



**Research-based
analysis of European
youth programmes**

PROJECT MODULES ACROSS ALL RESEARCH PROJECTS

GUIDANCE 2026 & 2027

NETWORK ORIENTATION

20 JANUARY 2026

GUIDANCE FOR NATIONAL PARTNERS



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1. INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are meant to provide you with a starting and reference point for planning the number of days needed for the implementation of research modules at national level. Note that in most of our research projects—a relatively new feature—national modules are optional, so that agencies can decide to conduct interviews but no focus groups in Project A, or conduct focus groups but no case studies in Project B.

Please keep in mind that this is a document for orientation: the number of days fluctuate a lot across contexts. Alone the travel time can make a difference of several days in a single project. Despite this contextuality, we hope that this document is helpful, and invite you to get in touch with specific questions at any time!

2. HOSTING & CO-HOSTING OPPORTUNITIES

There are a number of activities in 2026 and 2027, which you can host or co-host:

Sector-wide outreach events

- Triangular Summit in autumn of 2026, hosted by Ireland, co-hosts warmly welcome
- Network Meeting in June 2027, host warmly welcome

Network-specific events

- Joint working group meetings of MON/SOC in 2026 and 2027 (2 meetings each year)
- Working group meetings of MISS in 2026 and 2027 (1 physical meeting in each year)
- Working group meetings of DIGI in 2026 and 2027 (1 physical meeting in each year)
- One final working group meeting of LEARN in 2026



3. ACTIVITIES BY PROJECT

Time period	Project	Activities at national level
2026 (all year)	RAY MON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement of national re-search partner, if necessary (analysis of survey data can start as of April 2026) • National analysis of monitoring data, development of key in-sights, drafting of national reports and/or factsheets • <i>Optional: host a physical working group meeting</i>
	RAY SOC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement of national re-search partner, if necessary (analysis of survey data can start as of April 2026) • National analysis of monitoring data, development of key in-sights, drafting of national reports and/or factsheets • <i>Optional: host a physical working group meeting</i>
	RAY DIGI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalisation of case studies if you did not get done in 2025 • Stakeholder interviews on digitalisation strategies at national level • <i>Optional: host a physical working group meeting</i>
	RAY LEARN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalisation of long-term case studies at national level (final round data collection and national reports for final round) • <i>Optional: host a physical working group meeting</i>
	RAY MISS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of national thematic case studies • Analysis of fresh national monitoring data for MISS • <i>Optional: host a physical working group meeting</i>

Time period	Project	Activities at national level
2027 (all year)	RAY MON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translation of adapted, revised and refined questions for 3rd survey into national languages (will happen at the end of spring, towards early summer) • Supporting the 3rd survey cycle (in autumn 2027) through promotion and awareness raising • Preparing contracts with national research partner for the 3rd survey (the main analysis work will happen in the first half of 2028) • <i>Optional: host a physical working group meeting</i>
	RAY SOC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translation of adapted, revised and refined questions for 3rd survey into national languages (will happen at the end of spring, towards early summer) • Supporting the 3rd survey cycle (in autumn 2027) through promotion and awareness raising • Preparing contracts with national research partner for the 3rd survey (the main analysis work will happen in the first half of 2028) • <i>Optional: host a physical working group meeting</i>
	RAY DIGI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support research communication of main outcomes and key findings • <i>Optional: host a physical working group meeting</i>
	RAY MISS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National process of common sense-making: interpreting RAY MISS findings and co-developing recommendations for the next programme generation • Development of national research reports, factsheets and/or policy briefs



4. ANALYSIS OF MONITORING DATASETS IN 2026

For both MON & SOC, your national research partner will analyse the next round of national datasets in the first half of 2026. In most national contexts this means that you will need to prepare the contracts and go through your procurements in 2025. If you have a framework agreement or other longer-term arrangements, you can likely ignore this section.

Overall, the process of analysis in 2026 will entail:

- Cleaning of national datasets, depending on how you want to handle missing responses
- Adaptation of provided syntax file for dataset analysis, e.g. for specific disaggregations
- Analysis of the output of basic frequencies, crosstables and possibly disaggregations
- Summary of key findings in a format to be agreed (e.g. national report or factsheets)
- Participation in planning, reflection and discussion meetings with the National Agency
- Clarification of questions and communication with the transnational research team
- Contribution to research communication of key findings to youth sector stakeholders
- Participation in an analysis seminar, most likely in spring 2026 (dates/location tbc)

Altogether, this will likely amount to the following number of days

- 12-15 days for countries with a small national dataset/sample size
- 16-19 days for countries with a medium national dataset/sample size
- 20-24 days for countries with a large national dataset/sample size

The SOC datasets are considerably smaller, but they are also harder to analyse because of that. We recommend to work with 60-70% of the days for the MON analysis, so your research partner can invest some time in corroborating with other data sources (such as application data, to which you have access at national level, but we do not transnationally) and in that way contextualising the smaller dataset.

These are **guidelines and recommendations** that should be adapted to your context.

5. INTERVIEW MODULES

Projects containing an interview module typically involve:

- 5-10 interviews in countries with a small (international) youth sector
- 10-15 interviews in countries with a medium-sized (international) youth sector
- 15+ interviews in countries with a large (international) youth sector

That way, a thematic research project with 10 partners will gather around 60 interviews, which is a reasonable sample size for the transnational analysis. It is of course always possible to conduct more interviews, in particular if you would like to obtain a nuanced national picture and produce a stand-alone national report in addition to the transnational one.

For each interview, time should be calculated for

- the analysis of documents during the interview preparation, likely ½ day
- the preparation, conduction and follow-up of the interview, likely ½ day (plus travel)
- the analysis and analytical summary of the interview conducted, likely ½ day to 1 day

In addition, for the overall research work, time should be calculated for

- the identification of a shortlist of potential interviewees, likely ½-¾ day
- the arrangement of interview dates and times and interview logistics, likely ½-¾ day



- the analysis and analytical summary across all interviews conducted (if required according to analysis guidelines), likely 2-3 days (depending on number of interviews)
- communication with the transnational research team throughout, likely $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ day
- communication with the Erasmus+ National Agency throughout, likely $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ day

Example for a medium-sized country:

- Opting for 6 interviews, calculating 1.5 days per interview = 9 working days
- Adding 5 working days for overall research work = 14 working days in total

These are **guidelines and recommendations** that should be adapted to your context.

6. FOCUS GROUP MODULES

Projects containing a focus group module typically involve:

- 2-4 focus groups in countries with a small (international) youth sector
- 4-6 focus groups in countries with a medium-sized (international) youth sector
- 6-8 focus groups in countries with a large (international) youth sector

That way, a thematic research project with 10 partners will gather around 40 focus groups, which is a reasonable sample size for the transnational analysis. It is of course always possible to conduct more focus groups, in particular if you would like to obtain a nuanced national picture and produce a stand-alone national report in addition to the transnational one.

For each focus group, time should be calculated for

- the analysis of documents during the focus group preparation, likely $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ day
- the preparation, conduction and follow-up of the focus group, likely 1 day (plus travel)
- the analysis and analytical summary of the focus group conducted, likely $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ day

In addition, for the overall research work, time should be calculated for

- the identification of a shortlist of potential focus groups, likely 1-2 days
- the arrangement of focus groups dates, times and logistics, likely 1-2 days
- the analysis and analytical summary across all focus groups conducted, (if required according to analysis guidelines), likely 3-4 days (depending on number of focus groups)
- communication with the transnational research team throughout, likely $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ day
- communication with the Erasmus+ National Agency throughout, likely $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ day

Example for a medium-sized country:

- Opting for 5 focus groups, calculating 2.5 days per interview = 12.5 working days
- Adding 7.5 working days for overall research work = 20 working days in total

These are **guidelines and recommendations** that should be adapted to your context.

7. CASE STUDY MODULES

Projects containing a case study module typically involve:

- 2-4 case studies in countries with a small (international) youth sector
- 4-6 case studies in countries with a medium-sized (international) youth sector
- 6-8 case studies in countries with a large (international) youth sector

These numbers are rough estimates – actual numbers per country also depend on the type of cases and the case study methodology.



That way, a thematic research project with 10 partners will gather around 40 case studies, which is a reasonable sample size. It is of course always possible to conduct more case studies, in particular if you would like to obtain a nuanced national picture in addition to the transnational one.

For each case study, time should be calculated for

- the analysis of documents during the case study preparation, likely 1-2 days
- the preparation, conduction and follow-up of the case study, likely 2-3 days
- the analysis and analytical summary of the case study conducted, likely 1 day

In addition, for the overall research work, time should be calculated for

- the identification of a shortlist of potential case studies, likely 1-2 days
- the arrangement of case study dates and times and interview logistics, likely 1-2 days
- the analysis and analytical summary across all case studies conducted (if required according to analysis guidelines), likely 4-5 days (depending on number of case studies)
- communication with the transnational research team throughout, likely 1-2 days
- communication with the Erasmus+ National Agency throughout, likely 1-2 days

Example for a medium-sized country:

- Opting for 5 case studies, calculating 4.0 days per case = 20 working days
- Adding 10 working days for overall research work = 30 working days in total

These are **guidelines and recommendations** that should be adapted to your context.

8. LONG-TERM CASE STUDY MODULES

Projects containing a longitudinal case module typically involve:

- 2-4 longitudinal cases in countries with a small (international) youth sector
- 4-6 longitudinal cases in countries with a medium-sized (international) youth sector
- 6-8 longitudinal cases in countries with a large (international) youth sector

That way, a thematic research project with 10 partners will gather around 40 longitudinal cases, which is a reasonable sample size. It is of course always possible to conduct more longitudinal case studies, in particular if you would like to obtain a nuanced national picture in addition to the transnational one.

For each longitudinal case, time should be calculated for

- the analysis of documents during the preparation for the longitudinal case, likely 2 days
- the preparation, conduction and follow-up of the longitudinal case, likely 4-6 days
- the analysis and analytical summary of the longitudinal case conducted, likely 2-3 days

In addition, for the overall research work, time should be calculated for

- the identification of a shortlist of potential longitudinal cases, likely 1-2 days
- the arrangement of interview dates and times and logistics, likely 2-3 days
- the analysis and analytical summary across all longitudinal cases (if required according to analysis guidelines), likely 4-5 days (depending on number of case studies)
- communication with the transnational research team throughout, likely 2-3 days
- communication with the Erasmus+ National Agency throughout, likely 2-3 days

Example for a medium-sized country:

- Opting for 5 longitudinal cases, calculating 9.0 days per case = 45 working days



- Adding 15 working days for overall research work = 60 working days in total

These are **guidelines and recommendations** that should be adapted to your context.

9. RAY MISS THEMATIC CASE STUDIES

For RAY MISS, each partner is asked to conduct thematic deep dives into sectors of youth work and/or youth populations currently absent from the European youth programmes in their national context:

- 2-3 thematic deep dives in countries with a small (international) youth sector
- 3-4 thematic deep dives in countries with a medium-sized (international) youth sector
- 4-5 thematic deep dives in countries with a large (international) youth sector

For each thematic deep dive, each partner is asked to conduct an analysis, including focus groups and interviews, with 2-4 actors (organisations, networks, authorities, institutions).

That way, RAY MISS with its 14 partners will gather around 45-50 thematic deep dives, which is a reasonable sample size. It is of course always possible to conduct more thematic deep dives and/or to conduct more focus groups/interviews in each deep dive, in particular if you would like to obtain a nuanced national picture in addition to the transnational one.

For each actor analysis, time should be calculated for

- the analysis of documents during the preparation, likely 1 day
- the preparation, conduction and follow-up of focus groups & interviews, likely 2-3 days
- the analysis and analytical summary of the actor, likely 1-2 days

In addition, for the overall research work, time should be calculated for

- the identification of a priority list of themes for the deep dives, likely 1-2 days
- the identification of a shortlist of potential actors for analysis, likely 3-4 days
- the support of the translation of the short youth survey (15-20 qs), likely 1-2 days
- the arrangement of interview dates and times and logistics, likely 3-4 days
- the analysis and analytical summary across all actors per theme, likely 3-4 days
- communication with the transnational research team throughout, likely 2-3 days
- communication with the Erasmus+ National Agency throughout, likely 2-3 days

Example for a medium-sized country:

- Opting for 3 thematic deep dives and 3 actors per theme, calculating 6.0 days per case = 54 working days
- Adding 16 working days for overall research work = 70 working days in total

These are **guidelines and recommendations** that should be adapted to your context.

10. RAY MISS SENSE-MAKING PROCESS

For RAY MISS, we have foreseen a sense-making process in 2027, aiming to co-develop recommendations, based on the research findings, for the next programme generation.

Without knowing the research findings yet, it is hard to predict what shape and form such a sense-making process could take. The working group of the project has discussed a few ideas and will develop guidelines throughout 2026. For your planning, we recommend to plan for approximately the same amount of days for your national research partner in 2027 as in 2026, if your resources allow.



11. PARTICIPATION IN WORKING GROUPS

Participation in working groups is voluntary. If you choose to join a working group, we recommend to plan time for both an agency staff and a research partner staff. For each:

- 2 working group meetings per year, usually
 - 1 virtual meeting for ½ day, plus preparation and follow-up = 1 day
 - 1 physical meeting for 1,5 days, plus travel, preparation and follow-up = 3 days
- The RAY MON & SOC working groups will take more time in 2025, while we are working on refining and improving the monitoring surveys:
 - 1 physical meeting for 3 days, plus travel, preparation and follow-up = 6 days

In addition, time should be calculated for

- following and contributing to the working group communication = 2 days
- discussing research activities at national level in more depth = 2 days
- sharing research findings at national events = 2 days

These are **guidelines and recommendations** that can be adapted to your context, but in this case we recommend no strong deviations, so that all partners can contribute to working groups on a fairly equal level. It is of course possible to invest more time and resources in working groups, but we know that it is difficult to mobilise more than 2 x 10 days per calendar year for most smaller partners in the network, and they should have an equal chance to participate in working groups. If you would like to contribute additionally to working groups, consider hosting the physical meeting instead!