



Impact of COVID-19 on Youth Policy

A Youth Department finding

How has COVID-19 impacted youth policy?

Losing contact with the member organisations

Project implementation

Cancellation

Funding withdrawal

Delay/postponement

Convert to online

Closure of youth organisations/youth spaces

Delays

Reduce mobility

Disinterested volunteers

Reduced societal impact

Youth Department Strategy 2020 +



1) To recognise the impact, the reality experienced by youth organisations;



2) To study the results – possibilities and lessons learned;



3) Aim to absorbing the consequences;



4) Move forward...

Recognising the impact



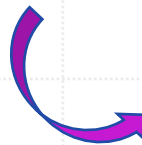
FEBRUARY 2020



ADVOCACY WORKING GROUP BROUGHT TOGETHER COMPOSED OF ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH AND STEERING COMMITTEE ON YOUTH [CO-MANAGED STRUCTURE] TO STUDY THE IMPACT.



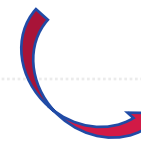
MARCH 2020



JOINT COUNCIL ON YOUTH [CMJ] DECIDED TO MANDATE THE WORKING GROUP ON YOUTH ORGANISATIONS AND COVID-19 TO INITIATE ITS TASKS AND TO LAUNCH A QUESTIONNAIRE TO YOUTH ORGANISATIONS, INITIATIVES AND NETWORKS ACROSS EUROPE.



JULY 2020 – AUGUST 2020



SURVEY LASTED A MONTH, WITH OVER 48 YOUTH ORGANISATIONS COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE.





Aim of the questionnaire

1. **How** does **COVID-19** pandemic influence the respondent youth organizations
2. **Practices being undertaken** by the youth organizations regarding the crisis;
3. Showcase the **digital tools and instruments** that the youth organisations were using or developed during the Pandemic in order to support young people;
4. **The support** – mainly financial - that youth organisations need to respond to the current crisis;
5. **Measures** that were taken at national and at the international level.



Objective of the questionnaire

- To offer a **general overview** of the youth organisations' challenges
- To present **existing practices of youth work** services delivery and of the activities that the youth NGOs had to adapt, and the online tools used
- To identify the **financial measures** and the other support measures that the local and national authorities put in place to support the youth organisations
- To map the **uncovered needs** that the youth NGOs have in order to respond to the youth needs and interests.
- To formalise **a set of messages for the relevant stakeholders** to further support the development of the youth sector.

Findings

Response rate:

In space of 31 days (about 1 month) – 48 youth organisations across Europe participated.

18 youth organisations operating locally;

14 international youth networks/organisations;

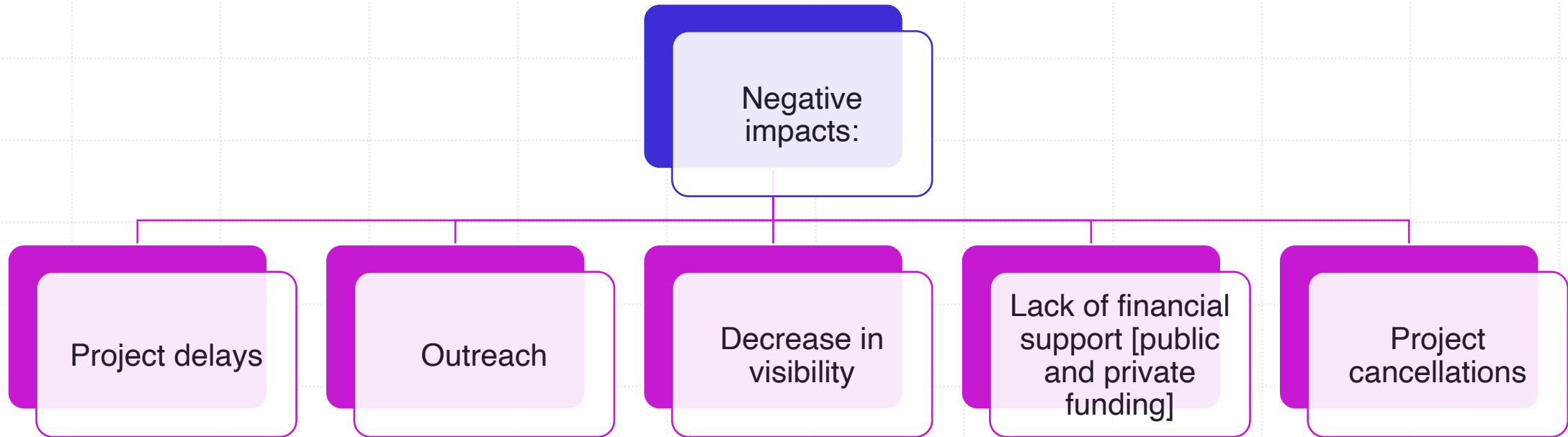
70% were members of a larger body of networks/associations;

83% worked in field of youth work;

46% worked in the field of human rights education;

45% worked in the field of youth policy.

All youth organisations in the survey stated that they were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.





Majority of youth organisations have had to cancel their programmes for 2020-1

- Lack of funding
- Difficulties in keeping the organisation motivated online.

Grant applications:

- 62% experienced delays in response to their existing or pending applications
- 45% experienced extension in their application
- 36% faced budget cuts

Loss of motivation

- Between volunteers
- Within NGO sector

Youth organisations felt as though they were neglecting their causes as issues were still prevalent, but NGOs were no longer able to cater for them.

Effect on the Activities of youth organisations



Opportunities

- **Online opportunities**

- Ability to familiarise themselves with digital technologies
- Majority of instruments were: Digital badges, Miro, Google hangouts, Zoom, Facebook etc.
- Youth organisations were not aware of many digital tools, instruments and practices developed by state authorities.

Tip given:

- State authorities should continue to develop digital tools, instruments and practices – providing them FREE of charge to NGOs.

Access to funding

Prior to the pandemic

- Funding came from local, national and international calls for projects;
- Budget came mostly from institutional bodies, private fundraisers or annual governmental grants.

Impact of COVID-19:

- Grant applications were delayed;
- Private donors allocated funds to support medical services;
- Cancelled projects or postponement;
- Little flexibility to shift projects online.

Statistics

- Over 80% youth organisations stated that they had not received any form of support from local/national authorities.
- Those who received the state support appreciated the support – especially when it covered for temporary payment of staff.
- Tax breaks from authorities during the pandemic helped many organisations in not going bankrupt.

Recommendations:

- Maintain a transparent communication with all NGOs on the emergency grant provisions.
- Make sure to include a long-term plan to include emergency grants – absorbing the consequences of the pandemic.
- Include the ability to use the funding on staff costs.

Support by institutions

80% of youth organisations participating stated that they received funding from European institutions and governmental grants.

90% of the organisations stated that they did not receive any financial support from international institutions.

- 10% who positively answered were waiting for Erasmus+, European Youth Foundation

51% of youth organisations participating had registered with European Youth Foundation.



Emerging challenges, gaps and opportunities

- In the case where the local, regional and national support was not available, the authorities could take measures to support the youth organisations. **To tackle this situation,** more flexible budgets should be provided.
- From the responses the digital gap should be noted. It is also the digital gap that the youth workers and the staff of the youth NGOs is going through and also the difficulties caused either by the lack of equipment or by the lack of competencies that young people are facing – especially those with fewer opportunities. **To tackle this situation,** digital gap deserves a special attention from the governmental and non-governmental actors and resources to tackle it.
- The pandemic also emphasised the challenge of sustainability of the youth organisations. Most of the respondents mentioned the fact that they face serious challenges related continue their activities due to the shortcoming in funding or not being able to diversify their funding opportunities. **To tackle this situation,** the governmental structures should also help the youth organisations.



Recommendations

Continue	Continue supporting youth organisations to help them in absorbing the impact of COVID-19 within their internal structures;
Avoid	Avoid imposing ridged regulations on youth organisations – this can cause shrinking space.
Provide	Provide funding allocations on national projects.
Cooperate	Cooperate with regional institutions.
Allocate	Allocate voluntary budget to European Youth Foundation to empower more youth organisations across Europe.