point scale where 0 stands for 'does not apply at all' and 5 stands for 'fully applies'.

[37] The analysis of the item: 'I strongly feel responsible for contributing to a sustainable development of Europe.' shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the initial and subsequent measurements. The median values in all four measurements are between 3.0 and 4.0 (N=67) on a 6-point scale where 0 stands for 'does not apply at all' and 5 stands for 'fully applies'.

- ▪ The awareness of values inherent to democracy is renewed, which could also result in strengthening these values.
- ▪ The projects contribute to the understanding and appreciation of participation and active citizenship, as well as to a willingness to contribute to society.
- ▪ The participants develop interest for new topics in the area of social, political and European issues, in particular in their own countries and in the countries they visited within the project, and they become aware of a wider range of social issues.
- ▪ The interest in the protection of the environment and sustainable development increased considerably.

As mentioned previously, these values and attitudes are primarily developed in projects explicitly addressing participation and citizenship.

Conversely, the quantitative research strand did not show any significant changes over the four survey waves, and the changes observed in the interviews are too small to be measured through the surveys. To account for this, values and attitudes related to participation and citizenship were already quite developed before the project, leaving less room for further development. Furthermore, values are deeply rooted and therefore, cannot be changed easily through a rather short-term experience.

2.2 Knowledge

The results of both research strands show that for some of the participants there is an increase of knowledge related to participation and citizenship through E+/YiA projects.

Whilst E+/YiA projects can be an excellent platform for acquiring knowledge on a variety of topics (e.g. knowledge important for the every-day lives of the young people), some interviewees report to have gained knowledge important for participation and active citizenship mostly through projects focusing on these topics. Gained knowledge, besides others, includes learning how to engage as an active citizen, plan (long-term) projects, establish and run a group or learning more about Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) (i.e. general information, way of functioning, job opportunities or founding an NGO). Furthermore, more experienced participants[38] (who choose a project related to a social or political topic they are already informed about and/or engaged in) as well as 'newcomers'[39] (who often do not participate in E+/YiA projects with the aim to learn something about a certain topic) deepen their already existing knowledge (cumulative advantage). Both experienced participants and newcomers return from the project with a generally fostered curiosity and the urge to follow up on social or political topics (project functioning as 'eye-opener'). In the third interviews, there is strong evidence for the persistency of this gained knowledge.

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[38] In this study, participants with prior experience with participation and active citizenship are referred to as 'experienced participants' or 'more experienced participants'. Vice-versa, those with no or little experience with experience with participation and active citizenship are referred to as 'participants with less experience.
[39] In this study, young people taking part in an E+/YiA project are referred to as 'newcomers'.

The increase of knowledge about NGOs expressed in the qualitative study does not become visible in the surveys, and the values stay constant across all survey waves[40]. Seemingly, participants did not increase their knowledge on how to engage in an NGO because they were already engaged in one before or they got involved in one for the project prior to the first survey. This is supported by the fact that the median value for this item was 4 on a scale between 0 and 5.

In the first survey of the quantitative study, responses of participants in general and of specific subgroups indicate that they are rather knowledgeable in the field of participation and citizenship, exhibiting the same levels as the young people in the control group. Whilst the levels for the control group stay the same over the following waves of surveys, a medium positive change occurs for participants, in particular between the survey before their project participation and a year after it. In the fourth survey two to three years after the project, the increased knowledge levels of the participants are roughly the same as in the survey one year after the project.[41] A positive change is also detected for those participants who participated in projects with a specific focus on participation and citizenship. This suggests that such projects make a difference in the area of knowledge related to participation and citizenship.

The quantitative analysis also revealed an increased knowledge for some subgroups of participants, for instance participants with university degrees and participants who speak two foreign languages. This could be in accordance with the knowledge gain of more experienced participants who engaged in a project to deepen their knowledge in a certain field. On the other side, the knowledge gain of 'newcomers' could be linked to the knowledge gain of those participants who took no specific course in the field of social or political science. Furthermore, the surveys revealed a knowledge gain for the participants who went abroad for their project. This is likely linked to the fact that projects taking place in a different social, political and cultural framework than the one participants are used to may have a larger potential to stimulate reflection and, therefore, learning processes of an individual. This could be seen in line with the result of the qualitative study, which the knowledge about Europe is clearly fostered through – besides other reasons – participation in projects taking place abroad. According to the quantitative research, male participants acquired more knowledge than female participants, which might be caused by a greater interest or engagement of male participants in these topics. Unfortunately, the findings of the interview study do not provide any other evidence for a better understanding of this effect.

The second and third interviews suggest that for many young people participation in the E+/YiA projects contributes to a knowledge gain on sustainable development/protection of the environment. The quantitative data does not support this finding as median levels are constant across all four survey waves. However the

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[40] The analysis of the item: 'I know how I can engage in a non-governmental organisation in my country.' shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the initial and subsequent measurements. The median values in all four measurements stay constant at 4.0 (N=58) on a 6-point scale where 0 stands for 'does not apply at all' and 5 stands for 'fully applies'.

[41] PP median levels in knowledge: 1st survey: 6.4; 2nd survey: 6.9; 3rd survey: 7.2; 4th survey: 7.1 (on a 11-point scale between 0 and 10).

data confirms a rather high level of knowledge[42] in the participant sample on this issue as medians reach the highest possible ranking in all survey waves.

The surveys and interviews indicate that the level of knowledge of youth policy (at national and European level) was fairly low before the project and did not increase much through the project[43]. With regard to terminology used in the questions of the surveys and interviews, most participants had a limited understanding of what was meant by youth policy. Having space to explain their views in interviews, respondents were rather upfront in acknowledging they have little knowledge on youth policy topics. Whereas in questionnaires, the unfavourable option of 'No knowledge at all' could lead the respondents to marking the middle points, they do not explicitly indicate they have no knowledge, but they also avoid indicating they are knowledgeable on youth policy topics. As an outcome, the research approach and instruments need to be developed further in order to tackle this challenge. In any case, these findings indicate that youth policy at national and/or European level do not play an important role in the projects.

Project leaders also show increasing levels of knowledge on participation and citizenship over time. Those involved in E+/YiA projects (participants and project leaders) show an increase of knowledge of participation and active citizenship compared with those who do not have a similar experience (members of control group). This indicates a positive effect of E+/YiA projects on an increase of respective knowledge.

Conclusions

The responses of participants to the surveys before the project display a relatively high level of knowledge for a number of areas related to participation and citizenship. Nevertheless, both the surveys and the interviews show an increase of participation and citizenship knowledge for different groups of participants:

- For both more experienced and less experienced participants, the projects function as 'eye-openers' and contribute to new knowledge. The projects deepen existing knowledge on participation and citizenship and encourage follow up on social or political topics.
- Some participants learnt how to engage as active citizens, e.g. in NGOs or how to organise projects.
- For many participants, the projects contributed to knowledge of sustainable development and environmental protection.
- An increased knowledge linked to participation and citizenship could also be observed for certain sub-groups of participants, e.g. participants with a

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[42] The analysis of the item 'I understand very well how the way I live has an effect on the global environment.' shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the initial and subsequent measurements: The median values in all four measurements stay consistently at 4.0 (N=57) on a 6-point scale where 0 stands for 'does not apply at all' and 5 stands for 'fully applies'.

[43] For the surveys, the analysis of the item 'I am familiar with the youth policies of my country.' shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the initial and subsequent measurements. The median values in all four measurements stay consistently at 3.0 (N=57) on a 6-point scale where 0 stands for 'does not apply at all' and 5 stands for 'fully applies'. The analysis of the item: 'I have a solid understanding of the European Youth Strategy.' shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the initial and subsequent measurements. The median values in all four measurements reach between 2.0 and 3.0 (N=57) on a 6-point scale where 0 stands for 'does not apply at all' and 5 stands for 'fully applies'.

university degree, male participants, participants who went abroad for their project etc.

Conversely, knowledge related to youth policies at national and European level is relatively limited before the project and does not change over the research period. Additionally, knowledge on participation and citizenship is primarily developed in projects explicitly addressing these topics.

Some of these findings are confirmed by the analysis of the control group, which show no changes for knowledge on participation and citizenship over all survey waves.

2.3 Skills

The results of both research strands provide evidence that E+/YiA projects contribute to the development of skills important for participation and active citizenship, and that these developments are persistent.

Several results of the online survey study suggest a gain in participation and citizenship skills of participants. There is a small positive shift between the first and the second survey waves in the self-assessment of the participants (median levels change from 7.3 to 7.7; in the third and fourth survey waves the levels reach 7.6)[44]. In contrast, the control group sample does not exhibit any changes in between the measurements. The same is the case for detailed subgroup analyses, whilst in the participant sample there are several subgroups that indicate an increase between measurements, this does not apply to the control group sample. The primary increase between the first survey (before the project) and second survey (after the project) and a rather constant median level for the second, third and fourth survey suggests strong evidence that this increase of skills is actually caused by the project, in particular because the self-assessment of the control group does not change over all four survey waves.

Furthermore, the participants themselves indicate rather high skill gains as an effect of the project when asked about this during the second, third and fourth survey wave. The median scores are rather high between 6.7 and 7.3[45]. These median scores do not exhibit any statistically significant difference, in other words participants consistently report the same skills gain through the project two to three months, around one year, as well as two to three years after the project.

According to the interview study, participants benefit from the project in the first instance by becoming aware of participation and citizenship skills they already possess, and by developing and deepening them through application in the project. To a smaller extent, interviewees also acquire new skills important for participation and active citizenship. The difference between acquiring new skills on one side and becoming aware and deepening already existing skills on the other side cannot be distinguished exactly. The interviews show a learning effect for the ability of

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[44] On a 11-point scale between 0 and 10.

[45] In this case, participants were asked 'To what extent do you agree with the following statements? Through my participation in the project I increased my ability to …' (complemented with skills such as 'discuss political topics seriously') and the answering options were 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'agree' and 'strongly agree' The way of asking seems to be crucial: participants are likely to give high scores when they are explicitly asked about changes as result of their project participation (as described above) – in contrast to asking them to assess their skills level without reference to the project.

individuals to negotiate successfully with other people (e.g. to cooperate, to communicate, to come to a compromise). The strongest effect can be seen for project management skills, whilst there is little evidence in the interviews that 'discussing political issues seriously', 'keeping up with changes' and 'forming independent opinions' are fostered through project participation. The quantitative analysis of these three items also shows consistent results in all four waves. Furthermore, interviewees state they became more self-confident through their project participation, which might well be linked to the development of their skills in communicating, negotiating and cooperating with others, and also to the development of their knowledge as outlined in the previous section.

The acquired and/or deepened skills seem to be largely persistent. Two to three years after the project the interviewees partly still attribute the same importance to them as around one year after the project. Some even became more aware of them in the meantime and/or developed them further from other various learning environments. In some cases, the mentioned skills cannot be recalled or are not seen as an effect of the project any longer. This may be because they are not seen to be important for the respective interviewee or perhaps because over time the reflection on them was overlaid by other experiences and influences after the project.

Between the first and the second survey waves, female participants show a medium increase of participation and citizenship skills (median levels of 7.0 and 7.6) and participants who speak two foreign languages show a small increase (median levels of 7.2 and 7.6). These results might have to do with the specific participatory and international character of an E+/YiA project. For instance during the project, participants try out and apply (new) skills, whereby they learn, improve and deepen skills. This application and trying out has rather noticeable effects, e.g. a participant succeeded to motivate others during a group work. This could perhaps be the reason why women, who generally tend to score themselves low respectively lower than their male counterparts[46], indicate to benefit more than male participants. In the qualitative study, the greatest learning effect is reported for cooperating in a team, communicating and coming to a compromise. Females tend to be team players and are perhaps more interested in acquiring group work skills. The setting of E+/YiA projects, with a strong focus on group work, may also play a role in this explanation. Another explanation might be the different motivations of female and male participants for taking part in projects, which are then reflected in different changes or developments, i.e. greater value for communication and cooperation skills than knowledge or vice-versa.

Due to the strong international dimension of E+/YiA projects, taking part frequently implies communicating with people speaking a different language. Those participants who are skilled in foreign languages, e.g. who speak two foreign languages, might benefit more from the project activities as they are better equipped. At the same time, participating in E+/YiA projects clearly contributes to foreign language proficiency of many participants in general. This result of the interview study is also confirmed by the RAY Monitoring study.[47]

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[46] See Sieverding 2003.
[47] Bammer, Fennes, Karsten 2017.

Further skills increases for subgroups are appearing in connection to the project participation itself, as was the case for the 'knowledge' area. Those participants who exhibit signs of project ownership, i.e. participants who feel well integrated into the project and feel engaged throughout the process, show positive developments in the 'skills' area. At the same time, the 'skills' development is visible also for those participants who indicate they developed knowledge relevant for participation and citizenship during the project itself. Both of the findings support the hypothesis that the project participation in itself may have positive effects on participants with respect to participation and citizenship skills. Especially projects that foster the development of participation and citizenship knowledge of participants and involve and engage participants in an effective way.

As is the case of knowledge, positive shifts in skills are also detected for participants having completed upper secondary education and participants who participated in no specific courses in the social or political domain. Perhaps again, as is the case for knowledge, those effects have to be seen in the context of the profile of the more experienced participants respectively of less experienced participants. In line with the knowledge findings, participants are also exhibiting positive shifts of participation and citizenship skills in cases of projects that had also a focus on participation and citizenship.

The links between the development of knowledge and of skills outlined above suggest that they result in similar sub-groups developing both knowledge and skills simultaneously for participation and citizenship, mutually fostering their development.

As mentioned previously, participants exhibit median levels between 7.3 and 7.7 in the four survey waves. In comparison, the project leader sample exhibits median levels of 8.2 to 8.4 across all four survey waves, as well as consistent results in the case of subgroups (e.g. gender and age groups, etc.). The difference between these two samples is not clear in statistical terms, but presumably may be occurring (a confidence interval analysis suggests such an option in some survey waves). This would mean that project leaders show higher levels of participation and citizenship skills than the participants. This result is consistent with the different roles and profiles of the two samples. The control group shows median levels of 6.1 to 7.2 across the four survey waves, with an insufficient number of units of analysis for more detailed comparisons within the sample. Confidence intervals do not prove statistical differences between the control group and the participant or project leader samples. Nevertheless, the low number of units of analysis is apparently influencing the width of the confidence interval in the case of the control group,and therefore potentially distorts results.

Conclusions

Both the surveys and the interviews provide evidence that participation and citizenship skills are developed through E+/YiA projects and this development is persistent. This is confirmed by the analysis of the control group, which shows no changes for skills relevant for participation and citizenship. In particular, communication, negotiation and cooperation skills are developed, which are relevant for participation and active citizenship. There is a wide range of sub-groups of participants who also show this skills development: female participants,

participants having completed upper secondary school, participants speaking two foreign languages, more experienced as well as less experienced participants and participants who did not attend a special course in the social political domain.

Interestingly, there is an overlap between participants who developed skills as well as knowledge relevant for participation and citizenship. This suggests that knowledge and skills are developed mutually and reinforce each other.

IAs is the case with the findings for effects of projects on values, attitudes, and knowledge, participants of projects explicitly addressing these topics mostly develop skills relevant for participation and citizenship.

2.4 Practice

General participation in civil society

The actual engagement in civil society and democratic life, referred to also as 'participation and citizenship practice' or simply as 'practice', was researched in three survey waves and in three interviews at the same stages: before the project, one year as well as two to three years after the project. The activity-related questions were not asked in the second survey, since the time difference between the first and second survey suggested that practice would not change much so soon after the project.

In the first interview, almost all participants describe themselves as active in personal areas such as friends, sports and hobbies. With regard to participation and active citizenship, the whole spectrum is represented as not being active at all, to medium level of activity, up to very active young people in civil society. In the quantitative study, the participant sample reaches median levels between 3.6 and 4.0[48] in all three measurements with constant results across subgroups (e.g. age, gender, etc.) in the general participation practice index. These results are lower than the ones in indexes covering other areas. This is likely due to the nature of the questions, which asked about specific activities and their frequency. Therefore, any median values must be read with regard to what is realistically possible for an individual to engage in, since a lot of time is consumed by other activities such as work, study, or private life.

A small decrease is visible in the participant sample in the area of 'general participation in civil society'. The levels fall from the median of 4.0 to 3.6 between the third and fourth survey wave (in contrast, the increase between the first and third survey wave from a median of 3.6 to 4.0 is not significant). The majority of the subgroups show the same pattern, even though the significant results are sporadically distributed between the negative and positive developments. Against this background, the following two hypotheses can be assumed.

Firstly, it can be assumed that the participation of the project participants in civil society and democratic life increases in a period following the project participation, whilst after a certain period (in this case two to three years after the project), the practice levels drop[49]. An increase of the actual participation of the participants after their project participation is also indicated by the second interviews. Whilst many

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[48] On a 11-point scale between 0 and 10.
[49] Since the control group was only asked about these activities in the 1st survey wave no comparison is possible.

participants are not more active, some interviewees report a concrete positive influence on their participation, such as engaging more in the social sector, doing something for their community or region, focusing more on their political activities, working more systematically in the public arena, and even engaging in areas that are completely new for them. In particular, young people already active before the project become more active, they become more involved in different organisations at the same time and initiate civil society action themselves. Furthermore, interviewees participating in a E+/YiA project for the first time often report a general enthusiasm about the project and as a result they are motivated to engage more often in further projects or in civil society. Finally, for many interviewees, going abroad again is of great importance because they are curious and partly feel as European citizens.

Conversely, the abovementioned drop seems to be visible also in the qualitative study. Many interview partners, who start or intensify their engagement due to the project, are still active at the time of the third interview. They report numerous and various developments within their engagement two to three years after the project. For instance, they offer trainings, take over more responsibility in the committees of their organisation, they are charged to coordinate the volunteers, support the formation of a nationwide head association for voluntary work, organise and implement summer camps for the younger members, start initiatives and much more. However, some of these interviewees report to engage less. In their argumentation, a decreasing motivation is rarely mentioned. They mainly argue to have come into a phase of life in which they invest more time in their private and professional life. For example, they concentrate on school or university, are confronted with unemployment and need to search a new job or spend time with their partner and/or start a family. These life trajectory-related changes are supported by the demographic data collected through the online surveys. The percentage of participants who live in partnerships or are married increase rather rapidly over the observed period of three years, an increase from about 24% before participating in the project to about 41% three years later. These developments are plausible because the sample includes young people who want to shape their lives. The life trajectory-related changes can also be observed for participants who are already engaged in civil society and/or democratic life before the project. A similar decrease of participation and active citizenship also applies to other young people not participating in E+/YiA. Unfortunately, the respective data was not collected from the control group and therefore this cannot be verified.

Secondly, an alternative hypothesis is that the overall societal and political situation during the period between the first and last interviews included impressive events, which might have led to an increased participation of project participants in civil society and political life, and hence influenced the results of the surveys. Once the events and the subsequent situation causing the increased levels of practice in civil society and political life came to an end, the practice levels dropped. Interviewees repeatedly mention developments like refugee movement, Brexit, as well as the growth of populist and extremist parties and movements. They tend to result in an increased awareness, e.g. for democracy and the values inherent to democracy, but influence only a few of the interviewees towards a stronger engagement. Therefore, the hypothesis does not seem to be supported by the qualitative results, and perhaps only plays a marginal role.

Whilst in the project leader sample, the median values are between 3.9 and 4.6 in all three measurements, the confidence interval analyses do not indicate statistically significant differences between the participant and the project leader sample results. A small increase for project leaders is measured with a median value of 4.2 in the first survey wave and 4.6 in the third survey wave. Further subgroup analyses are shown in chapter 4.4.1.

Information gathering

After the project, several participants look for information about the country in which their project took place, or for topics related to their project. As an effect of the project, a few interviewees intensify their efforts to keep themselves informed on social and political issues, and a few question the agenda setting of media, consume media more critically, try to follow as many different sources as possible and discuss the veracity of news. Whilst discussions during the project are much appreciated, there are very few examples for a fostered discussion activity after the project. Both effects seem to be persistent since the examples also appear again in the third interview, however they are subtle.

Initially, the results in keeping oneself informed seem to correspond with the findings of the quantitative study in gathering information, which exhibit rather average results with median values of 6.0 across all three survey waves and show no shifts across the survey waves, including subgroups. Nevertheless, it must be taken into account that the respective question in the questionnaires referred only to traditional media (newspaper, radio and television), and did not ask for web-based media, which young people use most and is confirmed in the interview study.

The small decrease between the first and third survey in the project leader sample (median values of 7.7 and 7.3) does not reflect as much of a tendency to gather less information than several years ago, but perhaps a switch to other types of media and information sources, most likely web-based.

Engagement in environmental protection and sustainable development

According to both the quantitative and qualitative study, the engagement in environmental protection and sustainable development is already high before the project, with a median value of 7.5 on a scale between 0 and 10 in the survey responses. Whilst the interviews contain some examples for a positive and persistent shift caused by the project (still mentioned in the third interviews), there are no statistically significant differences across the survey waves or between the subgroups. Possibly the shift found in the qualitative strand is too small to be detected in the survey. Since the respondents had assessed themselves already high before the project, it is possible that they did not increase their scores (even if they improved their practice) perhaps because they think that one can always do more for the protection of the environment.

Conventional political participation

The clear majority of interviewees take part in elections on a regular basis, and respectively they express their intention to vote once they are eligible. In contrast, most interviewees did not or do not run for office and/or engage in a political party. According to the second and third interviews, taking part in elections and running for

office is not fostered through the projects. These three results of the qualitative study are confirmed by the findings of the quantitative strand.

The index focusing on practices and activities within a 'conventional participation' domain, such as voting or running for an office, shows that the participant sample scores above average, reaching median values of 6.0 to 8.0. At the same time, the analysis of the confidence intervals does not show any statistically significant differences between the participants' median values in any of the survey waves.

'Conventional participation' is an area mostly covered by media, as well as by the formal educational system and other educational opportunities. Participants are experienced with these practices and engage in them continuously and long-term. In scores as high as exhibited by the participant sample in this respect, effects are apparently less likely, since most of the respondents already engage to a large extent in 'conventional participation practice'.

Additionally, almost all of the few interviewees who had run for office or who are engaged in a committee did not and do not do this in the political sphere, but rather in the organisations they`re member of or at university in the student council or parliament.

Non-conventional political participation

In the first interview around half of the interviewees discuss signing online petitions and/or taking part in demonstrations. There are almost no indications in the second and third interviews that these forms of participation are fostered.

The index depicting practice levels in the area of non-conventional political participation, such as signing a petition or donating money to a particular cause, shows under average median scores for participants, with results across all survey waves reaching median levels of 2.5. This result is in line with further analyses, which indicate differences neither between the participant sample across the survey waves nor in subgroups (e.g. gender etc.).

This suggests that both the participants and the project leaders are engaged in these activities to a lower extent than is the case in conventional participation practice. Again, what needs to be taken into account are the activities the questions ask about: signing a petition, donating to a certain cause, etc. These are, to some extent, one-time activities that may not occur often even though the individual is active in other ways in a given time period; whilst the conventional participation practices are state-regulated in terms of frequency and timing. This self-regulated and state-regulated framework may influence the frequency in which individuals engage in given practices. It cannot be demonstrated that the project participation has a visible influence in this respect, as these practices cannot necessarily be conducted very often due to a lack of opportunities. The time frame ('how often during the past 12 months') may have been too short for exploring changes.

Further results of the qualitative study

According to the interviews, E+/YiA projects frequently result in establishing networks, which are important for initiating and designing follow-up activities beyond the individual level with new partners or even organisations in other countries. In fact, this could be considered as 'general participation in civil society' but goes also beyond because it implies the development of structures, even if

informal they can foster participation and citizenship. This topic was not addressed in the surveys and should be included in future research on participation and citizenship.

The second and third interviews show that the so called 'experienced participants' apply their deepened knowledge in their citizenship engagement in the organisations they have been already involved in before the project or they start a new initiative. In consequence, it can be concluded that there are E+/YiA projects with high-quality content, otherwise they would not be attractive for the interviewees with a respective foreknowledge and engagement.

Some young men and women were inspired in their professional career through their project participation. They realise they want to contribute to society and politics professionally in their everyday life and start a respective apprenticeship, study or even dare a change.

Conclusions

The responses of participants to the surveys and interviews before the project display a relatively high level of participation and active citizenship for a number of areas, i.e. engagement in environmental protection and sustainable development, conventional political participation and gathering information on current issues. This indicates that participants in E+/YiA projects tend to already be active citizens before the project, at least in certain areas.

The interviews show that the projects result in an increased participation in civil society and democratic life for different groups of participants, e.g. those who participated in an E+/YiA project for the first time, but also those who were already active before the project (and then apply in their engagement what they had learnt through project). This increased participation can take different forms and different levels of intensity, but shows to be persistent in many cases.

At the same time, there are also participants who engage less in civil society because they moved into new phases of their lives, in particular having to focus on education, training, work etc. or giving priority to their children, family or partners. This could also be the case for young people not participating in E+/YiA, but unfortunately respective data was not collected from the control group.

The surveys do not show a significant increase of participation in civil society and democratic life. This could be caused by the fact that levels of participation were already high before the project and could hardly be increased. Another possibility is that the increase observed in the interviews was too small or did not apply to enough participants to be measured through the surveys.

2.5 Learning for participation and active citizenship

The research project did not only explore the development of participation and citizenship competence and practice through E+/YiA projects, but also approaches, methods, contexts and settings that contributed to the learning processes and outcomes such as, what was learnt, what were the changes in practice, and how this learning happened. In this respect, the surveys also included questions in the second and fourth survey that asked about project settings, activities and learning methods, as well as perceptions of participants, settings, activities and methods that contributed to their development of participation competence and practice. A question in the fourth survey also refers to experiences after the project, (studies, work, activities with peers, other projects etc.), thus also allowing to compare how experiences during the project and after the project contributed to the development of participation and citizenship competence and practice. Furthermore, participants were also asked about what contributed, if applicable, to the development of their competences and practice related to participation and citizenship, which came naturally together with when they were asked about the effects of their project participation.

In the surveys, the participants indicate that their experiences related to the project, the project participation itself, but also reflection on it afterwards and using what they had learnt through the project, had a stronger effect on the development of their participation and citizenship skills than the experiences after the project (which had no link to the project). Around 85% to 95% of the participants indicate that experiences with other participants in the project (including informal time), activities within the project programme, the application of the skills developed through the project and reflection about the project experience contributed to the development of participation and citizenship skills. This suggests, that non-formal learning and informal learning, including experiential learning/learning by doing, peer learning (learning from and with peers) and reflection are effective educational approaches and features for developing participation and active citizenship (see Figure 2). [50]

The responses to the surveys show that the projects included a broad scope of different activities, settings and learning methods, each of them appearing in between 40% and 70% of the projects, which indicates a large variety within the project. On average, around two thirds of the project time were dedicated to planned activities that were part of the project programme, most of it to non-formal education activities, and more than 20% to activities that were not part of the programme, which included informal time. This indicates that the projects provided for sufficient time and settings for informal and non-formal learning as outlined above.

Furthermore, more than 85% of participants indicate that they have used skills learnt through the projects, as well found them useful in their public engagements. This finding suggests that participants not only consider applying their newly developed

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[50] Interestingly, there are no systematic statistically significant differences in the perception of different PP subgroups towards the activities which helped them in skills acquisition. No gender, education or project focus related differences are discovered; therefore, Figure 2 seems to provide a consistent information on PP in general as well as for specific PP subgroups.

skills as a valuable learning experience, but also that applying these skills contributes to the scope of their public engagement and strengthens their learning.
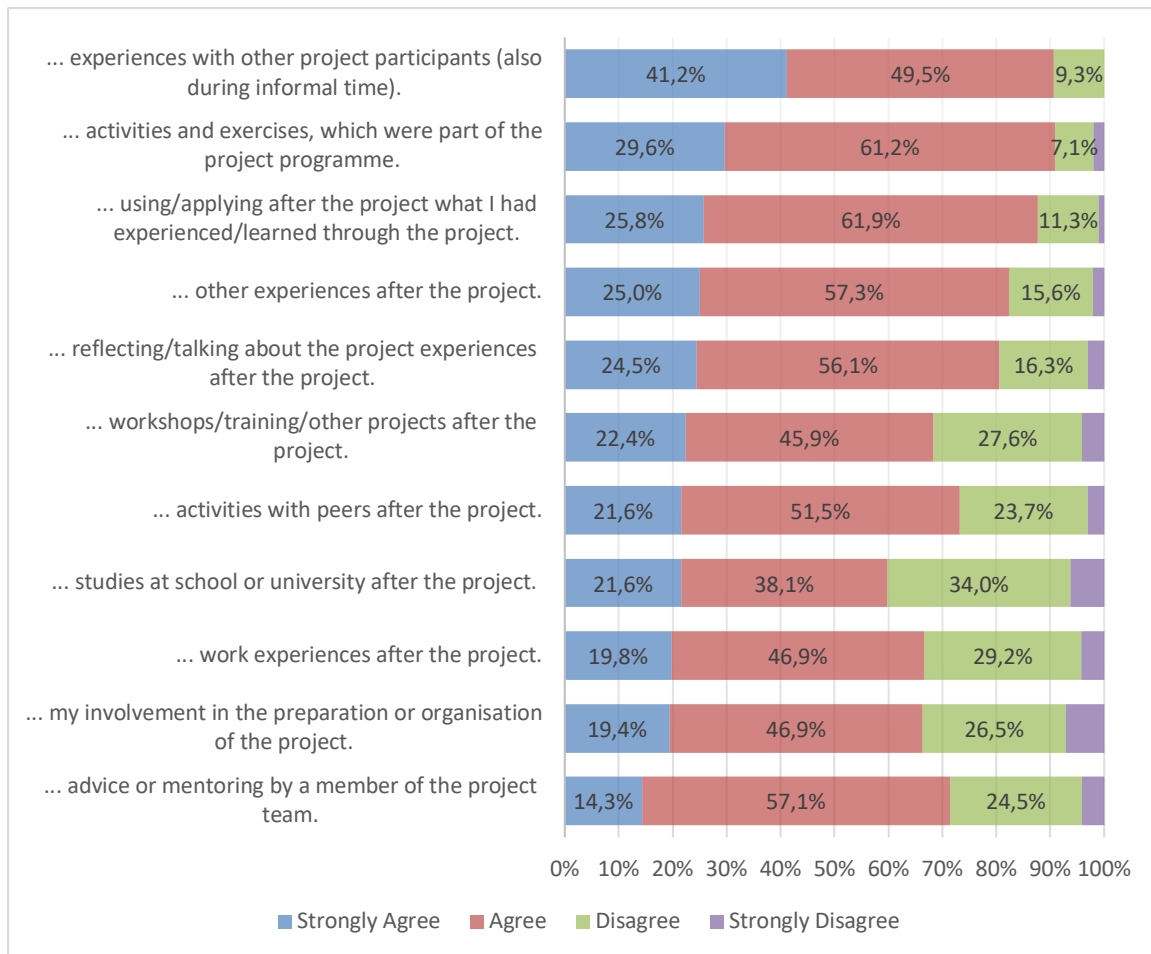
Figure 2: Agreement rates of PP with the statements concerning learning contexts.
Note: PP sample, N=96-98.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019. Item wording: 'I developed one or more skills mentioned above through …'
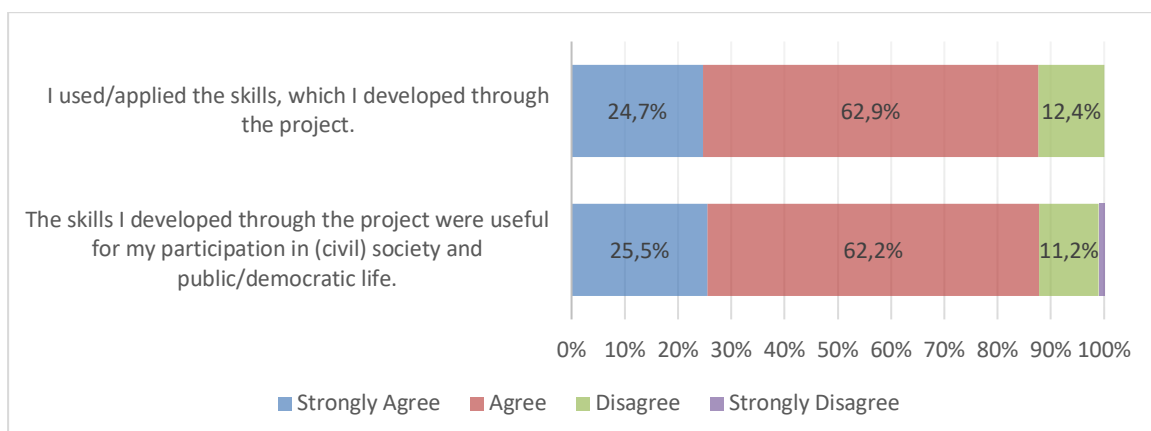
Figure 3: Agreement rates of PP with the statements concerning practical application of skills learned within the project.
Note: PP sample, N=97-98. Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

The qualitative interviews, as well as statements of participants in the Strasbourg conference, confirm the findings from the surveys. In particular, they indicate that peer learning in E+/YiA projects is of great importance within the various forms of gaining knowledge and skills, and supported exchanging values and attitudes as well as being motivated to engage (more) in the civil society and democratic life.

Statements of participants illustrate the value of the informal exchange between the participants in free time, which is essential for non-formal learning settings and in which everyday life situations cannot offer to this extent. The coming-together of young people from different countries allows cross-country comparisons and, in case of national projects, cross-regional comparisons. The influence of this motivation through diversity is reported from both the influencers and the influenced. Another important aspect is that young people meet 'experts' in their main area of interest. As reported, this helps and highly motivates participants to see so many other people also engaged in the same topic and the many solutions or approaches to a single challenge. All Strasbourg participants believe that participants with similar interests find each other very quickly and develop further ideas. They also express the wish to meet more like-minded people through E+/YiA projects.

Peer learning also includes attention for others, the perception of their motivations and the awareness to be responsible for others in some way. These important aspects are strengthened in the E+/YiA projects.

The positive impact on other young people does not only take place in the projects but also after returning home to the different spheres of life such as family, school, job or in free time. Many interviewees report to have transported their project enthusiasm to their friends.

Regardless of whether the interviewees became aware of an existing skill or acquired new skills, they state that these results were achieved due to the participatory approach applied in the projects. Skills need to be gained, especially through learning by doing, and the E+/YiA projects offered a wealth of respective possibilities, which corresponds with the criteria of non-formal and informal learning and are at the core of E+/YiA projects.

Respondents recall that they appreciated the non-formal education and learning methods in the projects, especially playful methods suitable for the content. Several participants considered voluntary work or travelling to foreign countries, which they had considered already before the project and their improved skills encouraged them to put this into practice.

2.6 Participants with fewer opportunities[51]

An explicit aim of E+/YiA is to foster young people with fewer opportunities. Within the 145 participants attending in the first interview there are 35 young people with fewer opportunities; in the second interview there are 24 out of 112 participants and in the third 17 out of 82. [52])

According to the results of the monitoring of E+/YiA[53] they basically and persistently benefit from the projects. In this study some of the disadvantaged interviewees report to be strongly empowered through their project participation and to be even more engaged in civil society:

> *"The youth exchange has made me believe in myself, that I can achieve things even though I`m just a regular young guy from a village. It has been a stepping stone to a more active participation in civic life. It has given me confidence and I`m not afraid of anything any more." (E+/YiA PP at the Strasbourg Conference)*

The example of one interviewee who is disadvantaged in several fields such as family background, education and finances gives insights in what project participation could do. The young man is interested in sports, music and having fun together with his fellows, in terms of participation and active citizenship a general lack of interest, appreciation, knowledge and concrete engagement has to be stated. The second interview shows a similar picture, but the interviewee reports that he would take part again in an E+/YiA project, because he very much appreciated the community and the chats with the other participants and he liked the activities, which were linked to his interests and craft skills, he could make use of. This can be seen as a very first step which should be followed up by further stimuli, e.g. by coaching in an individual setting. Especially in the work with young people with fewer opportunities the combination of group and individual settings can initiate a concrete learning progress.[54] Unfortunately this interviewee couldn`t be convinced to attend the third interview.

RAY Network has been engaged in the YPFO related research in the quantitative sense since 2016 and a composite indicator was created in order to identify YPFO in the participant sample. This indicator consists of subjective and objective indicators. Subjective indicators include several self-assessment questions answered directly by the participant respondents[55], while the objective indicators are based on educational attainment of the participants and their parents, the indicated belonging to an ethnic minority, and employment status of the participants. Altogether, this process allows for the participants sample (and similarly also for the control group sample) to be divided into young people with no obstacles, YPFO (combination of subjective and objective obstacles), young people with objective obstacles and young people with subjective obstacles, as shown in Figure 4. participants sample and control group exhibit similarities in the proportions of groups, with the young people with no

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[51] <mark>The sections 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9 and 2.10 are still a draft version and still need to be edited</mark>
[52] As described in chapter 2.6 first of all young people with fewer opportunities couldn`t be reached or convinced to participate in the 3rd interview - probably due to the demanding methodical concept.
[53] RAY MON
[54] Fennes, Gadinger 2014.
[55] An example of such item is: 'Compared to the way other people of my age/peers live in my country I think … that I am getting my fair share of opportunities in life / I am getting more than my fair share / I am getting somewhat less than my fair share / I am getting much less than my fair share.'

obstacles constituting the largest group, followed by those who show objective obstacles, such as low educational attainment, long term unemployment, or belonging to an ethnic minority, while the groups of YPFO and young people with subjective obstacles stay rather small. Analyses show that majority of the participants stay in the same categories across all waves[56], indicating that there is only a small fluctuation among the categories over time. Unfortunately, using these categories as one of the analytical subgroups proved impossible due to very limited number of YPFO in the participant sample, and therefore no findings in this respect can be drawn from the surveys.
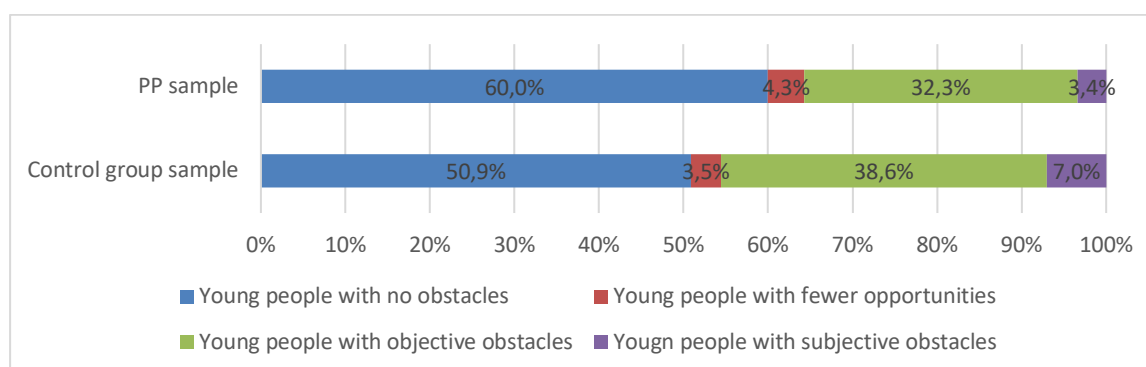
Figure 4: YPFO, PP sample, wave 1.
Note: PP sample, N=235; Control group sample N=57.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

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[56] This analysis was not possible for the control group, due to missing background variables in waves 2, 3 and 4.

2.7 General meaning the interviewees attribute to the E+/YiA project

Rather in the beginning of the third interview, also in the sense of refreshing their memories, the interview partners are asked, if they sometimes thought about the E+/YiA project in the last two to three years, and which meaning they would attach to it in general. The answers of the respondents show, that the participants, who had participated for the first time in an E+/YiA project respectively who are rather young, and those, who had been rather engaged, experienced and therefore rather old already before the project, show different tendencies in answering. The 'newcomers' remember at first the emotions linked to their participation: They talk about *"great memories" (3rd, DE)*, *"a positive look on the project" (3rd, SI)*, see it as *"something successful"* (3rd, SI) and attribute an *"important meaning" (3rd, IT, FI, MT, EE)* to it.

> *"I think of the project frequently and I have a nostalgic view and would like to go back and experience all over again." (3rd, MT)*

The 'experienced ones' tend to answer rather concretely and to question terms like 'effect' or 'influence' for describing, what the project caused for them. They prefer comparing the project for example with a *"drop in the sea" (3rd, CZ)* or that it gave them *"bits and pieces" (3rd, CZ)*, trying to express, that there is a variety of influences playing together, that it is hard or rather impossible for them to distinguish exactly, which influence had which effect, and that the project has to be seen as one potential influence alongside others. This corresponds to the theoretical reflections about possible effects (see chapter 1) and is expressed in the following quote:

> *"It [the project – editor`s note] will always stay as a positive experience, and something that…well I will also try to influence things in the future, that I find…or to be active. Things might change along the way, that you stop doing something and something else comes in its place, but regardless I will always be active in something." (3rd, FI)*

Furthermore members of both groups name single and very concrete effects of the project. One (experienced) interview partner for example describes the learning outcome of the project as very important for the core activity of the organisation he`s engaged for intensively already for a long time; the organisation itself had offered the project as an advanced training. Another Austrian interviewee sees his experience with handicapped people in the project three years after it still as very valuable. A very similar experience is described by a Czech interivew partner:

> *"I would not use such a word as 'influenced', I do not think it influenced me, it is more like I got in touch with an environment I would normally not visit, like people with disabilities, etc. It is one of the components of my development." (3rd, CZ)*

In this quote again, the refusal of the term *"influenced"* becomes apparent, the interviewee prefers to talk about a *"component of my development"*. The core of this differentiation might be the fact, that the participants save the *"new component"* because he perceives it as valuable, but that it hasn`t yet effected a modified practice or a new engagement.

Also the 'newcomers' concretely describe effect(s) of their project participation besides their general enthusiasm and general descriptions like *"expansion of horizons" (3ʳᵈ, SI)* or *"broadening of our perspectives" (3ʳᵈ, FI)*:

> *"It [the project – editor`s note] was what started my decisions and my interest in the environment even in my career." (3ʳᵈ, MT)*

The getting to know of as well as the contact to people from other countries shows up as one of the most frequent spontaneous memory about the project around three years ago – in accordance with the main feedback when asking the participants about the Strasbourg Conference in the 3ʳᵈ interview and according to known effects of international youth projects.[57] Especially the Italian interviewees taking part for the first time show since the first interview a great enthusiasm about this and a remarkable sensitivity for the topic Europe, speaking exclusively positive about it. This must be seen against the background that E+ and in particular E+/YiA is quite the only programme in Italy fostering youth mobility within Europe, allowing young people from often small and/or remote villages to make their first trip abroad.[58] Besides many other topics a fostered interest or knowledge about Europe is mentioned by several interviewees; interviewees also report about effects on participation and active citizenship: they learned to organise youth exchanges or to operate an international team, they gained political interest and knowledge or see the project as the beginning of their work in the youth sector.

Only very few interviewees did not think of the project or forgot, which project is meant.

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[57] Bammer, Fennes & Karsten 2017.

[58] Parallely the Italian sample contains interviewees, who are already accustomed to mobility projects and who adhere to the programme, because their interest was awaken. For those PP a continuous reinforcement in Europe and European issues can be observed.

2.8 Opinions on and effects of being interviewed and of completing surveys

Reflection is described as the most important effect of being interviewed. Thanks to the interviews most interviewees experience processes of awareness-raising, e.g. in respect of developments they went through due to the project but also due to other influences in terms of their citizenship engagement, their respective values and attitudes as well as their knowledge and skills important for participation. Rather young interview partners also report, that only the questions helped them to find out about their opinions about certain issues such as Europe or protection of the environment. The interviews were a good way …

> *"… to get to know myself a bit more. Normally, I do not think about these things on a daily basis, and therefore it is nice to talk to you about it." (3rd, CZ)*

> *"My immediate response was 'I don´t know'. The interviewer must to push me to think about it. Interviews helped me to reflect, it took time and it was subconscious development." (E+/YiA PP at the Strasbourg Conference)*

Being interviewed reminded a few of the importance of being active:

> *"The interviews reminded me, that one is responsible and that therefore one should be engaged in civil society. I don`t think about this each day and that`s why I perceive this effect of the interview so positive." (3rd, AT)*

Others even get new ideas about how to participate through the interviews and it has to be taken into consideration, that the interviews also have effects on further concrete actions of the participants (see chapter 6.4). A corresponding assumption, based on hints in the first interview of two different interviewees, wasn`t proofed in the 3rd interview. Both lived for many years in countries, which are not their origin countries, and both are strongly interested and highly engaged in public issues. Therefore the right to vote in her residence country respectively in his origin country is very important for them, but they are discouraged to establish the legal requirements due to the very high administrational burdens. In the second interview the male interviewee report, that he finally realised his plans and the female interviewee say, that she wants to put the plans into practice now. Being asked about this in the 3rd interview, both deny that thematising this in the interviews encouraged them finally to deal with the high bureaucratic hurdles.

Furthermore the interviews raised the awareness for many areas of potential development in the E+/YiA projects, the interviewees wouldn`t have thought about:

> *"I realised, that I could get more out of the project." (E+/YiA PP at the Strasbourg Conference)*

The reflection effect of the interviews contribute very much to the general enthusiasm of having been interviewed, which is also described as *"interesting"* and *"exciting"*. To be interviewed make some of them proud:

> *"It was appreciation of my role in the project. Someone care about what I have learned. It put recognition on my learning." (E+/YiA PP at the Strasbourg Conference)*

Some interviewees – again rather young ones – found some of the questions challenging or were nervous in the first interview, but even benefited in the end.

> *"… from one interview to another I have grown up and matured and I became less shy to express my opinion." (3rd, MT)*

> *"First time I was afraid and trying to impress, but second time I felt more relaxed." (E+/YiA PP at the Strasbourg Conference)*

As described in chapter 4.2.2 some interviewees have problems to understand the terms participation and acitve citizenship in the first interview. This was confirmed by a participant of the Strasbourg Conference, who added, that his *"phrasing was better in the second interview"*. The interviewer approached the terms together with him in the first interview and talked about them again in the second and third interview. In a focus group at the Strasbourg Conference the participants showed a good understanding of the terms participation and citizenship. It is assumed that such learning effects through the interviews took also place for further interviewees and in respect of further topics (see chapter 6.4).

Actually, all interviewees who took part in all three interviews, are pleased to have done it afterwards, including those, with whom the agreement of the third interview was more difficult due to time issues.

The insight in social research through the interviews is highlighted positively by a few interviewees.

Finally, it must be emphasized that all interviewees except of one or two would be willing to participate in a possible fourth interview in 2020; two proposed, to shorten the questions.

Conducting research into the project outcomes via repeated online surveys also needs to be taken into account in terms of potential influence the data collection method has on the participant taking part in the research. participant answers suggest that the questionnaire was perceived as a positive stimulus towards reflection on the project in general as well as on various specific aspects, such as engagement in civil society and public life, learning and development of the participants[59]. Interestingly, further analyses show that the participants who participated in projects directly focusing on participation and citizenship exhibit higher values in these items, than their counterparts from other projects (median of 4.0 in comparison to median of 3.0). Female participants also exhibited higher median values in case of reflecting on their engagement in civil society and public life, in comparison to male participants (median of 4.0 in comparison to median of 3.0). The participant sample also provided a direct feedback to the survey design, bringing in largely positive feedback in terms of length of the questionnaires, clarity of the questions, or transparency of scales used in the questionnaires. The only difference detected in the subgroups was found in case of understanding the questionnaire items, which is higher in participants whose highest educational attainment is higher secondary school in comparison to those whose highest educational attainment is lower secondary school.

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[59] PP reached medians of 4.0 on a scale from 0 (does not apply at all) to 5 (fully applies). An example of a questionnaire item is as follows: 'Completing the questionnaire made me reflect on my learning though the project'.

2.9 Opinions on and effects of the Strasbourg Conference

A vivid memory of the Strasbourg Conference became obvious during the third interviews approximately half a year after the event. The interviewees who had participated in the meeting in one of the seats of the European Parliament, combining the discussion of the preliminary findings with the researched subjects themselves with saying thank you to them for their participation in the two interviews up to this point in time (see chapter 6.1), expressed their large enthusiasm about it. The most often mentioned feedback was about meeting new people from different parts of Europe, making friends, exchanging, networking and discussing – in accordance with the main feedback when asking the participants for the general meaning they attribute to the projects in the third interview (see chapter 2.7) and according to known effects of international youth projects.[60]

The enthusiasm of several participants resulted also from the recognition they gained by becoming aware (or realising more clearly than they had done before), that their interviews had contributed to the presented results and that they are part of a big and europewide research project, or, like some of them called it, of *"something bigger"*.

> *"It is now a year from the last interview. I dind`t quite realise then how big the project I was involved in was and that my opinions would carry so much weight. Now when I saw the results and heard how many people were involved, I feel pretty grand." (E+/YiA PP at the Strasbourg Conference)*

> *"We are able to make a contribution to the results of the study and present our opinions. We talked a lot about well-being of young people and their chances of participating in decision-making." (E+/YiA PP at the Strasbourg Conference).*

The conference had a further and strong effect on the way the conference participants answered in the third interview: A tendency of deeper and more reflective answers became apparent and some of the conference participants came prepared to the interview (see chapter 6.3), relating their own experiences to the research results.

In general, the research results were considered to be (very) interesting respectively not surprising in the third interview. Some rather young interviewees critisized the way of conveying the results as too research focused, using a specialist language, which made understanding the content hard for them. In contrast, some rather old interviewees found some elements childish and would have prefered more intensive and longer discussions.[61]

A few participants perceived the conference as update, that engaging in civil society is important. They appreciated the discussions in which they learned about challenges in other projects as well as opinions and points of view of other participants, gained motivation and new ideas (e.g. for future projects). The rather young conference participants also liked the guided tour through the European Parliament, including one, who became more interested in European politics thereby.

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[60] Bammer, Fennes & Karsten 2017.
[61] The organisers of the conference had been aware of the large range of the educational attainment of the PP, starting with 15-year-old pupils up to university graduates with professional experience around in their early thirties, and therefore had tried to find a language and a way of presentation for everybody, knowing that this might be almost impossible.

The interview partners were asked to develop a setting for E+/YiA projects, which they consider to be adequate to foster active citizenship and participation in participants. In this setting, responsibility would play an important role: the participants should learn to take responsibility, they should be given more responsibility, and everybody should already be involved as responsible actors in the very beginning of the planning of the project. In order to enhance the awareness of the need to make decissions and in order to learn how to make decissions, meetings with decission-makers should be on the agenda of each project. Visits to NGOs and plenty of informal time should also be included. An ideal learning environment would furthermore comprise an atmosphere free from fear and pressure but full of creativity, a common goal and enough time for reflection. Last but not least the participants mentioned organisational aspects like clear rules, a fixed schedule and not too big groups.

2.10 Results of the quantitative study with project leaders/members of the project team

The project leader sample has been analysed alongside with the participant sample and its results intertwined with the ones of the participants in the previous chapters to provide as detailed and holistic picture as possible. Nevertheless, since it is a standalone subsample in the surveys, the most important findings are summarised in this chapter and complemented with further results.

First and foremost, project leaders scored very high in all measured areas: attitudes and values, knowledge, skills and practice[62]. The high scores obtained across the analysed areas may be connected to the project leader sample not exhibiting as many shifts as is the case in the participant sample: while there are shifts across waves in skills in participant sample, for example, no such development occurs in project leader sample. Despite this difference between the participant and the project leader developments, the project leaders do exhibit increases in knowledge and practice areas, indicating that participating in E+/YiA projects in the capacity of a project leader is in itself a learning opportunity.

Moreover, the project leaders themselves believe they have acquired new skills through their engagement in the E+/YiA projects, with over 90% of them stating that they have used these skills in the civil society engagements, and over 80% of them believing that these skills were useful to them in these engagements (see Figure 5). When it comes to the development of new skills, the project leaders believe that the most important is the peer learning, followed by the preparation and organisation of the project itself, and also active engagement in the project activities during the project itself (see Figure 6). This is largely in line with the opinions of the participant sample and shows a common ground between the participants and the project leaders when it comes to the skills development: peer learning and hands-on active engagement in the project are the most valued activities in this respect.

Similarly to the participant sample (see chapter 2.8), the project leaders were also asked to reflect on the surveys and their role in the learning process. Similarly to the participants, even the project leader sample largely agrees that the survey contributed to their learning processes via focusing their attention to different aspects of the project participation[63]. Interestingly, female project leaders have rated the influence of the surveys on their reflection in a more positive fashion than their male counterparts (median values of 4.0 in comparison to 3.0). This finding confirms that conducting the research is in itself influencing, to some extent, both the participants and the project leaders, while suggesting that this influence is mostly positive, increasing reflection of the participants and project leaders in relation to the project they have participated in and organised. When it comes to evaluating the questionnaire itself, the project leader sample rated all items rather positively, with the exception of the item 'Completing the questionnaires was very interesting for me' which was rated low with a median of 2.0. This was also the only item which showed a statistically significant difference in subgroup comparisons, with university graduates rating it statistically significantly

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[62] Analyses do not confirm statistical significance of the difference of the PL and PP scores, however, these may be due to a limited sample size and can be confirmed in larger samples.

[63] PL reached medians of 4.0 on a scale from 0 (does not apply at all) to 5 (fully applies). An example of a questionnaire item is as follows: *Completing the questionnaire made me reflect on my learning though the project*.

higher (median of 3.0) than project leaders with higher secondary education diploma (median of 1.5).
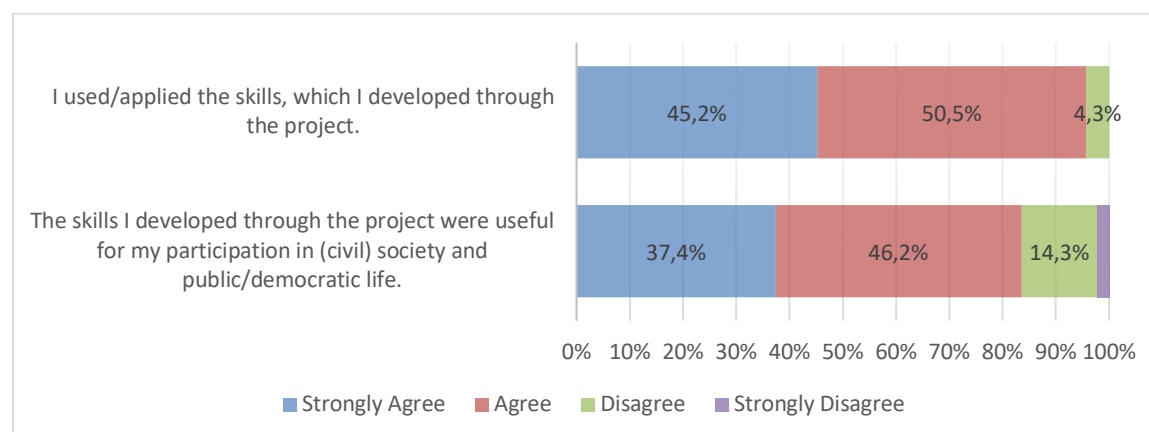
Figure 5: Agreement rates of PL with the statements concerning practical application of skills learned within the project.
Note: PL sample, N=97-98.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.
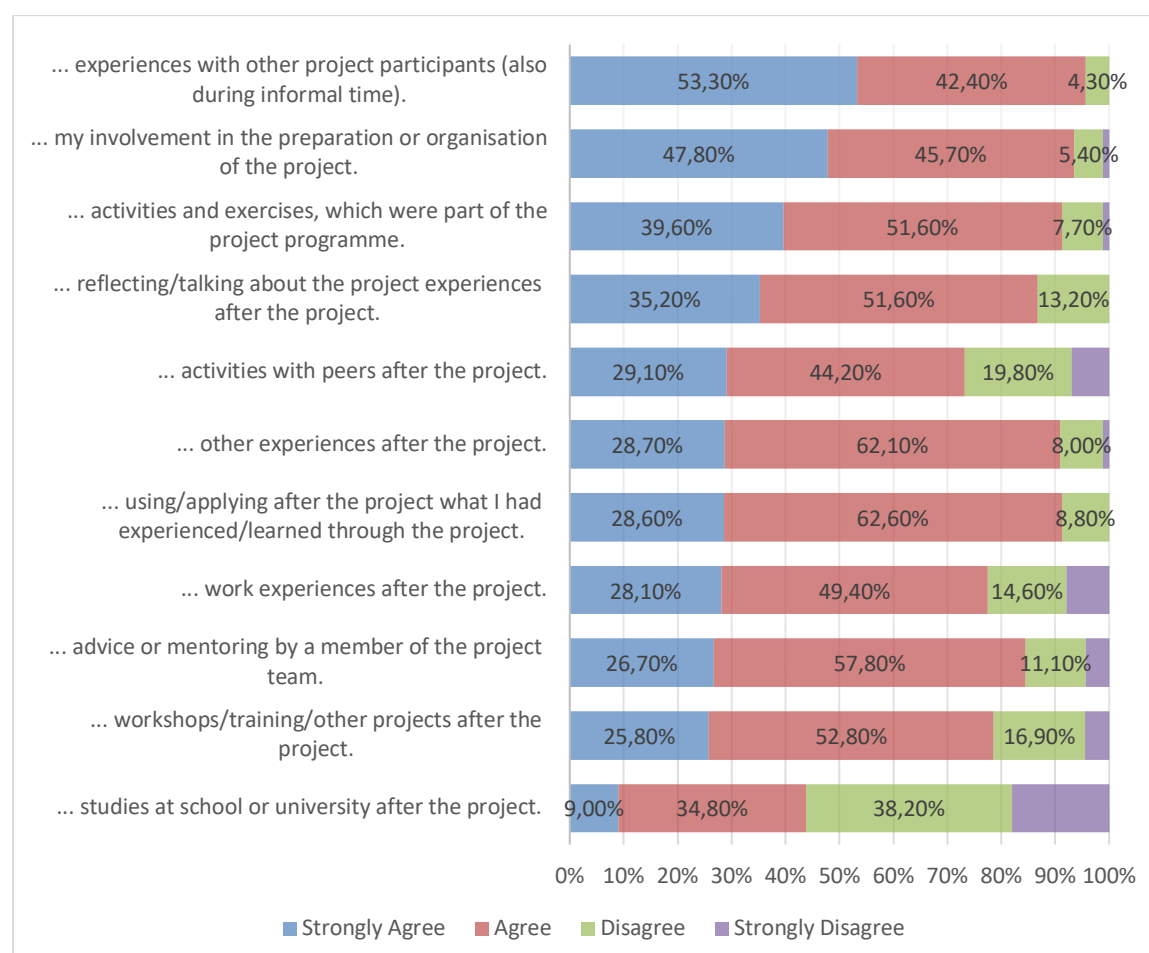
Figure 6: Agreement rates of PL with the statements concerning learning contexts. Item wording: I developed one or more skills mentioned above through …
Note: PL sample, N=96-98.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

3 Recommendations

The findings of this research project show that E+/YiA projects contribute to the development of participation and citizenship competence and practice and in which way. The findings also indicate factors that are likely to be decisive for this competence and practice development, which result in the following recommendations.

Recommendations for the project level

E+/YiA objectives related to participation and active citizenship

The findings of this research project indicate that participants are frequently not aware of the E+/YiA objectives related explicitly or implicitly to participation and active citizenship, even if linked to their project theme. Furthermore, younger and less educated participants often have difficulties understanding the rather abstract notion and concept of 'active citizenship' and translating it into their real lives. In particular, they are hardly aware of the term or concept of 'youth policies', no matter if at a local, regional, national or European level. The research findings show that the participants do understand the concept better if it is clearly made explicit to them. Specifically addressing issues related to these E+/YiA objectives contributes to more conscious and effective learning processes of the participants.

Recommendation 1: Emphasising E+/YiA objectives related to participation and active citizenship in E+/YiA projects.

Generally, project themes of most projects funded through E+/YiA can be linked in some way to the E+/YiA objectives related to participation and active citizenship. These links should be addressed explicitly wherever possible in E+/YiA projects. Whilst this might actually be done in the project applications, it is not always transferred into the project implementation.

Recommendation 2: Explicitly communicating the concepts of 'active citizenship' and 'participation in civil society and democratic life' in a language, phrasing and terminology that is comprehensible and close to the reality of participants and project team members.

These concepts can often be abstract, technical and complex. Therefore, they need to be revised and communicated in a language adapted to young people, which takes into account the age, experiences, competences, educational level, socio-political background etc. of the participants.

Recommendation 3: Highlighting environmental protection and sustainable development as topics included in E+/YiA objectives related to participation and active citizenship.

Participation and democratic citizenship imply solidarity with future generations as well as with people suffering from pollution and from an unfair distribution of resources. Therefore, environmental protection and sustainable development are clearly topics to be addressed in E+/YiA projects in line with the programme objectives, even more since these topics are high on the agenda of young people. This awareness, interest and engagement should be captured and followed-up in E+/YiA projects.

Project design and implementation: the project as citizenship practice

The findings of this research project suggest that certain project settings, educational approaches, methodologies and methods contribute effectively to the development of citizenship and participation competence and practice. This leads to the following recommendations.

Recommendation 4: Establishing a project design and project settings that provide for encountering differences as a basis for learning through exchange and discourse.

This includes differences between participants with respect to age, experience, education, socio-political and cultural backgrounds, values, being less or more active as citizens etc., or differences between countries involved in the project, e.g. non-EU and EU member states, countries with different political systems etc. These settings provide for effective peer learning, enabling participants to learn from each other and with each other, and to explore democratic values together. In particular, participants can become aware of their own realities and compare them with those of their peers. Furthermore, more experienced and more active participants can take on the role of multipliers and role models for other participants.

Recommendation 5: Linking social and political events and developments at local, regional, national, European and global levels to the project theme and to learning spaces in the environment of the project.

Addressing current social and political developments, which are interesting, relevant and of concern for young people, in E+/YiA projects enables participants to experience and understand participation in society and democratic life in a practical way that is close to real life and therefore in a more sustainable way.

Recommendation 6: Using adequate non-formal education and learning methods.

Methods used in the project need to foster learning participation and citizenship, i.e. through interaction within the project as well as with the project environment. In particular, non-formal education and learning methods provide for practicing participation and citizenship as an integral element of the project. In this respect, peer learning is one effective approach to be fostered, which allows participants to learn from and with each other and includes participants with more advanced citizenship and participation competences acting as multipliers and less experienced participants learning from them. This approach creates learning communities, which can continue to exist after the end of the project (see also recommendation 4 and 12). This can also increase the motivation of participants to pursue further activities related to participation and citizenship. Additionally, a participatory approach in the projects as well as experiential learning are effective features of non-formal learning to foster participation and citizenship competence. Furthermore, methods used in the project need to be adequate for the content, project settings and participants, as for the latter with respect to their age, prior experience, education, socio-political and cultural backgrounds etc.

Recommendation 7: Providing time and space for informal learning.

Relevant and effective learning processes also take place outside structured settings and when individuals or groups organise their learning by themselves. In fact, informal, non-formal and formal learning complement each other and are interlinked. Non-formal learning activities in E+/YiA projects are likely to stimulate

learning processes outside planned activities, which need adequate time for participants to engage in them.

Recommendation 8: Providing for adequate preparation as part of the project, in particular with respect to the development of participation and citizenship competence and practice, as well as to the European dimension of the project.

A good preparation involving the participants in the project theme(s) at an early stage of the project and starting well before an eventual international encounter, contributes to effective and intensive learning processes in the course of the project. Participants who have already acquired some basic understanding of participation and citizenship can benefit and learn more from a relatively short international experience if they have a proper preparation. Preparatory activities also allow participants to get to know each other, since they are learning from each other, knowing each other´s background can be vital to enhance the learning processes.

Recommendation 9: Providing adequate guidance to participants.

Current social and political events and developments can result in concerns, doubts, uncertainties and anxieties of participants with respect to their social and political life and their future. Adequate guidance by project teams is essential for participants to be able to cope with these concerns, especially in projects tackling issues related to participation and active citizenship.

Recommendation 10: Fostering participation and active citizenship by involving the hosting community.

RAY research suggests that E+/YiA projects can have an effect on the communities hosting them, also in the areas of participation and citizenship. Through a stronger involvement of the hosting community in the project these effects can be strengthened, in particular by fostering interaction between the project and the hosting community, e.g. as part of community events or through special project activities. This provides for opportunities through which members of the hosting community and project participants could jointly develop citizenship and participation competence and practice. In particular, within long-term volunteering projects such an approach is likely to be effective in terms of multiplying the effects of the projects and fostering the sustainability of projects.

Recommendation 11: Providing adequate time, space and guidance for reflection, individually and in groups, of experiences and learning related to participation and active citizenship.

Reflection is an indispensable part of any E+/YiA project in order for participants to become aware of what they experienced and learnt in the project. This is especially important for learning related to participation and citizenship, as the study shows the interview itself initiated a process of reflection for the interviewees on project experiences, which resulted in deeper insights the participants had not had before. This suggests that reflection, as part of the project, needs to go deeper and enable participants not only reflect on their learning but also link their own learning experience with broader concepts of participation and citizenship. This is also related to the activities prior to and following the main project activity, which might be crucial reflection points (see recommendation 9 and 12). In this respect, it is

recommended to develop learning instruments showing a similar effect as the interviews in this research project.

Recommendation 12: Providing for adequate follow-up as part of the project, in particular to the development of participation and citizenship competence and practice, as well as to the European dimension of the project.

An adequate follow-up to the project activities is equally important as a good preparation. As the study shows, participants are enthusiastic about the project and even highly motivated to transfer their enthusiasm, ideas and what they have learnt into practice and their everyday lives. At the same time, the research results also reveal that some participants do not succeed at this because they do not find like-minded people at home, feel lost and eventually give up. Therefore, follow-up to the projects needs to be ensured and participants need support after the main activity of the project, e.g. through meetings with other project participants to share their experiences in implementing their ideas and what they have learnt, and to prepare follow-up activities. They also need support to develop initiatives and projects on their own and to engage in civil society and democratic life, including in relation to issues with a European dimension, e.g. through a mentoring programme involving the members of the project team.

Programme implementation level

The recommendations for the project level outlined above imply the following recommendations for the programme implementation level.

Recommendation 13: Promoting participation and active citizenship as project themes.

Research shows that projects explicitly addressing participation and citizenship are more successful in fostering participation and citizenship competence and practice than projects without such a focus. Since the latter is an objective of E+/YiA, projects on these topics should be promoted to applicant organisations.

Recommendation 14: Explicitly communicating the concepts of 'active citizenship' and 'participation in civil society and democratic life' in a language, phrasing and terminology that is comprehensible to beneficiaries, project organisers and project team members, in order to be operationalised in their projects (see recommendation 2).

This can be done, for example through respective targeted publications (e.g. on project methodologies etc.), workshops, websites, webinars etc.

Recommendation 15: Providing special training activities for project organisers and project team members developing their competences to organise E+/YiA projects that foster participation and active citizenship.

Such training activities would be aimed at understanding participation and citizenship concepts (see recommendation 14) and developing competences to design and implement projects in line with recommendations 1 to 12 at the project level. Good practices, such as the Partnership on Youth between the Council of Europe and the European Union as well as other actors in the youth field, could be adapted and further developed in line with this recommendation.

Programme level

Some recommendations at the project and implementation level also imply the following recommendation at the level of the E+/YiA Programme and future EU Youth Programme(s).

Recommendation 16: Providing sufficient/additional funding explicitly for project elements and measures as recommended above or for new activity types.

In particular, funding for preparation, guidance, assessment and follow-up in order to strengthen the development of participation and citizenship competence and practice during or after funded projects, and to ensure their quality and sustainability. It is recommended to provide additional funding for preparation and follow-up activities within the project in line with the recommendations above and meeting minimum standards to be defined. Furthermore, it is recommended to develop activity types eligible for funding, which allow participants, either individually or in groups, to develop further activities, initiatives or projects of flexible formats aimed at fostering participation and citizenship. This could be similar to or a further development of 'future capital' projects funded in a prior EU-Youth Programme.

4 Results of the quantitative and qualitative study[64]

4.1 Values and Attitudes

4.1.1 Results of the quantitative study

'Democracy values'

A battery of questions is used to determine the levels of 'democracy values' of a respondent. This consist of questions focusing on the determination of the importance given by respondents to general democratic processes and principles, such as voting or social equality; but also of items aiming at migration issues. In order to explore levels of agreement of respondents with 'democracy values', a respective index[65] was created. The index is an eleven-point scale with 0 meaning no agreement and 10 standing for the maximum agreement with 'democracy values'. The measurement is, in this case, an objective one: the items underlying the index are designed to prevent respondents from guessing the purpose of the single items, and various areas are mapped through series of statements which never contain an explicit notion of values or 'democracy values'.

Generally speaking, participants score rather high, the median values stable at around 8.0, with constant levels across gender, age, project types, and educational attainment, as well as activity levels of participants (i.e. how much active in the civil or political sense the participants are). 'Democracy values' index levels prove to be high and stable for participants. Due to the low numbers of units of analysis, it is not possible to calculate 'democracy values' scores for the control group, and therefore no comparisons are presented.

No effects can be seen in between measurements neither in the participant sample with median scores of approximately 8.0 maintained across survey waves , nor in the participant subgroups which are further analysed (e.g. gender, education, age, etc.).

In case of project leaders, the results are the same as in the participant sample. General median values are constant across all survey waves and reach approximately the value of 8.0 without any visible deviations across the gender, age, education, or other background variables. There is not enough evidence that the general measurement is statistically different from the scores of the participant sample[66]; therefore the participants and project leaders likely reach the same levels of 'democracy values'. The results stay the same in this general measurement across the survey waves in both, the participant and the project leader sample as well as in the project leader subgroups which are further tested (e.g. gender, highest education, age, etc.).

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[64] <mark>Chapter 4 is still a draft version and still needs to be edited</mark>

[65] For details of index creation please see Appendix A.

[66] For details please see confidence intervals of median as calculated in the section 'Values' in Appendix B. Confidence intervals which do not overlap indicate statistically significant differences ($p<0.05$ or lower); while overlapping confidence intervals may suggest that the difference is potentially not statistically significant. For the sake of clarity of the text, not overlapping confidence intervals will be interpreted as indicating statistically significant difference between the median levels, while the overlapping confidence intervals will be interpreted as indicating non-significant differences between the median values, even though it involves a certain degree of simplification.

Interpretation

Projects attended by the participant and project leader samples do not have any measurable influence on their levels of 'democracy values', based on the indicators used in the presented research. This might occur for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, values are rather fundamental and long-lasting building blocks of human personality. It is, therefore, potentially hard to influence them within a scope of, mostly, rather short-term projects funded under the E+/YiA programme. In this respect, the age structure of the sample (as well as of the overall population participating in the E+/YiA projects) must be taken into account. In case of participants, less than 5% of the respondents are under 15 years of age, while in case of project leaders, over 87% of the respondents are 21 years of age or older (see Figure 7). These age groups are potentially coming to participate in the projects with at least partially formed and rooted set of values, which makes this area rather resistant to be influenced. Yet another aspect which needs to be underlined is the fact that on a scale of 0-10, where 10 stands for the most 'democracy values' levels, both participant and project leader samples exhibit rather highly developed 'democracy values'; and this in itself may be yet another reason for the constant results observed in the abovementioned analyses. Since this area seems to be rather well developed already, further effects may be less likely than in cases when the values would have been underdeveloped. The state of value development in participants becomes even more apparent when compared to the project leader sample. Project leaders are participating in the projects not only in different roles from the participants, but also (as can be seen in Figure 7) in a later stage of their lives, but the levels of 'democracy values' as measured by the index in this study, very likely do not differ between the participant and project leader samples across any of the survey waves. In other words, participants are just as developed in terms of the 'democracy values', as are the project leaders who take up a role of their educators.
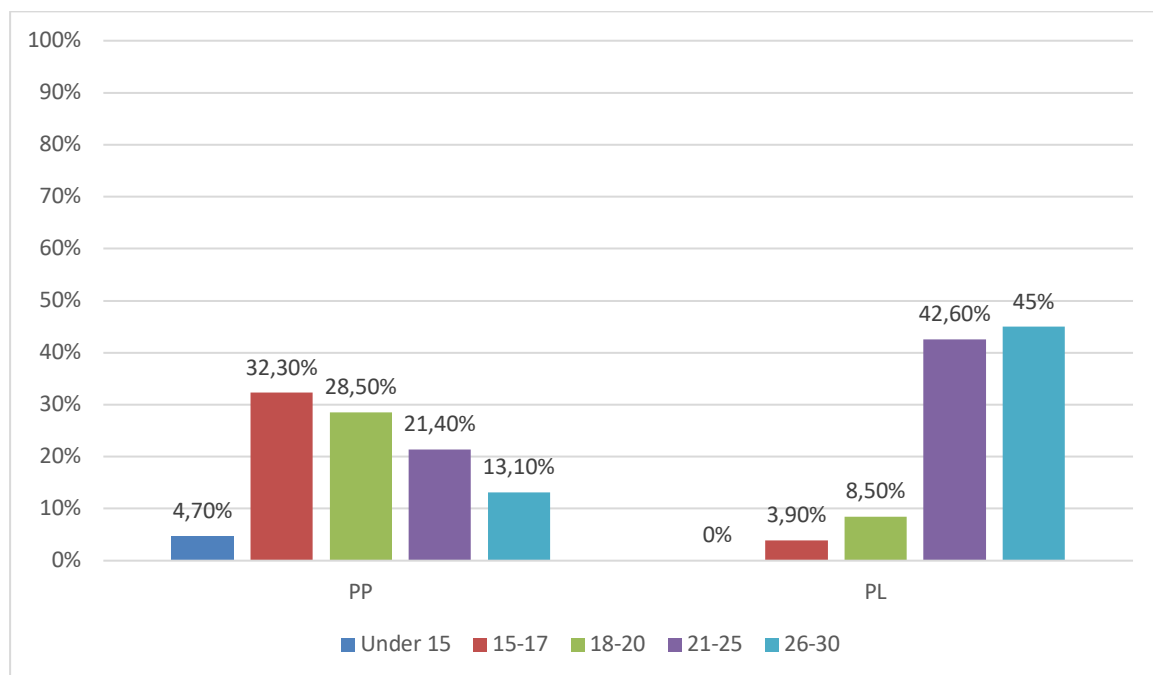
Figure 7: Age groups within the PP and the PL sample as measured in survey wave 1.

Note: PP sample N=449; PL sample N=129. Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Finally, limitations occurring due to the use of the paired-sample analyses must be mentioned. These analyses require the sample in question only include such respondents whose measurement of interest (in this case the democracy values index) is present in all survey waves. This brings the analytical sample to very low levels in terms of units of analysis (around 30 respondents for both the participant and the project leader samples). Due to this low number of units of analysis, it is difficult to calculate more detailed analyses for various subgroups (e.g. gender, age, education, etc.), and these analyses often come up with a negative result simply due to insufficient number of responses.

'Interest in the world'[67]

Generally speaking, the participant sample shows rather high 'interest in the world around them', scoring in all four survey waves a median value of around 7.5, with constant levels across gender, age, education and other background variables. Analyses show no differences in the participant sample across the four waves in general as well as in none of the subgroups (e.g. age groups, gender, etc.). These results are comparable to the results of the control group. Control group respondents' scores likely do not differ from the scores of the participant sample[68] across all survey waves. This result suggests that participants are not different from other young people in respect of the 'interest in the world around them'.

The project leader sample exhibits median levels of approximately 8.0 across all waves. In some cases, the results of participant and project leader sample differences are bordering with the statistical significance. For example, the project leader sample exhibits higher median scores of 'interest in the world' in comparison to the participant sample, but the difference is, statistically speaking, balancing between the statistical significance and error[69].

The project leader sample, nevertheless, does not show any shifts across the survey waves in general nor in specific subgroups. The attitude area 'interest in the world around them' stays constant across the waves and subgroups.

Analysis of the single items was also conducted in the participant and project leader sample as well as in control group sample, in order to shed more light on the attitude developments. Tested items included the following: 'interest in social issues'; 'interest in political issues'; and 'interest in European issues'. Results of the analyses show no changes in any of these items, with median levels constant around 4 on a scale from 0 which stands for 'no interest at all' to 5 which substitutes 'fully interested'. These computations confirm the results of the analyses quoted above, showing rather well developed attitudes which are constant across survey waves.

'Responsibility for the world'

Generally speaking, the measured median levels of the 'responsibility for the world' index are again rather high in the participant sample, around 7.0 in all four survey

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[67] The following text provides a coherent description of the trends and findings, for the detailed results please see Appendix B in which all statistically significant findings with a sufficient number of cases are listed in neat tables.
[68] Analysis of the confidence intervals of median shown in detail in section 'Attitudes' in Appendix B confirms that there are no statistically significant differences between the PP sample and the control group sample in any of the survey waves.
[69] For details, please see section 'Attitudes' in Appendix B.

waves, with constant levels across gender, age, education and other background variables. As was the case in the previous attitude *interest in the world around them*, the participant sample measurements in 'responsibility for the world' are very likely not different from the results of the control group.

Between the survey waves, the measurements stay constant in general participant sample measurement as well as in detailed analyses of subgroups (e.g. age groups, gender, etc.). The control group exhibits the same characteristic: no effects in general nor in subgroup analyses across the survey waves. This suggests that the participants of E+/YiA projects are not different from other young people in terms of levels or development of this particular attitude area.

The project leader sample shows rather high median levels between 8.0 and 8.7 across all survey waves both in general and in detailed analyses of subgroups. Analyses revealed no shifts for the project leader sample attitudes 'responsibility for the world', both in general and in subgroup analyses. The project leader and participant samples differ in second survey wave measurement (median of 6.7 in the participant sample and of 8.7 in the project leader sample[70]), while in other survey waves the measurements very likely do not cross the threshold of the statistical significance.

'Fairness to the world and to the state'

The participant sample exhibits rather high median levels between 7.0 and 8.0 in all four survey waves in 'fairness towards the world' as well as in 'fairness towards the state'. These figures are stable across all subgroups and survey waves. All in all, the participant sample exhibits rather high and constant levels of 'fairness' over long periods of time .

'Fairness' in the project leader sample reaches median levels of approximately 8.0 across all survey waves and is constant in all subgroups. The project leader sample also shows no developments across the survey waves in general and in any of the subgroups. 'Fairness' is rather high and constant over time, consistently with the measurements obtained for the participant sample and quoted above.

Confidence intervals analyses show that there are very likely no differences between the scores of the participant and of the project leader sample; in other words, the levels of 'fairness' do not differ between participants and project leaders of E+/YiA projects.

It was not possible to compute scores for the control group sample in any of the 'fairness' related indexes due to lack of units of analysis, and therefore no comparisons are provided.

Interpretation

All in all, median levels of 7.0 or higher occur in the participant and project leader samples, and these stay constant both in subgroups and across the survey waves. These results suggest that when it comes to attitudes supporting participation in civil society and political life of young people, both participants and project leaders exhibit high levels of such attitudes over long periods of time, namely *interest* in public affairs,

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[70] Statistical significance of the difference confirmed by confidence intervals of medians, for details please see section 'Attitudes' in Appendix B.

sense of *responsibility* for the civil domain, and *fairness* when it comes to acting in the public sphere.

Reasons for these findings are likely similar to those stated in the chapter focusing on 'democracy values'. Attitudes are, again, a section of a human personality which requires time and long-term influences to be modified, and at the same time tends to become more rigid with growing age. All of these make it difficult for the project participation to have a measurable effect on the civil and political attitudes of the young participants and project leaders. At the same time, as stressed above, the levels of civil and political attitudes are high in terms of young people being interested, feeling responsible, and perceiving fair, when it comes to the public domain. In such a setup, a positive effect is, of course, possible, but it might be hard to occur and hard to measure, due to the already high levels of these attitude scores.

4.1.2 Results of the qualitative study

First, it should be noted that the personal and professional situation of the interviewees, e.g. hobbies, friends and family, school life, finding an appropriate job or experiences at university/work, is of great(est) interest to them. Against the background of their life situation this is understandable, because the interviewees try to set the course for their future, search for their identity and are confronted with making decisions. Partly also interviewees who mention social and political topics in the first interview talk about the planning of their future in the second one probably because personal and professional topics become then more relevant. In this context many interviewees express their appreciation for the informal exchange during the project, from which they benefit much in respect of orientation in concrete every-day tasks.

Furthermore, the interviews before the activity show that especially very young participants have problems to talk about values in general and especially about values which are important for them, because the term is too abstract for them respectively they have not yet reflected about this question from a meta-evel. They mainly think of values in a very personal way.

Interest in social and political topics

In respect of the interest in social and political topics, big differences are observed between the participants before the project. There are very interested (and informed) ones; for most of them the project has no effect, but some of them report that an interest for new topics is created through it, e.g. the venue country of their project. Interested and partially interested interviewees largely show a greater interest in current developments in their countries and in Europe in the second interview. All in all, both social and political interests are supported through the project, with a more conscious attitude being the result, as well as a higher awareness of a wider range of social issues such as equality, racism, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBTQI*) people and of topics in public discussions. Interviewees also acknowledge the need to learn more about such issues, develop a stronger desire to dig deeper into public matters and to explore issues in more detail.

> *"I went home and studied more about it to learn more about it."* (2nd, SE)

There are also young people without any interest in social or political issues neither before nor after the project. For some of them, other fields are more important, e.g.

artistic occupation; some others cannot explain, why they are not interested; and again, others are more interested in the social and political issues of their projects, yet do not categorise their new interest as interest in political issues, because in their view politics as such is not a topic of the project. In one example the project is about the refugee crisis and in another example the project takes place in Turkey; after these projects, the two participants are more interested in the refugee crisis and in the current Turkish political situation, but do not call this a fostered interest.

Interest in protection of the environment and sustainable development

> *"And I … notice it more on the news that there are environmental problems.…"* (2nd, EE)

A clear increase in the level of interest can be stated for the protection of the environment and sustainable development. This is not only an effect of some projects focussing on these topics explicitly, but in some cases also of informal learning processes, for which the projects obviously offer enough space and time. Informal learning in this context means that the youngsters are impressed by the beauty of the *"untouched"* (AT) or *"inspiring"* (FI) nature in their venue countries or that their interest has increased when chatting with others. Since environmental protection is also practiced in everyday project life, the topic also repeatedly appears in projects that are not focused on it, e.g. in the waste separation. This is reported by some young people at the Strasbourg Conference, who took part in projects not focussing on environmental protection.

The interest of young people who chose intentionally a project about environmental protection and sustainable development increases – and in parallel their knowledge about it in a considerable extent (see chapter 4.2.2) as well as their willingness to take action (see chapter 4.4.2).

> *"We did talk more about the environment … I also got a few ideas about what I could do at my own school /… / over next year I will try to initiate a project myself, so that the schools in my county would have rubbish bins that have three separate compartments, so that waste would be separated."* (2nd, EE)

This is also proven by participants of the Strasbourg Conference.

Interest in Europe/the EU and identity as European/citizen of the EU

First, Europe and the EU are often treated synonymously by some participants. Other interviewees express their appreciation for, high interest in, and identification with Europe and show a critical or indifferent attitude against the EU and its institutions on the other side.

> *"[The European Union] might be important for those who are associated with it, like a representative or a prime minister because there are their relationships. As a citizen, I'm not concerned… or I am but I don't see why I should care…[about the effects of the EU on his life]. It affects me in that: I can travel to EU countries without a passport… it must have an effect on us, but it's not something we realise."* (2nd, HU)

> *"Well, to me it seems that some states are not being taken into account [by the EU]."* (2nd, EE)

A few interviewees even represent a very pessimistic attitude and predict, that the EU is doomed and *"will probably collapse" (EE)* due to both internal and external reasons. Another interviewee demonstrates a very distinct picture of the EU criticising its asylum politics, its *"arrogance" (AT)* against non-members and it's role as a global player towards the global south.

A small number of young people have alternative pictures of Europe, one of them for example describes it as a network of connections and flows. A few interviewees remain on an exclusively affective level *("I like Europe." (2nd, IT))*. And again, a few participants only feel a regional or national identity, because they are born in this region or country and Europe is of no importance to them. In contrast, for young people with a migration background living in Germany it was particularly important to also feel part of Europe and the EU. In varying degrees of intensity and consideration most interviewees feel like Europeans before the project.

It has to be pointed out, that current social and political developments in 2015 and beyond, such as the refugee movements, the Brexit, the growth of extremist parties and movements etc. (see chapter 2) are often indicated to have an influence on the perception of Europe, partly in the sense of a declining identification or more often encouraging people to fight for Europe and its values in the second interview. In respect of effects through the E+/YiA project significantly less than half of the interviews show examples for fostered interest/identification in/with Europe through the projects.

According to the last mentioned examples the following activities within the projects help to pave the way for a fostered interest in Europe and a strengthened feeling as European (second interviews): First of all getting to know people from Europe, their countries, their different temperament, style and eating habits, communicating with them, overcoming cultural differences, and being in touch with them after the project; obtaining information about the opportunities offered by the EU and the structure and functioning of the EU and last but not least further project participation or further travelling. The interviewees perceive that they share a common basis with participants from other countries, while nationalities become less relevant. Furthermore, experiences at first hand like waiting for hours at the Ukraine border, waiting for getting a stamp at the border to Georgia or meeting minorities living in neighbouring countries, who are not granted the same rights, have an impact. The respective interviewees report of a strengthened awareness of the free movement within the Schengen Area and of the insight, that sticking together peacefully is better than isolating oneself. Besides this, the perceived differences between Western and Eastern Europe as well as between EU- and non-EU-countries and a new awareness of the many beautiful European regions foster the interest in and the identification with Europe. This is also expressed by the fact, that some participants are eager to travel through Europe as a consequence of the E+/YiA project.

A few interview partners with a nuanced European identity and a high educational attainment are inspired through the project to consciously reflect about special topics of European policy and this leads to slight effects in single political attitudes.

Interest in national youth policy and European youth strategy

In the first interviews it becomes evident, that almost no interviewee is interested in national youth policy or European youth strategy and that the meaning of the term

'youth policy' is not clear to especially young respondents. They partly confuse it with education or associate it with the European Voluntary Service or the Erasmus+ Programme and show a big interest in talking and discussing about life of young people, youth culture and about youth affairs in general - mostly with references to their own and their friends' everyday lives. Some Hungarian youngsters connect youth policy with party politics, something they are not enthusiastic about. It must be stressed, that both youth policy on national and European level, do not play an important role in the projects. All in all, according to the participants neither interest in nor knowledge about (see chapter 4.2.2) national youth policy or European youth strategy increase through the E+/YiA projects.

Attitude towards participation and citizenship

With very few exceptions, all interviewees are convinced, that it is important and desirable that everybody feels responsible for and contribute to society and politics – regardless of wheter they practice it or not. However, many do not associate this conviction with the terms participation and citizenship. Younger and less educated, but also a few well educated and engaged interviewees have problems with these terms, which quite often have to be approached together with the interviewer, trying to 'translate' their meaning into the language of the interviewees. One well educated and highly engaged participants for example state, that the term participation sounds exaggerated to her, expressing nothing else but helpfulness. In contrast, most members of the Italian sample have a very clear idea of what participation means already before the project. Eight out of ten interviewees consider participation as a vital and fundamental concept for everyday life, as being active and making a contribution to society in a group. On one hand, this has to do with the fact, that some Italian interviewees are already engaged in civil society. On the other hand, the specific situation in Italy seems to have an impact: there is a strong, historically grown third sector (due to the lack of youth policies), through which participation through associations and volunteering gained great importance. E+/YiA ties on this tradition and helps to reinforce it by providing the respective tools.

Some interviewees are familiar with the terms and express a very elaborated attitude towards participation and citizenship:

> *"People died when they fought for democracy. This is why I see it as a duty to participate as citizen, and not as a right." (2nd, AT)*

This strong conviction can hardly be fostered through the project, but the elections in different countries, which are influenced by the swing to the right, clearly enhance the attitude of this young woman. The influence of worrying social and political developments can also be observed for other interviewees regardless of their previous attitude towards participation and citizenship.

A good portion of participants participated in projects in which participation and citizenship are no explicit topics and where a guided discussion leading to a sophisticated understanding of these terms is missing. And this, of course, plays an important role in respect of a possible effect through the project.

According to the second interviews several youngsters can positively be influenced by the project in respect of their attitude towards participation and active citizenship. The feeling that every vote counts and that each small act matters, the understanding

of acting responsibly and of loyalty towards the community, the willingness to give something back to society and to engage in social initiatives – in short, the importance of being an active citizen, especially as an actor of possible social change, are enhanced and more acknowledged than before the project.

"It most definitely is more important! /… / When I heard about the problems, about what's really going on in our lives, things that a lot of people don't even know about, then I understood that actually we should all do at least something, so that things would be good. Because you can't do everything alone. If every citizen started helping out with at least something, things would already be much better." (2nd, EE)

"The project helped me to realise and appreciate how important it is to participate and to be an active citizen." (2nd, MT)

Other participants develop the conviction that being better informed and bringing facts into debates belong to their responsibility as active citizens. Aspects supporting these perceived effects are personal concern in respect of the subject treated in the project, the fact, that responsibilities are shared in the project and everyone has to come up with ideas for the programme as well as the positive example of other participants, who are already more active.

"To spend 10 days together with the others gave motivation and power; the project gives empowerment to each participant." (2nd, AT)

"Many people feel too insecure to participate but I think that it is something that you can learn. You are not born with it, but you can learn the skill. In this project there were some friends of mine who are very insecure, and the project showed them that they also can do great things. Some of these friends have started to participate in social affairs more actively after the project." (2nd, FI)

Furthermore the confrontation with concrete social and political grievances and the meeting with people who suffer from them leave behind a strong impression. The discussion of some Hungarian participants with Hungarian minorities living in a neighbouring country and who are granted to equal rights only on the paper, make several participants think differently of their identity, foster their appreciation of their citizenship or even influences the concept of it.

The pessimistic attitude of single participants, that there are much more powerful forces than an individual and that one single person cannot achieve anything, stay unchanged with the participants.

Attitude towards democracy, democracy values and the importance of voting

Most participants are familiar with the term democracy, are aware of it and do appreciate it; only very few interviewees are not able to explain the meaning of democracy at all.

The awareness and appreciation of democracy of some participants is renewed or strengthened in the projects:

"Primarily Germany and Austria, we are living in paradise [in respect of democracy], and some people really do not know how valuable this is." (2nd, AT)

> *"When we [in a democracy] decide something, we stick to it. We follow the rules and want to finish things once started. We care about our common property, infrastructure. [In another country] there is corruption and money goes elsewhere and things are not finished. No one is interested in their common society." (2nd, FI)*

Both, the Austrian and the Finnish interviewees, participated in different projects in Eastern European countries, which do not fully comply to democratic achievements. This experience makes them aware of how valuable it is to live in democratic states.

The high approval to democracy values is supported by the project by thematising and discussing democracy and the values inherent to democracy. One participants for example remembers a discussion about human rights; he says that he had never thought that this topic could be so exciting. The confrontation with the already mentioned Hungarian minorities living in a neighbouring country makes three interviewees learn a lot about the institution of democracy and value more the protection of human rights:

> *"It was the first time, during the project, listening to the others, when I thought about how lucky I was because I was born in Hungary." (2nd, HU)*

The interviewee is motivated, to do something for the minorities.

At the Strasbourg Conference interviewees are also asked about concrete experiences with democracy values in general or in the project. One interviewee gave an example of a striking discrepancy between the high approval for democracy values according to the interviews and some participants, who did not accept refugees as participants in the project. Besides the need to inform the participants about the participation of the refugees a reflection on the meaning of democracy values in this specific context during the project would have been adequate.

Almost all interviewees think, that voting is important and again this attitude is renewed by thematising it in the projects. There are only a few participants who think that voting is not that important, others claim voting to be relevant, but prefer sleeping on the election day or leave for holidays without organising postal vote, and yet another small group is very critical towards elections and think that engaging differently, e.g. in NGOs, makes more sense.

A few interviewees indicate in the second interview, that they will vote in the future with a fostered awareness because of the Brexit, the swing to the right and – in one case – because the interviewee wants to be a model for her pupils since she started her study to become a teacher.

In summary it can be said, that E+/YiA projects take the already high awareness of democracy in many facets up, actually the appreciation and protection of democracy values, the importance to always see people in the center of a democratic state, to have the respective knowledge and to act democratically, e.g. to vote or to improve the practical implementation of democracy.

Long-term effects in respect of values and attitudes

The third interviews take place two to three years after the project. It is evident, that in this time the interviewees experience a lot, go through the most diverse developments, are affected by many other influences and of course or maybe also

find new interests. In consequence, the meaning they attribute to the effects they see as a consequence of the project maybe or probably developed in the one or other way.

Most interviewees who report a fostered interest in social or political issues one year after the project (according to the second interview the interviewees largely show a greater interest in current developments, a more conscious attitude and a higher awareness of a wider range of social issues), still remember the effect in the third interview. Some participants say, that the fostered interest still plays an important role for them. This is the case for almost all eight Estonian interviewees: they are still more interested in social issues than before the project and notice topics more prominently in public discussions. Maybe this can be seen in connection with the fact, that the project was the first one for seven of them and that they are still younger than 20 years old at the time of the third interview. In the second interview an Austrian participant describes, that her interest in the agenda setting of media is fostered through the experience of her E+/YiA project in Ukraine. There she realises, that although Western median do not report any more about the war, the war is still going on. The statements of some interviewees show, that they still perceive the effect of the project, but that they cannot concretely describe it. A Finnish interviewee states in the third interview, that her interest in social topics increased thanks to the project and is still high, but that she cannot pinpoint the effect.

Other interviewees say, that the effect was not lasting or is not important for them anymore. For them other topics became more relevant due to specific situations in life or current events. Four out of seven members of the Hungarian sample for example report a strengthened interest in minority rights due to the project in the second interview. In the third interview two of the four do not mention this interest; they talk intensively about national politics. This is not surprising, because of nationalistic tendencies in Hungarian politics and aspirations threatening the rule of law and press freedom. But this does not mean, that the effect reported about in the second interview is finally and forever meaningless and might become important again if this topic pops up again.

The third interviews furthermore give examples, in which effects of the project and other effects mix, work together or other influences revive project effects. A Czech interviewee attribute her developed interest in public activities to her studies and her time in Africa, but admits, that the E+/YiA project gave her bits and pieces as well (third interview). And an Austrian interviewee says, that a TV report reminded him of a chat with a French participants during the project, which had fostered his interest in environmental protection.

The clear increase of interest in the area of environmental protection is more than confirmed in the third interview. In addition to the interviewees who report increased interest in the second interview due to the project, more interviewees are doing so in the third interview. The general high interest of young people in this topic is confirmed by some participants at the Strasbourg Conference. Even in projects not focussing on this issue, it emerges again and again.

In respect of Europe/the EU significantly less than half of the second interviews show examples for fostered interest or identification. According to the third interviews these reported effects seem to be very persistent. Almost all interviewees say, that the

perceived effects of the project are not only still present, but also still valid. This seems to underline the strong influence of getting in contact with different people from foreign countries and their specific backgrounds as well as becoming acquainted with these foreign countries. In consequence of the so fostered interest a fostered mobility within Europe can be observed in the third interviews. Within the Finnish sample the willingness to travel or move abroad, to take part in or to organise further projects even seems to be one of the greatest impact of the projects.

> *"They've brought a lot of friends (projects). Like that, you get to network with foreigners. It's easier to go everywhere, if you have someone you already know there." (3rd, FI)*

And the participation in further projects causes a fostered European identity:

> *"I feel more European after each project." (3rd, AT)*

The fact, that a few interviewees with a negative attitude towards Europe/the EU have become less sceptical through the project is another very important long-term effect of the E+/YiA projects.

In respect of national youth policy or European youth strategy the third interviews confirm the results of the second interviews: E+/YiA projects contribute very little, if at all, to a strengthened interest in these topics.

Two to three years after the project – and in accordance with the results of the second interviews – small effects of the E+/YiA projects on the understanding and appreciation of participation and active citizenship become apparent. While some interviewees do not understand the terms before they take part in the project, again some of them are now rather familiar with them respectively partly obtain a picture of participation and citizenship. A few interviewees report in the third interview, that due to the project they started to think more about what it means to be an active citizen. Therefore, it can be stated, that E+/YiA projects can convey an idea of what participation and active citizenship mean, whereby a learning effect through being asked about this in three interviews must be assumed.

The effects of the project on several interviewees on their appreciation of participation and citizenship described in the second interview are repeated by again several of them in the third interview. They are encouraged towards a more proactive attitude to society and community. What is very much connected to this is, that they meet like-minded people in the project, while before the project they feel a kind of isolated with their ideas to participate having no other motivated people around them. In return, they then consciously begin to share their enthusiasm in their living environment. Two Finnish interviewees perceive their participation in the projects as participation and also represent this opinion in the third interview. – All in all, these effects must be described as subtle.

According to the third interviews the slightly stronger awareness of democracy and democracy values found in the second interviews seem to be persistent. Two of the all in all few remarks mentioning a project effect come from Finnish interviewees who say, that the project showed them what democracy looks like in practice. It can be concluded, that the project they participated in offered an adequate learning field through active participation; besides discussing terms like democracy, participation

and citizenship this is an ideal setting for the promotion of democracy, participation and citizenship.

In respect of the notion and appreciation of participation, citizenship and democracy the following probable influences must be taken into account: the fact, that the interviewees are older at the time of the third interviews, that many other influences, e.g. the current political situation in their country affect them and partly that they are prepared for the respective questions and learned about the terms within the first and second interviews. The political situation in Austria with a right-wing populist government since December 2017 until May 2019[71] effects that a few Austrian interviewees vote with a fostered awareness of the importance to take part in democratic elections. Also the high willingness to vote is expressed in both, the second and third interviews.

In the third interview, which took place approximately between nine and four months before the European Parliament election 2019, the majority of the interviewees says, that they intend to vote in these elections. As a side note should be mentioned, that a few interview partners only got to know about the elections through the question in the interview.

4.2 Knowledge

4.2.1 Results of the quantitative study

As was the case in values and attitudes, even in the area of 'civil and participation knowledge', a battery of questions covered wide areas such as human rights, principles of democracy, or understanding of non-governmental organisation operation principles. In case of *knowledge* the respondents are asked to rate their own knowledge in the given areas (whereas in case of values, respondents agree or disagree with certain statements and are rated based on their answers); this means that the indexes created in the first steps of the data analysis in case of knowledge describe merely the self-assessment of the respondents, i.e. what is the level of the self-perceived knowledge of the respondents on the topic of participation in civil society and political life (subjective measurement). In case the respondents indicate that their knowledge on, e.g. human rights, is high, this is taken as an indicator of their 'general civil and participation knowledge' without testing the respondent further in order to objectively verify this information. The index, used in the analysis presented below, ranges from 0 standing for no 'civil and participation knowledge', to 10 indicating very high levels of 'knowledge' on this subject.

Respondents in the participant sample in general indicate to be rather knowledgeable on the subject, the median 'knowledge' index value reaching between 6.4 and 7.2 in all four survey waves; this was consistent throughout the subgroup testing (e.g. in gender and age groups, etc.). The participant and control group samples do not show signs of statistically significant differences, while there is a statistically significant difference in 'civil and participation knowledge' levels between the participant and project leader samples in the first wave of surveys (median of 6.4 in the participant sample and of 7.7 in the project leader sample), suggesting that the participants come to the projects with lower levels of knowledge, than the project leaders. These

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[71] As a result of a scandal about the right-wing populist coalition partner the government only existed until 28 May 2019.

differences, however, do not last over time and cannot be found in further survey waves. Analyses also suggest that there are very likely no differences between the participant and the control group samples in any of the survey waves. When it comes to knowledge, the participants seem to exhibit the same levels as other young people over long periods of time.

Throughout the survey waves, the participant sample indicates medium positive effects in 'knowledge' levels (from median levels of 6.4 in the first survey wave to median levels of 7.2 in the third survey wave). This positive change from the first to third survey wave occurs also in some subgroups, namely in males (profound change from median of 6.5 to 7.8); in participants who went abroad for the project (medium shift from median of 6.4 to 7.2); in participants with higher secondary diploma (medium change from median of 6.4 to 7.3); in participants with university degrees (profound development from median 6.8 to 7.8); those participants who took no specific civil education courses (medium change from median of 5.9 to 6.8); those participants who speak 2 foreign languages (medium shift from median 6.4 to 7.2); those participants who obtained relevant civil-related knowledge during the projects they participated in (medium effect from median 6.5 to 7.3); and those participants with middle levels of project ownership (medium change from median 6.4 to 7.2). In case of control group sample, no such effects between survey waves show in the analysis results. Over time, namely between the moment before project participation of the participants, and a year after the project participation, the 'civil and participation knowledge' levels in the participants increased; in comparison, no such shift occurred in control group sample.

In case of the project leader sample, a small increase is observed between survey waves 1 and 4 (median levels of 7.7 and 7.9), as well as in several subgroups, namely in males (small increase from median of 7.6 to 7.6[72]); in project leaders under 30 years of age (profound increase from median of 7.0 to 8.0); and in those project leaders who speak three or more foreign languages (medium shift from median of 7.6 to 8.4). All in all, the area of 'civil and participation knowledge' exhibits an increase in project leaders generally and in various subgroups between the moment before participating in the project and the last survey two to three years later.

Interpretation

All in all, both participants and project leaders show an increase in 'civil and participation knowledge' levels over time, unlike the control group, whose 'knowledge' levels stay constant over time. This leads to a conclusion that the project participation per se might have influenced participants and project leaders in such a manner that they became more perceptive towards the civil domain, gathering over time more information about this sphere, than they had before participating in the project.

Surprisingly, it is males who benefited from the knowledge gains more than their female counterparts, which might suggest more profound influences of the projects to male participants as well as a possibility that the male participants come to the projects with different motivations than female participants. Studies describing underestimation of women in comparison to men also need to be taken into

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[72] The shift may be smaller than the median can demonstrate, occurring more in the distribution than in the median values.

consideration[73] due to the subjective type of measurement in this area, i.e. self-assessment approach to the civil and participation knowledge.

Projects taking place abroad seem to have influenced the participants more than the ones which take place in the home country of the respondent; this is likely affiliated to the fact that projects taking place in a different cultural framework than the one participants are used to may have a larger potential to invoke reflection processes, and therefore introduce an effect in an individual.

The increase detected in higher secondary diploma holders may be connected to the life trajectories of the participants. The highest educational attainment variable used in the analyses is the one the respondents indicate during the first survey wave, and the respondents tend to grow more educated over the observed time period, with some higher secondary diploma holders moving into the tertiary education as seen in Figure 8. Positive change in university degree holders may be connected to the learning to learn competence acquired over long periods of formal education as well as within the tertiary education itself.
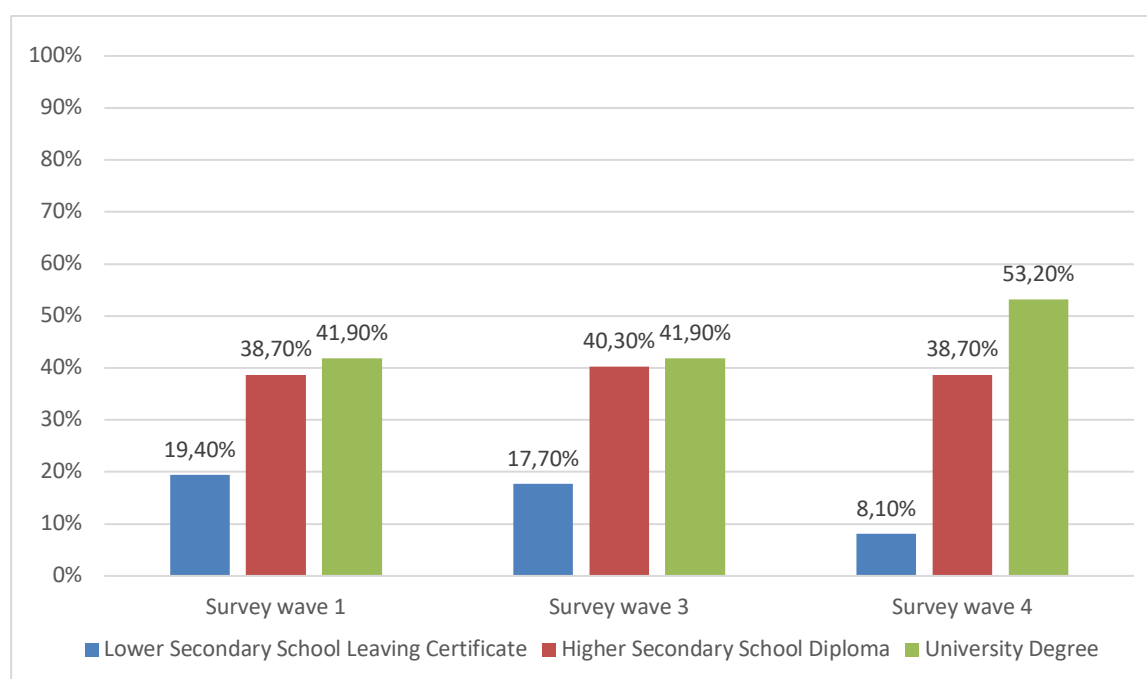
Figure 8: Highest educational attainment change over time, PP sample.
Note: PP sample, survey wave 1 N=62. Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Finally, interesting effects show in connection to the project participation itself. Those participants who exhibited signs of project ownership, in other words, the participants who felt well integrated into the project and felt engaged throughout the process, show positive shift in 'knowledge' gain. At the same time, the 'knowledge' gain is visible also in those participants who indicated that they had learned civil and participation related knowledge during the project itself. Both of the findings support the hypothesis that the project participation in itself may have positive effects on participants in connection to knowledge important for participation in civil society and

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[73] Sieverding 2003.

political life, especially such projects which focus on knowledge in this area itself, and integrate and engage its participants in an efficient way.

4.2.2 Results of the qualitative study

Some interviewees gain specific knowledge about participation and active citizenship

The results show, that the E+/YiA projects are an excellent platform for acquiring knowledge about many different topics, what is also verified by the RAY Monitoring study.[74] Interviewees mostly report a gain in knowledge about the personal life of the other participants, their private challenges and professional experiences as well as about intercultural differences; these interview partners mainly participated in one of the numerous projects not focusing on topics of civil life and politics:

> *"In the workshop itself we didn't talk much about politics." (2ⁿᵈ, DE)*

Specific knowledge about participation and active citizenship is gained by some interviewees, who mostly participated in projects focusing on these topics explicitly. This can be well illustrated on the Hungarian sample, which - besides others - involve interviewees from three projects thematising the living conditions of the Hungarian minority in the neighbour countries. These interviewees mention in the second interview that they deepen their knowledge about this topic and develop a better understanding of the connection between citizenship and nationality (there is also an effect on their attitude towards the EU in the sense of a fostered appreciation).

The gained knowledge is often practically oriented and neither taught at school nor could be found in everyday life of the young people. E+/YiA projects make this knowledge accessible for the participants, who obtain a real added value, becoming enabled to act independently as active citizen. The shared knowledge is about how to engage as active citizen, to plan (long-term) projects, to establish and run a group. Furthermore, knowledge is gained about Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) (general information, functioning, job possibilities or foundation), the civil society sector with local political systems and administrational structures, national services and possibilities for young people, in the field of professional orientation, job possibilities and study courses as well as in the area of environmental protection or human rights (e. g. the rights of minorities).

> *"Well, the project was going something like this: partly as an educational activity and partly as a contest. So we all came together for the whole weekend, talked in groups to experts, be it on the topic of local politics, how to present your own project, or how to write a grant application. And at the end of the weekend, there was the contest where we presented ourselves and our projects before a jury." (2ⁿᵈ, CZ)*

> *"I really liked the various lectures, and that there really were experts, and people who really do such projects in long-term perspective, and are able to help you with planning of your own project, so that was superb. That helped me a lot. For instance, I never knew, until then, how to establish an NGO, what are all the things you need to do. And the people in the project advised me on all that. So that was also superb. And it was practical stuff that you learn over there [in the*

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[74] Bammer, Fennes & Karsten 2017.

project], it is no philosophical business in terms of ´yes, develop your society´, but they really tell you in concrete terms what you can do." (2nd, CZ)

A further Czech interviewee enthuses about her project, which provided an insight into responsibilities, dependencies and the power structure within the society. They did not only plant trees, but got also information about the respective regulations and laws, discussed the state of trees and forests in Europe and the world, their meaning for the climate, distinguished the situation in their origin countries and finally came to the issue of sustainability in general. This communication of interconnections in a highly linked up world is to be considered as important knowledge in terms of participation.

Cumulative advantage for experienced participants

Within the interviewees benefiting in respect of knowledge about participation and active citizenship young and well-educated people could be discovered, who are very engaged already before the project and are consequently older than other participants. These active citizens choose a project of the topic or context they are already sensitized for as well as engaged and skilled in and – according to the second interview - deepen their already elaborated knowledge on it. This can be called a cumulative advantage and is in line with the 'Matthew effect'[75], frequently appearing in education and human capital: those, who do not start from scratch build on their previous knowledge, are potentially better equipped for further learning, because they want to go in detail, therefore know, that there is still more to learn and therefore have a bigger interest in getting to know more. The participants of the Strasbourg Conference confirm this aspect, that experienced young people participate in projects because of a more goal-oriented motivation. Furthermore, these experienced participants seek the exchange with other people sharing their interest and look for international aspects of it. In this regard E+/YiA projects contribute to a professionalization of young people. This is the case for the following three participants: One interviewee is engaged already for a long time in a non-profit organisation sending volunteers to African countries. He benefits from the project by even deepening his great knowledge about development cooperation and his high reflectivity. The same goes for two other interviewees who participate in projects focusing on subjects they study at university and they are also engaged in. One profits from international perspectives on the subject for her bachelor thesis from the other participants. Besides this she' s offered a working place at a foreign university for the time of her Master study by a professor within the project. Another interviewee does research at university about a certain social group of interest and participate in an E+/YiA project aiming at developing living standards for this group and at presenting the standards at a conference. Besides the above mentioned topics the 'experienced participants' participate in projects on the following issues: democracy, functioning of democratic processes, democratic principles and human rights (e.g. freedom of opinion); non-discrimination in terms of many different issues such as gender, sexual orientation, minorities, religion, origin country and social background etc.; disadvantaged groups like refugees or disabled people; current social and political

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[75] This sociological thesis was firstly described by Robert K. Merton in respect of success of scientists (1968) and transferred to further spheres of life. Also in the area of learning it was observed that initial "advantage tends to beget further advantage. … The Matthew Effect is considered to be a 'social spiral'. It resembles a positive feedback loop which describes a process of growth where processes feed upon themselves." (Rigney 2010).

affairs on local, national and international level; Europe and foreign cultures. – In the chapter about 'practice' (4.4.2) is illustrated, that and how the deepened knowledge influences the concrete engagement of the interviewees.

Young/less educated participants: Vague knowledge and problems with terminology

The state of knowledge about citizenship and participation of the less educated and/or rather young interviewees (who are less experienced due to their age) before the project is rather vague or not existing, basic information and experiences are not given and they do not know where to get respective information. They often equate elections with civil participation as such. Besides this, the interviewees are not acquainted with the respective terminology; instead of participation they call it *"being active"*, *"being helpful"* or *"doing something for others"*[76]. Even a 16-year-old very informed participants never heard the terminology explicitly before. Due to his very engaged family he participated in a lot of projects of the youth wing of a political party from an early age onwards, he is now regularly involved in the planning and implementation of these projects, he also takes part in other initiatives, for instance at school.

> *"Uh, sounds a bit like a kind of extra duty that you have to do, like social work."* (2nd, AT)

The rather young/less educated interviewees often come to participate in an E+/YiA project not that purposeful as the more experienced participants. Some of them just read about it in the newspaper or are told about it by friends. They share the motivation, to get out of home, to see foreign countries and to meet new people (from abroad). They mostly do not look for projects with a special subject or a focus on participation and active citizenship, but a few nevertheless gain respective knowledge, for example about the understanding of the terms participation and citizenship. One interviewee for example applies for a short-term EVS in order to bridge some weeks until the start of her already organised trip to Asia, after she has finally finished her unbeloved apprenticeship at the bank. She gets to know about a concrete possibility to participate within her project.

> *"Over there in England, we offered one time a week a so called 'Morning coffee' in the church. All older persons of the village could come, have a cheap coffee, some biscuits and a nice chat. And I was thinking, we do not have something like this at home in my village, but it would be really great to have it …"* (2nd, AT)

During the project she also becomes aware of her ability, to listen and communicate empathically due to many chats with another participant about his problems. Observing this, a project leader provides her with information about how to become a professional in social work.

As mentioned in the beginning of this subchapter, participants acquire knowledge about many different topics in the projects. Rather less educated interviewees become aware of their knowledge limits and often acquire knowledge about issues they were not that aware of before the project. Therefore, they often return from the project with a generally fostered curiosity and the urge to follow up on certain

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[76] In the interviews, it was a sensible task to explain the interviewees what is meant with citizenship and participation in a way, which was understandable for them, but also kept open space for their own ideas and associations.

information after the project. In this context the project can be seen as eye-opener or stimulus.

> *"The less experienced feels to have to benefit to learn at their best, for the opportunity they had." (E+/YiA PP at the Strasbourg Conference)*

Strong gain of knowledge about 'Europe/EU' and 'Sustainable development/ Protection of the environment'

First, it must be mentioned, that only a small number of interviewees differentiate between the terms Europe and EU. The knowledge of the participants about both is clearly fostered through the participation in E+/YiA projects. Especially freedom of movement and cultural diversity are brought back into mind when the interviewees meet young people from other countries or when they travel to a project venue outside the territory of the Schengen Agreement. The increased knowledge about European issues is linked with a fostered appreciation of and interest in Europe (see chapter 4.1.2).

> *"I have become more aware of what is happening and taking place at European level." (2nd, MT)*

Within the sectors of sustainable development and protection of the environment, deepened knowledge and strengthened awareness about utilizing natural material and avoiding waste when creating something, keeping the environment clean, planting trees and gardening in general (when, where and how planting different sorts of plants etc.) can be found in the interviews. Furthermore interviewees learn about the legal provisions of planting in different countries, the current condition of the environment in a certain country and different types of species (e.g. butterflies, bats etc.).

> *"So that's what it is, like the experience, that I found out through that… through the games and the role play I, … found out about the environment and the problems with it. I found out about what the different problems are called – what the terms are and that, maybe that was the most important thing." (2nd, EE)*

Increased or new knowledge about sustainability and protection of the environment are mentioned by participants taking part in projects focusing on these particular issues, but also by participants taking part in projects with other priorities. They learn when chatting with other participants in the informal parts of the project.

Networking

Projects result in the formation of networks. Such networks are content-specific and work as latent communities, with people 'knowing each other' and coming in touch when the necessity or opportunity arises, such as searching for information, advice, jobs, or project partners. These networks serve as channels to provide their members with valuable information which would otherwise only get to a limited audience. On this point, there are few references in the interviews.

The knowledge of the right people is an important basis for initiating and designing own follow-up activities with new partners or even organisations from other countries.

> *"I believe that if I leave the Czech Republic, and then come back after a while, and want to do something in this area, I know exactly who to visit." (2nd, CZ)*

"I think, that such projects are something really special, something great, because many informal learning processes are taking place. Let alone the fact, that you have such a network. You do not use it, but it exists. You know about it and you keep it for a very long time. And this is why I appreciate these projects being so valuable." (2ⁿᵈ, AT)

"I stayed in touch with the organisation." (E+/YiA PP at the Strasbourg Conference)

All members of the respective focus group at the Strasbourg Conference agreed to the statement, that networking is an integral part of E+/YiA projects and contributes to the personal development of the participants.

Little knowledge and gain in 'National youth policy'/'European youth strategy'

Youth policy is largely unknown to the interviewees, neither in the national nor in the European context, and there is only a very small or nearly no knowledge gain within the E+/YiA projects, because in almost all projects no explicit discussion about this topic takes place.

"Nothing ... practically nothing or nothing." (2ⁿᵈ, IT)

Besides others, one focus of all three Hungarian projects represented in the interview sample is youth policy and the second interviews partially show a gain in the respective knowledge.

In the interviews one year after the activity there is a tendency to connect youth policy with E+ and some participants report, that they learn more about their opportunities and advantages offered by the EU; parallelly there are many participants complaining not to have any information about possibilities to participate. However, this tendency shows, that the big majority of interviewees do not know concretely about the specific meaning of youth policy before the projects and that also in the second interview the interviewees understanding of this term remain very vague. Many interviewees record, that the situation, the concerns, and the current challenges young people are facing are discussed in the projects in various forms. Thereby the awareness for youth issues and even youth policy concerns is fostered implicitly to some extent.

Long-term effects in respect of knowledge

According to the analysis of the first and second interview some interviewees gain knowledge which is important for participation and active citizenship in the E+/YiA projects, whereas a considerable gain for more expeienced participants and in the areas sustainability/environment as well as Europe/EU can be stated. In the third interviews there is strong evidence for the persistency of this gained knowledge. The participants remember, what they learned, and mostly put on record, that in the meantime the gained knowledge or certain aspects of it became a conscious part of their body of knowledge and that it is partly now even more important to them. Of course they also see aspects which are not that important any more and it is evident, that they pass through many other influences and experiences, which contribute to their current state of knowledge. This can be observed exemplary in the Czech and Austrian samples with exclusively respectively mostly participants, who are already active in the civil sphere and who choose intentionally projects thematising various social and political topics or/and promoting engagement. Topics they learned about are for example the functioning of NGOs, youth work, the problem of discrimination

of different social groups and trying to contribute to make this situation better, Europe and generally acting in the public sphere. The following quote shows how detailed an interviewee reflects about the meaning of a project experience.

> *"I would not use such a word as influenced, I do not think it influenced me, it is more like I got in touch with an environment I would normally not visit, like people with disabilities, etc. It is one of the components of my development." (3rd, CZ)*

Some interviewees report about a gain in knowledge only in the third interview; their sight on the project approximately two to three years after the project obviously revealed effects, they have not perceived in the second interview. Several German participants for instance mention knowledge about youth work, politics, NGOs and participation only in the third interview. It can be assumed, that different influences in their life and an ongoing reflection process since the project lead to a more differentiated perception and/or to a fostered appreciation of the experiences of that time. Especially the interviews and the Strasbourg Conference contributed to a higher awareness of youth work and youth policy. In the Finnish sample could be observed, that more interviewees talk about a gain of knowledge about the EU in the third interview than in the second. Besides this, the majority of the Finnish and of the Italian interviewees feel they already have the necessary knowledge to participate actively with most of them mentioning that they could find out more if they wanted or needed to; but this should only be taken as tendencies since this issue was crossed in quite all interviews, but not asked systematically.

The second interview show, that a few of the interviewees who gained new knowledge, apply it in practice. In the third interviews can be seen, that again a few interviewees apply it at a later moment in time. Therefore the gained knowledge can be described as a repository the interviewees can resort to whenever they want or need. One interviewee for instance received information about social work and the respective requirements needed to become a professional social worker. Only in the third interview she reports that she followed up on this knowledge and visits now the respective school while she still travelled at the time of the second interview.

In respect of knowledge about national youth policy and/or the EU youth strategy the interviews two to three years after the project confirm the results of the interview one year after the project: there is only a very small or nearly no knowledge gain within the E+/YiA projects. Partly the interviewees say, that they heard the terms, but know nothing about it, or they admit, that they have never even heard about a EU youth strategy. A few interviewees got to know more about national youth policy due to their stronger involvement in the youth field. The knowledge about the EU youth strategy was deepened for again a few interviewees because they started to organise many youth exchanges.

The third interview shows, that the gain of knowledge about sustainable development and the protection of the environment is largely persistent – both according to the Maltese interviewees, who participated in projects with a focus on this topic, and according to some Austrian participants, who learned about it through their peers in the informal parts of the project; also two members of th German sample report about a gain in this topic in the third interview.

Last but not least the learning effects about Europe initiated through the project uphold their validity also in the third interview.

4.3 Skills

In order to participate in society and political life and to act as an active citizen, one needs to be equipped with specific skills, depending strongly on the concrete field of engagement. These skills can be arranged into two classes, referring on one hand to the ability of individuals to negotiate successfully with other people – the rather soft skills, which are necessary but not sufficient - and on the other hand to act efficiently in the civil and political arena, including the hard skills for conventional political participation. The first area centre around the ability 'to cooperate in a team', including communicative skills such as 'discussing convincingly', social skills, e.g. 'to compromise' and 'negotiate joint solutions' and intercultural skills, for example 'getting along with people from different backgrounds', whereas the meaning of different backgrounds refers to different categories like culture, social class, educational attainment, convictions etc. The skills of the second group could be summarised under the title 'acting in the civil and political arena'. At individual level, these refer to 'keeping up with changes', 'forming independent opinions' and in this context 'finding information'. These skills can be seen as a basis for skills for political participation, e.g. engaging oneself for society and politics through 'discussing political issues seriously' and through 'coming up with ideas', which could be helpful to one's community, organisation or initiative. To describe the skill set of an individual to act in the civil domain, both aforementioned categories need to be taken into account, as described in detail below.

4.3.1 Results of the quantitative study

According to the outlined understanding, 'civil and participation skills' are measured in the quantitative module through two batteries of questions, one focusing on the 'ability of an individual to negotiate with the world around him or her' (including items such as finding joint solutions, team cooperation, or discussion skills) and the other aiming at 'abilities to act in the civil and political arena' (including items such as keeping up with changes, finding information on different topics, or coming up with ideas to help their communities); these two components were used to create 'skills' index ranging from 0 representing no measurable skills in the person, to 10 standing for a highly skilled person in the civil and political arena. As was the case in the 'knowledge' area, even here the measurement is dependent on self-assessment of the respondents who rated themselves in the given competences (subjective measurement).

In general, the project participants scored between 7.3 and 7.7 in all four survey waves, and these scores are consistent throughout the subgroup testing (e.g. in gender and age groups, etc.). The project leader sample exhibits scores of 8.2 to 8.4 across all four survey waves, also with consistent results in case of subgroups (e.g. in gender and age groups, etc.). Difference between these two samples is not clear in statistical terms, but presumably may be occurring (confidence interval analysis suggests such option in some survey waves). This would mean that project leaders show higher levels of 'civil and participation skills' than the responding participants; a result which is consistent with the different roles and profiles of the two samples. Control group shows median levels of 6.1 to 7.2 across the four survey waves, with insufficient number of units of analysis for more detailed comparisons within the sample. Confidence intervals do not prove statistical differences between the control

group and the participant or project leader samples, nevertheless, the low number of units of analysis is apparently influencing the width of the confidence interval in case of control group, and therefore potentially distorting results. Increasing the number of units of analysis would cause the confidence intervals to be more precise, and potentially reveal statistical differences not detectable on the present sample.

There is a visible small increase in the general participant sample between the first and the second survey waves (median levels change from 7.3 to 7.7), while none of the other samples (project leaders and control group) exhibit any general shifts. The same is the case in detailed subgroup analyses: while in the participant sample, there are several subgroups which indicate increases in between measurements, no such developments are visible in the project leader or control group samples. Participant subgroups which show positive effects are the following: female participants show medium positive change between survey wave 1 and 2 (median levels of 7.0 and 7.6, respectively), as well as between the survey wave 1 and 4 (median levels of 7.0 and 7.6, respectively); participants with higher secondary education diploma show medium positive change between survey wave 1 and 2 (median levels of 7.1 and 7.8, respectively); participants who have never attended any specific civil or participation related courses show medium positive change between survey wave 1 and 4 (median levels of 6.7 and 7.3, respectively); participants who speak two foreign languages show small positive change between survey wave 1 and 2 (median levels of 7.2 and 7.6, respectively); participants who obtained relevant civil or participation knowledge from the project they participated in show small positive change between survey wave 1 and 2 (median levels of 7.6 and 7.8, respectively); and participants with middle levels of project ownership show medium positive change between survey wave 1 and 2 (median levels of 6.7 and 7.6, respectively).

Participants are also directly asked about their project experience in terms of skills development through the project participation during the second, third and fourth measurement, and an index was created to provide an overall picture of the participant gains in the 'skills' area as perceived and linked to the project participation by respondents of the surveys[77]. Median scores are rather high between 7.3 (measurement in second wave) and 6.7 (subsequent measurements in third and fourth waves), pointing at the fact that the participants themselves believe in rather high 'skills' gains through the project. Median scores do not exhibit any statistically significant difference,; in other words, the participants are admirably consistent when referring to their 'skills' gain through the project: they report the same results two to three months, one year and two to three years after the participation.

Interpretation

All in all, participants show increases in 'skills' levels over time, unlike the project leader and control group whose 'skills' levels stay constant over time. This leads to a conclusion that the project participation per se might have influenced participants in such a manner that they became more open towards the civil domain, gathering over time more 'skills' about in this sphere, than they had before participating in the project.

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[77] This question was asked in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th survey waves in order to determine whether this index results change, since they are based on subjective measurement: PP were asked to rate themselves in given areas. As an example, the respondent was asked: 'To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Through my participation in this project I improved my ability to discuss political topics seriously.' For details of index creation, please see Appendix A.

Unlike in case of 'civil and participation knowledge', in case of 'skills', it is females who benefit from the 'skills' development more than their male counterparts, which might, again, suggest a possibility that the female participants come to the projects with different motivations than male participants. More specifically, it seems that while males focus more on 'knowledge', females aim at developments in 'skills'.

Effects detected in higher secondary diploma holders may, again, be connected to the life trajectories of the participants, as described in case of 'knowledge' above. Interestingly, as was the case in 'knowledge' area, even in 'skills', the participants who took no specific courses dealing with the civil or participation domain, benefited more than those who already took some further education in this area. Speaking number of foreign languages also makes a difference in both *knowledge and skills* domains, which is in line with the fact that there is a strong international dimension in projects the E+/YiA is financially supporting (as shows in project leaders who speak three or more languages in the area of 'knowledge').

Finally, interesting shifts, again, show in connection to the project participation itself, as was the case in 'knowledge' area described above. Those participants who exhibited signs of project ownership, in other words, the participants who felt well integrated into the project and felt engaged throughout the process, show positive developments in the 'skills' area. At the same time, the 'skills' development is visible also in those participants who indicated that they had learned 'civil and participation related knowledge' during the project itself. Both of the findings support the hypothesis that the project participation in itself may have positive effects on participants in connection to the 'civil and participation skills', especially such projects which develop the area of 'civil and participation related knowledge' in participants, and integrate and engage its participants in an efficient way.

The overlaps between the 'knowledge' and 'skills' areas, highlighted above, may suggest that the interconnectedness of these two areas causes similar groups to develop simultaneously in both the knowledge and the skills area, using one to foster the other, and vice versa.

4.3.2 Results of the qualitative study

Awareness-raising and deepening of existing skills; gain of new skills to a smaller extent

In respect of skills the interview partners benefit of the project in first line by becoming aware of abilities, they already possess, largely by learning by doing processes within the participatory non-formal learning settings. This approach enables also a further development and deepening of these already existing skills.

"And now I have this great experience and I can also direct others towards participating in projects /… / afterwards, I understood that I'm much better at some things than I thought before." (2nd, EE)

"She [project leader] told me, that she had the impression, that I would be a suitable type for this work [social work]. And I thought, yes, I like to work with other people, and the experience I made in all the chats with that boy let me realise, that I liked it to listen to him, to encourage him and to reactivate a more positive attitude in him." (2nd, AT)

Applying skills in the project allows to estimate the extent of these skills, what is for some young people positively surprising.

To a smaller extent, interviewees also acquire new skills, whereas the difference between acquiring new skills on one side and becoming aware and deepening already existing skills cannot be specified exactly.

Specific skills for participation and active citizenship

While the interviews show a great learning effect in abilities of individuals to negotiate successfully with other people – as outlined in the beginning of chapter 5 an important basis for participation and active citizenship -, the effects on the rather specific ability group in the context of participation and active citizenship 'Acting in the civil and political arena' are weaker.

Starting with the skills enabling individuals to negotiate successfully with other, the interviews show a great learning effect in respect of *"… teamwork – how to work together in a team" (2nd, MT)*. Being able to better cooperate in a team is first of all effected through the clearly fostered social skill to compromise and through strengthened communicative skills. Common tasks, core of the E+/YiA projects, demand from the participants the ability to develop compromises, which can be illustrated by the Finnish interview partner, who has to produce a film in a group of 30 persons and need to find decisions together with all those participants in many questions and little details in order to get the film done. Three rather young German participants report, that they become aware of and deepen their skill to compromise in the project, and then also apply it at school, university and in their working environment. Discussing convincingly is one of various communication skills, which are fostered to a distinct extent through the project participation; in this context 'defending one`s opinion or ideas against others or even in front of a jury', 'bringing different perspectives and facts into debates', 'speaking freely in groups', 'presenting in front of others' and 'discussing fair and diplomatically' have to be mentioned. For the purpose of convincing others of the own opinion, an Austrian and a Maltese participants formulate their learning results as follows:

> *"I started to learn, that you cannot always succeed with a frontal, not diplomatic cultural discussion. Often the 'Austrian approach' from the side is better." (2nd, AT)*

> *"When there is disagreement, I used to hold back and then push forward when the argument died down – now I have realised that it is better that if you have an opinion that you express it in the heat of the argument." (2nd, MT)*

A basis for becoming good in convincing other people is the skill to understand the arguments of the other discussers; some participants improve this in the project:

> *"During the project you learned many useful skills. You heard new thoughts from others and I took a step forward in understanding other people's points of view.--- I will never forget it." (2nd, FI)*

'To cooperate in a team' ist related 'to get along with people from different backgrounds'. The following quote illustrates, that interview partners are conscious of its importance:

> *"You have to learn to get along with everybody as you need this later in life for work."* (2nd, DE)

Besides this, a basic openness is needed and many interviewees report, that due to the project they overcame their uncertainty and *"learn, that you should not be shy and that you really can approach other people and genuinely speak and talk to them."* (2nd, DE) *"approached new people in a more confident way"* (2nd, DE) and *"realised that I actually get along with people rather well. Even if I'm shy."* (2nd, FI) Especially for the very young participants the acceptance by and the orientation towards peers is highly important. Therefore, overcoming the situation of getting to know each other in the project means an important step for them. And as could be learned from a former RAY study[78], even people considering themselves as very open, were surprised in their retrospective view on their project participation, that they still became much more open and got to know each other extremely fast and easily.

To get to know others from different backgrounds includes also the acquisition of knowledge about the differences.

"I learned about the Romanians and their culture, how it is." (2nd, MT)

The projects enable participants to deal with this knowledge of differences, which can be annoying or cause misunderstandings. The project settings offer enough time, possibilities and pedagogical accompaniment to chat, discuss, approach and to open up to other cultures, what leads to an increased tolerance, open-mindedness and respect towards others. Many interviewees report, that their prejudices are reduced and that they learn to live diversity in a proactive way.

> *"Now, basically, I'm not afraid of communicating with other people. I don't know, in the past, I wouldn't call it racism, but ... let's say if it was an Afro-American, I was afraid, because s/he was somebody different. It's not like that anymore. Basically, they're people just like us."* (2nd, EE)

The strongest effect through the projects within the skill group 'Acting in the civil and political arena' can be seen in project management skills such as project planning, project writing, cultural management, fundraising and leading a group. In the second interview the youths share how they either consolidate their skills as leaders or how they realise that they possess leadership skills and that the exchange help them to develop these skills further.

> *"Now I would do almost everything differently. There would be more games, less professional content. This was the first project which I had done from the beginning to the end. I still think it was a success, but we have made mistakes, we have learned a lot from it. ,,, For example now I would better distribute the tasks, rather than doing everything as a one-man army."* (3rd, HU)

> *"If I go back to the E+/YiA project … we are doing workshops … I have learned how to speak in public, to manage/lead some things, to organise some events …"* (3rd, SI)

> *"I think so, because like before I wasn't ready at all to deal with any projects, because it just seemed like so much work and responsibility. (…) But like after*

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[78] Fennes et al. 2012.

this project, it just seems like less work… and much easier – understanding it and doing it." (2ⁿᵈ, EE)

"It gave me lots of purely practical skills, such as writing up a project, debate, explain." *(2ⁿᵈ, CZ)*

The projects also offer the possibility to try out to be a leader and to provide with important feedback from the counterparts:

"I noticed that people trust me to be the leader." (2ⁿᵈ, FI)

Also, empathy and the feeling of being capable to motivate or support others are mentioned occasionally and belong to the abovementioned project management skillset.

"In the end of the project the other participants told me, that they are glad, that I motivated them to participate again and again and that`s why they could gain experiences, which they appreciate very much." (2ⁿᵈ, AT)

Project managers also need a certain self-efficacy. There are some single examples in the interviews that this is supported by the project:

"I have understood better that I can have an influence. Everybody's acts have an effect." (2ⁿᵈ, FI)

There is little evidence in the interviews, that the skills 'keeping up with changes' and 'forming independent opinions' are fostered through project participation.

"The advantage of such things is that you are put outside routine, and you have to know how to adapt and learn something new." (2ⁿᵈ, SI)

"As I said, expressing own opinion, thinking with own head, and some flexibility, adaptability …" (3ʳᵈ, SI)

The same goes for 'discussing political issues seriously'. Three Slovenian interview partners for example learn how to deal with new situations, to adapt, how to use research for their argumentation and to think on their own. Of course, very informed and engaged participants took part in the projects with their respective skills much or above-average developed even before the project began; this could be observed for example in the Czech or Austrian interviewee sample. Partly these participants became aware of their abilities through the project experience.

Some interviewees develop ideas during the project, which could be implemented in their communities or organisations at home and according to the third interview some of them put it into practice (see chapter 4.4.2). But there are few hints, that they are sensitized in general for the skill to come up with ideas, which could be helpful to one`s community, organisation or initiative.

One Czech project should be presented as a special example for the enhancement of media literacy, a skill, which should not be underestimated in the context of project management and therefore participation in society and politics. Since the whole project was a reality show with episodes published online throughout the project, participants learn how to speak in front of a camera so that no one could twist what they said and use it out of the context they said it in, and they learn how much cutting the video influences the final video message.

Further social skills and foreign language proficiency

Besides the skills already mentioned in the second paragraph of this subchapter, the participants acquire further social skills – also considering that the acquisition of social skills might be glorified sometimes. Above all interviewees state, that they have become more self-confident.

> *"By doing so much by yourself, you could also put aside your weaknesses." (2nd, DE)*

> *"… you do not know the language ... then stay in a new place where you do not have friends and who do not you speak the language and everything ... So, it undoubtedly gives you a lot of courage." (2nd, IT)*

In the extraordinary setting of E+/YiA projects with a high concentration of social interaction and topic-related involvement participants are facing challenges, which are mostly no regular parts of their all-day life or they are even completely new for them, because they do not play an important role in the formal educational settings of schools, e.g. to be abroad alone for the first time. In consequence, their self-confidence is fostered and this supports their agency, independence and general personal development as many interviewees put on record.

> *"I think it [the project] has changed so much in my planning but also in my ability to handle my work. And so this obviously comes back to my personal life. Because I've learned so many things: I've learned how to manage time, I've learned how to handle the issues, I've also learned to let many things run and thus allow for a truer exchange between people. [...] This is also being used for future projects that I am preparing for." (2nd, IT)*

Only sporadic statements about the ability to receive criticism and negative feedback could be analysed. Not all weaknesses are always overcome, sometimes the interviewees realise and accept their limits in certain skills. For example, one participant feels that her fear of public speaking holds her back. The assessment of one`s skills can be considered as an important skill itself.

An improvement of foreign language proficiency can be observed in many interview partners. Even if the young people do not dare to start speaking English in the beginning of the project, most of them overcome the inhibition threshold, because they want to be involved in what is going on. Quite a few people are motivated by the project to follow up on their progress in English by attending a course at home or planning a further visit in an English-speaking country. Like this, many international possibilities open up for the participants:

> *"What surprised me the most was that I worked up the courage to speak English… the first time I talked about how I'm really scared of English… of speaking English, but this encouraged me and I even applied to go to the US for next year." (2nd, EE)*

Long-term effects in respect of skills

As shown in the previous paragraphs, interviewees report in the interview one year after the project, that they become aware of or acquire different skills through their project participation; skills, which are specific or an important basis in respect of participation and active citizenship. In the interviews two to three years after the

project the interviewees are asked again open questions, if they think they have skills enabling them to participate in civil and political life and to be an active citizen – and if yes, which skills concretely. If they did not mention the same skills like in the second interview, the interviewer asked them specifically about the mentioned skills: if they still remember them and if the skills are still important for them.

In the third interview the interview partners mention many skills as answer to the open question, they had also talked about in the second interview as effect of their project participation. Partly they still attribute the same importance to them like in the second interview, some also say, that in the meantime they had become even more aware of an acquired skill. Some of those interviewees report that they developed these skills further by applying them after the project and benefiting from various learning environments like further intercultural meetings, own civil initiatives, engagements in the social field etc. In these cases the interviewees assess the E+/YiA project as 'one piece of the puzzle' contributing to develop a certain skill; in many cases the E+/YiA project initiated this process and the interviewees call it a 'stepping stone' or a 'first step'. A Maltese interviewee describes himself as *"more outspoken"* as result of the project in the second interview and concretizes this in the third interview:

> *"I think that the project made me a better person and I learnt how to stand up and to articulate better my arguments. … I have taken some additional electives at University also about it."* (3rd, MT)

The described scenario is the case for both, specific skills for participation and active citizenship and rather general skills, which can be seen as an important basis. In the third interview interviewees attribute persistent effects for example to the specific skill 'to be a leader', 'to discuss more diplomatically and therefore more convincingly', 'organising and manage (youth) projects with non-formal methods', 'to work with groups', 'to be a patient and competent communication partner' or 'to get along with people from different backgrounds'. In respect of the rather basic skills they mention foreign language proficiency, a few practical skills like gardening and many different social skills, e.g. fostered balance, self-confidence, courage, empathy, flexibility or:

> *"I became aware that I am able to stay together with other people – this was the strongest effect of the project for me and this had a big influence on my life."* (3rd, AT)

Other interviewees did not put the skills, they report about in the second and third interview as effect of the project, into practice, because there was no situation, in which this skill was asked. For example two Austrian interviewees are still impressed of what they had learned in the project about the interaction with blind people, but since the project, they had never again met blind people.

There are also interviewees who do not mention the skills in the third interview, they saw as effects of the project in the second interview, who do not remember these skills, when the interviewer tell them what they said in the second interview or who remember these skills, but say, that these skills are now less important. This does not mean, that these skills are not persistent at all, but maybe these skills fade into the background, because other and in the respective life situation more important skills are needed.

Other interview partners explicitly say in the third interview, that a skill they had mentioned in the second interview as effect of the project, is no effect of the project. Also in this case, this does not necessarily mean, that the effects described in the second interview are not valid any more. This could also be interpreted, that the influence of the project on a skill was rather present to the interviewee in the interview one year after the project and that in the meantime the reflection on this skill developed further or was deepened, integrating also influences from before or after the project, in the third interview. For instance, one interviewee says in the third interview that she had already learned to compromise in her childhood with her three sisters and brothers and not only through the project as she had said in the second interview.

There are very few examples for interviewees, who become aware of a skill as effect of the project only in the third interview and not in the second. One Finnish interview partner reports in the third interview, that he realised only recently, that his management skills were fostered through the project.

Furthermore, some interviewees also gained completely new skills since the second interview.

Looking at national interviewee samples, different profiles of interviewees and accordingly different developments through the project can be observed. For instance, the young people in the Czech sample were already quite active with their skills or even above-average developed before the project and this resulted in a gain of the awareness of their own abilities after the second interview. That the projects helped the participants to re-evaluate their own capabilities, mostly to figure out that they are much more capable than they thought they were before the project, was proven in the third interview. The participants from Estonia in contrast are relatively unexperienced during the first interview and all of them feel that the project participation provide them with communication skills, the ability for teamwork, management skills and partly also with fostered intercultural communication skills through increased tolerance and open-mindedness towards people with other religions, cultures or races. In the third interview almost all interviewees emphasise their skills, also in respect of leadership, which they developed further since the second interview, due to both, the E+/YiA project and other influences.

4.4 Practice

4.4.1 Results of the quantitative study

'Active citizenship / citizenship practice' is measured using five different indexes in this study, as shown in Appendix A. Firstly, an index indicating 'general participation' of an individual in civil society and political life is measured on an eleven-point scale where the zero represents an individual who is not active in civil society and/or political domains at all, while the ten indicates a highly active individual. 'Gathering information' is measured as a separate and distinctive area of practice within the participation in civil society and political life, ranging again from zero (an individual who never gathers any information on civil and political life) to ten (a person who is gathering such information several times a day). Furthermore, 'environmental activities' are yet another index, showing people who are never engaged in environmental issues (those are represented by the zero) as well as respondents who

are nearly always active when it comes to environmental issues (represented by the ten on the scale). Lastly, two distinct types of political participation are measured: 'conventional' and 'non-conventional political participation'. 'Conventional political participation' represents activities related to official democratic processes, such as voting or running for an office; the zero represents those respondents who are never active in this respect, while the ten indicates a very active individual. 'Non-conventional political participation' shows such activities which are not always related directly to the official political processes outlined above, but nevertheless are still occurring within the rule of law limits, such as signing a petition, participating in a peaceful rally, or making a donation. In this case, again, the zero represents such individuals who are not active in this respect at all, while the ten shows respondents who are very active in this area. All of the abovementioned measurement need to be treated with caution, since real and concrete activities are counted[79], and individuals are only able to fit in a limited amount of the given variety of activity options into their everyday life. Taking this into account, basically no respondent would be able to reach 10: this would mean that the respondent is so engaged that they do very little in their everyday lives apart from being active in the political and civil domain. At the same time, these indexes are only constructed for the participants and project leader samples, since the control group was only asked about these activities in the first survey wave, and therefore no comparisons are possible. Lastly, the activity-related questions were only asked in the first, third and fourth survey waves, since the time difference between the first and the second survey wave (two to three months) suggested that not much will happen. Therefore, three measurements are quoted in all of the results for each aforementioned index below.

'General participation in civil society'

'General participation practice' in the participant sample reaches medians between 3.6 and 4.0 in all three measurements. In the project leader sample, the median values are between 3.9 and 4.6 in all three measurements. Confidence interval analyses do not indicate statistically significant differences between the participant and the project leader sample results, and in both groups the results seem to be constant across subgroups (e.g. age, gender, education, etc.). As emphasised in the previous text, these results are lower than the ones in indexes covering other areas; this is likely due to the nature of the questions, which asked about specific activities and their frequency, and therefore any median values must be read with regard to what is realistically possible for an individual to engage in, since much time is consumed by other activities, such as work, study, or private life. A small decrease is visible for the participant sample in the area of 'general participation in civil society', the levels falling from the median of 4.0 to 3.6 between the third and fourth survey wave. Similar small to medium sized decreases can be seen in the following subgroups within the participant sample: participants who participated in a project abroad (median values of 4.1 in the third survey wave and of 3.5 in fourth survey wave); participants who are university graduates (median values of 4.2 in the first and third survey waves and of 4.1 in the fourth survey wave); and participants who have attended a special education course focusing on topics important for participation in civil society and political life

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[79] Each of the respondents was able to share their civic and political participation related activities, and responses to each of the items were then taken into account, creating an index of the overall participation practice of an individual.

(median value of 3.9 in the first survey wave and of 3.4 in the fourth survey wave). Interestingly, in the participant sample subgroups, increases are detected as well: a profound increase in participants whose highest educational attainment is secondary education (median values of 3.1 in first survey wave and of 4.1 in third survey wave); a small increase in participants who took part in no specific education focusing on civil and participation area (median value of 3.2 in the first survey wave and of 3.5 in the third survey wave).

In case of the project leader sample, a small increase is measured with median value of 4.2 in the first survey wave and of 4.6 in the third one. Further subgroup analyses show, nevertheless, both positive and negative developments in various subgroups of the project leader sample. Increases can be seen in the following subgroups: female project leaders (median value of 4.1 in the first survey wave and of 4.7 in the third survey wave); in project leaders over 30 years of age (median value of 4.4 in the first survey wave and of 4.9 in the third survey wave); in project leaders who participated in projects abroad (median value of 3.9 in the first survey wave and of 4.9 in the third survey wave); project leaders with a university diploma (median value of 4.3 in the first survey wave and of 4.7 in the third survey wave); and project leaders speaking 3 or more foreign languages (median values of 4.3 in the first survey wave and of 4.7 in the third survey wave). Decreases occur in the following subgroups: female project leaders (median value of 4.7 in the third survey wave and of 3.1 in the fourth survey wave); project leaders who obtained knowledge relevant to the civil and participation area through the project participation (median value of 4.6 in the third survey wave and of 3.6 in the fourth survey wave).

Interpretation

In this particular area, the 'general participation in civil society', taking into account the results of both the participant and the project leader samples may provide a basis for potential interpretation of the findings. Vast majority of the subgroups show the same pattern, although only the female project leaders exhibit statistically significant results in both its aspects: increase of the 'general participation in civil society' between the first and third waves of the survey, and a following decrease of the this index between the third and fourth survey waves. Even though the significant results are sporadically distributed between the negative and positive effects in both the participant and the project leader samples, the pattern stays put in almost all cases. It can be hypothesized, that the participation in civil society and political life of both the participants and the project leaders increases in a period following the project participation, while after a certain time period (in this case after 3 years from the project participation), the 'civil and participation practice' levels drop.

While the interpretation of project influence on the increased levels of 'practice' in civil society and political life is apparent, it cannot be supported by the data, since (a) control group results are missing and (b) the second survey wave brought no data in this respect, and therefore the results refer to the levels of 'practice' before the project participation, one year after, and three years after the participation. An alternative hypothesis, taking into account external factors, is that overall societal and political situation in the observed period included events serious enough to increase participation in civil society and political life in the European population as such, hence influencing the results of the presented surveys. Once the overall hypothesized situation, causing the increase in 'practice' levels, passed, the 'practice' levels drop.

Another reason for the drop of the practice levels may also lie in the changes of the overall situation of the respondents: life trajectory-related changes. As an example, the percentage of participants who lived in partnerships or were married increased rather rapidly over the observed period of three years (see Table 2): from about 24% before participating in the project, to about 41% three years after that. These developments are understandable, given that both the participant and the project leader samples contain young people, and the decrease of time available to be devoted to the public domain in terms of 'active political or civil participation practice', may be limited due to other obligations over time.

Table 2: Development of relationship backgrounds of the test and control group samples

Wave	Status	Test Group	Control Group
1	Single	76.3%	75.0%
	Married/Living in a partnership	23.7%	25.0%
3	Single	72.9%	Not asked
	Married/Living in a partnership	27.1%	Not asked
4	Single	59.3%	Not asked
	Married/Living in a partnership	40.7%	Not asked

Note: PP sample N=59; only those respondents who responded to all survey waves permitted into the analyses.

Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Practice in information gathering

Focusing on one of the main areas of practical activities within the domain of participation in civil and political life, 'gathering information' about the public domain, the participant sample shows steady median values of 6.0 across all three survey waves, rather average results, with consistent results also across the subgroups (e.g. age groups, gender, etc.). In case of project leader sample, the median values are between 7.7 and 7.3 across all three survey waves, an above average score, with consistent results across subgroups. Confidence intervals show, that at least in case of the third survey wave, the participant and project leader sample medians are statistically significantly different, with project leader sample gathering more information than the participant sample.

The participant sample shows no effects across the survey waves whatsoever, including subgroups. In case of the project leader sample, the general measurement shows a small drop between the first survey wave and the third survey wave (median values of 7.7 and 7.3, respectively). This drop occurs also in several subgroups: to a medium extent in female project leaders (median values of 7.3 in third survey wave and of 6.7 in fourth survey wave); to a medium and profound extent in project leaders who attended formal education with a specific focus on civil and participation domain (median of 8.0 in the first survey wave, of 8.7 in third survey wave, and of 7.3 in fourth survey wave, with statistically significant differences between the first and the third as well as between the third and the fourth survey waves); and to a profound extent in the project leaders who speak 3 or more foreign languages (median value of 7.0 in the first survey wave, of 7.3 in the third survey wave, and of 6.0 in the fourth survey wave, with statistically significant effects between the first and the fourth as well as between the third and the fourth survey waves).

Interpretation

The results stated above seem to be rather negative on the first sight: rather average results in the participant sample across all waves, and decreases in project leader sample between waves, including several subgroups. Explanation for these results may, in this case, lie in the way the questions were put in the questionnaire for both the participant and the project leader samples, as shown in the Appendix A. Detailed look at the items which constitute this particular index shows that the questions aimed at the following media as information source: reading newspapers, listening to and watching the news. All of these refer to traditional media: newspapers, radio, and television. In case of the participant and project leader respondents who belong to young age groups, it is possible that these results do not reflect as much of a tendency to gather less information than several years ago, but maybe more of a switch to other types of media and information sources, probably web-based. This is a methodology-focused finding reflecting the approach used, and suggesting changes to such surveys in the future, rather than a clear research finding in the area of 'information gathering practices' of the participants and project leaders.

Environmental participation practice

Index focusing on activities the respondents take part in and connected to the environmental area shows that both the participant and the project leader samples score above average, with median values of 7.5 across all survey waves in participant sample and of 7.0 to 7.5 in the project leader sample. Both the general measurements and the subgroup analysis show no statistically significant differences across the waves or between the subgroups.

Interpretation

This result is in line with expectations: young people are interested in environmental matters, and actively engage in waste separation, water conservation and similar day-to-day activities and practices. Their above-average results across all survey waves suggest long-term engagement in such activities.

Conventional participation practice

Index focusing on practices and activities within a 'conventional participation' domain, such as voting or running for an office, shows that participant sample scores above average, reaching median values of 6.0 to 8.0, with the project leader sample reaching similar levels in median values of 8.0 across all survey waves. These values are consistent across subgroups as well as across survey waves, with no statistically significant differences detected during the analyses. At the same time, analysis of the confidence intervals does not show any statistically significant differences between the participant and the project leader median values in any of the survey waves.

Interpretation

'Conventional participation' is an area mostly covered by media as well as by the formal educational system, as well as by other educational opportunities. Both participants and project leaders are well-versed in these practices and engage in them continuously and long-term. In scores as high as exhibited by the participant and project leader samples in this respect, shifts are apparently less likely, since most of

the respondents engages to a large extent in 'conventional participation practice' already[80].

Non-conventional participation practice

Index depicting practice levels in the area of 'non-conventional practices', such as signing a petition, or donating money to a particular cause, shows under average median scores in both participants and project leaders, with results in both groups across all survey waves reaching median levels of 2.5. This result is in line with further analyses which indicate no differences between the participant and the project leader samples as well as no differences in subgroups (e.g. gender, etc.) or across the survey waves.

Interpretation

This area exhibits results which are in stark contrast to the results concerning 'conventional participation practice'. It suggests, that both the participants and the project leaders are engaged in these activities to a lower extent than is the case in conventional participation practice. What needs to be taken into account, again, are the activities the questions asked about: signing a petition, donating to a certain cause, etc. These are, to some extent, one-time activities which may not occur often even though the individual is active in other ways in a given time period; while the 'conventional participation practices' are state-regulated in terms of frequency and timing. This self-regulated and state-regulated framework may influence the frequency in which individuals engage in given practices. It seems the project participation does not have a visible influence in this respect, and these practices remain on a certain level over long periods of time in both participants and project leaders.

4.4.2 Results of the qualitative study

In the first interview, almost all participants describe themselves as active in personal areas such as friends, sports and hobbies. In respect of participation and active citizenship the whole spectrum is represented from being not active at all, through medium level of activity up to very active young people in civil society.

Some interviewees report a positive influence on their participation

Most of the participants are not more active after the project than before it. Several interviewees even express that they are less active in issues regarding participation and active citizenship one year after the project due to a high workload at school, university or in their apprenticeship or job. In consequence of an ongoing overload a few highly engaged participants decide to concentrate on less activities in the future in order to focus on their remaining tasks and to implement them better. But some interviewees report about a concrete positive influence on their participation: They engage more in the social sector, do something for their community or region, focus more their political activities working more systematically in the public arena, even in areas, which are completely new for them.

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[80] Examples of initiatives rather successfully engaging both active and inactive young people in the social and political matters exist, but these are rather specific large-scale projects such as 'This Time I am Voting' initiative launched before the European elections 2019. These activities are, however, incomparable by both scope and duration to common E+/YiA projects.

Especially young people, who are already active before the project, are influenced positively in different ways. Some become more active, get more involved in different organisations at the same time and initiate civil society action themselves.

> *"The project inspired me to do more voluntary work. In Romania, we see directly in a striking way the poverty that there is in Romania – saw many children and this is why I want to do voluntary work with children. … I want to go to London to carry out voluntary work with Mother Theresa nuns – if it weren't for the project I would not have been interested." (2nd, MT)*

> *"I went to this organisation called 'In the Name of Animals', and now I'm a volunteer there and I've organised two... protests in Tapa and Tartu against using animals in circuses, for example thanks to... that... organisation /.../ now I also joined the youth section of the socialists, but I haven't had time to deal with that, because there's so much more to do and I recently also joined the Estonian Union of Student Representations, their public policy area." (2nd, EE)*

Furthermore, already existing engagements, which have not been practiced any more or to a smaller extent than in the beginning, are reinforced.

One participant should also be mentioned, who participate explicitly with the intention to become more active in civil society and finally, as reported in the second interview, he indeed becomes very engaged, benefiting highly from his project participation.

Interviewees participating in such a project for the first time often report a general enthusiasm about the project, which results mostly from a mix of several reasons, e.g. the appreciation of the community with the other participants, the experience to be able to actively participate in the project or the awareness of positive results of the project for society and politics. Therefore, they are motivated to engage more often in further projects or in civil society.

> *"Yes, I believe, because I became motivated to participate in more projects for a good cause. … people grow together, bridges are built, and countries are connected." (2nd, AT)*

The participation in an E+/YiA project itself cannot be interpreted as active citizenship per se. Some interviewees apply for a project because they see it as cheap holidays, some want to fill up free time or they participate, because the group, they are a member of, take part, without reflecting (much) about the purpose of the project. The formulation in the following quotation *"It was so fun"* would therefore need a more concrete explanation.

> *"Umm, in some sense I'm definitely more active. … It was so fun that I'm going to participate in more things, because I just want to experience it again." (2nd, EE)*

Conventional and non-conventional political participation

The clear majority of interviewees take part in elections on regularly basis respectively they will vote once they are eligible to. Within the very engaged interviewees are single ones making a conscious decision before each election, whether they participate. And within the rather less engaged ones are some interviewees who usually vote, but do not take it so important that they would organise postal vote, when they are on holidays or they sometimes prefer to sleep on Sunday morning instead of going to the polling station.

Most interviewees did not or do not run for office and/or engage in a political party; a few rather young participants have not even thought about that possibility. The following quotation represents one often mentioned reason of most of them:

> *"First, there is no party representing my values and attitudes, and this means, that I would have to subordinate myself and let people first 'hump' me down until I fit into this form." (2nd, AT)*

Others say that they would very fast be the grumbler, reject hierarchical systems or do not feel prepared to publicly expose themselves; politics is *"not their thing" (3rd, EE)* and they are *"scared as I feel accountable and too young" (3rd, MT)*. The just quoted Austrian interviewee did the interview together with a fellow who also participated in the same E+/YiA project. He adds:

> *"I would rather start an initiative or a movement, that stands for an idea." (2nd, AT)*

> *"And I just think that you can also influence the system from the outside, through film for example, and thus can easily bind a certain awareness. By addressing issues that could be polarising and thereby becoming a political issue." (3rd, AT)*

This also applies to many other interview partners. Almost all of the few interviewees who had run for office or who are engaged in a committee, did not and do not do this in the political sphere, but in the organisations, they are member of, or at university in the student council or parliament. One Maltese project for example lead to the foundation of a NGO and six out of seven interviewees intend to be more active within it (second interview) respectively three want to overtake more responsibility in the NGO (third interview). A few interviewees do not exclude a political engagement totally when they are older (*"let`s see in ten years", 3rd, FI*), for example as plan B in case the aspired career fails, when they know better what they want to achieve or push forward or:

> *"I can imagine to run for office in the future when I will be older and will not have to prove myself anymore and will only work for the general goodness and not for my success. I would probably do this on European level, because it has the best reputation." (3rd, SI)*

According to the second interview taking part in elections and running for office are not fostered through the projects.

In the first interview around half of the interviewees talk about signing online petitions and/or taking part in demonstrations. There are almost no hints in the interviews, that these forms of participation are fostered.

Engagement in environmental protection, keeping oneself informed and taking part in discussions partly fostered

The engagement in environmental protection and sustainable development is already high before the project and is strengthened through the project; also, the interest in this topic and the knowledge about it are high and are effected positively (see chapters 4.1.2 and 4.2.2).

Several participants look for information about the country, in which their project took place, or for topics their project focused on. But only a few interviewees keep themselves informed permanently on social and political issues on a qualitatively higher level as effect of the project, e.g. they question the agenda setting of media,

they consume media more critically, try to follow as many different sources as possible, do not rely on mainstream media and discuss the verycity of news. Also the expression of one`s political opinion is only fostered in quite single cases.

Hungarian participants report that they discussed social and political topics in the project intensively and that they appreciated this very much; they visited Hungarian minorities in neighbouring countries who are disadvantaged there due to their status as minority. One interviewee reports, that with the project colleagues she finally found people to discuss with and another one stresses the importance of discussing within a democratic framework in the project, because he perceives a negative change in the style of Hungarian public discourses. This has to be seen in the context of Hungarian politics and of the Hungarian referendum about the distribution of migrants in Europe in 2016. – This is the only hint for a fostered participation in discussions through the project. Very rarely ideas for activities resulted from the project.

'Advanced participants' apply deepened knowledge in their civil engagement

As outlined in the chapter about knowledge (4.2.2) so called 'more experienced participants' deepen their already existing knowledge about a certain issue by participating in an E+/YiA project focusing on this issue. The second interviews show that these interviewees also apply the deepened knowledge in their civil engagement in the organisations they have been already involved before the project or that they start a new initiative. This should be shown by following up on the examples given in the chapter about knowledge. The interviewee who strengthen his knowledge about development cooperation and who is engaged in a respective organisation for a long time says in the second interview:

> *"If today people talk about 'the poor pigs down in the south' or about 'the lazy Africans', I can give another answer than before because of the project." (2nd, AT)*

The second interviewee integrated the living standards, which have been developed in the project for a certain social group of interest, in her university seminar and she engages in building a lobby for those young people as well. It could be observed in several cases, that participants integrate outcomes of the projects in resolutions, statements or claims, trying to distribute the content, to capture the interest of people, stakeholders and politicians for this issue and to advocate for it. The third interviewee integrate the outcomes of the project discussions about gender roles into her bachelor thesis and in her respective engagement as well. – These young people may develop to influential multipliers due to project participation. It can be also concluded, that there are E+/YiA projects with high-quality contents, otherwise they would not be attractive for the interviewees with a respective foreknowledge and engagement. The following interviewee is already an active member of an organisation protecting the environment. The project specialises his knowledge and he takes appropriate steps further:

> *"I thought that it was going to be like another course, but the experience changed my view of my studies and that is why I am now studying Earth systems." (2nd, MT)*

Effects on the choice of education and profession

As can be seen in the last quotation, some young men and women got inspirations for their professional career through their project participation. They realise, that they

want to contribute to society and politics also professionally in their everyday life. They start a respective apprenticeship or study or even dare a change.

> *"It changed perspective of my future job." (E+/YiA PP at the Strasbourg Conference)*

This could be observed for the areas of environmental protection, cultural management as well as for social and pedagogical work in various forms. One interviewee finnished her annoying apprenticeship in the bank and only knew, that she would never retur in this job. She got to know about the E+/YiA project from a friend and during the project a team member discovered her ability to listen and talk empathically with others (see chapter 4.3.2). From this moment on she wants to become a social worker and reports in the third interview, that she finally does the apprenticeship at the school for social work. – Some interviewees get the chance to become part of a university programme, e.g. in the area of civil society, or of a research project at university. A considerable number of participants also decide to spend one semester abroad as a result of the project participation.

Long-term effects in respect of practice

As described in the introduction of chapter 3 many different events can have an influence on the participants throughout three years. This can be well illustrated with a participant, who was very engaged already before her project participation. Her already long lasting feeling of overload plus a big frustration after the bad result of the green party in the legislative elections in Austria provoke a stop of all the interviewees engagement in university policy and a new start in a computer initiative dealing with the digital upheaval, advising governments and aiming at justice and data protection; furthermore and in parallel to her studies the interview partner tries to establish a career as speaker, who can be booked by organisations, because she realised to have this ability and wants to develop it further. She also could not realise the offer to write her thesis at a foreign university, because it came up, that there is no agreement with her home university.

Taking into account that the one or other interviewee (temporarily) reduced or changed her/his civil engagement due various reasons, it should be noted, that generally speaking the interviewees who are engaged in the civil area already before the project as well as those, who start their engagement due to the project, are still active. Many interview partners report of plenty different developments within their engagement: They make trainings, overtake more responsibility in the committees of their organisation, they are charged to coordinate the volunteers, support the formation of a nationwide head association for voluntary work, organise and implement summer camps for the younger members, start initiatives and much more.

Some interviewees see a direct link between their civil engagement and the E+/YiA project, they participated in, also in the third interview, for example:

> *"I am now a very active person and take part in opportunities as well as organise opportunities – the project started this all. Active participation means that you do voluntary work, that you vote with responsibility, that you take care of the environment." (3rd, MT)*

"It was easier to be in Tanzania when I already had interest to internationalisation [due to the E+/YiA project] and I got a good international feeling from that trip, so it is easier

to get involved with other international things in future." (3ʳᵈ, FI). The Czech interviewees report in the third interview, that their E+/YiA projects – all with a focus on participation and active citizenship – tend to make them think of political participation in one way or another. In some cases, they are encouraged to enter local politics, in some cases they set off with a rather opposite idea of working from the social engagement perspective until they feel they could no longer achieve their goals through civil engagement. This would be the moment they would start their political engagements. Besides this special case political engagement is almost not fostered in long-term perspective.

A few interviewees report in the third interview about effects through the project, which came only up after the second interview, for example because a situation emerges, which requires a certain action. One interview partner for example, who is already engaged in a non-governmental help organisation before the project and who is sent to the project by it, dare to participate in a refugee camp in Greece, because she feels encouraged to do this through the E+/YiA project. Shortly before the start of her service the refugee camp is closed (due to reasons of hygiene and security). Nevertheless, it can be concluded, that challenges, offers, new situations and the like work as triggers, which can raise the awareness for project effects like encouragement and activate interviewees to take a certain action. Those project effects which have not yet been important for practical life can be seen as a repository.

Furthermore, there are interviewees who report in the third interview, that besides an effect of the project, they already talk about in the second interview, they develop further in the meantime due to other influences. This can be illustrated by the example of two Austrian interviewees, who are rather young, very active in private life, but not socially engaged before the project. They get to know about the project from the newspaper and participate in a short-term voluntary service, because they want to go abroad after finishing their school respectively their apprenticeship. In the second interview they report that they are sensitised for nature and protecting it, but both refer to the level of awareness raising and not to the level of practice.

> *"One of the team members was very interested in making things from natural materials. So I have already taken a bit, I have to say in any case."* (2ⁿᵈ, AT)

> *"I learned to simply appreciate the environment differently. The landscape was so beautiful and if you then come to town and there is waste everywhere … so maybe it made me more aware of that. The fact that I would be actively involved now, that I would change something, is always such a thing, because I think a lot of people see it, but most of them do not do anything. And yes, unfortunately, I am one of them."* (2ⁿᵈ, AT)

In the third interview they mention, that they pay close attention to environmentally friendly behaviour in everyday life, because they learn very much form their new acquaintances in their very new social environment. In the meantime both started studies at university and at the school for social work, left therefore their remote village and live now in a city in own apartments, where for the first time they decide on their own, if for example they separate waste or buy regional products. Both interviewees attribute a rather small meaning to the former effect of the project and identify the current influences as strong (third interview), which are indeed stronger than the previous one. Maybe therefore the project effect is somehow overlaid by the present

ones and it can be assumed, that the interviewees are better able to recognise interconnections and to value influences with a greater time distance. When they participate in the project they start from zero in respect of civil engagement and the effects of the project could be seen as a first step for them. With their already fostered awareness they then enter their new and inspiring environment in the city, which can unfold its effects easily against this background. In any case with the third interviews it becomes obvious, that the development of participation and active citizenship "has to be seen as a life-long and life-wide process, including a variety of influences playing together." (see chapter 2). Therefore the focus should not be on dividing up between effects of the project and other effects, but on the concrete participation and active citizenship and the synergy of different influences.

Participation in elections, running for office and non-conventional political participation in general remain unchanged also according to the third interviews. Interesting developments can be observed in the Slovenian sample: The decision whether to run for an office or not is not so easy and can change again, because the exercise of an office requires certain attitudes, skills and knowledge and some young people first have to find out how skilled they are. Six interviewees who say that they cannot imagine running for an office in the first interview report about a change of their opinion in the second interview. The same can be observed for three interviewees in the third interview (they could not imagine running for an office in the second interview). 14 out of 15 Slovenian interviewees indicate not to participate in non-conventional political participation in the first interview. The small number is striking as well as the fact, that in the second interview already three and in the third interview eight interviewees report to sign petitions and participate in demonstrations.

Interviewees are still strongly engaged in environmental issues. There are only a few comments on this in the third interviews saying that this kind of participation was strengthened, besides others by a Finnish interviewee (since the question was not asked to the Finnish sample in the second interview). He reports, that thanks to the E+/YiA project he is now a vegetarian, recycles his cloths, buys less things and is in general more active in this respect.

The very few interviewees who reported to keep themselves better informed due to the project in the second interview repeat this in the third interview, but the effect is a very subtle one. The same goes for discussing social and political issues.

The third interviews also reveal, that after the researched project many interviewees participate in further E+/YiA or comparable projects or make or plan a study exchange, whereas their number is very high in the Italian (six out of seven) and Finnish (10 out of 13) samples; five Finnish interviewees declare, that the project contributed to their wish to live abroad. Going abroad is also for the Maltese interviewees of great importance, whereby the fact, that they live on an island and need to take the plane to come to another country, plays a role. In the three mentioned countries E+/YiA is the only funding possibility for young people for going abroad. The only way to keep working in the field is to keep participating in the programme and therefore many participants remain in contact with it for a while.

There are also some interviewees, who intend to organise and implement own projects and already have concrete ideas about the content; two interviewees work

professionally on E+ in the meantime. For some participants, the project stimulates modifications of their future plans.

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6 Appendix A – Methodology[81]

6.1 Research method and instruments

For this study, a mixed-method approach applying quantitative and qualitative social research methods is taken (see Table 3).

Table 3: Scheme of the LTE study including quantitative and qualitative social research methods

2015			2016	2017/18	2018		2019
Before project		2-3 months after project	1 year after project			2-3 years after project	
	E+/YiA projects			Interim Trans-national Report	Strasbourg Conference		Final Trans-national Report
Quantitative research strand with test group (E+/YiA PP), control group (young people) and E+/YiA PL ⟶							
1st survey with E+/YiA PP and PL		2nd survey with E+/YiA PP and PL	3rd survey with E+/YiA PP and PL			4th survey with E+/YiA PP and PL	
1st survey with young people	1st	2nd survey with young people	3rd survey with young people			4th survey with young people	
Qualitative research strand with test group (E+/YiA PP) ⟶							
1st interview with E+/YiA PP			2nd interview with E+/YiA PP			3rd interview with E+/YiA PP	

Standardised multilingual online surveys were conducted with project participants and project leaders[82] (test group) as well as with a control group of young people not involved in an E+/YiA project or in a similar project. In accordance with the research interest, the questionnaire was created to survey competences for participation and active citizenship, as well as participation and citizenship practice.

The questionnaire was created in alignment with the theoretical background, with attitudes, values, knowledge and skills as four main areas of 'citizenship competence' as well as 'citizenship practice', including habits and activities connected to being an active citizen.[83]

The indicators are shown in Table 4 and Table 5 as well as the indexes, which were used in quantitative data analysis in line with common research practice in this area,

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[81] Chapters 6 and 7 are still draft versions and still need to be edited.

[82] Previous RAY surveys indicate that also project leaders develop citizenship competences through their involvement in E+/YiA projects. They participate in the same surveys as project participants, with some adaptation to their specific role.

[83] See also chapter 1 Introduction and theoretical background.

and especially useful given the complexity of the researched subject of active citizenship[84]. These indexes are created as summative indexes based on factor analyses results, which showed that in all areas, except for the attitudes, single items could be combined into an index (in order to measure this concept from different angles).

Table 4: Competence for participation and active citizenship – main areas, indexes and items

Democracy Values[85]	*Importance of voting.*
	Equality of genders.
	Importance of freedom of assembly.
	Importance of voluntary activities.
	Giving immigrants the possibility to practice their habits.
	Giving immigrants basic rights.
	Restriction of immigration.[86]
	Home country enriched by immigration.

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[84] Hoskins & Campbell 2008; Hoskins & Mascherini 2008; Hoskins, Villalba, Saisana 2012; Zaff et. al 2010.
[85] Values inherent to democracy.
[86] This scale was formed with an opposite polarity from the rest of the items (asking respondents in negative terms) and was reversed before the analysis.

	Interest in the world *This index describes how interested the respondent is in everyday societal issues; how strong or weak an interest in the world surrounding the respondent was detected by the battery of questions this index is based on, such as interest in social, political, or economic issues.* *0 = No interest in the world* *10 = Highly interested in the world* *Subjective measurement.*	*Interest in social issues.*
		Interest in political issues.
		Interest in economic issues.
		Interest in European issues.
Attitudes	Responsibility for the world *This index describes how responsible the respondent feels to be with respect to the everyday societal issues; how strong or weak an urge to take action the respondent exhibits towards the issues that surround her or him; how likely he or she is to step up in these issues. Underlying battery of items focused on responsibility for the development of the local community, or willingness to take action in order to protect democracy in her or his country.* *0= No sense of responsibility at all* *10 = Highly responsible for the world* *Subjective measurement.*	*Responsibility for the development of local community.*
		Readiness to take action in order to preserve democracy.
		Responsibility for sustainable development of Europe.
	Fairness towards the world *This index describes to what extent the respondent shows tendencies towards respectful and fair behaviour and to what extent, on the other hand, to what extent a behaviour which is disrespectful and unfair is deemed appropriate by the respondent; in other words, the index shows an attitude towards dealing with an outside world: a very individualistic and not based on societal rules on one hand, and organized and based on social norms on the other. Items focused on respect towards other people, or attitude towards discrimination.* *0 = Does not attach to any societal rule* *10 = Always sticks to rules set by society* *Objective measurement*	*Readiness for intervention against discriminating/aggressive behaviour.*
		Respect towards people from different backgrounds.

	Fairness towards the state *This index is very similar to the index describing the general fairness of the respondent towards the outside world; this one focuses on fairness towards the state in areas such as not cheating on state benefits or taxes.*	*Unlawful claiming of state benefits.*[87]
	0 = Does not attach to any state-related rules *10 = Always sticks to rules set by the state* *Objective measurement*	*Not declaring taxable income.*[88]

	Discussing convincingly.
	Cooperating efficiently in a team.
	Forming independent opinions.
	Negotiating joint solutions.
Skills	*Discussing political issues seriously.*
	Finding information.
	Coming up with ideas in the interest of a community.
	Getting along with people from different backgrounds.
	Keeping up with changes.

	Discussing convincingly.
	Cooperating efficiently in a team.
Skills Developed through the Project Participation	*Negotiating joint solutions.*
	Discussing political issues seriously.
	Getting along with people from different backgrounds.

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[87] This scale was formed with an opposite polarity from the rest of the items (asking respondents in negative terms) and was reversed before the analysis.
[88] This scale was formed with an opposite polarity from the rest of the items (asking respondents in negative terms) and was reversed before the analysis.

Knowledge	*Up-to-date knowledge on community affairs.*
	Up-to-date knowledge on European affairs.
	Understanding of link between lifestyle and environment.
	Familiarity with youth policies in home country.
	Understanding of the European Youth Strategy.
	Knowledge on NGO engagement in home country.
	Familiarity with representative democracy principles.
	Knowledge on civil responsibilities and rights.
	Knowledge on Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.
	Knowledge of Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Table 5: Participation and citizenship practice – main areas, indexes and items

Active citizenship / citizenship practice	General participation in civil society *First wave Cronbach`s a=0.832* *Third wave Cronbach`s a=0.851*	*Discussing political issues with family and friends.*
		Discussing political issues online with people one knows.
		Discussing political issues online with strangers.
		Helping in the community.
		Evaluating media messages.
		Keeping informed on European issues.
		Wearing a badge or a shirt with political motives.
		Sharing political views on social media.
		Handing out leaflets on political issues.
		Producing content on political issues (texts, videos…).
		Verifying media messages.
		Expressing ideas through arts.
		Negotiating joint positions.
		Volunteering.
	Gathering information *First wave Cronbach`s a=0.636* *Third wave Cronbach`s a=0.577*	*Reading newspapers.*
		Listening to the news.
		Watching the news.
	Environmental activities *First wave Cronbach`s a=0.651* *Third wave Cronbach`s a=0.670*	*Separating waste.*
		Avoiding wasting water.
		Using public transport to minimize pollution.
		Shopping responsibly.
	Conventional political participation *First wave Cronbach`s a=0.844* *Third wave Cronbach`s a=0.831*	*Voting in local elections.*
		Voting in regional elections.
		Voting in national elections.
		Voting in EU elections.
		Running for an office.
	Non-conventional political participation *First wave Cronbach`s a=0.519* *Third wave Cronbach`s a=0.554*	*Participation in community events.*
		Participation in peaceful rallies.
		Signing petitions.
		Collecting signatures for petitions.
		Making donations.

Items in the questionnaires for both, the test and the control group. were used in two different ways. The first way constitutes of a direct question on the desired topic, e.g. asking a respondent if he or she is interested in something, in case interest is being measured. This approach is in this report called a "subjective measurement", since it gives the respondents an opportunity to consciously adjust the answer; it is a self-assessment item with an obvious aim. Another way to ask a question is to present series of statements and ask the participants with no obvious or direct link to the measured phenomena in order to come up with an assessment of the given area, which is not influenced by the subjective opinion of the respondent. For example, asking series of questions on the preferences of the respondent may provide a sound basis for the examination of the respondent´s values system. This approach is called an "objective measurement", since these findings can hardly be influenced by the respondents: they do not provide obvious links to what is being scored.

The questionnaires consist of closed/multiple-choice questions and include a number of dependency questions, which only appear for the respondents in the event a previous (filter) question is answered in a specific way. The questionnaires could be accessed in English and the official languages of the project partners: Czech, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Maltese, Russian, Slovene and Swedish.[89]

Furthermore, qualitative interviews were conducted with project participants and not with project leaders/members of the project teams because the research interest referred first of all to participants. The guidelines of the semi-structured interviews are designed ensuring coherence and complementarity with the questionnaires. Thus, they also refer to participation/citizenship competence, including values, attitudes, knowledge and skills, and to participation/citizenship practice. The interviews start with introductory information and warm up questions and end by asking for the future plans of the interviewees. The interviews were conducted in ten languages: Czech, Estonian, Finnish, German, Hungarian, Italian, Maltese, Russian, Slovene and Swedish.

A further important part of the research process was the discussion of the preliminary findings, which were worked out on the basis of the first and the second interview and the first, second and third survey, with the researched subjects themselves. Almost 50 young people – in the first line interviewees from seven LTE project countries, but also a few respondents of the surveys of the test and of the control group – followed the invitation to the conference 'International youth projects: An impulse for participation in a democratic society', taking place from 22 until 25 May 2018 in Strasbourg, France (see Table 3). Furthermore, more than 30 project leaders and team members of the E+/YiA projects, the interviewees had taken part in, as well as representatives of the E+/YiA National Agencies and the national researchers of the project countries attended the meeting in the European Youth Centre. The preliminary findings were presented in plenary sessions and discussed in groups. Furthermore, the young people tried to answer the questions of the researchers about striking results in focus groups, and last but not least they

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[89] The first questionnaire has also been translated into Dutch and French, because the E+/YiA NAs from the Netherlands and France were partners in the LTE project from the very beginning, but withdraw their project partnership due to a lack of time resources. Many thanks to the partners of the two NAs, who nevertheless supported the LTE project with translations, contact data and methodological input in the ongoing process.

developed action plans on the basis of the preliminary findings and the outcomes of their discussions. This communicative validation lead to valuable results. At the same time, the conference might have influenced the view of the interviewees on the E+/YiA project and the learning effects they perceive to be results of their project participation. This influence on the response of many conference participants in the third interview, which took place around half a year after the Strasbourg Conference, had to be taken into account in the analysis (see chapter 2.9).

The conference's aim was also to give recognition to the efforts of participants and project leaders in contributing to this research project through their participation in interviews and surveys. Therefore, a guided tour through the European Parliament, inputs of two representatives of the Council of Europe – European Union Youth Partnership, meetings with representatives of local youth organisations and last but not least a sightseeing tour were organised.

Figure 9: Graphic recording of the impact discussion at the Strasbourg Conference.
The E+/YiA PP who participated in the Strasbourg Conference worked out messages for the E+/YiA NAs,
comments for the researchers and action plans, how to further disseminate the research results and
how to strengthen European Youth Mobility. Coline Robin recorded the results graphically.
Source: RAY 2018.

6.2 Implementation, sample and documentation of the surveys

The online surveys addressed participants and project leaders/team members of projects funded by the E+/YiA Programme through the National Agencies of the RAY Partners, participating in the project on long-term effects on participation and citizenship.

The participants and project leaders were invited to four surveys at different stages before and after their E+/ YiA project:

- before the (first) activity/the intensive phase (first survey)[90];

- two to three months after the project/(last) activity/intensive phase (after having had time to reflect and to look at the experience from some distance and without the potential initial enthusiasm) (second survey);

- one year after the project/(last) activity/intensive phase (third survey);

- two to three years after the project/(last) activity/intensive phase (fourth survey).

Two rounds of these four waves were conducted in order to achieve a satisfactory number of responses (starting in 2015 and in 2016)[91].

In principle, the participants and the project leaders were asked the same questions in all four surveys, with some exceptions:

- Questions about citizenship practice were only included in the first, third and fourth survey and not in the second survey.

- A few questions asking directly about perceived effects of the project were only included in the second, third and fourth survey.

- Some questions about meta data unlikely or impossible to change (e.g. gender, age, educational achievement of the parents) were only included in one of the surveys. Some questions referring to the project or to prior project experience had to be rephrased (e.g. "I am involved in this project …" in the first survey to "I was involved …" in the second and third survey).

Project participants and project leaders were invited by e-mail to complete the questionnaires before an E+/YiA funded project they wanted to take part in (first survey) and after they had participated in the project (second, third and fourth survey). Only those, who had completed the first survey, were invited to the second, third and fourth survey. The following information was included in the e-mail invitation: the project title, the project dates, the project venue country and a URL with an individual token (password). This hyperlink allowed the participants to access the online questionnaire directly. The e-mail invitations were customised according to the official language(s) of the country of residence of the respective addressee, or in English in cases where the language was not available through the survey tool.[92] The addressees

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[90] In the case of a youth exchange, the 'activity'/'intensive phase' is the international encounter; in the case of an EVS, this would be the stay abroad; in the case of a training activity, this would be a seminar/workshop; etc.
[91] For the second round starting in 2016, the fourth survey was conducted 2 years after the project.
[92] In particular, this was the case for participants from non-RAY-LTE project partner countries.

were given around eight weeks to complete the questionnaire. As long as they did not complete the survey, they received a maximum of three reminder e-mails.

The surveys were implemented using an online survey platform (LimeSurvey[93]) which offers the necessary functionalities, in particular multilingual questionnaires with an option for filter questions and dependency questions and the possibility to invite/remind addressees.

It was found, that getting a satisfying number of participants by opportunity sampling was quite challenging. The involved NAs got the contact data of the participants only a very short time before the activity started. The beneficiaries often work on a voluntary basis and mostly there is a frequent change on the participant list, so that the final list only exists shortly before the project starts. Besides this, not all tools of the new E+ Programme worked properly in 2015. So sometimes it was too late to invite the participants/project leaders in time (before the project started). Yet 2,030 participants were invited to the first survey, 1,231 to the second, third and fourth survey (260 of 373 project leaders/members of the project teams completed the first survey and were invited to the second, third and fourth survey).

Considerable 60,6 % of the participants (69,7 % of the project leaders) completed the first survey[94]. As expected, the response rate declined in the second, third and fourth survey (PP: 35 %, 18,8 %, 10,7 %; PL: 42,2 %, 29,8 %, 19,6 %).

A data cleaning procedure of the responses applied the following steps: consolidation of gender and age (if the information was missing in the metadata, the answer of the respondent was used); introduction of a new variable 'age_groups'; recoding of 'activity types'; deleting records for which the age indicated by respondents was not in line with the age limit of the respective key action/activity type.

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[93] https://survey.limesurvey.org/
[94] There were only few bounced back e-mails, because the e-mail addresses were mostly up to date.

Table 6: Number of invited and responding PP and PL and response rates of the four test group surveys

	Participants (PP)*	Project Leaders/Members of the project teams (PL)*
Invitees	**2,030**	**373**
Respondents 1st survey***	**1,231**	**60**
% out of invitees	60.6%	69.7%
Respondents 1st and 2nd survey***	**711**	**176**
% out of respondents of 1st survey	57.8%	67.7%
% out of invitees	35.0%	47.2%
Respondents 1st, 2nd and 3rd survey***	**381**	**111**
% out of respondents of 1st survey	31.0%	42.7%
% out of invitees	18.8%	29.8%
Respondents 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th survey***	**217**	**73**
% out of respondents of 1st survey	17.6%	28.1%
% out of invitees	10.7%	19.6%

PP and PL from 46 countries, involved in projects funded by AT, CZ, DE, EE, FI, HU, IT, MT, NL, SE and SI. The core activity of these projects took place in 2015 and 2016.
**Respondents: all those, who went into to survey by clicking on the respective link in the invitation e-mail, regardless how many pages they completed.
***The surveys took place before (first) and after (second: two to three months; third: one year; fourth: two to three years) the core activity of the projects.

With respect to the number of cases, only items that were answered by at least 20 respondents were taken into account for this report.

Since a heterogeneous sample could be obtained as intended, the analysed differences between the four different waves were also crosschecked for a number of different subgroups of respondents and projects:

- *Gender Groups*
  - The following categories were used in analyses:
    - *Male*
    - *Female*
- *Age Groups*
  - The following categories were used in analyses:
    - *Under 15 years of age*
    - *15-17 years of age*
    - *18-20 years of age*
    - *21-25 years of age*
    - *26-30 years of age*
    - *31-35 years of age*
    - *36-40 years of age*
    - *41-50 years of age*
    - *51-60 years of age*

- ▪ *Over 60 years of age*[95]
- ▪ *Educational Attainment*
  - o Respondents were asked about their highest educational attainment in line with ISCED typology as follows:
    - ▪ *Primary school*
    - ▪ *Lower secondary school*
    - ▪ *Technical school*
    - ▪ *Upper secondary school*
    - ▪ *Upper vocational school*
    - ▪ *University, polytechnic, post-secondary education*
  - o This categorisation was simplified for analytical purposes as follows:
    - ▪ *Basic school* (primary and lower secondary education)
    - ▪ *High school* (technical school, upper secondary school and upper vocational school)
    - ▪ *University* (university, polytechnic, post-secondary education)
- ▪ *Specific Courses* (attendance in specific courses or studies on social or political issues)
  - o Respondents were asked the following questions: '*During the past 12 months, I attended a seminar, a course or studies in the field of …*'
    - ▪ *… social science.*
    - ▪ *… political science.*
    - ▪ *… educational science.*
    - ▪ *… law.*
  - o These questions were turned into an index which was used in analyses and had the following categories:
    - ▪ *Zero courses.*
    - ▪ *One course.*
    - ▪ *Two or more courses.*
- ▪ *Special Focus of Formal Education* (formal educational attainment in the field of social or political sciences)
  - o Respondents were asked the following questions: '*The focus of my studies was/is in the field of ...*'
    - ▪ *… social science.*
    - ▪ *… political science.*
    - ▪ *… educational science.*
    - ▪ *… law.*
  - o These questions were turned into an index which was used in analyses and had the following categories:
    - ▪ *Formal education did not focus on social, political, educational, or law subjects.*
    - ▪ *Formal education focused on social, political, educational, or law subjects.*
- ▪ *Membership in Civil Society and Political Organisations*
  - o Respondents were asked the following question:
    - ▪ *How many such movement(s), association(s) or organisation(s) are you a member of? [a youth movement, association or organisation; a social movement, association or organisation; an*

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[95] 96% of the project participants were under 35 years of age.

> *environmental movement, association or organisation; a political movement, association or organisation (including a party); another non-governmental or non-profit organisation/association that aims to contribute to the community/society]*

- o This question was turned into categories as follows:
  - *Membership in one organization*
  - *Membership in two organizations*
  - *Membership in three or more organizations*
- *Experience Abroad* (experiences with travels abroad)
  - o Respondents were asked the following question:
    - *How often have you been abroad BEFORE this project? (An approximate number is sufficient.)*
  - o This question was turned into categories as follows:
    - *Minimal experience from abroad*
    - *2nd quartile*
    - *3rd quartile*
    - *Maximum experience from abroad.*
- *Previous Participation in a Similar Project*
  - o Respondents were asked the following question: '*Have you participated in a similar project before this project we are asking you about (a youth exchange, a voluntary service abroad, a 'structured dialogue', a youth initiative, a mobility or training project for youth workers etc.)?*'
    - *Yes*
    - *No*
  - o Answers to this question were directly used as an analytical variable.
- *Number of Foreign Languages Spoken by Respondents*
  - o The following categories were used in analyses:
    - *Working knowledge of none or one foreign language.*
    - *Working knowledge of 2 foreign languages.*
    - *Working knowledge of 3 or more foreign languages.*
- *Relevant Knowledge Acquired in the Project* (knowledge on relevant issues the respondents perceive as gained in the projects)
  - o Respondents were asked the following questions: '*Please respond with respect to the project we specified in the invitation to this survey and which you participated in since the first survey we asked you to complete some weeks ago. In the project, I learned something new about*:'
    - *European issues.*
    - *Human rights, fundamental rights.*
    - *Democracy.*
    - *Youth policies.*
    - *Environmental issues.*
  - o These questions were turned into categories as follows:
    - *No relevant knowledge indicated by the respondents* (in case none of the abovementioned items received a positive answer).
    - *Relevant knowledge acquired in the project* (in case at least one of the abovementioned items received a positive answer).

- *Skills Developed Through the Project* (skills in relevant areas the respondents perceive to have developed in the projects)
  - o Respondents were asked the following questions: '*To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Through my participation in this project I improved my ability …*'
    - *to say what I think with conviction in discussions.*
    - *to cooperate in a team.*
    - *to negotiate joint solutions when there are different viewpoints.*
    - *to discuss political topics seriously.*
    - *to get along with people who have a different cultural background.*
  - o These questions were turned into categories as follows:
    - *Very low agreement with skills gain*
    - *2nd quartile*
    - *3rd quartile*
    - *Very high agreement with skills gain*
- *Project Ownership* (participation in the project development/implementation)
  - o Respondents were asked the following questions:
    - *I was able to contribute with my views and ideas to the implementation of this project.*
    - *I was actively involved in the decision-making concerning the implementation of this project.*
  - o An index was created based on these two items, with a scale ranging from 0 (*no project ownership*) to 10 (*very high project ownership*).
- *Initial Activity of Respondents in the Non-Conventional Political Participation* (citizenship activity of the respondent in a non-conventional sense)
- The measurements from the first wave of the surveys in the index '*Non-Conventional Political Participation*' were considered to mark the '*Initial Activity of Respondents*' in this area.
- The measurements from the first wave of the surveys in the index '*Conventional Political Participation*' were considered to mark the '*Initial Activity of Respondents*' in this area.
- The measurements from the first wave of the surveys in the index '*General participation in civil society*' were considered to mark the '*Initial Activity of Respondents*' in this area.
- Subgroups of projects according to:
  - o activity types: Youth Exchanges (YE, Key Action 1), Volunteering/European Voluntary Services (EVS, Key Action 1), Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCA, Key Action 2) and Mobilities of Youth Workers (YWM, Key Action 1);
  - o activity duration: 'short-term activities' (with a relatively short core/intensive international experience, e.g. Youth Exchanges) and 'long-term activities' (with a relatively long/ continuing international experience, e.g. European Voluntary Services);
  - o activity venue: 'hosting' participants who participated in a project in their residence country and participants who went to another country for their project ('sending').

Factual significance

This means that the finding is significant in terms of its content. In layman´s terms, this would mean that a difference in, e.g. income is high or low. This is a matter of interpretation and is not dependent on statistical significance described elsewhere. Factual significance differs in dependence on the audience: an additional income of €500 per month would be significant to some people, and at the same time there are millionaires who would not consider it significant at all. In this report, scales are used, usually ranging from 0 to 10; and shifts in the mean or median values are being interpreted by authors of this report based on their understanding of the phenomena in question as follows: a difference smaller than 0.5 is considered a small shift; a difference between 0.50 and 0.99 is considered a medium shift; and a difference equal to or larger than 1.00 is considered to be a profound shift.

Statistical significance

Statistical significance refers to the certainty with which a conclusion can be made based on the data analysis outcomes: a statistically significant result is very likely to be found also in the basic population, not only among the respondents of our survey. In this case, in layman´s terms, the statistically significant result means that it is applicable to all participants of E+/YiA projects which are similar to the projects our respondents took part in. In this report, only statistically significant findings are reported, i.e. all shifts described below are statistically significant and applicable to all participants of similar E+/YiA projects as our respondents participated in.

The control group surveys addressed young people, who did not take part in an E+/YiA project or in a similar project during the four surveys. The addresses of the survey participants were collected by the involved NA in youth centres, youth clubs and schools. Young people also had the possibility to register themselves on an online list, expressing their consent to be invited to the surveys.

In principle, the young people completed the same questionnaire at four different times. Only questions about meta data (e.g. date of birth) were not included at all four waves. In the second, third and fourth survey questions asking for a learning effect "since the last survey" were added; in the third and fourth survey some formulations had to be changed (e.g. "about two months ago" in the second wave to "about 1 year ago"/"about two to three years ago" in the third/fourth wave). Since the young people did not participate in an E+/YiA project or in a similar project, they were not asked, if they perceive effects to be the result of a project. But they were asked in all four surveys, if they had participated in a project since the last survey.

Invitations to the first survey of the control group were sent out between September 2015 and October 2016, the invitations to the second, third and fourth survey followed two to three months, one year and two to three years after that.

Table 7: Number of invited and responding young people in the control group and response rates of the four control group surveys

	Young people from AT, DE, FI, IT, SE, who did not take part in an E+/YiA project or in a similar project
Invitees	**335**
Respondents* 1st survey**	**136**
% out of invitees	40.6%
Respondents* 1st and 2nd survey**	**66**
% out of respondents of 1st survey	48.5%
% out of invitees	19.7%
Respondents* 1st, 2nd and 3rd survey**	**38**
% out of respondents of 1st survey	27.9%
% out of invitees	11.3%
Respondents* 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th survey**	**29**
% out of respondents of 1st survey	21,3%
% out of invitees	8.7%

Respondents means all those, who went into to survey by clicking on the respective link in the invitation e-mail, regardless how many pages they completed.

**The second, third and fourth survey took place two to three months; one year and two to three years after the 1st survey.

6.3 Implementation, sample and documentation of the interviews

Selected participants were interviewed individually at different stages before and after the E+/YiA project:

- as early as possible in the project, in any case before the (first) activity/intensive phase;
- one year after the project/(last) activity/intensive phase,
- two to three years after the project/(last) activity/intensive phase.

The main objectives of the interview before the activity were to explore previous experiences and activities of the interviewees as well as their values, attitudes, knowledge and skills in particular related to citizenship and participation in (civil) society, public and political life. Furthermore, their motivation, expectations and involvement in the E+/YiA project were of interest. In order to provide for authentic statements in three interviews in three years, it was very important to establish a trustful and sustainable relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee. First of all, the interviewer had to clarify the purpose and structure of the study.

In the second interview one year after the activity the interviewer tied on the trustful relationship with the interviewee and updated the purpose and structure of the study. In first line, she/he had to explore experiences and activities, values, attitudes, knowledge and skills of the interviewee since the E+/YiA activity, in particular related to citizenship and participation in (civil) society, democratic and political life. This

should provide for a comparison of responses to respective questions in the first interview and to explore perceived effects on citizenship competence and practice development as well as their causes and what triggered these effects and developments.

According to the second interview, the third interview aimed at exploring experiences and activities, values, attitudes, knowledge and skills of the interviewee since the E+/YiA activity, in particular related to citizenship and participation in (civil) society, public and political life. And again, this should provide for a comparison of responses to respective questions in the first and now also in the second interview and to explore perceived effects on citizenship competence and practice development as well as their causes and what triggered these effects and developments. In order to find out longitudinal effects, one focus was on questions, for which the respective interviewees had given some answers in one of the previous interviews. Ideally, for each question, the interviewer should have gone through the following steps: First, the interviewee should have been asked an open question without reference to the project and possible effects. Once the interviewee has given her/his narrative to that question, the interviewer should have been following up with her/him answer to that question during the first and second interview – in case this seems to be interesting and useful. This way, changes between the previous interviews and the present one could be made visible and conscious. If the answers show a change since the first and/or second interview, the interviewee should be asked what triggered this change, and if and what way the project could have been one cause for this change or development of a competence or practice. If applicable, interviewees could be asked why they think that a change described by them was not affected by the project. This could reveal changes caused by a number of experiences, including the project, but the latter was not conscious. It is assumed that in most cases, changes of competence and practice are not monocausal, and the project might only be one of many influences causing a change. Furthermore, the project could have triggered an action/activity not directly linked to participation and citizenship, and this action/activity then actually had an effect on participation and citizenship – so it would be an indirect effect. When asking about participation/citizenship knowledge and skills, the interviewer should go a step further and ask if a specific knowledge or skill in question was actually used in practice after the project/during the past two to three years. This way, a link between competence development and practice development could be established – and applying a competence in practice might result in a further development of that competence.

Some interviewers found it ambitious, to go through all questions of the guidelines in the necessary depth. This might have to do something with the observation, that it was not easy for some interviewees to answer the question, if a certain change or development, they described, was affected through their participation in the E+/YiA project. That`s easy to imagine since two to three years had gone by since the project took place and since there are many influences and impressions. The interviewees described many effects and changes, but mostly said, that they were not caused by the project.

In almost all project countries, the participants were interviewed by the same interviewer in the first, second and third interview and got involved more or less with her or him during the three years. The national researchers discussed the question, if

the more the relationship develops the more socially desirable or in contrary the more honest the interviewees would answer, but could not agree on a final opinion. The interviewers ensured their interview partners from time to time, that there was no need to exaggerate. Nevertheless, an effect of social desirability has to be taken into account to a certain extent. Furthermore, it has to be assumed, that being interviewed had an effect on the answers of the interviewees in the following interviews (see chapter 2.8 and 6.4). And the Strasbourg Conference had an effect on the way the conference participants answered in the third interview (see chapter 2.9 and 6.1):

Primarily participants, who were invited to the quantitative surveys (see chapter 0), were asked to be interviewed. The first interviews before the E+/YiA project took place 2015 and 2016, partly face-to-face and mostly via Skype with video or telephone, ensuring a setting as close as possible to face-to-face-interviews. The second and third interviews were implemented in 2016/2017 and 2018/19, again mostly as face-to-face and partly as Skype or telephone interviews.

Before the first interview the participants were contacted via e-mail and/or telephone call with respect to the specific E+/YiA funded project they wanted to take part in. They were informed about the research project and the practicalities linked with the interview, trying to cause them as less discomfort as possible, e.g. in respect of the timing of the interview. In addition to the above-mentioned challenge to get the contact data from the NAs in time before the project started – and to have enough time to get in contact with the future participants via e-mail and/or telephone call asking them for their willingness to take part in an interview - many potential interview partners apologised with reference to their high temporal burden caused by school, formation and/or other engagement. So the plan to achieve a sample of young people participating first of all in projects focusing on participation and citizenship could only be put into practice to a certain extent. The researchers in three project countries had good success in finding interview partners by announcing incentives to the young people.

Nevertheless, a sample of 82 participants, being interviewed three times (before the E+/YiA activity, one year as well as two to three years after the activity) could be achieved. It was to be expected, that some of the 145 interviewees, who did the first interview, would not participate in the second (or the third, in case, they did the first and second) interview, because they did not want to or were too busy with job or education; some did not even answer the request or could not be found any more. 33 interviewees were lost for the second interview and again 30 interviewees for the third interview (Table 8). Most of the national researchers report consistently, that it turned out to be more difficult in general to fix the dates for the third interviews than it had been for the first or second ones. Yet most of the young people, who finally took part in the third interview, were pleased to have done it afterwards and underlined that again being interviewed was very exciting for them and they benefited from it. This corresponds with the general enthusiasm of the interviewees about having been interviewed. (see chapter 2.8).

Table 8: Number of interviews with participants of E+/YiA projects

	AT	CZ	DE	EE	FI	HU	IT	MT	SE*	SI	tot.
1st interview before activity	16	12	20	15	15	14	13	9	10	21	145
2nd interview one year after activity	13	6	14	10	13	11	10	7	9	19	112
3rd interview two to three years after activity	11	5	8	8	13	7	8	7	0	15	82

*SE: Withdrew from the project after the interim transnational analysis including the first and the second interviews (and the first, second and third surveys), but still provided translations for the fourth survey.

While the motivation to participate in the third interview was lower than in the second one, the young people, who could not be reached or convinced to participate in the third interview were according to the research partners in first line those with fewer opportunities - probably due to the demanding methodological concept of taking part in three interviews with an average duration of one hour. This aspect is to be regretted in respect of the E+/YiA goal, to especially include this target group, and in respect of the valuable insights, these interviews could have been delivering. And of course, this bias towards a sample including rather young people with more opportunities has to be taken into account when interpreting the outcomes. As can be seen in Table 8 there is a relatively small range of numbers of interviewees doing all three interviews from the different project partners (starting from five up to 15 interviewees); this might help to keep national tendencies small. In each country sample there are two or three interviewees who participated in the same project, e.g. the five interview partners of the Czech sample took part in three projects. Although the effects of a project can be different for different participants, this fact must also be included in the interpretation. Besides this, the themes and the quality of a project play an important role in respect of the research question. To stay with the mentioned example: Two of the three Czech projects were Structured dialogue projects with more than one face-to-face meeting of the participants. In these meetings between young people and decision-makers in the field of youth have rather been active and engaged in civil society before their participation. One focus of a Youth Exchange in contrary is rather on meeting other young people from different countries and therefore more suitable for first-time-participants – the third Czech project was a youth exchange. A clearly bigger diversity of projects is given in the Austrian sample; the eleven interviewees took part in nine different projects, so only two couples of interview partners participated in the same project. Otherwise, the Austrian shows a bias in respect of the activity types: six interviewees participated in youth exchanges, two in short-time voluntary services and one in a youth worker mobility.

The characteristics of the sample have to be taken into account when interpreting the results. Therefore, the following description tries to be as exact as possible. The sample of the 82 interviewees shows a slight excess of female participants (see Table 9). The groups of the under 20- and 30-year-olds are almost equally strong, including 35 respectively 39 interviewees, and only eight members of the sample are 30 years old or older. Most young people, who took part in all three interviews, were at university or were (self-)employed; only eight were still pupils. Although the available data of the educational attainment of the interviewees is incomplete, it illustrates the

clear tendency to higher education: more than half of them have a high school diploma and 20 a university degree. Like described in the previous paragraph the number of interviewees with fewer opportunities decreased in comparison to the interviewee sample of the first interview. More than half of the sample already had mobility experience before they participated in the E+/YiA project. The 82 interviewees participated in 45 different projects and this broad dispersion avoids extreme effects and leads to balanced results. The big majority of interviewees participated in Youth Exchanges (51 persons) and only a few in Youth Workers Mobilities, European Voluntary Services and in Structured Dialogue projects. Nearly two third of the participants took part in a project in their origin country, around one third had to travel in another country for participating. The project themes included many different topics such as Europe, protection of the environment, non-discrimination or rights and possibilities for young people (see Table 10).

As already mentioned in this subchapter, it was initially intended to include in first line projects focusing on participation and citizenship. Out of the 45 projects this was only the case for 17 projects and accordingly for 40 interviewees.

The face-to-face interviews took place at the workplaces, schools, houses of the interviewees or in public cafés. They lasted in average 51 minutes, the shortest and the longest one 25 respectively 101 minutes. All the interviews were recorded electronically with the permission of the person being interviewed, transcribed and anonymised. Their analysis followed a predefined grid and represented the basis for national reports, which were translated in English. Based on these reports, the results of the qualitative study have been mapped out for this report.

Table 9: Socio-demographic data of those participants, who took part in all three interviews, and characteristics of the activities, they participated in

		AT	CZ	DE	EE	FI	HU	IT	MT	SI	tot
Interviewees		11	5	8	8	13	7	8	7	15	82
Gender	Female	6	2	6	6	8	5	5	3	5	46
	Male	5	3	2	2	5	2	3	4	10	36
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Age	<20	1	0	3	8	9	3	1	3	4	32
	<30	6	5	2	0	4	4	7	4	10	42
	<40	4	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	8
Current occupation	School	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	3	0	10
	University	7	2	6	8	1	2	1	4	2	33
	Professional school	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
	Civil service/Internship	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
	(Self-)Employed	2	5	1	0	3	4	7	0	12	34
Highest educational attainment	O-Level	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	1	9
	A-Level	7	1	7	8	2	7	2	4	9	47
	University degree	2	4	1	0	0	3	6	0	5	21
Fewer opportunities		0	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	4	17
First E+/YiA or similar activity		2	0	8	7	9	3	3	6	1	39
Attending in an activity with a focus on participation/active citizenship		0	5	0	1	9	6	8	0	10	39
Activity type	Youth Exchange	8	1	4	8	13	6	2	7	14	63
	European Voluntary Service	2	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	6
	Structured Dialogue	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
	Youth Worker Mobility	1	0	1	0	0	0	6	0	1	9
Hosting/ Sending*	Hosting	7	5	2	2	5	6	8	1	14	49
	Sending	4	0	6	6	10	1	0	1	1	29
Activities		9	3	7	4	6	3	3	2	8	45
Activities with a focus on participation/active citizenship		0	3	0	1	4	2	3	0	4	17
		AT	CZ	DE	EE	FI	HU	IT	MT	SI	tot

Activities can include hosting and sending participants.

Table 10: Topics of the activities, the interviewees took part in

AT	Discrimination of women, sexual orientation; Attitude against Global South; Job/life chances in general; Job/life chances for disadvantaged young people/refugees/care leavers; Rights and possibilities for young people; Bringing together young people with and without handicap
CZ	Personal development of young leaders; Environmental issues of today; Social issues of today; Youth policy and politics in general
DE	Europe; EU; Freedom; European Citizenship; Youthwork with disadvantage people; Internet; Security
EE	Europe; Environment; Nutrition and Cooking
FI	Health; Cultural exchange; Youth participation and youth dialogue
HU	European Union and youth; Children with fewer opportunities; Foster rights and possibilities for young people
IT	Active (European) citizenship; Participation; Leadership and entrepreneurship; learning about non-formal learning approaches, methodologies and tools
MT	Environment (Fieldwork on flora and fauna in Romania; Improving a nature reserve, observing nature)
SI	Environment; Young People; Environment and Health; Peer to peer; Discovering and protecting wild and wonderful rivers; Social skills; Empowerment, Culture (verses of Europe); Development

6.4 Limitations of the study

As can be seen from the description of the methodological approaches above, two interlinked research methods were used to collect data in order to provide an as wide data basis as possible. Even though both research methods are based on the same theoretical background and were planned to be conducted together from the very beginning – thus providing for a triangulation of the data collected – there is an important difference in the timing of the data collection. While in the quantitative part the data collection was done before the project activity, two to three months after the project activity and one year after the project activity, the qualitative approach collected interview data before and one year after the project activity.[96]

The objective to include especially participants of projects with a focus on citizenship and participation into the study could not be met entirely. This was mainly caused by the very short time available to get in contact with participants before their project started and to invite them to the first surveys and interviews before the project.

Furthermore, the contact data was provided by ten National Agencies, which are organised differently in each country and are confronted with different social, economic, administrative and political realities, which might be reflected in the respective samples. Also, the fact that different interviewers with different interview styles in the different countries with potentially culturally coloured understandings of citizenship and participation cooperated in this study has to be considered.

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[96] It was assumed that, for exploring the competence development, a quantitative survey two to three months after the project activity was sufficient, thus avoiding a considerable additional workload caused by qualitative interviews at the same time. If this research project would be repeated, it could be considered to revise the design and include an extra wave of qualitative interviews two to three months after the project activity (see also the research design of the RAY research project on competence development and capacity building).

As in all RAY studies, the transnational implementation of the study allows for special country-specific insights and comparisons; on the other hand, this very approach also leads to certain conceptual blurring that cannot be fully ruled out in the field of international cooperation, even in the greatest effort.

Methodically speaking, it also has to be taken into account that the interviews themselves could have served as reflection settings for the participants and may have had an influence on the issues or ideas expressed by them.[97] Especially for those, who reflected for the first time about their project experience in the interview (because their project did not provide time for reflection), enough time for the interview and a patient attitude of the interviewers were needed.[98] The first and second interviews (might) have effects on the answers of the participants in the following interviews and on their concrete actions in respect of participation and citizenship. Furthermore, the participation in the Strasbourg Conference had an influence on what the conference participants said in the third interview. Therefore, it might be difficult to differentiate exactly between effects of the project on one side and effects of being interviewed or effects of the participation in the Strasbourg Conference on the other side in single cases.

Furthermore, the participants' ability to communicate could have played a role with respect to the results: higher educated participants are likely to be more knowledgeable and might be better able to express themselves.

The study aims to find out, what are long-term effects related to participation and active citizenship on participants and project leaders resulting from their involvement in E+/ YiA. The period of two to three years, in which data were collected at three different stages in time, can only be considered as a first approach to long-term effects. Therefore, maybe a further round of data collection should be put into practice around four years after the project participation.

In this study the effects of a temporarily limited influence – the E+/YiA projects – lasting a maximum of around two weeks, were researched.[99] Therefore the results should only be compared with due diligence with other studies researching the influence of for example everyday life influences on participation and citizenship.

To answer the research question, in this study mainly the self-assessment of the participants was taken into consideration; about the projects only general information and whether they had a focus on participation and citizenship were collected. Therefore, the focus of the follow-up study within RAY will be on approaches to participation and citizenship education and learning in Erasmus+ Youth in Action projects (RAY-PART).[100]

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[97] See also chapter 2.8.

[98] Furthermore, the perception and assessment of learning processes can differ strongly. This is shown by two examples (see also page 16 of the volume 'Main Findings'): in one example the project was about the refugee crisis, and in another example the project took place in Turkey. After these projects, the two participants were more interested in the refugee crisis and in the current Turkish political situation, but they did not categorise their new interest as interest in political issues because, in their view, politics as such was not a topic of the projects. This perception illustrates the difficulties of the data collection as well as the lack of adequate reflection as part of the projects.

[99] Only 6 out of 82 PP participated in Short-term European Voluntary Services lasting four weeks.

[100] RAY-PART is taking place from summer 2019 until summer 2021. Each of the nine partners from different countries will do at least two case studies.

7 Appendix B – Results of the Quantitative Analysis

The Appendix B contains all vital statistics to support the textual part of this report. Please note that only meaningful statistics (i.e. statistics with N>=20 exhibiting statistically significant results) are presented. All other statistical data, even though they were calculated during the analytical process, are omitted.

7.1 Values

Table 11: "Democracy Values" General Testing (PP)

Democracy Values	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	7.8	7.0-8.5	33	X	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	8.0	7.3-8.8			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	8.3	7.5-8.5			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.8	7.3-8.5			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests. Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 12: "Democracy Values" General Testing (PL)

Democracy Values	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PL	1	8.0	7.5-8.8	33	X	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	8.3	7.5-8.5			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	8.0	7.5-8.3			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	8.3	7.5-8.8			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests. Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

7.2 Attitudes

Table 13: "Interest in the World" Attitude General Testing (PP)

Interest in the World	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	7.5	7.0-8.0	65	X	*1st wave − 2nd wave*	X
	2	7.0	6.5-7.5			*2nd wave − 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.5	7.0-8.0			*2nd wave − 4th wave*	X
	4	7.5	6.5-8.0			*1st wave − 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave − 4th wave	X
						3rd wave − 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 14: "Interest in the World" Attitude General Testing (PL)

Interest in the World	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PL	1	8.0	7.5-8.5	61	X	*1st wave − 2nd wave*	X
	2	8.0	7.5-8.5			*2nd wave − 3rd wave*	X
	3	8.0	7.5-8.5			*2nd wave − 4th wave*	X
	4	8.5	8.0-8.5			*1st wave − 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave − 4th wave	X
						3rd wave − 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 15: "Interest in the World" Attitude General Testing (Control Group)

Interest in the World	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Control Group	1	6.5	5.5-8.0	17	X	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	6.5	5.5-7.5			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	6.0	5.0-7.0			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.5	4.0-7.5			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 16: "Responsibility for the World" Attitude General Testing (PP)

Responsibility for the World	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	7.3	6.7-8.0	67	X	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	6.7	6.0-7.3			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.3	6.7-8.0			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.3	6.7-8.0			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 17: "Responsibility for the World" Attitude General Testing (PL)

Responsibility for the World	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PL	1	8.0	8.0-8.7	65	X	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	8.7	8.0-9.3			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	8.0	8.0-8.7			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	8.7	7.3-8.7			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 18: "Responsibility for the World" Attitude General Testing (Control Group)

Responsibility for the World	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Control Group	1	5.3	4.0-7.3	17	X	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	4.7	3.3-7.3			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	6.0	4.7-6.7			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	5.3	4.7-5.3			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 19: "Fairness Towards the World" Attitude General Testing (PP) [101]

Fairness towards the World	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	7.0	7.0-9.0	49	X	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	8.0	7.0-9.0			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	8.0	7.0-9.0			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.0	7.0-9.0			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 20: "Fairness Towards the World" Attitude General Testing (PL)

Fairness towards the World	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PL	1	8.0	8.0-9.0	48	X	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	8.0	8.0-9.0			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	8.0	8.0-9.0			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	8.0	8.0-9.0			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

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[101] Not enough cases in the control group to compute the statistics.

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 21: "Fairness Towards the State" Attitude General Testing (PP) [102]

Fairness towards the State	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	7.0	6.0-9.0	31	X	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	8.0	7.0-9.0			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.0	5.0-9.0			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	8.0	7.0-9.0			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 22: "Fairness Towards the State" Attitude General Testing (PL)

Fairness towards the State	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PL	1	8.0	7.0-9.0	41	X	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	8.0	7.0-9.0			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	9.0	7.0-10.0			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	8.0	7.0-9.0			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

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[102] Not enough cases in the control group to compute the statistics.

7.3 Knowledge

Table 23: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" General Testing (PP)

Participation and Citizenship Knowledge	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	6.4	6.0-6.8	50	0.001	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	6.9	6.4-7.2			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.2	6.6-8.0			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.1	6.4-8.2			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	0.001
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 24: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" General Testing (PL)

Participation and Citizenship Knowledge	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PL	1	7.7	7.0-8.2	60	0.033	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	8.0	7.2-8.4			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	8.0	7.0-8.6			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.9	7.6-8.4			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	0.039
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 25: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" General Testing (Control Group)

Participation and Citizenship Knowledge	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Control Group	1	6.5	5.0-7.6	16	X	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	6.5	5.4-7.2			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	6.9	5.4-7.8			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	6.9	6.0-8.0			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 26: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" Testing within Gender (PP)

Gender	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Male	1	6.5	16	0.034	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
PP	2	7.1			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.8			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.8			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	0.030
					1st wave – 4th wave	X
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 27: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" Testing within Gender (PL)

Gender	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Male	1	7.6	22	0.016	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
PL	2	7.5			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.7			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.6			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
					1st wave – 4th wave	0.031
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 28: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" Testing within Age Groups (PL)

General Testing	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Under 30	1	7.0	26	0.003	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
PL	2	7.4			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.5			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	8.0			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
					1st wave – 4th wave	0.002
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 29: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" Testing within Sending and Hosting (PP)

Sending and Hosting	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Sending	1	6.4	42	0.001	1st wave – 2nd wave	X
PP	2	7.0			2nd wave – 3rd wave	X
	3	7.2			2nd wave – 4th wave	X
	4	7.5			1st wave – 3rd wave	0.01
					1st wave – 4th wave	X
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 30: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" Testing within Educational Attainment (PP)

Educational Attainment	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Higher	1	6.4	20	0.009	1st wave – 2nd wave	0.042
Secondary	2	7.4			2nd wave – 3rd wave	X
Education	3	7.3			2nd wave – 4th wave	X
Diploma	4	7.5			1st wave – 3rd wave	0.016
					1st wave – 4th wave	X
PP					3rd wave – 4th wave	X
University	1	6.8	21	0.022	1st wave – 2nd wave	X
Degree	2	7.0			2nd wave – 3rd wave	X
	3	7.8			2nd wave – 4th wave	X
PP	4	8.0			1st wave – 3rd wave	0.025
					1st wave – 4th wave	X
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 31: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" Testing within Special Courses (PP)

Special Courses	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
No courses taken	1	5.9	24	0.003	1st wave – 2nd wave	X
PP	2	6.4			2nd wave – 3rd wave	X
	3	6.8			2nd wave – 4th wave	X
	4	6.4			1st wave – 3rd wave	0.005
					1st wave – 4th wave	X
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Table 32: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" Testing within Foreign Language Knowledge (PP)

Number of Foreign Languages Spoken by Respondents	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
2 foreign languages PP	1	6.4	23	0.011	1st wave – 2nd wave	X
	2	6.6			2nd wave – 3rd wave	X
	3	7.2			2nd wave – 4th wave	X
	4	6.4			1st wave – 3rd wave	0.010
					1st wave – 4th wave	X
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Table 33: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" Testing within Foreign Language Knowledge (PL)

Number of Foreign Languages Spoken by Respondents	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
3 or more PL	1	7.60	35	0.000	1st wave – 2nd wave	X
	2	7.60			2nd wave – 3rd wave	X
	3	7.80			2nd wave – 4th wave	0.033
	4	8.40			1st wave – 3rd wave	X
					1st wave – 4th wave	0.000
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Table 34: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" Testing within Relevant Knowledge Learned in the Project (PP)

Relevant Knowledge from the Project	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Relevant Knowledge Obtained *PP*	1	6.5	48	0.003	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	6.9			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.3			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.5			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	0.002
					1st wave – 4th wave	X
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 35: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" Testing within Project Ownership (PP)

Project Ownership	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Middle Levels of Project Ownership *PP*	1	6.4	23	0.012	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	6.6			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.2			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	6.6			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	0.012
					1st wave – 4th wave	X
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 36: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" Testing within Project Focus (PP)

Project Focus	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Project Focusing on Participation and Citizenship *Yes* *PP*	1	6.8	34	0.005	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	7.0			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.3			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.5			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	0.004
					1st wave – 4th wave	X
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.

Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 37: "Participation and Citizenship Knowledge" Testing within Project Focus (PL)

Project Focus	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Project Focusing on Participation and Citizenship	1	7.6	23	0.035	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	7.2			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	0.031
	3	7.6			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
No	4	7.6			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
PL					*1st wave – 4th wave*	X
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

7.4 Skills

Table 38: "Participation and Citizenship Skills" General Testing (PP)

Participation and Citizenship Skills	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	7.3	7.3-7.8	58	0.12	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	0.021
	2	7.7	7.3-8.0			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.6	7.3-8.0			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.6	7.1-7.8			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 39: "Participation and Citizenship Skills" General Testing (PL)

Participation and Citizenship Skills	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PL	1	8.2	7.8-8.4	63	X	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	8.4	8.0-8.7			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	8.4	8.0-8.9			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	8.2	7.8-8.4			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 40: "Participation and Citizenship Skills" General Testing (Control Group)

Participation and Citizenship Skills	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Control Group	1	7.1	6.4-8.0	16	X	1st wave – 2nd wave	X
	2	6.1	6.0-8.9			2nd wave – 3rd wave	X
	3	7.2	6.2-8.4			2nd wave – 4th wave	X
	4	7.2	6.2-8.2			1st wave – 3rd wave	X
						1st wave – 4th wave	X
						3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 41: "Participation and Citizenship Skills" Testing within Gender (PP)

Gender	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Female *PP*	1	7.0	38	0.008	1st wave – 2nd wave	0.027
	2	7.6			2nd wave – 3rd wave	X
	3	7.6			2nd wave – 4th wave	X
	4	7.6			1st wave – 3rd wave	X
					1st wave – 4th wave	0.040
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 42: "Participation and Citizenship Skills" Testing within Educational Attainment (PP)

Educational Attainment	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Higher Secondary Education Diploma *PP*	1	7.1	21	0.018	1st wave – 2nd wave	0.043
	2	7.8			2nd wave – 3rd wave	X
	3	7.8			2nd wave – 4th wave	X
	4	7.6			1st wave – 3rd wave	X
					1st wave – 4th wave	X
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.

Table 43: "Participation and Citizenship Skills" Testing within Special Courses (PP)

Special Courses	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
No courses taken *PP*	1	6.7	27	0.030	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	7.3			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.6			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.3			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
					1st wave – 4th wave	0.037
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 44: "Participation and Citizenship Skills" Testing within Foreign Language Knowledge (PP)

Number of Foreign Languages Spoken by Respondents	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
2 foreign languages *PP*	1	7.2	28	0.039	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	0.043
	2	7.6			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.6			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.2			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
					1st wave – 4th wave	X
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 45: "Participation and Citizenship Skills" Testing within Relevant Knowledge Learned in the Project (PP)

Relevant Knowledge from the Project	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Relevant Knowledge Obtained *PP*	1	7.6	55	0.020	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	0.034
	2	7.8			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.8			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.6			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
					1st wave – 4th wave	X
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 46: "Participation and Citizenship Skills" Testing within Project Ownership (PP)

Project Ownership	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Middle Levels of Project Ownership *PP*	1	6.7	27	0.017	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	0.027
	2	7.6			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.6			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.3			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
					1st wave – 4th wave	X
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 47: "Participation and Citizenship Skills" Testing within Project Focus (PP)

Project Focus	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Project Focusing on Participation and Citizenship *Yes* *PP*	1	7.3	39	0.016	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	0.011
	2	7.8			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.8			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	7.6			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
					1st wave – 4th wave	X
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

7.5 Practice[103]

Table 48: "General Participation in Civil Society" General Testing (PP)

General Participation in Civil Society	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	3.6	3.3-4.0	58	0.021	*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	4.0	3.4-4.3			*1st wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	3.6	3.1-4.1			*3rd wave – 4th wave*	0.024

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 49: "General Participation in Civil Society" General Testing (PL)

General Participation in Civil Society	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	4.2	3.6-4.6	62	0.012	*1st wave – 3rd wave*	0.018
	3	4.6	3.9-5.0			*1st wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	3.9	3.6-4.1			*3rd wave – 4th wave*	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 50: "General Participation in Civil Society" Testing within Gender (PL)

Gender	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Female	1	4.1	41	0.001	*1st wave – 3rd wave*	0.012
PL	3	4.7			*1st wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	3.1			*3rd wave – 4th wave*	0.003

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 51: "General Participation in Civil Society" Testing within Age Groups (PL)

Gender	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Over 30	1	4.4	34	0.028	*1st wave – 3rd wave*	0.027
PL	3	4.9			*1st wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	3.9			*3rd wave – 4th wave*	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.

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[103] Sign tests used, as the variables were only measured in the first and last measurement, not on all three occasions, like in the other indexes.

Table 52: "General Participation in Civil Society" Testing within Sending Hosting (PP)

Sending Hosting	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Sending	1	3.6	46	0.027	*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
PP	3	4.1			*1st wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	3.5			*3rd wave – 4th wave*	0.032

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.

Table 53: "General Participation in Civil Society" Testing within Sending Hosting (PL)

Sending Hosting	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Sending	1	3.9	31	0.019	*1st wave – 3rd wave*	0.028
PL	3	4.9			*1st wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	3.6			*3rd wave – 4th wave*	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.

Table 54: "General Participation in Civil Society" Testing within Educational Attainment (PP)

Educational Attainment	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Higher Secondary Education Diploma	1	3.1	23	0.040	*1st wave – 3rd wave*	0.045
	3	4.1			*1st wave – 4th wave*	X
PP	4	3.7			*3rd wave – 4th wave*	X
University Degree	1	4.2	24	0.001	*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	4.2			*1st wave – 4th wave*	0.015
PP	4	4.1			*3rd wave – 4th wave*	0.002

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.

Table 55: "General Participation in Civil Society" Testing within Educational Attainment (PL)

Educational Attainment	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
University Degree	1	4.3	46	0.032	*1st wave – 3rd wave*	0.043
	3	4.7			*1st wave – 4th wave*	X
PL	4	3.9			*3rd wave – 4th wave*	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 56: "General Participation in Civil Society" Testing within Special Courses (PP)

Special Courses	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
No courses taken *PP*	1	3.2	28	0.020	1st wave – 3rd wave	0.018
	3	3.5			1st wave – 4th wave	X
	4	3.5			3rd wave – 4th wave	X
One course taken *PP*	1	3.9	24	0.017	1st wave – 3rd wave	X
	3	4.1			1st wave – 4th wave	0.035
	4	3.4			3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 57: "General Participation in Civil Society" Testing within Foreign Language Knowledge (PL)

Number of Foreign Languages Spoken by Respondents	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
3 or more *PL*	1	4.3	25	0.008	1st wave – 3rd wave	0.007
	3	4.7			1st wave – 4th wave	X
	4	3.9			3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 58: "General Participation in Civil Society" Testing within Relevant Knowledge from the Project (PL)

Relevant Knowledge from the Project	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Relevant Knowledge Obtained *PL*	1	4.2	44	0.040	1st wave – 3rd wave	X
	3	4.6			1st wave – 4th wave	X
	4	3.6			3rd wave – 4th wave	0.043

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 59: "Information Gathering Practice" General Testing (PP)

Information Gathering Practice	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	6.0	6.0-6.7	64	X	1st wave – 3rd wave	X
	3	6.0	6.0-6.7			1st wave – 4th wave	X
	4	6.0	5.3-6.7			3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 60: "Information Gathering Practice" General Testing (PL)

Information Gathering Practice	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PL	1	7.7	6.7-8.0	72	0.011	1st wave – 3rd wave	X
	3	7.3	7.3-8.0			1st wave – 4th wave	0.047
	4	7.3	6.0-7.3			3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 61: "Information Gathering Practice" Testing within Gender (PL)

Gender	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Female	1	7.3	47	0.020	1st wave – 3rd wave	X
PL	3	7.3			1st wave – 4th wave	X
	4	6.7			3rd wave – 4th wave	0.040

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 62: "Information Gathering Practice" Testing within Specific Formal Education (PL)

Specific Formal Education	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Yes	1	8.0	37	0.002	1st wave – 3rd wave	X
PL	3	8.7			1st wave – 4th wave	0.009
	4	7.3			3rd wave – 4th wave	0.044

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 63: "Information Gathering Practice" Testing within Foreign Language Knowledge (PL)

Number of Foreign Languages Spoken by Respondents	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
3 or more	1	7.0	28	0.001	*1st wave − 3rd wave*	X
PL	3	7.3			*1st wave − 4th wave*	0.048
	4	6.0			*3rd wave − 4th wave*	0.001

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 64: "Information Gathering Practice" Testing within Project Focus (PL)

Project Focus	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
Project Focusing on Participation and Citizenship	1	7.3	19	0.016	*1st wave − 3rd wave*	X
	3	6.7			*1st wave − 4th wave*	X
Yes	4	6.0			*3rd wave − 4th wave*	0.045
PL						

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 65: "Environmental Participation Practice" General Testing (PP)

Environmental Participation Practice	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	7.5	6.5-8.0	64	X	*1st wave − 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.5	6.5-8.5			*1st wave − 4th wave*	X
	4	7.5	7.0-8.0			*3rd wave − 4th wave*	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 66: "Environmental Participation Practice" General Testing (PL)

Environmental Participation Practice	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PL	1	7.0	6.0-7.5	69	X	*1st wave − 3rd wave*	X
	3	7.0	6.5-7.5			*1st wave − 4th wave*	X
	4	7.5	7.0-7.5			*3rd wave − 4th wave*	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.

Table 67: "Conventional Participation Practice" General Testing (PP)

Conventional Participation Practice	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	8.0	4.0-8.0	15	X	*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	6.0	2.0-8.0			*1st wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	8.0	2.0-8.0			*3rd wave – 4th wave*	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.

Table 68: "Conventional Participation Practice" General Testing (PL)

Conventional Participation Practice	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PL	1	8.0	8.0-8.0	31	X	*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	8.0	8.0-8.0			*1st wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	8.0	8.0-8.0			*3rd wave – 4th wave*	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.

Table 69: "Non-Conventional Participation Practice" General Testing (PP)

Non-Conventional Participation Practice	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	2.5	2.5-5.0	50	X	*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	2.5	2.5-2.5			*1st wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	2.5	2.5-5.0			*3rd wave – 4th wave*	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.

Table 70: "Non-Conventional Participation Practice" General Testing (PL)

Non-Conventional Participation Practice	Wave	Median	95% Confidence Interval of Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PL	1	2.5	2.5-5.0	65	X	*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	2.5	2.5-5.0			*1st wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	2.5	2.5-5.0			*3rd wave – 4th wave*	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.

Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

7.6 Single Item Analysis

The following items were analysed:
- CompAtt1_1/2/5
- CompAtt4
- CompDkill1a_5/6
- CompKnow1_1/2/4/5/6
- CompKnow2_2/3
- CompValue1_1/5
- Prac2_1/3
- PRIOBJ_1/2/5
- prac12_8
- prac13_1/2
- prac21_1/2/3/4/5
- prac25_1/2/3/4
- prac30
- Kc_1/3/4

Table 71: Gain in Skills through the Project Participation (PL, PP)

Waves	Mean	Median	N
2nd wave PL	7.6	7.3	159
2nd wave PP	7.0	7.3	265
4th wave PL	7.2	7.3	89
4th wave PP	7.1	6.67	101

Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 72: "I have a solid understanding of the European Youth Strategy." General Testing (PP)

"I have a solid understanding of the European Youth Strategy."	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	2.0	57	0.008	*1st wave − 2nd wave*	X
	2	3.0			*2nd wave − 3rd wave*	X
	3	3.0			*2nd wave − 4th wave*	X
	4	3.0			*1st wave − 3rd wave*	0.016
					1st wave − 4th wave	X
					3rd wave − 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 73: "I know the civil responsibilities that come with my civil rights." General Testing (PP)

"I know the civil responsibilities that come with my civil rights."	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	1	4.0	56	0.002	*1st wave – 2nd wave*	X
	2	4.0			*2nd wave – 3rd wave*	X
	3	4.0			*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	4.0			*1st wave – 3rd wave*	X
					1st wave – 4th wave	0.018
					3rd wave – 4th wave	X

Note: Related-Samples Friedman´s Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks and the post hoc tests.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 74: Relationship between Age and Educational Attainment (PP)

Highest Educational Attainment	Statistics	Under 15	15-17	18-20	21-25	26-30	Total
Lower Secondary School Diploma	Column %	80.0%	61.2%	24.2%	1.0%	0.0%	29.2%
	Adjusted Residual	4.4	9.8	-1.5	-6.9	-5.3	X
Higher Secondary School Diploma	Column %	20.0%	38.8%	70.3%	41.7%	30.5%	47.0%
	Adjusted Residual	-2.1	-2.3	6.3	-1.2	-2.7	X
University Degree	Column %	0.0%	0.0%	5.5%	57.3%	69.5%	23.8%
	Adjusted Residual	-2.2	-7.8	-5.8	8.7	8.9	X
Total	Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Note: N=432. Chi-square p=0.000; Gamma correlation coefficient equals 0.856 (p=0.000).
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 75: Relevant Skills Gained through the Project. General Testing (PP)

Skills Gain through the Project	Wave	Median	N	Significance of the Friedman´s test	Pairwise comparisons	Significance after Bonferroni correction
PP	2	7.3	80	X	*2nd wave – 4th wave*	X
	4	6.7				

Note: Related-Samples Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 76: Reflection Resulting from Research Participation (PP)

Completing the questionnaire made me reflect…	Mean	Median	N
… on my experiences during the project.	3.5	4.0	97
… on my knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.	3.7	4.0	95
… on my engagement in (civil) society and public/democratic life.	3.7	4.0	97
… on my learning though the project.	3.6	4.0	98
… on my development since the project ended.	3.9	4.0	98

Note: These items were only included in the last survey wave, 3 years after the project activity. Respondents used a scale from 0 (does not apply at all) to 5 (fully applies) to answer the respective items.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 77: Reflection Resulting from Research Participation (PL)

Completing the questionnaire made me reflect…	Mean	Median	N
… on my experiences during the project.	3.6	4.0	93
… on my knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.	3.6	4.0	94
… on my engagement in (civil) society and public/democratic life.	3.5	4.0	92
… on my learning though the project.	3.5	4.0	93
… on my development since the project ended.	3.6	4.0	94

Note: These items were only included in the last survey wave, 3 years after the project activity. Respondents used a scale from 0 (does not apply at all) to 5 (fully applies) to answer the respective items.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 78: Reflection Resulting from Research Participation, Testing within Project Focus (PP)

Completing the questionnaire made me reflect…	Project Focused on Participation and Citizenship	Median	N
… on my experiences during the project.	No	3.0***	31
	Yes	4.0***	53
… on my knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.	No	3.0**	30
	Yes	4.0**	52
… on my engagement in (civil) society and public/democratic life.	No	3.0**	31
	Yes	4.0**	53

Note: These items were only included in the last survey wave, 3 years after the project activity. Respondents used a scale from 0 (does not apply at all) to 5 (fully applies) to answer the respective items. Independent-samples Mann-Whitney U Test used to determine statistical significance of the difference; $p > 0.05$; $p > 0.01$**; $p > 0.001$***.*
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 79: Reflection Resulting from Research Participation, Testing within Gender (PP)

Completing the questionnaire made me reflect…	Gender	Median	N
… on my engagement in (civil) society and public/democratic life.	Female	4.0*	68
	Male	3.0*	29

Note: These items were only included in the last survey wave, 3 years after the project activity. Respondents used a scale from 0 (does not apply at all) to 5 (fully applies) to answer the respective items. Independent-samples Mann-Whitney U Test used to determine statistical significance of the difference; p>0.05*; p>0.01**; p>0.001***.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 80: Reflection Resulting from Research Participation, Testing within Gender (PL)

Completing the questionnaire made me reflect…	Project Focused on Participation and Citizenship	Median	N
… on my experiences during the project.	Female	4.0**	59
	Male	3.0**	34
… on my knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.	Female	4.0***	59
	Male	3.0***	35
… on my engagement in (civil) society and public/democratic life.	Female	4.0*	57
	Male	3.0*	35
… on my learning through the project.	Female	4.0*	58
	Male	3.0*	35
… on my development since the project ended.	Female	4.0***	58
	Male	3.0***	35

Note: These items were only included in the last survey wave, 3 years after the project activity. Respondents used a scale from 0 (does not apply at all) to 5 (fully applies) to answer the respective items. Independent-samples Mann-Whitney U Test used to determine statistical significance of the difference; p>0.05*; p>0.01**; p>0.001***.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 81: Evaluation of the Online Surveys (PP)

Item	Mean	Median	N
Completing the questionnaires was very interesting for me.	2.8	3.0	98
It was easy to complete the questionnaires.	3.5	4.0	98
In particular, I found rating myself on the scales between 0 and 5 very easy.	3.5	4.0	98
I fully understood all questions of the questionnaires.	3.9	4.0	98
The length of the questionnaires was easy to handle.	3.1	3.0	97

Note: These items were only included in the last survey wave, 3 years after the project activity. Respondents used a scale from 0 (does not apply at all) to 5 (fully applies) to answer the respective items.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 82: Evaluation of the Online Surveys (PL)

Item	Mean	Median	N
Completing the questionnaires was very interesting for me.	2.3	2.0	97
It was easy to complete the questionnaires.	3.4	4.0	97
In particular, I found rating myself on the scales between 0 and 5 very easy.	3.4	4.0	97
I fully understood all questions of the questionnaires.	3.9	4.0	97
The length of the questionnaires was easy to handle.	2.7	3.0	97

Note: These items were only included in the last survey wave, 3 years after the project activity. Respondents used a scale from 0 (does not apply at all) to 5 (fully applies) to answer the respective items.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 83: Evaluation of the Online Surveys, Testing within Education (PP)

Item	Education	Median	75th Percentile	N
I fully understood all questions of the questionnaires.	Lower Secondary	4.0*	4.0*	23
	Higher Secondary	4.0*	5.0*	36

Note: These items were only included in the last survey wave, 3 years after the project activity. Respondents used a scale from 0 (does not apply at all) to 5 (fully applies) to answer the respective items. Independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis Test used to determine statistical significance of the difference; p>0.05*; p>0.01**; p>0.001***.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

Table 84: Evaluation of the Online Surveys, Testing within Education (PL)

Item	Education	Median	75th Percentile	N
Completing the questionnaires was very interesting for me.	Higher Secondary	1.5*	3.0*	20
	University	3.0*	4.0*	75

Note: These items were only included in the last survey wave, 3 years after the project activity. Respondents used a scale from 0 (does not apply at all) to 5 (fully applies) to answer the respective items. Independent-samples Kruskal-Wallis Test used to determine statistical significance of the difference; p>0.05*; p>0.01**; p>0.001***.
Source: RAY LTE Transnational Dataset, 2019.

8 Appendix C – the RAY Network

The RAY Network was founded on the initiative of the Austrian National Agency of the EU-Programme Youth in Action (YiA, 2007 to 2013) in order to develop joint transnational research activities related to this programme. The research aims at producing reliable and valid documentation and understanding of processes and outcomes of the programme and of the activities supported through the programme. A first network meeting took place in Austria in 2008. Since then, the RAY Network has expanded continuously and currently involves the National Agencies of Erasmus+ Youth in Action (E+/YiA)/the European Solidarity Corps and their research partners in 33 countries: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czechia, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, North Macedonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom. The RAY Network is open for additional partners.

In principle, the research on the programme and its activities envisages a combination of quantitative and qualitative social research methods and instruments, in particular surveys with project participants, project leaders/team members and staff of beneficiary organisations of E+/YiA as well as qualitative interviews and focus groups with different actors involved in E+/YiA. Surveys and interviews can also involve young people, youth leaders and youth workers not participating in the programme and thus acting as control groups.

The RAY research programme presently includes the following research projects:

- Research-based analysis and monitoring of E+/YiA, aimed at contributing to monitoring and developing E+/YiA and the quality of projects supported by it.
- A research project on the long-term effects of E+/YiA on participation and citizenship of the actors involved, in particular on the development of participation and citizenship competences and practices (which this publication is about);
- A research project on competence development and capacity building of youth workers and youth leaders involved in training/support activities in E+/YiA; this project will also explore the effects of E+/YiA on the organisations involved;
- Research-based analysis and monitoring of the European Solidarity Corps aimed at contributing to monitoring and developing the European Solidarity Corps and the quality of projects supported by it.
- A research project on the impact, role and potential of strategic partnerships and cooperation in E+/YiA (under Key Action 2) as instruments to foster innovation and exchange of good practices in the youth sector and related fields.
- A research project on strategies and practices for organisational development and learning of organisations and networks in the European youth sector.
- A research project on approaches to participation and citizenship education and learning in E+/YiA exploring which approaches are effective in developing participation and citizenship competences and practices.

9 Appendix D – Research project partners

This study was designed and implemented by the Institute of Educational Science at the University of Innsbruck and the Generation and Educational Science Institute in Austria in cooperation with the National Agencies of Erasmus+ Youth in Action and their research partners in Austria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Slovenia, Sweden. National research reports can be requested from the respective National Agencies and their research partners listed below.

Austria
IZ – Verein zur Förderung von Vielfalt, Dialog und Bildung
Österreichische Nationalagentur Erasmus+ Jugend in Aktion & Europäisches Solidaritätskorps
Dresdner Straße 82/12
A-1200 Wien
https://www.iz.or.at

Institut für Erziehungswissenschaft der Universität Innsbruck
Institute of Educational Science, University of Innsbruck
Liebeneggstraße 8
A-6020 Innsbruck
https://www.uibk.ac.at/bgl/index.html.en

GENESIS – Generation and Educational Science Institute
c/o Schraubenfabrik
Lilienbrunngasse 18/2/9
A-1020 Wien
www.genesis-institute.org

Czechia
Dům zahraniční spolupráce (DZS) Centre for International Cooperation in Education (NAEP)
Na Poříčí 1035/4
110 00, Praha
http://www.dzs.cz

Estonia
Archimedes Foundation Youth Agency
L. Koidula 13A
10125, Tallinn
https://noored.ee/

Finland
The Finnish National Agency for Education - EDUFI
Internationalisation Services for Youth, Culture, Sport
P.O. Box 380 (Hakaniemenranta 6)
FI-00531 Helsinki
http://www.oph.fi/english

Germany
JUGEND für Europa (JfE)
Nationale Agentur Erasmus+ JUGEND IN AKTION und Europäisches
Solidaritätskorps
Godesberger Allee 142-148
D - 53175 Bonn
https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de

Forschungsgruppe Jugend und Europa am
Centrum für angewandte Politikforschung CAP
Ludwig Maximilians Universität München
Maria-Theresia-Str. 21
81675 München
www.cap-lmu.de

Hungary
Tempus Közalapítvány / Tempus Public Foundation
Kéthly Anna tér 1.
1077 Budapest
www.eplusifjusag.hu

Italy
Agenzia nazionale per i giovani (YIA-IT)
Via Sabotino, 4
00195, Roma
http://www.agenziagiovani.it

Dipartimento di Studi Politici e Sociali, Università di Salerno
Department of Political and Social Studies, University of Salerno
Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132
I-84048 Fisciano (Sa)
https://www.disps.unisa.it/home

Malta
European Union Programmes Agency (EUPA)
Triq l-Imtarfa
Imtarfa MTF 1140
http://www.eupa.org.mt

Slovenia
MOVIT
Nacionalna agencija programov EU
Erasmus+ Mladi v akciji in Evropska solidarnostna enota
Dunajska cesta, 5
1000, Ljubljana
http://www.movit.si

University of Ljubljana
Faculty of Social Sciences
Kardeljeva ploščad 5
1000 Ljubljana
http://www.fdv.uni-lj.si/en

Sweden
Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society
Liedbergsgatan 4
Box 206
351 05 Växjö
http://www.mucf.se