

**Research-based Analysis of Youth in Action Programme
RAY Network**

**Research-based analysis and monitoring of
Erasmus+: Youth in Action (E+ /YiA) (RAY-MON)**

TURKEY NATIONAL REPORT 2018

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Programme Monitoring Unit
Youth Mobility Unit
Youth Work Unit

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Abbreviations

CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CoE	Council of Europe
E+/YiA	Erasmus+ /Youth in Action Programme
ESC	European Solidarity Corps
ETS	European Training Strategy
EU	European Union
EVS	European Voluntary Service
GENESIS	Generation and Educational Science Institute
KA1	Key Action 1
KA2	Key Action 2
KA3	Key Action 3
NA	National Agency
NGOs	Nongovernmental Organisations
RAY	Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of Erasmus+: Youth in Action
RAY-CAP	RAY Research Project on Competence Development and Capacity Building in Erasmus+: Youth in Action
RAY-INNO	Research project on the impact of Key Action 2: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices
RAY-LEARN	Research project on organisational development and learning organisations in the European youth sector
RAY-LTE	Research project on long-term effects of Erasmus+: Youth in Action on participation and active citizenship
RAY-MON	Research-based analysis and monitoring of Erasmus+: Youth in Action
RAY-PART	Research project on approaches to participation and citizenship education and learning in Erasmus+: Youth in Action
SALTO	Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities
TCA	Transnational Cooperation Activities
YiA	Youth in Action Programme

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Introduction

Turkish National Agency has been a partner of the *Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme - RAY Network* since 2012. Within the context of the partnership with the RAY Network, Turkish National Agency has been conducting a series of research projects developed in a way to contribute to a better understanding of international youth work and youth learning mobility in Europe, particularly in the context of the Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme.

This report is prepared to share the findings of one of the RAY Network projects, namely the Research-based analysis and monitoring of Erasmus+: Youth in Action E+/YiA (RAY-MON).¹ In this regard, this report consists of six parts, in addition to Introduction and Conclusion. In the first part, a brief summary of the Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of Erasmus+: Youth in Action (RAY) is provided. The second part draws the framework for the Research-based analysis and monitoring of Erasmus+: Youth in Action E+/YiA (RAY-MON) in a way to present the aims and objectives, research questions, research design, profile of the sample, planned outputs and conceptual framework of the RAY-MON research. Third part presents the stages and characteristics of the total sample of RAY-MON research in Turkey, the fourth part elaborates on the analysis of the findings. The fifth section provides a comparative analysis based on the data from the Project Leaders, who are also part of RAY-MON study. Finally, the report aims to enrich the quantitative evidence presented with a selection of quotes from anecdotal evidence provided by the participants of the surveys.

This is the third of the analysis reports based on RAY-MON data for Turkey. With this report, an important stock of monitoring and evaluation is built for better further analysis and for supporting evidence based policy making. The RAY reports offer very valuable insights on the impact of participation in Erasmus+ Youth activities on the capacity and competence building of young people. It is the sincere hope of all involved with RAY research that these analyses, RAY-MON and RAY-CAP, will be studied and utilized for all parties involved; practitioners and policy makers alike.

¹ The author wishes to thank Asst. Prof. Dr. Asuman Göksel, RAY co-researcher for her valuable contributions and input to this report. The author also thanks Mr. Soner Akhan from Optimar for his hard work and contributions on the statistical analysis and graphing of the data.

1. Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of Erasmus+: Youth in Action (RAY)

1.1 What is RAY?

Research-based Analysis of Erasmus+: Youth in Action (RAY) is a joint research initiative within the context of the Youth in Action Programme. It was initiated in 2007 in order to explore (learning) processes and effects as well as the implementation of the Youth in Action Programme of the European Union (2007 to 2013).²

The RAY Network is an open, growing and self-governed European research network of National Agencies of the Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme and their research partners.

The main aim of RAY is to contribute to a better understanding of international youth work and youth learning mobility and thus to an evidence-based policy development in the youth field in Europe as well as to the development of international youth work and learning mobility practice. The RAY Network was founded in 2007 by five National Agencies of the Youth in Action Programme (2007-2013) on the initiative of the Austrian National Agency and the University of Innsbruck. Since then, the RAY Network has expanded continuously. It currently involves the National Agencies and their research partners in 31 countries: Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Greek Administration of Southern Cyprus (GASC), Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United Kingdom³.

Until 2014, RAY Network conducted research primarily on the effects of Youth in Action (YiA) Programme on the actors involved, such as the project participants and project leaders, with respect to competence development and learning (processes) and measures fostering learning in YiA projects.⁴ Furthermore, RAY studied the

² RAY Network Mission Statement, Final Draft, Version 25.4.2016 revision accepted 07.09.2018.

³ The RAY Network study is coordinated by the University of Innsbruck in cooperation with GENESIS (Generation and Educational Science Institute).

⁴ RAY Network Mission Statement, Final Draft, Version 25.4.2016 revision accepted 07.09.2018.

implementation of the YiA Programme and of its funded projects, in a way to contribute to the monitoring of the Programme.⁵ With the initiation of the Erasmus+ Programme, the RAY Network has adopted its research framework to the Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme (2014 to 2020).

1.2 Aims and objectives of the RAY Network⁶

The overall aim of the RAY Network is to contribute to a better understanding of international youth work and youth learning mobility in Europe, in particular in the context of the Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme. In this regard, RAY values cooperation and dialogue between research, policy and practice in the youth field. Furthermore, RAY aims to contribute to research at large in this field and to a respective theory development.

The strategic objectives of RAY are:

- to contribute to the development of international youth work and learning mobility practice, in particular within E+/YiA;
- to contribute to monitoring E+/YiA with respect to the objectives and priorities of the programme;
- to contribute to quality assurance and quality development in the implementation of E+/YiA at the project level (development and implementation of projects) as well as at the programme level (promotion, support, administration etc. of the programme);
- to contribute to the development of E+/YiA and the programme following E+/YiA after 2020;
- to contribute to the recognition of non-formal education and learning in the youth field, in particular in the context of international youth work and learning mobility;
- to contribute to evidence-based and research-informed youth policy development at all levels and with respect to relevant policy processes such as the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018 and 2019-2027), including in the context of strategic partnerships such as with the Council of Europe; and,

⁵ Previous publications of the RAY Network can be found at <http://www.researchyouth.eu/results-erasmus-youth-in-action>.

⁶ This section is adopted from RAY Network Mission Statement, Final Draft, Version 25.4.2016 revision accepted 07.09.2018.

- to contribute to the visibility and promotion of E+/YiA.

Furthermore, RAY has some objectives with respect to research. These are:

- to study the effects and the impact (short-term and long-term) of E+/YiA projects on the actors involved – at the individual level (young people, youth workers/project leaders), at the systemic level (youth groups/organisations/bodies, local project environments/communities, youth structures, youth work, youth policy) and at a collective level (larger public);
- to study educational and learning approaches, methods and processes applied in E+/YiA projects, in particular with respect to their effectiveness in stimulating and supporting learning processes;
- to study the implementation of E+/YiA projects, in particular in view of the profile of project participants, project leaders and organisations involved as well as with respect to project methodologies and project management;
- to explore how international youth work and learning mobility practice develops in the framework of E+/YiA over the programme period 2014-2020; and,
- to explore policy development at national and European levels in line with RAY research findings.

In view of its strategic and research related objectives, the RAY Network seeks close cooperation with National Authorities responsible for youth, the European Commission and related institutions; and it intends to develop an exchange with researchers, research institutions and research networks involved in youth research, as well as in research on learning mobility and on non-formal education/learning, in particular with an international and/or intercultural dimension.

1.3 RAY research activities

With the initiation of the Erasmus+ Programme, the RAY Network has adopted its research framework to the Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme (2014 to 2020), and developed three different research projects⁷:

⁷ <http://www.researchyouth.eu/ray-research-activities>

- Research-based analysis and monitoring of Erasmus+: Youth in Action (E+/YiA), which is a further development of the main activity of the RAY Network between 2009 and 2013 (the ‘Standard Surveys’), aimed at contributing to monitoring and developing E+/YiA and the quality of projects supported by it (RAY-MON)⁸;
- 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)⁹;
- A research project on competence development and capacity building of youth workers and youth leaders involved in training/support activities in E+/YiA (RAY-CAP)¹⁰, in a way to cover the effects of E+/YiA on the organisations involved in a separate module.

Upon the completion of some of these projects by the end of 2018, the RAY Network decided to expand its research scope through four new research projects. Some of these will depend on the further exploration of the findings of the previous projects, and some of these will explore new aspects of the Erasmus+/YiA Programme activities. The new workpackages of the RAY Network for the period of 2019-2021 are as follows.

- 1) In line with the main findings of the interim transnational analysis of the RAY research project on long-term effects of Erasmus+: Youth in Action on participation and active citizenship (RAY-LTE), a new research project entitled *Research project on approaches to participation and citizenship education and learning in Erasmus+: Youth in Action [RAY-PART]* will be conducted in 2019-2021. The research design will be based on the findings of RAY-LTE and of RAY-MON.

The objectives of the RAY-PART are tentatively defined as follows:

- to explore approaches to participation and citizenship education and learning applied in Erasmus+/YiA projects, in particular with respect to a European dimension;

⁸ This activity is a joint activity of all RAY Network partners.

⁹ Participant countries of the RAY-LTE are Austria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Sweden.

¹⁰ Participant countries of the RAY-CAP are Austria, Belgium (Flemish speaking community), the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Turkey.

- to explore, which approaches are particularly effective in developing participation and citizenship competences, and why;
 - to explore how the competences necessary to implement these approaches can be developed.
- 2) *Research project on the impact of Key Action 2: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices [RAY-INNO] (2019-2020)* aims to explore the role, impact and potential of Erasmus+/YiA strategic partnerships as instruments to foster innovation and the exchange of good practices in the youth sector and related fields.

Tentative key objectives of this research project are to explore:

- the variety and diversity of formats of transnational strategic partnerships, and patterns of similarities and/or differences between these different formats;
- the impact of transnational projects funded through KA2 on the youth sector, both in relation to the fostering of innovation and the strengthening of good practice;
- the potential of transnational strategic partnerships, as an instrument more generally and with the specific funding rules, to foster innovation and strengthen good practice;
- the profile of beneficiaries, both at organisational and individual level, that have participated in and benefited from transnational strategic partnerships;
- the key features of transnational strategic partnerships with a high level of impact on fostering innovation and strengthening good practice in the youth sector.

The study will draw on existing available data for strategic partnerships and KA2 projects (such as national impact assessments, final reports of the KA2 funded projects in the sample, results of the pre-study to be conducted as the first step of this research project, RAY-MON data, SALTO data, conference presentations, etc.).

- 3) *Research project on organisational development and learning organisations in the European youth sector [RAY-LEARN] (2019-2020)* aims to explore strategies and practices for organisational learning and development of youth sector organisations and networks.

RAY-LEARN will draw on existing quantitative data on effects of Erasmus+/YiA on youth workers/leaders and their organisations obtained through RAY-MON as well as qualitative data available through RAY-CAP.

Tentative key objectives of this research project are to explore:

- explicit strategies of youth sector organisations, networks and institutions to foster organisational learning and strengthen organisational development;
- implicit practices of youth sector organisations, networks and institutions to foster organisational learning and strengthen organisational development;
- explicit strategies of European youth programmes to support organisational learning and development and their impact and relevance;
- implicit effects of European youth programmes in support of the organisational learning and development of youth sector organisations, networks and institutions;
- improvements to the strategies that foster organisational learning and strengthen organisational development, at organisational as well as at programmatic level.

4) *Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of the European Solidarity Corps [RAY-ESC-MON]* (2019-2020) will be developed in view of the special characteristics and features of the European Solidarity Corps (ESC). Its research design will be based on quantitative social research methods with at least two questionnaires covering all activity types of the ESC, prepared for two groups of recipients: one for participants and one for persons supporting and/or supervising the participants.

2. RAY Research Project on Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of Erasmus+: Youth in Action (RAY-MON)¹¹

2.1 What is RAY-MON?

Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of Erasmus+: Youth in Action (RAY-MON) is one of the three research projects conducted under the framework of RAY Network. It is specifically designed to explore a broad scope of activities for/with young people, youth workers and youth leaders in Erasmus+: Youth in Action (E+/YiA) apart from Strategic Partnership projects. This research project aims to explore a broad scope of aspects of the Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme (E+/YiA) in order to contribute to practice development, to improving the implementation of E+/YiA and to the development of the next Programme generation. This project is a further development of the ‘Standard Surveys’ conducted with participants and project leaders/teams within Youth in Action (2007-2013) and is a joint activity of all RAY Network partners.

2.2 Aims and objectives

The aim of this project 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 access to E+/YiA at the level of young people (in particular of young people with fewer opportunities) as well as at the level of 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.

¹¹ E+/YiA Monitoring Project Description by RAY Network version 20151104 and <http://www.researchyouth.eu/ray-monitoring>.

2.3 Research questions

In order to operationalise the above mentioned aims and objectives of the RAY-MON research, some general research questions are developed. These are:

- 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 the access to E+/YiA, the development of projects, the profile of actors and organisations involved in the projects, the management of the projects and the support provided by the 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?

In the same line, a set of specific research questions also guide the RAY-MON research:

- What are the effects of participating in E+/YiA projects on the development of competences participants as well as of project leaders/team members involved in E+/YiA projects? In particular, what are the effects of e+/YiA projects on their knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and behaviours?¹²
- 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?
- 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

¹² The 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.

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 participants from abroad) and the countries of residence of participants and project leaders?
- What is the profile of participants, project leaders and projects involved in 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?

2.4 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/team members 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. This implies that in case of international activities 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 provide 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.

These surveys are conducted on a regular basis during the programme duration (2014-2020) at least every second year, starting in 2015. 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. Each survey cycle will cover a representative sample of a full year of funded activities. The first cycle of surveys cover project activities ending in 2015. The second cycle, on the other hand, covers project activities ending in 31.12.2017 at latest.

2.5 Profile of the sample

The RAY-MON surveys provide data for the effects of the Erasmus+/YiA projects as perceived by participants and project leaders. The analysis provides various differentiations, in particular:

- by (sub-)Actions (in particular new project formats)
- by ‘sending’ and ‘hosting’ experiences (sending = going to another country for a project; hosting = participating in a project in one’s own country of residence)
- by socio-economic, education-related, demographic and biographical characteristics of respondents
- by countries for selected aspects for which country specific contexts and background information is available

A standardised sampling procedure should ensure that the responses are comparable by country and between surveys. Smaller countries might need larger samples than bigger countries in order to arrive at meaningful results at national level. Different sample sizes need to be weighted for a transnational analysis.

The mechanism of sampling also tries to avoid that the samples for the three RAY research projects are overlapping, i.e. that the same persons are surveyed for more than one RAY research project.

2.6 Outputs

From the data collected within the framework of RAY-MON research, a number of reports at two levels are prepared. At the RAY Network level, transnational reports are published in a way to discuss the findings of research in a comparative way. At the national level, RAY Network member countries prepares its own country reports with the findings of the RAY-MON Research.¹³

2.7 Youth work within E+/YiA and non-formal education/learning

RAY conceptual framework suggests that it is not possible to provide a generic definition of European youth work and accordingly it prefers to focus on the social role of youth work within E+/YiA in terms of respecting and including the needs of young people within a political framework. Still, some key elements of youth work are also appreciated. In the context of the defining features of the youth work, it is argued that youth work is focused on young people and it emphasises voluntary participation and fosters social and personal development, especially through non-formal and informal learning. Accordingly, the key objectives of the youth work include opportunities and activities of social, cultural, educational and political in nature with which young people can shape their own future, having better chances for integration and inclusion in society. Here, accessibility for young people in terms of participation in pre-structured activities becomes a key topic. In addition, youth work entails tackling with societal challenges and trends, and therefore it has to renew its practice and strategies continuously.

The conceptual framework of another research project of RAY Network, namely RAY-CAP acknowledges that now youth work is recognised in the context of a “transit(ional) zone as a social and pedagogical intervention in the third socialisation environment” (Council of Europe, 2015) in relation to self-identify/individual outside the family and school environment. The aims of the youth work is highly related to personal development for integration and inclusion into the existed society as well as for adulthood. Defined as such, youth work deals with self-organised young people in organised circumstances of adults and under political impact causing tensions between emancipation and control. In other words, on the one hand youth work is related to the

¹³ RAY-MON transnational and country reports are also available online at the RAY Network website at <http://www.researchyouth.eu>.

personal development of young people, and on the other hand it has close relationships with politics.

The diverse nature of youth work across Europe is mainly due to the differences with regards to youth work practices based on diverse field of social and educational practices, and financial and political contribution. This leads to different frameworks across Europe, such as voluntary versus professional youth work, or that some target groups are limited by age or the occurrence of the inclusion in the welfare system, or the cultural system. In other words, the cultural and historical contexts define different limitations and ideologies of youth work for young people.

As Lauritzen (2006) stated, youth work is located in the context of “out-of-school education”, which points out to non-formal or informal learning settings and is associated with the social welfare and educational system. Considering the argument that, traditional school curriculum alone will not be capable of tackling with current challenges such as digitalisation and technology, media, environmental crisis, economic uncertainty and inequality and dealing with their consequences, cooperation between different educational sectors (non-formal/informal) becomes a promising tool. *Non-formal education* in this regard is considered to be complementary to formal education. Moreover, it is acknowledged that learning takes place in a “learning continuum” (Chisholm et al. 2006; Fennes & Otten, 2008) along the axis of informal and formal, providing more learning opportunities for actors.

In the absence of a generic definition, non-formal education is often related to issues such as process, location and setting, purposes and content. Some key characteristics in non-formal learning includes the development of personal competences with respect to humanistic, democratic values, attitudes and behaviours; and, being mainly organised in structured, goal-oriented settings apart from formal learning/education. While formal learning is institutionalised especially in school or training institutions, where the learning environment is structured and certified; in informal learning incidental learning in daily life and/or non-organised socialisation processes is described. Non-formal learning, on the other hand, implies the absence of formalised structures to ensure a creative, participatory and experiential learning environment, to reflect, experience, generalise or

contextualise on acquiring competences (knowledge, skills, attitudes). In non-formal education, individual learning needs are respected and combined with learning goals and expectations from different stakeholders, aiming to empower young people.

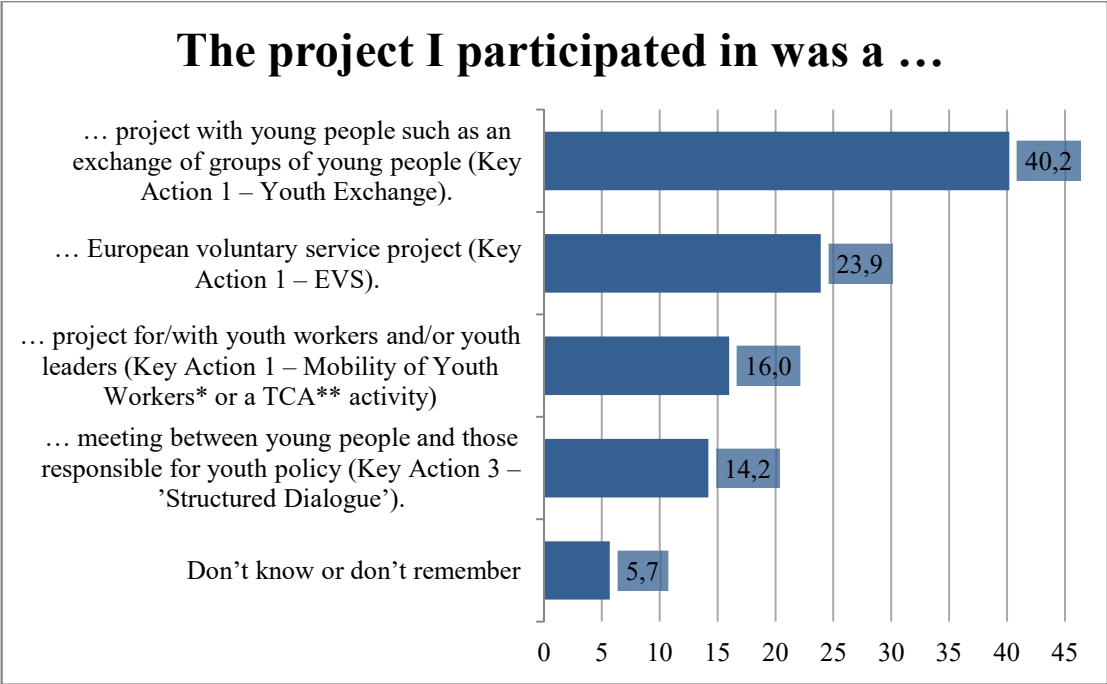
Accordingly, the methods of non-formal learning include result, cognitive, affective and practiced-oriented methods to enable quality learning causing particular benefits also in formal education. Learning styles and methods of non-formal education includes participant-centred learning approach (personal development fostered by addressing head, hands, heart and health), integrated-learner approach (i.e. learning from experience in cyclical processes of doing-reflecting-doing), and entrepreneurial learning derived from experiential learning, practical and life-related learning settings. Altogether, these learning styles reflect experience-based learning, learning by doing and a process-centred learning environment. In addition, one of the most important aspect for tackling societal challenges with respect to cultural diversity across Europe is “intercultural learning” (Fennes and Otten, 2008), which encompasses political (building sustainable, participative intercultural societies) and educational (personal enrichment through social and cultural learning in international training/learning settings in terms of empathy, role distance and tolerating ambiguity) notions. In youth work, tolerance of ambiguity relates to intercultural learning and deals with acceptance of ambiguity and multiple unforeseeable confrontations within cultural encounters. In this context, it is possible to argue that “intercultural learning is always political” (Otten, 2009), illustrating the impact of political dimension in the intercultural learning discourse.

3. RAY-MON Country Study: Turkey

Within the context of the RAY-MON research, two online questionnaires were implemented in October 2017 and April 2018. The questionnaire was filled in by **2045 participants** (out of **5773 KA1, KA3 and TCA project participants and 1095 KA1 project leaders who were invited**) participated in the Erasmus+ Youth projects with activity end dates in 2017.¹⁴

This sample is composed of the individuals who were residing in Turkey when they participated in the project and it excludes the individuals who participated in the projects hosted in Turkey but were residing in another country at the time of the project application. Thus, as the sample shows, the findings and analysis presented in this National Report examine the impact of the Youth in Action Programme on the young people in Turkey. Percentage distribution of the sample according to activity and action types can be seen in Graph 1.

Graph 1 Type of Activity by Participants (%)

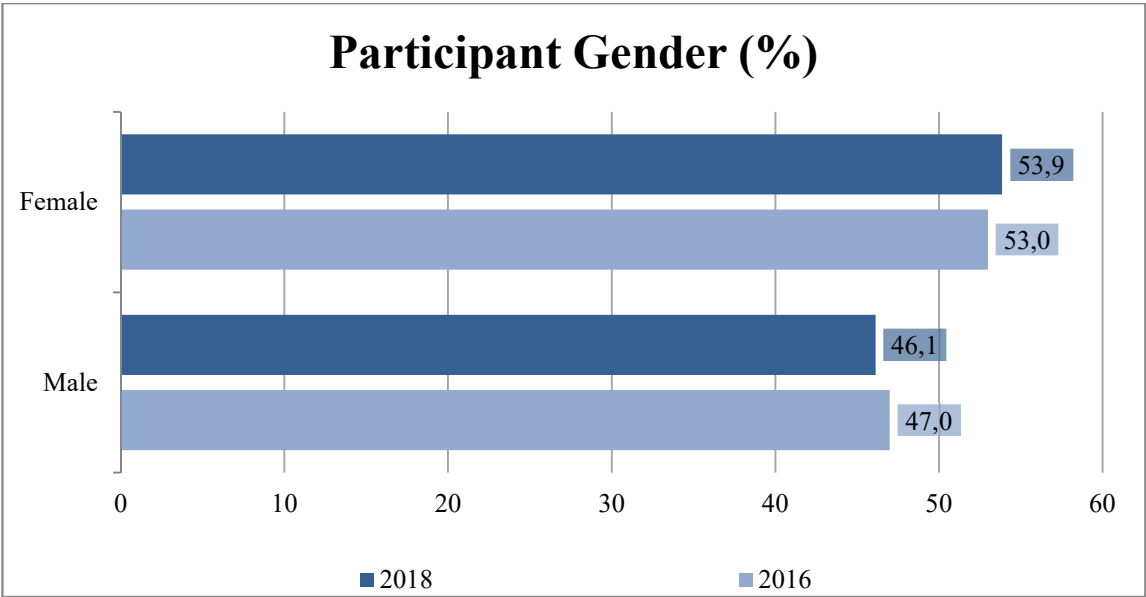


¹⁴ Those numbers are the numbers gathered and used in the analysis after the missing; erroneous and problematic responses to the questionnaires were cleaned and data was organised.

Graph 1 demonstrates that approximately 40% of the respondents have participated in an exchange of groups of young people (Key Action 1 – Youth Exchanges) with 40.2 %. Compared with the previous data from 2016; the sample contains less Youth Exchange participants (55% for 2016). The European Voluntary Service project (Key Action 1 – EVS) participants have a much more representation in this cycle; with 23.9% (up from 7% in 2016). Participants of projects focusing on youth workers and/or youth leaders (Key Action 1 – Mobility of Youth Workers or a TCA activity) with 16.6% of the respondents (down from 26% in 2016). The smallest group consists of participants of meetings between young people and decision-makers in the field of youth (Key Action 3 – Structured Dialogue) with 14.2% (up from 6%). Compared with the previous data set; the distribution of the respondents in this cycle is much more representative, including sizeable numbers of participants from different activities. In the previous years, the sample was dominated mainly by the participants of Youth Exchange projects.

The gender distribution of the respondents of the surveys is rather balanced. Whereas 53.9% of the respondents consist of females, the remaining 46.1% are male (Graph 2).

Graph 2 Gender Distribution of Respondents



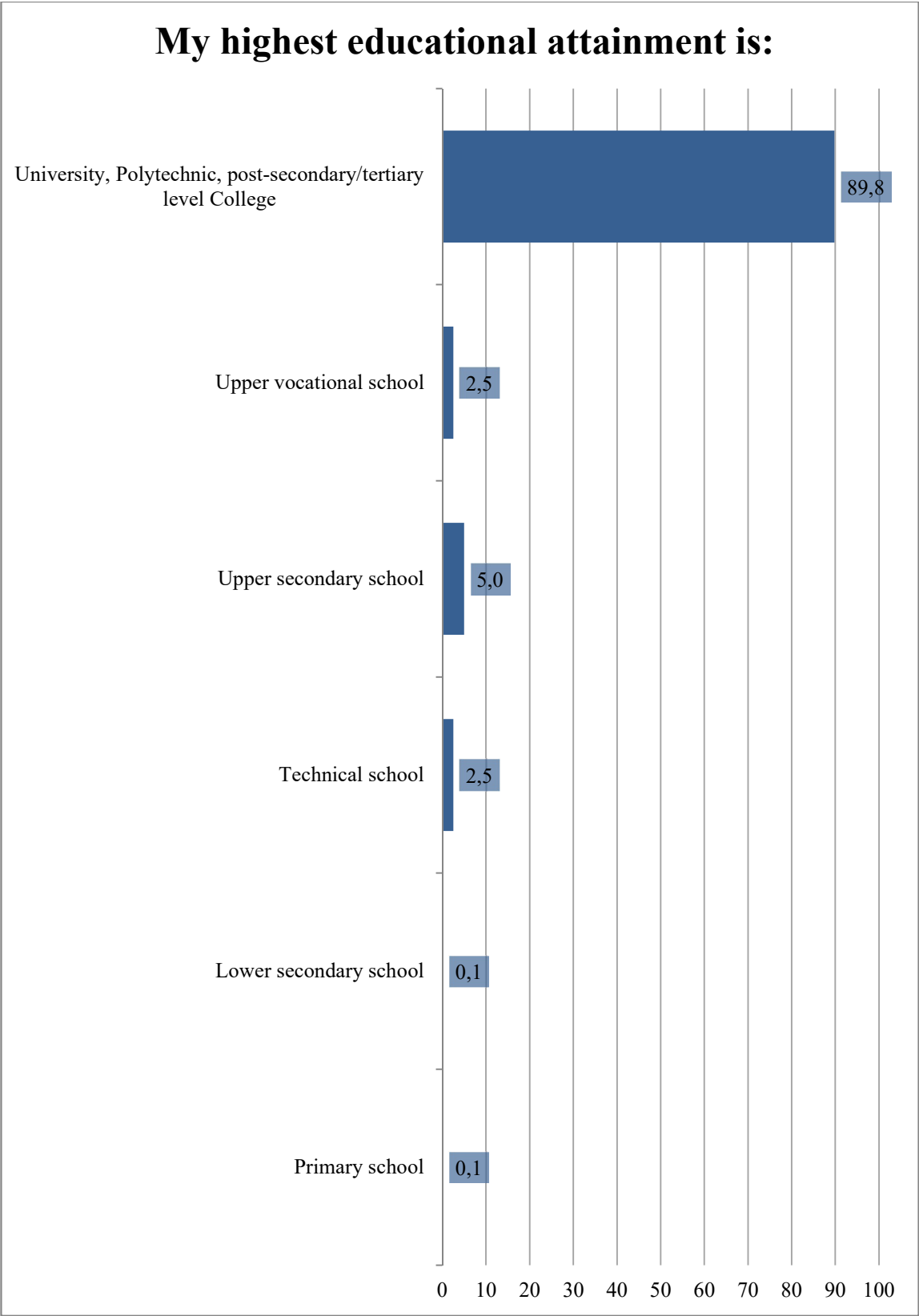
When the educational levels of the respondents are looked into, their educational attainment levels are very high. Almost all of the respondents’ highest educational

attainments are university level and even higher. There are two possible explanations for this issue.

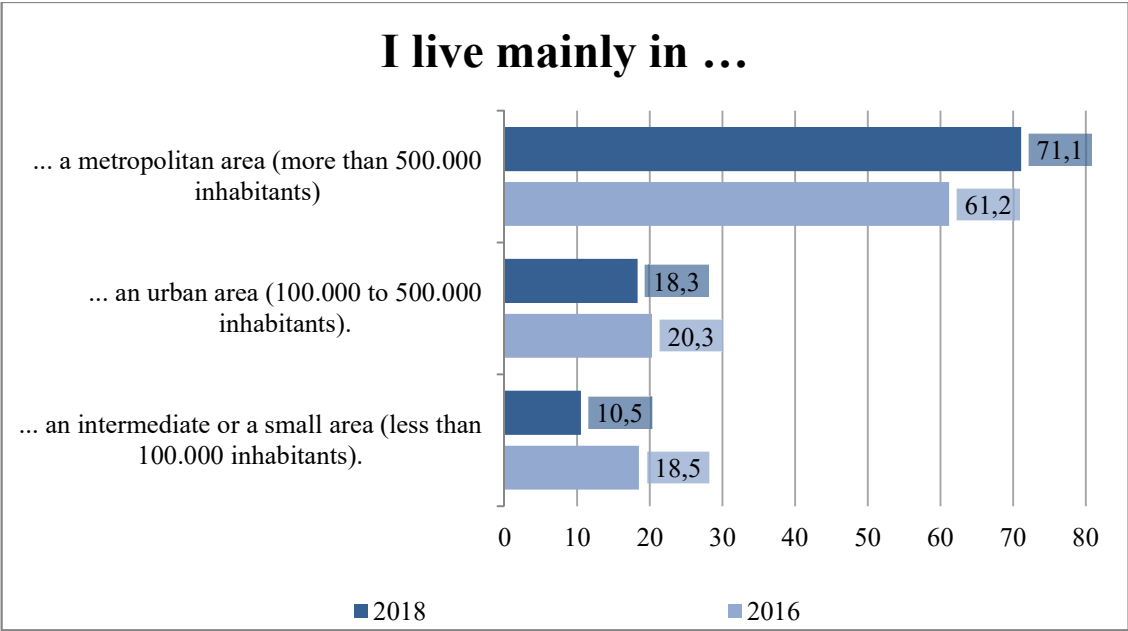
First is a methodological shortcoming in terms of sampling. RAY-MON surveys are being emailed to EACH and EVERY ex-participant of ALL E+ Youth in Action projects with an activity end date within 2017, but participation in these surveys are completely voluntary. Therefore, the representativeness of the sample is rather problematic, as it only includes those individuals who are willing to take the time and energy to answer such a long survey as well as those who have sufficient technology and internet connection. Higher levels of education are generally correlated with survey response rates. In other words, those with higher education levels tend to answer the surveys more.

However, there is also the evidence from the youth work field. First of all, the education levels of project participants in youth projects are high overall. Youth projects are increasingly attracting young individuals with high levels of education and the volunteer and participant profiles are changing in the direction of high education. This is a phenomenon that is well documented and elaborated (for a recent discussion on the increasing educational profile of young people and youth projects, see Şenyuva and Nicodemi, “I have a Diploma, now I need a Youthpass” in *the Youth Knowledge Volume on Learning Mobility and Social Inclusion*). On top of this general trend, Turkey also has a special situation. Young people with Turkish passports need to go through detailed and difficult visa procedures when travelling to other European countries for projects. Young people who are students are more likely to get visa approvals, which in return makes the organizations favour participants within education system.

Graph 3 Educational Levels of Respondents



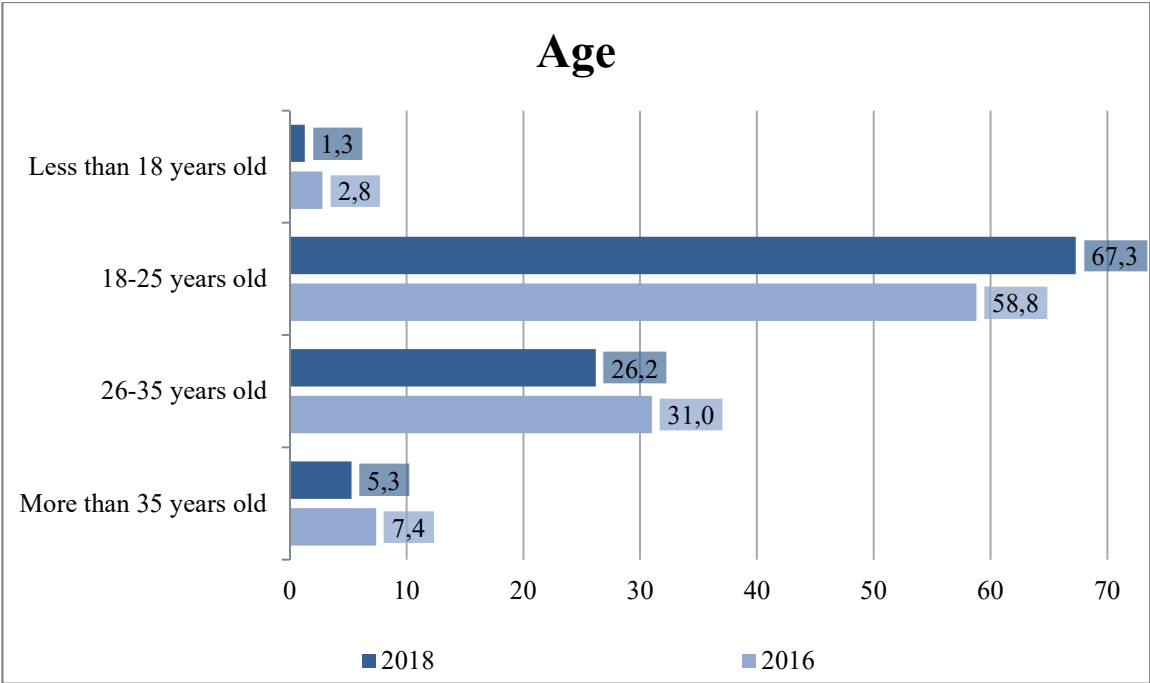
Graph 4 Residential Distribution of Respondents



The survey respondents mainly come from metropolitan areas, with populations more than 500.000 inhabitants. 71,1% of the respondents have chosen this option, and it is a 10% point increase compared with the previous survey. The shift appears to be coming from the participants from intermediate and small areas with populations less than 100.000 inhabitants, a decline from 18,5% to 10,5%. On the other hand, one out of five participants was residing at an urban area with 100.000 to 500.000 inhabitants.

This picture is not surprising, but worthy of discussion. It is a well-known fact that most of the universities and youth organisations are concentrated in metropolitan areas. Furthermore, Turkey has an unbalanced demographic distribution, where Istanbul is host to approximately 20 million inhabitants and Ankara to approximately 6 million. Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir combined host 91 universities (as of 2018), which attract young people from all around Turkey. These create a massive concentration of young people and youth organisations in these cities; which in return affect the distribution of urban/rural participation in the projects. Especially taking the high levels of education of participants, it is strongly correlated with the residential distribution, increasing the participation of urban and metropolitan residents to the projects.

Graph 5 Age Distribution of Respondents



RAY-MON survey data reveals that a clear majority of the respondents were between 18-25 years old at the time of their participation to the project. The figures are stable between 2016 and 2018 data, with an increase in this age group from 2016 to 2018.

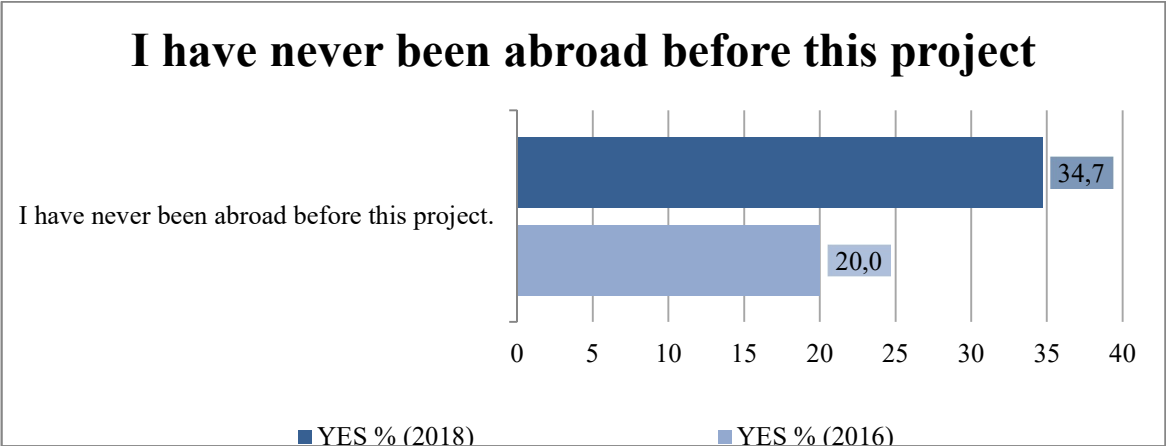
These figures are important for several reasons. First, it shows that the respondents participate in these projects at an early age; which are the more formative years during which the young person make decisions on their future educational and professional paths. As the data also shows that the experience impacts the future personal, educational and professional decisions, having a younger age group which is more receptive to the project impact is very important.

Second, the younger age group participation is related with future participation. Having had the experience at a younger age, the participants have the time and opportunity to participate in similar activities, and even grow up to take responsibility and organize similar projects.

Finally, having the project experience at a younger age allows the young people to make use of this experience in their future personal and professional lives. For instance, the

student participants enrichen their CVs and increase their employability through differentiating themselves from their peers.

Graph 6 Going Abroad before the Project

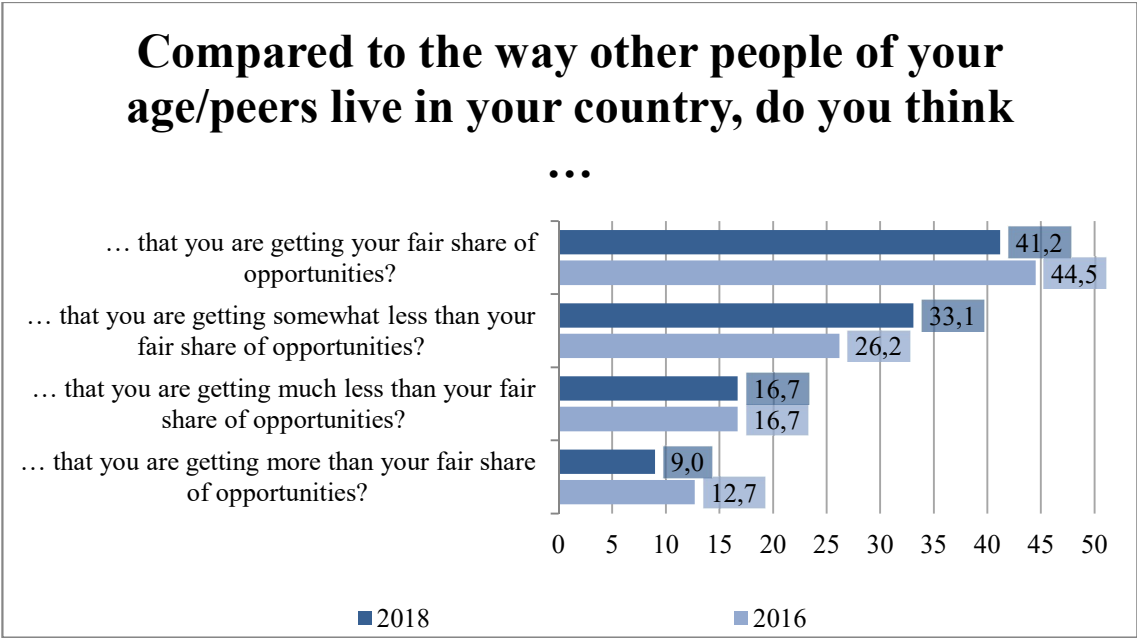


The survey data shows that the percentage of the respondents who have travelled abroad for the first time for the project is on an increase. In 2016, 20% of the respondents indicated that the project experience was their first time travelling out of Turkey; this figure rose to 34,7% in 2018.

Travelling abroad is a rare opportunity for Turkish young people due to visa restrictions (which also affects the educational levels of the participants, as it is easier for those who are part of the formal education system to get visas). Therefore, the projects offering this chance to a larger group of young people is a very important contribution. It indicates that it helps a certain segment of young people to gain international mobility experience, which they could not get until their project. This is an important aspect of inclusion dimension of the programme.

In terms of inclusion, the analysis of the inclusive dimension of the projects is an ongoing sub-analysis of RAY network. Inclusion, in a multi-country, multi-linguistic survey is a difficult concept to operationalise. RAY-MON surveys include a battery of question items that aims to operationalize the inclusion dimension. For the sake of simplicity in this report, taking the target audience into consideration, only subjective assessment of opportunities is reported in the next graph.

Graph 7 Subjective Assessment of Opportunities



According to the results of the data, almost half of the respondents (49,8%) in 2018 and 42,9% in 2016 subjectively believe that they are in a more disadvantaged position compared with their peers. They state that they are getting somewhat less or much less than their fair share of opportunities. On the other hand, 41,2% of the respondents in 2018 and 44,5% of the respondents in 2016 evaluated their own situation as *getting their fair share of opportunities*.

This dimension definitely deserves further analysis to investigate on how the respondents consider opportunities and what factors do they include in their own analysis. Furthermore, using the other battery of questions, the subjective assessments should be compared and controlled for objective variables. The RAY Network study on inclusion utilizes such an approach. Once the RAY Network study on inclusion is publicised, it may be useful to adopt the developed approach and framework for national cases to better evaluate the inclusionary aspect of the projects.

4. RAY-MON Turkey: Preliminary Findings

4.1. Information sources, expectation from and motivation for the activities

Main Finding 1: it appears that the participants use a mix of information channels to learn about the projects they participate.

Being a larger country, Turkey has a sizeable youth population. Getting the information across to young people and informing them about the possibilities of youth projects is a rather difficult task.

The analysis demonstrates that young people in Turkey reach information regarding the European youth projects using diverse methods and sources (Graph 8).

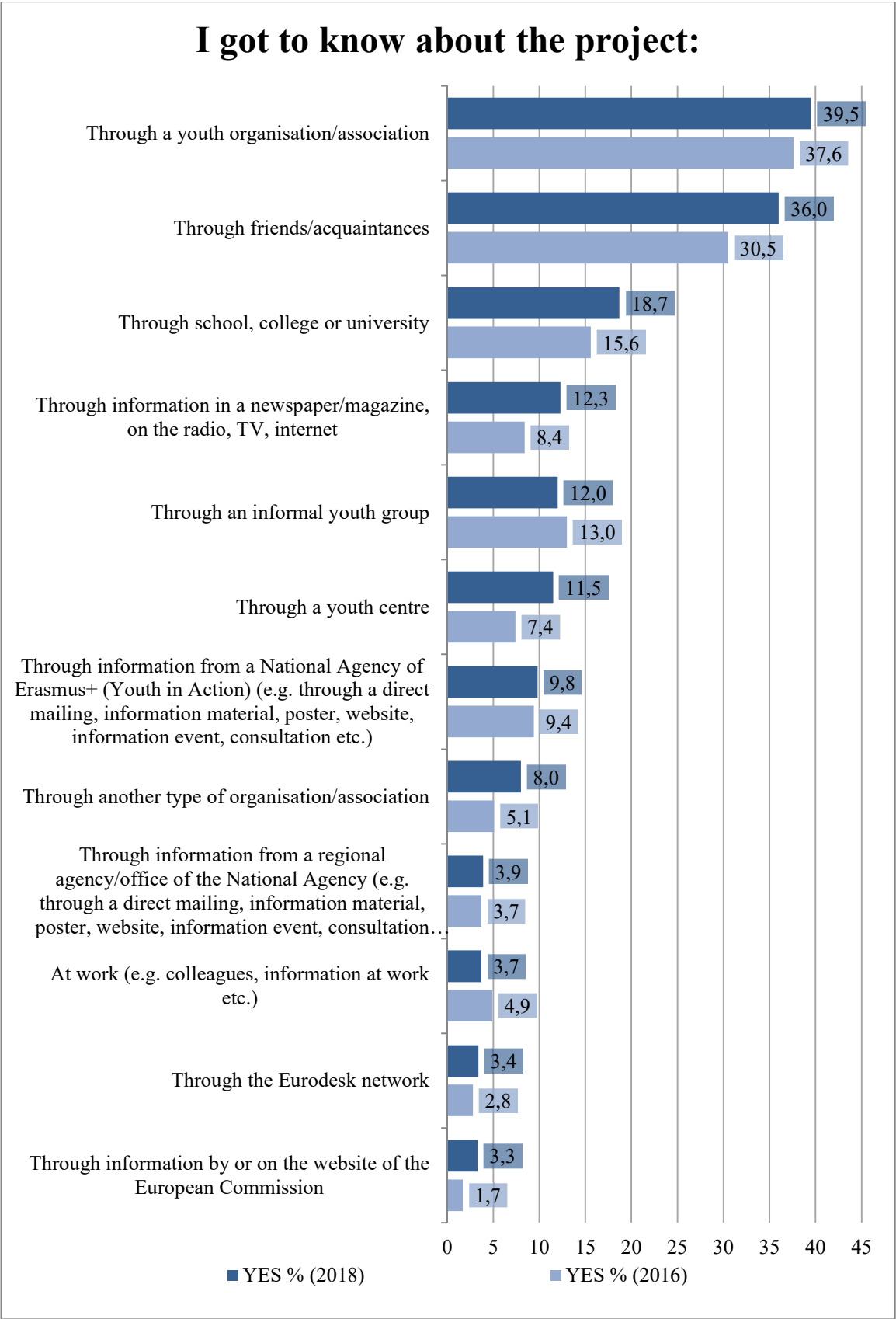
The youth organizations/associations are the most common source of information for participants (39.5%) followed by social and friendship groups (36%). These two sources are stable sources; they were also the most popular information sources for the last wave as well. In fact, compared with 2016, Youth organizations and social groups became even more popular; while use of informal youth groups and workplace decreased in popularity in terms of information sources.

The high number of social and friendship groups as information sources also point to the high levels of satisfaction; it shows that people who know about the projects and who participated in similar projects in the past act as information multipliers; they inform and encourage friends to participate.

Almost 1 out of 10 project participants *indicate that they have learnt about their project through Turkish National Agency.* In fact, this importantly indicates that the Turkish National Agency is being perceived also as a potential source of information by the youth in Turkey in addition to its funding and accrediting aspects. It should be remembered that the NA mostly targets the Erasmus+ Youth information activities on various organisations in the youth field. Thus, high percentage of NGOs and organisations which

remains stable over the years; indicating that the information activities of the NA to NGOs and youth institutions in the past two years did remain efficient.

Graph 8 Information Sources



Main Finding 2: Young people participate in projects for new experiences, meeting new people and learning new things...

When the incentives behind participating in youth projects are examined, it can be said that the greatest motivation is the desire to gather *new* experiences, meet *new* people, discover and learn *new* things. Therefore, the key concept ‘*new*’ appears as a crucial factor among the youth.

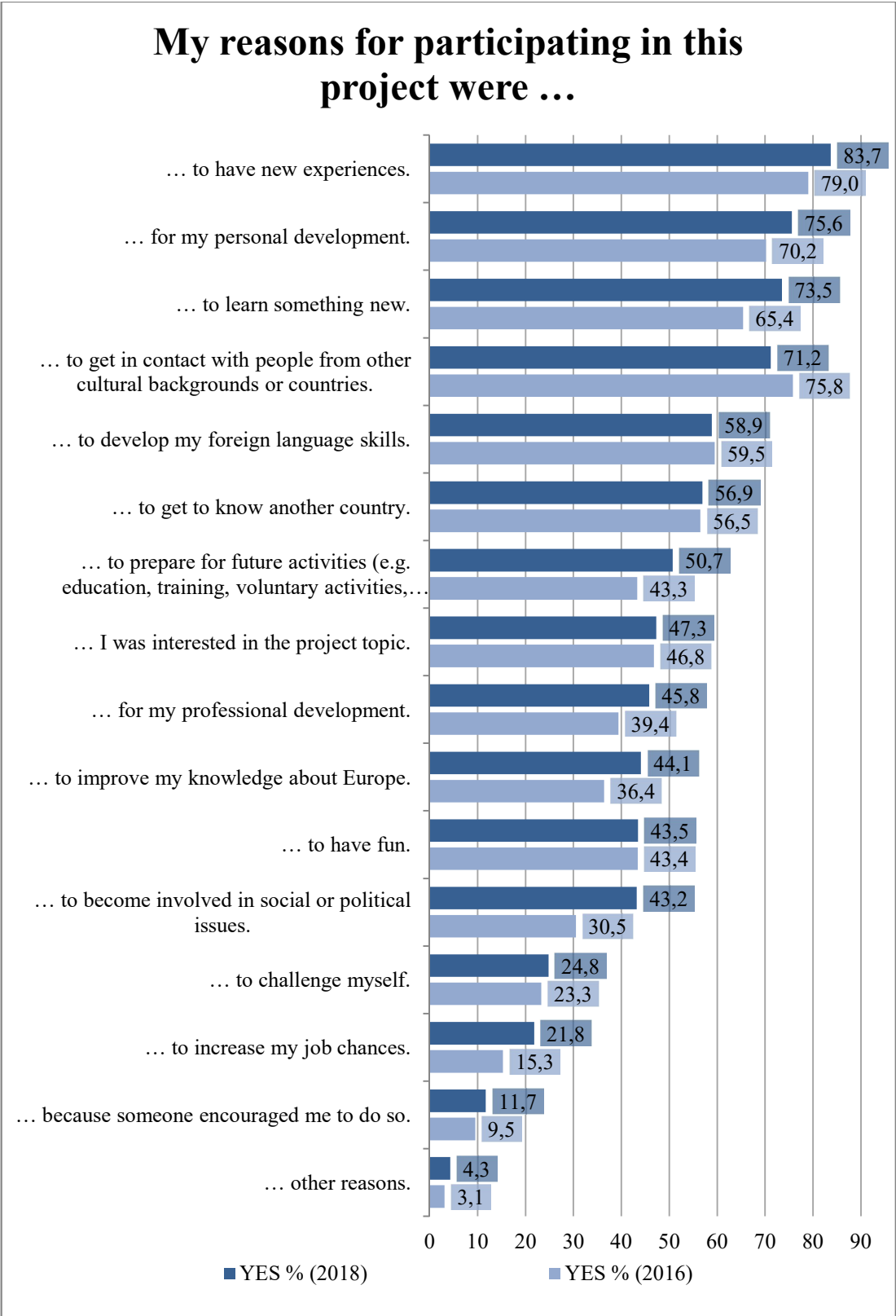
Results listed in Graph 9 shows that the most popular motivation of respondents in participating in the projects is *to have new experiences* with 83.7%. This is closely followed by *for their personal development* with 75.6 % and *to learn something new* with 73.5 %.

Compared with the previous finding, there seems to be major shift. In 2016, *to get in contact with people from other cultural backgrounds* was the second most important motivation with 76 %. This year, it is down to 4th place with 71.2 %.

The analysis of change indicates that young people’s motivation to participate in a project is becoming more self-centered; prioritizing personal development and learning over intercultural interaction.

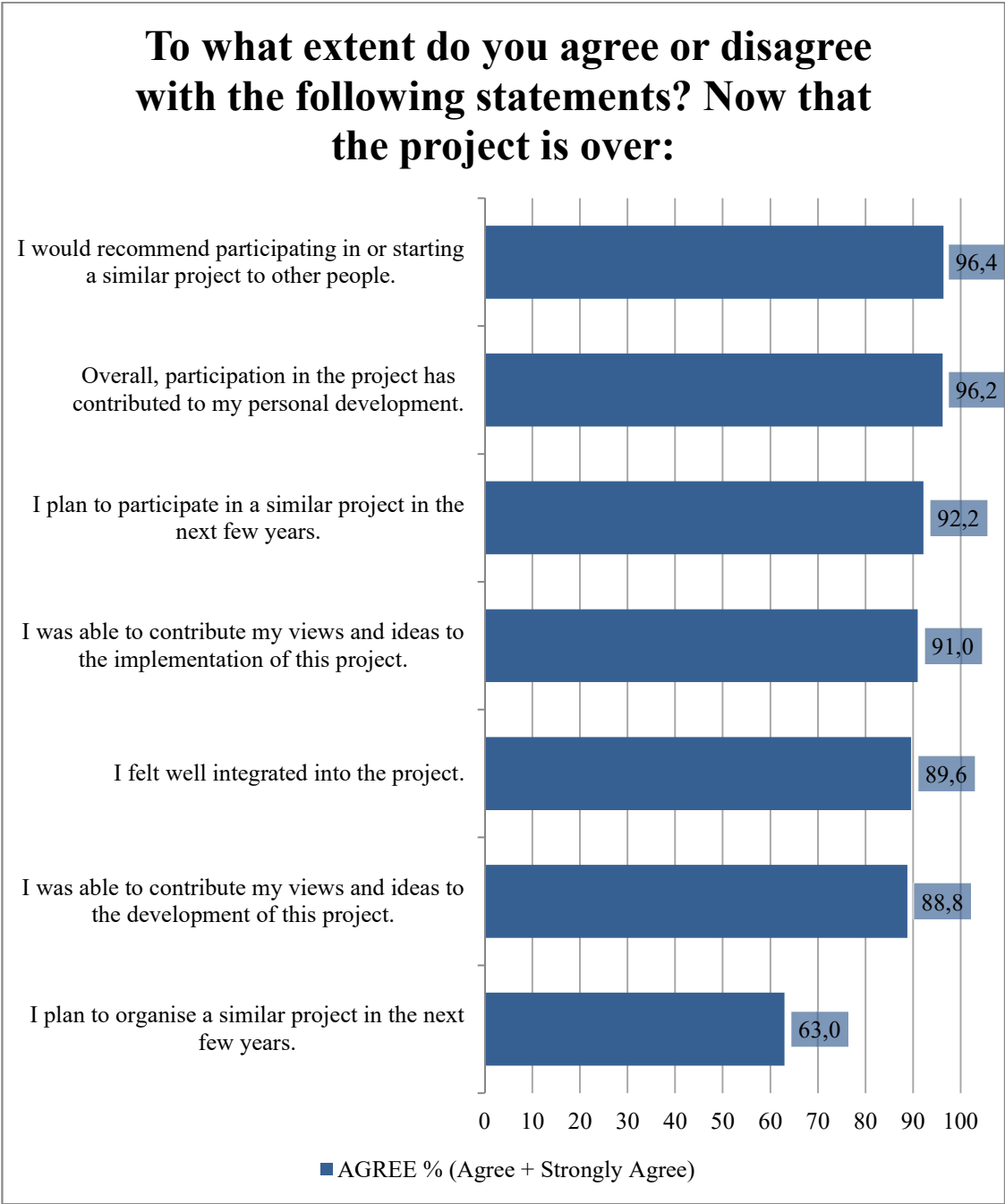
One point to remark is that young people do take part in Erasmus+ youth projects mainly with their own initiatives, albeit with different motivations. Only **1 out of 10** of the respondents indicated that their motivation was on the encouragement of other people, while the rest of the respondents pointed to various reasons that led them to take their decision on their own for their participation, desire and motivation to take part in such a project, which is a very positive and strong indicator. This issue is also important read together with Graph 8, sources of information. *It is clear that young people are the principle actors in reaching the information, making the decision, and participating in a youth project.*

Graph 9 Motivation to Participate (multiple answers possible)



4.2. General evaluation of the project

Graph 10 General Evaluation and Satisfaction



Main Finding 3: The participants have very high levels of satisfaction from the projects they participated in.

As Graph 10 indicates, the percentages of positive evaluations on the project seem to be very high at rates well above 85% although there is the exception of a technical and more responsibility indicating option, that of organizing a similar project. Also importantly, around 96.4% of the respondents stated that they would recommend taking part in similar projects to others, which indicates that the ***multiplier effect*** is very high.

Whereas 96.2% of the respondents are in the opinion that participating **contributed to their personal development**, another crucial indicator for high satisfaction levels from the project experience is that 92.2% of the respondents stated that they would be **willing to participate in similar projects**.

It is also important to note that these indicators are highly interlinked with the motivations of the participants. The findings indicate that the youth is highly satisfied in terms of one of their essential motivations to take part in such projects, mainly that of personal development as emphasized above. Accordingly, they do not only *recommend other young people to participate in similar projects*, but also *plan to participate in similar projects in the future*. Therefore, it should be emphasized that high satisfaction levels in a project are highly related with factors of *multiplier effect* and *return participation*.

Young people do feel ownership of the projects through contributing to the development and implementation of the projects. 91% of the respondents stated that they contributed to the implementation of the project by sharing their ideas and views. 89.6% feel that they were well integrated to the project while 88.8 % state that they contributed to the development of the project. It is important to note that 9 out of 10 respondents see themselves as active participants to the projects instead of passive recipients. This is important especially since active involvement of youth in the project development and implementation is one of the main objectives of Erasmus+ Youth projects, which seems to be achieved within the scope of Turkish participants.

4.3. Learning in the project and competence development

Main Finding 4: By using non-formal and informal learning methods, the participants gain new knowledge on a diversity of issues, regardless of the type or the theme of the project

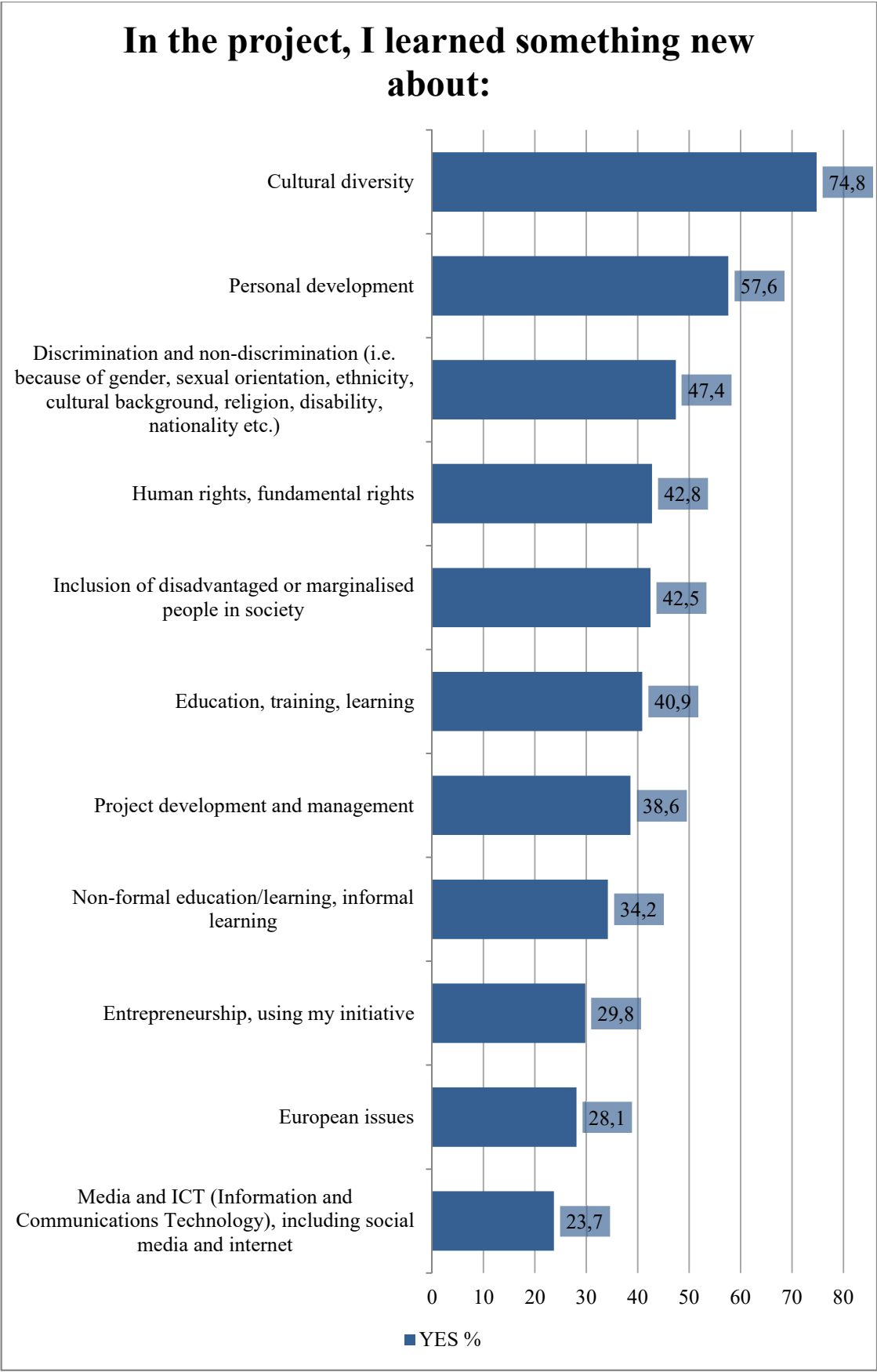
Specific types of projects, such as training courses are designed to provide the participants with new knowledge and aims to equip them with new skills depending on the theme of the activity. But the learning process is not limited to the training courses. All the youth projects are designed with the principles of **non-formal** and **informal learning**. The participants gain new knowledge and skills by participating in these projects.

The analysis of the RAY-MON data demonstrates that the youth projects, regardless of their type, **provide new knowledge to the participants from Turkey** (Graph 11).

According to Graph 11, it can be seen that by far the greatest learning took place in *cultural diversity*. When asked what they have learned something new about in the project, **74.8% of the respondents reported that they learned something new about cultural diversity**. That combined with almost half of the participants agreeing that they learned about **Discrimination and non-discrimination** (i.e. because of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cultural background, religion, disability, nationality etc.), shows the participants are positively influenced in terms of cultural awareness and tolerance.

The results also show that **almost 60% of the respondents have learned something new about personal development**, as well as in average 4 out of 10 participants **learned something new about Project development and management, Education, training learning, Non-formal education/learning and informal learning**.

Graph 11 Learning in Project



Main Finding 5: There is strong evidence that participating in youth projects contribute very significantly to competence and skill development.

Competence development of the project participants is a significant issue that the Erasmus+ Programme puts great emphasis on. Competences are described as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes. It is necessary to take a look at the competence and skills development during the projects as well, in order to better understand the learning experience that comes with participation in the projects. When the RAY-MON surveys are analysed, there is a rather remarkable outcome. Furthermore, this competence development is steady and always high every year. Comparative results indicate that each year, the participants report very high levels of competence development.

The results obtained from the analysis of the participant surveys are presented in Graph 12. It is apparent from this data that a very strong majority of respondents reported an improvement in their competences and skills, with very high percentages. Almost **all of the respondents (96%) indicate that as a result of the project, they improved their ability to get along with people who have a different cultural background.** The figures are almost the same for 2016 and 2018.

When meeting with people from different cultures and backgrounds is being taken into account as a major driver that motivates young people to take part in such projects, this is a highly important finding. Indeed, this should also be taken into account when explaining the **high satisfaction levels of the youth from projects.** In other words, this finding is an indicator for the fact that **participants largely fulfilled their expectations.**

Whereas such positive findings make it difficult to describe and assess the differences, the respondents express significant development levels in all of the key competencies of Lifelong Learning according to Graph 8. In fact, the percentage of respondents who think that they have made progress at least in one of the competencies is between 63% and 96%¹⁵.

¹⁵ Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 On Key Competences For Lifelong Learning, 2007.

Even the most technical and specific skill of *producing media content on one's own (printed, audio-visual, electronic)*, which is naturally not a significant part of many projects is very close to 70%.

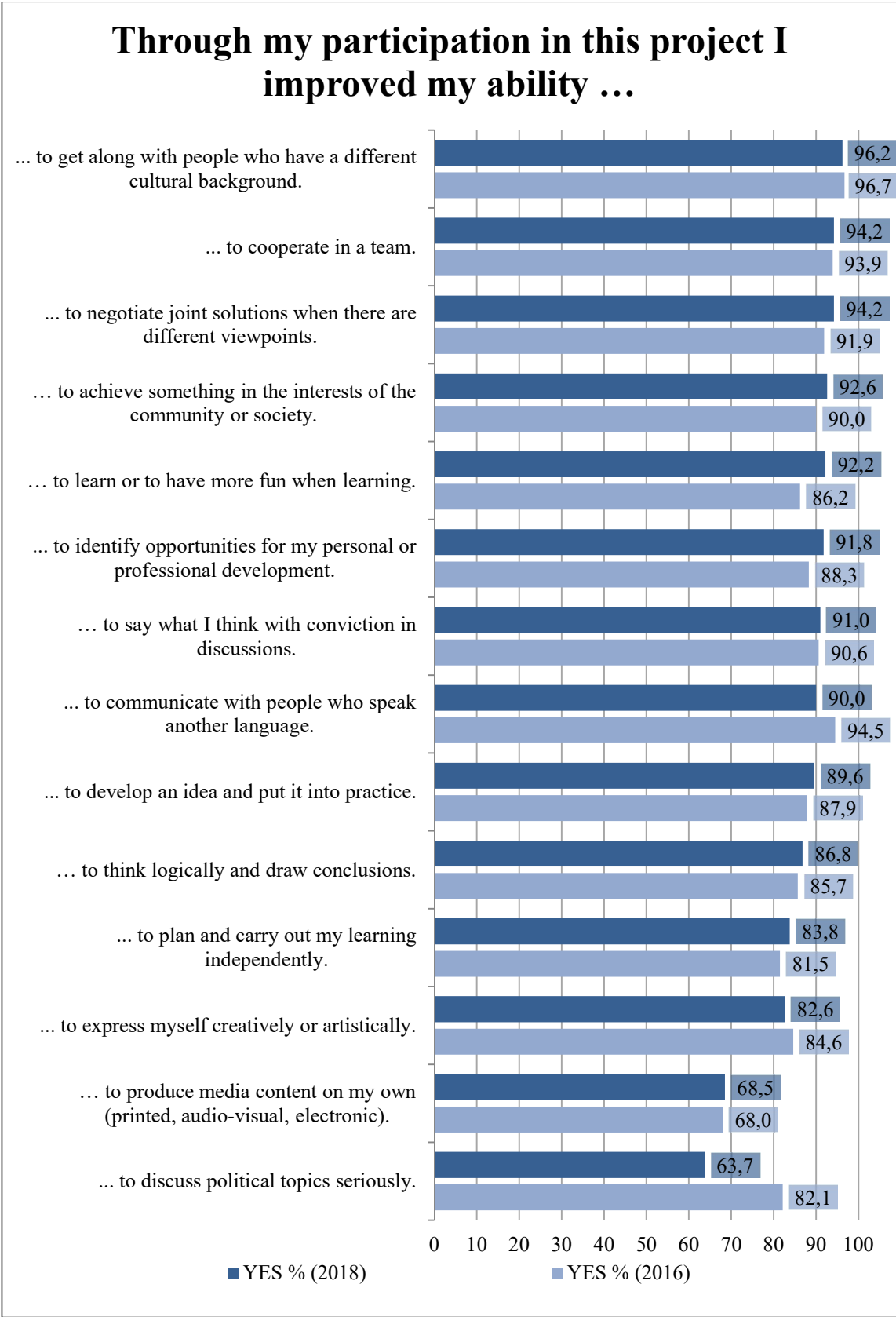
A major shift between 2016 and 2018 is observed as the decrease in the competence of *discussing political topics seriously*. In 2016, the percentage of those who indicated that they have developed their ability to discuss political issues serious was 82%, and it decreased to 63.7% in 2018. There are two possible explanations for this change. First, it may have to do with the increasing right wing radical political movements in Europe and increasing Islamophobia and racism within European societies. It is very possible that political issues were avoided in general in youth projects. Second possible explanation may have to do with the changing composition of participants; in the previous sample there may be more politically engaged individuals. This issue is elaborated further in the following sections where the learning is examined by project type.

Still, considering that **above 80% of the respondents** saying that they developed all skills and competences except for these two is **a very major indicator that these projects are designed, implemented and finalised in an efficient way which contribute very significantly to the personal and professional developments of the participants.**

As seen in Graph 12, various items are listed related to skills and competences development. The diversity of the skills and competences that are reported to have developed is another noteworthy element. **This point proves that the youth projects do not touch on just a single issue, but involves a complex and multi-faceted learning structure. The projects provide opportunities to develop very wide range of skills, from *communication* to *team-work*; *developing initiatives* to *negotiation skills*.**

The results in this section indicate that **the participants gain new knowledge, skills and competences in the projects.** The next section, therefore, moves on to discuss the impact of these on the lives of the participants.

Graph 12 Competence & Skills Development



4.4. Project impact

Main Finding 6: As a result of the project experience, the participants have experienced major personal development and changes in their lives.

While the report focused on the benefits and gains obtained with regard to skills and knowledge so far, this section assesses the impact of the experiences on the personal and professional lives of the participants.

It appears that the biggest impact on personal development of the participants is related to **self-confidence**. **94.8% of the respondents reported that as a result of the project, they feel more self-confident.**

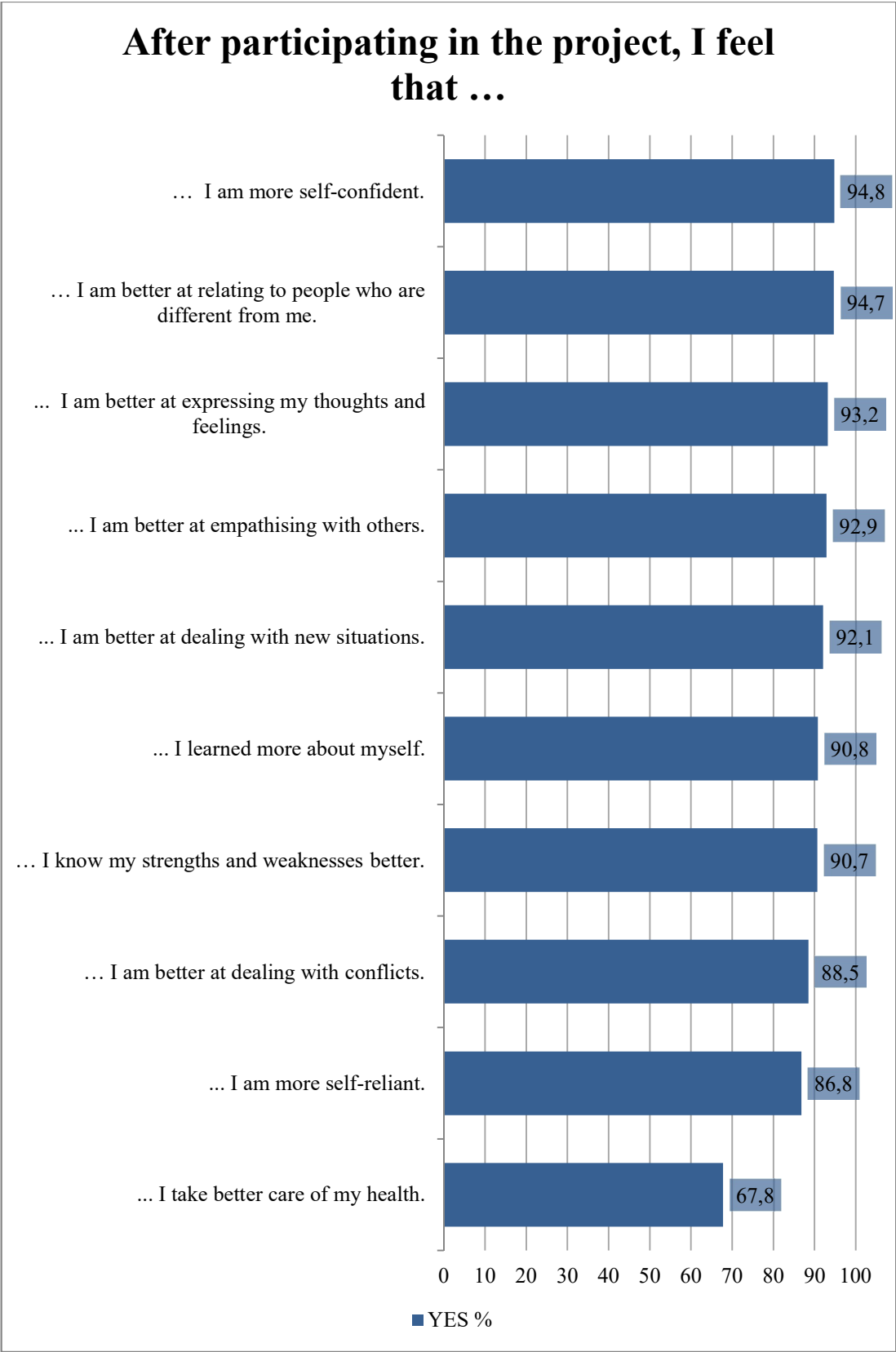
Another major impact that is manifested by the participants, which goes with almost the same figure as self-confidence, is on the intercultural skills. **94.7% of the respondents believe that *they are better at relating to people who are different from them.*** This goes very much in line with the earlier findings, where participants are motivated *to meet with new people, they learn how to communicate with people with different cultural backgrounds and finally, as a result, they feel better equipped to relate with them.*

The findings also demonstrate that almost **9 out of 10** respondents feel that **they are better** *at expressing their thoughts and feelings; empathising with others; dealing with new situations; they learned more about themselves, know their strengths and weaknesses better and are better at dealing with conflicts.* Out of which, “*learning more about themselves*” particularly shows that **the participants not only learn about different issues and cultures, but also about themselves as well.** *90.8 % of the respondents shared that at the end of the project, they learned more about themselves.* Considering the age group of the participants, majority of them are in the years of self-discovery and either about to decide or just recently decided on their life paths and what they want from the future. Therefore, **the fact that youth projects offer the opportunity of self-discovery is crucial.**

More than 8 out of 10 respondents, on the other hand, feel **more self-reliant** after they have taken part in the project compared to before their participation. Indeed, this is a

crucial finding as it can be assumed that most young people think that they have learned how to carry out their responsibilities on their own whereas they might have relied on others such as their parents before taking part at such projects.

Graph 13 Personal Development



Personal development of the participants as a result of the projects appears to be accompanied by *educational and professional development*. The data analysis brings about a number of findings regarding professional development. The major points identified are presented in Graph 13.

Main Finding 7: The respondents state that the project contributed to their professional development and provided them with ideas about –potential-educational paths.

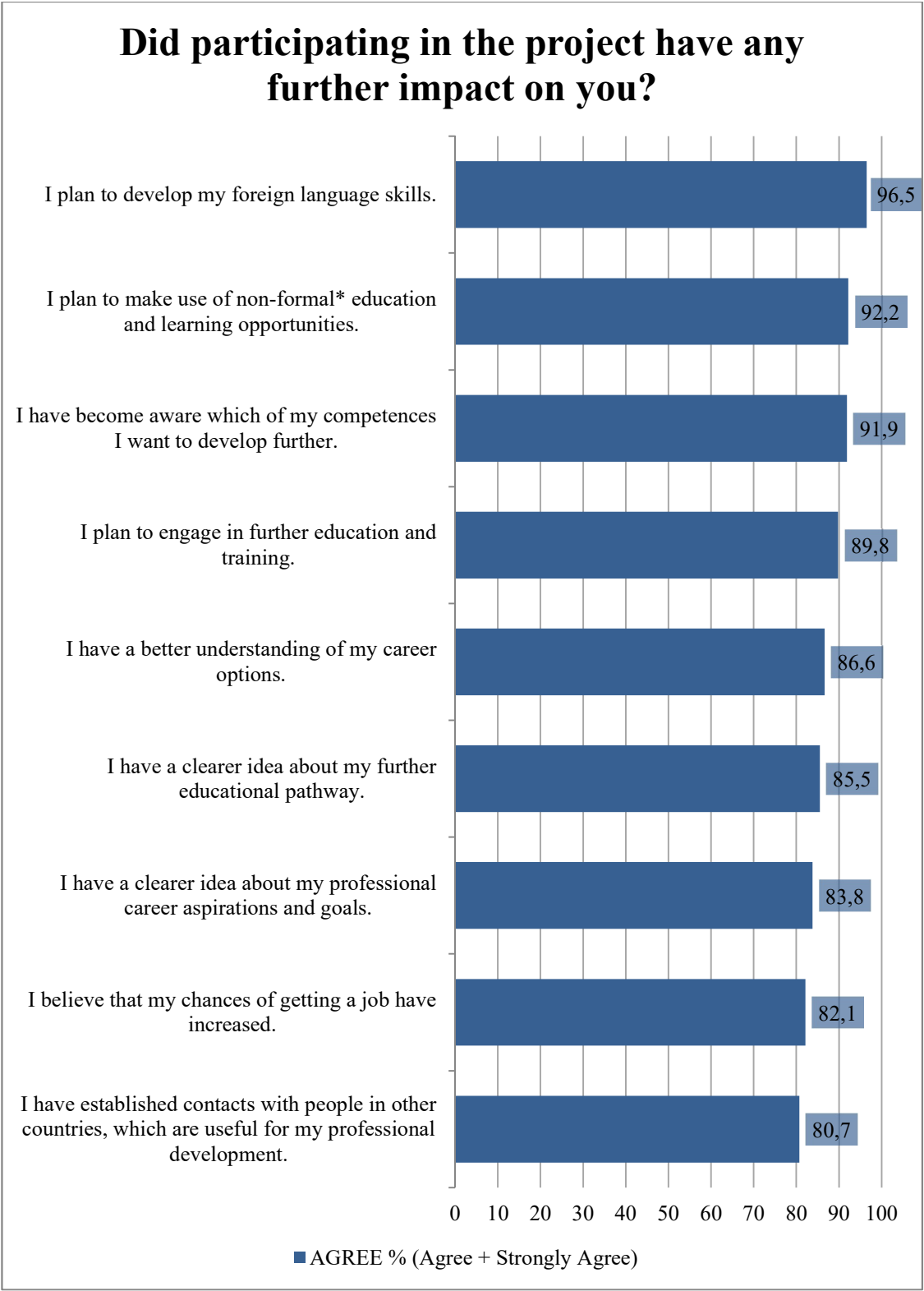
As seen in Graph 14, similar to personal development items, **80% or more of the respondents state that the project had an impact on their professional and educational perspectives.** The strongest impact seems to be in the **foreign language skills**, where **96.5% of respondents want to further develop their skills.** Foreign languages are followed by the *education/training related items*, **92.2% wants to use non-formal and informal opportunities; 91.9% is now aware of which competences they want to develop and 89.8% wants to continue further education and training. 85.5% of the respondents believe that as a result of the project they have a clearer idea about their educational plans.**

Beyond doubt, the participants of the projects are not only motivated to continue their education and get acquainted with new fields but also feel more confident of which field to be more committed in the future and which competencies are required.

Besides education, there seems to be a great impact on the **professional careers and employment plans** of participants as well. Most of the respondents indicated that as a result of their project experience, **their chances of getting a job increased (82.1%); they have a clearer idea about their professional career aspirations and goals (83.8%) and finally, they have a clearer idea about their career options (86.6%).** In a comparative manner, it is important to note down that in 2018, the educational and employment evaluations are **more positive** compared with 2016; with an average increase of **four to five percentage points in positive evaluations.**

Taken together, these results suggest that there is a very strong impact of participating in a European youth project on the young people. The experience gives them **clearer ideas about their educational and professional aspirations**, informs them **about different education and career opportunities** as well as contributing **to their career and educational planning**.

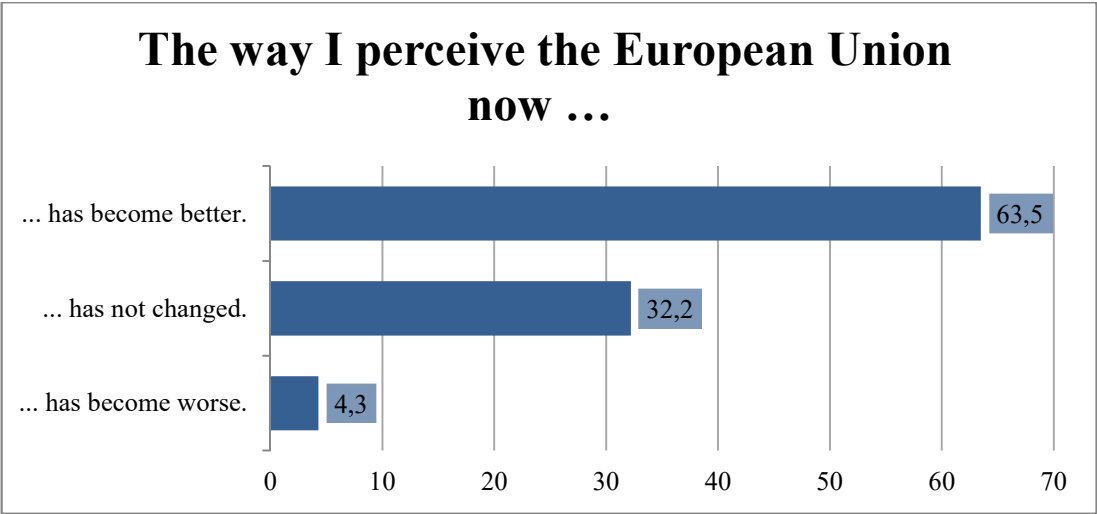
Graph 14 Educational and Professional Impact



Erasmus+ Youth in Action places great emphasis on a better understanding of Europe and European values among youth. The projects within this framework strive to contribute to a better understanding of European citizenship as well as informing young citizens about the structure, institutions and policies of the European Union, especially in the field of youth.

Findings of the RAY-MON participants who took part in surveys reveal that overall, the perception related to European Union among young people are positive. 63.5% of the participants stated that their image of the European Union became better (Graph 15). In this sense, the low percentage (4.3%) of those who indicated that their image of the EU became worse is remarkable. In a comparative perspective, these findings are very close to those of the previous RAY research findings in 2016.

Graph 15 Image of the European Union



4.5 A Comparative Look at the Project Types

The Erasmus+ Youth in Action funds different types of projects. Each of the project types fall under the Key Actions. “Key Action” is the collective categorical name for activities and projects that can be funded under Erasmus+. There are three Key Action areas which can be summarised as:

Learning Mobility of Individuals (Key Action 1)

Cooperation for Innovation and Exchange of Good Practices (Key Action 2)

Support for Policy Reform (Key Action 3).¹⁶

Key Action 1 (KA1) is about providing opportunities for individuals to improve their skills, enhance their employability and gain cultural awareness through mobility. KA1 receives the highest amount of funding within the Erasmus + budget and funds the most number of projects. As of the implementation of the second cycle (2017/2018) of RAY-MON research, three types of learning mobility activities for youth were funded under KA1 (until the introduction of the European Solidarity Corps Programme, which is the new funding mechanism for the youth volunteering activities): youth exchanges; European Voluntary Service (EVS); and training/networking for youth workers.

Key Action 2 (KA2) provides opportunities for organisations to collaborate and produce and/or share innovative practices. KA2 focuses on developing, sharing and transferring best practices and innovative approaches in the fields of education, training and youth. In the RAY-MON research concept, only TCA (Transnational Cooperation Activities) participants are surveyed under KA2, which are lower in number and grouped with KA1 – Mobility of Youth Workers participants for the purpose of the following analyses.

Key Action 3 (KA3) on the other hand, covers any type of activity aimed at supporting and facilitating the modernisation of education and training systems. Under Key Action 3, the Erasmus+ programme funds strategic activities supporting policy reform across the EU in education, training and youth. Key Action 3 covers the fields of higher education,

¹⁶ For all the details of different key actions, their application and implementations rules, see the European Commission EACEA web page on Erasmus+ available at: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/actions_en

vocational education and training, schools, adult education and youth. Key Action 3 Structured Dialogue projects give young people the opportunity to interact with decision-makers on issues of concern to young people and to influence policy.

RAY-MON study focuses majorly on young people and youth workers/leaders who have taken part in different youth projects that took place under Key Action 1 and Key Action 3 (number of TCA participants are relatively lower). The distribution of the respondents under different projects is presented in Graph 1 at the beginning of this report.

Each of these activity types are organised with different aims, with different rules, different time periods and with different participant profiles. For instance, while Key Action 1- European Voluntary Service, allows young people aged 17-30 to take part in unpaid and full-time voluntary service for up to 12 months in another country within or outside the European Union, Key Action 1 - Youth Exchanges allow groups of young people (aged 13 to 30) from different countries to meet and live together for up to 21 days. On the other hand, Key Action 1 - Mobility of Youth Workers supports the professional development of youth workers when they take part in seminars, training courses, contact-making events, study visits, or a job shadowing/observation period abroad in an organisation active in the youth field.

Therefore, the profile and the motivation of the participants in different projects would diversify as well as the outcomes of these different projects.

At this part of the report, the differences between the evaluations of participants from different project types are presented and discussed in a comparative manner.

To start with, it is investigated ***if there is a difference between participants of different projects in information sources utilized.***

The findings of the analysis are presented in Table 1:

Table 1 I got to know about the Project (YES %)

		The project I participated in was a ...				
		Key Action 1 – Youth Exchanges	Key Action 1 – EVS	Key Action 3 – Structured Dialogue	Key Action 1 – Mobility of Youth Workers or a TCA activity	Don't know or don't remember
Through an informal youth group		18,2	4,6	11,5	10,6	5,3
Through a youth organisation/association		48,6	28,9	38,3	37,5	28,4
Through a youth centre		13,7	9,6	12,8	8,0	11,6
Through another type of organisation/association		8,9	4,8	11,5	8,7	4,2
Through friends/acquaintances		38,8	35,9	36,6	25,8	44,2
Through school, college or university		16,8	28,4	18,7	9,5	17,9
At work (e.g. colleagues, information at work etc.)		2,9	1,3	4,3	7,2	9,5
Through information in a newspaper/magazine, on the radio, TV, internet		10,2	15,2	22,1	4,9	10,5
Through information from a National Agency of Erasmus+ (Youth in Action) (e.g. through a direct mailing, information material, poster, website, information event, consultation etc.)		6,2	7,6	12,8	19,7	9,5
Through information from a regional agency/office of the National Agency (e.g. through a direct mailing, information material, poster, website, information event, consultation etc.)		3,0	3,3	5,1	6,1	3,2
Through information by or on the website of the European Commission		1,2	5,1	3,8	5,7	3,2
Through the Eurodesk network		3,0	3,0	3,4	4,9	3,2

As Table 1 indicates, *youth organizations* and *associations* seem to be the primary source of information for KA1-Youth Exchanges through which nearly half of the participants (48.6%) of Youth Exchanges learned about their projects. For KA1-EVS participants, on the other hand, the major source of information appears to be their friends and social environment in broader terms. The findings of the RAY-MON survey demonstrate that 35.9% of the EVS participants were informed about youth projects through their friends and acquaintances whereas 28.9% of them through youth organizations/associations.

For the other two activities analysed in this report, KA3 - Structured Dialogue and KA1 - Mobility of youth workers and TCA, *the youth organisations and associations* are the primary sources of information. Informal information networks present also unique and interesting findings since these constitute the second most frequently used source of information at a rate of 36%. These mainly consist of *friends* and *acquaintances*.

Information flow from friends and acquaintances about youth mobility opportunities being highly prevalent is an important finding, as RAY-MON also revealed earlier that satisfaction with a project is highly correlated with *word of the mouth*. The participants are very likely to recommend other people to participate in similar projects following a successful project. As indicated earlier, *the multiplier effect is very high in non-formal learning projects, and a very high percentage of participants act as multipliers to mobilize their friends and acquaintances to participate in similar projects*. Table 1 demonstrates that the multiplier effect of ex-participants is very powerful for all types of activities: people tend to pursue the recommendation of friends and acquaintances and participate in projects that are recommended to them.

As different projects have different aims, the motivations of participants to be a part of such projects may also differ. In order to analyse the differences in motivations, a comparison by project types is made. The findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 My reasons for participating in this project were ... (YES %)

	The project I participated in was a ...					
	Key Action 1 – Youth Exchanges	Key Action 1 – EVS	Key Action 3 – Structured Dialogue	Key Action 1 – Mobility of Youth Workers or a TCA activity	Don't know or don't remember	
... to get to know another country.	64,8	73,2	16,6	49,2	54,7	
... to have new experiences.	86,9	86,6	73,2	81,8	80,0	
... to become involved in social or political issues.	42,7	30,6	67,7	39,4	49,5	
... to have fun.	50,4	49,1	23,8	32,2	51,6	
... to develop my foreign language skills.	67,7	73,9	20,9	51,5	49,5	
... for my personal development.	77,3	78,5	69,8	74,2	70,5	
... to learn something new.	74,4	74,7	68,5	73,5	73,7	
... to get in contact with people from other cultural backgrounds or countries.	80,9	80,5	31,1	71,2	64,2	
... to challenge myself.	26,3	33,7	12,3	18,9	24,2	
... because someone encouraged me to do so.	12,0	15,2	9,4	7,6	11,6	
... for my professional development.	41,2	39,2	49,4	66,3	40,0	
... to prepare for future activities (e.g. education, training, voluntary activities, work etc.)	50,7	54,2	45,1	50,0	52,6	
... to improve my knowledge about Europe.	49,0	52,7	23,0	38,3	43,2	
... I was interested in the project topic.	46,2	36,2	55,3	59,5	48,4	
... to increase my job chances.	22,0	27,3	17,9	17,4	18,9	
... other reasons.	4,5	6,8	2,1	2,3	3,2	

Table 2 shows the diversity of the motivation of participants which are in line with the general aims and objectives of different projects. To illustrate, KA1-Mobility of Youth Worker participants demonstrate higher willingness for reasons related to *professional development* when compared to the participants of the other projects. Due to the fact that the main objective of these projects is to contribute to the development of the quality of youth work, this is much-anticipated. Likewise, due to the fact that TCA and other mobility activities for youth workers tend to be very theme-based and involve specific training courses and seminars, KA1-Mobility participants show much more interest in project topics in comparison to others.

In terms of *discovery dimension*, the drivers for participating in projects are similar among participants from different types of activities. Participants in all projects have the common motivation to *make new experiences, meet new people and learn new things*. These are also highly related to the *non-formal learning dimension* which motivates young people to similarly discover *new people, new places and make new experiences*.

Overall, these findings demonstrate that there is a solid correlation between the project types attended and the motivation behind since young people try to participate in projects that *fit their expectations* instead of participating *for the sake of participating*. Thus, *appropriate guidance and information delivery is essential in terms of informing and directing young people to the types of projects that fit their expectations best*.

Another important finding concerns the multiplicity of motivations behind participating in projects. As it can be derived from Table 2, there are diverse motivations that play a greater role than other drivers for each project. The complementarity of motivation groups is also striking as, for instance, personal development may be complemented by meeting new people which again can be complemented by political engagement. It is important that this complexity of motivations should be *taken into account in all steps of project management: from information to design; from implementation to evaluation*.

Table 3 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Now that the project is over: (AGREE+STRONGLY AGREE %)						
		<u>The project I participated in was a ...</u>				
		Key Action 1 – Youth Exchanges	Key Action 1 – EVS	Key Action 3 – Structured Dialogue	Key Action 1 – Mobility of Youth Workers or a TCA activity	Don't know or don't remember
I would recommend participating in or starting a similar project to other people.		97,0	95,2	96,6	97,4	93,7
I was able to contribute my views and ideas to the development of this project.		87,8	86,0	94,4	92,4	83,9
I was able to contribute my views and ideas to the implementation of this project.		90,4	90,3	92,4	94,7	84,0
I felt well integrated into the project.		90,9	86,6	89,4	93,5	82,9
I plan to participate in a similar project in the next few years.		94,5	85,4	94,9	95,1	89,4
I plan to organise a similar project in the next few years.		65,4	52,9	65,4	74,8	50,0
Overall, participation in the project has contributed to my personal development.		95,6	96,7	97,5	96,6	93,6

Figures presented in Table 3 reveal that the type of project participated does not have a significant effect on the *multiplier effect*. Almost all of the participants involving in all types of projects, state that they *would recommend other people to participate in a similar project*; and *overall, the project contributed to their personal development*. These findings are very noticeable because as demonstrated earlier, the recommendation of friends and acquaintances is a powerful motivation for people to participate in projects. Such high levels of recommendations exhibit the success of the projects in contributing to the mobilisation of new people directly.

As can be seen when Table 3 is examined, the participants of KA1-European Voluntary Service have slightly lower figures in *repeating the experience through a similar project* and *plan to organize a similar project*. Those lower figures most likely results from the structure and design of EVS projects. First of all, once a volunteer returns from a long term volunteering project organised within KA1-EVS, it is not possible for them to go for another long term volunteering activity. Many are aware of this condition which in return may explain the lower figure in willingness to repeat the experience. Similarly, organisation of an EVS project requires the involvement of a host organisation, a sending organisation and a volunteer. Unless the returning EVS volunteer is directly involved within an organisation, organisation of an EVS project is rather difficult for an individual. On the other hand, organisation of a Youth Exchange involves several people, it is rather easier to organise and above all, the time period of a youth exchange is much shorter than that of an European Voluntary Service. Therefore, it is more likely for a participant to organise a youth exchange following the end of a youth exchange rather than an ex-EVS volunteer to assume the responsibility of a EVS project that may last up to a year.

Table 4 (a. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements as a result of the project?) (b. Did participating in the project have any further impact on you?) (AGREE+STRONGLY AGREE %)

	The project I participated in was a ...				
	Key Action 1 – Youth Exchanges	Key Action 1 – EVS	Key Action 3 – Structured Dialogue	Key Action 1 – Mobility of Youth Workers or a TCA activity	Don't know or don't remember
a. I am now better able to move around on my own in other countries (e.g. travel, study, work placement (internship), job etc.).	96,4	96,5	79,7	95,1	91,8
a. I intend to go abroad to study, work, do a work placement (an internship) or live there.	95,8	94,6	84,8	87,5	85,9
a. I intend to continue the contact with networks I have established through the project.	96,6	93,6	88,8	97,5	86,8
a. I intend to develop joint activities or projects with people I got to know through the project.	89,9	77,9	84,5	92,7	77,4
b. I plan to engage in further education and training.	92,8	88,5	88,4	88,3	82,0
b. I believe that my chances of getting a job have increased.	86,5	84,5	79,1	75,2	69,9

The influence of the exceptional nature of EVS can also be observed among the project impact analysis presented in Table 4. When asked *whether they intend to develop joint activities or projects with people they got to know through the project*, the lowest levels of positive responses come from ex-EVS volunteers with 77.9 %, while this figure is 92.7 % for mobility for youth workers participants. As discussed earlier, preparing, organising and implementing EVS projects is demanding and takes longer time.

Taken together, the comparison between different activity types on the items presented in Table 4 reveals two important findings: First, the project impact is very similar across different activity types and projects. Second, *all types of projects* have very positive impact on the participants in terms of future educational and professional prospects and intentions.

Information in Table 4 focuses mainly on the impact on youth work development and personal education and mobility assessments. RAY-MON questionnaire includes another part where participants were asked to give information on their self-assessments on the impact on their personality. The results of analysis of this section are presented below, in Table 5.

Table 5 After participating in the project, I feel that ... (YES %)

	The project I participated in was a ...				
	Key Action 1 – Youth Exchanges	Key Action 1 – EVS	Key Action 3 – Structured Dialogue	Key Action 1 – Mobility of Youth Workers or a TCA activity	Don't know or don't remember
... I am more self-confident.	96,0	94,5	94,4	92,9	94,0
... I am better at expressing my thoughts and feelings.	95,5	92,0	91,8	91,1	91,6
... I take better care of my health.	68,1	70,7	67,3	64,6	62,2
... I am more self-reliant.	88,6	86,3	81,0	86,5	90,4
... I am better at dealing with new situations.	93,4	93,2	88,6	92,0	86,6
... I am better at empathising with others.	93,2	93,2	91,4	93,8	90,2
... I am better at dealing with conflicts.	90,0	90,4	84,8	88,4	79,5
... I learned more about myself.	93,7	89,9	88,9	88,4	86,3
... I know my strengths and weaknesses better.	92,3	91,2	88,2	90,2	85,4
... I am better at relating to people who are different from me.	96,9	94,0	91,4	92,9	95,1
... participation in the project did not have any particular effect on me.	27,6	24,3	31,3	34,5	31,7

When the results for items related to personal effects are analysed, it is seen that the strongest development is on *self-confidence and sympathy for different people*. While 94.8% of project participants state that after the project they feel more self-confident; again 94.7% of the respondents state that they became better at relating to people who are different from them.

The second field of project impact is that the respondents believe they *feel better in expressing their thoughts* to other people and *empathising with others*. **Almost 9 out of 10 participants** say that they are also better in dealing with new situations after the project. The highest percentage in self-expression comes from the participants of KA3- Structured Dialogue, which is expected, as these projects are based on exchange of ideas, discussions and sharing of opinions.

The most striking result to emerge from the data is that the change in the pessimist views of the participants of Key Action 3 – Structured Dialogue. In 2016, **60% of the Structured Dialogue respondents** stated that *participation in the project did not have any particular effect on them*, and this year this figure decreased by half; to 31.3 %

Overall, the findings indicate that the difference in project type does not create a major difference in self-assessment on impact on personality.

**Table 6 How did the project affect you in the end?
(MORE THAN BEFORE THE PROJECT %)**

	<u>The project I participated in was a ...</u>				
	Key Action 1 – Youth Exchanges	Key Action 1 – EVS	Key Action 3 – Structured Dialogue	Key Action 1 – Mobility of Youth Workers or a TCA activity	Don't know or don't remember
I keep myself informed on current European affairs.	37,9	37,8	26,7	43,4	37,9
I engage in civil society.	37,8	31,2	38,0	39,7	38,6
I actively support the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities.	47,8	38,6	41,0	44,4	45,3
I actively contribute to environmental protection (e.g. by recycling, using renewable energy, using public transport in order to reduce pollution etc.).	35,2	33,3	29,4	31,9	42,9
I participate in democratic/political life.	32,5	26,8	35,1	29,5	30,2
I engage in voluntary activities.	46,8	35,6	41,0	38,8	39,5
I appreciate cultural diversity.	51,7	45,9	38,9	48,4	52,9
I am interested in contributing to youth policy development.	48,6	40,4	45,2	53,6	44,7
I feel European.	27,8	29,3	17,9	30,8	38,8
I am committed to work against discrimination, intolerance, xenophobia or racism.	47,3	45,5	34,1	48,2	54,0

Perceived changes related with the personality and opinion were presented with the items in Table 5. However, it is no secret that changes at opinion level do not always reflect at the behaviours of an individual. In order to assess the impact of the project experience on the actual behaviour of the participants, another set of items titled “How did the project affect you in the end?” were included in the RAY-MON surveys. As the results presented in Table 6 show, the project experience also affects the behaviour of the participants. However, this impact is to a lesser degree compared with the attitudinal and opinion level.

According to the analysis carried out across different project types, it is important to note that Key Action 1 – Mobility of Youth Workers or a TCA event appears to have fulfilled the aims of its particular project type. For instance, on the item of *increased interest in contributing to youth policy development*, the positive change is apparent; **half of the respondents state that they are more interested in youth policy development after the project.** This is very important, as the principal aim of youth worker mobility is to contribute to the development of the quality of youth work. Youth worker mobility and TCA projects can take the form of meetings, conferences, consultations and events. It seems that the investment in these projects have a high return to youth policy development and engagement of practitioners in policy.

Table 7 (a. Did you receive a Youthpass certificate as part of the project you are being asked about?) (b. Have you used your Youthpass certificate for anything? E.g., for a job application, an application for an internship, a course, studies etc.) (YES %)

	The project I participated in was a ...				
	Key Action 1 – Youth Exchanges	Key Action 1 – EVS	Key Action 3 –Structured Dialogue	Key Action 1 – Mobility of Youth Workers or a TCA activity	Don't know or don't remember
a. Did you receive a Youthpass certificate as part of the project you are being asked about?	84,5	66,9	79,3	82,3	74,7
b. Have you used your Youthpass certificate for anything? E.g., for a job application, an application for an internship, a course, studies etc.	31,4	28,2	30,6	24,5	16,1

Youthpass¹⁷ is the recognition instrument for projects supported by Erasmus+: Youth in Action. With Youthpass, participants of Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps projects can describe what they have done and show what they have learnt. In the final part of the comparative analysis of different activity types, the rate of using Youthpass is examined. As the results presents in Table 7 illustrate, there is **a major difference between KA1 - EVS and other activities in terms of receiving a YouthPass**. The percentage of participants receiving a Youthpass at the end of their project is not very high for all projects, although it is **above 66% for all project types**. But it is significantly lower for KA1 – European Voluntary Service (66.9%) compared with KA1 - Youth Exchanges (84.5%) and KA1 – Mobility of Youth Workers (82.5%).

A major issue that comes out of the comparative analysis is the *decrease* in Youthpass receiving rates from 2016 to 2018. In the previous data, the average was above 80% for all project types; and it reached almost 99% for KA1 – Youth Exchanges and 97% for KA1 – European Voluntary Service.

This decline in receiving Youthpass should be a concern, especially considering the visibility and recognition of the European youth projects. The reasons for why much less percent of participants have received Youthpass must be carefully investigated. It is important to know whether this is due to organisational design, in which the organizers do not encourage and inform the participants, or due to individual reasons in which the participants are reluctant and not motivated to receive a Youthpass.

The usage rates of the Youthpass received is also **low**. The overall rates of using Youthpass for a job application, an application for an internship, a course, studies etc. is low across all project types, around 30 % in average.

The results in this section indicate that except for **Youthpass usage rates, there are no significant differences in terms of information sources, motivation and impact on opinion, perception and behaviour across different types of activities**.

¹⁷ <https://www.youthpass.eu/tr/>

The following section outlines the perceptions and assessments of project leaders on the impact and outcomes of projects.

5. The Perspective of the Project Leaders

While the findings of the report outlined thus far are *self-evaluations of the participants*, it should be noted that self-assessment of improvements, changes and impacts resulting from project experiences present significant suggestions. Since it is the young people themselves who are going through these experiences, they are also the best sources of information who can evaluate their changes in ideas, behaviours, thoughts and plans. However, it is also proven that subjective evaluations of individuals about their self-change and development is not always accurate since individuals tend to under-estimate certain developments and over-estimate other aspects with the excitement of a successful project or on the contrary, with the bitterness of a disappointing project. At such incidents, it is always prudent to triangulate with different sources of information and evaluations.

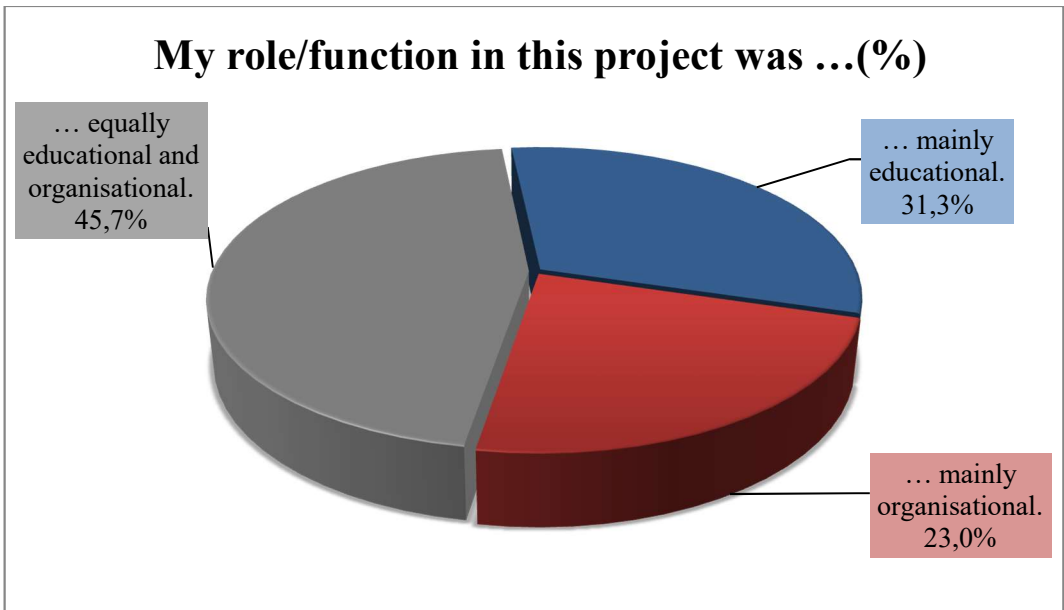
In such cases, the project leaders can be consulted who can provide important external perspective. Being the ones who contribute to the design and implementation of projects directly, they have first-hand information of the aims and objectives of each project. The opinions of project leaders on whether the initially set aims and objectives were met or not are very important. On top of that, each project has its own evaluation plan, and the project leaders are generally in charge of carrying out this evaluation. The educative and informative achievements of a project can be assessed very efficiently by the project leaders.

Due to the fact that it is often the case for young people not to be aware of their own progress, or take their development as granted, project leaders' evaluations concerning the participants are very informative and valuable. The external assessment of a project leader who may compare how the participant was in the beginning of the project and at the end can give significant conclusions.

To acquire greater insight from these external evaluations, RAY-MON conducted two waves of surveys with the project leaders, similar to those of the participants, the first wave being in October 2017 and the second wave in April 2018.

A total of **286 project leaders** – out of **1095** that were invited to participate – (who were residents of Turkey right before the project start) responded the two waves of surveys. The project leaders that participated in RAY-MON have carried out different roles in the projects. This diversity enhances the validity of the data gathered, as different roles allow different perspectives on the development of the participants and allows better assessment of the impact of the project. Graph 16 gives the distribution of project leaders surveyed in terms of the roles they had during the project.

Graph 16 Project Leaders' Roles in Project

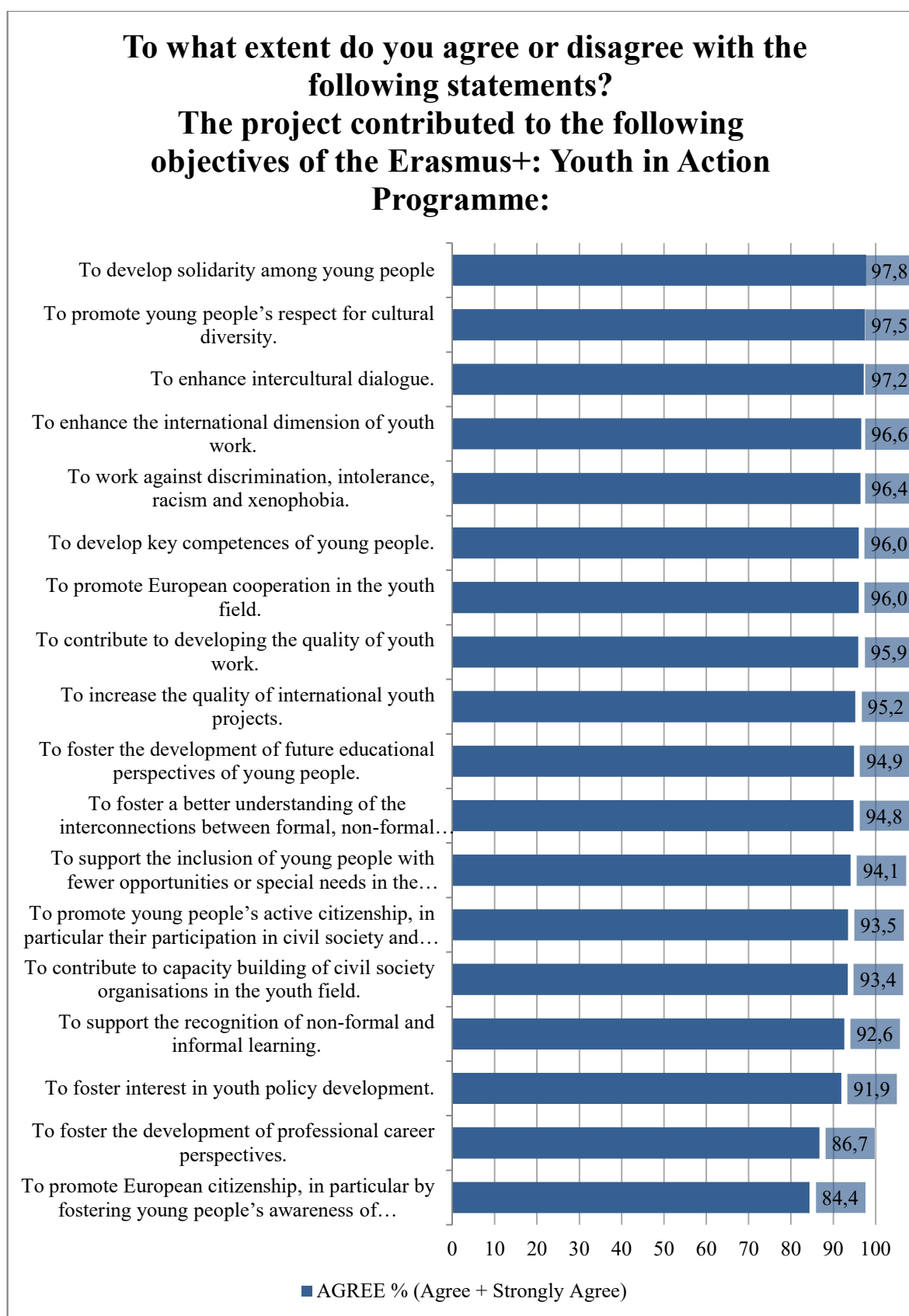


Almost half of the respondents carried a dual role, *both educational and organisational*, as seen in Graph 16. This means that they were involved in all aspects and stages of the project, and therefore had a very close relation with the participants. This makes them highly valuable in their assessments of the participants' development and learning. 31.3% of the respondent project leaders had a mainly educational role, while the remaining 23% had primarily an organisational role.

Compared to the gender distribution of the participants, the gender distribution of the responding project leaders is rather less balanced. The majority of the project leaders that have participated in RAY-MON surveys are male (62%) while 38% of the respondents are female. However, a brief desk research on projects carried out reveals that this

disproportionateness is merely a reflection of the reality in the field: the percentage of males in the project leader roles is in general higher than the female project leaders.

Graph 17 Project and Programme Objectives



Overall evaluation of the project leaders' is that **the projects carried out within Erasmus+ Youth contributed to the objectives set out in the Programme.**

The highest positive evaluations come out with solidarity, cultural diversity and international/intercultural aspects of the Programme objectives. **97.8% of the project leaders believe that the projects contributed to develop solidarity among young people.** The project leaders assess that the projects organized have contributed *to promote young people's respect for cultural diversity (97.5%); to the enhancement of the international dialogue (97.2%) and to enhance the international dimension of youth work (96.6%).*

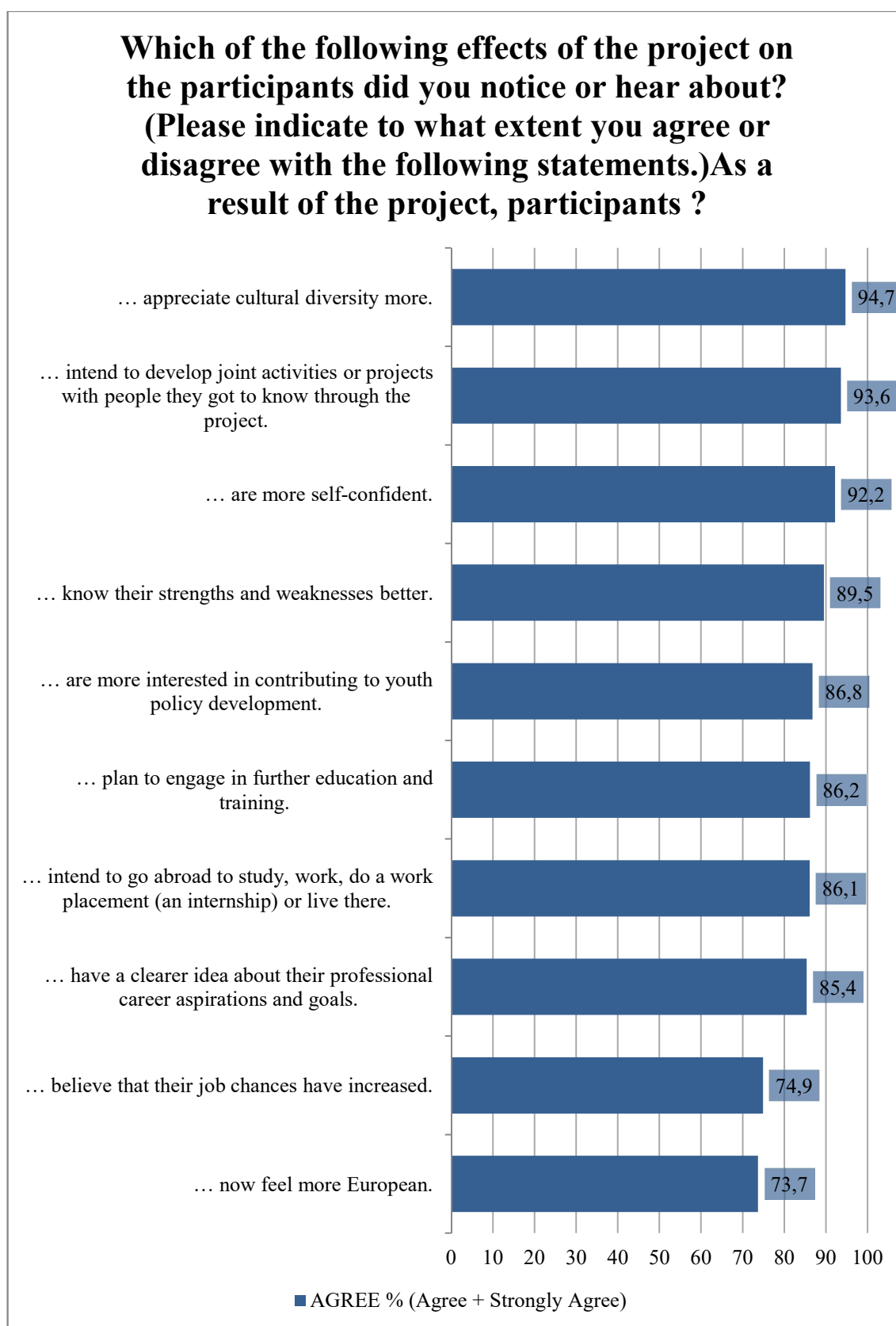
It is also indicated by the project leaders that **projects contribute to the competence and skill development of the participants. Almost all project leaders indicated that the project they have been involved in developed the key competences of the young people (96%).** This is very much in line with the self-assessment of the project participants presented in Graph 7.

According to the findings presented in Graph 17, it appears that the **project leaders' evaluations of meeting different Programme objectives are highly positive. The average of those respondents that agree that the project met different objectives is 94.2 %.** Considering that the objectives are very diverse, ranging from active citizenship to recognition of informal and non-formal learning, such a high positive evaluation indicates a major satisfaction from the outcomes of the projects.

A major criterion for evaluating success of a youth project is the assessment of the impact on the participating young people. As discussed earlier, RAY-MON data shows that participants' self-evaluations indicate high positive impacts and competence development. In this regard, it is highly important and informative to compare and contrast these self-assessments with the external assessments of project leaders.

The findings of RAY-MON on project leaders' views on the impact of projects on young people are presented in Graph 18.

Graph 18 Effect of Project on Participants



It is evident that the majority of project leaders **strongly believe that the projects have a positive impact on the participants**, when the data presented in Graph 18 is analysed.

According to the project leaders' perception, the projects have the highest impact on intercultural learning. **94.7% of the respondents indicate that as a result of the project the participants *appreciate cultural diversity more*.**

Another major impact on the participants, according to the project leaders, is on *self-discovery* and *self-awareness*. **92.2% of the respondents indicate that *participants are more self-confident*; 89.5 % believe that participants *know their strengths and weaknesses better*.**

The project leaders also believe that the project participation has a major impact on the future of the participants. **93.6% *indicate that their participants intend to develop joint activities or projects*. 86.2% say that the participants *plan to engage in further education and training*, 86.1% *intend to go abroad to study, work, do a work placement (an internship) or live there*. Finally, 74.9% of the project leaders believe that *the participants' job chances have increased*.**

In a comparative manner, the project leaders' assessments are more positive in 2018 compared with 2016. The Project Leaders emphasize diverse issues as well, more organizational and policy oriented future concerns appear in 2018, while in 2016 it is much more self-oriented and focused on individual learning and competence development.

As argued earlier, the participants may under-estimate or over-estimate in their self-assessments. Consequently, when approached in a comparative manner, the assessments and perceptions of the project leaders and those of the project participants reveal certain differences. The impact of the projects appears to be a field where *the participants* and *project leaders* evaluate differently from each other. In Graph 13 and Graph 14 the evaluations on the project impact by the participants were presented. When compared with the project leaders' evaluations in Graph 18, **it appears that the project**

participants have a more positive evaluation of the project impact than the project leaders. For instance, while *82.1% of the participants believe that their job chances have increased*, this percentage is 74.9 for project leaders. Similarly, while *94.8% of the participants feel more self-confident*; this figure is 92.2% for the project leaders.

Such a difference may be linked to different explanations. Firstly, the participants may have an overly post evaluation due to their excitement and high levels of motivation and euphoria as a result of a successful project. Secondly, the project leaders may have a more realistic perspective as they can assess the participants comparatively with other participants. Thirdly, the project participants may have a more realistic assessment, as their contact with the project leaders are limited with the time period of the project, and they can assess the impact in a longer time period, i.e. they realize the positive impact much later when the occasion raises.

One significant point to note is that *both the project participants and project leaders believe and state that the projects **have positive impacts on the participants**, and the impacts are about cultural awareness, self-confidence, self-awareness and future personal, educational and professional decisions and aspirations.*

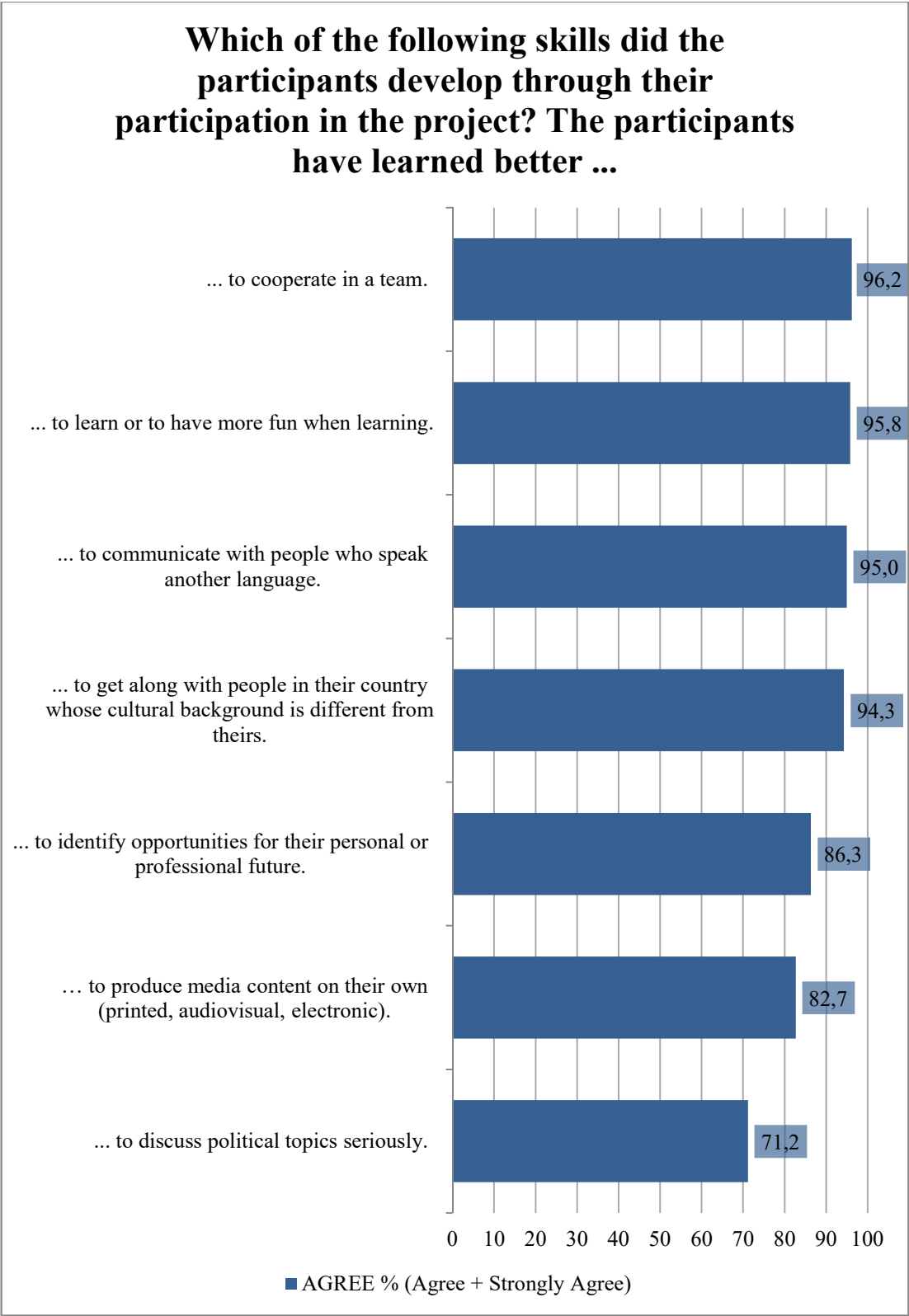
Finally, in the last part of the survey, project leaders were asked about the competence and skill development of the project participants. Respondents were asked to indicate whether the participants have demonstrated a development in a set of skills. The positive answers are presented in Graph 19.

The results demonstrate that according to the project leaders, the projects overall contributed not only to the personal development of the participants, but *also contributed significantly to the skill development of them*. Comparing the results from the participants' survey, it is apparent that the project leaders' evaluations are in the same direction with the participants, and they agree on the skill development aspect of the projects.

As presented in Graph 19, almost all of the project leaders surveyed (96.2%) believe that the participants *have developed their skills in cooperating in a team*.

In general, the evaluations of the participants are rather similar with the project leaders. The skills dealing with *team work*, *identification of opportunities for future*; *learning in non-formal and fun setting* were all mentioned with high levels of agreement by both project leaders and project participants.

Graph 19 Competence and Skill Development of Participants



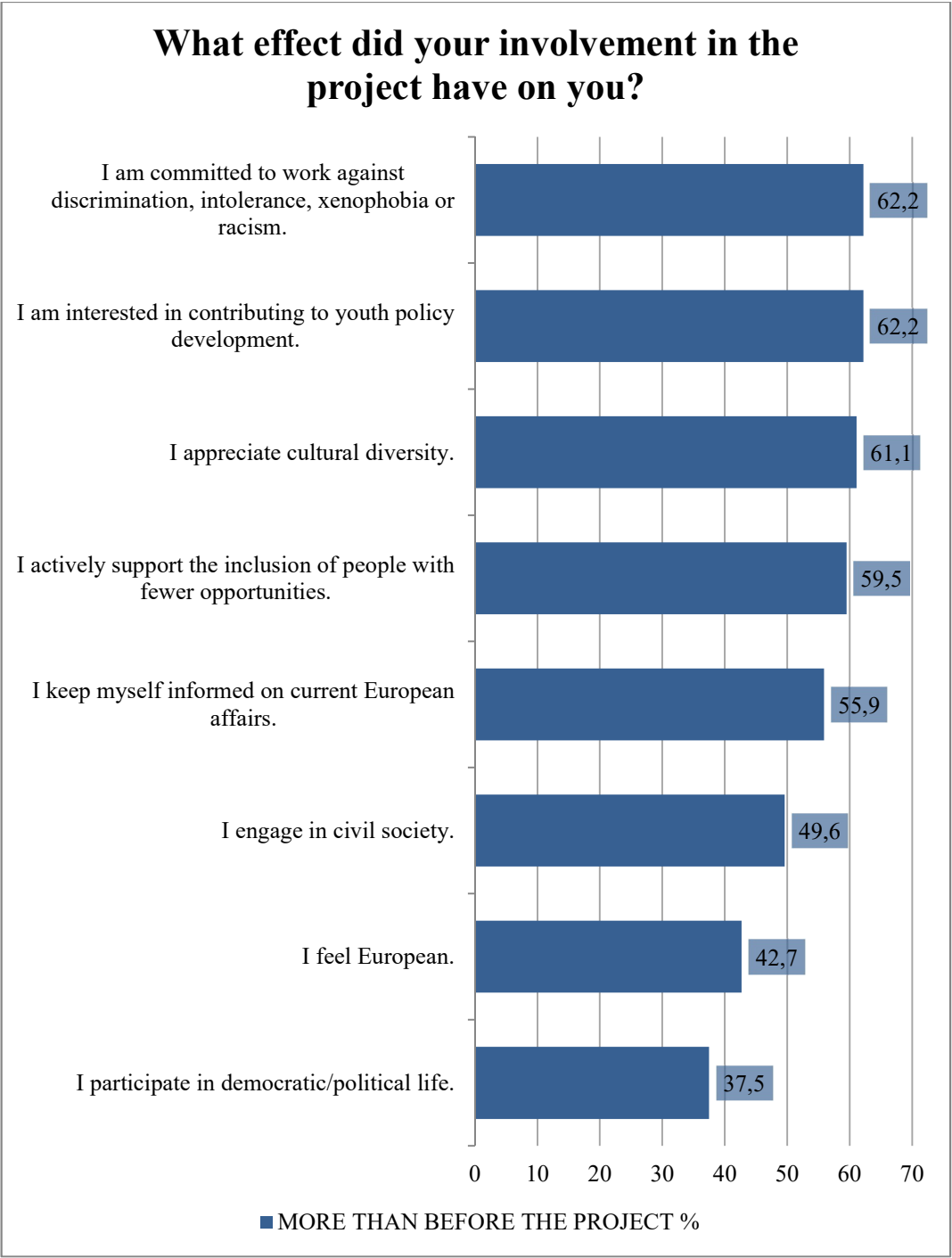
Engaging thoroughly in a project and assuming the role of a project leader is a major responsibility. As shown earlier, the project participants tend to not only continue participating in similar projects, but also take along further responsibilities and act in different roles as well. Therefore, it may be safely argued that almost all of the project leaders come from previous participant roles.

The preparation, implementation and evaluation of each project offers also a learning process for the project leader and presents valuable learning opportunities to all parties involved. RAY-MON also examines the learning and development of the project leaders as a result of taking a responsibility in a project. Project leaders were asked to report on their *own* learning processes and assess the impact of being a project leader on their self-development as part of the RAY-MON survey.

As demonstrated in Graph 20, overall more than half of the project leaders **believe that the project has a major and positive impact on them. 6 out of 10** project leaders **stated that as a result** *they appreciate cultural diversity more than before the project* and **half of those surveyed indicate that** *they keep themselves more updated about current European affairs.*

Being a project leader appears to have an impact on the professional motivation and aspirations of the individuals as well. **62.2% of the responding project leaders say that** *they are committed to work against discrimination, intolerance, xenophobia or racism more than before the project* and *they are more interested in contributing to youth policy development.*

Graph 20 Impact on Project Leaders



6. Towards the Recognition and Validation of Youth Work and Non-formal and Informal learning: Youthpass

Recognition of youth work and non-formal learning/education has been regularly on the agenda of European youth work since a first symposium was organised in 2000 by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe and the European Commission White Paper on Youth in 2001 claimed for a better recognition of non-formal learning.

It is also important to make a distinction between different forms of recognition, depending on who recognises learning and for what purpose. In the main reference document in the field of recognition, *Pathways 2.0*, the forms of recognition are defined as follows:

- **Formal recognition** means the “validation” of learning outcomes and the “certification” of a learning process and/or these outcomes by issuing certificates or diplomas which formally recognise the achievements of an individual.
- **Political recognition** means the recognition of non-formal education in legislation and/or the inclusion of non-formal learning/education in political strategies, and the involvement of non-formal learning providers in these strategies.
- **Social recognition** means that social players acknowledge the value of competences acquired in non-formal settings and the work done within these activities, including the value of the organisations providing this work.
- **Self-recognition** means the assessment by the individual of learning outcomes and the ability to use these learning outcomes in other fields.¹⁸

As a concrete result the European Portfolio for youth leaders and youth workers (2006, revised in 2014) and the Youthpass for Youth in Action activities (as of 2005, today within Erasmus+) have been developed in order to foster formal recognition.

¹⁸ Pathways 2.0 towards recognition of non-formal learning/education and of youth work in Europe, available from : http://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/7110668/GettingThere_WEB.pdf/

Youthpass is a part of the European Commission's strategy to foster the recognition of non-formal learning. It is available for projects funded by Erasmus+ Youth in Action (2014-2020) and Youth in Action (2007-2013) Programmes. As a tool to document learning outcomes, it puts policy into practice and practice into policy:

- While creating their Youthpass Certificate together with a support person, the participants of the projects have the possibility to describe what they have done in their project and which competences they have acquired. Thus, Youthpass supports the reflection upon the personal non-formal learning process and outcomes.
- Being a Europe-wide validation instrument for non-formal learning in the youth field, Youthpass contributes to strengthening the social recognition of youth work.
- Describing the added value of the project, Youthpass supports active European citizenship of young people and of youth workers.
- Youthpass also aims at supporting the employability of young people and of youth workers by documenting the acquisition of key competences on a certificate.¹⁹

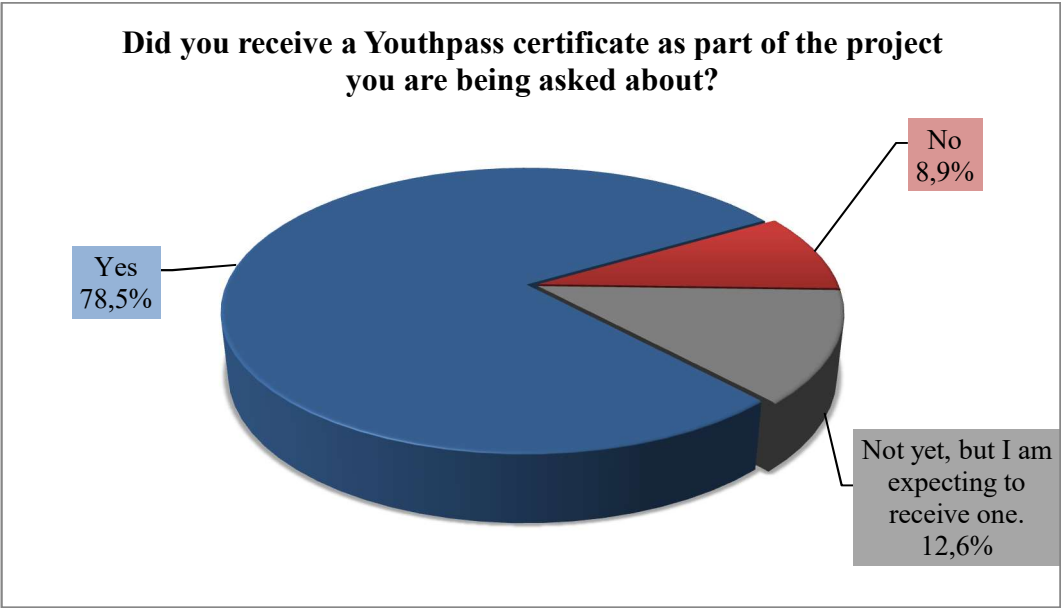
As shown in the related parts of this report, findings of the RAY-MON research, both from the project participants and project leaders demonstrate very high levels of project impact and learning and skill and competence development during the projects. However, the recognition of these knowledge and skills by the society is subject of inquiry. As The 'Youthpass' certificate describes, certifies and recognises the learning experience acquired during an Erasmus+ Youth in Action project, it is a good point to start.

Within the RAY-MON surveys, the participants were also directed a set of questions regarding the Youthpass and the use of it.

¹⁹ <https://www.youthpass.eu/en/youthpass/about/>

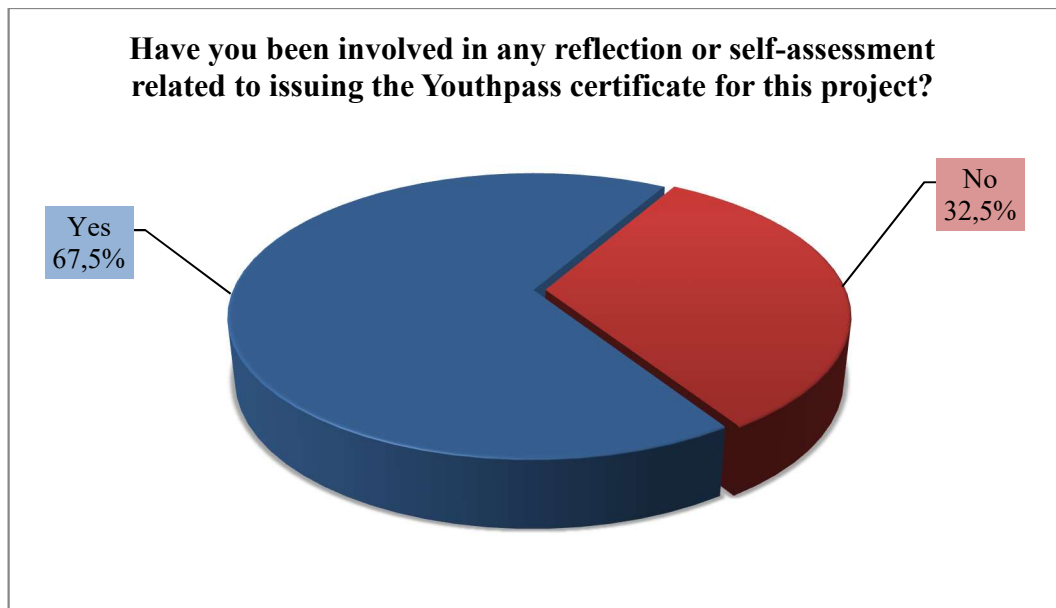
To start with, it is found that the project participants *received a Youthpass* is in a **decline**. **78.5% of those surveyed indicated that *they received a Youthpass at the end of the project they have evaluated* which is much lower than 94% in 2016.** (Graph 21) One other possible explanation is due to survey wording and design. In the previous questionnaire, there was no answer option, “Not yet, but I am expecting to receive one”. There is a high probability that those in this category would select the “Yes” option, thus creating a higher percentage. These two options total to 91% in this survey. But this issue needs further investigation, to track closely the distribution rates and the commitment of organizations to issue certificates.

Graph 21 Participants Having a Youthpass



Youthpass is not issued automatically at the end of a project. It is intended to be a self-evaluation and reflection tool, which enables the participant become aware of his/her development and learning. However, due to practical reasons, it is not unknown that certain projects do not carry out this reflection processes related to the Youthpass. Therefore, the project participants were asked whether there was a reflection or self-assessment at the end of their project as part of the Youthpass certificate. The results are presented in Graph 22.

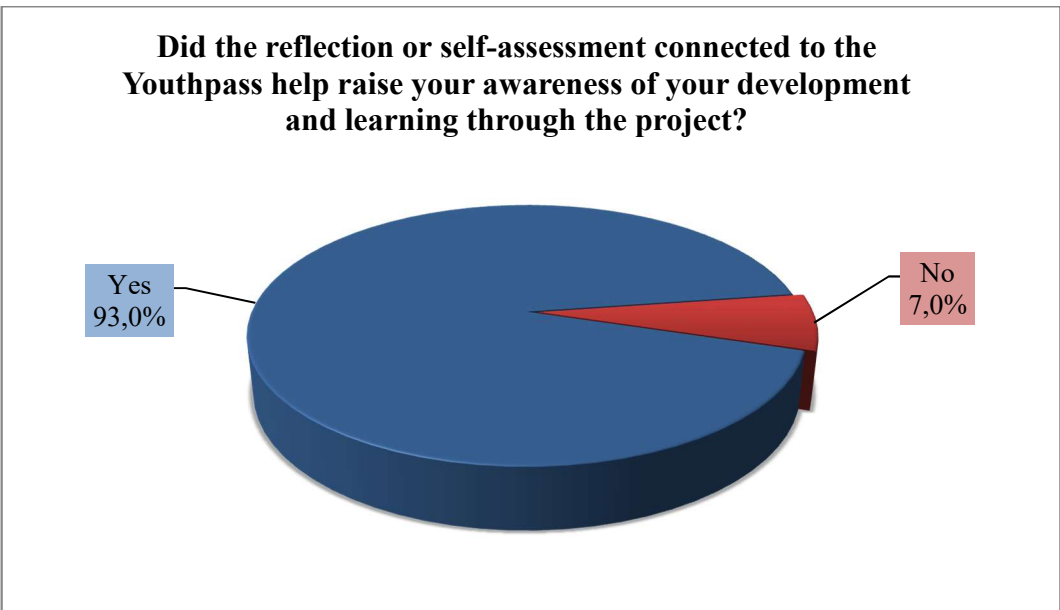
Graph 22 Youthpass Reflection and Self-Assessment



The survey data reveals that 67.5% of the participants went through a Youthpass self-assessment and reflection process at the end of the project, while **32.5 % state that they did not have such a process**, which is a rather high number and it should be noted down carefully.

Having a self-assessment or reflection process does not automatically guarantee a significant outcome. It has to be designed carefully and implemented thoroughly. The participants who stated that they had such a process were asked to evaluate the self-assessment and reflection they had for Youthpass. The results are very positive (Graph 23).

Graph 23 Youthpass: Effects of Reflection and Self-Assessment



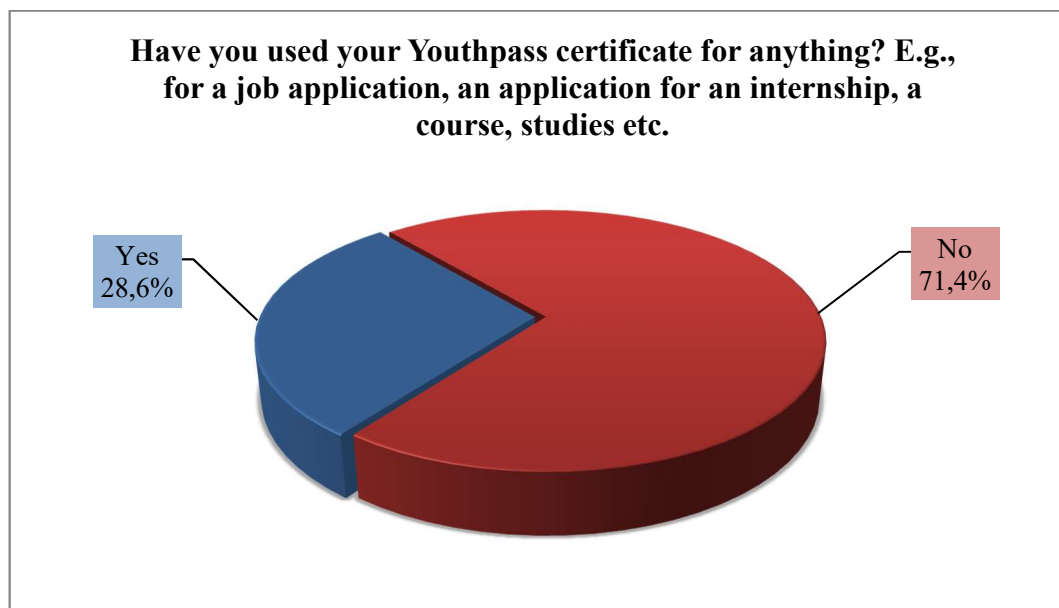
93% of project participants who had a Youthpass reflection and self-assessment connected to the Youthpass believe that it helped to raise their awareness of their development and learning through the project. This very high score demonstrates that a Youthpass connected reflection and self-assessment at the end of the project is very useful and necessary for developing the self-recognition of the participants. Through such a process, they can become aware of their own development and learning during the project, and therefore they can work more efficiently in gaining social and political recognition. In other words, a young person who is self-aware of the development can explain and transmit the benefits of non-formal learning to his/her environment better.

To increase the awareness about Youthpass in the larger society and improve its recognition is a priority. The Youthpass holders are recommended to include it in their CVs and portfolios and use it in their applications for employment, internship, and for further education.

RAY-MON survey asked the participants *who received a Youthpass* whether they presented it in some sort of the application. As the Graph 24 shows, only **3 out of 10 participants used the Youthpass in an application**. This low figure may be explained with the time

factor, keeping in mind that these waves of projects were *completed in 2017*. Therefore, the participants may not have had the opportunity to use it *yet*.

Graph 24 Youthpass Used in an Application

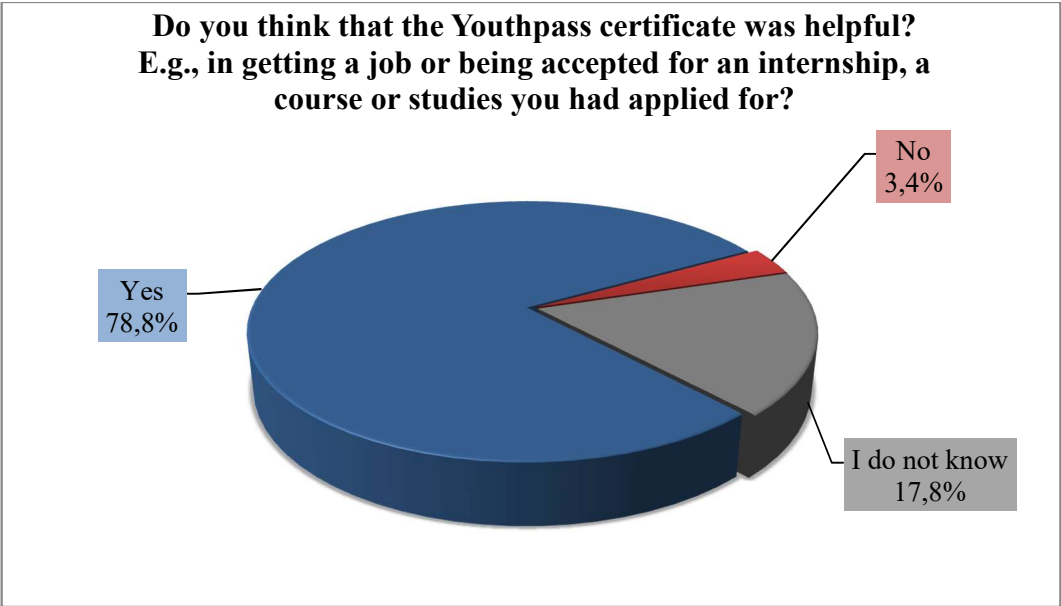


However, those who have used the Youthpass report very positive responses. It appears that when Youthpass was presented in some form of application in Turkey, **it creates a positive reaction**, according to the participants who have used it.

Graph 25 presents the percentages of Youthpass holders who presented it in an application and **believe that presenting a Youthpass increased their chances of being accepted**. **78.8 %** said that the Youthpass certificate *was helpful in getting a job, being accepted to an internship, a course or studies*.

Taken together, these results suggest that when used, the Youthpass makes an important contribution to the career and professional lives of the participants. Although the research on the level of recognition of non-formal and informal learning in Turkey is rather weak, the findings of RAY-MON and RAY research in the past years all point towards a potential to explore: there is an interest and positive reaction towards Youthpass and non-formal learning experience, however in the very limited areas where they are presented and discussed.

Graph 25 Youthpass: Value/Helpful for Being Accepted



7. My Story

RAY-MON surveys also include a few open ended questions which allow the respondents to share their ideas, experiences and suggestions in their own words. A closer look into these open ended responses reveal important insights on the quantitative dimension of the survey.

The most important characteristic of the personal accounts of the respondents is the confirmation of the positive impact of the project experience and how it changed the future plans of the individuals. There also a few complaints and criticisms on the level of professionalism of the project leaders, organizers and trainers. The structural criticisms are also plenty, regarding the flow and quality of information before and during the project; the conditions of living; the activity programme; the inclusion and ownership of the participants.

But overall, the testimonials are very much in line with the findings; they are about personal and professional development; change in future plans; intention for future participation in other projects and increased awareness.

- *Only thing I expect from you is closing this training gap in our country with activities of this kind. I expect you to provide environments in which students in my country can develop self-confidence, find a way out of pessimism and selfishness, and look hopefully to the future. It may be a solution to focus more on individuals with fewer opportunities and increase the number of national and international projects fit for this purpose.*

- *We expect more TCA activities and trainings. Projects and trainings offer significant opportunities for youth in the country and I am very happy to be able to make use of such opportunities.*

- *I experienced the most wonderful two weeks of my life in spite of serious health problems and I can say that it was a project providing me with valuable experiences for the rest of my life. I thank all who contributed.*

- *It was a magnificent experience for me. How fortunate is it that there is the European Union and its values (democracy, justice, freedom of thought, peace). I hope we can do a lot more together. Thanks.*

- *This experience contributed so much to my life. I suggest everybody to have such an experience at least once. I hope I will be going on.*

- *I wish the continuation of this work. I hope a larger budget is allocated and a policy that would include more people is adopted. I wish you good work.*

- *It was a very informative, educative and pleasing experience for me. It is also good that there is such a detailed survey work after the project, have a good work. I hope to meet you again in another survey after having taken part in another youth work.*

- *I am very happy to be a part of this project. I would like to take part in such a project again. Thanks.*

- *I can communicate in English. But since my level in English remained below other participants it was somewhat harder for me to actively take part in the training. It was a satisfactory and useful training, which included both a theoretical part and a visit for applied training.*

- *It was an unmatched experience for me to be in this project. I hope all will have their part in projects of this kind and you will be touching the lives of more and more young people!*

- *This project organised in Georgia was indeed at the hands of an almost professional team. The methods they used in non-formal learning were different and pleasant. The project itself was fine first of all.*

- *This programme was a perfect opportunity for me to express myself and feel free and independent! My wholehearted thanks to all those who contributed.*

- *After having taken part in these projects I started English courses and think about writing a project with friends. I can even say that we are about to start [writing a project] with the help of our teachers.*

- *There was a training delivered before I participated in EVS, that I had no information of. This experience of acquaintance before going was useful for my friends in establishing a communication network. It would have been better if it were wider. Other than these remarks I thank you for the opportunity you provided through my country, the project and the hosting and sending organisations.*

- *I am grateful to you for providing us an opportunity like EVS. It will remain in its special place in my life and never be forgotten. Thanks for everything.*

- *I believe I have drawn some lessons for myself after participating in this project. We are rather volunteers and as such we acquire new friendships and new worldviews with its excitement. Thanks.*

- *A nice project functioning as a bridge between cultures, religions and people. What everyone needs is social awareness. It was a successful project achieving its objective.*

- *As the number of projects that you develop and we participate gets higher, our cultural coalescence will be facilitated. We bring together more opportunities and more people to make the world a better place. Thanks for everything.*

- *It makes me very happy that problems I faced in my country and wonderful and unique experience I had in Europe are monitored in such a way [the RAY survey].*

- *Although our differences resulted from our languages, racial and cultural backgrounds, we were still together and free. Thank you for everything.*

- *It is a nice and pleasant project, but further benefit from selected volunteers must be ensured in some projects and organisations, and they must be endowed with further knowledge and skills through activities.*

- *Taking part in projects must have left a meaningful and lasting memory to all. Personally, besides their contribution to my personal development, I think projects have also changed my way of looking at things. This new awareness showed me that life is not squeezed into the city you live and one can easily follow after his dreams if he really wants to. I was one of those who tightly hold on to their dreams and I thank the National Agency for helping me in this process.*

- *I found the opportunity to meet and interact with other cultures and people with my own background, country and culture. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to mention my awareness in your survey.*

- *This project made me gain more than one thing. Firstly, I was in Europe for the first time; it is very nice to know, observe and analyse people from different cultures. I extend my thanks and satisfaction to all people working, who offered us this opportunity; it is good that you are here with us. Thanks again.*

- *In this project I realised that Europeans have many preconceived ideas about my country. I want to represent my country at different places and remove these ideas as soon as possible.*

- *Besides new information, skills and experiences, I realised with Erasmus+ projects how small the world is and we all smile the same way even if our languages are different.*

- *I was so happy to be a part of a project like this. This project contributed to my personal development, improved my knowledge, helped me gain experience in working together with youth from other countries facing the same environmental problems, and develop policies for solution. I'll be participating as a volunteer in this kind of work.*
- *This experience of mine made me gain awareness and new perspectives in many issues and I was also acquainted with many friends and cultures.*

- *Everything was absolutely perfect. The project, organisation, friends, being a volunteer... Somebody calling you "Hey volunteer" with a smile, talking with you for hours about the world and your country, seeing a new country, meeting new people and telling others about my country... All of them are great experiences. I will go again and do my best to have everybody get acquainted with Erasmus+. Thanks Erasmus+.*

- *Now I am settled and married in the country (Bosnia and Herzegovina) where I volunteered and presently I am working in the same organisation I used to volunteer for. I can speak three languages now.*

- *We had some problems in adaptation with other friends in my project but being there contributed much to me personally, thank you for everything.*

- *Firstly, thank you for giving me the option of taking part in this survey. The European Voluntary Service (EVS) project that I took part helped me significantly in experiencing very important and nice things in my life in a short period of time. Apart from this, I didn't see any missing part or question in the questionnaire. It was a clear and easily filled in questionnaire in general. Thank you again.*

- *1- Discrimination is a huge shame, 2- Whatever is banned, people will be drawn to. 3- Power flusters, but we cannot walk ahead without love. Europe has managed to impart love to its children, I could see that. We can do it as well. I appreciate and thank all those who put in their efforts to projects and wish them good work.*

- *European Voluntary Service offered me incredibly valuable experiences as was the case in many earlier projects and exchanges under the Erasmus+ Programme that I participated. Other than these nice factors that contributed to my personal development, there is a point I want to make for improving few aspects in EVS: Checking closer that persons selected by the receiving organisation as “mentor” and “coordinator” is not the same person... Also, there is need to improve health services in EVS activity areas and to ensure that doctors speaking English get in communication with volunteers. These are the two main problems I experienced in the EVS process. Thank you. In spiritual terms there was two different “I” before starting the programme and after. While returning back I felt more mature, positive, and open to learning, sharing things, materially and otherwise, and to solidarity. I am grateful to EVS for its contributions to me.*

- *Projects of this kind are very important for the development of us, young people. I am thankful to all who provided us with this opportunity. Lastly, I have an advice: Projects of this kind must be publicised much more intensively, especially in schools located at marginal neighbourhoods, villages and districts. I wish you good work.*

- *It was a remarkable experience for me. While I felt my freedoms deeper, I also witnessed different kinds of exclusion by other cultures. In any case, it was an activity I remember as nice and contributing much to me.*

- *Youth projects are indeed more useful and efficient than what one might expected. It is clear that there is change and improvement in every field. There are really great things worth telling others. Our wish is that there are more of such events. I mean, shortly, more projects means more young persons who are active and aware... Including this survey, I thank you for importance you attached to the ideas of other people. Greetings from Turkey.*

Conclusions and Recommendations

This RAY-MON report presents the general theoretical and methodological framework for the RAY-MON research, and accordingly discusses the country-specific findings of the research. The analysis depends on the data within the RAY-MON study, which consists of two large scale surveys conducted with the participants and leaders of Erasmus+ Youth projects with activity end date within 2017. It focuses on project participants and project leaders who are from Turkey.

RAY-MON report presents evidence that Erasmus+ Youth projects make a difference in the lives of participants.

The results presented in this report are consistent with those of earlier studies and suggest that whoever they are, wherever they come from, whatever the project duration is, the projects make a major contribution to the personal and professional development of the individuals who participate.

As the analysis in earlier section showed, the participants state that the impact of the project experience affect both the *present* and the *future* of their lives.

In terms of *immediate* changes; the analysis reveal that by using non-formal and informal learning methods, the participants gain new knowledge on a diversity of issues, regardless of the type or the theme of the project. The analysis also demonstrates that the learning dimension is accompanied with competence and skill development by the participants. As the results in section four show, there is strong evidence that participating in youth projects contribute very significantly to competence and skill development.

Learning dimension together with the skill and competence development indicate that the youth projects do not touch on just a single issue, but involve a complex and multi-faceted learning structure. The projects provide opportunities to develop very wide range of skills, from communication to team-work; developing initiatives to negotiation skills.

The participants share the opinion that as a direct result of project experience, their future is also different now, or at least they believe that with the new knowledge attained and with the skills and competences developed, they are in a better position to shape their future. The respondents state that the project contributed to their professional development and provided them with ideas about –potential- educational paths. The findings show that the experience gives them clearer ideas about their educational and professional aspirations, informs them about different education and career opportunities as well as contributing to their career and educational planning.

The positive evaluations for the impact on present and the future are seen to be correlated with the high levels of project satisfaction. The participants repeatedly indicate that they are and would recommend other young people to participate in similar projects. Furthermore, the participants also plan to participate in similar projects in the future. Therefore, it should be emphasized that high satisfaction levels in a project are highly related with factors of multiplier effect and return participation.

The findings also shed some light on the expectations and results relation. While the participants have very high levels of satisfaction, it also corresponds to their initial expectations for participating in such a project. When the incentives behind participating in youth projects are examined, it can be said that the greatest motivation is the desire to gather *new* experiences, meet *new* people, discover and learn *new* things. Therefore, the key concept ‘*new*’ appears as a crucial factor among the youth. As the results show, this expectation for facing the new is greatly met.

On a final note, it is also striking that the young people are the principle actors in reaching the information, making the decision, and participating in a youth project. They are active information seekers and decision makers in finding about the projects and deciding to apply in order to participate. The important role of the young people as their own agents should be recognized and encouraged.

In their search for information regarding the European youth projects young people in Turkey use diverse methods and sources. The youth organizations/associations are the most common source of information for participants followed by social and friendship

groups. These social and informal networks as well as the important role played by the organizations should be recognized and used for further mobilization and inclusion diverse groups of young people. The Turkish National Agency should continue to design and implement information and communication strategies targeted at the youth organizations. Another potential channel for dissemination and communication includes the potential social and informal networks, such as the friend networks of ex participants.

There is also an urgent need for a further study and analysis in terms of the participants' profiles. The RAY-MON surveys consistently point to a highly education group of participants in youth projects. A representativeness study that would provide information about the whole population of participants is urgently needed. With the data on the profiles of ALL participants of projects, the representativeness of the RAY-MON survey may be better assessed. Such a study would also answer the important question regarding the RAY-MON survey data. Are better educated participants more likely to respond to the survey, thus creating a sample that is different than the whole group or in general there is a systemic or unintended mechanism that enables and includes highly educated young people from Turkey to participate significantly more than the others?

In Turkey, for over ten years, these programmes have provided opportunities for personal and professional development for thousands of young people and other individuals, active in youth work at different ages, of different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and from different locations and continue to do so. People have the opportunity to travel to places that they would normally not have the possibility to go. For majority of the young people from Turkey, these projects are the only possibilities to travel abroad, to overcome the financial and bureaucratic obstacles.

The learning mobility dimension is very valuable. The people getting mobilised for an international project activity become part of an important learning experience, which makes this mobility fundamentally different than other types of mobility, such as backpacking, or Eurorail. The learning process combined with mobility makes the time spent in a project activity valuable for the individual, and as the data shows, the individual values and evaluates this time as a turning point in their lives.

This National Report is the fourth of its kind. The last three reports covered the periods of 2012; 2014 and 2015 and provided important findings regarding the impact of the Youth in Action Programme. Through RAY analysis and findings, the youth workers, youth researchers and related policy makers have the possibility to have a better understanding of the work they are involved in, and hopefully RAY findings provide the basis for further evidence-based policy making in the future.

The RAY research findings should be utilized for establishing and strengthening the *research-policy-practice* dialogue in Turkey. At its current stage, in the fields of youth work, non-formal and informal learning and learning mobility, it is difficult to argue that such a triangle exists in Turkey. Although the Turkish National Agency, particularly its programme monitoring unit is acting as a bridge between research and practice through its cooperation with different academic institutions, there is a need for further and deeper cooperation.

What is needed is a systematic and structured dialogue and cooperation between research, policy and practice in order to facilitate evidence based policy making and knowledge based youth work practice. RAY findings can be used as a first step to launch such cooperation. A structured sharing and dialogue process on RAY-MON and RAY-CAP findings should be initiated and the major findings should be disseminated among the relevant policy, practice and research circles. The practitioners should be introduced to the RAY research and the main findings in general and they should be encouraged to integrate the findings to their youth work practice in order to increase the quality of their projects and their overall work.

In a similar manner, the prominent youth researchers in Turkey, working in different fields such as youth studies, education, sociology, psychology and politics should be informed about the RAY-MON and RAY-CAP. They should be invited to make further use of the findings and integrate them in their own line of research. Furthermore, they should be invited to cooperate with the National Agency to make further analysis of the available data in their fields of research. Finally, the potential for conducting cross sectoral and comparative analysis of the RAY-MON and RAY-CAP data should be explored by investigating similar and comparable data from other studies. Through such

initiatives, it would be possible to generate further knowledge that could be used to strengthen the research - policy and research - practice dialogue channels.

RAY-MON and RAY-CAP can also make important contributions to the evidence-based policy making in Turkey. Evidence-based policy making is becoming increasingly important at European level, particularly within youth policy. As for the evaluation and impact analysis literature goes, monitoring without evaluation is an incomplete story; evaluation without evidence based policy recommendations is only story-telling. Thus, the RAY research and its findings should constitute the evidence to contribute to the policy making at national and local level youth work, in particular to the youth work dealing with international learning mobility.

The Council of the European Union adopted a *Resolution on the new EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027* and held a debate on its implementation in November 2018. The EU Youth Strategy is expected to develop a cross-sectoral approach by addressing the needs of young people in other EU policy areas.

In the official adopted EU Youth Strategy document, *evidence-based youth policy making and knowledge building* is presented as a central instrument. In the EU Youth Strategy, it is stated that:

The following measures will be used to achieve the objectives of the EU Youth Strategy where appropriate on a local, regional, national, European and global level:

Evidence-based youth policy-making and knowledge building: EU Youth Policy should be evidence-based and anchored in the real needs and situations of young people. That requires continuous research, knowledge development and outreach to young people and youth organisations. The collection of disaggregated data on young people is of particular importance to foster understanding of the needs of different groups of young people, particularly those with fewer opportunities. Evidence based policy-making should be carried out with the support of the Youth Wiki, youth research networks, cooperation with international

organisations such as the Council of Europe, the OECD and other bodies, including youth organisations.

The central role given to evidence based youth policy making, and the call for such a practice on local, regional and national levels, as well as European and global levels indicates that Turkey, with its larger youth population and its active role within European youth and education programmes, is also expected to invest in such practices. RAY research and the vast and rich data generated on young people and youth workers/leaders who participated in European Commission Youth projects provides an important opportunity to start with. The policy makers in Turkey, both at local and national levels should be introduced with RAY findings in a structured manner. They should be encouraged to become part of the research-policy-practice triangle and benefit from the knowledge generated and the experience presented within such a structure.

A key policy priority for the Turkish National Agency and other involved stakeholders should therefore be to plan for the long-term awareness raising and recognition strategy to disseminate the positive impact of these projects. The information provided by the RAY research can be used to develop a systematic and structured dialogue with relevant parties from practice and policy fields.

RAY-MON aims to systematically continue to monitor, assess and analyse the impact and contribution of these projects to the young people in specific and to the society at large. RAY Network provides a unique scientific, evidence-based and over time analysis of this important learning mobility opportunity for European young people.

The most important advantage of the Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of Youth in Action Programme – RAY Network National Research is that it is based on continuous and comparative analysis. Continuous and systematic data collection is a must in order to understand correctly the dynamic and changeable structure of the youth work, whose sole object is youth. RAY-MON, together with RAY-CAP provide a very comprehensive picture of the contribution of the Erasmus + Youth to the young people in Turkey, to the development of youth work and youth workers and overall contribution to the society. It is therefore essential to continue and complement the RAY-MON and

RAY-CAP findings and make use of them for better assessment and evaluation of the state of art in European youth projects in Turkey and other European countries.

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