RAY

Research-based
analysis of European
youth programmes

2014–2020

Comparative Research Report

RAY-MON

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Effects and outcomes of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme

Transnational Analysis

Erasmus+ Youth in Action has been part of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union during the 2014–2020 programme generation. It is being continued as Erasmus+ Youth in the 2021–2027 programme generation. The RAY Network, short for *Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of European Youth Programmes*, carried by the National Agencies of Erasmus+ Youth (in Action) and their research partners in more than 30 countries*, has conducted monitoring and analysis surveys of the European youth programmes since 2008, and will continue to do so in the years to come.

This comparative research report is the summary of the transnational analysis of the results from surveys conducted between 2014 and 2020 with project participants and project teams involved in Erasmus+ Youth in Action projects.

The research work underpinning this report was designed and implemented by the Generation and Educational Science Institute, based in Vienna, and Youth Policy Labs, based in Berlin, in cooperation with the RAY Network.

The questionnaires used for this study are based on questionnaires designed in cooperation with the Institute of Educational Science at the University of Innsbruck. The data collection for this study was coordinated by IZ – Vielfalt, Dialog, Bildung on behalf of the RAY Network.

This study was co-funded within the Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCA) of Erasmus+ Youth in Action. 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.

* 35 countries between 2014 and 2020: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and United Kingdom.

WWW

Where available, national research reports can be requested from the respective National Agencies and their research partners
↓
www.researchyouth.net/network

Further RAY publications can be retrieved from
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www.researchyouth.net

Erasmus+   genesis
Generation and Educational Science Institute

YOUTH POLICY LABS

FINNISH NATIONAL AGENCY FOR EDUCATION

Comparative Research Report

RAY-MON

Effects and outcomes
of the Erasmus+ Youth
in Action Programme

*from the perspective
of project participants
and project leaders*

Transnational Analysis
2014-2020

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FIGURES IN THE COMPARATIVE DATA REPORT

LIST OF TABLES (DATA REPORT)

The following tables are included in the accompanying *Comparative Data Report*. The page numbers refer to the pages in the Data Report.

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COUNTRIES AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

COUNTRIES

E+/YiA Programme countries	These are EU member states, EEA countries and EU candidate/accession countries (for country codes/abbreviations see Table 2 in this RAY-MON Data Report).
E+/YiA Partner countries	These are countries from Southeast Europe, countries from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus region as well as Mediterranean countries (for country codes/abbreviations see Table 3 in this RAY-MON Data Report).
RAY countries	RAY Network members participating in the RAY-MON surveys as funding countries (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom).

RAY RESEARCH PROJECTS

RAY-COMP	A research project on educational approaches to competence development & capacity building of youth workers & youth leaders in the European youth programmes.
RAY-COR	A research project on the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on youth work in Europe, including the European youth programmes, and the response of youth work.
RAY-DIGI	A research project on dimensions of digitalisation in the European youth programmes and on approaches to strengthen and support digital dimensions in youth work.
RAY-INNO	A research project on the impact, role and potential of strategic partnerships in Erasmus+ Youth in Action as instruments to foster innovation in the youth field.
RAY-LEARN	A research project on strategies and practices for organisational development and learning of networks, organisations and teams in the European youth sector.
RAY-MON	Research-based analysis and monitoring of Erasmus+ Youth in Action contributes to the development of Erasmus+ Youth in Action and the quality of its projects.
RAY-PART	A research project on participation and citizenship education and learning in the European youth programmes, and the competences necessary to implement it well.
RAY-SOC	Research-based analysis and monitoring of the European Solidarity Corps contributes to the development of the European Solidarity Corps and the quality of its projects.
RAY-STRAT	A research project on the contribution of the European youth programmes to either programme- or sector-specific strategies on youth policy and youth work.

ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

ABBREVIATIONS

E+	European Union Programme Erasmus+ (2014-2020)
E+/YiA	Erasmus+ Youth in Action (2014-2020) – the youth strand within Erasmus+
EU	European Union
FE	Formal education
FL	Formal learning
NA	National Agency
NFE	Non-formal education
NFL	Non-formal learning
ICL	Intercultural learning
PL	Project leaders/members of project teams: Youth workers, youth leaders, trainers or other actors who prepared and implemented YiA projects for/with young people or youth workers/leaders, at least in an education/socio-pedagogic function, but frequently also with an organisational function; normally, in particular in the case of projects with participants from two or more different countries, these projects are prepared and implemented by project teams with two or more project leaders.
PP	Project participants: Youth workers, youth leaders, teachers or other actors who attended projects/training/activity within E+/YiA for/with youth workers/leaders, at least in an education/socio-pedagogic function, but frequently also with an organisational function.
RAY	Research-based analysis of European youth programmes. The RAY Network consists of the Youth in Action National Agencies and their research partners involved in the RAY project.
YiA	European Union Programme 'Youth in Action' (2007-2013) – the predecessor of Erasmus+
YPFO	Young people with fewer opportunities
YPSN	Young people with special needs

ACTIVITY TYPES

CP	Capacity building in the field of youth (Key Action 2)
EVS	European Voluntary Service (Key Action 1). As of 2018, this format is covered by a new European youth programme, the European Solidarity Corps.
SD	Structured Dialogue – meetings between young people and decision-makers in the field of youth (Key Action 3). As of 2019, this format is called Youth Dialogue.
SP	Strategic Partnerships (Key Action 2)
TCA	Transnational Cooperation Activities
YD	Youth Dialogue – meetings between young people and decision-makers in the field of youth (Key Action 3). Until the end of 2018, this format was called Structured Dialogue.
YE	Youth Exchanges (Key Action 1)
YWM	Mobility of youth workers (Key Action 1)

DEFINITIONS

Activity start/end	The dates when, within a funded project, the core activity starts/ends, for example a youth worker mobility (when youth workers from different countries meet in one country), a seminar, a training course, etc.
Project start/end	The dates when a funded project starts/ends; the duration of a project is normally much longer than that of the core activity (see activity start/end) – the project also includes the preparation of and the follow-up to the core activity.
Country of origin/ residence	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'
Hosting 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 'venue 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 country of residence.

KEY COMPETENCES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING *

KC1	Communication in the mother tongue
KC2	Communication in foreign languages
KC3	Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology
KC3a	Mathematical competence
KC3b	Basic competences in science and technology
KC4	Digital competence
KC5	Learning competence (learning to learn)
KC6	Social and civic competences
KC6a	Interpersonal and social competence
KC6b	Intercultural competence
KC6c	Civic competence

KC7	Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
KC7a	Sense of initiative
KC7b	Sense of entrepreneurship
KC8	Cultural awareness and expression
ML	Media literacy
*	The key competences addressed in this survey are based on the key competences for lifelong learning as defined in 2006 by the European Parliament and the European Council. While these were revised in 2018, this survey maintained using the 2006 version in order to ensure the comparability of data for the entire programme generation 2014–2020.

1 — INTRODUCTION

Research-based analysis and monitoring of Erasmus+ Youth in Action (RAY-MON) has explored a broad scope of aspects of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme, seeking to contribute to the development of the current programme's implementation as well as of the next programme generation. What are the effects of the European Union's Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth (Erasmus+ Youth in Action) on young people, youth workers and youth leaders involved in the projects funded by this programme? What are the effects on youth groups, organisations, institutions, structures and communities involved in the programme?

These are some of the questions the RAY Network – a network of E+/YiA National Agencies and their research partners in more than 30 European countries – explores, ultimately seeking to study to which extent the objectives and priorities of E+/YiA are achieved.

1.1   THE RAY NETWORK

The RAY Network was founded on the initiative of the Austrian National Agency of the YiA Programme in order to develop joint transnational research activities related to the EU-Programme Youth in Action (2007 to 2013) in line with the aims and objectives outlined above. A first network meeting took place in Austria in 2008. Since then, the RAY Network has expanded continuously. It now covers the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme with its research activities and currently involves the National Agencies and their research partners in 33 countries: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom.

The RAY Network is open to additional partners.

1.2   RESEARCH APPROACH AND ACTIVITIES

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 and staff of beneficiary organisations 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 included the following research projects between 2014 and 2018:
- Research-based analysis and monitoring of E+/YiA (which this publication is about) aimed at contributing to monitoring and developing E+/YiA and the quality of projects supported by it (RAY-MON);
- 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 (RAY-LTE);
- 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 (RAY-CAP).

In 2019 and 2020, additional research projects were initiated, exploring:
- the impact, role and potential of strategic partnerships in Erasmus+ Youth in Action as instruments to foster innovation in the youth field (RAY-INNO);
- strategies and practices for organisational development and learning of networks, organisations and teams in the European youth sector (RAY-LEARN);
- participation and citizenship education and learning in the European youth programmes, and the competences necessary to implement it well (RAY-PART);
- the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on youth work in Europe, including the European youth programmes, and the response of youth work (RAY-COR).

1.3 CONCEPT FOR THIS STUDY

This research project aims to explore a broad scope of aspects of E+/YiA in order to contribute to practice development, to the improvement of the implementation of E+/YiA and to the development of the next programme generation. It is a further development of the Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of Youth in Action (YiA), the main activity of the RAY Network between 2009 and 2013 (see Fennes, Gadinger, & Hagleitner, 2012; Fennes, Hagleitner, & Helling, 2011), which indicated that youth mobility projects have an effect not only on participants – young people, youth leaders and youth workers – but also on project leaders/team members as well as on their organisations and on the local environments of the projects. Furthermore, the previous studies on YiA showed that a broad spectrum of effects was reported by participants and project leaders/team members, both intended as well as unintended. Based on the findings of the previous studies, the following design for this study was developed.

1.3.1 Aims and objectives

The aim of this study is to contribute to quality assurance and quality development in the implementation of E+/YiA, to evidence-based and research-informed youth policy development and to a better understanding of learning mobility in the youth field.

The objectives of this project are to explore
- the effects of projects funded through E+/YiA on the actors involved, in particular on project participants and project leaders/team members, but also on their organisations and on the local environments of these projects;
- the level of access to E+/YiA for young people (in particular of young people with fewer opportunities) as well as organisations, bodies and groups in the youth field;
- the profile of participants, project leaders/team members and organisations/groups/bodies involved in E+/YiA projects;
- the development and management of funded projects;
- the implementation of E+/YiA.

1.3.2 Research questions

General research questions:
- What are the effects of E+/YiA projects on participants, project leaders/team members and their organisations/groups as well as on the local environments of these projects?
- What is the environment of Youth in Action projects, in particular with respect to access to E+/YiA, the development of projects, the profile of actors and organisations, the management of projects and the support provided by funding structures?
- How could the findings from this study contribute to practice development, in particular in view of the implementation of E+/YiA and future Youth Programmes of the European Union?

Specific research questions:
- What are the effects of participating in E+/YiA projects on the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and behaviours[1] of project participants as well as of project leaders/team members involved in E+/YiA projects?
- What are the effects of participating in E+/YiA projects on educational and professional perspectives of participants as well as of project leaders/team members involved in E+/YiA projects?
- What are the effects of E+/YiA projects on youth workers and youth leaders involved – either as participants or as project leaders/team members – with respect to the development of (international) youth work competences?[2]
- To which extent are E+/YiA projects in line with the objectives and priorities of the E+/YiA Programme? In particular, how do they contribute to participation of young people in democratic life, active citizenship, intercultural dialogue, social inclusion, solidarity and participation in the labour market as well as to the development of youth work, international cooperation in the youth field, recognition of non-formal and informal learning and youth policy development?
- How do these effects differ depending on the types of E+/YiA projects, the type of experience (going abroad for a project or being involved in a project at home with partici-

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1 This study refers to key competences for lifelong learning as defined by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union (2006), complemented by other competence frameworks and models, in particular related to (international) youth work competences.

2 Where applicable, this study has been linked to the RAY research project on competence development and capacity building of E+/YiA (RAY-CAP), in particular with respect to the development of (international) youth work competences of youth workers and youth leaders as well as concerning effects on the organisations involved in E+/YiA.

pants from abroad) and the countries of residence of participants and project leaders?

- What is the profile of participants, project leaders and projects involved in E+/YiA projects, in particular with respect to their educational or professional status, socio-economic and demographic background, educational attainment and previous experience with learning mobility? What does this say about the access to the YiA Programme?

1.3.3 Research design

In order to explore the research questions above, the research design is based on multilingual online surveys with project participants and project leaders for the following reasons:

- Actors involved in projects funded through E+/YiA are surveyed two months or longer after the end of their project in order to provide for a more reflected and distant view at their experiences and the perceived effects. By that time, however, the actors involved in a project have returned to their countries of residence and would be difficult to contact for face-to-face interviews or group discussions.
- Multilingual online surveys allow a large majority of actors to complete the questionnaires in their native language (or in a foreign language which they understand sufficiently).
- Surveying both project participants and project leaders/team members of E+/YiA projects through two different but coherent and interrelated questionnaires provides for a triangulation of responses, in particular with respect to the perceived effects on the participants by comparing the self-perception of participants and the external perception of project leaders/team members.

In order to provide for comparable views on experiences and perceived effects of E+/YiA projects, participants and project leaders/team members are invited to participate in these surveys between two and ten months after the end of their project.

The surveys for this study were conducted between 2014 and 2020, covering funded activities ending in the years 2015, 2017 and 2019. The questionnaires were available in 25 languages in 2015, in 26 languages in 2017, and in 29 languages in 2019.

1.3.4 Comparability

Two main limitations of our surveys should be kept in mind, in particular when comparing data across survey cycles.

On the one hand, there is no dataset for all project participants available. This is quite intentional and owed to the programme design: Not all activity types require the registration of personal details of project participants. If you consider, just for a moment, educational activities with vulnerable young people, you will immediately recognise why this is a conscious and conscientious decision.[3]

On the other hand, new data protection regulations took effect during the programme generation, changing substantively how we reached out to project participants and project teams.

Kindly keep both aspects in mind when considering the data presented in this comparative research report and the accompanying comparative data report.

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3 Not all missing data of project participants is owed to such intentional decisions. At times it is simply caused by dysfunctional technical tools.

2 — COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

This chapter explores the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and behaviours through E+/YiA and relates to the programme's objective to improve the level of key competences and skills of young people, in particular through learning mobility opportunities.

2.1 KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION

Project participants were asked whether they learned something new through the project ('choose all that apply'). Less than 1% of all respondents asserted that they did not learn anything new from this project. Figure 1 provides an overview of the knowledge acquired by project participants through the project (see also Table 199, Table 200, Table 201, Table 202).

Interestingly, the responses by project leaders about the main themes of the project differ from the responses by project participants about their knowledge acquisition. The differences are presented in Figure 2 below (see also Table 203).

A number of themes are selected as being addressed during the project less frequently by responding project leaders than by responding project participants for their acquired knowledge. This indicates that learning effects go beyond the issues addressed in the projects.

Between age groups, the focus of participants' knowledge acquisition differs slightly, however Cultural Diversity features significantly across all groups with the highest overall response rate of 70%. Also featured highly across all age groups were Youth, Youth Work (59%), Non-formal education learning, informal learning (51%) and Personal Development (49%). It is also interesting to consider the themes that each age group learned most about (using the last survey cycle, see Table 93 in the 2019/20 Data Report):
- Age group of 15-17 years: Cultural Diversity (68%), Personal Development (52%), Youth, Youth Work (51%)
- Age group of 18-20 years: Cultural Diversity (74%), Personal Development (54%), Youth, Youth Work (54%)
- Age group of 21-25 years: Cultural Diversity (72%), Youth, Youth Work (58%), Non-formal education learning, informal learning (55%)
- Age group of 26-30 years: Cultural Diversity (69%), Non-formal education learning, informal learning (61%), Youth, Youth Work (60%)
- Age group of >30 years: Youth, Youth Work (68%), Non-formal education learning, informal learning (65%), Cultural Diversity (64%)

Across activity types, the focus of participants' knowledge acquisition is similar across age groups. Consider, for example, the themes that more than half of all project participants learned something about (again using the final survey cycle, see Table 92 in the 2019/20 Data Report):
- YE activities cover Cultural Diversity (74%), Personal Development (50%), Youth, Youth Work (51%)
- EVS activities cover Cultural Diversity (82%), Personal Development (64%), Non-formal education learning, informal learning (64%)
- YD/SD activities cover Youth, Youth Work (56%), Active citizenship and participation in civil society and democratic life (53%)
- YWM activities cover Cultural Diversity (68%), Non-formal education learning, informal learning (66%), Youth, Youth Work (65%), Personal Development (51%),
- TCA activities cover Youth, Youth Work (77%), Non-formal education learning, informal learning (63%),

2.2 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The following section explores the skills development of project participants and project leaders, based on their self-assessment. In addition, project leaders were asked to assess the skills development of project participants, allowing for a comparison of self-assessed key competences by responding project participants and assessed key competences of participants by responding project leaders respectively.

Across the board, skills development of project participants is reported to be significant. High values across all activity types improved their abilities through participation in their project, with combined scores ranging between 95% and 57% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') for all provided items. To get along with people who have a different cultural background features highest with an overall score of 95% ('strongly agree or 'agree').

FIGURE 1

Knowledge acquired by project participants (PP)

(PP) 10. In the project, I learned something new about: (multiple response)

Category	Percentage
Cultural diversity	69,5%
Youth, youth work	58,5%
Non-formal education/learning, informal learning	51,1%
Personal development	49,4%
Education, training, learning	39,8%
Discrimination and non-discrimination*	38,9%
European issues	36,9%
Inclusion of disadvantaged or marginalised people in society	35,6%
Human rights, fundamental rights	34,1%
Solidarity with people facing difficulties	33,2%
Active citizenship and participation in civil society	31,6%
Project development and management	29,2%
Democracy	24,9%
Entrepreneurship, using my initiative	22,3%
Policies or structures of the European Union	21,3%
Environmental issues	20,6%
Work, professional development	20,6%
Media and ICT, including social media and internet*	19,7%
Health, well-being	19,7%
Non-violence	19,1%
National youth policies	18,4%
Sustainable development	17,7%
Youth policy development	17,0%
European youth policies	16,3%
I did not learn anything new in this project.	1,2%
Other	3,1%

FIGURE 2

Main themes of projects (PL) compared to knowledge acquired (PP)

(PP) 10. In the project, I learned something new about:
and (PL) 6. Main themes actually addressed during the project:

● Learned about (PP)   ● Themes addressed (PL)
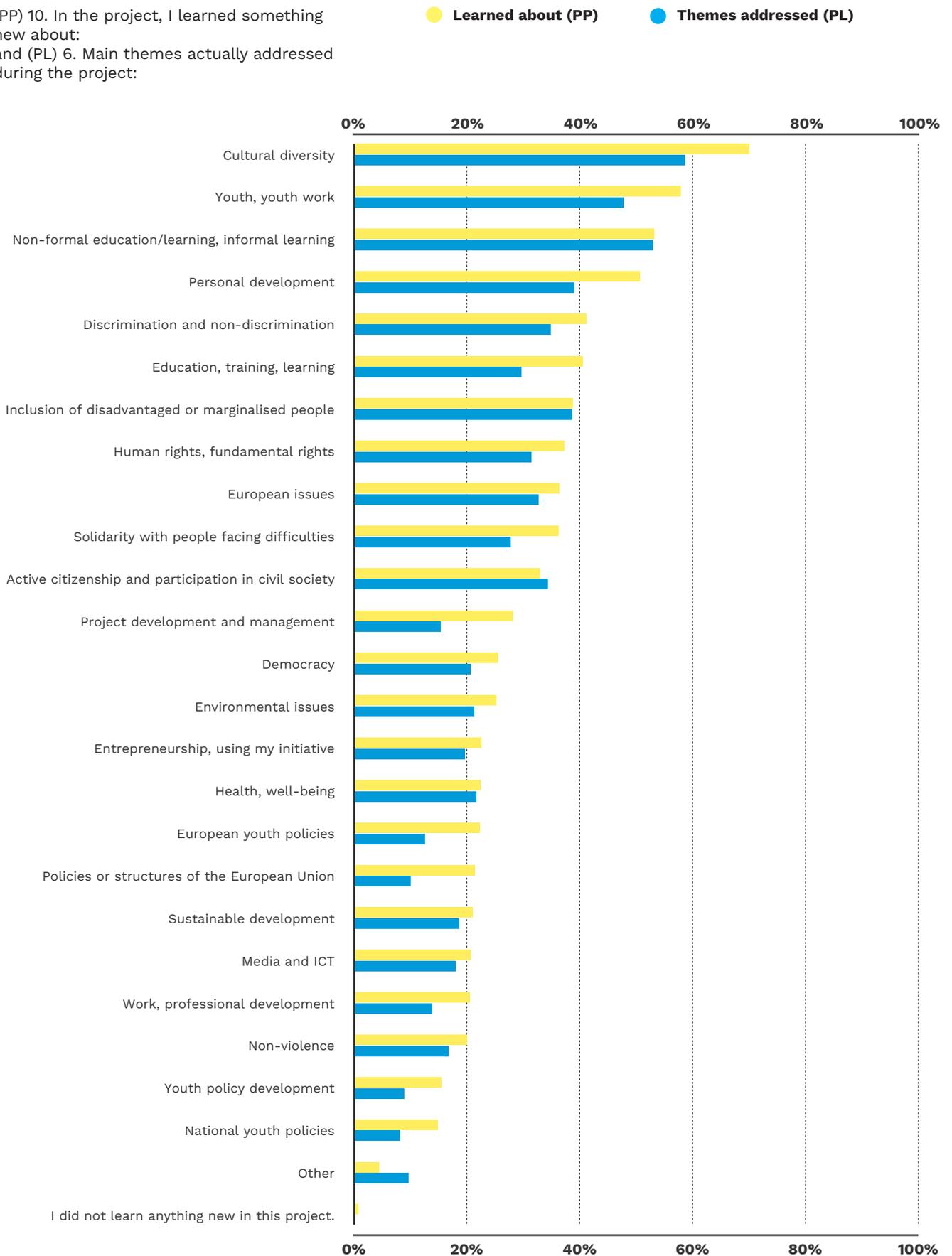
FIGURE 3

Skills development of project participants (PP) and project leaders (PL) – by survey cycle

(PP) 11. and (PL) 10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Through my participation in this project I improved my ability...

Legend:
- 2015 (PP)
- 2017 (PP)
- 2019 (PP)
- 2015 (PL)
- 2017 (PL)
- 2019 (PL)

... to say what I think with conviction in discussions.

... to communicate with people who speak another language.

... to produce media content on my own (printed, audio-visual, electronic).

... to develop an idea and put it into practice.

... to negotiate joint solutions when there are different viewpoints.

... to achieve something in the interests of the community or society.

... to think logically and draw conclusions.

... to identify opportunities for my personal or professional development.

... to plan and carry out my learning independently.

... to express myself creatively or artistically.

... to get along with people who have a different cultural background.

There are, however, three areas with lower scores: to produce media content on my own (66% 'strongly agree' or 'agree'), to discuss political topics seriously (63% 'strongly agree' or 'agree'), and to use smartphones, tablets, notebooks, computers, internet etc. (57% 'strongly agree' or 'agree'). See Figure 3 and Tables 210–212 for additional details.

Skills development of responding project leaders is consistently reported somewhat higher than for project participants. All skills are above 83% for project leaders and scores range between 83% and 98% ('strongly agree' or 'agree'). See Figure 3 below and Tables 219–221 for additional details.

Differentiated by age groups, the item to discuss political topics seriously during the project featured more negatively for <15 years 61% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree') than older age groups, 15-17 years 39% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree'), 18-20 years 38% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree'), 21-25 years 37% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree'), 26-30 years 36% and >30 years 34% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree').

The skill to produce media content on my own (printed, audio-visual, electronic) shows a similar picture of an overall more negative response across age groups: <15 years 39% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree'), 15-17 years 36% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree'), 18-20 years 34% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree'), 21-25 years 30% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree'), 26-30 years 35% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree') and over 30 years 36% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree').

As well, the skill to use smartphones, tablets, notebooks, computers, internet, featured more negatively across age groups: <15 years 44% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree'), 15-17 years 42% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree'), 18-20 years 43% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree'), 21-25 years 42% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree'), 26-30 years 45% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree') and over 30 years 43% ('strongly disagree' or 'disagree'). However, the skill to cooperate in a team was valued highest across all age groups with an overall score of 95% ('strongly agree' or 'agree').

Age could have an impact on the learning setting as well as on opportunities to improve the learning to learn competence. The younger responding participants are less developed in their skills to identify personal and professional development, develop an idea and put it into practice, and plan and carry out learning independently (see Figure 4 below and Tables 210–212 for additional details).

2.3 YOUTH WORK COMPETENCES

A number of questions explored competences of respondents specifically in relation to youth work. Almost all questions were asked to project participants and project leaders alike, allowing for comparisons between both respondent groups. Among project participants, questions were asked to those respondents who had participated in YWM or TCA activities, i.e. those project participants seeking to develop their youth work competence.

Across all aspects of non-formal and informal learning/education, responding project participants selected predominantly high values when asked whether their competence had been strengthened: Between 83% and 90% 'strongly agree' or 'agree' across ALL activity types (see Table 225). Project leaders assess these items even higher than project participants, ranging from 90% up to 95% across ALL activity types (see Tables 226–231).

94% of project participants 'strongly agree' or 'agree' that they have learned better how to work in an international team. Differentiated by activity types, YWM (92% 'strongly agree' or 'agree') scores better than TCA (82% 'strongly agree' or 'agree'). Responding project leaders selected 96% ('strongly agree' or agree') for the improvement of this skill.

Furthermore, 92% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of responding project participants have learned something which they intend to use in their work/involvement with young people, again with higher scores for YWM (92% 'strongly agree' or 'agree') than for TCA (90% 'strongly agree' or 'agree'). Similarly, 90% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of responding project participants now understand the concept of non-formal education and learning better, again with higher scores for YWM (92% 'strongly agree' or 'agree') than for TCA (82% 'strongly agree' or 'agree'), (see Figure 5, Table 225 and Table 228).

Finally, 86% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of responding project participants have learned better to deal with unexpected situations in educational activities with young people, although this item has the greatest score difference between YWM 88% and TCA 74% ('strongly agree' or 'agree'). In comparison, 95% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of responding project leaders indicated to have learned better to deal with unexpected situations in educational activities with young people.

FIGURE 4

Skills development of project participants – by age group (PP)

(PP) 11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Through my participation in this project I improved my ability … (sum of „agree" and „strongly agree")

Legend: <15   15-17   18-20   21-25   26-30   >30

Chart categories (top to bottom):
- … to say what I think with conviction in discussions.
- … to communicate with people who speak another language.
- … to cooperate in a team.
- … to produce media content on my own (printed, audio-visual, electronic).
- … to develop an idea and put it into practice.
- … to negotiate joint solutions when there are different viewpoints.
- … to achieve something in the interests of the community or society.
- … to use smartphones, tablets, notebooks, computers, internet etc.
- … to think logically and draw conclusions.
- … to identify opportunities for my personal or professional development.
- … to learn or to have more fun when learning.
- … to discuss political topics seriously.
- … to plan and carry out my learning independently.
- … to express myself creatively or artistically.
- … to get along with people who have a different cultural background.

2.4 EFFECTS ON PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

79% of responding project participants state that having new experiences was among the top reasons for participating in their project ('choose all that apply'), 72% say that their personal development was part of their motivation, and 71% indicate that contact with people from other cultural backgrounds or countries was among their reasons (see Table 103).

Looking back at the project, 87% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of responding project participants report that they improved their ability to identify opportunities for their personal or professional development through their participation in the project. With 83% ('strongly agree' or 'agree'), the percentage of project leaders who assessed that project participants had improved that ability (see Tables 226–231) is slightly lower.[4]

In comparison, 92% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of the responding project leaders indicate that they improved their ability to identify opportunities for their personal or professional development through their involvement in this project, highest scores being in YWM 96% 'strongly agree' or 'agree'), followed by YE (92% 'strongly agree' or 'agree'), SD/YD (87% 'strongly agree' or 'agree') and EVS (86% 'strongly agree' or 'agree'), (see Tables 226–231).

Overall, 97% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of responding project participants report that their participation in the project has contributed to their personal development (see Table 198) and 83% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of them report that the project had an impact on their awareness which of their competences they want to develop further (see Figure 6 below and Tables 257–259). Over 93% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of responding project leaders indicate their awareness raising in terms of further competence development as a result of the project, again representing higher values than responding project participants (87% 'strongly agree' or 'agree') (see Figure 6 below and Tables 254–256).

2.5 FURTHER EDUCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL PATHWAYS

We explore through a range of questions which impact a project has had on responding project participants and project leaders in relation to their further educational and professional pathway. Responding project participants and project leaders assess further impact based on their participation in the project in the context of their professional development as follows (see Figure 6; Tables 254–256 and Tables 257–259).

2.6 CONCLUSIONS

To improve the level of key competences and skills of young people, in particular through learning mobility opportunities is one of the key youth-specific aims of the Erasmus+ Programme, and our research findings show it is fulfilled with acclaim. The development of key competences and skills is very high for project participants and project leaders alike.

Project leaders are slightly more affirmative and self-confident about the improvement of their competences than project participants, which is to be expected, given their longer and more intense involvement in projects. Notably, project leaders consistently assess the learning outcomes/development of key competences of project participants through their participation in the project slightly higher than the responding project participants themselves.

Projects, with some variation across age and activity type, motivate project participants and project leaders to learn more and develop further, both personally and professionally.

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4 It is worth noting that 10% of responding project leaders stated that they didn't know/couldn't say to what extent project participants had improved the ability to identify their personal or professional development (see Table 103).

FIGURE 5

Youth work competence development of project participants (PP) and project leaders (PL)

(PP) 15. and (PL) 13. Please indicate the effects of your participation in this project on your work/involvement in the youth field:

- ● strongly agree (PP)
- ○ agree (PP)
- ● strongly agree (PL)
- ● agree (PL)
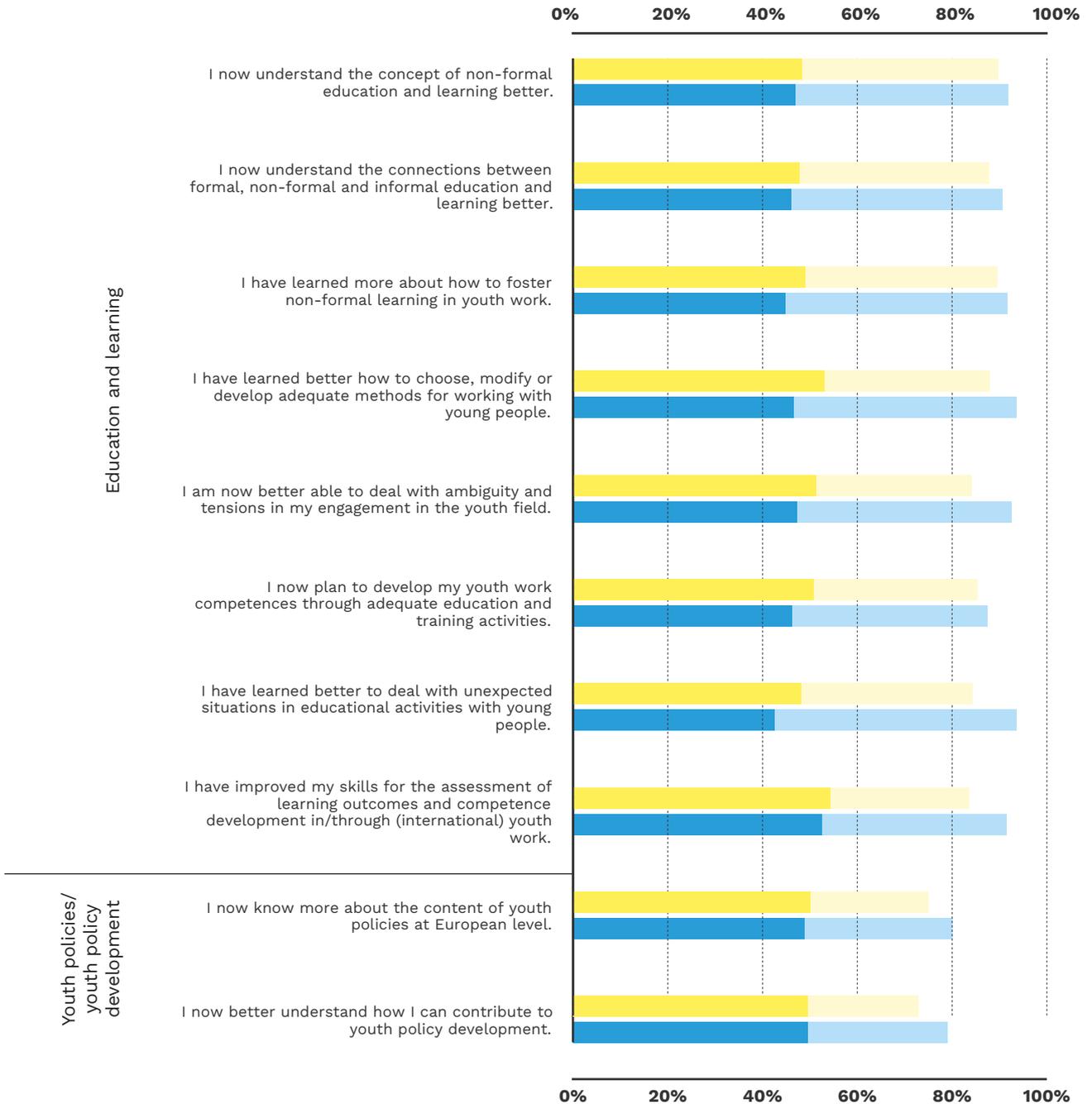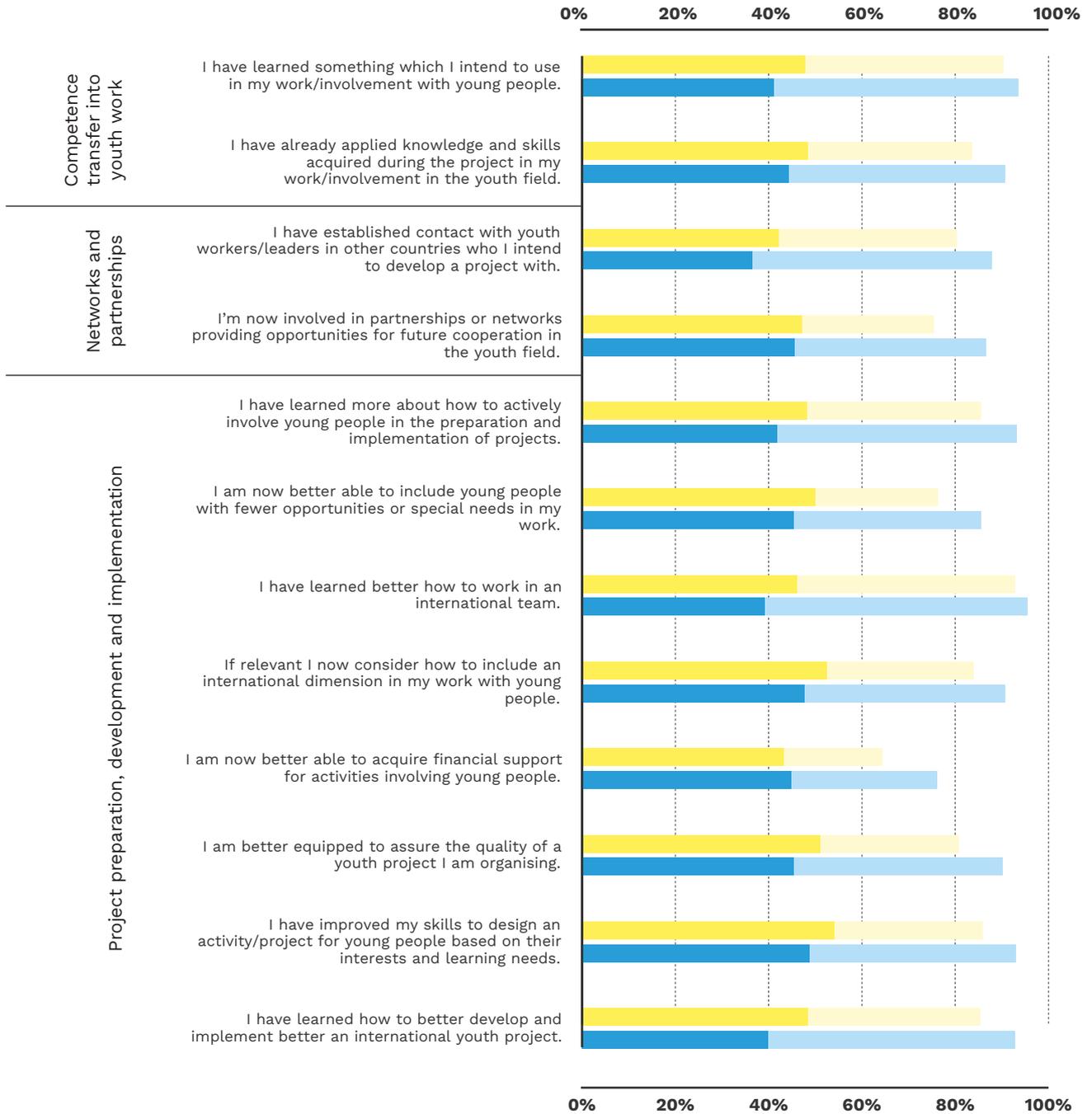
FIGURE 6

Effects on pathways of project participants (PP) and project leaders (PL) – by survey cycle

(PP) 14. Did participating in the project have any further impact on you?

(PL) 12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements as a result of the project?

Legend:
- 2015 (PP)
- 2017 (PP)
- 2019 (PP)
- 2015 (PL)
- 2017 (PL)
- 2019 (PL)

Categories:
- I have a clearer idea about my further educational pathway.
- I have a clearer idea about my professional career aspirations and goals.
- I have a better understanding of my career options.
- I have become aware which of my competences I want to develop further.
- I plan to develop my foreign language skills.
- I believe that my chances of getting a job have increased.
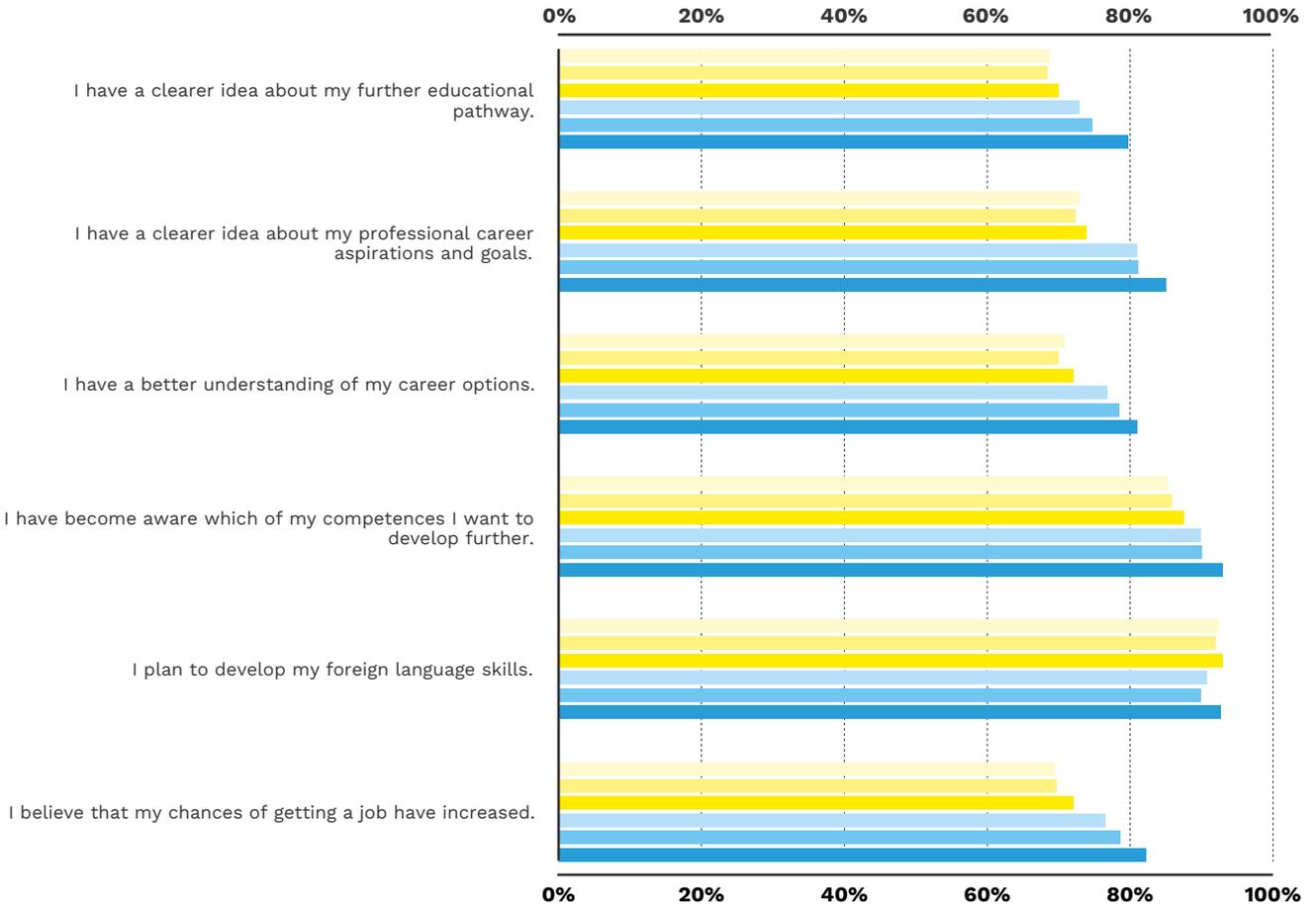
3 — PARTICIPATION AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

The concept of participation and active citizenship refers to a broad scope of themes relevant to today's society, such as democracy, human rights, anti-racism and anti-discrimination, equal opportunities, intercultural issues, environmental issues, sustainable development, global issues, economy, peace and conflicts at all levels, community issues and social cohesion. In line with this, the questionnaires for participants and for project leaders/team members included a number of questions and items related to knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and practices relevant for participation and active citizenship, which could have been fostered through participating in E+/YiA. Additionally, project leaders as well as youth workers and youth leaders involved in YWM and TCA as participants were asked what they learned about youth participation – in particular, how to foster youth participation.

3.1 KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION ON CITIZENSHIP & PARTICIPATION

The question regarding knowledge acquisition through project participation includes 24 items, of which around three quarters relate directly or indirectly to participation and citizenship. Multiple choices were possible. On average, respondents chose more than 7 items, indicating a broad scope of knowledge acquired (see Table 199). Items related to participation and citizenship were chosen by 16% to 70% of respondents, with cultural diversity ranking exceptionally high with 70%, followed by discrimination/non-discrimination (39%), European issues (37%), inclusion of disadvantaged or marginalised people in society (36%), human rights, fundamental rights (34%), and active citizenship/participation in civil society and democratic life (32%), all of which ranked fairly high. Non-violence (19%), National youth policies (18%) and Youth policy development (17%) were ranked rather lower (see Figure 1). In comparison to other subjects, citizenship topics rank between average and below average, except for cultural diversity with 70%.

When differentiating citizenship knowledge acquisition by activity types, Youth/Youth work ranks highest among TCA (77%), YWM (65%), EVS (59%) all ranked above the average of 58% to-

tal responses. Following this, inclusion of disadvantaged or marginalised people in society were ranked higher by both EVS (47%) and YWM (46%).

SD/YD ranks the highest for active citizenship and participation in civil society and democratic life (53%), which is well above the average of 33% total responses, as well as Democracy, which was rated highest by SD/YD (49%) above the average of 26% total responses.

YWM ranked highly discrimination/non-discrimination (47%), YE highly ranked Human rights, fundamental rights (37%) and European issues (35%), TCA highly ranked European youth policies (49%), and EVS highly ranked Solidarity with people facing difficulties (52%), well above the of average of 36% total responses (see Tables 200–202).

3.2 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ON CITIZENSHIP & PARTICIPATION

The questions for project participants regarding the development of key competences for lifelong learning include 14 skills, which could be answered with 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'agree' or 'strongly agree'. The responses for the sum of 'agree' and 'strongly agree' range between 57% and 95% (see Table 212). Three of these skills are directly related to participation and citizenship:

- 96% of responding PP indicated that they agree (34%) or strongly agree (62%) that through their participation in the project they improved their ability to get along with people who have a different cultural background. For this item, there are high values across activity types, age groups and gender, in particular for YE and YWM participants (97% and 96% 'agree'/'strongly agree'), participants aged 21 to 25 (96% 'agree'/'strongly agree'), while similar values were found for female and male participants (both 95% 'agree'/'strongly agree'); (see Tables 210–224).
- 90% of responding PP indicated that they agree (50%) or strongly agree (40%) that through their participation in the project they improved their ability to achieve something in the interest of the community. SD/YD (93%) and YWM (92%) rank highest ('agree'/'strongly agree') across activity

type, as well as participants aged 18-20 (90% 'agree'/'strongly agree') and 21-25 years (91% 'agree'/'strongly agree').

- 63% of responding PP indicated that they agree (39%) or strongly agree (24%) that through their participation in the project they improved their ability to discuss political topics seriously. In particular, SD/YD ranks highest across activity type (86% 'agree'/'strongly agree').

PL were asked about their perceptions of the effects on participants in their project using corresponding items. Their perceptions about effects on participants are largely coherent with PP self-perceptions, although PL scored PP higher for their ability to discuss political topics seriously (70% 'agree'/"strongly agree').

87% of responding project participants involved in YWM indicate that they learned more about how to involve young people in the preparation and implementation of projects– thus how to foster youth participation in youth work. For project leaders, the numbers are even higher: 94% of responding project leaders indicate that they learned more about how to involve young people in the preparation and implementation of projects (39% 'agree', 55% 'strongly agree'; see Tables 219–224).

3.3 CITIZENSHIP & PARTICIPATION ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS

The responses to the question on perceived effects of the project on participation/citizenship attitudes and practice (10 items) indicate few increases ('more than before') of between 25% and 67% for the different items (see Tables 232–234). Between 2% and 4% of respondents indicate a decrease, all others indicate no change.

- The highest increase is reported for the appreciation of cultural diversity (67%). Slight increases also include feeling European (51%) and commitment to work against discrimination, intolerance, xenophobia or racism (52%)
- The lowest increase is reported from participating in democratic/political life, these scores indicate that PP perceived 71% ('same extent as before the project') and only 25% ('more than before the project'). Lower increases also include engaging in civil society (37%), engaging in voluntary activities (41%), keeping oneself informed on current European affairs, actively supporting the inclu-

sion of people with fewer opportunities and contributing to environmental protection (all three at 43%) and interest in contributing to youth policy development (51%)

- Perceived effects are diverse across activity types, hosting/sending, age groups and gender – largely for plausible interpretations (see Tables 235–237).

Perceived increases for attitudes are generally higher than for practices, with higher increases for affective attitudes and practices versus lower increases for cognitive attitudes and practices.

Project leaders were asked if they noticed or heard about effects of their project on participants. PL perceptions are much higher than those of participants (see Tables 204–206):

- 95% of PL respondents 'agree/strongly agree' that the participants now appreciate cultural diversity more;
- 81% of PL respondents agree/strongly agree that the participants now feel more European;
- 74% of PL respondents 'agree/strongly agree' that the participants now are more interested in contributing to youth policy development.

3.4 VALUES REGARDING CITIZENSHIP & PARTICIPATION

The question regarding values included a number of citizenship values; the responses indicate that the majority of citizenship values did become more important for between 47% and 66% of the respondents (see Tables 242–244).

- Around 1% of respondents indicate that these values had become less important; the majority of other citizenship values 'became more important' after the project.
- Increases above 50% were reported for all citizenship values with the exception of justice. 52% of PP indicated that justice had 'not changed' and 46% indicated it had 'become more important' after the project.

3.5 CITIZENSHIP & PARTICIPATION IN ORGANISATIONS

The question to participants in YWM projects and TCA regarding perceived effects on their organisations included a number of items related to participation and citizenship (see Table 264):

- 75% of the respondents in YWM projects and 69% in TCA 'agree' and 'strongly agree' that their participation in the project resulted in an increased appreciation of cultural diversity in their organisation/group.
- 67% of the respondents in YWM projects and 66% in TCA 'agree' and 'strongly agree' that their participation in the project resulted in an increased commitment to include young people with fewer opportunities.
- 64% of the respondents in YWM projects and 55% in TCA 'agree' and 'strongly agree' that their participation in the project resulted in an increased participation of young people in their organisation/group.
- 62% of the respondents in YWM projects and 63% in TCA 'agree' and 'strongly agree' that their participation in the project resulted in a more intensive involvement in European issues.

This suggests a considerable indirect effect of the participation of youth workers and youth leaders on participation and citizenship in their organisations and groups.

Project leaders (for all activity types) were also asked this question. Their responses show higher values for competence development than those of the participants in YWM projects and TCA, which can be explained by the direct involvement also of project participants from their organisations (see Tables 265–267):

- 91% of the PL respondents indicate that their participation in the project resulted in an increased appreciation of cultural diversity in their organisation/group (28% 'agree', 63% 'strongly agree').
- 85% of the PL respondents indicate that their participation in the project resulted in an increased participation of young people in their organisation/group (34% 'agree', 51% 'strongly agree').
- 84% of the PL respondents indicate that their participation in the project resulted in an increased commitment to include young people with fewer opportunities (33% 'agree', 51% 'strongly agree').
- 81% of the PL respondents indicate that their participation in the project resulted in

a more intensive involvement in European issues (39% 'agree', 42% 'strongly agree').

3.6 CITIZENSHIP & PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Project leaders were asked about effects of the project on the local community in which it was carried out. Some items of this question are related to participation and citizenship (see Tables 268–270):

- 82% of PL respondents indicate that the intercultural dimension was appreciated by the local community (36% 'agree', 46% 'strongly agree');
- 77% of PL respondents indicate that the European dimension was received with interest by the local community (37% 'agree', 40% 'strongly agree';
- 73% of PL respondents indicate that the local community has become aware of the concerns of young people (37% 'agree', 36% 'strongly agree') – thus suggesting (or hoping), that the local community might strengthen youth participation;
- 64% of PL respondents indicate that the local community has become more committed to the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities (32% 'agree', 32% 'strongly agree'; see Table 129).
- Generally, the agreement of 'hosting' project leaders to these items was stronger than the agreement of 'sending' project leaders, suggesting that the effects on the hosting communities are stronger than on the sending communities – which could be expected

It needs to be noted that the agreement was relatively small with respect to the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities.

3.7 CONCLUSIONS

To promote active citizenship and participation in democratic life in Europe is another key youth-specific aim of the Erasmus+ Programme. Our research shows that 96% of responding project participants improved their ability to get along with people who have a different cultural background, and 90% their ability to achieve something in the interest of the community. These skills are translated into action swiftly: 37% of respondents report that they actually became more active as citizens as a result of their participation in the programme, compared to their engagement before the project.

Equally remarkable are the responses of youth workers and youth leaders involved as PP or PL in E+/YiA projects: They report that they learned better how to foster participation of young people in the preparation and implementation of (youth) projects (87% of PP in YWM, 82% of PP in TCA, 94% of PL).

These developments are underpinned by the involvement of participants in the preparation and implementation of the project, reported by 86% of participants, through which participants could actually practice participation. A related outcome is that organisations also became more open with regard to the participation of young people, the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities and the involvement in European issues.

FIGURE 7

Impact of projects on organisations/networks of project participants (PP) and project leaders (PL)

(PP) 17. and (PL) 14. If you have been participating in this project on behalf of an organisation/group/body: What impact/effect did the project have on your organisation/group/body? [PP: YWM & TCA only]

- strongly agree (PP)
- agree (PP)
- strongly agree (PL)
- agree (PL)
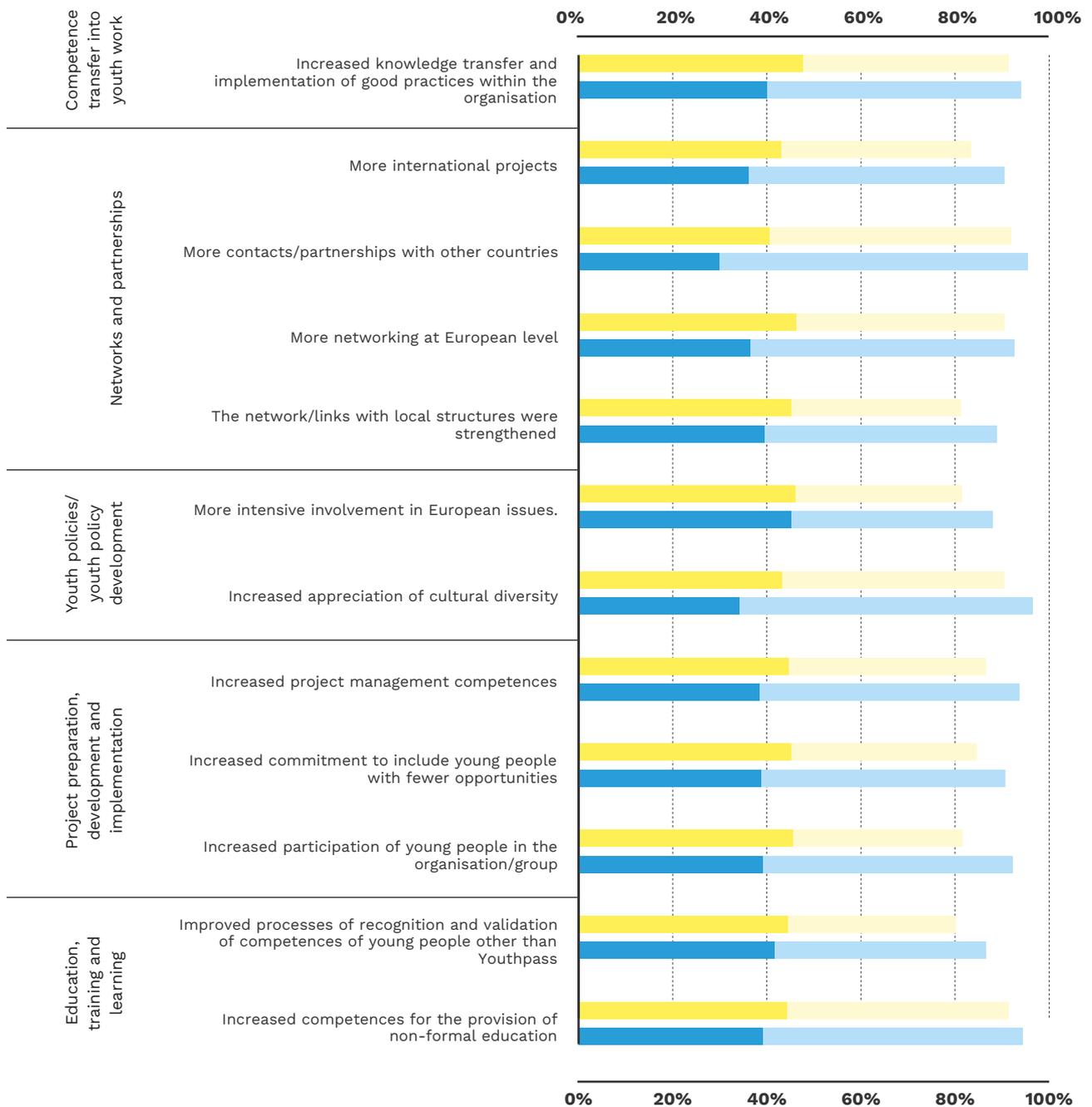
4 — LEARNING ORGANISATIONS AND COMMUNITIES

This chapter explores the effects of the programme on organisations and communities.

4.1 EFFECTS ON ORGANISATIONS

Concerning the effects of the participation/involvement in the project on the organisation/group/body, 75% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of respondents of YWM projects and 76% of TCA, and 89% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of responding project leaders assess that they increased competences for the provision of non-formal education.

In addition, 61% of responding YWM participants and 57% participants of TCA ('strongly agree' or 'agree') and 79% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of responding project leaders indicate that they improved processes of recognition and validation of competences of young people other than Youthpass (see Tables 264–267).

Responding YWM and TCA participants as well as responding project leaders report some effects of their project participation on their work and involvement in the youth field through the transfer of competence development into practice.

83% of responding YWM, 84% of responding TCA ('strongly agree' or 'agree') and 92% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of responding project leaders have already applied knowledge and skills acquired during the project in his/her work/involvement in the youth field (see Tables 225–231). In addition, about 75% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of responding YWM (74%) and TCA (76%) participants

and 87% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of responding project leaders indicate an increased knowledge transfer and implementation of good practices within the organisation.

4.2 EFFECTS ON COMMUNITIES

In addition to the impact on organisations, complementary questions explore effects of the project on local communities. 72% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of the responding project leaders stated that the project has created synergies between different stakeholders in the local community and 64% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') that the local community became more committed to the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities. In addition, 72% of responding project leaders ('strongly agree' or 'agree') indicated that the local community became more aware of the concerns and interests of young people and 82% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') assess that the intercultural dimension was appreciated by the local community (see Tables 268–270).

Furthermore, 86% of responding project leaders ('strongly agree' or 'agree') express that the project was positively perceived by the local community. 80% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of respondents assess that the local community was actively involved in the project and 76% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') positively indicate that the local community has shown interest in similar projects in the future. Finally, 73% ('strongly agree' or 'agree') of these respondents judge that the local community has expressed readiness to support similar activities in the future (see Table 270).

FIGURE 8

Effects on local communities (PL) – by survey cycle

(PL) 15. Which effects did the project have on the community in which it was carried out?

● 2015 (PL)   ● 2017 (PL)   ● 2019 (PL)
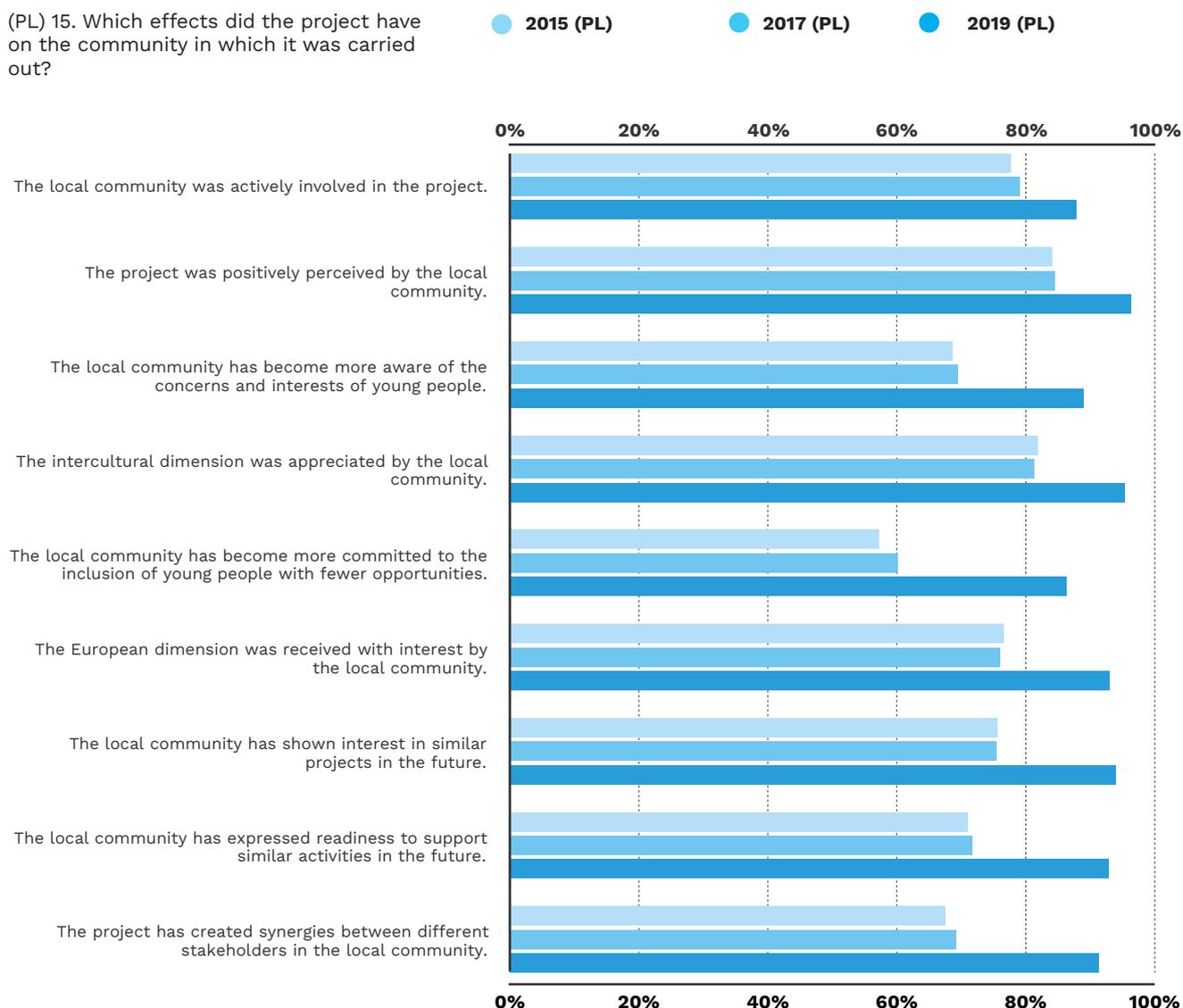
4.3 CONCLUSIONS

To strengthen the role of youth organisations as support structures for young people, in particular through enhanced cooperation, is another key youth-specific aim of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme. Our research shows that effects of projects on organisations – and communities – are assessed to be positive by project participants and project leaders alike. The effects are less strong than the ones on the individual level – in part because they are less immediate and can only be seen at the time of surveying. Understandably, systemic effects need more time to take hold than individual effects.

The most highly rated effects on organisations rated from 69% to 91% by both project participants and project leaders, which are increased appreciation of cultural diversity (PP YWM 75%,

PP TCA 69% and PL 91%), more contacts/partnerships with other countries (PP YWM 74%, PP TCA 79% and PL 90%) and more networking at European level (PP YWM 73%, PP TCA 76% and PL 87%). Thus, showcasing an improved, extended, enriched and enriching international dimension of youth work.

Project leaders rated the highest effects of projects on their local communities as the project was positively perceived, as well as the intercultural dimension was appreciated by the local community, both with response rates of over 80%.

In both instances, additional research could be undertaken to explore the effect on organisations and communities from the perspective of those stakeholders who did not directly participate in a E+/YiA project.

5 — RESPONDENT PROFILES

This chapter explores the profiles of respondents to contextualise the findings of this research project. At the same time, the chapter also provides relevant information with respect to the programme's aim to involve young people with fewer opportunities. While the subsequent chapter summarises the self-assessment and -perception of project participants and project leaders regarding e.g. obstacles they face, this chapter studies their personal profiles.

5.1 PROFILES OF PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

5.1.1 Gender and age

Two-thirds of respondents are female (65%), one third is male (34%), and <1% selected 'other' (see Table 26), a gender ratio that has remained stable over the years. The highest number of respondents can be seen in the age group 21-25 years (33%), followed by 18-20 years (21%) and 26-30 years (19%). The total percentage of respondents over 30 years is 15% (see Table 30).

- YE: highest percentage in the age group ≤ 15 years (94%)
- EVS: highest percentage in the age group 26-30 years (17%)
- SD: highest percentage in the age group 15-17 years (18%)
- YWM: highest percentage in the age group > 30 years (72%)
- TCA: highest percentage in the age group > 30 years (20%)

5.1.2 Educational attainment

Generally speaking, the educational attainment of responding project participants is high: 60% of respondents have a tertiary degree (university, polytechnic or post-secondary/tertiary level education). The highest educational attainment can be seen in TCA projects (87% with a tertiary degree), YWM projects (81%), followed by EVS projects (73%),[5] SD/YD projects (43%) and

YE projects (43%). Overall, 77% of the responding 21-25-year-old participants completed some form of tertiary education, compared to 89% for participants aged 26-30 years and 90% aged over 30 years (see Table 34).

Parental educational attainment is somewhat lower, as would be expected, given the development of educational attainment in Europe over the past decades and the policy objectives of the European Union[6]: 40% of fathers/male legal guardians and 45% of mothers/female legal guardians have a tertiary degree themselves, according to respondents. 15% of fathers/male legal guardians and 15% of mothers/female legal guardians have a primary or lower secondary level of attainment, compared to 3% of those project participants who are 21 and older.[7]

5.1.3 Minority affiliation

Overall, 14% of responding participants indicated that they belong to a cultural, ethnic, religious or linguistic minority. The differentiation between defined obstacles in the questionnaire for project participants highlights that the largest number of responding project participants[8] belong to an autochthonous/indigenous minority that has always lived in this country (37%) or an ethnic or cultural minority (31%), followed by a linguistic minority (25%) and religious minority (25%). The values for a migration background (second or third generation) and an immigration background (first generation) concern 36% in total. The item other minority was selected by 6% of responding project participants (see Figure 9; Table 47).

5.1.4 Occupation of project participants

With regard to the occupational status of responding participants (choose all that apply), 58% report to have been in education or training for at least three months during the 12 months before the project started.

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5   It should be taken into account that in YWM and TCA there is no age limit for participating in these projects, and that participants are usually older in YWM and TCA than in other activity types. In addition, youth workers are included within the sample of the Standard Surveys 2019/20, who often underwent vocational training for doing youth work (as is required in some countries).

6   See http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/higher-education/attainment_en for an outline of the targets for educational attainment as outlined in the EU-2020 strategy.

7   Younger respondents may still attend secondary school and may therefore not have completed their higher secondary education.

8   Dependency question: 13% of the responding project participants received this question.

FIGURE 9

Minority affiliation of project participants (PP) – by survey cycle

(PP) 41.a Please specify: – Question asked to those who indicated that they belong to a minority in Q41.

● 2015 (PP) ● 2017 (PP) ● 2019 (PP)
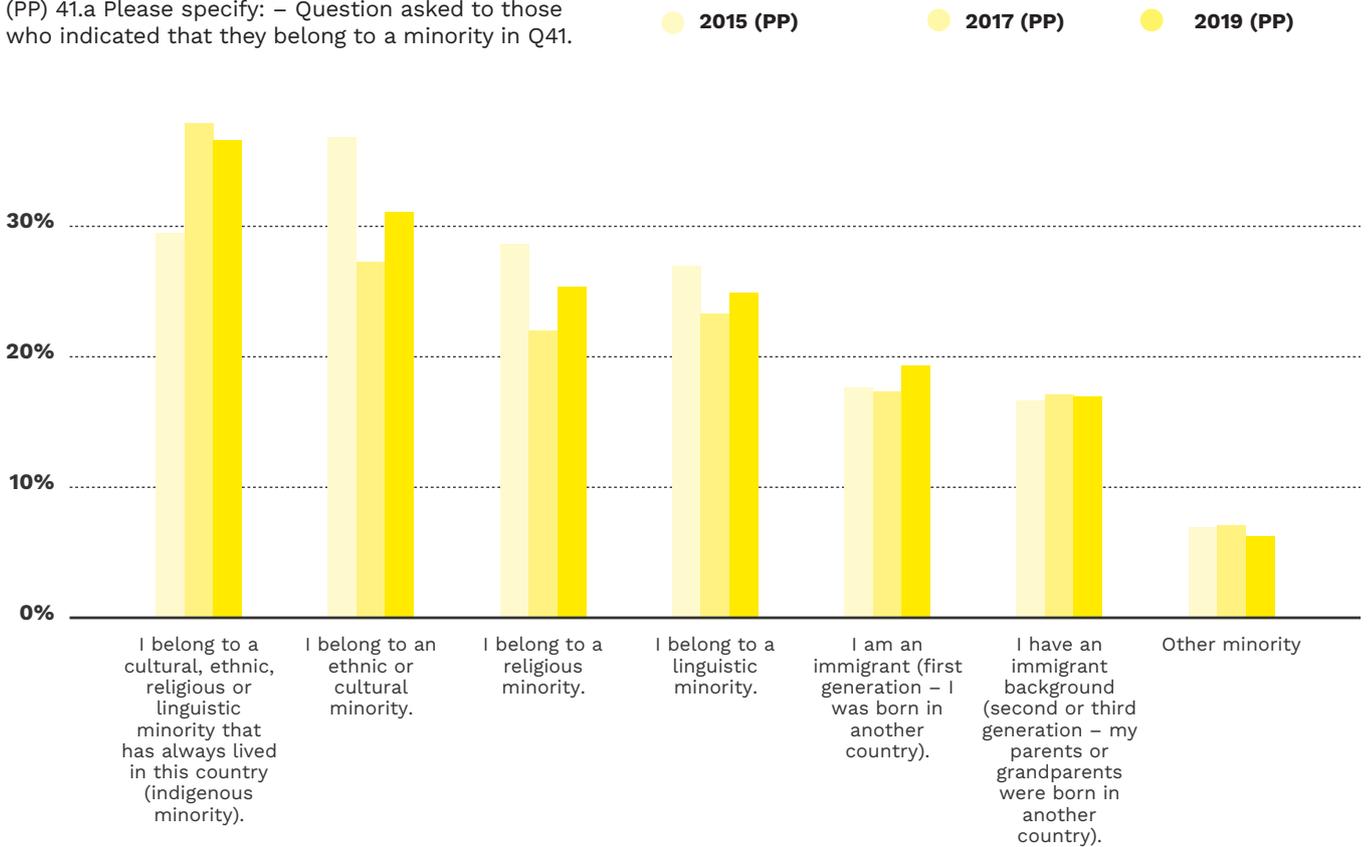
Of the respondents not in education or training (choose all that apply), 22% report to have been a volunteer, 25% in full-time employment, 18% in part time employment, 7% doing an internship or work placement, 9% self-employed and 7% un-employed for at least three months during the 12 months before the project started. 6% of re-sponding participants ('choose all that apply') re-port that they were not in paid worked, education or training for at least three months during the 12 months before the project started.

The largest age group not in paid work, education or training for at least three months during the 12 months before the project started are under 15 years (11%) and between 15-17 years (8%). The largest age group unemployed for at least three months during the 12 months before the project started are 26-30 years old (14%) (see Table 39).

With regard to the educational status for at least three months during the 12 months before the project, of responding participants 50% were a student at a university or polytechnic, 33% were a pupil at secondary school, 13% were engaged in

another type of education or training and 5% were an apprentice in vocational training (see Table 46).

5.1.5 Motivation

With regard to the motivation for participating in this project ('choose all that apply'), responding project participants highest scores are for new experiences (79%), personal development (72%), to get in contact with people from other cultur-al backgrounds or countries (71%), and to learn something new (66%). The responding project participants indicate over 50% for interested in the project topic (56%), to get to know another country (54%), to develop foreign language skills (55%). The lowest values relate to increasing job chances (19%), encouraged by someone to par-ticipate (10%) and other reasons (5%) (see Table 103).

Both YE and EVS indicate the highest values (88%) for new experiences as motivation for participa-tion, as well as to get to know another country (YE 67% / EVS 74%), personal development (YE 77% / EVS 86%) and to get in contact with people from

FIGURE 10   **Occupation of project participants during the 12 months before the project (PP) – by survey cycle**

(PP) 34. During the 12 months *before* the project, I spent at least 3 months …

● 2015 (PP)   ● 2017 (PP)   ● 2019 (PP)

5.2 PROFILES OF PROJECT LEADERS

5.2.1 Gender and age
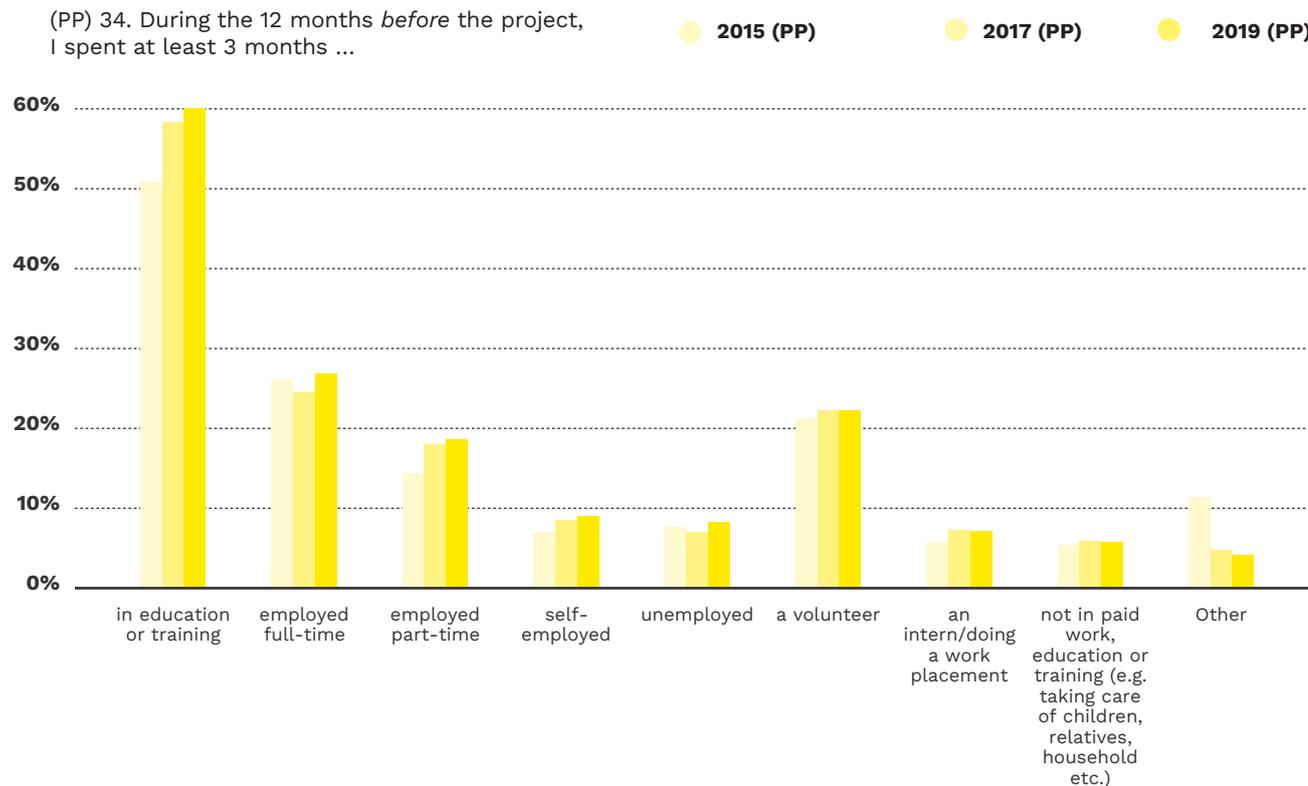
other cultural backgrounds or countries (YE 81% / EVS 75%).

In addition, EVS participants more frequently indicated their motivation to develop foreign language skills (71%) and to challenge myself (62%). YE participants more frequently indicated their motivation to learn something new (73%) and to have fun (62%).

SD/YD responding participants are predominantly motivated by new experiences (69%), followed by to become involved in social and political issues (64%), personal development (64%), and to learn something new (60%).

TCA responding participants are predominantly motivated by professional development (70%), followed by to learn something new (57%) and to prepare for future activities (57%).

Finally, for YWM the most important motivational factors range from personal development (76%), followed by new experiences (73%) and to learn something new (68%) (see Tables 104–106).

Similar to the responding project participants, the majority of responding project leaders are female (60%) and 40% are male; 0.5% of the responding project leaders indicated 'other' (see Table 110). The highest percentage of project leader respondents can be identified in 31-40 years age group (30%), followed by 26-30 (21%), 21-25 (18%), 41-50 (15%) and 51-60 (8%) (see Table 114).

5.2.2 Educational attainment

81% of responding project leaders indicated having a university/college degree (85% female; 74% male), 11% completed an upper secondary school (8% female; 12% male), 5% an upper vocational school (6% female; 8% male), and 2% a technical school (1% female; 3% male). Only 0.2% indicated primary school and 2% lower secondary school to be their highest educational attainment, in such small numbers that gender disaggregation is not meaningfully possible (see Figure 12, Table 122).

Differentiated according to activity types, it becomes apparent that in SD/YD (91%) and in YWM (88%) the highest proportions of responding project leaders have a tertiary level of educational attainment, followed by EVS (84%) and YE (80%). In comparison, the next highest proportion of responding project leaders' highest educational attainment is evident for upper secondary school in YE (11%), EVS (10%), YWM (7%) and SD/YD (3%; see Figure 14, Table 51).

Across all activity types, little changed between 2015, 2017 and 2019 – the educational attainment of project leaders has remained very high (see Figures 12 and 14).

With respect to the completed number of years of formal education, responding project leaders indicate the highest scores for 14-20 years of formal education (77%, see Table 118).

5.2.3 Minority affiliation

19% of the responding project leaders identify themselves as belonging to a minority.

More specifically, 34% of those respondents[9] belong to an autochthonous/indigenous minority, 31% to an ethnic or cultural minority and 26% to a linguistic minority (choose all that apply). 27% of project leaders with a minority affiliation identify as being an immigrant of the first generation and only 12% of the second or third generation. Furthermore, 8% of the respondents select the item other minority, 10% in YWM, 9% in YE and 8% in SD/YD, for which for further clarification could be interesting.

Differentiated by activity types, YE represents the highest scores in comparison to other activity types for belonging to an autochthonous/ indigenous minority (39%) and second or third generation immigrant (11%). EVS scores highest in the selected item belonging to a linguistic minority (30%), whilst SD/YD scores highest in belonging to a religious minority (42%). YWM scores highest amongst, belonging to an ethnic or cultural minority (39%) and being an immigrant of the first generation (36%) (see Table 149).

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

The level of educational attainment for both project participants and project leaders is comparatively high: 60% of project participants and 81% of project leaders have a tertiary degree (university, polytechnic or post-secondary/tertiary level education),[10] compared to the EU-wide average of just above 40% in the same age-group[11].

14% of responding project participants indicated that they belong to a cultural, ethnic, religious or linguistic minority, whereas 19% of responding project leaders define themselves as belonging to a minority.

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9 Dependency question: 14.6% of the responding project leaders received this question.

10 With over 50% of project participants still being in education or training, the PP percentage is likely to rise.

11 http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Educational_attainment_statistics

FIGURE 11

Motivation for participation (PP) – by survey cycle

(PP) 6. My reasons for participating
in this project were ...

● 2015 (PP) ● 2017 (PP) ● 2019 (PP)
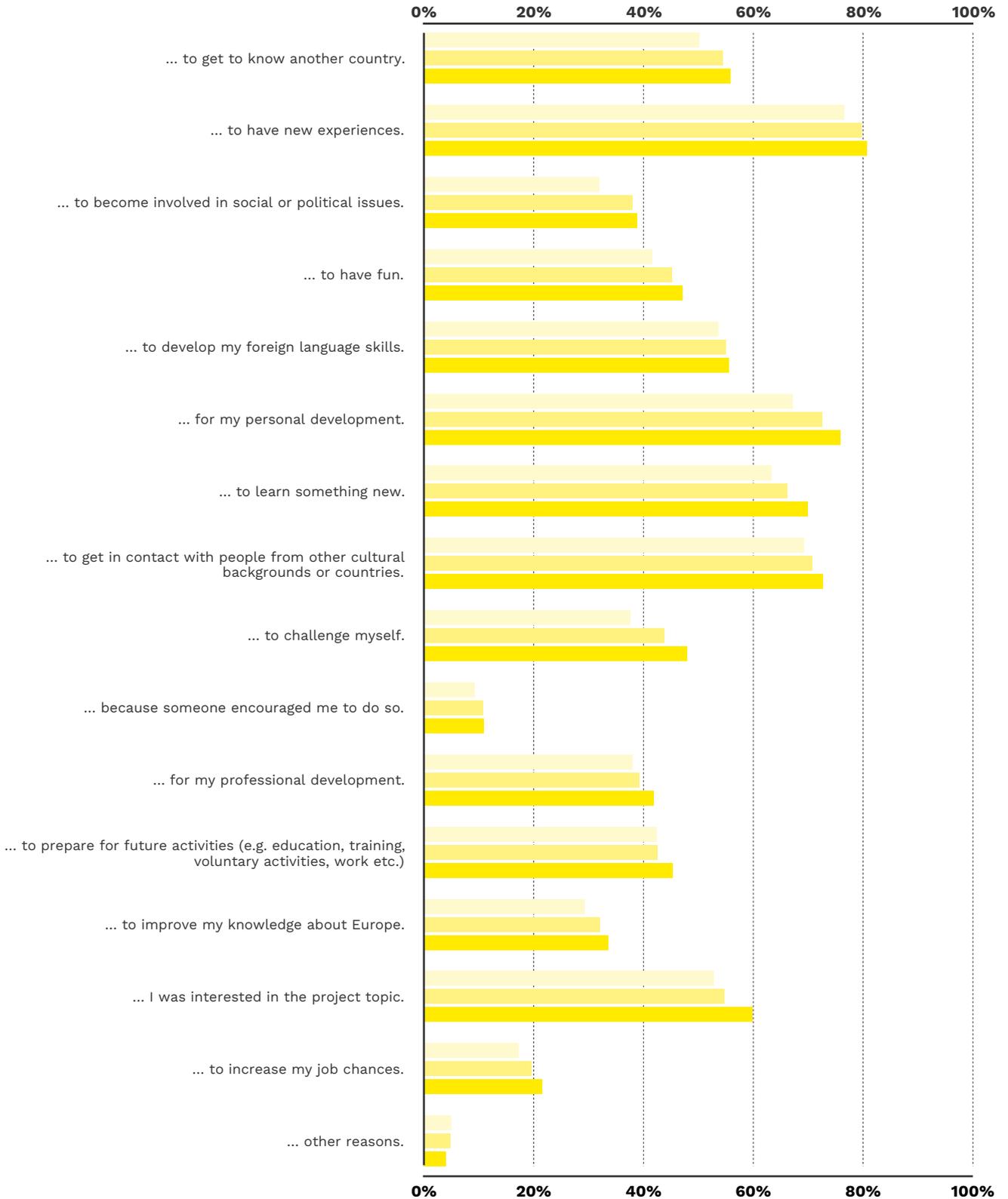
FIGURE 12

Highest educational attainment of project leaders (PL) – by survey cycle

(PL) 22. My highest educational attainment is:

● 2015 (PP)   ● 2017 (PP)   ● 2019 (PP)

Primary school
- 0,1%
- 0,2%
- 0,2%

Lower secondary school
- 1,1%
- 1,4%
- 1,6%

Technical school
- 2,2%
- 2,3%
- 2,1%

Upper secondary school
- 11,4%
- 10,2%
- 10,5%

Upper vocational school
- 4,4%
- 5,2%
- 4,7%

University, Polytechnic, post-secondary/tertiary level College
- 80,8%
- 80,6%
- 81,0%

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%
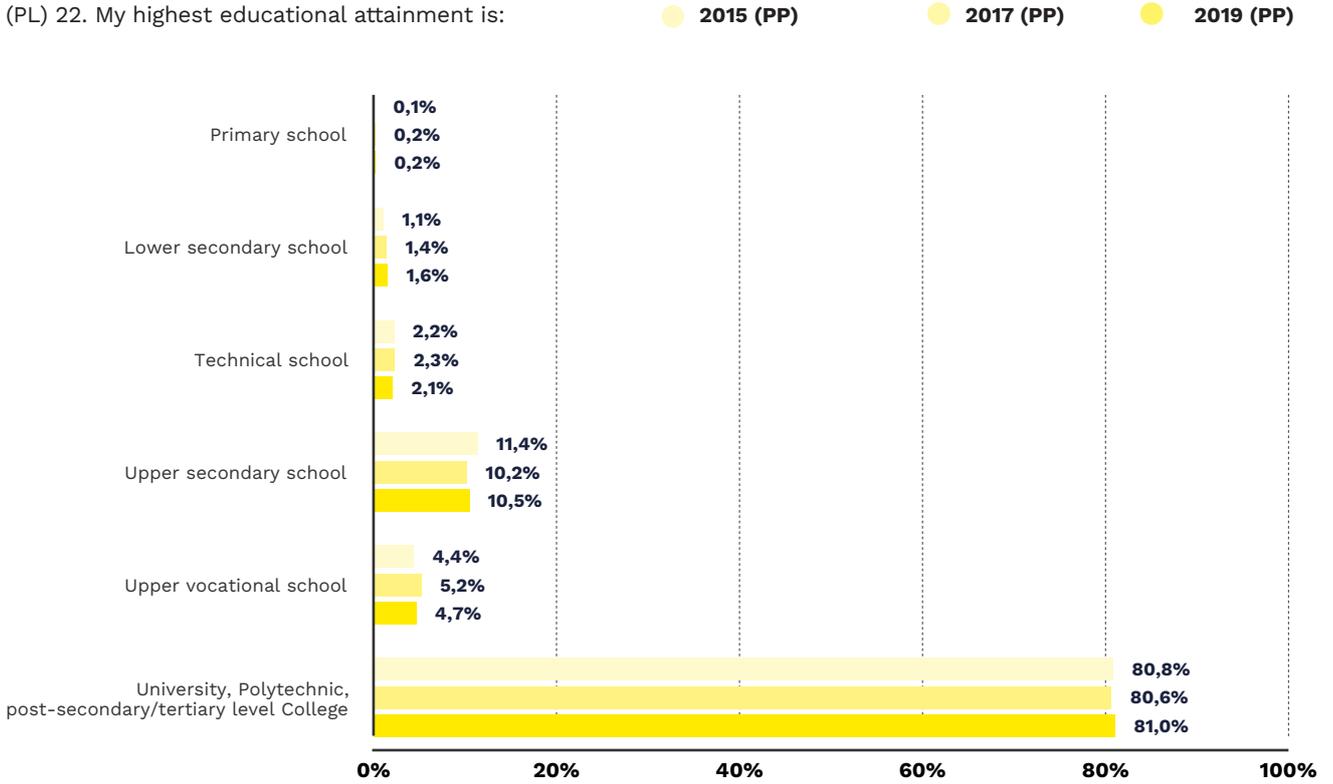
FIGURE 13

Highest educational attainment of project leaders (PL) – by gender

(PL) 22. My highest educational attainment is:

● female   ● male   ● other

Primary school
- 0,2%
- 0,2%
- 0,0%

Lower secondary school
- 1,1%
- 1,7%
- 0,0%

Technical school
- 1,4%
- 3,4%
- 6,4%

Upper secondary school
- 9,7%
- 11,9%
- 12,8%

Upper vocational school
- 4,0%
- 6,0%
- 6,4%

University, Polytechnic, post-secondary/tertiary level College
- 83,6%
- 76,8%
- 74,5%

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%
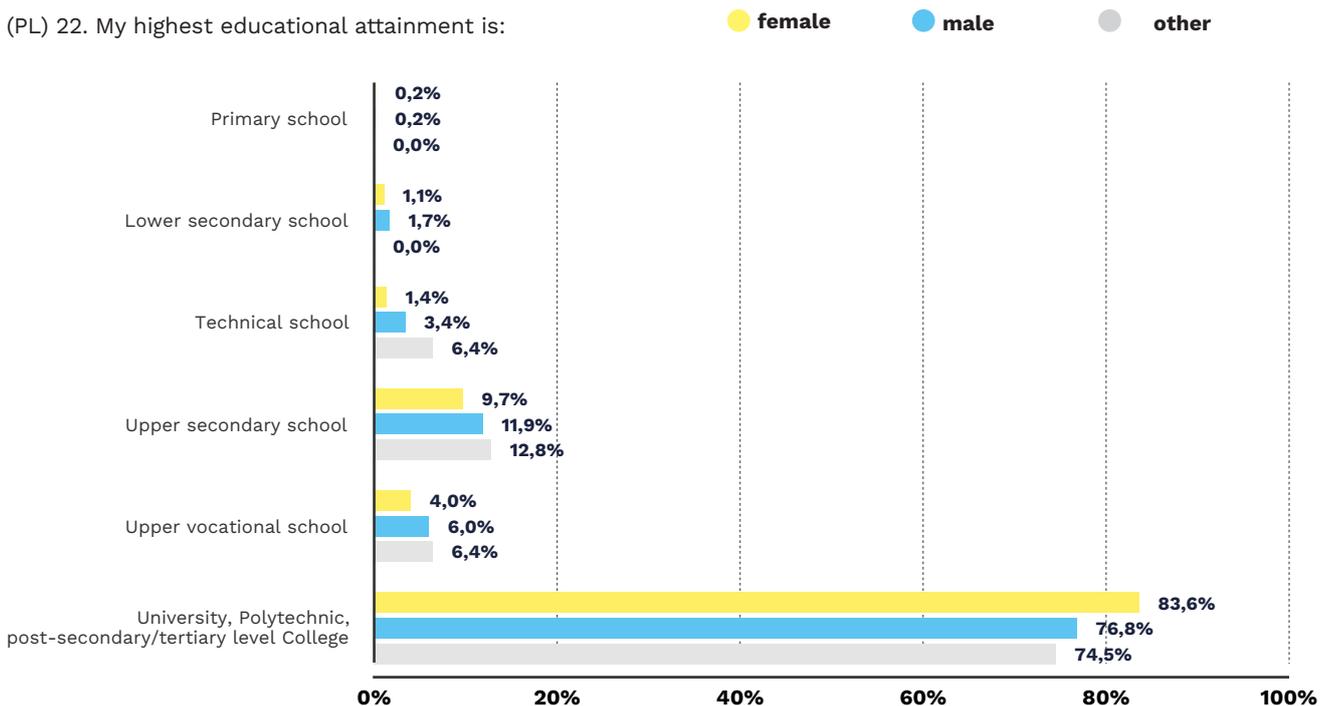
FIGURE 14

Highest educational attainment of project leaders (PL) – by survey round and activity type

(PL) 22. My highest educational attainment is:
(First survey cycle covering the funding year 2015)
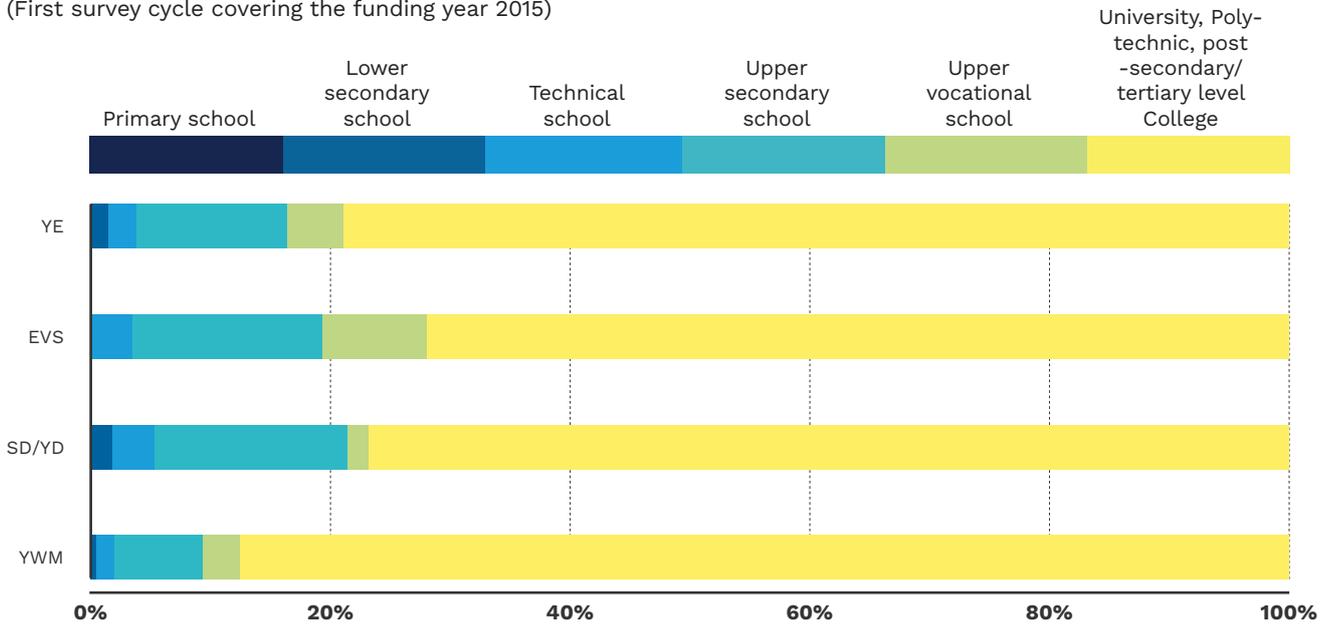
(PL) 22. My highest educational attainment is:
(Second survey cycle covering the funding year 2017)
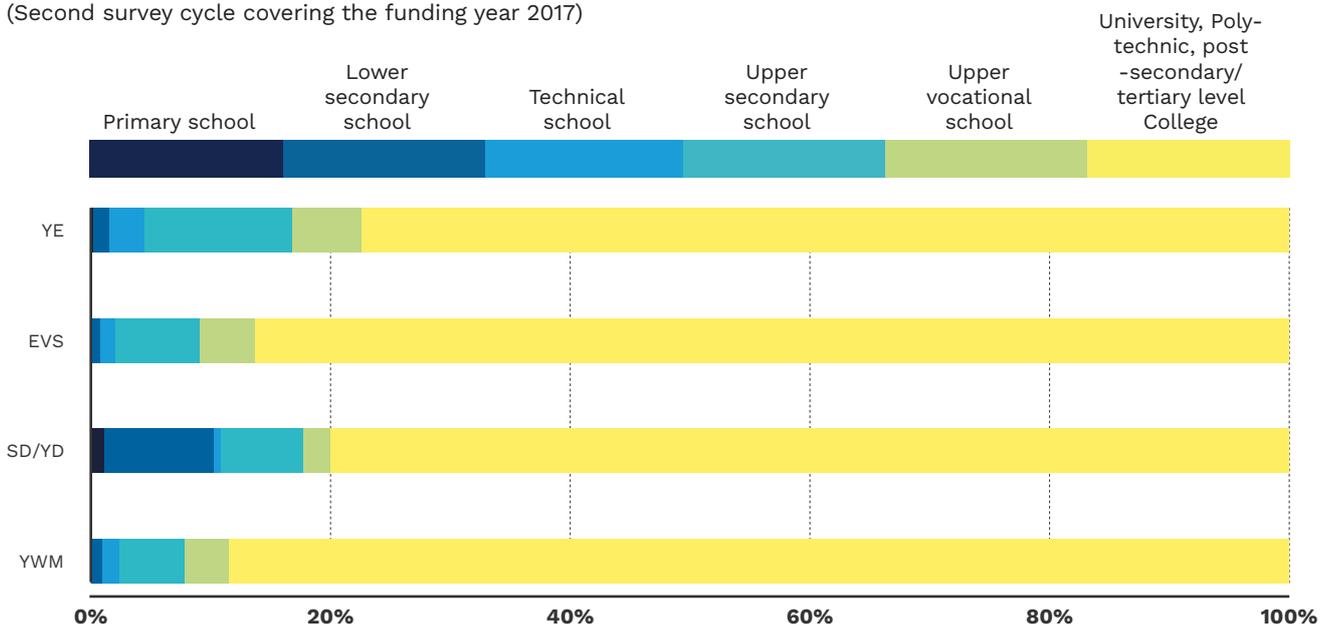
(PL) 22. My highest educational attainment is:
(Third survey cycle covering the funding year 2019)

Legend: Primary school | Lower secondary school | Technical school | Upper secondary school | Upper vocational school | University, Poly-technic, post-secondary/tertiary level College

Categories: YE, EVS, SD/YD, YWM

Scale: 0% — 20% — 40% — 60% — 80% — 100%
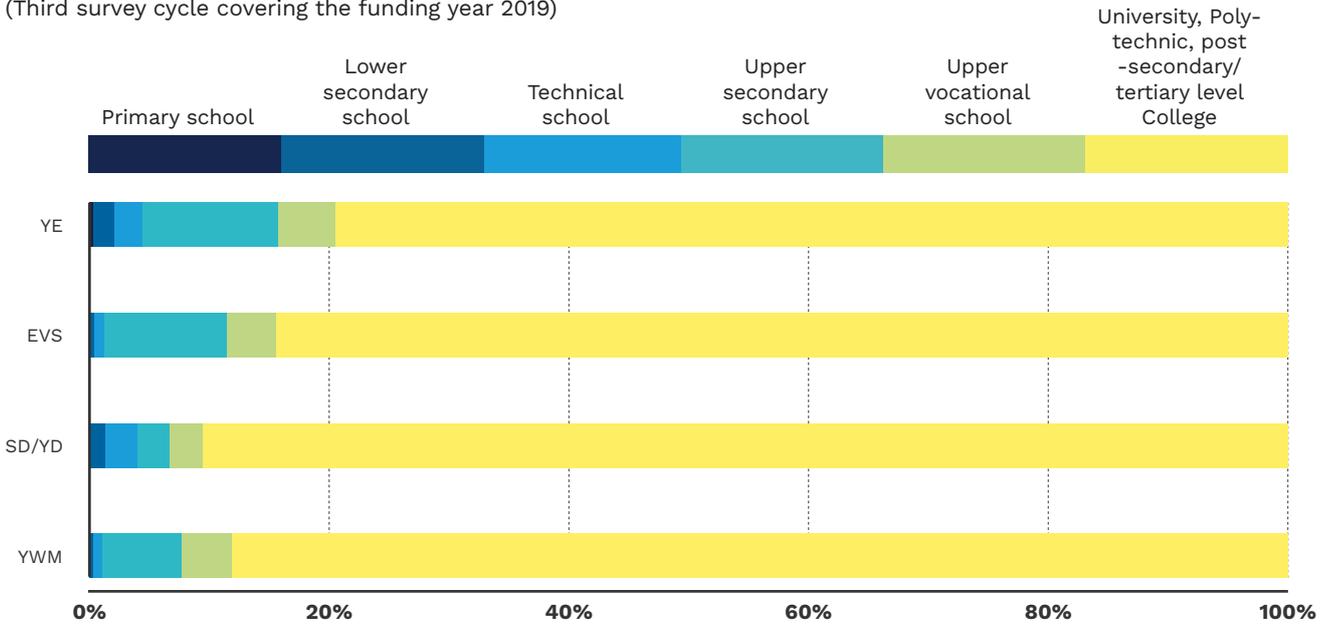
FIGURE 15 **Minority affiliation of project leaders (PL) – by survey cycle**

(PL) 26.a Please specify: –
Question asked to those who indicated to belong to a minority in Q26.

Legend: 2015 (PL) | 2017 (PL) | 2019 (PL)

Bar chart categories:
- I belong to a cultural, ethnic, religious or linguistic minority that has always lived in this country (indigenous minority).
- I belong to an ethnic or cultural minority.
- I belong to a religious minority.
- I belong to a linguistic minority.
- I am an immigrant (first generation – I was born in another country).
- I have an immigrant background (second or third generation – my parents or grandparents were born in another country).
- Other minority.

Scale: 0% — 10% — 20% — 30%

6 — INCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES OR WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

65% of project leaders reporting to be involved in YE, EVS or SD/YD stated that young people with fewer opportunities or with special needs participated in their project (SD 81%, YE 71%, EVS 53%; see Tables 72–74). Geographically, the percentage of project leaders who confirmed the involvement of young people with fewer opportunities or with special needs ranged from 33% in Iceland and 55% in Austria to 86% in Ireland and 88% in Belgium (see Tables 68–70).

61% of responding participants reporting to be involved in YWM and TCA confirmed that they themselves are working with young people with fewer opportunities or with special needs (YWM 59%, TCA 70%; see Table 75). In geographic terms, the percentages range from 38% in the Czech Republic and 46% in Denmark to 83% in Finland and 94% in Iceland (see Tables 76–78). Project leaders stated, however, that 66% of the youth workers, youth leaders and other professionals participating in their projects worked with young people with fewer opportunities or special needs.

6.1 ASPECTS OF (POTENTIAL) EXCLUSION

6.1.1 Obstacles of project participants – as assessed by themselves

64% of responding participants across RAY partner countries, and 72% of respondents of other countries, report that they are faced with at least one obstacle when asked to indicate all obstacles that apply (see Table 89).

The main obstacle project participants see concerns are accessing work and employment (61%), followed by active participation in society and politics (36%), mobility (31%) and accessing education (27%) (see Table 91).

All four obstacles show large geographic variations. Obstacles in accessing work and employment ranges from 34% in Norway to 73% in Luxembourg (the largest variance among the four obstacles); active participation in society and politics ranges from 19% in Slovakia to 55% in

Turkey; mobility ranges from 13% in Estonia to 50% in Slovakia; and access to education ranges from 13% in Luxembourg to 45% in Finland (see Table 43 in the 2019/20 Data Report).

When asked to indicate the kind of obstacle faced ('choose all that apply'), one item dominates the responses, namely not having enough money (48%), which is represented across all activity types, with slightly higher values for EVS (51%) and YWM (50%). All other kinds of obstacles are mentioned less frequently, with six other obstacles indicated by more than 10% of respondents: living in a remote area (17%), family responsibilities and health problems (both 13%) and finally, social background, gender, and low educational attainment/achievement (all at 12%; see Tables 91–93).

Some obstacles play a stronger role in certain activity types: health problems are rated highest by YE (14%), low educational attainment/achievement was highest for EVS, living in a remote area was highest amongst both SD/YD (20%), belonging to a disadvantaged group rated highest with YWM and SD/YD (both 10%), SD/YD rated highest living in a remote are (20%) as well as gender (15%), and finally, family responsibilities/ties and living in a remote area were rated highest amongst TCA (both 19%).

When asked to compare their opportunities to those of their peers (described as people of your age living in your country), 55% respondents state that they are getting their fair share of opportunities, whereas 21% assessed that they are getting more than their fair share of opportunities, with 18% stating that they are getting somewhat less than their fair share of opportunities, and 6% stating that they are getting much less than their fair share of opportunities (see Table 82).

The number of respondents who say they are getting much less than their fair share of opportunities is highest in Turkey (18%), Liechtenstein (17%) and North Macedonia (12%). The number of respondents who say they are getting more than their fair share of opportunities is highest in the Czech Republic (42%), Netherlands (40%) and Denmark (39%).

The majority of responding project participants say they are getting their fair share of opportunities, with a range of 75% (Switzerland) to 41% (Turkey). The average score for RAY countries is 55%.

There is no country where more than half of all responding project participants say they are getting somewhat less or much less than their fair share of opportunities.

Though five RAY countries stand out with combined 'somewhat less' and 'much less', which are Turkey with 50%, North Macedonia and Serbia with 34%, Liechtenstein with 33% and Italy with 32% (see Tables 86–88).

6.1.2 Obstacles for project participants – as assessed by responding project leaders

On average, 66% of project leaders state that youth workers, youth leaders and other professionals participating in their projects worked with young people with fewer opportunities or special needs. However, 61% of project participants, YWM (59%) and TCA (70%), confirm that they do so as well (see Table 75).

Simular are the number of project leaders who reported that inclusion was addressed in their projects and the number of project participants who learned something about inclusion: 39% of project leaders state that inclusion was a main theme addressed during their project, and 39% of project participants state they learned something about inclusion as part of their project (see Table 199, Table 203).

The number of project leaders indicating that their projects included young people with fewer opportunities (YPFO) or young people with special needs (YPSN) increases remarkably with the age of respondents: the percentage of project leaders reporting to be involved in YE, EVS or SD/YD with YPFO/YPSN grows steadily from 55% in the age group of 16-20-year-old respondents up to 76% in the age group of respondents who are older than 30 years (see Table 67). This begs the question whether older project leaders are more confident in working with YPFO/YPSN target groups, or whether the perception of what constitutes a disadvantage has changed over time and younger project leaders are closer to the target group. This needs to be explored in further analyses and studies.

Project leaders were also asked to specify which obstacles prevented young people with fewer opportunities or with special needs who participated in their project from having access to education, mobility, work or participation in society and politics at large. They specified not having enough money as the most frequent obstacle (64%), followed by living in a remote area (45%), social background (39%), living in a deprived (sub-)urban area (30%) and low educational attainment (31%). Project leaders estimate the obstacles to be more common than project participants themselves (see Table 95 and Table 99).

There are strong differences between the self-assessment of project participants concerning obstacles they are faced with and the project leaders' perception of the obstacles of participants (see Tables 95–102). For example, social background is seen as an obstacle by 39% of all responding project leaders, whereas only 12% of all responding project participants assessed this to be an obstacle they are faced with. This is similar to their belonging to a disadvantaged group, project leaders also perceived this higher at 38% compared with project participants self-assessment at only 9%. The living in a remote area (PL perception 45%, PP self-assessment 17%), low educational attainment (PL perception 31%, PP self-assessment 12%), living in a deprived (sub-)urban area (PL perception 30%, PP self-assessment 9%) and not having enough money (PL perception 64%, PP self-assessment 48%) are also considered to be obstacles by a much larger percentage of project leaders.

6.2 WORKING ON INCLUSION

Project leaders were asked to state how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the statement that their project contributed to supporting the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities or special needs in the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme. 48% of responding project leaders strongly agreed with the statement, another 40% agreed, with 11% disagreeing and 2% strongly disagreeing (see Tables 271–273).

Project participants were asked how the project affected them in the end, using a series of statements, one of them being 'I actively support the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities'. 43% of responding project participants said they do so more than before the project, 55% said they do so to the same extent as before the project, and 2%

said they do so less than before the project (see Tables 232–240).

Project leaders were asked the same question. 56% of responding project leaders said they do so more than before the project, 43% said they do so to the same extent as before the project, and 2% said they do so less than before the project (see Tables 238–240).

Project participants involved in YWM or TCA projects were also asked, in case they had been participating in this project on behalf of a group or organisation, what impact the project had made on their group or organisation. 67% of responding YWM project participants and 66% of TCA project participants say they 'strongly agree and agree' that the project resulted in an increased commitment to include young people with fewer opportunities (see Table 264). Even more, project leaders of all activity types believe that the project resulted in an increased commitment to include young people with fewer opportunities: 84% 'strongly agree and agree' with this statement, while 6% 'disagree or strongly disagree' (see Tables 265–267).

6.3   CONCLUSIONS

To strengthen social inclusion and solidarity in Europe is a key youth-specific aim of the Erasmus+ Programme. To this end, 70% of responding project leaders stated that young people with fewer opportunities or with special needs participated in their projects. 61% of responding participants reporting confirmed that they themselves are working with young people with fewer opportunities or with special needs.

On the other hand, 65% of responding project participants report that they are faced with at least one obstacle in society. The main obstacle, from the perspective of project participants themselves, is gaining access to work and employment (57%), followed by active participation in society and politics (34%), mobility (27%) and accessing education (23%). Participants mentioned as specific type of obstacles as not having enough money (48%), living in a remote area (17%), health problems and family responsibilities/ties (both 13%), social background, gender and low educational attainment/achievement (all three 12%).

There are strong differences between the self-assessment of project participants concerning obstacles they are faced with and the project leaders' perception. Project leaders, on the other hand, believe that next to not having enough

money (64%), other major obstacles for project participants are living in a remote area (45%), social background (39%), low educational attainment (31%) and living in a deprived (sub-)urban area (30%).

Notwithstanding these differences in judgment, which should be researched further, the programme's inclusion approach works. 88% of project leaders agree that their project contributed to supporting the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities or special needs in the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme (48% strongly agree, 40% agree).

43% of project participants and 56% of project leaders said they actively support the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities more than before the project. Furthermore, 67% of participants in YWM projects and 66% of participants in TCA projects ('agree' and 'strongly agree'), as well as 84% of project leaders ('agree' and 'strongly agree') across all activity types said that the project resulted in an increased commitment of their organisations to include young people with fewer opportunities. This chapter explores the previous experience of project participants and project leaders and sheds lights on the professional status and occupation of project leaders.

7 — YOUTH IN ACTION TRAJECTORIES

7.1 TRAJECTORIES OF PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

7.1.1 Previous mobility experiences of project participants

97% of all respondents had been abroad before participating in their Erasmus+ Youth in Action project. 15 options were given to respondents to indicate why they had been to another country before, in addition to I have never been abroad before this project (3%). By far the most frequently indicated reason was because I went abroad for holidays (75%), followed by because I participated in a youth exchange (45%) and because I went abroad with my class at school (41%; see Table 51).

Differentiating the responses by age shows a number of variances:
- Age group 15-17 years: 45% went abroad with my class at school; 11% have never been abroad before this project
- Age group 18-20 years: 51% went abroad with my class at school; 10% have never been abroad before this project
- Age group 21-25 years: 51% participated in a youth exchange; 7% have never been abroad before this project
- Age group 26-30 years: 54% participated in a youth exchange; 3% have never been abroad before this project

As is to be expected, working and studying in another country becomes more prominent in older age groups. Interestingly, the same is the case for youth exchanges (see Tables 52–54).

Considering the responses geographically, a number of differences become apparent (see Table 26/1-3 in the 2019/20 Data Report):

- Turkey has by far the largest proportion of project participants who had never been abroad before their project (32%). All other countries range between 10% (RO) and 0% (CH).

- On average, 44% of respondents (from RAY partner countries) went abroad with their class at school, ranging from 7% (TR) to 72% (SI). Relatively low percentages are noticeable in the Nordic states (FI 32%, SE 36%, NO 53%) – with Denmark being a regional exception (65%). Most other regions show similarly aligned response patterns, although, curiously enough, there is often exactly one regional exception (LT 37% and LV 33% – but EE 57%; PT 36% and ES 44% – but IT 53%; HU 47% and BG 37% – but RO 18%).

The level of educational attainment has a noticeable impact on prior international mobility experiences (see Tables 55–57):
- 17% of respondents at primary school attainment level had never been abroad before their project, compared to 7% of respondents with upper secondary and 1% of respondents with tertiary levels of attainment. This could also be linked to the age.
- Respondents who had spent time abroad to gain work-related experience (job, internship, au-pair) are more frequently those with higher technical/vocational or tertiary educational attainments.
- Respondents who had spent time abroad to gain education-related experience (school, university, language course) are more frequently those with upper secondary and tertiary educational attainments.

7.1.2 Previous project experiences of project participants

Responses of project participants to the questions regarding participation in a similar project before show the following:
- 49% of respondents have previously participated in a project supported within Erasmus+ Youth in Action or an earlier EU youth programme (e.g., Youth in Action 2007-2013).
- 22% of respondents have previously participated in a similar project which was supported by another programme of the European Union.

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12 It needs to be noted that the sample of project leaders is relatively small for some countries. Therefore, the respective percentages need to be seen with caution, in particular when comparing the responses by countries. Therefore, the text avoids referring to percentages of some countries when they represent extremes.

- 24% of respondents have previously participated in another similar project (see Tables 59–61).
- As can be expected, the level of prior experience with similar projects increases with age: 57% of 26-30 years old and 65% of >30 years old have had previous experience within Erasmus+ or an earlier EU youth programme. Compared to 37% of 15-17 years old and 44% of 18-20 years old whom have never participated in a similar project before (see Tables 52–54).
- Gender-based variance is marginal (32.2% of female and 31.7% of male respondents had previously not participated in a similar project).
- 41% of those who had participated in a similar project before indicated that they had participated once (20.5%) or twice (20.5%) before in a similar project. 34% of responding participants had participated 3-5 times in a similar project, 16% between 6 and 10 times, 6% more than 10 times and 2% reported 20+ (see Table 58).
- Comparative to the 2015 survey, prior participation in similar projects increased significantly. While in 2015 less than half of all responding project participants (49%) had participated in a similar project before, this percentage increased to 61% in 2017 and further increased to 67% in 2019.

7.2 TRAJECTORIES OF PROJECT LEADERS

7.2.1 Professional status and occupation of project leaders in the youth sector

Project leaders were asked to indicate what they had done during the year prior to their project outside of the organisation for which they were involved in the project. When asked to select all options that had applied for at least 3 months out of 12, respondents specified the following:

- 40% of the responding project leaders were full-time employed, 24% were in education or training, 20% were volunteers, 19% were self-employed, 15% were part-time employed, 7% stated to be unemployed, 5% to be not in paid work, education or training, and 4% were doing an internship (see Tables 126–135).

- Across activity types, project leaders were most frequently employed full-time, ranging from 34% (YWM) to 47% (SD/YD); see Tables 127–129).
- Unemployed project leaders are more likely to be involved in YE (8%) and YWM (8%) (see Tables 127–129).
- Self-employed project leaders play a very strong role in YWM projects (37%), compared with YE (18%), EVS (16%) and SD/YD projects (14%) (see Tables 127–129).
- As would be expected, older project leaders are less often involved in education and training (age group 16-20: 71%, age group 21-25: 52%, age group 26-30: 21%, age group 31-40: 11%, with a slight increase in age group 41-50: 13%, age group 60+: 9%). Similarly, employment increases with age (full-time employment in the age group 16-20: 11%, in the age group 26-30: 41%, increasing to 57% in the age group 41-50; see Tables 130–132).
- Female respondents are slightly more likely to be in education and training (25% versus 23% of male respondents). As well, female respondents are slightly more likely to be employed part-time (16% verses 14%). On the other hand, male respondents are more likely to be both employed full-time (42% verses 38% of female respondents) and self-employed (23% versus 17% of female respondents; see Tables 133–135).
- Geographic variance is distinct: the percentage of project leaders who were employed full-time for at least 3 months out of 12 ranges from 0% to 100%. In 4 RAY partner countries, half or more all responding project leaders were employed full-time: EE, FI, MT, RO. In 4 RAY partner countries, less than a quarter of all responding project leaders were employed full-time: DK, IS, IT, NL.
- When considering full- and part-time employment together, more than half of all responding project leaders in 17 of the RAY partner countries were employed (see Tables 145–147).
- In 12 RAY countries, the percentage of unemployed project leaders is 10% or higher: CY (14%), EL (17%), FI (10%), FR (15%), HR (16%), IE (12%), IS (11%), MK (14%), NO (11%), RS (14%), SI (10%), SK (11%) (see Tables 145-147).

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13 It needs to be noted that the sample of project leaders is relatively small for some countries. Therefore, the respective percentages need to be seen with caution, in particular when comparing the responses by countries. Therefore, the text avoids referring to percentages of some countries when they represent extremes.

7.2.2 Professional status and involvement of project leaders in their projects

The majority of responding project leaders were involved in their project as volunteers (61%). Only 16% were involved on a permanent full-time employment basis and 6% on a permanent part-employment. All other options (temporary full- or part-time employment, self-employment, internship, other) each were relevant for less than 10% of respondents and cumulatively amount to 17% (see Tables 136–138).

Voluntary involvement is lowest in EVS activities (25%) and highest in YE activities (69%). Permanent full-time positions are most prevalent in EVS activities (43%) and least prevalent in YE activities (12%); permanent part-time positions range from 16% (SD/YD, EVS) to 4% (YE). Temporary part- and full-time employment accumulatively (project leaders were employed specifically for their project) is most frequent in YWM activities (13%) and least frequent in SD/YD activities (3%). Self-employment is highest in YWM activities (19%) and lowest in SD/YD (3%) (see Tables 136–138).

Voluntary involvement decreases with age (age group 16-20: 88%, age group 26-30: 61%, age 31 and above ranges from 50% to 55%). Permanent full-time employment increases with age (age group 16-20: 2%, age group 26-30: 14%, age 31 and above ranges from 17% to 26%). Most employment types show the same pattern, see Tables 139–141).

Female respondents are less often involved as volunteers (58%) than their male counterparts (66%). Female respondents are more frequently employed on a permanent full-time basis (18%) compared with their male counterparts (13%), and in permanent part-time positions (6%) compared with their male counterparts (4%). Whereas male respondents are more frequently employed on a temporary full-time basis (4%) compared with their female counterparts (3%; see Tables 142–144).

Project leaders who are employed full-time by another organization/employer (39%) or in education or training (25%) represent the highest ranges, followed by volunteer (21%) and self-employment (19%; see Table 126).

Types of involvement differ considerably between countries (see Tables 145–147). Voluntary involvement in projects is highest in Malta (86%) and Serbia (82%), and lowest in Iceland (11%), Nether-

lands (30%) and Germany (32%) It is below 50% in 9 RAY partner countries, predominantly in Northern and Western Europe (AT, CH, DE, DK, FR, IE, IS, NL, PL), and above 50% in 23 RAY partner countries, covering all regions of Europe.

Permanent full-time positions are most frequent in Finland (44%), Belgium (41%) and Denmark (39%). Permanent full-time positions are least frequent in Latvia (3%), Serbia (6%) and Hungary (7%).

In 6 countries, more than 10% of project leaders were involved in their project on a self-employed basis: The highest self-employment rates come from Netherlands (23%), Iceland (22%), Latvia and Germany (both 14%). Overall, across all RAY partner countries, 16% of PL are in permanent full-time employment, followed by 6% of PL in self-employment.

7.2.3 Previous project experiences of project leaders

Responses of project leaders to the question 'Have you previously participated in projects supported within Erasmus+ Youth in Action or an earlier EU youth programme (e.g. Youth in Action 2007-2013)?' show the following:

- 81% of respondents had participated in a project supported by the programme before, 44% of them as project leaders or team members, and 37% of them as participants. 19% of responding project leaders said they had never participated in a project supported by the programme before (see Tables 1554–156).
- Differences between activity types are distinct: 26% of responding project leaders of YE projects stated they had never participated in a project supported by the programme before, compared to 13% EVS, 17% YWM, and 23% SD/YD (see Tables 154–156).
- With age, the percentage of those who had previously participated as a project leader or team member in a project supported by the programme grows (age group 16-20: 31%, age group 26-30: 53%; see Table 157).
- Male respondents have more frequently participated as project leaders or team members before (61%, versus 50% for female respondents), whereas female respondents have more frequently participated as participants before (48%, versus 44% for male respondents; see Table 158).
- Geographic variance is noticeable: prior participation in a leading role is most common

in Luxembourg (80%) and Cyprus (71%), and least common in Croatia and Switzerland (both 29%).

- Prior participation in a participating role is most common in Luxembourg (80%), Hungary (61%), Cyprus and Finland (both 60%); and least common in Switzerland (29%), Ireland and Austria (both 31%).
- No prior participation is most common in Switzerland (43%) and Ireland (38%), and least common in Cyprus (6%).

Those respondents who had stated that they had been involved as a project leader or team member in a project supported by the current or former EU youth programme were asked to estimate in how many projects they were involved. 5% had been involved in 1 prior project, 11% in 2 prior projects, 27% in 3-5 prior projects, 25% in 6-10 projects, 20% in 11-20 projects, 6% in 21-30 projects and 13% in more than 20 projects (see Tables 160–162).

Prior involvement in previous projects is most pronounced in YD/SD and EVS projects (28% (YD/SD) and 27% (EVS) of respondents had been involved in more than 6-10 previous projects), compared with YE (25%) and YWM (20%) projects (see Tables 160–162).[14]

Geographic variances exist without a particular regional pattern and range from 29% (MT) of prior involvement as a project leader/team member in more than 5 prior projects to 81% (AM). In 19 countries more than 50% of respondents estimated having been involved in more than 5 prior projects (AM, AT, BA, CY, ES, FI, GE, IE, IT, MK, NO, RO, RS, RU, SE, SI, TR, UA, UK).

7.3 CONCLUSIONS

33% of responding project participants had never participated in a similar project before. Of those 67% who had participated in a similar project before, 21% indicated that they had participated once before in a similar project, whereas 34% said they had participated 3-5 times in a similar project. While this demonstrates that initial participation sparks further interest and engagement, it may also be an indicator for limited access and/or for a lack of (advanced) project and training offers outside the realm of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme.

81% of responding project leaders had participated in a project supported by the programme before, 44% of them as project leaders or team members and 37% of them as participants. There is a slight gender bias to the prior experience of project leaders: Male respondents had more frequently participated as project leaders or team members before, whereas female respondents had more frequently participated as participants before.

The occupational status of project leaders outside of their E+/YiA project indicates that 54% of all responding project leaders were in some form of employment: 28% were full-time employed, 19% were self-employed, 15% were part-time employed, and 4% were doing an internship.

Within the projects, the majority of project leaders is involved on an unpaid basis (61% as volunteers), while 33% are involved in some form of employment - 19% full-time employed (temporary or permanent), 8% part-time employed (temporary or permanent), 6% self-employed, and 1% on the basis of an internship/a work placement.

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14 Due to the small samples for EVS and YD/SD this comparison needs to be considered with caution.

8 — IMPLEMENTATION OF ERASMUS+ YOUTH IN ACTION

This chapter explores various aspects related to the application for and administration of projects in the context of Erasmus+ Youth in Action.[15]

8.1 BECOMING INVOLVED IN ERASMUS+ YOUTH IN ACTION

55% of project participants got to know about their project through a youth organisation/association (37%), an informal youth group (11%) or a youth centre (7%).[16] Other sources and contexts through which participants learned of their project were friends/acquaintances (30%), school/college/university (12%), newspapers/magazines/radio/TV/Internet (13%), other types of organisations (10%), National Agency of Erasmus+ (6%), at work (5%), Regional Offices of the National Agencies (2%), SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centre (5%) and information/the website of the European Commission (2%) or Eurodesk (less than 2%; see Tables 168–170).

Differences between activity types are distinct: youth organisations/associations/groups/centres range between 14% (TCA) and 47% (YWM); friends/acquaintances between 7% (TCA) and 38% (YE), schools/colleges/universities between 2% (TCA) and 38% (SD/YD), National Agency of Erasmus+ 3% (YE) and 37% (TCA) (see Tables 168–170).

76% of project leaders and team members learned of Erasmus+ Youth in Action through a youth organisation/association (49%), an informal youth group (18%) or a youth centre (9%) – even more than project participants learned about their project through these contexts. 19% of project leaders learned about Erasmus+ through a National Agency of the programme. A considerably smaller role was played by school/college/university 11%), Regional Offices of the National Agency of Erasmus+ (7%), and the information/website of the European Commission (8%). Friends and acquaintances (30%) played a much more prominent role, as did the work environment (17%) and another type of organisation or association (16%; see Tables 171–173).

Again, differences between activity types are distinct, in particular with respect to EVS and SD/YD, while YE and YWM show more similarities. It needs to be noted, though, that the samples for EVS and SD/YD are relatively small, so the percentages need to be considered with caution (see Tables 171–173).

8.2 APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

All project leaders whose country of residence is identical with the funding country of a project (n=942), were asked to which extent they agree or disagree with 11 statements regarding the application procedure and administrative project management of their project. Their responses show the following (see Tables 174–176):

● Overall satisfaction with the 11 covered aspects of the application procedure and administrative project management is high. The overall 'agree' response rate ranges from 34% to 43% and 'strongly agree' response rate ranges from 31% to 42%.
● Respondents most strongly agreed that the information required for applying for this project was easy to understand (42%), and least strongly agreed that the administrative management of this grant request was simple (31%).
● Three of the 11 covered aspects of the application procedure and administrative project management were viewed comparatively positively, all with a combined 'agree' and 'strongly agree' response rate above 80%:
  • 83% agree/strongly agree that it was easy to obtain the essential information required for applying for this project.
  • 82% agree/strongly agree that the information required for applying for their project was wasy to understand.
  • 82% agree/strongly agree that the online tool for Youthpass was easy to use.
● Four of the 11 covered aspects of the application procedure and administrative project management were viewed more critically, all

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15 See earlier footnote: It needs to be noted that the sample of project leaders is relatively small with respect to EVS and YD/SD. Therefore, the respective percentages need to be considered with caution, in particular when comparing the responses by activity types.

16 Multiple answers were possible.

with a combined 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' response rate of above 12%.

- 16% disagree/strongly disagree that the application procedure for this project was simple.
- 14% disagree/strongly disagree that the administrative management of this grant request was simple.
- 13% disagree/strongly disagree that reporting was easy.
- 12% disagree/strongly disagree that the online tools for application and reporting are easy to use.

Agreement with the 11 covered aspects of the application procedure and administrative project management are fairly similar across activity types, however activity types had various preferences for the application procedure and administrative project management of their project

- 46% of YWM project leaders 'strongly agreed' that the information required for applying for this project was easy to understand, compared with YE (40%), EVS (42%) and SD/YD (28%).
- 42% of YWM and 41% of YE project leaders 'strongly agreed' that the online tool for Youthpass was easy to use, compared with EVS (38%) and SD/YD (25%).
- 44% of EVS project leaders 'strongly agreed' that it was easy to obtain the essential information required for applying for this project, compared with YWM (41%), YE (40%) and SD/YD (23%)
- 31% of SD/YD project leaders 'strongly agreed' that compared with other funding programmes, the administrative management of this grant request was easy. This was the highest response rate for 'strongly agree' for SD/YD projects, however this response is fairly similar with other response rates, EVS (39%), YE (32%) and YWM (34%).

When comparing responses of those project leaders with and without prior project experience, the interesting pattern that had emerged in 2015 and 2017 remains present in 2019. Project leaders without prior experience are more critical in their assessment of aspects relating to the application procedure and project administration leading up to the start of a project, whereas project leaders with prior experience are more critical of aspects relating to reporting and project administration in the later phases of a project.

Overall, the satisfaction with the application procedure and administrative project management has decreased throughout the programme.

8.3 DEVELOPMENT, PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS

8.3.1 Development and preparation of projects

Project leaders were asked to respond to a number of statements about the development and preparation of their projects and to indicate whether each statement was true or false. Based on their responses, the following observations can be made (see Tables 177–182):

- 92% of all respondents state that their project was well prepared. Fluctuation between activity types is nominal (EVS 93%, YE 92%, SD/YD 96%, YWM 94%).
- 78% had cooperated with one or more of the partner organisations before their project. Fluctuation between activity types is slightly more distinct (EVS 84%, YE 76%, SD/YD 80%, YWM 86%).
- 71% of all respondents used Skype or similar tools during the preparation of the project, ranging from 59% for SD/YD projects to 81% for YWM projects.
- 69% of all projects were prepared in one or more preparatory meetings involving other project partners. Fluctuation between activity types is slightly more distinct (EVS 52%, YE 71%, SD/YD 79%, YWM 67%).
- 29% of respondents stated they found one or more project partners through online support services such as OTLAS. Fluctuation between activity types is pronounced (SD/YD 15%, YE 31%).
- 94% of all respondents involved in a project with at least one such preparatory meeting said that the preparatory meetings were essential for the preparation of the project. SD/YD project leaders were most frequently involved in a preparatory meeting with one or more project partners (95%), followed by YE and YWM projects (both 86%), and EVS projects (80%). SD/YD project leaders also rated 100% for preparatory meeting as essential for the preparation on the project.

In addition, project leaders were asked to which extent they 'agree' and 'strongly agree' with two statements regarding the development and preparation of their projects. Their responses show the following (see Tables 183–185):

- 92% of respondents state that the relationship between the project leaders/members of the project team was characterised by mutual respect and good cooperation. (com-

bined 'agree' and 'strongly agree' response rate). With the exception of SD/YD (97%), all activity types show similar rates of agreement (EVS 93%, YE 92%, YWM 93%).

- 93% of respondents state that the overall project management was appropriate and satisfactory. With the exception of YE (92%), all activity types show similar rates of agreement (SD/YD, YWM, EVS: 95%).

There are no major differences between projects of different duration and between respondents with and without prior project experience.

8.3.2 Implementation of projects

Project leaders were asked to which extent they 'agree' and 'strongly agree' with 7 statements regarding the implementation of their projects. Their responses show the following (see Tables 183–185):

- 93% of respondents state that the relationship between the project leaders/members of the project team was characterised by mutual respect and good cooperation. (combined 'agree' and 'strongly agree' response rate). With the exception of SD/YD (97%), all activity types show similar rates of agreement (EVS 93%, YE 92%, YWM 93%).
- 93% of respondents state that the overall project management was appropriate and satisfactory (EVS 95%, SD/YD 95%, YWM 95%, YE 92%).
- 92% of respondents state that the results/ outcomes of the project are sustainable. Fluctuation between activity types is slightly noticeable (SD/YD 95%, YWM 94%, EVS 90%, YE 91%).
- 89% of respondents state that during the implementation of the project, the cooperation between the partners worked well. Fluctuation between activity types is slightly noticeable (EVS 91%, YWM 90%, YE 89%, SD/YD 88%)
- 91% of respondents state that the pedagogical implementation of the project was of high quality. Fluctuation between activity types is slightly noticeable (YWM 96%, SD/YD 95%, YE 90%, EVS 88%).
- 88% of respondents state that the workload for the implementation of the project was reasonable. Fluctuation between activity types is slightly noticeable (YWM 90%, EVS 88%, YE 89%, SD/YD 91%).
- 89% of respondents state that the results/ outcomes were disseminated appropriately. Fluctuation between activity types is slightly

noticeable (SD/YD 91%, EVS 88%, YWM 90%, YE 89%).

There are no major differences between projects of different duration and between respondents with and without prior project experience.

8.4 YOUTHPASS

92% of responding project leaders report that Youthpass was used in their project. Furthermore, 90% of project leaders strongly agree (56%) or agree (34%) that Youthpass was integrated throughout the project and its methods.

With regards to the integration of the Youthpass throughout projects, YWM (89%), YE (90%), EVS (89%) all scored highly ('agree' and 'strongly agree'). SD/YD (81%) is below the average of 90%, which can only partially be explained by the fact that Youthpass was launched for SD/YD only in 2016 (see Tables 187–190).

88% of the project leaders reporting that Youthpass was used in their project indicate that the project participants wished to receive a Youthpass. More than 90% of project leaders agree or strongly agree that:

- they received all necessary information concerning Youthpass
- project participants were informed in detail about Youthpass
- the information about Youthpass was clear and understandable (see Table 82).

77% of participants report having received a Youthpass certificate as part of the project they were asked about (YWM 84%, EVS 77%, YE 79%, TCA 60%, SD/YD 44%; see Table 191).

Of those who received a Youthpass certificate as part of this project, 71% reported having been involved in a reflection or self-assessment related to issuing the Youthpass certificate (EVS 81%, YWM 77%, TCA 64%, YE 65%, SD/YD 55%; see Table 192), and of these 89% said that this reflection or self-assessment helped raise their awareness of their development through the project (see Table 193). The lower percentage of participants who were involved in a reflection or self-assessment (71%) compared to the percentage of project leaders stating that Youthpass was integrated throughout the project and its methods (92%) should be explored further.

30% of the participants having a Youthpass certificate reported that they had used it, e.g., for

an application for a job, internship, studies etc. Of the 30% participants who reported using the Youthpass, 60% indicated it was used in education or training (60%) and in part time and full time employment (42%).

As could be expected, the use of a Youthpass is more distinct for older age groups (age group 21-25: 35%; age group 18-20: 30%; see Table 86 in the 2019/20 Data Report).

Of the 30% participants who reported using the Youthpass, 67% of the participants think that it was helpful, e.g. in getting a job or being accepted for an internship or studies (see Table 195).

8.5 CONCLUSIONS

The majority of project participants and project leaders learned of their project, respectively of E+/YiA or a preceding EU youth programme, through youth organisations/associations, followed by friends/acquaintances. Informal youth groups played a prominent role for both project participants and project leaders, while the work environment played a more prominent role for project leaders than project participants.

Overall, project leaders are largely satisfied with the application procedure and administrative project management of projects under E+/YiA. Four aspects are seen more critically: between 12-16% of project leaders 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' that the application procedure for this project was simple, that the administrative management of this grant request was simple, that reporting was easy, and that the online tools for application and reporting are easy to use.

Agreement with the 11 covered aspects of the application procedure and administrative project management are fairly similar across activity types. For SD/YD projects changes have emerged from the 2015, 2017 and 2019 survey waves, which brings SD/YD projects – after initial difficulties at the start of this programme generation – further in line and agreement with all other activity types.

It should be noted that overall satisfaction with the application procedure and administrative project management has decreased noticably. In particular the complexity of application and reporting procedures are viewed more critically, alongside the lack of ease of use of online tools.

According to project leaders and team members, Youthpass is widely used in E+/YiA projects – 92% of project leaders report this, and 90% 'agree' and 'strongly agree' that Youthpass was integrated throughout the project and its methods.

Much in line with that, 77% of project participants reported having received a Youthpass as part of the project they were asked about in the survey. Similar to the 2017 survey cycle, 71% of project participants who have received or expect to receive a Youthpass, reported having been involved in a reflection or self-assessment related to issuing a Youthpass certificate, while 89% of these stated that this helped raise their awareness of their development through the project. Given the value of reflection or self-assessment for the learning process of participants, it should be explored how Youthpass could be integrated more into the projects.

While only 30% of participants having a Youthpass certificate reported that they used it, e.g., for an application, 60% of those have used it education or training and 42% have used it for employment. This suggests a relatively high recognition of the Youthpass certificate – and that E+/YiA participants should be encouraged to use it more frequently.

9 — ENDNOTES FOR FIGURES

FIGURE (1) For readability, several items were shortened.

The shortened reponse 'Discrimination and non-discrimination' read as 'Discrimination and non-discrimination (i.e. because of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cultural background, religion, disability, nationality etc.) in the survey.

The shortened response 'Inclusion of disadvantaged or marginalised people' read as 'Inclusion of disadvantaged or marginalised people in society' in the survey.

The shortened response 'Active citizenship and participation in civil society' read as 'Active citizenship and participation in civil society and democratic life' in the survey.

The shortened response 'Media and ICT' read as 'Media and ICT (Information and Communications Technology), including social media and internet' in the survey.

FIGURE (2) For readability, several items were shortened, in the same way as described for Figure 1 above.

The response option 'I did not learn anything new in this project' was a response option for project participants (PP) only.

FIGURE (3) No notes

FIGURE (4) No notes

FIGURE (5) For readability, this figure spans across two pages.

FIGURE (6) No notes

FIGURE (7) Project leaders were asked (PL) 14. What effect did the project have on your organisation/group/body? and project participants (PP of YWM and TCA activities only) were asked (PP) 17. If you have been participating in this project on behalf of an organisation/group/body: What impact did the project have on your organisation/group/body?

FIGURE (8) No notes

FIGURE (9) Question was asked to project participants who indicated that they belong to a minority.

FIGURE (10) No notes

FIGURE (11) No notes

FIGURE (12) No notes

FIGURE (13) No notes

FIGURE (14) No notes

FIGURE (15) Question was asked to project leaders who indicated that they belong to a minority.

10 — RESEARCH PROJECT PARTNERS

This study was designed and implemented by the the Generation and Educational Science Institute in Austria and Youth Policy Labs in Germany in cooperation with the National Agencies of Erasmus+ Youth in Action and their research partners in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Cyprus, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Lat-via, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom. Where available, national research reports can be requested from the respective National Agencies and their research partners listed below.

The National Agencies (hosting organisations) listed below are those that were responsible for the implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme from 2014 to 2020. On our website you will find the current contact information for all National Agencies that are active in our network: www.researchyouth.net/network/

A AUSTRIA

- IZ – Verein zur Förderung von Vielfalt, Dialog und Bildung
  Österreichische Nationalagentur Erasmus+ Jugend in Aktion & Europäisches Solidaritätskorps

- Institut für Erziehungswissenschaft der Universität Innsbruck
  Institute of Educational Science, University of Innsbruck

- Generation and Educational Science Institute – GENESIS
  Institut für Generationen und Bildungsforschung

B BELGIUM

- Jugendbüro der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft VoG

- BIJ - Bureau International Jeunesse (BIJ)

- JINT

BULGARIA

- Human Resource Development Centre (HRDC)

C CROATIA

- Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes Agencija za mobilnost i programe Europske unije (AMPEU)

CYPRUS

- National Agency of "Erasmus+ Youth" Programme Youth Board of Cyprus

CZECHIA

- Dum zahraniční spolupráce (Czech National Agency for International Education and Research)

D DENMARK

- Danish Agency for Higher Education and Science

E ESTONIA

- Foundation Archimedes

F FINLAND

- The Finnish National Agency for Education - EDUFI, Internationalisation Services for Youth, Culture, Sport

FRANCE

- Agence du Service Civique

- Erasmus+ Jeunesse et sport

G GERMANY

- JUGEND für Europa (JfE) Nationale Agentur Erasmus+ JUGEND IN AKTION

- IKAB e.V.
  Institut für angewandte Kommunikationsforschung in der außerschulischen Bildung

- Forschungsgruppe Jugend und Europa am Centrum für angewandte Politikforschung CAP

GREECE

- Youth and Lifelong Learning Foundation

H HUNGARY

- Tempus Közalapítvány / Tempus Public Foundation

I

ICELAND
- Rannís

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- Léargas

ITALY
- Agenzia Nazionale Per I Giovani

- Dipartimento di Scienze Politiche, Sociali e della Comunicazione, Università di Salerno Department of Political, Social and Communication Sciences, University of Salerno

L

LATVIA
- Jaunatnes starptautisko programmu aģentūra – Agency for International Programs for Youth

LIECHTENSTEIN
- aha – Tipps & Infos für junge Leute National Agency Erasmus+ Youth in action

LITHUANIA
- Agency of International Youth Cooperation

LUXEMBOURG
- Anefore, eduPôle Walferdange

- Jugendforschung an der Universität **Luxemburg**

M

MALTA
- European Union Programmes Agency (EUPA)

N

THE NETHERLANDS
- Nederlands Jeugdinstituut (NJI)

NORTH MACEDONIA
- National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility

NORWAY
- Aktiv ungdom, Barne- ungdoms og familiedirektoratet

P

POLAND
- Fundacja Rozwoju Systemu Edukacji – Foundation for the Development of the Education System

PORTUGAL
- Agência Nacional para a gestão do programa Juventude em Acção

R

ROMANIA
- Agentia Nationala pentru Programe Comunitare in Domeniul Educatiei si Formarii Profesionale (ANPCDEFP)

S

SERBIA
- Foundation Tempus – National Agency for Erasmus+ programme

SLOVAKIA
- IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute Národná agentúra programu Erasmus+

SLOVENIA
- Movit

- University of Ljubljana Faculty of Social Sciences

SPAIN
- Agencia Nacional Española de la Juventud (INJUVE)

SWEDEN
- Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society

SWITZERLAND
- Movetia – Austausch und Mobilität, National Agency for Exchange and Mobility

T

TURKEY
- Avrupa Birliği Eğitim ve Gençlik – Centre for European Union Education and Youth Programmes (CEUEYP)

U

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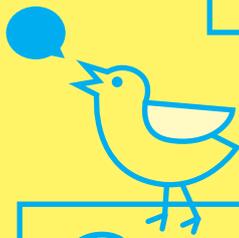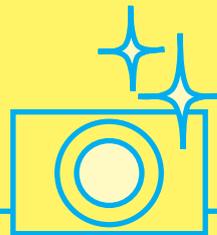
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