

The Long Term Training Course Enter!

Final Evaluation

November 2011

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Executive summary

The following document presents the final results of the ongoing evaluation process that accompanied the Long Term Training Course – Enter! (LTTC Enter!) that was run by the Directorate of Youth & Sports of the Council of Europe (DYS) under the auspices of the flagship Enter! Project on the Access to Social Rights of Young People from Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods from 2009 to 2011. In November 2008, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe reaffirmed the importance of human rights and social cohesion as pillars of the youth policy of the organisation, including

“(...) Ensuring young people’s full enjoyment of human rights and human dignity, and encourage their commitment in this regard”; (...) Supporting young people’s autonomy and well being, as well as their access to decent living conditions (...).”¹

The aim of the LTTC Enter! was

To develop the competences of youth workers and youth leaders to contribute to combating the social exclusion of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods through the development of concrete projects.

The LTTC Enter! provided 33 youth leaders and youth workers active in a variety of civil society based, youth work and non-formal educational contexts with complementary European training in competences essential for supporting young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods to access their social rights. Trainees developed local social benefit projects with a human and social rights education dimension with and for young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Through the development and implementation of these projects and the active evaluation of their experience, participants have improved their competences not only for the development and implementation of local educational interventions in favour of the access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, they have analysed their training needs for conducting their work for young people in respect of quality standards commensurate with those of the DYS for its non-formal education activities.

The training course was organised in six phases, involving 20 months of active participation on the part of the trainees over three calendar years, and was delivered through e-learning, face-to-face training (3 residential seminars at the European Youth Centres) and project implementation by a team of five members. Participants also benefited from extensive mentoring by the training team, and could request an individual project visit or the organisation of a regional mentoring meeting. Projects associated with the LTTC Enter! and that met the criteria of the European Youth Foundation received special consideration under its funding stream for local projects (Category D) whose priority for the period 2009 – 2011 was social inclusion.

In addition to the extensive focus of the LTTC on project development, implementation and evaluation related skills, participants received training in many

¹ Resolution CM/Res (2008)23 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe.

aspects relating to (non-formal) educational work with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods on access to social rights ranging from social rights and the main European mechanisms and instruments for their protection and promotion at international and European level, including the European Social Charter to educational and youth policy approaches for dealing with the challenges faced by young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods (including violence, conflict, exclusion and discrimination). They were introduced to relevant youth and social rights related programmes and instruments of the Council of Europe and some international institutions, and were exposed a variety of perspectives on quality standards for this kind of work. They had the chance to develop their critical thinking skills and to learn about how to work across sectors and cooperate with partners in the policy field.

The evaluation was commissioned with the dual objective of providing formative evaluation perspectives to the training team as a means of supporting their process of delivery and with the summative evaluation of the educational quality, strategic relevance and political impact of the LTTC Enter! as a complementary European educational intervention in favour of the access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and in relation to the objectives of the overall Enter! Project.

In general, the evaluation finds that this first, and therefore pilot, edition of the LTTC Enter! has largely reached its aim. Participants have gained in competence, capacity and confidence for their work on access to social rights with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Their knowledge and horizons have been extended and they have become sensitised to the potential of relationships with the European level. They have further become aware of the important of ongoing assessment and improvement of the quality of their work against recognised standards for non-formal education and youth work. The participants' projects have also contributed to the improvement of the awareness of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods of the rights, and in some cases have had concrete impacts on the situation of access to social rights of said young people. At the same time, several aspects of importance for the quality and adequacy of the LTTC as an intervention in favour of improved access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods ranging from the functioning of the intersectoral cooperation expected to support the effective implementation of the LTTC Enter! through certain curriculum and approach related choices made the by the training team would require reconsideration or improvement to ensure maximum effectiveness.

This report provides a synthetic overview of perspectives on the quality and adequacy of this pilot course as an educational intervention in favour of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods of the LTTC Enter!'s training team, its participants, the institutional stakeholders involved in the intersectoral cooperation supporting the course and of the evaluator herself, collected over a period of some 18 months using a variety of standard social science methods including documentary research, observation of the e-learning platform, surveys and questionnaires targeting the opinions of participants (including qualitative and quantitative questions) and semi-structured interviews. It is not a representative empirical research study and the results and conclusions presented in this report can be considered impressionistic at best. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the conclusions of the evaluation can be used for both the improvement of the quality of the educational experience and results the course offers as well as for the development of the institutional approach to working with the area of concern

represented by access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

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Yael Ohana
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Part I:

The Long Term Training Course (LTTC) Enter! in Brief

I.1. The Course Framework

I.1.a. Rationale for the LTTC – The Enter! Project

Europe has a growing number of multicultural communities, the result of migration and urban concentration. In and around many cities, the social and economic imbalances associated with migrant and minority communities have led to the development of disadvantaged neighbourhoods, where diversity is also accompanied by poverty and often with marginalisation or exclusion. These realities are accompanied by different forms and levels of *de facto* social segregation, exclusion, discrimination and violence.

At times of economic and social crisis, feelings of powerlessness and anxiety about future perspectives risk deepening local tensions and conflicts present in the neighbourhood. Realities are very different from country to country and from city to city; diverse also are the responses of local and national authorities. Rarely, however, are the root causes addressed; at best, policy responses are rolled out when critical epiphenomena (e.g. youth violence or delinquency) make it into the news.

The situation for young people in such disadvantaged neighbourhoods often serves as a barometer for their integration and for the cohesion of the community and of the society more broadly. Growing up lacking faith in their own futures, feared by the institutions and adults, many young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods seem doomed to confirm the stereotype. For some bad luck and its consequences in terms of social mobility are hereditary. The problems of both the neighbourhoods and the young people concerned are more often than not multi-dimensional. This implies that policy responses need to be intersectoral. This complexity is highly challenging, but it cannot justify a lack of action or response on the part of authorities, unfortunately common. On the contrary, this challenge should stimulate cooperation, creativity and determination in finding approaches for preventing that the social (human) rights of the young people concerned are violated and denied, and for the maintenance of social peace.

Youth policy and youth work are directly concerned by these situations. Youth workers and youth organisations are often at the forefront of projects designed to provide alternative non-formal education and leisure time activities, counter discrimination and exclusion, generally promote participation and citizenship, often with the aim of easing social tensions in the neighbourhood. However, these responses are insufficient in number and sustainability. Despite the identification of this phenomenon as "pan-European" (in other words, as taking place all over Europe) there are few possibilities at the European level for youth workers and youth leaders working in such disadvantaged neighbourhoods to share experiences, learn from each other and receive further complementary training specific to their needs.

The youth policy of the Council of Europe aims at providing young people with equal opportunities and experiences, which enable them to develop their competence to play a full part in society.

In November 2008, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe reaffirmed the importance of human rights and social cohesion as pillars of the youth policy of the organisation, including

“(...) Ensuring young people’s full enjoyment of human rights and human dignity, and encourage their commitment in this regard”; (...) Supporting young people’s autonomy and well being, as well as their access to decent living conditions (...).”

It is against this backdrop and in consideration of this rationale that the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe initiated its two-year project on the access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, better known as the Enter! Project. This project aims at developing innovative and effective youth work and youth policy responses to the exclusion, discrimination and violence experienced by young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The objectives of the Enter! Project are:²

- To address situations of conflict and exclusion of young people living in multicultural environments through non-formal education and youth work projects;
- To develop conceptual and practical means of translating intercultural dialogue into the realities of youth work;
- To explore and identify means for innovative youth work projects with young people at risk of exclusion and violence;
- To initiate, support and evaluate thirty-five innovative pilot projects with a high multiplier effect across Europe;
- To address situations of exclusion, conflict and violence affecting young people through partnerships between youth work, youth policy and local authorities;
- To consolidate results of the “all different – all equal” European youth campaign in relation to diversity, participation and human rights.

At the heart of the Enter! Project is a non-formal educational intervention targeting the training of youth workers and youth leaders active in disadvantaged neighbourhoods with young people who face difficulties in accessing and exercising their social human rights. The training, offered through a Long Term Training Course (LTTC) format aimed at developing the skills and competences of such youth workers and youth leaders for setting up projects to improve the access to social rights of the young people they work with in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and for their better social integration.

A key feature of the LTTC format is that each trainee is expected to develop a concrete project with young people, based on active participation, intercultural learning and human rights education. A dedicated website and an e-learning platform supported the communication and networking of the participants during their project implementation and evaluation.

The LTTC was developed in partnership with other sectors of the Council of Europe, especially those concerned with questions of social cohesion and local participation

² At the time of writing in August 2010 the Enter! Project is still ongoing although the LTTC Enter! has come to a close.

(Directorate for Social Cohesion; Congress of Local and Regional Authorities) to ensure intersectoral support for the development of projects that make sustainable educational interventions for the improvement of the access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The experiences of the projects of the participants of the LTTC have also been used in the development of policy recommendations on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights, contributing to the fulfilment of the overall policy development objectives of the broader Enter! Project.

I.1.b. Aims and Objectives of the Long Term Training Course – Enter!

The aim of the LTTC Enter! was

To develop the competences of youth workers and youth leaders to contribute to combating the social exclusion of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods through the development of concrete projects.

Its **specific objectives** were identified as follows:

- To develop participants' competences in developing and running a youth project for social inclusion based on intercultural learning, human rights education and participation;
- To familiarise participants with European youth programmes and policies (Council of Europe and European Commission) and the values, mission, structure and ways of working of the Council of Europe and in particular the Directorate of Youth and Sport;
- To concretely address situations of conflict and exclusion of young people living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods through non-formal education and youth work projects by the course participants;
- To explore and develop conceptual and practical means of translating intercultural dialogue into the realities of youth work;
- To identify and try out criteria for innovative youth work projects with young people at risk of exclusion and violence;
- To initiate, support and evaluate up to thirty five innovative pilot projects with a high multiplier effect across Europe;
- To share knowledge and experiences on challenges to human and social rights faced by young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Europe;
- To support the implementation of cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary youth work and youth policy by associating local authorities, youth research and youth policy development to youth work;
- To contribute to the recognition of youth work and non-formal education at local and national levels;
- To support the implementation of the objectives of the Agenda 2020 of the Council of Europe in relation to the social inclusion of young people.

I.1.c. Competences to be developed through the LTTC

The LTTC was designed to develop the participants' (youth workers and youth leaders) skills and competences to contribute to combating the social exclusion of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods through the development of concrete projects.

The following competences were identified as requiring attention during the LTTC:

- a thorough understanding of social rights as human rights and of the main European mechanisms and instruments for their protection and promotion at international and European level, including the European Social Charter;
- knowledge about the relevant programmes and instruments of the Council of Europe and other international organisations;
- knowledge about recent research results and the ongoing research projects in relation to access to social rights and young people;
- critical thinking skills and the ability to create multiple perspectives on contemporary human rights issues and dilemmas related to young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods or exposed to conflict and violence;
- Needs-based youth policy approaches and its relevance in youth projects;
- Intercultural learning and its applicability in local youth work;
- Management of cultural diversity with youth groups;
- Integrated policy approaches to local youth projects, in particular in relation to the development of partnerships with various institutions and partners concerned by youth policy and youth work at local and regional level;
- Non-formal learning and its role in promoting the autonomy and social integration of young people;
- Conflict transformation with young people;
- Developing democratic and participatory approaches with young people;
- Project planning and project management cycles;
- Communication and presentation skills;
- Networking and negotiation skills;
- Fund-raising and financial management;
- an understanding of key concepts related to the youth work and their role in transformative learning approaches;
- European youth programmes and policies (Council of Europe and European Commission).

I.1.d. Expected results and outcomes

For the course participants, their organisations and local authorities involved in the projects, it was expected that the LTTC would have the following results and outcomes:

- Improvement in the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights and new approaches to conflict transformation and violence prevention;
- Increased possibilities for development of new projects with young people and their efficacy and sustainability;
- Enlarged possibilities for networking with other projects and local authorities across Europe;

- Support to and recognition of the role of partnerships between youth work institutions, local authorities and youth researchers;
- Greater visibility for their projects;
- Institutional recognition and support for the local projects and initiatives by the Council of Europe;
- Increased competences for using European youth programmes and policies by local youth projects.

For the Council of Europe and its partners in youth policy, it was expected that the LTTC would result in:

- Thirty-five youth workers trained in non-formal education, intercultural dialogue, conflict transformation and human rights education;
- Thirty-five pilot projects set up at local level reaching and involving potentially more than 1.000 young people;
- Quality criteria for future similar projects identified in view of the multiplying function of the project;
- Prevention of conflict, violence and exclusion in suburban neighbourhoods across Europe;
- Increased experience and expertise in fighting social exclusion and addressing conflict situations in multi-cultural environments;
- Further recognition and understanding of the role of non-formal education and youth work for social inclusion of young people;
- A publication with results and examples of successful practice by the participants;
- Enlarged networks of youth workers and trainers across Europe;
- Youth policy guidelines and recommendations on the social inclusion of young people in multicultural environments.

I.2. Main characteristics of the LTTC Enter!³

I.2.a. Methodology

Long Term Training Courses are always organised in several phases over a specific period of time, as implied by the reference to ‘long term’ in the name. This LTTC included three residential training seminars. In between these seminars the participants were expected to develop and start a project based on the needs of young people with fewer opportunities addressing the problems in access to social rights that they experience in their disadvantaged neighbourhood. In addition, they were expected to participate in online e-learning assignments on a regular basis.

This methodological approach allows for a good balance between theory and practice, between learning and practical implementation, and understanding training as a process that is necessarily longer than the duration of a training seminar. A diversity of working methods was used, the starting point of the course being participants’ experiences. Inputs and interventions from experts supported the course team in the delivery of the knowledge component of the LTTC.

Participants were asked to engage in self-evaluation and an identification of training needs in relation to their specific situation in working with young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods as a basis for the team of trainers delivering the LTTC to adapt their proposed curriculum to real needs changing over time. This needs based approach has been an important characteristic of the development of the LTTC curriculum over its duration.

The LTTC was deliberately organised as a bilingual training offer. It is acknowledged that local youth workers and youth leaders active in disadvantaged neighbourhoods are not as likely as many participants of European youth training activities to speak foreign languages. Therefore, to ensure maximum participation of grassroots youth workers and leaders, it was decided to offer the course with simultaneous interpretation.

A further factor in the approach taken to the course was the deliberate focus on different profiles within youth work. This course welcomed a variety of youth work profiles ranging from voluntary youth leaders running local youth organisations through professional youth workers active in the youth services of local authorities. This intentional diversity in profiles was aimed at the enrichment of the projects of the participants and their personal and professional development perspectives.

³ For more detailed information refer to the course documentations which can be downloaded from the Enter! website: <http://enter.coe.int/eng/Publications>.

I.2.b. Calendar of the course

The course consisted of six phases stretching over a period of 20 months over three calendar years, including face-to-face, project implementation and distance learning elements:

Phase 1 – Introduction and preparation; e-learning 1

July 2009 – September 2009

This phase served to create the common ground for communication and to develop a mutually accepted learning culture between the participants of the LTTC. Through the e-learning platform, participants began the process of getting to know each other; building up a learning community; learning how to work with the e-learning technology; self-assessment of their competences (and those they feel they need to acquire); preparation for the first training seminar; analysis of the social situation of the young people with whom the projects would work.

Phase 2 – Introduction seminar

September 2009, European Youth Centre Strasbourg, France

This seminar addressed most of the knowledge-related issues described in the competences. Through input from experts, practical workshops and sharing of experiences, the participants expanded their understanding of access to social rights, the underlying causes of the situations of the young people their projects work with and developed attendant skills for youth work. A substantial part of the seminar was devoted to developing and shaping the participants' projects to be implemented during the next phases of the LTTC

Phase 3 – Project development and implementation 1; e-learning 2

September 2009 – September 2010 – Home based

During this phase the participants worked on the further development of their project plan and on its initial implementation. They benefited from the support and mentoring of the trainers. Visits to individual projects and project related meetings bringing together participants in geographical proximity or with similar projects were organised as appropriate. E-learning played an important role in this phase, with the exploration of themes and methodological issues related to youth work with young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Regular e-learning through the platform also ensured the maintenance of the learning community.

Phase 4 – Consolidation seminar

September / October 2010 – European Youth Centre Budapest, Hungary

Participants attended a mid-term residential seminar, in order to consolidate the learning achieved during the 1st project development phase and during attendant e-learning. The seminar focused on improving the projects and introduced new knowledge elements, such as the policy dimension. The group also had the opportunity to reconnect.

Phase 5 - Project implementation 2; e-learning 3

October 2010 – May 2011 – Home based

During this phase the participants worked on the implementation of their project (for those who had come that far); others continued development or were stalled. Participants again benefited from the support and mentoring of the trainers. Further project visits were organised. Further e-learning assignments were completed and communication through the platform continued.

Phase 6 - Evaluation seminar

May 2011 – European Youth Centre Strasbourg, France

This final residential seminar evaluated the overall relevance and achievements of the course and complemented prior learning with exchanges of best practice and the consolidation of the network of expertise generated by the LTTC. The course was brought to a close.

The participants in the long-term training course were associated to other activities comprising the overall Enter! Project including three research and policy development seminars (on the themes of youth information and counselling, youth policy approaches to access to social rights and gender equality in youth projects), a conference on the social mobility of young people, and a Youth Congress during which a Committee of Ministers recommendation on access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods was debated, in order to ensure better integration between the educational and policy dimensions of the overall Enter! Project.

I.3. Participants and projects in the LTTC Enter!

I.3.a. Profile of participants

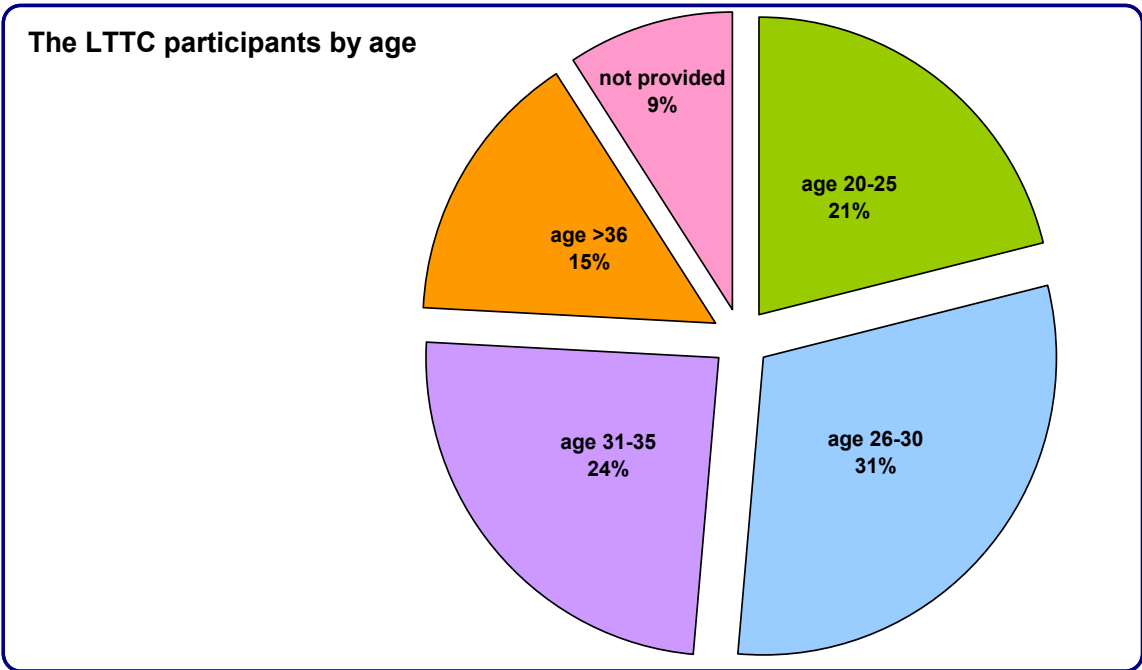
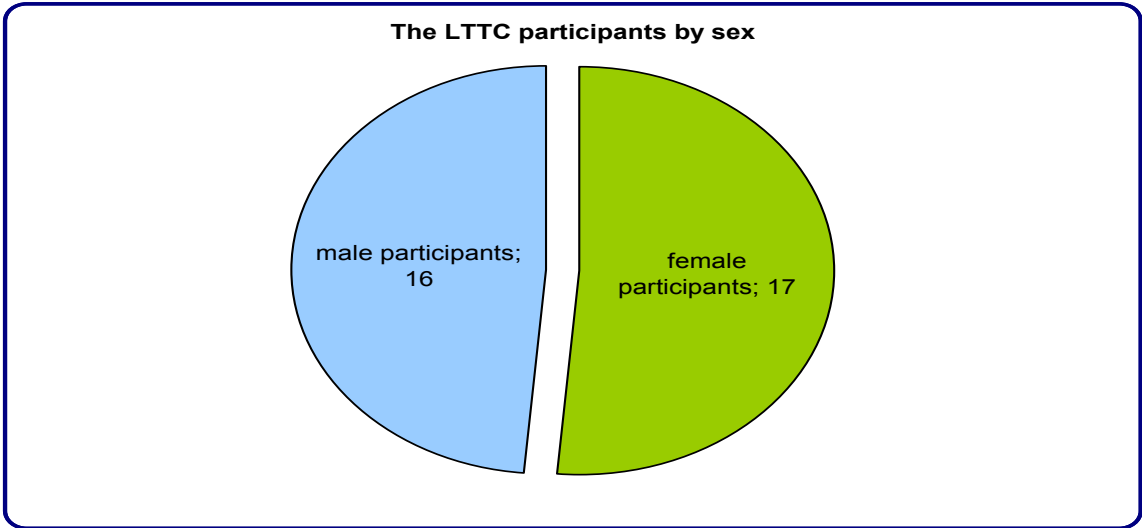
The course was organised and planned for the following profile of participant:

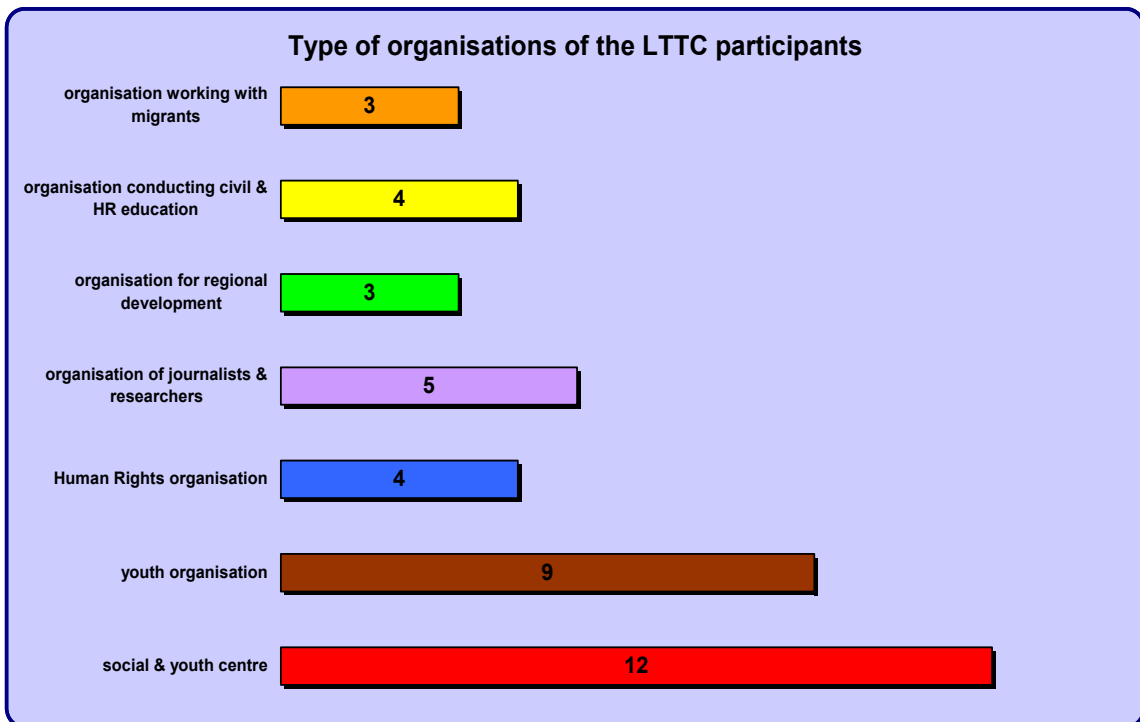
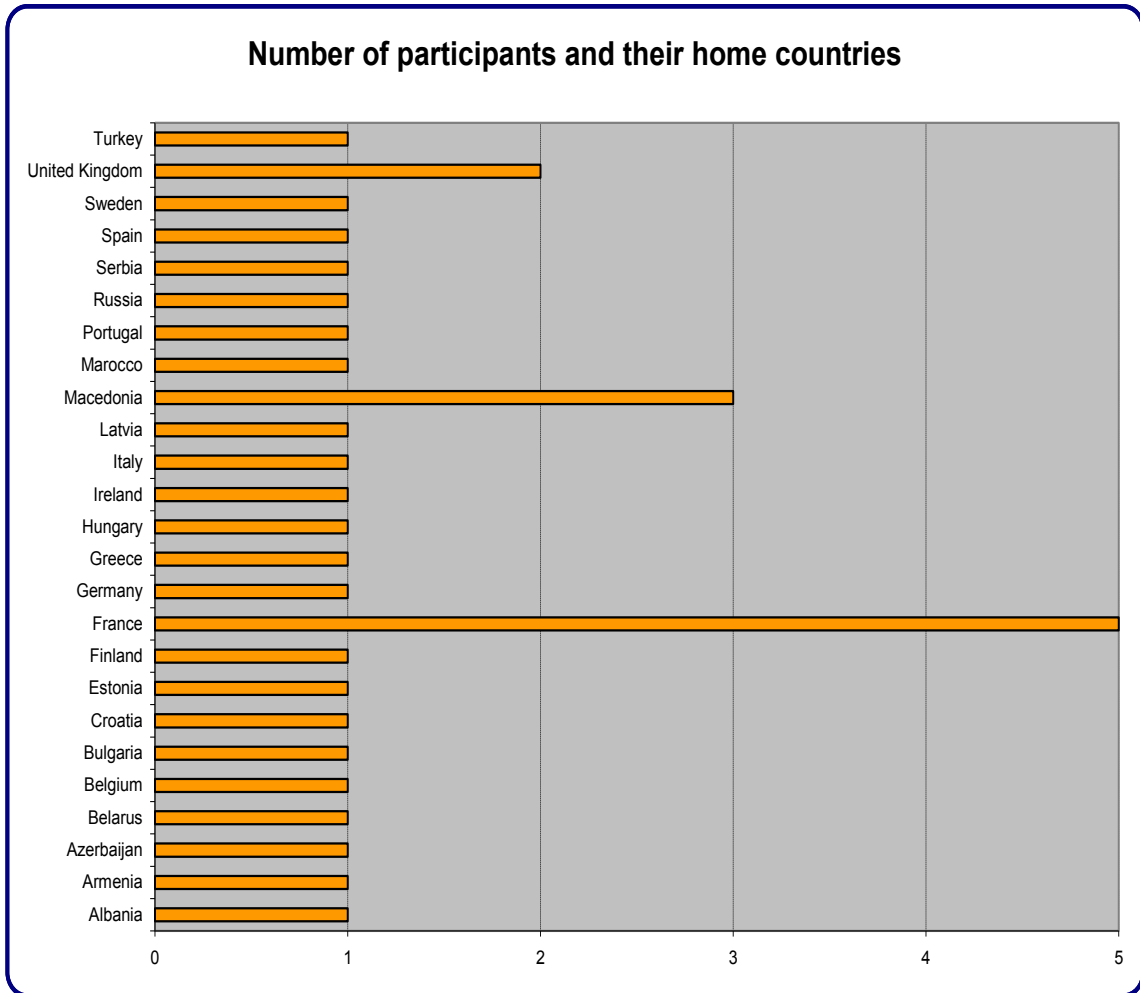
- Local youth leaders and/or youth workers active at grassroots level with disadvantaged young people and in disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
- Other educators working with young people with fewer opportunities to participate;

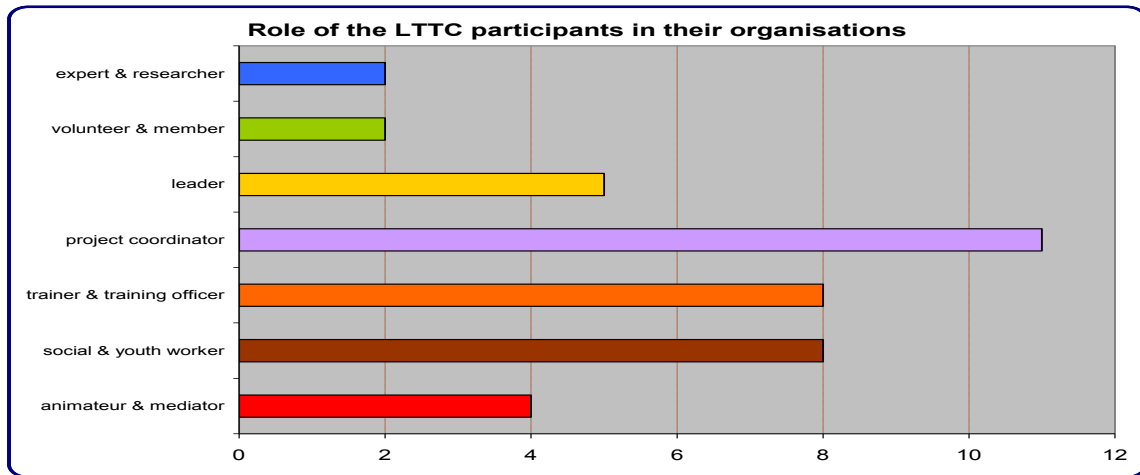
I.3.b. The participants of the LTTC

Over the duration of the course (20 months over three calendar years), the composition of the group of participants fluctuated quite extensively. 95 applications were received from 43 countries for the 35 available places on the LTTC. Of the selected participants, several accepted and then dropped out at the last minute, leading to the need to replace 3 participants from the waiting list at short notice. In the end, 31 participants attended the introduction seminar. One participant was asked to leave the course in the middle of the 1st project implementation phase, because of her total lack of participation on the e-learning platform and questionable commitment to the course. Two further participants dropped out of the course for various reasons. In the course of the LTTC, several participants encountered circumstances under which they were unable to attend a given seminar: some were offered new jobs or fellowships abroad, other lost their jobs or were moved to another department, yet others again saw their organisations collapse and close. Nevertheless, most of these participants continued with the e-learning dimension and remained 'part' of the course. Two 'new' participants were recruited to join the course to replace 'drop-outs' in advance of the consolidation seminar. In total, 33 participants had some involvement in the course. Further, not all participants participated in all elements of the course (residential seminars) and not all participants participated to the same level / degree in all e-learning units.

The following provides an overview of information about participants of the LTTC in graphic format:





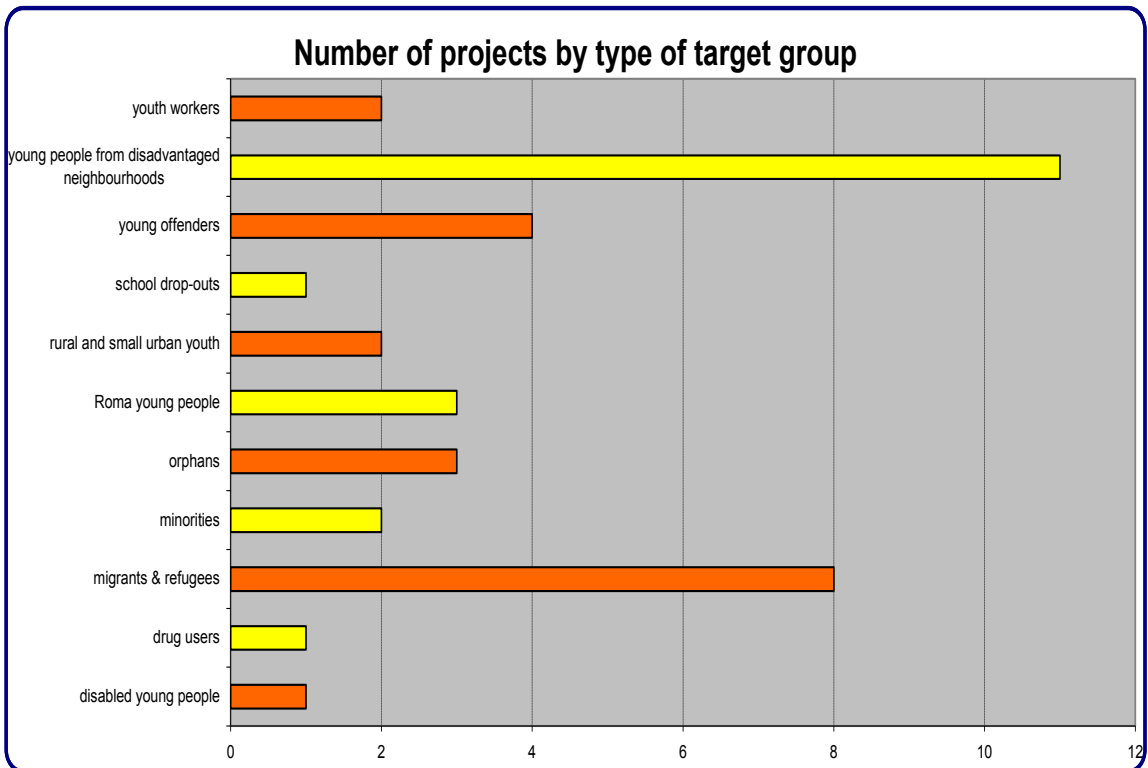
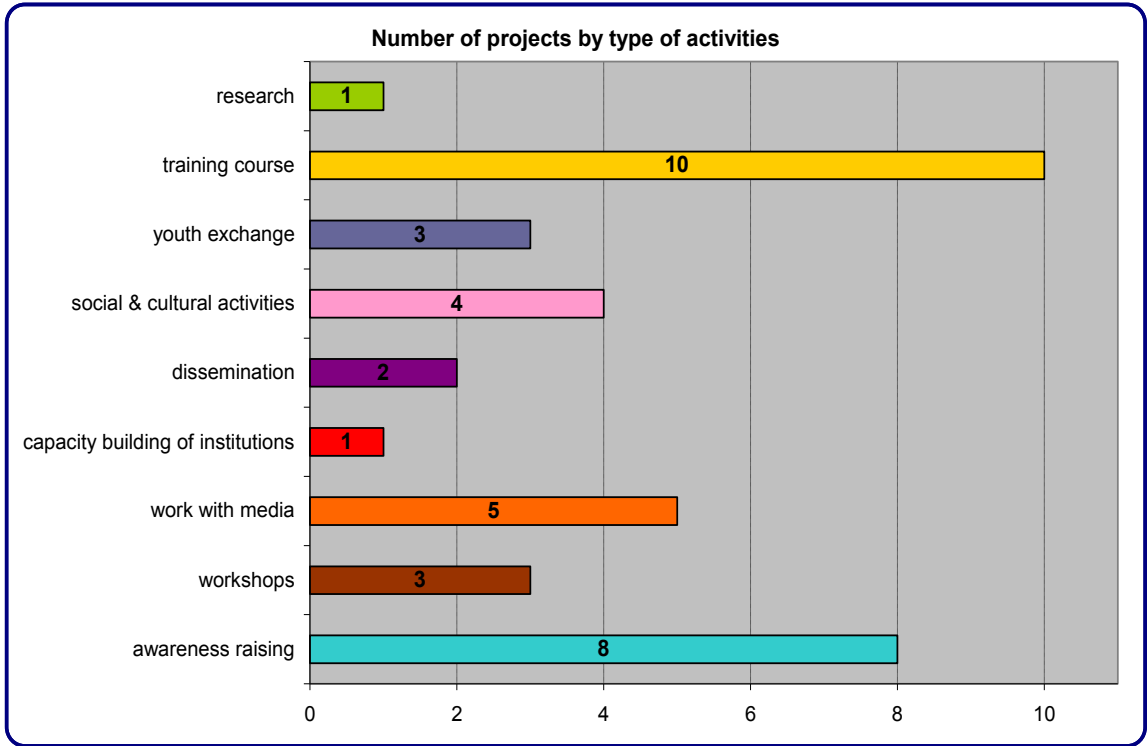


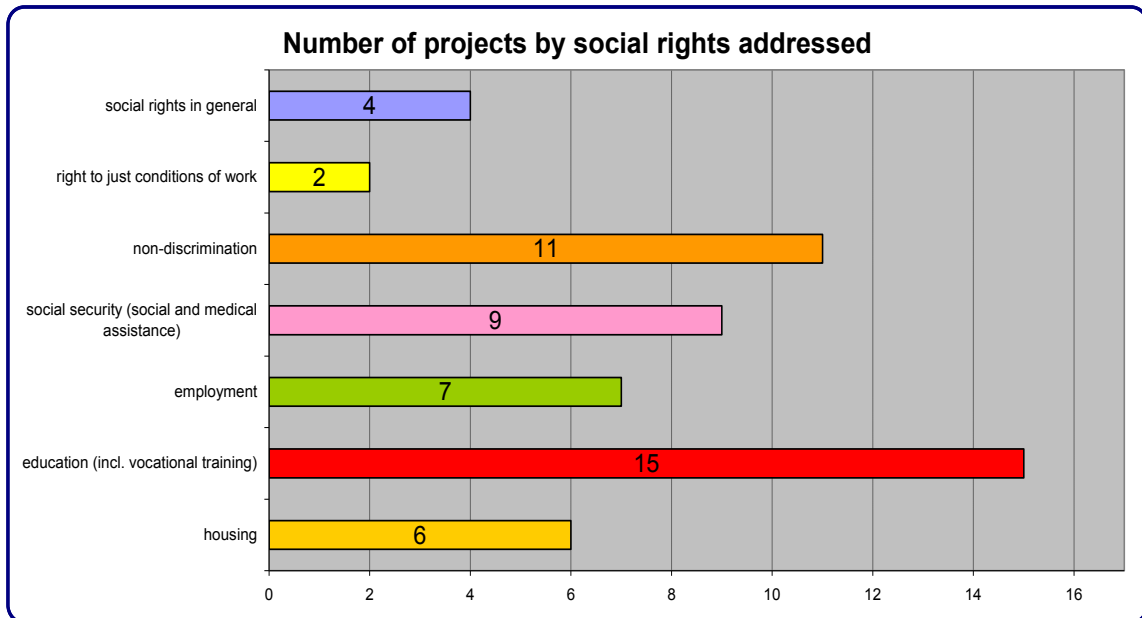
An in depth discussion and evaluation of the adequacy of the profile of participants of the course can be found in Part III – Results of the Evaluation.

I.3.c. Participants' projects

Participants of the LTTC prepared and implemented to varying degrees of completion and success a variety of projects, deemed to be *educational interventions in favour of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods*. Altogether 33 projects were planned to some degree of completion during the LTTC. By the time of the Evaluation Seminar in May 2011, 18 had been completed, 8 were ongoing, and 5 were stalled (in other words, had gotten stuck in the development or implementation phase, or had not gotten off the ground at all). Notably, one of the 18 completed projects was conducted by a participant who had to leave the course because his new employer would not give him leave to attend the remaining seminars – the organisation ensured that his project was completed by a colleague. Two participants, who left the course, did not implement projects. At the time of writing, the actual state of play of the 5 stalled projects was not fully known because the participants concerned had not filled in the project update form.

The following provides a concise graphic overview of some basic information about the projects developed within the LTTC:, based on a multiple choice survey of participants:





More complete descriptions of the projects of the participants can be found in the documentations of each of the residential seminars, in which the latest updated version of the project description at the time of writing appears. Further, the Enter! website contains updated project descriptions from around the time of the evaluation seminar, i.e. approx. May 2011 (<http://enter.coe.int/eng/Project-elements/ENTER!-a-long-term-training-course/Projects>).

An in depth evaluative discussion of the achievements of the projects can be found in Part III – Results of the Evaluation.

Part II:

About the evaluation

II.1. The evaluation framework⁴

II.1.a. Rationale

The Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe (DYS) and the other partners involved in the Enter! Project are committed to keeping access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods high on the youth policy agenda in Europe. In addition, they are concerned to understand the effectiveness of European level youth work interventions for the improvement of the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights and for influencing the policy level. This requires evidence of the utility and effectiveness of the LTTC Enter!

II.1.b. Purpose

The objective of this exercise was to develop and conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the LTTC Enter! focusing on the following main elements:

- Achievement of the political and strategic objectives of the LTTC
- Relevance of the LTTC for the overall Enter! Project
- Adequacy of the structure and features of the LTTC as a youth work intervention to improve access to social rights of young people
- Use and adequacy of the resources allocated to the LTTC
- Achievements of participants' projects
- Impact of the course on the learning of participants, their projects and their organisations
- Quality and adequacy of intersectoral cooperation between the project partners within the Council of Europe in the rolling out and implementation of the LTTC
- Impact of the participants' projects, and therefore, of the LTTC, on the policy dimension

II.1.c. Scope

Broadly speaking, the evaluation of the LTTC Enter! is an evaluation of a European level pilot educational intervention at the centre of a large-scale intersectoral and interdisciplinary co-operation project aiming at the improvement of the life situations of a specific target group of young people (young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods) as well as at the improvement of policies addressing their situations. Therefore, it covered a mixture of considerations specific to the LTTC alone, and generally relevant to the LTTC, as a key component of the Enter! Project. As such, it is neither purely educational nor institutional in scope, and it is hoped that the conclusions of the evaluation can be used for both the improvement of the quality of the educational experience and results the course offers as well as for the development of the institutional approach to working with the area of concern

⁴ The full evaluation framework as presented by the evaluator and accepted by the initiators of the course and evaluation in February 2009 can be consulted in the Appendices, available on request from the Directorate of Youth and Sport.

represented by access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It should, nevertheless, be clarified that this evaluation focuses exclusively on the LTTC Enter! and not on any other aspect of the Enter! Project, although it necessarily considers aspects of the LTTC in relation to the objectives of the Enter! Project. Further, it covers the duration of the training course – from the beginning of Phase 1 through the completion of Phase 6 (a total of 20 months over three calendar years). It does not include evaluation of other activities within the Enter! Project, in which LTTC participants took part. It also does not include evaluation of the Youth Congress (September 2011) in which some end-beneficiaries of LTTC participants' projects, among other young people, took part. It should be further noted, that direct evaluation with the end-beneficiaries of participants projects, although initially considered and recommended by the members of the Reference and Support Group (RSG) supporting the Enter! Project was far beyond the scope (in terms of time and resources available) of this evaluation and has not been conducted.

The role and mandate of the evaluator was defined during several preparatory meetings and conversations, and through the elaboration of the terms of reference for the evaluation. The evaluation process included the following tasks for the evaluator:

- Attending elements of the LTTC residential seminars, especially those during which the participants evaluate their learning, their projects and the impact of those for the access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
- Attending the LTTC training team's evaluation and preparatory meetings throughout the process of running the course, especially those concerned with the team's evaluation of the effectiveness of their training inputs, the fulfilment of the objectives of different elements of the training (residential seminars, e-learning, etc), participants' learning, their progress within in the LTTC and their projects and the team's own performance;
- Conducting interviews with individual and / or groups of participants about their experiences and learning within the course and about their projects;
- Identifying and reviewing documentary materials produced for and within the course and about the Enter! Project overall;
- Conducting interviews with project stakeholders within the overall Enter! Project about intersectoral cooperation, adequacy of resourcing and youth policy impacts of the LTTC, the adequacy of youth work interventions for improving access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
- Preparation of guidelines for the team members about the collection of evaluation information;
- Sharing observations and impressions concerning possible results of the evaluation with the team members that might be useful for them in their evaluation process and for the planning of effective course inputs at relevant moments during the implementation of the LTTC;
- Creating different kinds of evaluation tools for the collection of qualitative and quantitative evaluation information;
- Summarising and interpreting the results of any evaluation tools used and full documentation of responses to any surveys or questionnaires;
- Preparing and presenting interim reports and the final evaluation report with relevant appendices;
- Preparation of statistical analyses and preparation of graphs.

As implied by the above list of tasks, the evaluation was both summative and formative in nature. On the one hand, it was supposed to lead to the preparation of a comprehensive evaluation report at the end of the LTTC providing an overview of final evaluation conclusions and eventual recommendations to be used by the institutional partners in the further development of this kind of work on access to social rights of young people (i.e. this report). On the other hand, it also fed into the preparation and implementation process with observations from the ongoing evaluation with the aim of helping the training team to improve the training offer and the effectiveness of the LTTC.

II.2. Approach & methods used

As concerns the approach taken in the preparation and implementation of the evaluation, this could be categorised as ‘pragmatic’ in nature. The evaluation of such an in-depth and long term training process with participants from all over Europe working in highly diverse realities lends itself to the collection of masses and masses of information. In the preparation of the framework for the evaluation, it was important to both the initiators (DYS) and the evaluator that the evaluation process remains as focused as possible on the relevance and quality of the LTTC Enter! as an educational intervention in favour of access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and as a contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the Enter! Project. Hence, specific decisions concerning the scope, and by extension the approach of the evaluation, have been taken, including to focus the evaluation on the participants of the course and not to go one level further down ‘the food chain’ and to evaluate with end beneficiaries of the participants’ projects. This has some importance for the extent to which evaluation conclusions presented in this report can be considered valid and an evidence base on which to determine further DYS action in relation to improving the access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods beyond what can be achieved through a revised and improved LTTC.

As mentioned above in relation to its scope, the evaluation was both summative and formative in nature. On the one hand, it has led to the preparation of this report. It is hoped that the final evaluation conclusions and recommendations contained here will be used by the institutional partners in the further development of this kind of work on access to social rights of young people. On the other hand, it also fed into the preparation and implementation process of the training team with observations from the ongoing evaluation with the aim of supporting them to improve the training offer. Hence, in terms of approach, the evaluator was constantly on the look out for impressions that would be useful for the team in making the training as relevant as possible for the participants’ needs (stated and perceived). The team very openly worked with the feedback provided by the evaluator and on regular occasions re-considered what should be emphasised at a given moment in the course. However, this also means that over time the evaluator’s perception of the quality of the course has increasingly converged with the perception of the quality of the course of the team. Some impressions might have looked differently if the evaluator had not been so directly involved in the planning process. In the opinion of the evaluator this formative dimension of the evaluation has served to improve its accuracy and relevance. Others might, however, question its objectivity.

The evaluation relied on standard social science methods for gathering evaluation evidence including documentary research, observation of the e-learning platform, surveys and questionnaires targeting the opinions of participants (including qualitative and quantitative questions) and semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, participants of the LTTC and the team of trainers. This said, this evaluation is not a representative empirical research study and the results and conclusions presented in this report can be considered impressionistic at best. No causal relationships can be drawn between the ‘things that happened’ or ‘what was done’ during the course and specific outcomes in terms of the effects of participants’ projects in their communities. At best, we have been able to take the

participants' evaluations of the training received in relation to the elements they considered useful for their learning and that they were able to put it into practice in their project and to compare those conclusions and interpretations with those of others directly and less directly implicated in the training course and to draw some conclusions of our own.

It was well beyond the scope of this evaluation for the evaluator to be present during all face-to-face meetings and on the e-learning platform 100% of the time. In fact her direct involvement in the course was relatively limited. This said, the privileged access of the training team to the participants was a key source of information for the evaluation. To facilitate the process of information collection, the evaluator provided guidelines to the team of trainers about the kinds of information they should collect at various moments during the course and suggested and prepared methods for doing so.

The collection of numerical information and the subsequent generation of evaluation statistics in this project was very challenging. First, this is because we underestimated how difficult it would be to get participants and stakeholders to actively contribute to the evaluation through the online surveys and questionnaires. In fact, it was assumed that online surveying would increase the response rate, which has not been the case. Average participation in the online surveys has been approximately 50% among participants. This should not be misunderstood as a lack of good will on their part, however. The evaluation was demanding of their time and energy, in addition to the workload they had to deal with within the course in their spare time from work, studies and their LTTC project. Further, it was difficult for many to articulate their work in terms of results and impact, as well as to translate their work into numbers – even in relation to the financial aspects of their projects. Second, the ACT-HRE e-learning platform was not developed for the purpose of online surveying and questionnaires, nor even for the collection of statistics beyond those related to its own use within limited time frames of approximately 12 months, and is rather lacking in flexibility for adaptation. In one case, reprogramming was required, and this took an inordinate amount of time and effort, not commensurate with the resulting yield in information. Hence, the evaluation team had difficulties in developing relevant online evaluation tools using the poorly adapted technology and minimal technical support available. Thirdly, many aspects of the numerical evaluation lent themselves better to summative evaluation than to formative evaluation. Yet, it was important for the team and the evaluator both, to have punctual information about the opinions of the participants. This simply complicated the collection and especially the collation of statistical information within the evaluation – the results of repetitive surveys over time could not be merged automatically and the desired statistics had to be collated manually. Finally, many of the participants were not prepared for contributing with concrete information to the evaluation process through the interviews or the surveys conducted, and some had difficulties to quantify and qualify their own understanding of the achievements and challenges they faced as project carriers and learners during the course.⁵ These considerations taken together, the statistics included in this report can, at best, be considered a

⁵ This should have been addressed by the evaluator and the team during the 1st residential seminar, but was not anticipated as a potential problem. In the future such potential difficulties should be taken into account when preparing the evaluation and some activities should be foreseen to prepare participants for participating in evaluation activities.

graphic illustration of some of the evaluation conclusions, but cannot be considered scientifically representative.

As a result of its limited scope and resources for implementation, this evaluation has had to rely heavily on the self-reporting of participants, team and stakeholders, without there necessarily being any way to achieve corroboration of that self-reporting other than by comparison to the self-reporting of relevant others. This has been particularly problematic in relation to the 'measurement' of the potential multiplier effect of the participants' projects, or their impacts. It has also been problematic in relation to establishing the validity of, for example, stakeholder perspectives on the extent to which their expectations of the LTTC have been met, because it emerged during the evaluation that, in fact, stakeholders were relatively poorly informed about the LTTC (especially as time went on in the course).

For all of these reasons, it is the firm conviction of the evaluator that while the results of this evaluation may be considered valid for this LTTC pilot experience, and can inform its review and possible improvement, any extrapolation of conclusions about anyone or anything beyond this course (i.e. young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods or educational interventions to improve access to social rights of young people in those neighbourhoods, for example) is to be avoided.

II.3. Evaluation activities

The following evaluation activities have been conducted during the evaluation process. The activities are grouped according to categories of activities. Information about when the activities in each category took place is included with each category. A full calendar of the evaluation activities conducted in chronological order is presented in the Appendices to this evaluation report.

Establishment of the evaluation infrastructure: From approximately October to the end of 2009, the evaluation team put the necessary evaluation infrastructure in place, so as to be in a position to begin collecting information and feeding it into the work of the training team, including: finalisation and adoption of the evaluation plan; creation, preparation of the online mentoring report forms on the LTTC Enter! website; creation and testing of a repetitive online survey of participants to monitor progress in the course on the ACT-HRE platform; creation of an evaluation framework for use during project visits and regional meetings of participants; establishment of an evaluation framework evaluation with stakeholders (interviews and surveying); development of online evaluation questionnaires for evaluation with participants and trainers; development of an interview framework for team and participant evaluation. In addition, the evaluator created and regular updated an evaluation plan management tool to track progress in the evaluation, known as the 'rolling evaluation calendar'.

Attendance at residential seminars: Evaluation staff attended all three residential seminars (September 2009, September 2010 and May 2011) for some days to hold discussions with the team, observe the dynamics in the group, to speak to individual participants and to assist the team with specific seminar related evaluation tasks.

Evaluation with key stakeholders: In the period from approximately April 2010 to July 2010, 14 in depth interviews (approx. 2 hours in length each) were conducted with key institutional stakeholders of the Enter! Project and by extension the LTTC concerning their expectations towards the LTTC. A follow-up survey was conducted in September 2011 to assess the extent to which the expectations initially outlined had been fulfilled. The contents of both the summary of interviews and the results of the survey have been used extensively in Part III of this report, which presents the results of the evaluation. The full summary of the results of the interviews as well as the summary of the follow-up survey can be found in the Appendices.

Evaluation with participants: Over the duration of the evaluation (approx. November 2009 through August 2011), a variety of evaluation activities were conducted with participants of the LTTC in face-to-face settings, through interviews and using online surveying and questionnaires, as follows:

- Completion of four evaluation questionnaires, one for each residential seminar and an additional one for the LTTC as a whole; analysis and interpretation
- Completion of three repetitive online surveys; analysis and interpretation
- Extraction and analysis of the results of mentoring activities conducted by the team members with individual participants, covering the period February 2010 to May 2011

- Completion of 20 in-depth interviews with participants covering project evaluation and the contribution of the LTTC to their personal and professional development

The results of the evaluation questionnaires and repetitive participant surveys have been used to generate the majority of the statistics contained in this report. The summaries of all of these can be found in the Appendices.

Evaluation with the team: Over the duration of the evaluation (approx. November 2009 through August 2011), a variety of evaluation activities were conducted with the team of trainers of the LTTC in face-to-face settings, through interviews and using online surveying and questionnaires, as follows:

- Five meetings with the team including discussions of the evaluation plan, provision of ongoing evaluation input concerning interim results of the evaluation that might have a bearing on how the programme of the course should be planned and contribution to the meeting reports.
- Two rounds of interviews with all team members (interim and ex-post evaluation), summarisation and analysis of the results. The first round of team interviews was held from October to December 2010. The second round was held in July 2011.
- Three post-residential seminar evaluation questionnaires to assess team perspectives on the achievements of the course over time.
- One post-course evaluation questionnaire to assess team perspectives on the achievements of the entire course and to prepare for the post-course evaluation interviews.
- Analysis and interpretation of the project and e-learning tracking panoramas and preparation of relevant statistics.
- Analysis and interpretation of mentoring reporting.

The full summaries of team interviews and surveying activities with the team can be found in the Appendices.

Interim reports: Two interim evaluation reports were prepared and presented to the team and the DYS (one in September 2010 and another in February 2011). Their contents have informed the content of this report significantly.

Statistical evaluation: The evaluation generated statistical information concerning the level of activity of participants of the LTTC in e-learning assignments, and in general on the ACT-HRE e-learning platform; general statistics on the profile and characteristics of participants and their organisations; project related statistics (active and passive beneficiaries of participants' projects or end beneficiaries; funding mobilised; social rights addressed by projects, type of activities of projects, etc) and on their opinion of the utility and relevance of the course for their projects, personal and professional development over time. These statistics are presented in graphs throughout the report and serve illustrative purposes.

Attendance at meetings of the Reference & Support Group (RSG) and other activities within the Enter! Project: The evaluator attended the 2nd meeting of the RSG (December 2009) to discuss the evaluation plan and receive feedback to it, and the seminar on policy approaches to working with access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods (December 2010).

Part III:

Results of the evaluation

III.1. Structure of evaluation results presented

The results of the evaluation are presented in synthetic format, covering the main headings of the evaluation plan presented to and accepted by the DYS in February 2010, as follows:

- Institutional and other expectations towards the LTTC
- Participants learning and achievements in terms of competence
- Achievements of the participants' projects
- Feasibility and reproducibility of the participants' projects as interventions in favour of the access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- Quality of the LTTC as an educational intervention in favour of the access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- Resources and means for the development and implementation of the LTTC
- Intersectoral cooperation within the Council of Europe in support of the LTTC
- Impact of the LTTC on youth policy

In the evaluation plan a series of sub-headings under each main aspect listed above was identified as demanding enquiry. These sub-headings are not treated one by one under each heading, but are considered in a synthetic manner in the narrative.

The results pertaining to these main issues are preceded by a discussion of the institutional and other expectations towards the LTTC Enter! Part IV, entitled Conclusions & Recommendations, takes up the question of the extent to which these expectations were met or not.

This part of the report does not deal with the evaluation of the overall impact of the LTTC Enter! That is covered in the Part IV, 'Conclusions'. The evaluation of the entire Enter! Project is beyond the scope of this evaluation, but the LTTC's possible contributions to the fulfilment of the objectives of the Enter! Project are considered, again in the Part IV.

III.2. Institutional and other expectations towards the LTTC

By way of introduction, and having already outlined the general framework within which the LTTC Enter! has been rolled out, including the initiating institution's expectations towards it, it seems appropriate to precede the presentation of the results of the evaluation with a summary of the expectations placed on it by its other various stakeholders.

It should be noted that the expectations of stakeholders, while important for the training team to consider, did not have the same weight in decision-making about the curriculum of the course or about its educational process as the needs of participants identified before and during the implementation of the LTTC or as the institutional framework communicated to the team in advance of their initial curriculum planning. These expectations are given some attention here, and the extent to which they might have been fulfilled is given some attention in Part IV, 'Conclusions & Recommendations', as it would be naïve to assume that the project stakeholders a. did not have any expectations or b. that they all correspond to what the initiators had in mind when launching the LTTC. It is important to acknowledge this, as perceptions of adequacy, quality and success are heavily influenced by expectations, and sometimes even more so than by evidence and information.

Further, while many of the stakeholders' expectations were both reasonable and realistic considering the pilot nature of the course, team and course director warned against over-playing the potential impact of what remains a European level training initiative involving approximately 30 participants active in non-formal education, youth work and civic initiatives in the face of the extensive problems of access to social rights in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods represented in the course.

The initial interviews with key stakeholders addressing their expectations took place between April and June 2010. The full summary of the results of this round of interviews can be found in the Appendices. It includes a run down of the questions asked and a list of the institutional stakeholders interviewed. It should be mentioned that more key stakeholders were contacted than agreed to be interviewed, and some figures that might have been thought to have a direct interest in the evaluation (such as the representative of the national government that co-funded the Enter! Project) did not respond to our invitation to participate.

The interviews with stakeholders revealed a wide variety of expectations towards the LTTC. In summary stakeholders expected:

⇒ **That the local projects of LTTC participants address real needs:** In the opinion of interviewed stakeholders, the most meaningful result of the LTTC would be if the development and implementation of the concrete projects of participants would respond to the real needs of their end beneficiaries in terms of access to social rights. Significant changes in the situation of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods would be the ideal. Taking into account the information about the LTTC available to them (mostly the information on the Enter! website), stakeholders imagined that the projects could help to improve

- the self-confidence of their beneficiaries, overcome feelings of powerlessness and improve their awareness of their social rights. In addition, they might improve beneficiaries' access to employment, social welfare and other support systems. Finally, some stakeholders referred to the potential for some projects to act as preventive measures for social problems, such as school drop out, etc;
- ⇒ **That the competences of the LTTC participants improve and develop:** The LTTC was expected to develop participants' knowledge, skills and attitudes in areas such as (among others): knowledge of social rights, capacity to be an active youth leader or youth worker, skills to manage projects and youth organisations, including fundraising skills, ability to evaluate one's own work, methodological skills to understand the process of non-formal education and causes of exclusion. In addition, it was expected that participants develop their capacities to increase the self self-esteem of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and for supporting them to advocate for their own rights;
 - ⇒ **That participants develop their political literacy:** Interviewees emphasised the importance of cooperation with local policy makers, local authorities and other actors with an influence on the situation of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. For that, they need political competence, an understanding of policy-making processes, the ability to advocate for their positions, to have realistic expectations towards the elected representatives and, in the end, to establish working relations with policy makers. Stakeholders emphasised that through such political literacy, participants would become able to facilitate the influence of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods on the development of sustainable policy solutions to their problems of access to social rights;
 - ⇒ **That the NGOs participants represent are strengthened:** Interviewees hoped that the training course and the participants' projects would considerably contribute to strengthening local youth NGOs and youth structures in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, so they involve young people and become a focal point for new social initiatives;
 - ⇒ **That a pool of educational resources is developed:** Interviewees also hoped that the LTTC and the projects would generate educational resources in terms of methodologies, experience, new approaches, good practices and guidelines, evaluation results, materials, trained multipliers, etc, which can be assets for further exploitation and dissemination to the benefit of communities of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, the DYS, the other Council of Europe sectors, youth NGOs and other stakeholders;
 - ⇒ **That the LTTC has some political impact:** All agreed that the success of the LTTC and the Enter! Project should be communicated through the partners in the Enter! Project to other actors within and outside the Council of Europe political system who could help to follow-up and formulate adequate recommendations, observations, reports and policy documents in favour of improving the access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
 - ⇒ **That the visibility of the DYS and the Council of Europe youth sector is improved:** The entire Enter! Project, and the very concrete successes of the LTTC, have the capacity to increase the visibility of DYS' expertise in the field of access to social rights and social integration of young people, not only in the youth sector but beyond. An important expectation was that the sector becomes better recognised as an important player in this field;
 - ⇒ **That existing synergies are improved and new ones are created:** Interviewees agreed that there is already added value in the fact that the LTTC

brings so many people working together in various institutions and levels (local, national, European) – course participants and their peers, the project team, participants of other Enter! events, the stakeholders themselves at the European level – on an issue of common concern. It is hoped that the synergies that have been created in the context of this project can be maintained and developed over time.

The extent to which these expectations may or may not have been fulfilled has been assessed on the basis of the comparison of these initial results with the results of a post-course survey (conducted in September 2011) with the same stakeholders who were interviewed and with the evaluator's own impressions. However, of the 14 stakeholders which were interviewed only four responded to the post-course survey, which is very disappointing and might be taken as an indicator for the importance of this project on the agenda of the stakeholders concerned. The full results of that survey are available in the Appendices. The main perspectives on the fulfilment of expectations towards the LTTC are summarised in Part IV, 'Conclusions & Recommendations'.

III.3. Participants learning and achievements in terms of competence

In the course of the LTTC all participants had the opportunity to participate in three residential seminars⁶ and a series of monthly / 6-weekly e-learning assignments set by the team on different topics relevant to the development and implementation of the participants' projects on access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and the broader field of social rights, human rights and youth policy. The course documentations provide an overview of the contents delivered during these seminars and the e-learning phases, and a later section of this report deals with the evaluation of the adequacy of the contents of the training.

In terms of learning outcomes, and in relation to the three dimensions of competence (knowledge, skills and attitudes & awareness), participant and team interviews, the mentoring reporting, and the final evaluation of the LTTC reveal that participants have gained in terms of the following, presented in list format:

III.3.a. Knowledge

⇒ **About social rights**

- (Access to) social rights and how they relate to the groups of young people the participants are working with

⇒ **About youth work**

- Human rights education, social rights education, intercultural learning, youth work
 - Some theoretical aspects
 - Practical examples of how to work
 - Methods
 - Tips for how to more effectively facilitate direct work with young people
- The diverse ways of working with young people (from disadvantaged neighbourhoods)

⇒ **About Europe**

- The European dimension
 - Relevant institutions
 - Human and social rights frameworks (legal, etc)
 - Support measures for the participants' work
 - Existence of policies / instruments that can support participants' efforts at the local level

⇒ **About the situation of young people**

- In other disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- In other parts of Europe

⇒ **About (youth) policy**

- Local

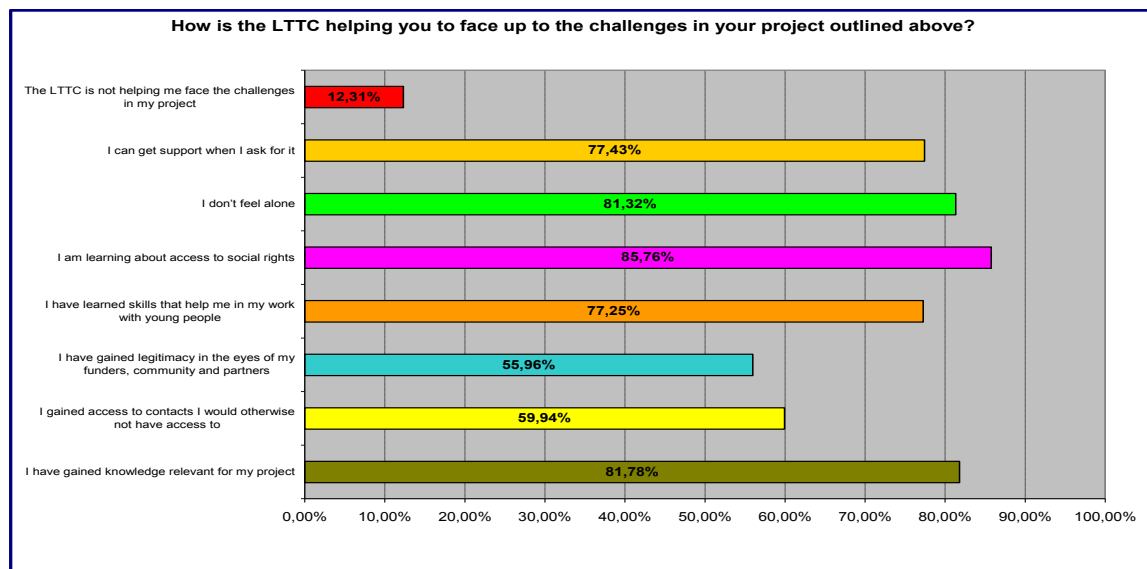
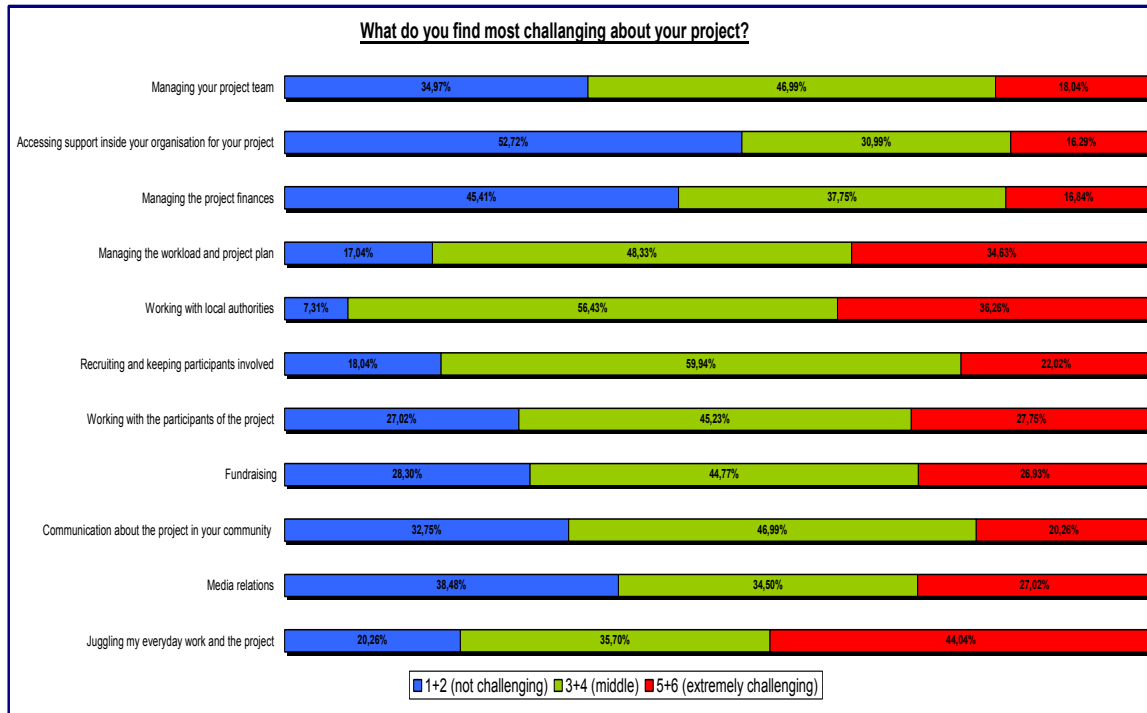
⁶ As mentioned above, not all participants were able to attend all residential seminars. The number of participants that attended each residential seminar is presented in graph format in the section of this Part of the report that deals with the evaluation of contents and curriculum, under specific consideration of residential seminars. See page 48.

- International

III.3.b. Skills

- ⇒ **Technical:** For example, making presentations, budgeting, time management, project writing;
- ⇒ **Pedagogical/educational:** For example, delivery of youth work, planning and delivery of non-formal education activities, understanding that learning takes place in a variety of ways and that young people have learning styles and preferences, as a basis for the appropriate development of non-formal educational activities;
- ⇒ **Political:** For example, skills for working with policy makers;
- ⇒ **Project-related:**
 - **Developing project impact potential** – Participants have learned that their projects can have a broader impact in their realities. The project ideas have been developed well beyond the initial idea with which they arrived at the first residential seminar – many look completely different at the end of the course. They have also improved and developed their understanding of how to make an impact, e.g. through working with other local actors and institutional actors, networking with other organisations, youth NGOs.
 - **Project development skills** – Participants gained experience in project development, both from a technical point of view (how to find partners, develop a needs analysis, plan step by step, etc) and from a conceptual point of view (access to social rights, needs of their participants, etc). Importantly, they have understood how integrating the theme of social rights and access to social rights into their projects can be relevant for the young people they work with.
 - **Translation of results into policies** – Participants have a clearer picture of how project results can be translated into policy interventions as a result of the course. Not all participants are able to do this yet, but they have begun to reflect on the necessity of doing it and on how it might be possible for them to do it through their projects. Most of the participants were not in the position to have this reflection before the LTTC. Further, they have developed their understandings of how their organisations work and of how to influence the policy and strategic orientations of their organisations. In some cases, this has led to the organisations adopting the theme of access to social rights as a priority in their strategic plans.

The statistical evaluation has revealed the following information about the LTTC as a support mechanism for participants to confront the challenges involved in their projects:



⇒ **For digital communication & e-learning:** Participants have developed their competence for working with the online platform and the online assignments through the e-learning dimension of the course. The majority of participants had no previous experience whatsoever of online learning and at the end of the course competently able to interact with the platform. Nevertheless, most of them have shied away from exploring and experimenting with the more challenging functionalities of the platform (WIKIs, etc) and, their e-learning competence can be said to have only developed so far. A more in depth evaluation of the challenge represented by e-learning for the participants and the

course as a whole is presented in this part of the report under the section dealing with contents and curriculum, E-Learning – see page 50. Beyond this, some participants reported that felt they had learned about how to use information and communication technologies to address and communicate with young people.

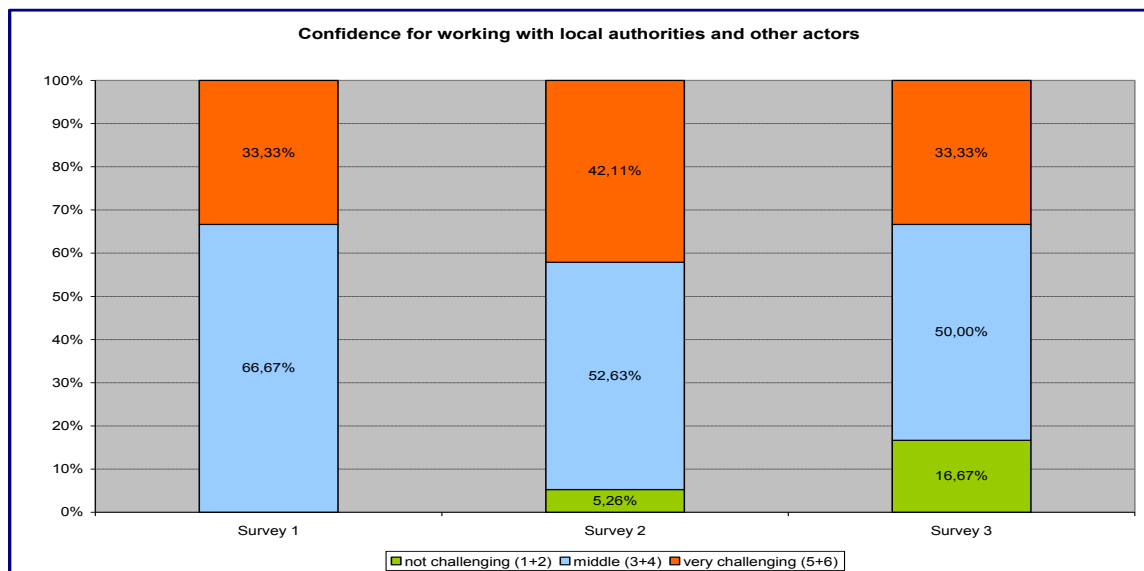
III.3.c. Attitudes, awareness & confidence

Participant self-reporting through a variety of mechanisms (mentoring, surveys, evaluation questionnaires and interviews) and various evaluation exercises and discussions with the team reveal that the course has supported participants extensively in the development of their personal and professional attitudes and self-awareness in relation to their work for and with young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods:

- ⇒ **Self-reflection & analysis** – This course has helped many of the participants to reflect on what they do, why they do it and how they do it. The course has broadened their perspectives. To a large extent, this is thanks to the exchange with other participants and with their mentors. Through the course, they have inspired, motivated and asked each other questions and have had opportunities to compare the things they are doing. This relates as much to their own personal and professional development as it does to the development of their organisations. Initially, the identification of competences and learning needs was difficult for many of the participants. Now they are better able to identify and assess their own progress and have understood the importance of regular self-assessment of what still needs to be learned (lifelong learning) to be effective in one's work. Participants have also learned about new ways of working in organisations and can now compare those with the ways of working habitual in their organisations. This helps them to consider what might need to change or improve in the way their organisations deal with the issues and target groups at the centre of their attention and to initiate discussions relevant to change and improvement.
- ⇒ **Readiness to consult with others** – Many participants have understood the necessity of communication and cooperation with other stakeholders in their neighbourhoods. Even those reluctant at the beginning, admitted they need to consult with local authorities (and even their youth related departments) for the sake of implementing any significant and sustainable change.
- ⇒ **Conceptual understanding** – At the beginning of the course, the majority of the participants considered human and social rights important but only as a result of the course do many of the participants consider that they actually understand these concepts, and see their practical implications and even usefulness for their daily work.
- ⇒ **Extended horizons** – The participants self-report that the course has extended their horizons beyond the situation of their specific disadvantaged neighbourhood and beyond their specific daily work format by bringing them into contact with others in similar situations from a variety of countries and professional / voluntary orientations. Participants also self-report that they have discovered that the connection to Europe offered by the course can provide them support and legitimacy. Further, at the beginning of the course, many did not think that the European dimension might be useful for their work with young people in the neighbourhood. Now they see more relevance in the European dimension, and they see interrelations between the local and the European levels, especially as regards the (youth) policy dimension of the work they are doing.

- ⇒ **Intercultural competence** – This course prioritised the involvement of a wide variety of youth work and social rights related perspectives by virtue of the diverse composition of the group of participants. While these participants are confronted daily with the ‘intercultural’ dimension of their neighbourhoods (diverse and mixed populations from a cultural, etc, point of view), it is rarer for them to be confronted with other ways or working or alternative approaches to youth work and access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Learning to learn from the exchange has helped participants to develop their intercultural competence.
- ⇒ **Renewed motivation, commitment and inspiration** – The participants self-report that they have had the opportunity to engage with important questions of the why and wherefore of their work, and through the course have developed renewed motivation, commitment and inspiration, a key condition for their work, in which they are often faced with knock-backs or the sense that nothing ever really changes. This positive effect of participation in the course has been corroborated by the mentoring reporting of the team members, and by impressions gathered by the team during project visits.
- ⇒ **Confidence** – Participants feel more confident in many respects. Certainly, one of the areas in which they lacked most confidence was in relation to engagement with policy makers and policy-making, including local authorities and other stakeholders at the local level, and this is something that has clearly changed according to the self-reporting of the participants.

The following graph shows the improvement of participants’ confidence for working with local authorities and other actors over the period from April 2010 to the end of the course, during which three participant surveys were conducted. The growth in the green block by survey three indicates that over time more participants found it ‘not challenging’ to work with the authorities and other actors.



Participants also report feeling more confident in general – in relation to the representation of their work to the outside world and in relation to the challenges represented by the projects and youth work with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. They have, it seems, learned to believe in themselves and their work. It is obvious that many participants feel better able to take action. If before the course, they were used to follow the instructions of others about what kind of

projects to do with the young people they work with, they now feel able to propose projects to the young people, taking into account the young people's issues, concerns, interests and needs. This has gained them recognition in the eyes of the young people they work with, as well as from their organisations and even local authorities. For some participants, this has changed the way in which other actors perceive and interact with them. Some of them feel that they are finally taken seriously as a social actor. They are invited to the meetings of the authorities and they are consulted in the neighbourhood about the social issues of young people.

In general, the self-reporting of the participants has been corroborated by the mentoring reporting and other evaluation activities carried out with the training team in relation to the learning achievements of the participants. In general, the evaluation finds that the list of competences that were to be trained through the LTTC (see Part I of this report) have been addressed, although some in more depth than others. In particular, those competences and contents relating to Council of Europe programmes, instruments and concepts of social rights as human rights (and in particular, the European Social Charter), project development related competencies and competencies for partnerships with the policy sector have been prominent in the LTTC. Less prominent were competences related to project management, the programmes and policies of other international organisations, fundraising and financial management and the more pedagogical dimensions of working through non-formal education in youth work.

III.4. Achievements of the participants' projects

33 projects were planned to some degree of completion during the LTTC. By the time of the Evaluation Seminar in May 2011, 18 had been completed, 8 were ongoing, and 5 were stalled (in other words, had gotten stuck in the development and implementation phase or had not gotten off the ground). Notably, one of the 18 completed projects was conducted by a participant who had to leave the course because his new employer would not give him leave to attend the remaining seminars – the organisation ensured that his project was completed by a colleague. Two participants left the course and did not implement their planned projects. Of the participants who completed their projects, several have begun a new or a follow-up project. Of these participants, three have applied for funding to the European Youth Foundation with the result that one project has been rejected, the second received a recommendation for resubmission and the third is currently in assessment.

It remains rather unclear, at the time of writing, how many of the completed projects have been thoroughly evaluated beyond that which has taken place during the training course itself, i.e. conducted by the project carrier during the consolidation and evaluation seminars. Participant interviews, the project panorama, and to the extent that these were completed, the project update at the end of the course, reveal a very mixed picture with regard to the evaluation of the projects. It would seem that only some have conducted in-depth evaluations of their projects with their teams and organisations. Some participants have also reported on their projects to the funders (for example, the European Youth Foundation), but this does not necessarily mean that they have conducted a full evaluation. While the team and the staff of the European Youth Foundation have identified that these participants had substantial difficulties in articulating and communicating the objectives, educational value, results and achievements of their projects, especially in written format, most of the participants interviewed did not have difficulty in identifying what they considered to be their project achievements and impacts, which they largely evaluate positively. It is noteworthy that several of the participants interviewed remarked that the interview was a good experience for them because they got the chance to really think deeply about what they had achieved, and it would help them to avoid pitfalls their follow-up actions and new projects. It contributed to the development of the awareness of participants that evaluation is not only 'a necessary evil' that must be gone through to satisfy funders or other authorities.

In relation to project achievements, the following can be observed at the end of the LTTC:

Visibility for access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods: Participants report that the projects and their association to the LTTC and the Council of Europe has created additional visibility for the question of access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. For the most part, this has had positive impacts for their work on access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Integration of strong social and human rights education dimensions into the projects: For many of the participants, access to social rights and human rights education were completely new. Even if they were working with issues and approaches close to social rights and human rights education, they did not name them as such or promote them as such, and they did not work with existing European frameworks for such. Participants have self-reported through the online surveys and the interviews that they have made progress in integrating these dimensions into the work of their organisations as well, or that they are making efforts to do so.

Impacts on the awareness of young people of their social rights: Many of the projects aimed at raising the awareness of their participants and the wider youth publics in the disadvantaged neighbourhood about social rights and they have succeeded in doing so through a variety of non-formal educational and creative approaches and methods. These projects and their project carriers are working from the valid assumption that the young people's access to social rights is also dependent on their knowledge of social rights.

Impacts on the actual access to social rights of the young people involved in the projects: Some participants' projects also aimed at addressing the lack of access to specific social rights of the young people they work with and have attempted through a variety of interventions to improve the actual situation of the young people involved in their projects. The actions of these projects range from interventions to help young people into training and qualification schemes to interventions to help young migrants access legalisation and citizenship procedures. These projects have an impact on a small number of young people only, but in some cases they have changed the life situation of the young people concerned.

Policy follow-up: A larger number of participants than initially expected have considered how the results of their project can be utilised for policy change or improvements in the disadvantaged neighbourhood where they are active. Most of these are actively working towards the development of follow-up actions with a specific policy dimension. Several of these are focusing on how to improve or even introduce altogether local youth policies specifically relevant to the access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Increased capacity of the project carrier and organisation: The experience of the project, and its systematic planning and implementation with support from the LTTC, has increased the capacity of the project carriers and their sending organisations in a variety of project related competencies. Many of these project carriers and organisations had never considered applying for European funding (if they even knew it was available), had never used a structured methodology for project planning, had little experience of conducting a needs analysis, and were not used to conducting evaluations, etc. The continuous mentoring by the team throughout the course has helped participants in the development of their project management competencies as well. A further dimension of increased capacity in the participants' organisation relates to their human resources. While the extent to which participants' colleagues have become more competent could not be assessed, it stands to reason that the small teams of 3 – 5 people involved in the planning and delivery of participants' projects have contributed to increasing the capacity of the participants' organisations for conducting such projects. Nevertheless, the team has evaluated that even at the end to the course, these participants have real difficulties in articulating and communicating the objectives, educational value, results and

achievements of their projects, especially in the context of established and bureaucratic administrative systems (e.g. funding, working with policy actors, etc).

Project funding: Of the 26 projects completed or ongoing, all but 2 required some form of external funding to be implemented. 2 participants were able to run their projects using the resources of their organisation, exclusively. The other 24 made funding application to the European Youth Foundation (17 projects) and some other primary funding sources, including the Youth In Action Programme of the European Commission (2 projects), the Swiss Development Agency (1 project), the Italian Ministry of the Interior (1 project). All 17 LTTC participants who made an application to the European Youth Foundation received a grant. Further, the projects also had some form of co-funding (mostly in kind, but some in cash) from other sources to make up the total resources they required to run their projects (for example, private donations [1 project] and the organisations' own resources [6 projects]).

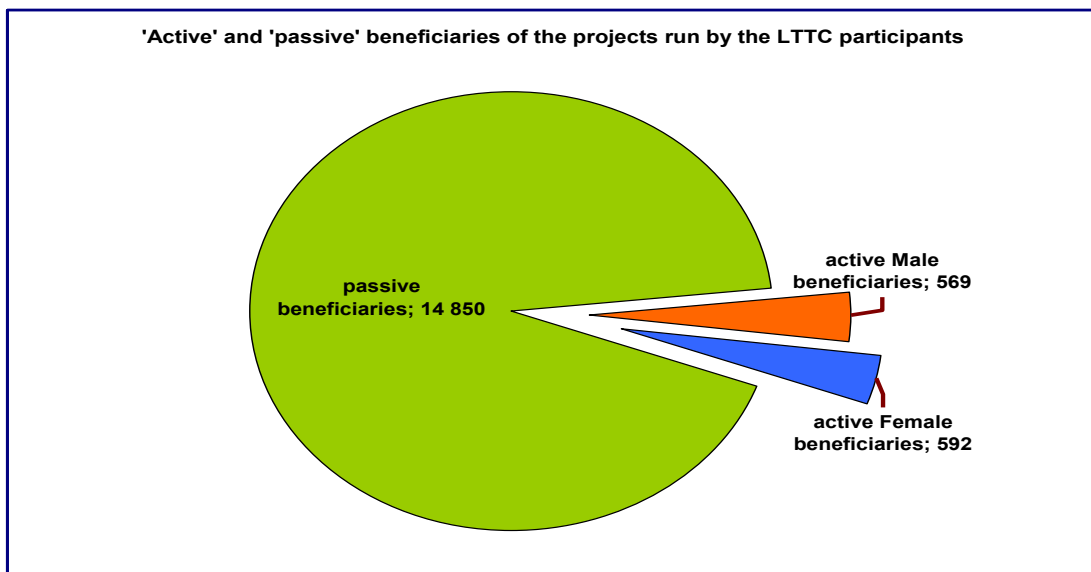
The evaluation finds that these results in terms of project funding are an achievement. For the majority of the participants, this was the first time they ever applied for funding from a European source and most had little or no experience in writing project funding applications of any kind. In addition, and as mentioned above, some have been able to mobilise cash co-funding in addition to the funding provided by their primary funder. All the projects were able to mobilise some other resources (in cash or in kind) that contributed to the implementation of the project.

Nevertheless, accessing project funding is one of the main challenges experienced by participants. Evaluation with the staff of the European Youth Foundation revealed that while 17 applications for funding were accepted in the end, applicants from the LTTC required extensive coaching and support from both their mentors and from the staff of the EYF to make it through the process. The team also evaluated that more in depth training in fundraising, relevant funding sources and managing project finances early on in the training process would have been helpful to all the projects carriers, because of their general lack of experience in this relation.

A further point in this relation is that access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods was made a specific priority for the European Youth Foundation in its last funding cycle, overlapping significantly with the LTTC. Hence, while projects had to meet the EYF criteria and demonstrate a relevant level of quality to be considered, their thematic coherence with the priorities of the EYF potentially advantaged them over projects not participating in the LTTC. Further consideration of mitigating factors for considering the funding accessed by participants as an achievement of the projects can be found in the section of this report that deals with the feasibility and reproducibility of the projects (see pages 38 - 42) and that deals with the contents of the LTTC (see pages 47-54).

Project reach: It was extremely difficult to assess the multiplier effect of the LTTC projects. Conducting an empirical evaluation of the multiplier effect, for example by surveying end-beneficiaries about to whom they spread word of the project, or by surveying local communities about the visibility and results of the projects, was well beyond the scope of this evaluation. Nevertheless, participant self-reporting can give us an indication of the potential reach of the projects, and by extension, of their multiplier effect, even if the figures cannot be empirically verified and remain the subjective estimation of the project carriers. The evaluation asked participants to calculate how many 'active' and 'passive' beneficiaries their projects reached. Active

beneficiaries refers to anyone who was involved in the LTTC projects in some identifiable capacity – for example, as a learner in a training course, as a project team member, as a volunteer, as a trainer, etc. Passive beneficiaries refers to anyone who was reached by the project through, for example, awareness raising activities, information distributed, etc, but who did not participate in any educational or other activity within the project or who did not have a concrete implementers role. The following graph shows the breakdown of active to passive beneficiaries of the LTTC projects. In absolute terms the LTTC projects reached 1,161 active beneficiaries. The project carriers estimated that their projects reached a total of approximately 14,850 passive beneficiaries. This implies that the potential reach of the LTTC projects was 16,011 people and that the ratio of active to passive beneficiaries of participants' projects was approximately 13:1. It would be tempting to estimate the multiplier effect of projects that reached approximately 16,000 people as rather 'large'. Nevertheless, it should be noted that 5 projects accounted for 13,500 of the total number of 'passive' participants, while the remaining 21 account for just 2,500. Hence, 'guesstimations' of the potential multiplier effect of the LTTC projects should be avoided.



Cost-benefit: Pure cost-benefit analyses of educational investments are often misleading, because many dimensions of impact that can be the result of educational interventions are hard to estimate and measure in terms of return on financial investment. A concrete example in this context is that many projects aimed at fighting discrimination, but it is notoriously difficult to measure 'non-discrimination' or to measure how many fewer cases of discrimination there were as a result of the projects' intervention. Nevertheless, consideration of the costs involved in the projects considering their outcomes, provide us insights into the potential of (small-scale, local) projects to impact the situation of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The total net financial investment in the participants' projects, not counting the financial investment represented by the fact that the project carriers were participants in the LTTC (i.e. the cost of the training per se), was 223,500 euros. If one only considers the 18 completed projects, plus those that are ongoing (another 8), and discounts the 5 that are stalled, so in total 26 projects, then we are looking at an average project cost of a little over 8,500 euros each. If one then considers

the large reach that the projects seem to have had and other project achievements outlined above, there is reason to evaluate the cost-benefit ratio of such projects as very good. While small scale, they cost very little and require little external or cash funding. At the same time, it might be argued that it would be more accurate to count the cost of the training per participant as an investment in the project as well, and therefore as an element to consider in the cost-benefit analysis. If this is counted, then an investment of approximately 467,500 euros has been made in 26 completed and ongoing projects, which represents an investment of approx. 18,000 euros each on average. This of course changes the picture with regard to cost-benefit considerably. Nevertheless, usual standards of acceptable cost-benefit for European projects considered, the evaluation finds that the cost of the LTTC projects cannot be considered too high for their achievements.⁷

⁷ For an interesting and somewhat surprising example of what is considered an acceptable cost-benefit ratio by European project funders, and some discussion thereof, see <http://www.cottica.net/?s=eparticipation>.

III.5. Feasibility and reproducibility of the participants' projects as interventions in favour of the access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

Several issues pertaining to the feasibility and reproducibility, or maybe better put, the sustainability, of the projects as educational interventions in favour of the access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods can be observed at the end of the LTTC. These reveal what can only be considered a 'mixed picture'.

III.5.a. Project scale

Micro-projects: Some of the projects were very obviously what might be categorised as 'micro-projects' – involving very few end beneficiaries, tiny budgets and little or no external funding and a very small project implementation team (if any staff beyond the project carrier). These have, nevertheless, had important effects for their end beneficiaries and through a focus on training some have also had a multiplier effect. And, they can certainly be considered feasible and reproducible, in the sense that small-scale initiatives costing little and requiring little staffing are not difficult for local organisations to undertake. This said, project scale is an important dimension of the potential impact of projects on access to social rights in terms of substantive change in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Once-off projects: Closely related is the issue project follow-up and momentum. Several of the participants' projects could be considered 'once-off' activities, without extensive potential for developing a self-sustaining dynamic in the community or for follow-up by the project carrier themselves or their organisation. This does not have to represent a negative value judgement on such projects. Even as once-off activities, they can also be very important punctual interventions in the lives of their beneficiaries. Nevertheless, once-off activities are less likely to make 'lasting change' in the access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, as communities with structural problems and challenges, because they cannot address the long-term nature of those problems and challenges.

Local projects: The specificity of this LTTC is that it worked with a target group of project carriers implanted in very local contexts, in specifically disadvantaged neighbourhoods. This means that in some cases, the scope of action of the project carrier concerned and therefore of their project was extremely limited – sometimes extending to several streets or blocks of flats in a given town quarter. Again, this does not imply a value judgement on the effectiveness of the project as such. It does indicate what might be considered realistic expectations of such projects – lasting change for small groups of young people in small geographical localities.

III.5.b. Project type and approach

Know your rights to get your rights: Many participants have rightly assumed that in order to be able to access their social rights, young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods need to know what their rights are and how to access them. Many of the projects, therefore, took some form of educational approach to helping their beneficiaries understand their rights and take necessary action to access them. This is valuable on the one hand because it supports young people in difficult circumstances to develop the autonomy to act on their own behalf – something that is difficult for them to do as living in a disadvantaged neighbourhood has negative impacts on young people’s agency. On the other hand, from the perspective of project impact and change in favour of access to social rights it also might be understood as ‘the path of least resistance’, as it is significantly easier to educate about social rights than it is to change the situation of access to rights of those being educated.

Awareness-raising in the public: Closely related to the above are the projects that prioritised awareness raising of a broader nature in relation to social rights. Such projects can create conditions for the better visibility and acceptance of young people’s demands in relation to their poor access to social rights. They do not demand extensive ‘buy-in’ from their target groups, and hence might be easier to roll out than projects that demand more active participation. The benchmarks for measuring results in awareness-raising projects are also less stringent than in other kinds of educational project – for example, behaviour change might be considered an excellent result but does not have to have taken place for effective awareness-raising to have taken place.

DYS ‘copy-cats’: Several of the participants’ projects are what one might call ‘DYS copy-cats’, without this being intended to have a negative connotation. These projects reproduce the LTTC Enter! or some other training offer of the DYS for youth leaders / youth workers (e.g. citizenship modules, training in the use of the charter on local and regional youth participation, Compass training) in the disadvantaged neighbourhood and explicitly make use of the existing training methodologies and resources tried and tested first in the DYS. On the one hand, this is a good use of existing resources and a chance for DYS training/NFE methodologies to be disseminated more broadly. On the other, the extent to which those project carriers are skilled enough in NFE delivery with young people (also given that this LTTC did not focus extensively on training NFE and general youth work delivery skills) might be questioned. On another hand again, this could also be considered a dimension of innovation.

III.5.c. Impact on access to social rights

Social analysis: Participants of this LTTC were not extensively skilled in conducting what is commonly referred to as the ‘social analysis’ of projects in LTTC jargon. That is to say, the initial development of their project idea was not necessarily always informed by evidence of the situation and most urgent needs of the beneficiaries they intended to involve or of the young people in the disadvantaged neighbourhood more broadly. The more reflected among the participants have been able to develop their understanding of the fundamental need for their project as a specific intervention in favour of access to social rights and adapt their project plan accordingly, but this has not been the case for all participants and projects. A poor or irrelevant social analysis is more often than not the cause of project failure, in the

experience of this evaluator, and this has limited some of the projects in their potential to impact and change the situation of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

‘Real change’: In numerical terms it is difficult to assess how many of the end beneficiaries of participants’ projects have experienced an improvement in their access to social rights as a result of participation in an LTTC project, although given what is known about the projects it is likely to have been relatively limited. Nevertheless, some participants’ projects have contributed to helping end beneficiaries access education, training, employment, welfare, or a legal status in the country where they now live. Others have contributed to the quality of life of their beneficiaries by providing them with leisure, learning, participation and exchange / solidarity opportunities they would not have had access to otherwise. Such projects can also be said to ‘change’ something and to have ‘improved’ something, although such change may not be large scale enough to be ‘publicly visible’. Further, the policy follow-up dimension of many of the projects could also be seen as an indicator for their potential for ‘real change’. As mentioned earlier, one must be careful about making value judgements in relation to project effectiveness based on ideas about ‘change’ that have not been de-constructed and clarified. The question here is as of when in numerical terms can we consider ‘real change’ to have happened. The LTTC aimed at developing projects as educational interventions in favour of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and all the completed and ongoing projects in the LTTC have attempted to do this. Hence, for this evaluator, the number of people’s life situations that have been changed by the projects is less important than the nature of the change experienced.

Awareness of social rights: Considering the seemingly extensive reach of the projects overall, it is plausible to conclude that there has been some improvement in public and youth awareness of access to social rights, at least in the neighbourhoods concerned. This can also be considered a valid impact..

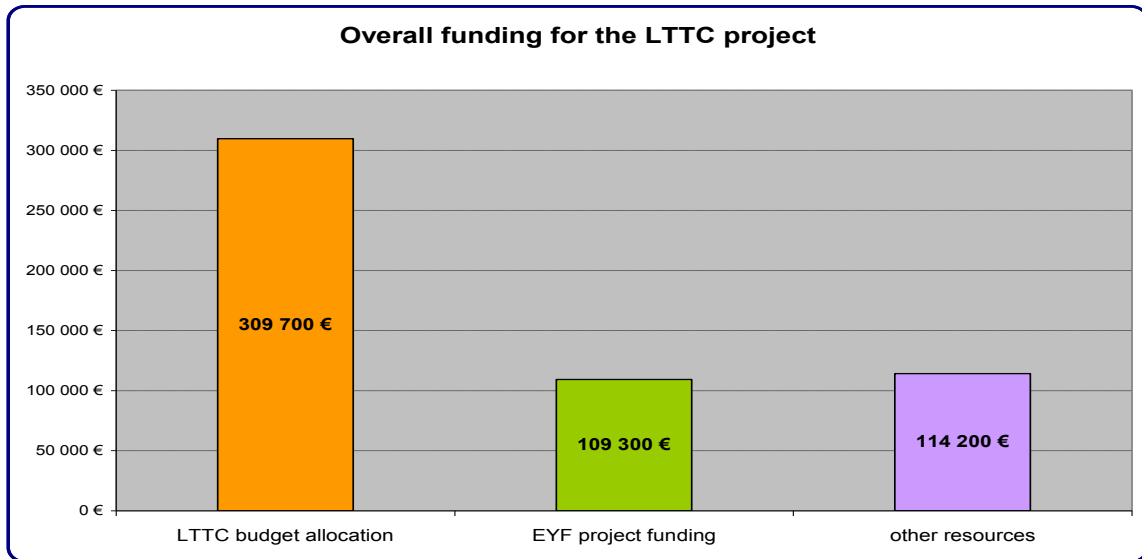
III.5.d. Organisational priorities

New priorities: Some of the participants’ organisations have incorporated access to social rights into their priorities and work programmes as a result of the process of developing and implementing a project on access to social rights (for the first time).

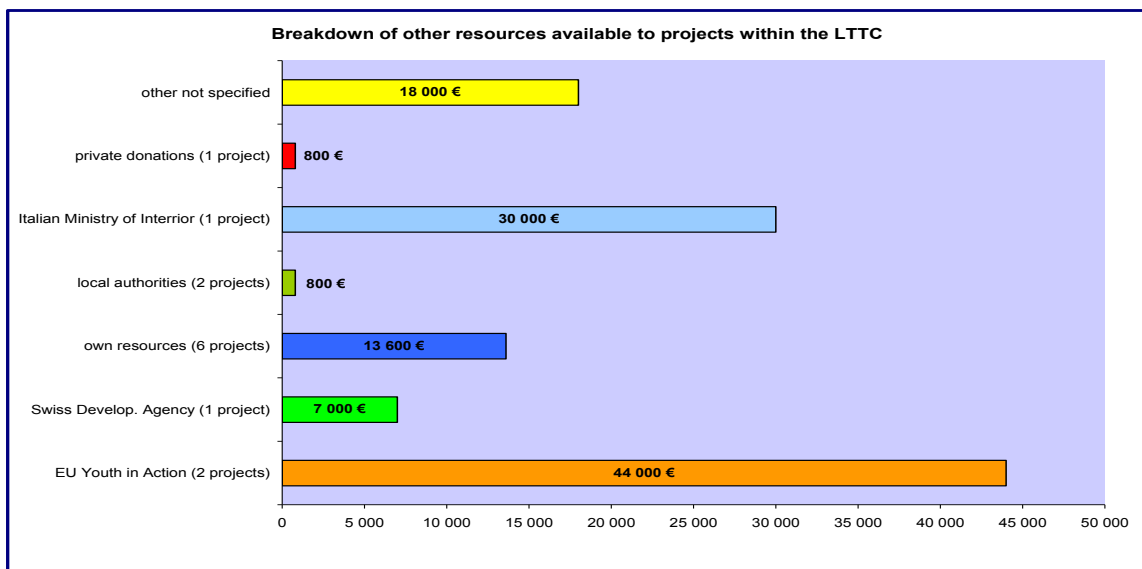
III.5.e. Project funding

Challenging funding landscape: Accessing funding has been one of the most important challenges for these project carriers, according to their self-reporting. The majority of participants interviewed reported that the only viable source of funding for their LTTC project was the European Youth Foundation – no other primary or even co-funder was available or was found at local, national or international level. It is noteworthy that most of the project carriers could not imagine running a local project without the acquisition of funds (despite their generally small scale and low-cost) and few conducted any fundraising at the local level. The statistical evaluation corroborates the self-reporting of participants concerning their difficulty to access funding for their projects. The following graph shows the overall financial resources mobilised by the LTTC and its projects – comprising the global budget of the LTTC, the funding provided to LTTC projects by the European Youth Foundation and the

funding project carriers were able to mobilise through other sources (including the resources of their own organisations).

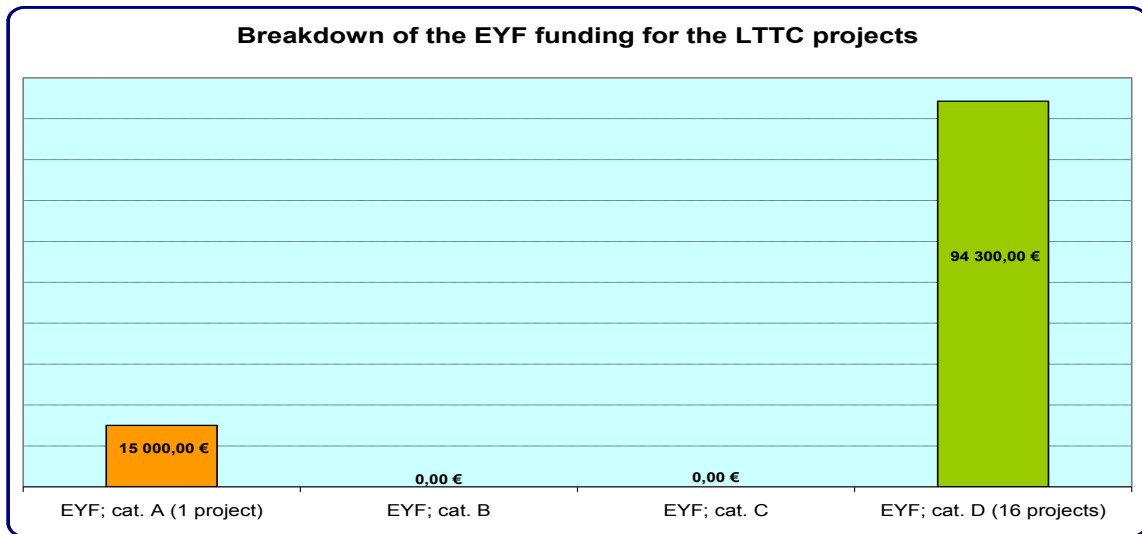


While the amount of ‘other resources’ funding is higher than that allocated to projects by the European Youth Foundation, (114,200 euros vs. 109,300 euros respectively), if we take a closer look also at the other resources that were available to the LTTC projects, we get a slightly different perspective on the significance of the other resources leveraged by the projects. The following graph provides a breakdown of the other resources that the LTTC projects were able to leverage.



This shows that a total of 64% of other resources available went into just three of the projects, and came from just two sources (a national ministry and the Youth in Action programme of the European Commission). Local authorities provided just 1% of funding to a total of just 2 projects. And 6 projects were able to mobilise 12% of the total amount of other resources from their own organisations (in cash and / or in kind).

The following graph shows the breakdown of European Youth Foundation funding received by the LTTC projects. Note that the overwhelming majority of EYF funding went into small grants for local projects under Category D – pilot projects, which are the only category of projects in the EYF funding portfolio that can be used by local projects without an international dimension. This is also the category of funding for which co-funding is not required and which will consider once-off activities.



This could demonstrate three things, without these being mutually exclusive: First, that the funding situation for this kind of project based youth work is generally poor that there is a clear funding gap when it comes to local ‘social benefit’ youth work projects. Second, that the participants of the LTTC were not well informed about alternative appropriate sources of funding at the various levels. And third, that the participants have not engaged in extensive fundraising efforts because they were aware they would have priority for funding under EYF Category D, because what they could get from the EYF under Category D was sufficient to run the scale of project typical for the course, because of sheer fear of European / other funding application processes, or because of any other reason. Participant interviews and mentoring reporting indicate that all of these reasons are present.

III.6. Quality of the LTTC as an educational intervention in favour of the access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

Four dimensions of the quality of the LTTC as an educational intervention in favour of access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods have been assessed during the evaluation:

- a) Adequacy and suitability of the LTTC (profile of participants, curriculum, contents, delivery) to the objectives and learning goals outlined within the overall Enter! Project;

- b) Quality of the projects in relation to the quality standards for projects in the LTTC;
- c) Quality of the LTTC in relation to the quality standards for non-formal learning activities (in the Directorate of Youth and Sports);
- d) Achievement of the LTTC objectives.

III.6.a. Adequacy and suitability of the LTTC to the objectives and learning goals outlined within the overall Enter! Project

Within this dimension, the following sub-dimensions were assessed:

1. Profile of participants
2. Concept & approach
3. Curriculum & contents
4. Delivery & competence of the team

III.6.a.1. Profile of participants:

As outlined in Part I, this LTTC was planned and organised for the following profile of participant:

- Local youth leaders and/or youth workers active at grassroots level with disadvantaged young people and in disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
- Other educators working with young people with fewer opportunities to participate;

The detailed characteristics of this profile include that the participants were expected to be:

- Experienced in working with young people with fewer opportunities from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, in particularly those faced with discrimination and violence
- Interested in developing strategies and ways to improve social cohesion and access to social rights with young people
- Motivated to share their experiences and to learn throughout the course in accordance with the methodology proposed
- Committed to learning with others and able to attend the full duration of the course in all its phases
- Ready and able to create a project combating the social exclusion of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and demonstrate active ownership of their project by the disadvantaged youth concerned
- Supported by their organisation or association, or other network to ensure multiplication, dissemination of results and changes in policies
- Supported by a local or regional authority, if possible
- Able to dedicate on average 2 hours per week for e-learning and collaboration with the other course actors through the Internet
- Able to work in English and / or in French

In hindsight, the team members concluded that the majority of participants have come to fit the planned profile of desired participant, as a result of their participation in the course. But, many participants did not demonstrate the level of experience in relation to project management or youth work or non-formal education hoped for by the course initiators. For example, there are some participants who had little or no general youth work experience when they joined the course, being NGO leaders and

project managers with little or no direct contact to young people through youth work and/or educational activities, or brand new volunteers in their organisations. At the same time, there were some participants who could be said to have met the profile from the outset, but whose level of experience and long years in youth work made it difficult for them to, firstly, develop at the speed they would like to in the course and, secondly, who were relatively set in their ways and not really ready to change the way they do things. The group of participants that actually took part in the course were what might be understood as ‘actor-learners’ more than experienced youth workers seeking complementary training with a European dimension. Clearly, the starting point of a training process with such actor-learners, often young people themselves, living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and experiencing the same issues as the peers for whom they are working, will be a different one than with youth workers who have been through some form of youth work training in their home context or who may have national qualifications for such.

One of the key questions that emerged in relation to the profile of participants was the perennial ‘professionals vs. volunteers’ dilemma. A great variety of youth work formats were present in this LTTC. Some of the participants were trained social youth workers, with specific qualifications, working in public institutions responsible for the delivery of youth work, and receiving a salary, as this kind of youth work is their profession. These could certainly be called ‘professionals’. Others are youth work project managers in NGOs. They also receive a salary for their work and often do their work very professionally, even without specific qualifications in youth work. Others again are youth leaders – active young people who voluntarily work with their peers in the community. They do not get paid, they don’t want to make youth work their profession, but they also do it well – one might say ‘professionally’. Some participants were the ‘leaders’ or ‘bosses’ in their organisations and had significant freedom of decision-making regarding their project. Others were employees or volunteers without that kind of mandate. The lines between these different youth work statuses are of course very blurred both in the course and in youth work realities around Europe more generally.

For the course, the complexity represented by the blurring of these lines relates to the differences in training and personal development needs across the different groups of participants and individuals. While the matter of employment status is not the issue *per se*, the level and quality of involvement in work with young people in the disadvantaged neighbourhood can differ considerably depending on employment status. It is also important to note that the resources and opportunities are very different across the categories. Usually the work of employed staff in public youth work institutions is better recognised and resourced than that of unpaid volunteers in local non-governmental organisations.

A specific, but related, challenge of working with ‘professional social youth workers’ encountered in the LTTC is that they are often limited in their autonomy of action within the institutional context where they work. They have a limited mandate, little decision making power and little if any management capacity (in terms of budget, staff, etc). They have to ‘execute’ a programme or policy, and their work can develop into a kind of routine. The big risk is that they end up doing the same thing over again without being able to respond to changing needs or being sensitive to the concerns of their target groups. An attendant risk is that they end up becoming youth work managers responsible for budgets and projects, rather than being youth workers with direct contact to the young people benefitting from the work they do.

For their part the NGO leaders in this course have tended to be ‘project managers’ rather than young people leading their peers in project development, which in several cases had implications (not necessarily positive) for the adequacy of the social analysis of the projects, the level of ownership of the beneficiaries and their general potential for authentic impact in terms of access to social rights for young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The diverse positions of the project carriers and ‘actor-learners’ that actually participated in the course in their organisations had an important impact on their abilities to act, and therefore, to meet the profile of desired participant.

In sum, having participants from such diverse youth work realities and settings in the same course was very important for provoking reflection on their motivation, the directions they are interested in exploring in terms of personal and professional development and the opportunities they have for changing the situation of their young people through their work, and therefore it has been enriching and very positive for many participants. It has also been a key aspect of the intercultural dimension of this LTTC.

At the same time, it raises questions of focus and effectiveness. It had important implications for the emphases put on certain aspects of the course curriculum by the team at different moments in the course, and therefore on the approach taken, with mixed results in terms of the response of participants and their motivation for learning in the course. It was also an immense challenge for the team to bridge such diverse needs, without devolving the course methodology into one based largely on ‘counselling’.

Pertinent questions were asked about the profile of participants as currently formulated at the evaluation meeting with the team, including whether the kind of participant ‘desired’ has the time or the option (in professional qualification terms) to apply for such a course. The evaluation finds that the experience of this course in relation to the pilot group of participants raises convincing arguments for several aspects of the planning process to be reconsidered, including the profile of participants as currently formulated.

Such questions receive further consideration in Part IV of this report – ‘Conclusions & Recommendations’.

III.6.a.2. Concept & approach:

The training team is generally satisfied with the course concept that they have developed. Team members pointed to some elements in their approach that they evaluate particularly positively, such as the fact that it:

- understands social rights as an integral dimension of human rights, and therefore emphasises human rights education
- uses the potential of non-formal education
- emphasises the participation of young people
- stresses the involvement of local authorities
- takes into consideration relevant policies
- works from the needs of the participants assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the duration of the course the course draws lessons from previous LTTCs and other DYS training courses
- follows the quality standards set for DYS activities
- takes into consideration the results of the Enter! preparatory seminar

These approach related considerations had to be squared with key institutional priorities as laid down in the course framework by the initiating partners, among others:

- to improve the competences of the participants
- to develop projects as tools for direct impact on the local reality of the participants and the young people they work with in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods where they are active
- to improve access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

While the general level of satisfaction with the course (on the part of both the team members and the participants) is high, team members pointed out some dilemmas as concerns the exercise of squaring the course as planned, with the institutional expectations placed on it with the actual reality of working with this specific group of participants – in other words, as concerns the adequacy of the course concept and approach – as follows:

⇒ **Social rights** – The team was conscious that the DYS does not have a lot of experience in working on these themes in local youth work contexts. They asked themselves a critical question: Who are we (i.e. the training team) / who is the DYS to train social youth workers? Is this not the role of responsible authorities? In light of this reflection, the team chose to approach social rights from the perspective of supporting participants to develop an understanding of their work as contributing to the fulfilment of social rights for young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and to realise that such concepts can be of value for their work. In this way, they could learn how to work with the issue in a European perspective and develop a deeper understanding of how they can influence the realities the young people they work with are facing, using European opportunities to the best potential. This puts the choice of the team to work very explicitly with and on the Social Charter, being the main instrument at the disposal of that institution for ensuring that social rights are respected, into perspective. Other European frameworks for social rights and other conceptual approaches to understanding them (for example, quality of life, etc) received less attention, but were nevertheless raised.

⇒ **Disadvantaged neighbourhoods?** – Defining the specificity of working with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods was a specific challenge for the definition and adequacy of the concept of this LTTC. Unlike other activities, this LTTC does not have in its central focus ‘disadvantaged young people’, *per se*. Its particularity lies in working with the geographic context of such neighbourhoods. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that the disadvantage of the neighbourhood inevitably causes young people living there to be disadvantaged. In many situations, it is the geography of the neighbourhood that makes the access to social rights even more difficult and that exacerbates other exclusion mechanisms. It is often a precondition for discrimination. The social context of the neighbourhood can de-motivate and dis-empower young people – they can lose hope in ever being able to ‘get out’ or that something might ever change in their situation. But, disadvantaged neighbourhood, as a term, means different things in different places, languages, countries: defining their character is a delicate matter. It can stigmatise; it can be politically motivated. The initiators of the LTTC chose not to pre-define what is meant by ‘disadvantaged

neighbourhood’, although they did describe the fact that such neighbourhoods experience three common conditions: exclusion, discrimination and violence. The project carriers, therefore, have been given the freedom to develop their own understanding of how these factors relate to the situation of their neighbourhood, however they choose to define it geographically, and to the young people they work with. Disadvantaged neighbourhoods also suffer from a lack of attention – few organisations and institutions are present or working to support young people; there are few policies to support or make use of the positive potential of the young people. At the same time, it is acknowledged that only in some cases, the geographical dimension or ‘neighbourhood’ in the projects of the participants was really clearly defined and justified. The neighbourhoods presented in the projects vary from the ‘stereotypical’ *quartier sensible* to whole towns and regions being considered disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

⇒ **Must be ‘excluded’ to help the ‘excluded’?** – The LTTC has brought together a very mixed group of participants: there are people who are embedded in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods where they work with young people and others who are not, even if they work directly with young people in the community. The course also included participants who are themselves young people from the disadvantaged neighbourhood where they are running their project and participants who work in the community but not directly with young people – youth work project managers. It is difficult to assess the extent to which those who are embedded in the communities of young people in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods that are targeted by the projects are able to impact the situation of the young people more effectively. If a social youth worker has grown up in the neighbourhood, s/he can speak the same language as the young people, understands the realities and can gain the trust of the target group, and can also have the legitimacy to be more critical. At the same time, there is a risk that they focus only on their local reality and the immediate limits of their community. Further, those who are from outside the community are often able to open up debates that would not happen without an outsider view and can create links and connections to the ‘outside world’ that have solidarity effects for the community. In the context of this course, no value judgement was put on one or the other profile through the approach taken by the team. But, it became clear through the projects that some participants were more directly engaged with the concerns and situations of the young people with whom they work than others. This certainly impacted on the potential relevance of the responses they proposed to the situations of access to social rights experienced by the beneficiaries of their projects, and therefore was a recurring question in relation to both the profile of the participants and in relation to the training approach in support of the development of relevant social analyses for the projects.

⇒ **Projects** – It became clear over the duration of the training course that participants’ levels of competence in relation to projects were so diverse that there was hardly any potential for comparison and were much weaker than had been foreseen by the profile of participants. At the same time, and without exception, the concept of access to social rights was new for participants. The team, therefore, faced the challenge of having to simultaneously develop the basic skills of participants for project development and develop the participants’ understanding of the basic conceptual framework for the course (access to social rights). The team felt it necessary to focus, in the first place, on helping

participants to develop projects that relate to social rights. Other important aspects, such as the policy dimension, came later in the training process once the challenges of projects for social rights had been addressed to the extent necessary to move on.

- **Projects as learning vehicles:** One of the principles of the course is that project development, implementation and evaluation are key sources of learning for participants. In the conception of the LTTC, the project creates opportunities by which the participants develop the competences necessary to bring about change in the neighbourhoods where the young people they are working with and for are living, and the course process captures those opportunities and reflects upon them. At the beginning of the course, and for some participants, the LTTC was only about learning to do a project. Most, if not all participants, have developed beyond this stage and have come to understand that this LTTC could offer them and their youth work more than just project development training.
- **Ownership of the projects:** Another important aspect of the concept of the course was that projects should not be exclusively owned by the project carriers (i.e. the participants of the LTTC), but primarily by the young people they serve. The extent to which project decision-making and leadership has indeed in the hands of the end beneficiaries of the projects (i.e. the young people living in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods) remains questionable in quite many of the projects implemented, however. In some cases, such as some of those projects dealing with children or refugees, this might be necessary given legal and administrative conditions imposed by legislation, and might also be compensated for within the internal workings of the project. But, there remain some project carriers who do not consider it contradictory that the project is FOR the target group, rather than WITH the target group. This reveals, in the first place, that participants come to such training courses with certainties about their work, and in the second place, that not all participants in such an LTTC are ready to confront and change their pre-conceived ideas about projects, leadership and participation. It was a significant challenge for the LTTC to overcome this kind of thinking. At the same time, a good number of projects (mostly run by those project carriers with access to a stable group of young people with whom they work on a regular basis through some form of established structure like a youth centre) worked primarily from the principle of ‘the beneficiaries decide’. In terms of project development this was a challenge, because all decisions made in the context of the project development phase had to be consulted with the young people involved in the project and eventually were changed or discarded. On the other hand, the approach of these project carriers challenged others to re-think their assumptions and mutual exchange on this issue has been enriching for all concerned.
- **Impact:** The diversity of the LTTC participant group was also expressed through the way participants saw their projects and their potential impacts. Some projects aimed at providing immediate responses to specific problems of access to social rights on the part of their beneficiaries. Others focused on education and awareness-raising as a first step towards creating the target group’s capacity for

accessing their social rights. The results of the latter projects, in terms of access to social rights, will be visible only in the long term, well beyond the time frame of the LTTC. The fact that this is the case, though, does not negate their potential nor the validity of their involvement in such a course, even when a key objective was concrete improvements in the access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

- ⇒ **Institutional expectations:** Despite the clearly stated objective to ‘improve access to social rights’ expressed by the initiating institution, the course concept developed by the team clearly does not target ‘the young people’ in disadvantaged neighbourhoods *per se*. Rather the course has been developed as an educational measure to improve the capacity and competence of the youth workers and youth leaders participating, understood as ‘intermediaries’, to support young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods to learn about and access their social rights. This choice was both pragmatic and justified on the part of the team. In the first place, it corresponds the classical multiplication principle of the DYS. In the second place, it acknowledges the structural and long-term nature of problems of access to social rights in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In the third place, it acknowledges that complementary educational interventions by European institutions can only achieve so much when local and national authorities do no act. This said, it highlights the necessity of rethinking what might be a suitable aim and therefore, expectation, for such a course.
- ⇒ **Institutional frameworks and training:** It is also important to note that due to the chosen structure for planning the Enter! Project and by extension the LTTC (preparatory seminar / consultative meeting; role of the RSG), the team received a relatively well developed, if broad and general, framework of objectives and contents, within which they were expected to develop the course. On the one hand, this was a comfortable position, as the team had a relatively clear framework within which to plan the training concept and approach. On the other hand, the applications and the finally composed group at the 1st residential seminar, revealed a wide variety of needs, some of which were not considered by the initial concept. It has also become clear over time that the institution’s own social analysis for the development of the LTTC is not sufficiently grounded in evidence of the *training needs of the social youth work field*. Rather, commensurate with that of the Enter! Project as a whole, it takes its starting point from the condition and situation of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and extrapolates the training needs of those conducting social benefit projects and youth work in those circumstances. This might explain why aspects such as the participants’ lack of experience in project development and management of participants came as something of a surprise. The team has had to constantly adapt the training concept and contents to take into account the development of group, as well as the sometimes very individual needs of participants, over time.

III.6.a.3. Curriculum & contents:

A complete run down of the extensive list of contents covered in the three residential seminars and attendant e-learning units can be found in the course documentations (<http://enter.coe.int/eng/Publications>).

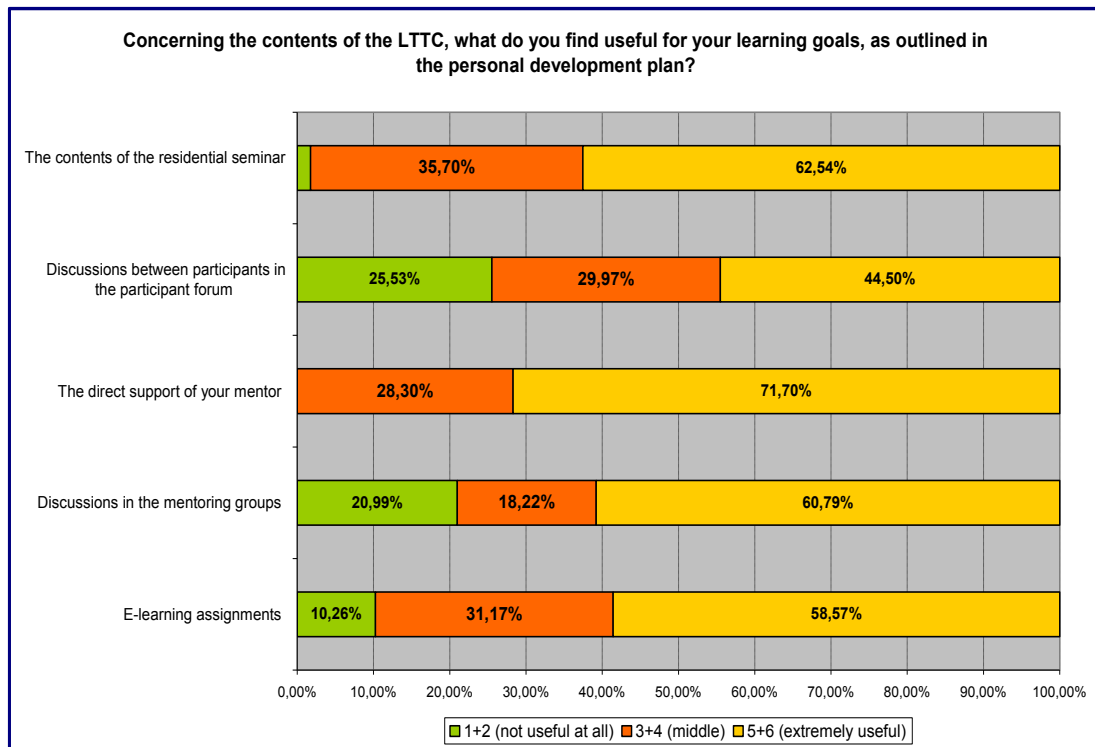
In general, it is not possible to fault the scope and relevance of course contents proposed by the team. Indeed, everything covered during the course seems to have been relevant to the participants to some degree. This might simply reflect the neediness of this group. But, it also reflects broadness and vagueness of several of the objectives of the course, the common desire of to pack as much as possible into such a training course, and the common difficulty of evaluating which contents are more important for the complexity and diversity represented by the group being worked with.

Based on close observation of the struggles of both the team and the participants to cope with the enormous workload involved in the course, a 'less is more' approach was advised in advance of the consolidation seminar, with the aim of focusing more and deeper attention on the specific learning needs of different groups of participants, emanating from the mentoring, the project evaluations and on what participants really knew about the situation of the young people they were working with (in terms of their access or lack thereof to social rights) rather than on pre-defined contents. The evaluation of the consolidation seminar simply confirmed this, and in response to the increasing divergence in needs among participants, the team adopted an even more individualised approach in the implementation of the evaluation seminar. This demanded enormous flexibility of the team and a lot of trust on the part of the participants, as a 'pre-defined' curriculum was not developed, and that contents were assessed as more or less relevant at 'a given moment' and for 'specific participants' in the course. Nevertheless, the team did not go the road of differentiating the contents offered to different groups of participants according to their perception of their level and advancement in the learning process. Rather, participants were asked to take responsibility for their own learning, to assess what they thought they needed most and to choose among a variety of contents offered in parallel.

In the post-course evaluation, the team and evaluator considered together which items might not have been adequately addressed or which might have been missing altogether from the overall inventory of contents, with the following results:

- ⇒ **Individual approach:** The participants would have benefitted from more individual mentoring and support – the majority of mentoring took place in a small group setting. This would have supported them in the use of the Personal Learning and Development Plan (PLDP);
- ⇒ **Research:** While some experts provided inputs during the residential seminars, the presentation of data would have helped participants to make the link between their realities and policy interventions.
- ⇒ **Conflict transformation & intercultural dialogue:** More could have been done on intercultural dialogue and conflict transformation, considering that for most participants these issues reflect the realities in their neighbourhoods and considering that addressing such was an explicit objective of the course.
- ⇒ **Using DYS experience:** More attention should have been paid to make best use of existing resources of the DYS, rather than starting from scratch each time. The same was remarked with regard to previous training concepts of relevance.

The following graph provides an overview of the general assessment of the relevance of different contents of the LTTC in relation to participants' learning needs as identified in their PLDPs, prepared after the 1st residential seminar and updated on an ongoing basis throughout the course, through the repetitive participant survey.

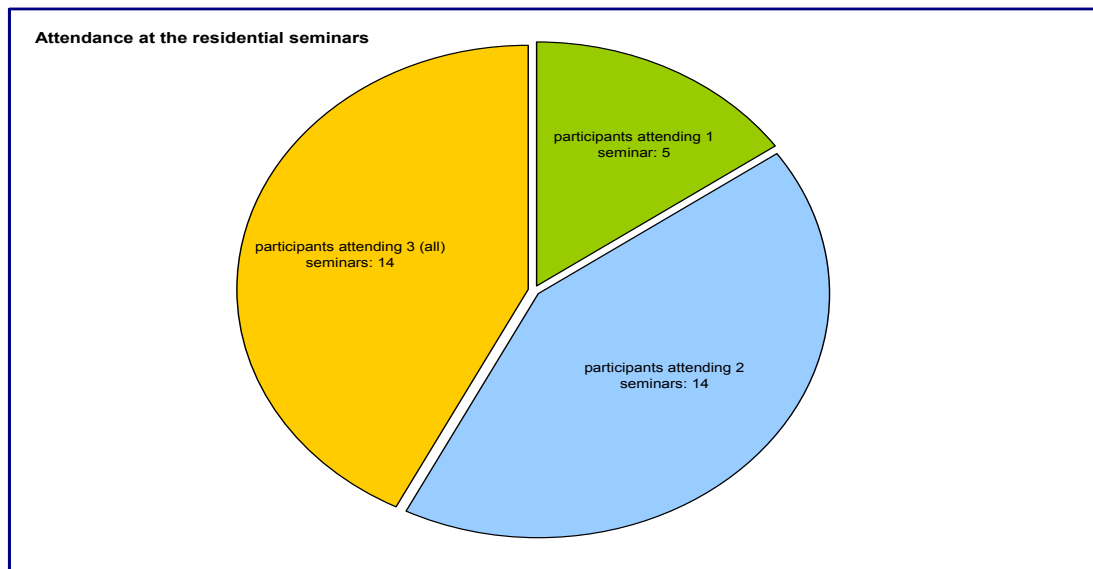


Noteworthy are the high results for the direct support of the mentor and for the residential seminars and the lower results for e-learning and discussions with other participants on the e-learning platform.

These aspects are discussed in more detail in the following observations:

III.6.a.3 (i). Residential seminars

It is plausible to argue that the residential seminars were among the most important learning opportunities for the participants. This is hardly surprising because the face-to-face element of any course is usually the most engaging and the most memorable, and therefore the one that motivates participants the most. In this course, the residential seminars were also the moments when the most intensive mentoring took place. Participants appreciated the fact that they could engage with their peers from other countries and in comparison to the e-learning platform, found it easier to do this during the residential seminars (and as was later ascertained, bilaterally outside the e-learning platform). Participants, nevertheless, learned at very different speeds and paces, even during the residential seminars, and this meant that for different participants the pace at which learning took place was too fast and too slow in parallel, clearly a challenge for the team to manage.



In hindsight, the following training elements were identified as possibly deserving of more attention during the face-to-face training through the residential seminars:

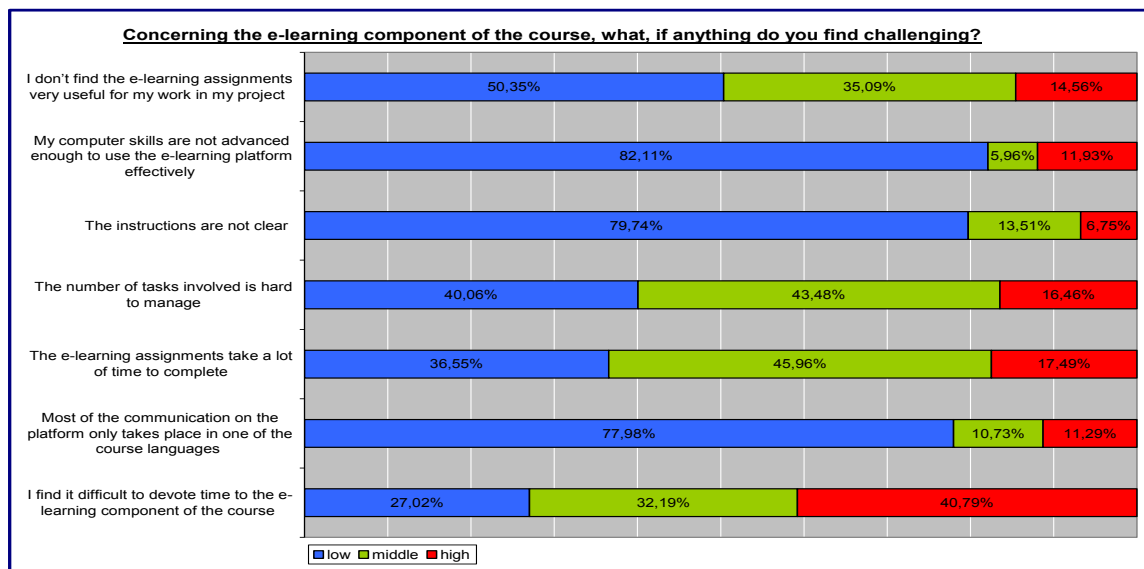
- ⇒ **Introduction to European (youth) programmes:** While the presentation of the Council of Europe youth programme was addressed, the course did not address EU youth policies and programmes in as much detail. This is understandable considering the composition of the group is such that only some of the participants would have been eligible to access EU funds. At the same time, information about other EU programmes aiming at social inclusion rather than at youth might also have been useful.
- ⇒ **Project management:** The level of project management experience of the participants was lower than expected. More emphasis on skills for project management, in addition to the work done on project development during the initial phases of the course, would have been supportive of the capacity of the projects to deliver results in relation to their own objectives.
- ⇒ **Funding sources, fundraising and financial management:** Project funding was another major challenge for participants. In hindsight, some additional skills training focusing on financial management, fundraising and sources of funding for projects would have helped the participants if it had taken place early on in the course. Evaluation with the European Youth Foundation revealed that coaching the participants in the use of their application form would also have been useful.
- ⇒ **'Collective' project evaluation and improvement:** The residential seminars, although offering a lot of time to the projects, could have focused more in depth on collective project evaluation as a basis for the identification of how to improve the effectiveness of the projects for access to social rights, as well as for the learning of the participants. The team had constraints in terms of time, certainly, but explicit project evaluation received relatively little time, took place in the mentoring groups exclusively and relied heavily on individual work and self-reporting. Particularly, the aspect of participant-to-participant constructive criticism and the mixing of participants across mentoring groups were limited, with the result that participants were not extensively confronted with alternative opinions and perspectives on the success or effectiveness of their projects.
- ⇒ **Three dimensions: exclusion, discrimination and violence:** The ways in which these phenomena intersect with access to social rights, on the one hand as causes for problems of access, and as consequences of it, on the other, were not tackled very explicitly until relatively late in the course, except through the social

analysis dimension of project development and through expert input on disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and this was reflected in the general lack of explicit reference to these by participants when speaking about their projects in the interviews. Treatment of such in more depth could potentially have also addressed the identified lack of attention to intercultural dialogue and conflict.

- ⇒ **Role and involvement of local authorities:** Except through the occasional presence of a member of the Congress’ secretariat, local authorities were almost completely absent from the residential seminars, although after the 1st seminar it was identified by the training team that both the Congress and its members should become more present and take a more active role in the training process.
- ⇒ **Personal learning & development plans:** In hindsight, the participants’ level of experience in relation to ‘self-directed learning’ was probably not have been sufficient for them to engage with this kind of self-assessment tool without some explicit exploration of self-directed learning and self-assessment, in other words, of ‘learning to learn’. The introduction of the PLDP during the introduction seminar might have supported its use during the rest of the course. In the opinion of some team members, there were some participants who may not have seen themselves as ‘learners’ *per se*, being as they are social actors in their everyday contexts.

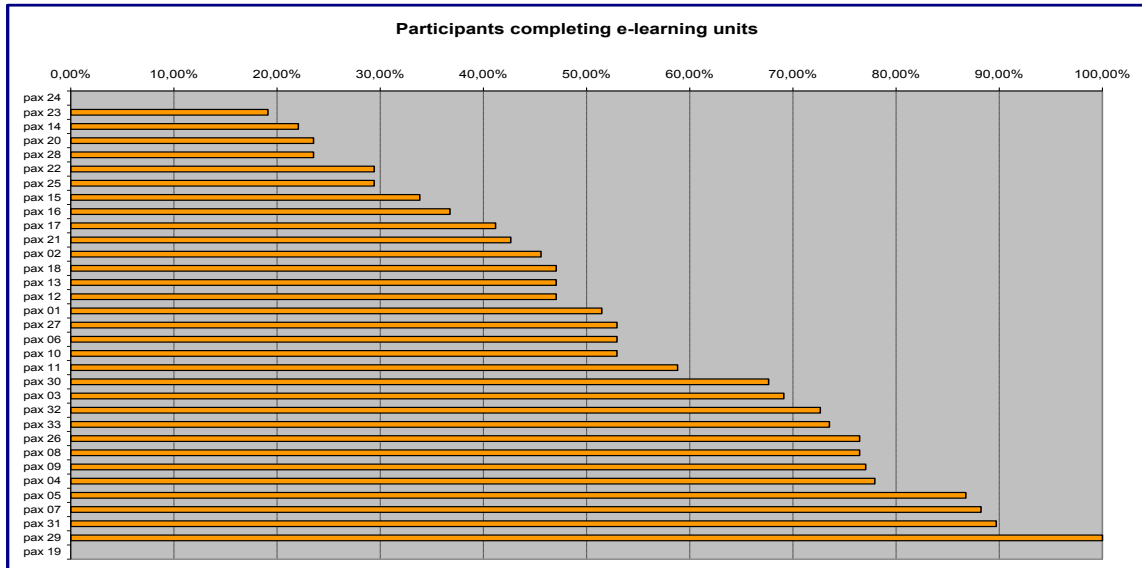
III.6.a.3 (ii). E-learning

It became clear as the course developed that the e-learning dimension of the LTTC was quite challenging for participants, in some very specific ways. In the first place, e-learning was a time management challenge. The following graph indicates the evaluation of the average level of challenge represented by different aspects related to the e-learning in the course over time (3 participant surveys from February 2010 to the end of the course).

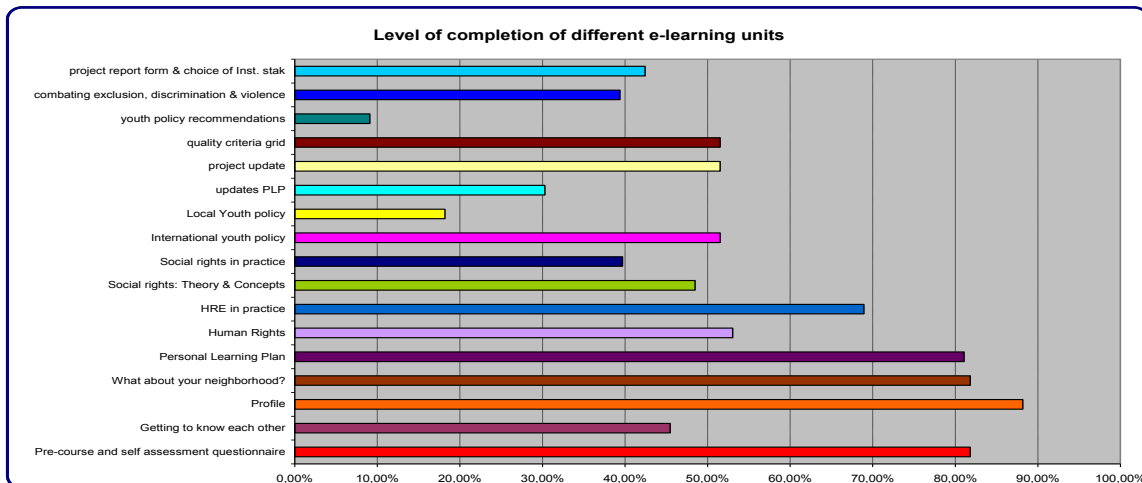


Most challenging was finding time to do the assignments. A large proportion of the participants had difficulties in managing the workload involved in the e-learning assignments in addition to working on the project and their jobs or studies. A large number of participants consistently did not manage to keep up with the pace of submissions expected, and it was slowed down somewhat in response mid-way through the course (from an assignment every 4 weeks to one every 6 weeks).

This result is both corroborated and complemented by the following two graphs, which demonstrate, first, the extent of completion of e-learning units by each of the participants and second, the extent of completion of each e-learning unit by participants of the LTTC.



Noteworthy in the above is that only one participant managed to complete all e-learning units.

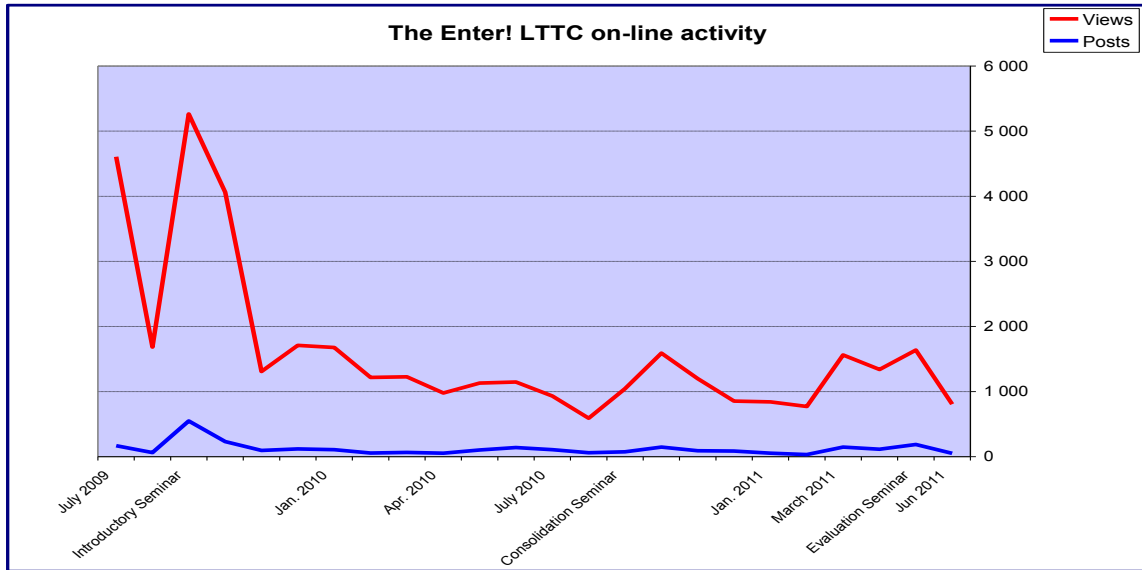


Considerations of difficulties in workload management are complemented by the above graph providing evidence of the kinds of e-learning unit that were most completed by participants. Here, we can see that the participants, in general, tended to prefer, and, therefore, to be more active in completing, the assignments that had an active dimension – i.e. that required less individual reflection and writing and more work directly with young people.

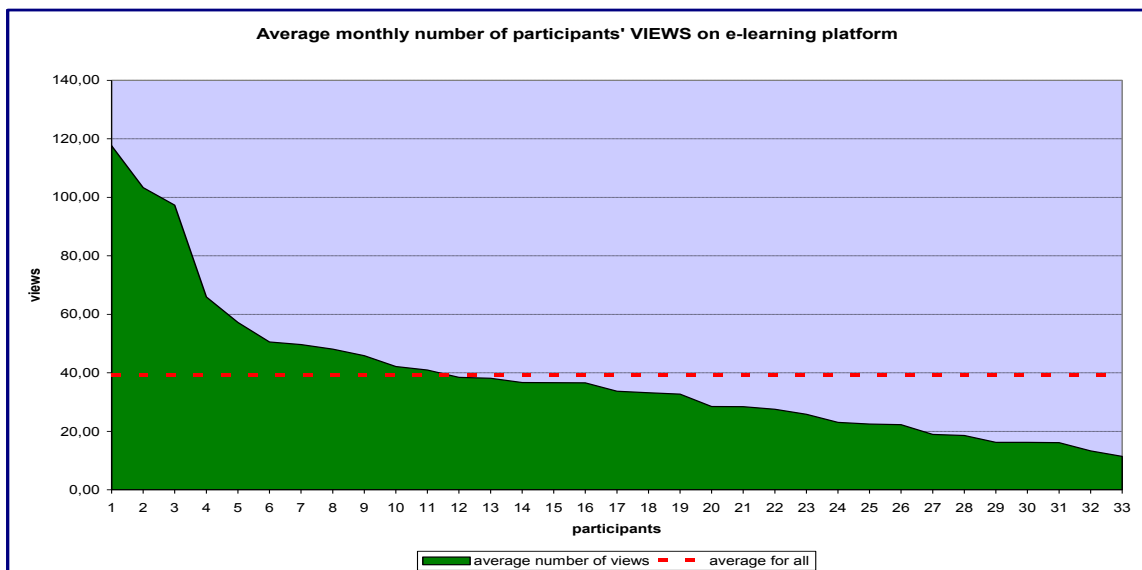
While the evaluation finds that the participants considered the e-learning useful, interesting and relevant in relation to their project (first) and their work (second), there is cause for questioning the extent to which time and workforce have been

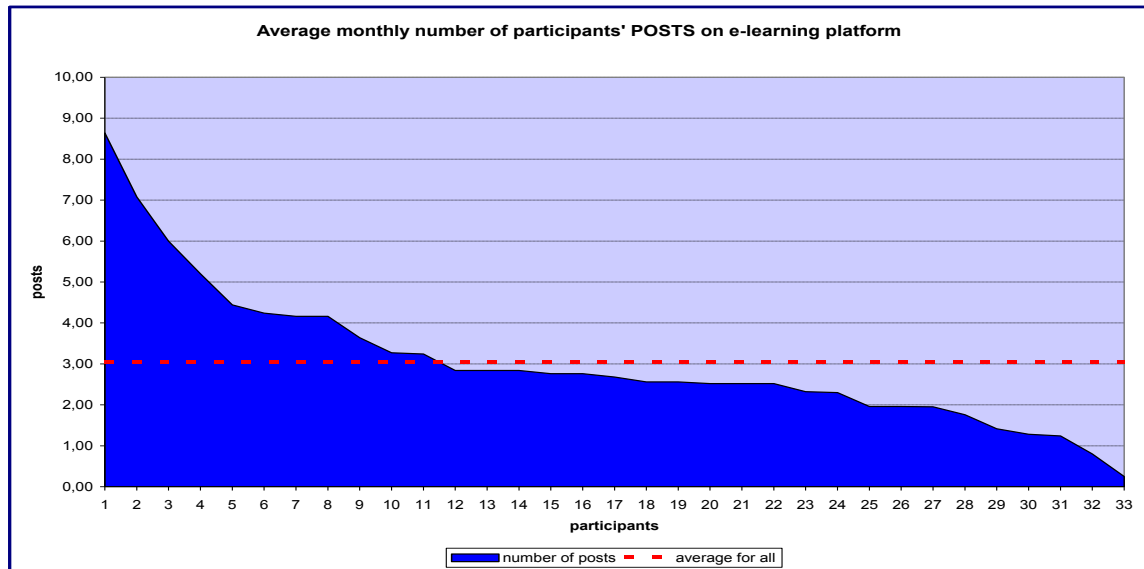
ploughed into it (by both team and participants), in comparison to the learning outcomes demonstrated by participants as a result of their use of the platform.

The following graph demonstrates the overall use of the platform in terms of views and posts by participants during the entire duration of the LTTC:



The above demonstrates first and foremost that participants' use of the platform has been overwhelmingly passive in comparison to active (note the large difference between the number of views and posts). Second, the peaks and troughs in online activity correspond to key moments in the course, those being the residential seminars, which corroborates the evaluation conclusion that participants preferred the face to face learning opportunities provided by the residential seminars over e-learning activities. The following graphs provide more detail concerning participant activity





While from the platform statistics, it was not possible to calculate the average time spent by participants on the platform each month over the duration of the course, it was possible to calculate the average number of views and posts participants made monthly. The overall monthly average for views was: 40 and for posts was: 3. The above graphs show the average monthly views and posts by participant.

Finally, the evaluation finds that participants were variably disappointed with their peers for their passiveness or felt a sense of guilt that they could not devote more time to the platform. This has, however, not led to participants 'correcting' their approach to using e-learning, despite extensive evaluation and some adjustments to e-learning expectations by the team.

As such, the evaluation finds that the e-learning component of the course has not developed or been exploited to its full potential, whether because of a lack of time or a lack of skill. It has not, for example, produced extensive gains in terms of participation, group learning or inclusion. The language barriers present in the course have been exacerbated by the e-learning component, because while individual assignments are available in both languages, the discussions and debates around the assignments take place only in one of the languages. It is clear that running such a course in two languages complicates and makes more work intensive the e-learning dimension for the team. It is also clear that the commitment of some participants has been put under strain – the workload and duration of this course involves is comparable to some study programmes, but participants will not receive any form of recognised certification. This said, for the participants who have been able to manage the technology and their time well, the e-learning dimension has represented added value.

III.6.a.3 (iii). Personal learning & development plan

All participants developed personal learning and development plans (PLDPs) after the 1st residential seminar. Few of the participants, however, used them in a systematic manner to guide their reflection on what and how they wanted to learn through the course. The team encouraged participants, through mentoring, to both make reference to the PLDP, and to update it as often as possible. But, while reflections on the contents of the PLDP and its eventual updating were discussed in the mentoring

groups and were useful for participants' learning, participants rarely recorded these in written form (by updating the PLDP online). Interim interviews with team members revealed consensus that after the consolidation seminar, a more individualised and differentiated approach to participants and their learning would be necessary. The great diversity of needs, and the great differences in the stages of development of particular participants, justified the team's argumentation for this kind of approach, focusing even more extensively on mentoring than prior to the consolidation seminar. The PLDP would have been natural tool for this kind of approach, and it could have supported participants in becoming more competent and confident in formulating their specific learning outcomes and further goals beyond the LTTC. The consolidation seminar partially addressed the need for more substantial engagement with the PLDP, but the evaluation nevertheless finds that it was something of an uphill struggle for the team to bring the personal and professional dimension of the learning, through active use of the PLDP, to the fore of the participants' concerns.

This may be to do with the PLDP's status as 'something of an afterthought' emanating from the 1st residential seminar, where it was neither introduced nor worked with. It may also simply be that the majority of participants were not yet ready to engage in that kind of personal and professional reflection when it was introduced. Self-assessment, such as that required by a tool like the PLDP, assumes that those using it are self-directed learners. Either way, the lack of active engagement of the participants with the PLDP represents something of a missed opportunity, in the opinion of the evaluator.

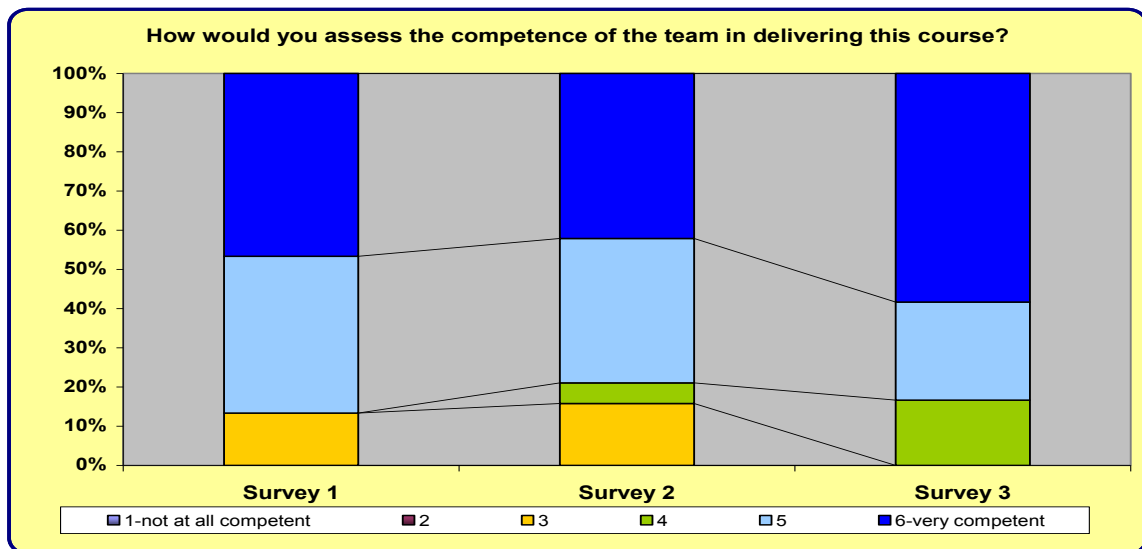
III.6.a.3. (iv). Other elements

Project & regional mentoring visits: Despite their limited visibility as a key element of the course, the opportunity for participants to ask for a project or regional mentoring visit was very important for those who took the opportunity to use it. In particular, it gave them the impression that the Council of Europe really cared about their concerns and those of their young people and helped them to feel supported and motivated. It was also an opportunity to the team to get to know the realities in which the participants are working and to get a more 'real' understanding of the challenges facing the young people in the neighbourhood, the role and implantation of the organisation and the nature of the relationship between the participants and the project carrier. In some cases, it was possible for the team member to join a participant's project activity or to meet with relevant local authorities to provide additional legitimacy to the participant's efforts at cooperation with local policy stakeholders. Regional mentoring meetings were useful for those project carriers that required more support for their project development and for dealing with personal and professional challenges that arose during their participation in the LTTC. Nevertheless, it is noted that these visits were not taken advantage of to the extent that might have been expected – only some participants requested a project visit or asked for regional mentoring meetings, and those that took place took quite some time to organise and to get off the ground. It is only possible to speculate why this was the case, but one reason might have been a sense among some participants of not wanting to appear as 'needing' additional support. The team specifically chose not to organise 'random spot visits', as this would have created a sense of controlling that might have jeopardised the trust of participants in the team.

III.6.a.4. Delivery & competence of the team:

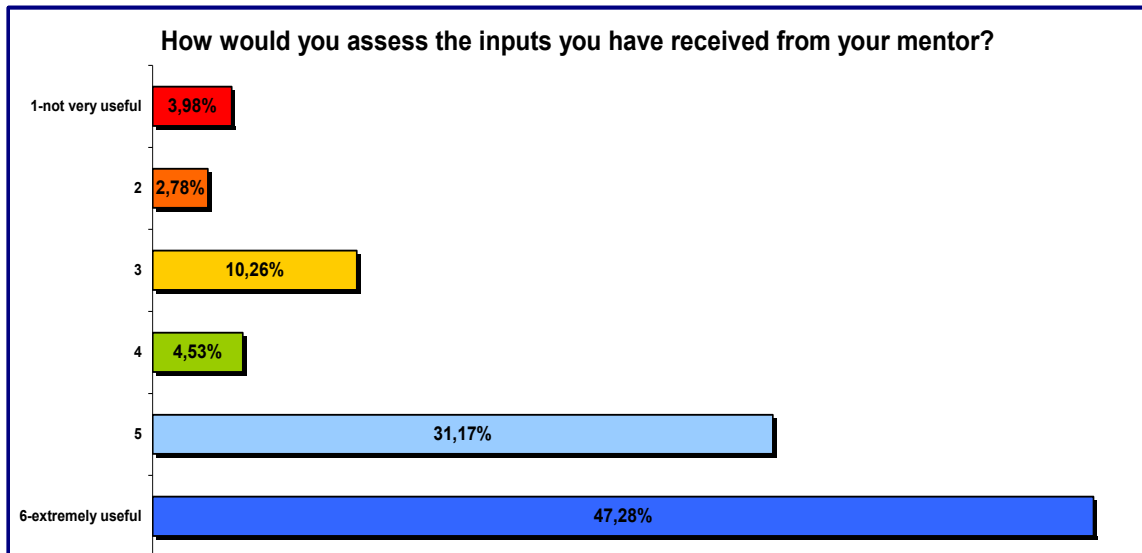
Information concerning the competence of the team to conduct this course has been gathered from evaluations conducted with participants (final evaluations from 3 residential seminars, the online surveys and participant interviews), the observations of the evaluator during those seminars, team meetings (of which the evaluator has attended five), the interviews with team members themselves, and the e-learning activities online. Despite the numerous sources of information, the evaluator’s impressions can only be considered partial.

As can be gathered from the graph below, participants are very satisfied with the competence of the team – both as individuals and as a team. They evaluate the team’s competence as knowledgeable, seamlessly professional in content delivery, clear, friendly, available, supportive and so on. They have no criticisms, only praise, for the team.



For the evaluator, several points in relation to team competence and delivery of the course stood out:

Mentoring: The team members seemed most at home, and most effective, in their role as mentors in bilateral support of the individual participants, and participants appreciated this individual care and attention immensely. They felt respected and supported, it contributed to the improvement of their self-esteem and their sense of worth, and hence, was a very important dimension and added value of the course. The team has been able to mobilise and draw on both their individual and collective expertise (which in the areas of non-formal education, human rights education and the situations of specific regions and minority target groups is certainly extensive) for this task very effectively.



Nevertheless, in the opinion of the evaluator, the team members seemed to be ‘doing an awful lot’ for the participants in their mentoring groups. The extent to which the team members were effective in challenging participants to think ‘outside the box’ of their usual ways of doing things continues to be somewhat unclear. On the one hand, the bilateral nature of the relationships in the mentoring groups and communication using the platform mitigated a variety of constructively critical opinions being voiced on how participants saw and did things. On the other, the team members visibly tried to dig deeper into participants’ ways of thinking about their projects and the effectiveness of their work. While it is to be acknowledged that the heavy reliance on mentoring by the team was also a response to the highly diverse needs of this group, which diverged even further as the course went on, it can be questioned whether the extensive mentoring and the level of concentration placed on individual learning, has not led some participants to develop dependency relationships with their mentors.

The team members noted in their post-course evaluation that the mentoring approach taken represents an innovation in the context of traditional LTTCs in the DYS and that it was their first experience of conducting systematic mentoring. In their opinion, they would have benefitted from some specific training for this role, in order, for example, to be better able to distinguish when mentoring slides into counselling.

(Youth) policy dimension: The team explicitly chose not to engage with this theme in the 1st residential seminar and in the development of the initial project plans, a choice that for the evaluator remains questionable, considering the objectives of the LTTC directly target policy change and policy actors, and considering the clear difficulties of involving local authorities in the LTTC and the projects of participants encountered from the outset. While the team’s major areas of competence and experience are in direct educational work with young people through non-formal education and Human Rights Education, and in comparison they had less direct experience of working with policy and advocacy at the local level on the question of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, they engaged diligently with the question of engagement with youth policy through two e-learning units and an exploratory session during the consolidation seminar, and prioritised it in relation to the development of participants project follow-up plans. The evaluator wonders, however, if there would not have

been some added value for project impact in addressing this question early on in the development of the participants' projects. In addition, it is to be questioned whether 'youth' policy is the most relevant policy area for projects attempting to address the access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and while the team did try to raise the awareness of participants to the importance of other sectoral policy areas for the impact for their projects, this issue might also have been addressed in the context of the LTTC in more depth.

E-learning: While supporting the participants on the e-learning platform in a very diligent manner, the team (both as individuals and as a team) did not have extensive experience of e-learning when they began the course and did not demonstrate extensive confidence in working with the platform. As individual users they managed well, and they could support each other. One member of the team had more experience than the others and, therefore, acted as team liaison for the technical side of the platform management in the team. Nevertheless, the team was not able to 'make the most of the technology' for the learning experience of the participants, despite their extensive time investment. The most obvious indicator for this was that the e-learning work was basically conducted in an individual or bilateral manner, between the individual participants and the individual team members that were mentoring them or through individual assignments set to participants. It goes without saying that online group assignments are the most difficult to organise and run. However, the team did not find an adequate solution for the fact that their attempts at developing and implementing group assignments did not function with the participants.

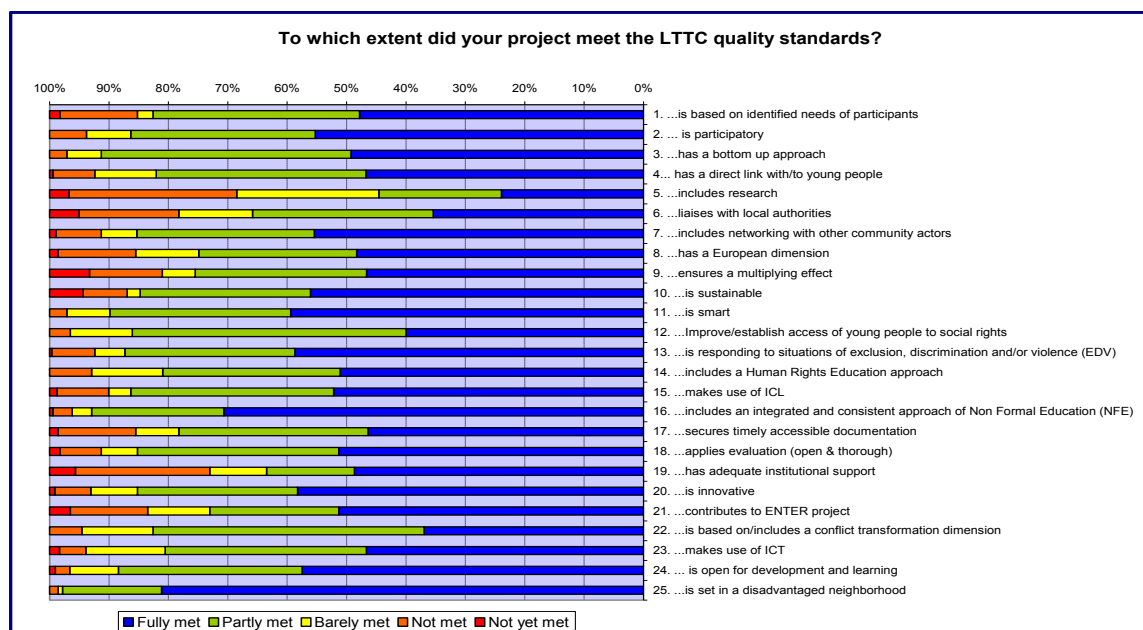
Time management & deadlines: It is noteworthy that this team had time management difficulties. Whether the overall workload involved in the course was so large or whether individual team members had too many other commitments, it seemed like the team was constantly behind schedule. Deadlines set by the team members themselves were rarely met. Some members of the team found this frustrating; others did not. Nevertheless, it had implications for the timeliness of communication with participants and with the evaluator and for many organisational aspects of the running of the course.

Implicit working approach: This team had the privilege of working together over a rather long period of time and they have developed a high level of comfort in working together. This is certainly very nice for the team members and means that they feel good working together – participants also sense the high level of harmony in the team and it inspires trust in them. This said, it has also created a certain kind of implicit working approach that means certain kinds of things 'just don't have to be said or discussed'. The team's time management issues, for example, have not been addressed and some specific practices that are important for the documentation and evaluation of LTTCs have been all but discarded by the end – for example, the preparation of written session outlines or full documentation of discussions about methodology and methods in planning meetings. This is not a problem in and of itself, but it does have some implications for the communicability of the team's decisions to others, including the participants. It also meant that deadlines for the preparation of such materials were rarely kept, and the documentary needs of the documentalist and evaluator had to be regularly reiterated. It is also noteworthy that the team members did not consider this an issue despite the fact these aspects of preparation are explicitly outlined in the quality standards for DYS activities.

III.6.b. Quality of the projects in relation to the quality standards for projects in the LTTC

The quality standards were addressed in some detail in the 1st residential seminar and were reiterated during the consolidation seminar. Individual mentors have considered and discussed the project in relation to the quality standards in their ongoing discussions with the participants. They have been explicitly addressed during the several visits of team members to participants’ projects and in the participant evaluation interviews.

Post-consolidation seminar, the team transformed the quality standards into an online evaluation survey for the participants’ easy use, with the following (positive) results:



It is noteworthy that participants’ own evaluations of the extent to which their projects meet the quality standards corroborate aspects identified as ‘missing’ or as ‘dealt with less’ in the course by the team and the evaluator. For example, aspects such as the inclusion of an intercultural dimension, local authorities, research or a conflict transformation dimension have all been evaluated least positively by participants and have also been identified by the team as having been given less emphasis in the course.

While the quality standards have become a more important evaluation tool over time, it is clear that if it were not for their constant repetition and reiteration at different moments of the course, most participants would probably not have used them. One can only speculate about the reasons for this, but in the opinion of the evaluator, one reason might be the relatively slow speed at which the participants became aware of the need for ongoing evaluation of their projects. By the time of the participant interviews about mid-way through the course, most participants had not yet really begun to think about evaluating the quality of their project. A second reason is certainly that the concept of quality standards in project work was new for these participants, and it took them some time to understand why they need to be thinking

about them. A third reason may be that participants were not used to being challenged about how ‘good’ or ‘relevant’ what they do is – in other words, having to justify the quality of their work – and it is sometimes difficult admit the things ones does could also be done better. Nevertheless, when challenged to engage with it and when given tools to do so, most participants consider their projects to have met the criteria fully or partially, as demonstrated by the graph above.

It is noteworthy, however, that participants often defined the key concepts underlying the quality criteria in varying ways, for example, the participation of young people, or ‘disadvantaged neighbourhood’. By way of example, some evaluated their project’s quality on the issue of participation or involvement of young people in the project far more positively than the evaluator would, considering their self-reporting on the how the young people were involved. Some project carriers whose projects were most definitely ‘for’ the young people, rather than ‘with’ or ‘by’ the young people, nevertheless, considered their project to have fully met the criteria on involvement of young people. This simple example serves as an illustration of the subjectivity of the exercise of assessing the quality criteria.

If at the time of writing of the first interim report (September / October 2010) it was clear that the projects’ strongest dimension (from among those implied by the quality criteria) was the Human Rights Education dimension, the situation at the end of the LTTC reveals that projects address a more diverse series of quality criteria from the long list identified by the team and that the participants have become much more aware of the need to consider quality issues in their work and to evaluate it on an ongoing basis, which is a positive result. They have also been challenged more openly by the team, and in some cases, even by each other, to engage honestly and authentically with the quality standards through the mentoring group activities, as a means for improving their projects.

Some observations concerning the fulfilment of the quality standards for projects from the perspective of the evaluator seem pertinent at this point:

The rights dimension: Many (if not most) of the projects take their starting point from the assumption that young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods cannot gain access to social rights if they are not aware of what they are. Hence, many of the projects take a human rights or social education approach or better put, take the approach that first one must raise the awareness of the young people about their social rights before they can demand redress of their lack of access to social rights on their own behalf.

Policy dimension and impact: While only a minority of projects have an explicit policy dimension outlined in their project plan, the consolidation seminar has revealed that participants have been reflecting on the possible policy impact of their projects and, therefore, about how that can be integrated into their projects. In addition, participants have considered how to involve local authorities in their projects, with mixed results. Not all have managed to develop partnerships with local authorities, but in general participants are aware of the need to involve decision makers and power holders in their efforts if their aim is to change substantively the access of young people to social rights.

Substantive change in the access of the participants of participants’ projects to social rights in their disadvantaged neighbourhoods: The

awareness of rights focus of many of the projects has meant that in some respect or another they have had an 'educational' impact on their beneficiaries in relation to social rights. Further some projects have been able to deliver concrete changes in access to social rights for their limited number of participants in areas such as access to employment, legal status in the host country, vocational training, and education. Nevertheless, it has to be acknowledged that youth work projects of this kind may not be the best adapted to making structural change in terms of access to social rights in such neighbourhoods, especially considering the extensive problems such neighbourhoods face and the inability of many governments to achieve extensive improvements.

Active participation of the young people (project target groups) in decision-making in the projects: Some participants have clearly been making efforts to conduct decision making about the project with the target group – it is a key principle of their planning and implementation phase. The participant evaluation interviews revealed that participants have diverging understandings of what active participation of young people in the projects means. For some this is clearly related to direct consultation of young people about their needs and concerns along with extensive negotiation with the young people of how to address these until decisions have been reached. For others, projects are run by young people for other young people, but the decision making about what to do and how to do it is done by the project carrier alone or in conjunction with a small project team of more experienced volunteers.

Innovation: Some participants have been using the course and the progression through the e-learning units to include new dimensions in their project preparation or implementation. For example, some participants have begun considering how to include a policy dimension in their project in follow-up to the e-learning units on local and international youth policy. Others have been using e-learning units or activities they took part in during the residential seminars as a means of integrating social rights into their project activities with their participants. But, the question of innovation as a quality criterion is complicated, and needs a nuanced discussion. On the one hand, there seems to be little awareness of this criteria or its importance on the part of the participants. For example, several participants ran projects, which are part or entirely 'their everyday work' in their association or professional setting. Some others are running micro-projects with few participants, small scale funding, and with no specific plans for follow-up ('once off activities'). It seems to have been difficult for the team to convince these participants of the relevance of trying something 'new' or 'different', both for their own learning and for the situation of the young people they work with. On the other hand, it has been argued by team members, and not without reason, that the integration of any element of the course contents or approach represents an innovation for a good part of the participants of this course. Their work on the local level in their disadvantaged neighbourhoods is often so far removed from the European level that participation in the course and its effects on the project are an innovation in an of itself. One must also necessarily take into account that the target groups of the participants' projects are disadvantaged from many perspectives, including the perspective of information about and access to European programmes.

In conclusion, it seems necessary to also question the extent to which some of the standards were hard or soft standards, and the utility of such a long list of quality standards. In discussing this with the evaluator, the team agreed that the quality

concept may have been a little vague and diffuse to be used as a real tool for improvement of the projects and that a shorter, more focused, set of hard criteria for projects might have had better impact. This said, it is readily admitted that not all projects 'must' fulfil all criteria to the full to be considered valid interventions in favour of the access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

III.6.c. Quality of the LTTC in relation to the quality standards for non-formal learning activities (in the Directorate of Youth and Sports)

Quality standards as defined by the education and training unit of the DYS for non-formal education activities are:

- A relevant needs assessment;
- Concrete, achievable and assessable objectives;
- The definition of competences addressed and learning outcomes for the participants;
- The relevance to the Council of Europe programme and DYS priorities;
- An adequate and timely preparation process;
- A competent team of trainers;
- An integrated approach to intercultural learning;
- Adequate recruitment and selection of participants;
- A consistent practice of non-formal education principles and approaches;
- Adequate, accessible and timely documentation;
- A thorough and open process of evaluation;
- Structurally optimal working conditions and environment;
- Adequate institutional support and an integrated follow-up within the DYS programme and its partner organisations;
- Visibility, innovation and research.

The complete list of criteria that exemplify these standards can be found in the Appendices.

The following remarks in this relation seem appropriate in light of the evaluation results collected and discussions with the team.

It can be concluded at the end of the LTTC that in general the course as delivered by this team does respect the quality criteria for DYS activities. This said, and as was also the case for the quality criteria for projects in the course, some criteria have been given more precedence than others, or have been more relevant to this course than others. In the following remarks we will look at those standards that the evaluator feels did not receive as much attention as they might have warranted:

Relevant needs assessment: The LTTC Enter! needs assessment was established through a preparatory process including a consultative meeting with some key stakeholders from the youth NGO sector, researchers and members of the DYS statutory bodies. Nevertheless, this cannot be said to have been an 'evidence based' training needs assessment of the field of social youth work in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Rather, the institution has established the priority of social inclusion of young people and from that a policy response and educational intervention have been developed – resulting in the Enter! Project and by extension the LTTC. While

evidence of the situation and needs of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods has been consulted in the process, the needs (in terms of complementary training at the European level) of youth workers and youth leaders have not.

Intercultural learning: While a key approach and working methodology in non-formal education in the DYS, intercultural learning did not appear strongly in this LTTC. Rather, the course was acknowledged to have had a strong intercultural dimension, notably through its bilingual nature and through the diverse realities in which the participants work. Nevertheless, some methods commonly associated with intercultural learning were used during the training, although intercultural learning did not appear as a strong element of the training contents nor was the intercultural dimension within the course itself worked with very explicitly. Nevertheless, it did take an explicit Human Rights Education approach, which is closely related to intercultural learning.

Timely preparation process: In many respects this criterion has not been met sufficiently. The LTTC had to be prepared in a relatively hasty manner with delays in implementation making for key preparation tasks being conducted late or in a rush, such as, for example, the recruitment of team and participants, the conducting of the 1st preparatory meeting without all team members being in a position to be present, the adoption of the evaluation plan after the course had begun, etc.

Adequate recruitment and selection of participants: Recruitment and selection for this course were conducted late and under pressure. The previous discussion of the suitability of this pilot group of participants to the planned profile of participants is indicative of the fact that there were problems with recruitment. As mentioned in Part I of this report, 95 applications from 43 countries were received for the 35 places available. This is a very low number of applications in comparison to the number of applications usually received for DYS training activities. In addition, of the 95 applications received many did not meet the profile of participants at all. Hence, the number of applications from which the team could select the participants was relatively limited. A clearer and more targeted participant profile, and a more in-depth and targeted recruitment procedure, might have improved the overall suitability and quality of the applications received. More time and more proactive methods for the dissemination of the call would also have been necessary to reach suitable target audiences. It was noted that to make up the short fall in suitable applications, several 'informal' channels for recruiting participants were used (sending the call to individuals with relevant contacts in relevant structures / organisations, speaking about the call to specific people, directly encouraging specific people / organisations to apply). These channels can be complementary to the ones usually employed and ensure that suitable applications are received.

Innovation: The LTTC is a fairly tried and tested training format for the DYS. Even so, the DYS' previous experiences with social youth work training using this format from the 1990s have not provided much input into the development of the training concept. Further, the experiences of the DYS in the field of training for cooperation between governmental and non-governmental representatives in the youth sector (known as the 50/50 format) have not been extensively considered in the preparation of this LTTC. This LTTC might have innovated on the basis of such previous experiences. This said, two dimensions of innovation in this course as delivered stand out. The first is the focus on disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The

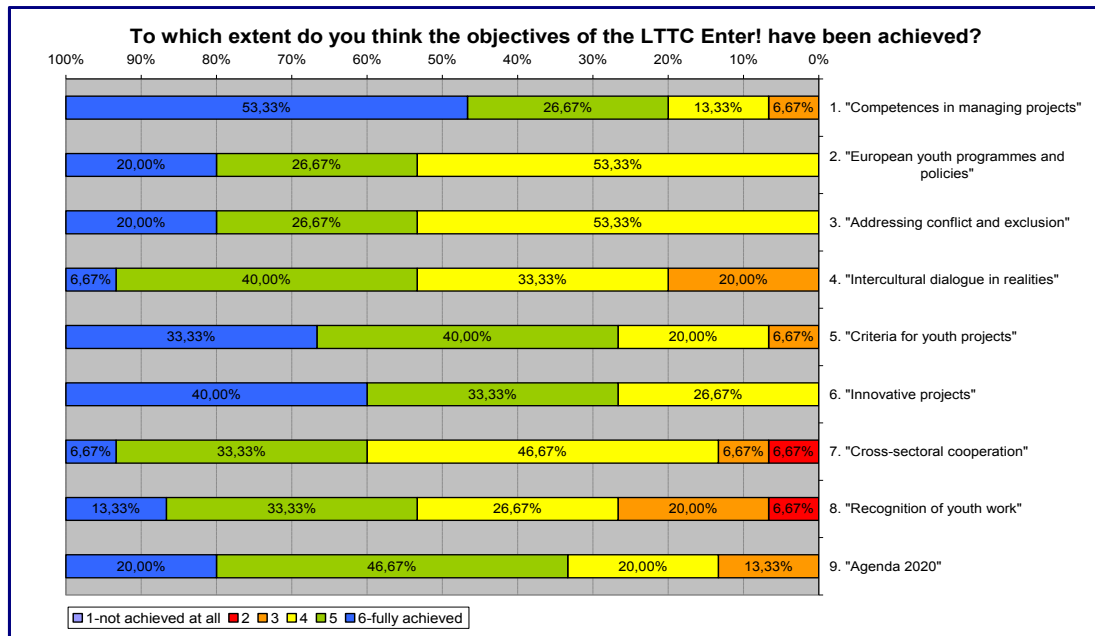
second is the mentoring system, which is new and was in the case of this group of participants absolutely invaluable. Further one might ask the question ‘innovative for whom’? While much of what was delivered in this LTTC is not innovative for the DYS, it was innovative for the participants, for their organisations and for the youth work they are doing in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Adequate institutional support and an integrated follow-up within the DYS programme and its partner organisations: The Enter! Project has been given relative priority in the programme of the DYS by the statutory bodies and formally the LTTC has received adequate institutional support as part of the Enter! Project. This said, and maybe by force of overstretched capacity, the statutory bodies of the DYS, the other sectors of the Council of Europe that are key stakeholders, members of the RSG and even colleagues inside the DYS (with the exception of those working at the European Youth Foundation) have not given the LTTC very much attention and / or support in concrete terms. The course was basically left in the hands of the educational advisor coordinating the work of the team, who was expected to breath life into the intra- and intersectoral cooperation largely by herself. Some team members noted with disappointment that when the responsible educational advisor’s contract came to an end and she left the DYS’ employment, access to the institution became more complicated for them.

III.6.d. Achievement of the LTTC objectives

The following graph shows the extent to which participants consider the objectives of the LTTC as fulfilled (based on their ex-post evaluation):⁸

⁸ Legend: Objective 1: To develop participants’ competences in developing and running a youth project for social inclusion based on intercultural learning, human rights education and participation; Objective 2: To familiarise participants with European youth programmes and policies (Council of Europe and European Commission) and the values, mission, structure and ways of working of the Council of Europe and in particular the Directorate of Youth and Sport; Objective 3: To concretely address situations of conflict and exclusion of young people living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods through non-formal education and youth work projects by the course participants; Objective 4: To explore and develop conceptual and practical means of translating intercultural dialogue into the realities of youth work; Objective 5: To identify and try out criteria for innovative youth work projects with young people at risk of exclusion and violence; Objective 6. To initiate, support and evaluate up to thirty five innovative pilot projects with a high multiplier effect across Europe; Objective 7: To support the implementation of cross-sectorial and interdisciplinary youth work and youth policy by associating local authorities, youth research and youth policy development to youth work; Objective 8: To contribute to the recognition of youth work and non-formal education at local and national levels; Objective 9: To support the implementation of the objectives of the Agenda 2020 of the Council of Europe in relation to the social inclusion of young people.



The main focus for participants is clearly on projects and project development, and this reflects the priority given to the projects in the course, even if in hindsight (in the post-course evaluation) some team members reflected on whether a little less time should have been spent on the projects in order to make space for some other aspects (like the policy dimension and recommendations) earlier in the process.

The interim team interviews provided a first opportunity for the team to reflect on the extent of progress towards the course objectives, resulting in the general impression that the course was on track and moving in the right direction. At the time of the interviews, team members rated the level of fulfilment at between 50 and 70 percent. Some commented that progress was slower than they had anticipated. Others commented that some objectives had already been reached. Team members also commented that they regularly referred back to the objectives of the course, to ensure the consistency of its development with the overall framework laid out by the institution. Some team members mentioned that aims and objectives always seem unreachable, because they can never really be fulfilled 100%.

The post-course evaluation process with the team reveals that they believe most of the objectives of the course were fulfilled. There are some reservations, however. Firstly, some objectives were very broad and they were not tackled specifically, for example the objectives referring to the 'All Different - All Equal' campaign and Agenda 2020 or to the recognition of non-formal education. These objectives are very far from the core of course and seem more suitable to the Enter! Project as a whole, and hence have received less attention in comparison to more pressing concerns like developing projects or learning about access to social rights. This is also corroborated by the statistical evaluation of the objectives by participants (above).

Overall, though, the team is confident that the course they delivered has reached its aim. Everybody got something, although every participant probably got something different. For some, the course was a great opportunity, empowering, had a revolutionary impact on the way they work and consider the quality of their work. Even the participants for whom the LTTC was probably not the course in which they

should have participated, because they wanted to attend a Council of Europe training course no matter the theme, surely gained something, even if they may not have needed THIS course per se.

At the time of the interim interviews, the team raised the following dilemmas in relation to the achievement of the LTTC objectives. To a large extent, these remain valid at the end of the course, and have been corroborated by the post-course evaluation activities with the team. They, therefore, deserve some attention here:

- ⇒ **Access to social rights? Yes, but only in the long run:** The team doubted that the result of the LTTC would be better access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. They also rightly doubted it would be possible to measure the impact that the course has had on the access to social rights of the young people involved in the participants' projects. Nevertheless, they are convinced that the course has trained a group of professionals, who are aware of social rights issues, that are recognised by authorities and local communities and who are competent and confident to intervene in favour of better access to social rights of the young people they work with in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In the long run, this will have a positive impact on the actual situation of access to social rights of this vulnerable group of young people. This corresponds to the classical multiplier approach preferred by the DYS and the evaluation finds that this is an appropriate expectation to have towards a complementary European educational intervention.
- ⇒ **Achievement of objectives depends on others too:** Even with the best will and efforts of the team and participants, some of the objectives of the course cannot be reached without action on the part of other stakeholders, like the DYS Secretariat, the RSG, other Council of Europe departments, as well as the local stakeholders, such as the local authorities involved in the projects of the participants or their supporting organisations. In many cases, this action has not been forthcoming.
- ⇒ **Irrelevant objectives:** Team members remarked that some of the objectives of the course are, in fact, more like institutional expectations. They have been formulated by people independently of knowledge of the group of course participants and take into account the more institutional priorities that could be achieved through any DYS initiative on this theme. This is certainly the case as concerns the consolidation of the results of the "All Different – All Equal" campaign and even as concerns achieving Agenda 2020. These objectives have little to do with the situations the course is trying to address on the ground in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The aim of the LTTC was

To develop the competences of youth workers and youth leaders to contribute to combating the social exclusion of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods through the development of concrete projects.

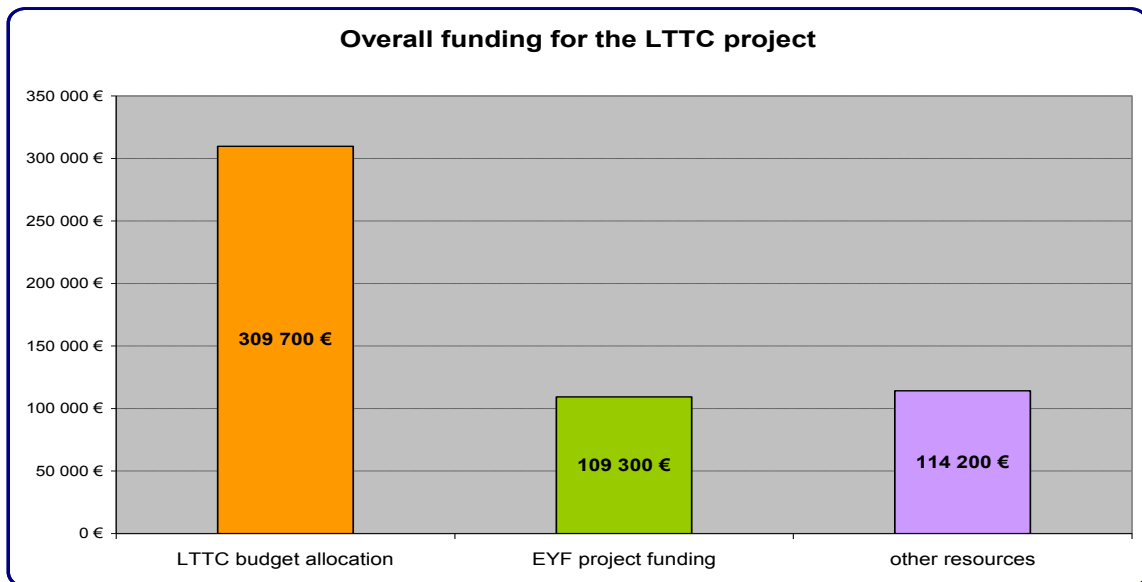
The evaluation finds that not only is this aim broadly appropriate for a complementary European training intervention on this theme it has also largely been met. This said, and as will be reviewed in further detail in Part IV of this report, the

overall achievement of the objectives, and more importantly, their relevance in the first place, presents a rather mixed picture.

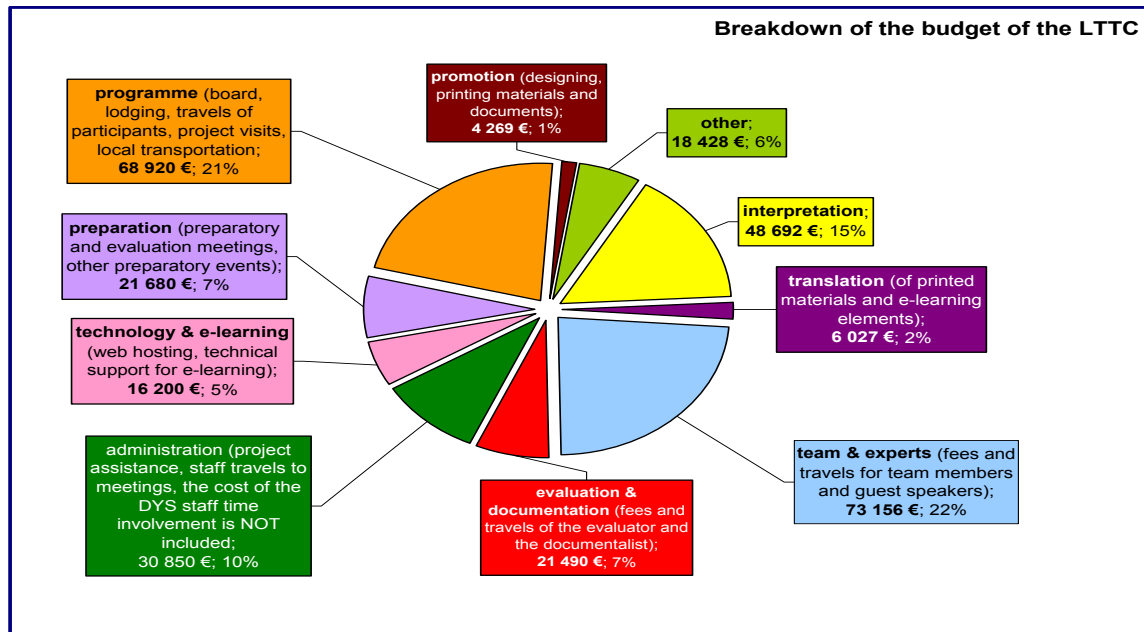
III.7. Resources and means for the development and implementation of the LTTC

The Enter! Project and by extension its flagship component – the LTTC – has been a priority for the Council of Europe’s youth sector in the period from 2009 to 2011. To external observers, such as the institutional stakeholders interviewed, the LTTC seems very well resourced in comparison to other courses that they know or have experience of. Most of the institutional stakeholders interviewed were not familiar with the details of the extent to which the LTTC was resourced, but were aware that it benefited from a relatively large voluntary contribution from a member state of the Council of Europe. They were also aware that extensive time and human resources have been invested in the LTTC.

The following graphs show the overall Council of Europe investment in the LTTC and its projects, and the amount of funding that the LTTC and the projects were able to leverage.



The following graph shows the breakdown of the LTTC budget allocation according to its different elements of spending.



Noteworthy in the above is the high cost of interpretation and the relatively high cost of ‘administration’, considering that the cost of DYS staff time (i.e. that of the educational advisor coordinating the course, the administrator coordinating the Enter! Project and the administrative assistants supporting the preparation and implementation process) are not included.

The team considers the resourcing of the LTTTC more than adequate and has described the approach of the DYS in this regard as open to suggestion. In the words of one team member, ‘whatever we needed, we only had to ask, and it was considered’.

As extensive as financial and staffing resources may seem to external observers, or indeed be, it is the observation of the evaluator that the real workload involved in the course for those staffing it has been enormous. Several remarks in this regard follow, based on interviews with both stakeholders and team members, and on the evaluator’s own observations and experiences during the course:

Time: The team seemed to be constantly under time pressure, and constantly working on the LTTTC. For the educational advisor in charge of the course, the LTTTC was only one of many training and other activities under her responsibility. Other team members were required to invest part time input. Nevertheless, the whole team seemed to be very busy with the LTTTC all of the time, and seemed to be short of time all the time. Many routine tasks involved in the implementation of an LTTTC consistently took far too long, and team members have often not been able to keep to the deadlines they have set for themselves for content planning and reporting. This clearly complicated the development of the course. Further, the team seems to have invested quite a bit more time in the course than they were paid for, although they are not comfortable with complaining about this because the long term nature of their contract makes it rather an attractive one in absolute terms. It should be noted that the time investment required of the team for participation in the evaluation was not considered from the outset in the planning or in the contractual arrangements of the team.

Project Assistance: The administrative and technical support to the course provided by the project assistant until June 2010 was absolutely essential to the development and implementation of the course, and while it was available, extremely useful. But, if until then it was difficult to manage basic visibility and information tasks, including keeping stakeholders informed about the progress of the LTTC, the absence of the project assistant has made it all but impossible. This support provided by the project assistant was re-distributed to several other people in the DYS with mixed results. On the one hand the part-time support provided by the administrative assistant and the documentalist at the EYCB has been excellent and highly professional. On the other hand, project-wide tasks, such as communication with partners and website maintenance, have been lacking.

IT support for the e-learning platform: When actually available, the externally contracted IT support for the e-learning platform has been helpful. However, and for reasons unknown, that IT support has regularly not been available, or if working, then extremely slow. The e-learning platform has not been designed with this specific LTTC in mind, and the demands of e-learning and the evaluation seem to have challenged it extensively. The changes requested to compensate for this have either not been possible or when possible have been implemented very late. This has caused delays and complicated the evaluation process. In-house staff had to jump in to make up for this situation, causing additional workload.

Stakeholders supporting the course: Several stakeholders, especially those involved in the RSG, were supposed to act as support persons for the Enter! Project and by extension to the LTTC. This has not materialised to the satisfaction of the training team and many questions have been raised concerning the utility of the RSG. On the other hand, some stakeholders have offered their support but their offers were not taken up by participants. Stakeholders admitted to not having time to support the course. Several further complained that they have difficulty to stay well informed because they would have to navigate the websites in order to do that, and because they are not members of the RSG, they do not receive regular reports about the course. From their side, the coordination team inside the DYS remarked that the level of time and effort invested in trying to ensure the support of such stakeholders for the course did not warrant the limited results.

III.8. Intersectoral cooperation in support of the LTTC

The evaluation finds that the intersectoral cooperation has not worked to its best potential in support of the LTTC.

The team complained that, despite their efforts, it has not been possible to make effective use of the non-tangible resources represented by the stakeholders to the maximum benefit of the participants' projects, or the training programme. The engagement of both Social Policy and Standards Division in Directorate General III and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities has been patchy at best and often only reflected their specific strategic interests at a given moment. Although the Congress has become more engaged in the Enter! Project over time, relevant staff has not been as proactive as hoped in facilitating contact between local authorities and the participants of the LTTC. The initiative was entirely left up to the participants, often with very mixed results in terms of the response of the local authorities. Neither was it particularly forthcoming in facilitating the involvement of local authorities in the programme of the training. In the case of the Social Policy and Standards Division at DGIII, interest was largely confined to contributions the LTTC and its participants could make to its events (for example, the Conference on Social Mobility). Overall, short term interest in specific aspects of the Enter! Project (such as the policy related seminars) seems to have been higher than in the long-term commitment required by more active involvement in the LTTC. Resource contributions, in terms of time, finances and staff, have not been forthcoming. The evaluation also finds that the more or less proactive attitude of the intersectoral partners depended largely on the attitude of the staff concerned and on their and their work field's situation in the Council of Europe at any given moment. It is noteworthy that during the time of the LTTC several of the staff delegated by the intersectoral partner were redeployed or got other jobs in other departments, meaning that responsibility for the LTTC and the Enter! Project shifted to new staff more than once.

Further, with the exception of the cooperation with the European Youth Foundation, the engagement of the intrasectoral stakeholders has been disappointing. In particular, the lack of active involvement on the part of the DYS' Statutory Bodies, especially the CDEJ (the intergovernmental committee), is regrettable. While the Advisory Council (the non-governmental committee) was represented in the Reference and Support group for the Enter! Project, the CDEJ was not from the outset and delegated a representative only very late. The impression of disinterest on the part of the Statutory Bodies has certainly been compounded by the lack of activity and interest in the LTTC on the part of the RSG, discussed in a previous section.

This poor situation with intersectoral cooperation has been put down to weak communication and a lack of time to concentrate on the LTTC. Institutional stakeholders, working inside and outside the DYS, complained that while the amount of information available to them is large, they found it difficult to keep up to date about the development of the project, due to a lack of time to go online and search for information, or due to the fact that they did not receive regular reports about the progress of the LTTC. Others mentioned that even if the Enter! website

was a useful resource in some respects, it was neither regularly updated with regard to the LTTC (for example, state of implementation of the projects), nor was it particularly user-friendly. The ACT-HRE platform was also difficult to use for stakeholders. Many were disappointed that they simply did not have enough time to devote to the LTTC, which is an additional element to their regular workload, rather than an integral part, and acknowledged that this detracted from their contribution and from the quality of intersectoral cooperation.

However, lacking time, information and interest cannot exclusively be blamed for the fact that the intersectoral cooperation did not work as well as hoped. The evaluation finds that while the team may have attempted to involve relevant intersectoral partners, no formal structure and facilitation for such was available. Other than the meetings of the RSG, which deals more broadly with the Enter! Project, no systematic channel for coordination and planning of the contributions of other partners to the LTTC was established. From the outset, there was an ambiguity with regard to the 'ownership' of the LTTC – while intersectoral partners understood themselves as part of the Enter! Project, it was not clear if the course was a 'common' initiative or an initiative of the DYS to which partners could contribute as appropriate and possible.

The experience of cooperation with the European Youth Foundation (EYF) has been the positive exception to the above. Both the team and the staff of the EYF evaluated that, in general, the cooperation worked well because of the open and facilitative attitude of both parties. The team particularly appreciated the willingness of the staff of the EYF to provide the participants with information in a timely, friendly and supportive manner. Nevertheless, this cooperation was not without its difficulties. The staff of the EYF would have appreciated to be more involved in the planning of the LTTC and eventually of the projects, to ensure that participants were sufficiently competent to use the application procedure autonomously. Their lack of experience and their difficulty to articulate objectives and results was surprising and difficult to manage for the EYF. By EYF standards, the quality of the applications and subsequent project reporting were sometimes poor. This did not do justice to what actually happened in the projects and sometimes led to the erroneous impression that funding had been invested in projects that had little or no relevant impact.

Nevertheless, the experience has been positive, as it has led the EYF to consider what in its approach and treatment of such projects and project carriers might require revision in order to make the Foundation as supportive as possible of this field of work. It has also led the EYF to think through its own role in relation to the broader funding landscape. As identified above, this field of work is extremely under-funded and in many cases the projects of participants would not have been able to be run without the EYF grant – no other funding would have been available. The EYF is now considering how it can best leverage this experience to adapt its own funding approach in support of this kind of work, but also how it can raise the awareness of other actors in the European funding landscape for the needs of this field.

Part IV:

Conclusions & Recommendations

IV.1. Conclusions

The evaluation framework states that conclusions should be drawn in relation to the following aspects

- a) Achievement of the objectives of the LTTC
- b) Fulfilment of the expectations of the stakeholders; achievement of expected results
- c) Adequacy of the structure and features of the LTTC as a youth work intervention on the improvement of access to social rights of young people
- d) Adequacy and use of the resources allocated to the LTTC
- e) Achievements of the projects
- f) Impact of the course on the learning of participants, their projects and their organisations
- g) Intersectoral cooperation within the Council of Europe in support of the LTTC
- h) Impact of the LTTC on the policy dimension
- i) Relevance of the LTTC for the overall Enter! project on access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- j) Overall outcomes and impact of the LTTC (educational, policy, political / institutional dimensions)

The following conclusions have been drawn based on the results of the evaluation outlined in the previous part of this report.

IV.1.a. Achievement of the objectives of the LTTC

Considering the results of the evaluation, and her own impressions, it is the general conclusion of the evaluator that the course has functioned well and made slow but nevertheless steady progress through its different phases towards the achievement of its aim and objectives, despite the fact that some objectives were a little misplaced.

The following remarks in relation to the achievement of the objectives of the course seem appropriate at the end of the LTTC:

<p>Objective 1: To develop participants' competences in developing and running a youth project for social inclusion based on intercultural learning, human rights education and participation</p> <p>Objective 2: To initiate, support and evaluate up to thirty-five innovative pilot projects with a high multiplier effect across Europe</p>

The course has succeeded in establishing projects (although not 35) based on principles of human rights education and youth participation (while intercultural learning was less emphasised) focusing on access to social rights, to varying degrees of completion and success. Nevertheless, the extent to which these can be considered pilot projects with a high multiplier effect or having substantive impact on social inclusion remains to be seen. This evaluation has not been able to measure the impact of the projects, beyond the subjective estimation of the participants, and the extent to which we can expect these to realistically improve the situation of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, considering the deep-seated structural problems facing those neighbourhoods, is indeed questionable. Expectations that

such complementary educational measures as are developed and financed by the European level could solve structural problems of social rights in the local context are simply unrealistic, and deflect attention from the fact that national and local authorities have primary responsibility for the development of such neighbourhoods. Nevertheless, as complementary measures for raising the awareness of the young people they work with for their social rights, and of local policy actors for the need to improve policy, and as community based approaches for accessing them, the projects of the participants are both credible and relevant, and even those that present themselves as ‘once off activities’. At the same time, the extent to which the participants of this course continue to have difficulties in communicating and articulating the value (in educational terms and in terms of impacts on access to social rights for young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods) to funders and other partners is noteworthy and questions the extent to which the course has been able to raise the competence these participants to work in ‘established’ bureaucratic systems, especially those that regulate funding for their work.

Objective 3: To familiarise participants with European youth programmes and policies (Council of Europe and European Commission) and the values, mission, structure and ways of working of the Council of Europe and in particular the Directorate of Youth and Sport

Most of the participants could be considered ‘novices’ in matters European youth sector at the beginning of the course. The course has provided them with information and knowledge about European youth programmes and policies and has given them the opportunity to gain insight into ‘how Europe works’. This also applies to the themes of human and social rights in a European perspective. At the end of the course, participants have come to see that Europe can be helpful to them and their young people, although they may still not always know how best to approach enlisting its support. This said, the Europe of the Council of Europe has been given more attention than the opportunities provided by the European Union. Considering, the role that EU structural funds and other such mechanisms are supposed to play in the improvement of the situation of disadvantaged neighbourhoods, this might a little more focus on the programmes of the EU beyond those specifically focusing on youth, might have been relevant. At the same time, it is also to be questioned if these participants would have been able to cope with the complicated and often intimidating nature of EU programmes, or whether the majority are involved in organisations that could even consider participating (whether because of size or geographical location).

Objective 4: To concretely address situations of conflict and exclusion of young people living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods through non-formal education and youth work projects by the course participants

All the participants (through their everyday work) and their LTTC projects address multicultural realities, but the multicultural nature of these realities differ considerably, and so do the conflicts and exclusions that young people living in the neighbourhoods represented in the course experience. Some neighbourhoods are classically ‘multicultural’ – in other words, made up of many different kinds of people from a variety of backgrounds as a result of migration. Some of the neighbourhoods host isolated minorities living segregated from hostile majority communities. Here

one can remark an important difference between the realities addressed by projects taking place in Western and Eastern Europe respectively, and between urban and rural contexts in both. The course enquired into these situations in a variety of ways, using the exchange across realities to raise the participants' awareness for different ways of understanding and responding to their specific situations. The project development phase focused on trying to find appropriate educational responses, especially to the situations of exclusion experienced by the young people in such neighbourhoods. The conflict dimension, however, was less explicitly addressed in the course and in the projects. This may be for a variety of reasons – the conflicts concerned simmer below the surface and are not explicit in all cases, the conflicts concerned are too entrenched to be addressed by a project on access to social rights, the project carrier prefers to take a 'positive' approach, and not to only target the negative dimensions – i.e. conflicts emanating from cultural differences, or the definitions of conflict and the value judgements placed on them differ across realities, etc. One strong common denominator between the projects, however, was their human rights education approach and their promotion of access to social rights as a dimension of human rights.

Objective 5: To explore and develop conceptual and practical means of translating intercultural dialogue into the realities of youth work

Intercultural dialogue in the classical Council of Europe sense (c.f. definition in the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue) has not been explicitly tackled in this LTTC in any significant depth. Hence, results for intercultural dialogue are not very likely unless as a side effect of some of the projects. If one takes a broader perspective on the idea of intercultural dialogue, however, one might interpret the fact that projects bring young people into contact with different realities than their own as a form of intercultural experience. Nevertheless, only a small number of projects have explicit objectives to increase communication between young people from different cultural groups that might be considered in conflict, and hence highly visible impacts in terms of intercultural dialogue are not to be expected based on the information at the evaluation's disposal. In the same vein, participants have been confronted with their own stereotypes and prejudices as regards other stakeholders in the youth and social rights fields – such as for example, local authorities, political representatives, civil servants (bureaucrats) and so on – and have been challenged to try to overcome them and to work cooperatively with such actors. In some cases, this has led to more collaborative and effective relationships in the local contexts; but in others, the experience has only reinforced the negative impression of civil society actors towards authorities. In the opinion of the evaluator, while it may not constitute intercultural dialogue, it does constitute a form of intercultural learning, and could be considered a step in the right direction.

Objective 6: To identify and try out criteria for innovative youth work projects with young people at risk of exclusion and violence

The extent to which these projects are innovative in combating violence might be questioned. Combating violence, or addressing the violence perceived as pervasive in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, has not been a very explicit dimension of the projects of the LTTC participants. Most of the realities concerned by the projects are not plagued by the kind of 'high-profile' youth violence that is commonly portrayed as typical for 'disadvantaged neighbourhoods' in the mainstream media – shootings,

youth homicide, gun crime, gang violence, drug related crime, etc. They suffer from more ‘mundane’ and subtle forms of violence – domestic, police, aggressive individual behaviour. Nevertheless, some participants have had traumatic experiences as a result of the violence that takes place in their communities during their participation in the course. Some have lost friends to shootings or members of their youth groups to stabbing. While these personal experiences were not explicitly brought into the training context, the undertone of violence in the communities concerned was ever-present, and while many of the projects did not specifically address violence as ‘something to solve’, the projects are contributions to changing the fundamental atmosphere of violence in the community. Exclusion has been an important dimension of the conceptualisation of the projects, because it corresponds much more broadly to the realities in which the majority of the LTTC participants are active. It may also be discussed in all earnestness whether the situations of exclusion treated by participants’ projects and in which some of the participants themselves live in the communities where they are active, do not constitute forms of violence. While this has not been significantly debated or developed in this LTTC, it may be a relevant point for the specification and conceptualisation of future courses.

Their discussion in the previous chapter shows that quality standards and criteria such as those applied to the projects in the context of the LTTC can be an excellent tool for reflection within the project development phase and for evaluation, as well as for the development of the more general awareness of project carriers for the need to assess the quality and effectiveness of their work. In the sense that the participants had a first opportunity to work with such quality standards, and in the sense that they were developed specifically for the projects in this course, one can conclude that indeed been ‘tried out’. This said, the standards largely developed for the course largely overlap with those of the DYS for educational activities, and as such their ‘innovative’ character might be questioned. The evaluation finds that the standards require extensive revision – there are too many of them and not all of them have proved to be relevant to the question of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Objective 7: To share knowledge and experiences on challenges to human and social rights faced by young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Europe

The entire course concept is predicated on the exchange of experience between participants, team and experts. The composition of the group was very diverse, and brings with it direct experiences of a large variety of disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Participants were clearly committed to making the best of the opportunities to exchange, especially during the face-to-face learning opportunities and bilaterally. Nevertheless, it should be further considered how the e-learning platform could be used to its best potential for creating exchange between participants. Mentoring groups, while an excellent method for participant support, can also limit the potential for exchange in the wider group. The lack of engagement of the stakeholders in the LTTC process can also be seen as something of a missed opportunity for exchange. Overall, then, many opportunities for exchange have been offered to the participants by this course, but more might have been made of them, by participants but also by the organisers.

Objective 8: To support the implementation of cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary youth work and youth policy by associating local authorities, youth research and youth policy development to youth work

The team has tried to encourage the participants to engage with local authorities in their context, as one approach to creating sustainable projects, and to develop a more elaborate policy dimension in their projects, as another. Many of the projects have been able to establish relationships with local authorities or other policy relevant stakeholders, but without this leading to significant input, support or commitment from them. Further, the policy follow-up to participants' projects would require explicit evaluation, to be able to assess the extent to which cross-sectoral relationships have been established and are sustainable, and have had any impact on the situation of access to social rights of young people in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods concerned. Further, the LTTC curriculum has not put extensive emphasis on the role of research, although it has encouraged the participants to provide evidence for their social analysis, and has challenged them to improve it when it was not sufficiently well argued or plausible. Hence, the course has succeeded in sensitising the participants to the need for evidence based project development, quality control, ongoing evaluation and the involvement of a broader constituency of stakeholders, including those with policy making power, if they are to develop effective youth work in such contexts. This is a positive result, although in practice this sensitivity has not always led to results in terms of improved interest and willingness to cooperate on the side of authorities and other policy stakeholders.

Objective 9: To contribute to the recognition of youth work and non-formal education at local and national levels

To the extent that most of the participants do not have established policy relationships with those authorities that are responsible for the recognition of youth work at the national level in their countries, and to the extent that this is not an explicit aim of the majority of the projects, this cannot be considered to have been strong result of the course. In addition, the course itself does not benefit from any form of recognised certification or validation. This said, participants have reported that through the project and the association to the Council of Europe, their work (often primarily youth work using non-formal education methodology) has come to be seen in a different light by outsiders of different kinds – elders in the community, authorities, colleagues from other sectors, etc. It is, therefore, possible to conclude that the informal recognition of non-formal education and youth work have been increased in some of the contexts where participants are active. However, the extent to which that might have positive effects on the formal recognition of non-formal education and youth work cannot be assessed.

Objective 11: To support the implementation of the objectives of the Agenda 2020 of the Council of Europe in relation to the social inclusion of young people

The Enter! Project, and the LTTC as its centre-piece, are the main instruments of the Council of Europe's current strategy for promoting the social inclusion of young people, which is a very lofty aim. It seems fair to question the extent to which such an aim can be achieved by the measures taken, given their scale, the fact that they are largely limited to the European level and that they do not directly target the

young people in need of social inclusion. This said, as a pilot experience, the LTTC is informative for the Council of Europe's youth sector to specify relevant non-formal educational interventions for intermediaries working with young people who require more support to achieve social inclusion. The effectiveness of future courses would benefit from a more in-depth analysis of the field of 'social benefit youth work' and of the training needs of those staffing it. This would help specify target group and curriculum to in support of conceptual and practical work towards social inclusion of young people.

IV.1.b. Fulfilment of the expectations of the stakeholders; Achievement of expected results;

The expected results of the LTTC and the expectations of the stakeholders towards it are outlined in the introductory part of this report about the 'LTTC in brief'. What follows is a conclusive discussion based on the evaluator's impressions.

A long-term training course cannot change the world. The evaluation concurs with the conclusion that this LTTC (as an educational intervention working with intermediaries) has not changed the situation of access to social rights of more than a handful of young people living in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods represented by the participants significantly or sustainably. Young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods are a particularly vulnerable group, whose structural problems cannot be solved by this kind of pilot intervention. For significant improvements, there needs to be significant political will behind local governmental intervention efforts. Civil society and youth organisations have a supporting role to play – as demonstrated by participants projects supported by the LTTC. But, for the social and human rights of young people living in such neighbourhoods to be respected to the full, certain basic social conditions have to be met, and this is a long way from being the case in most in most of the communities connected to the LTTC Enter!

The course, has, however, helped young people to get to know their rights. This is a good starting point for developing their competence to advocate on their own behalf and to overcome victimhood. Supporting youth workers and youth leaders to empower the young people they work with is a key objective of the course and represents a realistic expectation concerning the potential impact of such a training intervention in relation to the broader context of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Europe. It has also developed the competences of a limited number of volunteer and professional (NGO) youth leaders and youth workers to conduct their youth work in a social and human rights perspective using the opportunities offered to them by the European level. And it has sensitised them to quality issues in relation to how this work should be done. The LTTC has also created some visibility for the Council of Europe in the communities concerned, and the relationship with the Council of Europe has given the participants and their projects some additional credibility in the eyes of local stakeholders. In a few exceptional cases, the LTTC projects have convinced the local authorities that youth work and youth policy should be playing a bigger role in efforts to ensure access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It has also contributed directly to the development of youth policy guidelines and recommendations on the social inclusion of young people, although these will need significant follow-up to be effective.

As such, several of the expected results outlined in the project description and included in the description of the LTTC framework at the beginning of this report may not have been fully realistic. This course has not had significant impact on the situation of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, even considering the potential reach of the projects. Nor has it created a significant number of sustainable interventions with local authority support.

Specifically, as concerns the expected results for the DYS, it could be concluded that the course has provided the DYS with a new and informative experience of the challenges and pitfalls of working from European to local level, without the intermediary of mandated national or local authorities on a theme which is so much their preserve. But, without several effective follow-up actions to make visible and publicise the results of the course, and without the further specification of its curriculum and profile of participants, and the improvement of its recruitment procedures, the DYS will not be in a position to consolidate a niche for itself as providing complementary youth worker training in the field of access to social rights.

As concerns the stakeholders' expectations, all but one of their expectations can be considered to have been addressed by the course, although to varying degrees. Some political impacts can be foreseen. It is plausible that through the follow-up to the Enter! Project and through efforts to implement the recommendations developed, the LTTC could have some political impact within the Council of Europe system. However, the extent to which this expectation can be achieved is rather difficult to assess. A good example of this is the space given to the European Social Charter in the LTTC. On the one hand, in those countries that have ratified the Charter, participants theoretically have additional tools for lobbying for more effective policy treatment for access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods as a result of their learning in this regard in the course. This said, only seven countries which contributed participants to the LTTC have ratified the Charter. In addition, the evaluation finds that beyond the Council of Europe context, the course's results are less likely to be as politically relevant, given the lack of involvement of local and national authorities and the generally poor attention the course received from the CDEJ. This issue is further addressed in section IV.1.h. Impact of the LTTC on the policy dimension (see page 77 - 78).

While only four institutional stakeholders involved in the intersectoral cooperation supporting the LTTC answered the post-course evaluation survey, most have evaluated the LTTC's achievement of its stated objectives positively. One respondent indicated their disappointment in how the intersectoral cooperation with their sector of the Council of Europe worked, corroborating this evaluation's impressions (see the section on intersectoral cooperation in support of the LTTC, page 77). The summary of responses received to the stakeholders' post-course survey can be found in the Appendices.

IV.1.c. Adequacy of the structure and features of the LTTC as a youth work intervention on the improvement of access to social rights of young people

In terms of adequacy of the structure and features of the LTTC as a youth work intervention on the improvement of access to social rights of young people, the

evaluation finds the following:

Aim & objectives of the course

As mentioned above, the aim of the course is considered to have been both realistic and appropriate. It takes into account the limits of non-formal education and considers the many contextual factors that might mitigate direct impact on access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods when working through non-formal education and with intermediaries. Some objectives, however, were overly ambitious, beside the point or simply poorly formulated, raising unrealistic expectations. This experience shows that the course is an adequate intervention to improve the capacity of youth workers and youth leaders working on issues of access to social rights in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, but it can only improve the access of social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods to a minor extent.

Duration of the course

Several indicators point in the direction of the conclusion that this course is too long – or rather, that the project development phases between the residential seminars are too long. The first indicator is the number of participants, who when interviewed approximately halfway through the course had difficulties in specifying what they felt they had learned from the LTTC either in relation to their project or in relation to their broader work. Many participants reported that they did not remember the online assignments and found it difficult to indicate specific things they had learned. The second is the general decrease in activity on the e-learning platform over time, in terms of communication and exchange among the participants. The third is the number of participants who did not manage to attend all the residential seminars. In addition, quite many of the participants had already finished their projects by the time of the consolidation seminar, while others had not yet begun. The question of the extent to which participants might have felt more inclined to move faster with their projects had the project implementation phases been shorter also has to be asked. This made for difficulties with using the project experience as a learning tool in the course.

Bilingualism

The choice of English and French languages was strategic to the theme of the LTTC, in that if youth workers speak any foreign language it is likely to be English and French is a common *lingua franca* for more than one European country experiencing issues with access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. However, the same can be said for Spanish, Russian, German and some other European languages. This choice, and offering the course only in 2 languages with interpretation, has limited the potential number of applicants from certain regions. Further, and probably more problematically, the choice to run the course bilingually was not thought through to its logical conclusion in relation to the complexity it creates. Additional resources and time were not foreseen for extensive translation of materials (documentations, e-learning platform materials, etc). Hence, the team produced online assignments in two languages, but the ensuing discussions online took place only in one language. Extensive additional financial resources were not available for translations of materials including the course documentations into French. Finally, only 2 team members were proficient enough in French to be able to develop relationships with French-only speaking participants, limiting communication and exchange between certain participants and certain team members.

Involvement of local authorities

It has been rightly assumed in the conceptualisation of this course that projects with the direct involvement of local authorities would have the potential for additional impact and sustainability. Nevertheless, effective measures for achievement their involvement have not been found or developed. The recruitment procedure made it the responsibility of the project carrier to present a project with the support of local authorities or their direct involvement but it was not a hard criteria. Also, ‘support of a local authority’ was not specifically defined as meaning this or that kind of involvement. The lack of involvement of the local authorities represented in the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in the LTTC is nevertheless particularly disappointing because the Congress was a key intersectoral partner in the project. The Congress has not actively encouraged or facilitated the involvement of its members in the projects of the participants taking place in their municipalities and regions and did not involve itself extensively in the training programme, despite some invitations to do so. Further, several of the LTTC participants work in contexts from which there is no representative in the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. Finally, the experiences of previously tried and tested DYS models of cooperative training involving both governmental and non-governmental representatives have not been referred to extensively in the preparation of this course, which potentially represents something of a missed opportunity.⁹

Use of self-assessment tools & certification

Given that one of the objectives of the LTTC was to contribute to the recognition of non-formal education and learning, the question that comes to mind is why the self-developed (i.e. by the team) personal learning and development plan (PLDP) has been the preferred method of self-assessment over some more ‘recognised’ tools (for example, the portfolio for youth workers produced by the Council of Europe itself). Such tools could fulfil similar purposes as the PLDP and would have the added value of having external, even if informal, recognition, and some form of validation, associated with them. Further, the participants of this course receive a certificate of participation, which describes the competencies developed, and the elements of the training in which the participants take part. It has not formal external recognition, although in the context of a portfolio, might be used to demonstrate experiences acquired through non-formal education.

⁹ For more detailed perspectives the involvement of local authorities by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, refer to the summary of stakeholders’ post course evaluation survey, in the Appendices.

Recruitment & selection of participants

It has been ascertained that the recruitment was not adequate to achieve a match between the desired profile of participants as outlined in the course framework and the pilot group of participants. Recruitment procedures for this course were begun too late, used the 'usual' DYS channels for reaching the field and did not consider the challenge of reaching the grassroots in such neighbourhoods sufficiently. The selection of participants relied too heavily on the online application form as the exclusive source of information about the applicants. Several of the aspects of the profile of participants were not sufficiently specified or defined in advance as to be able to differentiate between more and less experienced candidates. In hindsight, the replacement of 'drop-outs' with new participants mid-way through the course was not a prudent decision – it complicated the group dynamic and put pressure on both team and the participants concerned to get up to speed (likely impossible).

Quality concept of the course

The use of the quality standards for projects has been evaluated as one of the most effective tools for supporting the learning of participants in relation their projects in various respects. The quality concept for projects in the course, nevertheless, was not sufficiently well defined and specified, nor was its position in the course curriculum clear from the outset. The quality concept

Key concepts in the course

The initiators of the course chose to work on access to social rights, and focus extensively on the Social Charter, leaving other conceptual approaches to questions of inclusion / exclusion in disadvantaged neighbourhoods something to one side. Yet, within the Council of Europe itself, the department dealing with issues of social rights has moved beyond this approach and favours the concept of 'quality of life'. One might also debate the extent to which it made sense to conceptualise a course for those working in disadvantaged neighbourhoods rather than for those working with disadvantaged young people with a specific focus on the geographical dimension of their disadvantage.

IV.1.d. Adequacy and use of the resources allocated to the LTTC

As outlined above in the analysis of the resources available to the LTTC, the course has been adequately resourced with a generous budget and good working conditions. This said the workload involved was very large and some aspects of the resourcing and staffing could have been better thought through and managed from the outset (project assistant, bilingual course, time required of the team for evaluation, communication with stakeholders about the LTTC, visibility of the course, etc).

IV.1.e. Achievements of the projects

The specific achievements of the projects have been discussed in some depth in the previous chapter. In sum, it can be concluded that in and of themselves, even the once-off and small-scale activities organised by some participants have been valid and relevant interventions for their end beneficiaries and intense learning experiences for the participants of the LTTC. Some concrete improvements in the situations of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods have either been achieved or can be

expected, and the seemingly high reach of the projects is an indicator that a good multiplier effect could also be expected. It also seems plausible to conclude that the LTTC projects, in terms of scale, type and approach, are both feasible and reproducible. Nevertheless, whether they will be feasible or reproducible in the future is unclear given the identified fragile funding situation of this kind of work, although the fact that some organisations have made access to social rights a priority of their work as a result of the LTTC experience could partially compensate for this. Nevertheless, the extent to which the projects are truly sustainable remains largely unclear and, in the opinion of the evaluator, is highly questionable considering generalised lack of concrete financial engagement of local authorities with responsibility for the issues treated by the projects, and more often than not, their lack of political engagement as well.

IV.1.f. Impact of the course on the learning of participants, their projects and their organisations

The discussion in the previous chapter outlines the concrete impacts of the LTTC on the participants, their projects and organisations. In sum, we can conclude that the impact of the LTTC has been greatest on its participants and their projects, but their organisations have also gained from their participation, as have the end beneficiaries of the participants' projects. The participants have gained competence both for their general youth work and for conducting specific projects, and many of their organisations now consider access to social rights as a new priority for their ongoing work in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Many of the achievements of the projects have also been made possible by the association of these project carriers to the LTTC – whether as a result of the improvements that have been made to their project plans through the development process or as a result of the EYF grant. For some project carriers the association to the LTTC and the Council of Europe has given them and their organisations additional credibility. Probably the most important impact of the course on the participants, however, is the extent to which they have gained in confidence – to defend their work when it is challenged, to justify and argue for it in front of authorities and funders and to explain to others why they remain committed to it. In fact, many of the participants have gained renewed motivation and commitment for their work, which until the LTTC at least was often put into question and doubt.

IV.1.g. Intersectoral cooperation within the Council of Europe in support of the LTTC

As outlined above, the evaluation finds that intersectoral cooperation in support of the LTTC was not satisfactory. While all the Council of Europe partners in the Enter! Project and the LTTC by extension were more than happy to be involved in the project, and considered intersectoral cooperation important, the way in which it worked has been evaluated as poor and disappointing, especially by the initiating partner, the DYS. A sense of common ownership for the LTTC has not developed by the intersectoral partners. The question raised by these observations is whether the DYS did anything to create that sense of ownership, or to facilitate its further development and maintenance. The evaluation finds that while much time was invested in trying to encourage more active participation on the part of the intersectoral partners, it did not bear fruit because no system was established for them to make their contributions to the LTTC specifically.

IV.1.h. Impact of the LTTC on the policy dimension

At the end of the course, the evaluation finds that five main considerations relating to potential policy impact of the LTTC stand out

Framework conditions for this kind of work: The experience of this course reveals evidence of the extreme fragility of the voluntary youth sector working on issues of access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. As the course went on, the fact that participants face a lack of resources and have to manage organisations and projects in a state of consistent underfunding, to the point where many of those taking part on the course found their jobs at risk from cuts to social programmes as a result of, or legitimated by, the economic crisis, became more and more obvious. The course has raised further awareness for the fact that this field of work lacks recognition and those working at the front line of social rights issues lack a strong mandate and decision-making power, and that the action of the different sectors engaged with these issues (civil society, government and donors) is completely fragmented. Even those few high profile regeneration efforts that have been rolled out in some of the disadvantaged neighbourhoods participating in the course seem to have had unanticipated negative side effects, such as the breakdown of the community fabric. The experience of the participants' projects further shows that there is little real support from the political level for effective redress of this fragility. The LTTC has revealed this fragility and can bring it to the attention of the political level in the Council of Europe, but also at the local level, with the right kind of support and investment.

Cooperation with local authorities: The cooperation dimension of policy related work (i.e. learning to work with policy actors/necessity to reflect on how to do this) has been a very important dimension of this course, and many participants have developed policy related follow-up plans for their projects as a result of their participation in the course. This said, whether these follow-up plans will have some form of policy impact seems to be in the hands of the other side of the cooperation equation – the local authorities – whose involvement and commitment has been anything but exemplary. Some actions need to be developed to hold local authorities to their responsibilities.

Youth policy or just policy: It also needs to be taken into account that youth policy, as such, may not be the most important policy area for addressing the challenges that the LTTC projects were dealing with – in other words, specific sectoral policy areas may be more important for changing or improving the situation of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. As such, the LTTC might have engaged a little more actively with some of those other policy areas. This said, through the LTTC, youth policy is a sector to which participants have gained better access and several participants working on policy related follow-up activities are convinced that the development of a new or the improvement of an existing local youth policy is important for redressing some of the challenges faced by the young people they work with in the disadvantaged neighbourhood where they are active. It remains to be seen if they can convince the local policy makers of same.

Policy or politics: Some participants remain sceptical about whether it makes sense for them engage with policy makers – given that they are politicians. In some of the participants' contexts such engagement is tantamount to cooptation in the

eyes of the general youth public and young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Participants are worried about their legitimacy in working with what is perceived as a corrupt and self-serving sector. It is further noted with some concern that several participants have experienced serious difficulties with their municipal partners or municipal employers. The course has certainly encouraged these participants to work through their prejudices in this regard and to consider engagement, but many have rightly pointed out that it is both de-motivating and counterproductive to engage with political actors in several of their contexts. Nevertheless, the course has helped participants to think in more political terms – to reflect on their own position as youth leaders and youth workers in relation to the political sphere, to consider what policy and politics can help them achieve (in anything) and to formulate their issues, concerns and demands in more political terms.

European vs. local level policy: Participants of the LTTC, using their work experience and the experience of their projects as a basis, have formulated specific recommendations to the policy sphere about what should be done to improve the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. As such, they have contributed to the development of at least one new European policy instrument in favour of access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. This said, the extent to which another Council of Europe policy recommendation can contribute to substantive change in the situation of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods has to be questioned. It is unclear at this point what kind of political backing from national governments it might have. The forthcoming Youth Ministerial Conference on the question of ‘youth rights’ may prioritise the access to social rights based on this experience. Would that be the case, there is potential for the DYS engage with this field of work in more depth and with more resources. In this way, the political level would legitimise the educational work and provide the field with perspectives for further development. Nevertheless, at this point one can only speculate as to whether this will be the outcome.

All things considered, the potential impact of the LTTC on the European policy level is relatively high, but continues to depend on the extent to which the Enter! Project and the LTTC will be given priority for political and strategic follow-up, by the DYS, and by other institutional stakeholders. It also cannot escape readers attention that much also depends on national and local authorities and to date their engagement has been very weak.

IV.1.i. Relevance of the LTTC for the overall Enter! Project on access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods

The evaluation finds that the objectives of the Enter! Project are broad such that several different courses of action and approaches might have been used to achieve them. The choice to put a non-formal educational intervention such as the Long Term Training Course at the centre of such a project when other approaches could also have been taken should, therefore, be evaluated in the context of the evaluation of the Enter! Project more broadly. While there is room for discussion whether the LTTC could not be complemented by other approaches (including non-educational ones), there is reason to believe it has proven its worth in terms of achieving the objectives of the Enter! Project (largely coherent with those of the LTTC), because:

- The LTTC has addressed situations of exclusion of young people living in multicultural environments by helping youth leaders and youth workers to develop relevant non-formal education and youth work projects focusing on improving access to social rights of young people, although with varying degrees of success and impact. Addressing 'conflict' has been a less important dimension of the projects than exclusion, but in many of the neighbourhoods in which the projects take place conflict is a consequence of exclusion and, therefore, the projects within the LTTC can be considered as implicitly addressing its many manifestations, among their other foci.
- While intercultural dialogue has not been extensively and explicitly addressed in the course, the realities the projects address and the approaches taken by them can be considered as contributing to improving conditions for intercultural dialogue in a broad sense, because they support young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to advocate on their own behalf in the political sphere.
- The LTTC has introduced the project carriers participating to completely new horizons for their work with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods from concepts such as access to social rights, through European level legal instruments for achieving human and social rights, to quality standards for projects addressing this target group and this theme. As such, the LTTC projects can be seen as innovations in their specific contexts and their experience will help the DYS to specify criteria for innovative youth work projects that aim at improving the access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.
- While the extent to which the LTTC projects have been supported and evaluated varies, 33 projects have been initiated in the context of the LTTC. All have received extensive support for their development and evaluation from the training team of the LTTC. 17 have received financial support from the European Youth Foundation. 26 projects have been completed or are ongoing. The approximate reach of these is more than 16,000 people. All the projects, through the inputs of the LTTC, can be said to include some dimension of innovation for the context where they were or are being run.
- While the LTTC participants have accepted the necessity of cooperation across sectors (civil society and local authorities, for example) and have diligently tried to integrate a dimension of cooperation with local authorities and / or a policy dimension into their projects, the same cannot be said for the majority local authorities responsible for the disadvantaged neighbourhoods where they work. The evaluation finds that, in general, this was not for a lack of effort on the part of the project carriers. Hence, the question that arises how to ensure that local authorities are partners in the context of this kind of educational intervention. Certainly, the experience of this course shows that leaving the initiative to the participants through projects does guarantee the involvement of local authorities, nor does the involvement of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (at least at the level at which it was involved in this case).

Of all the objectives of the Enter! Project, the one that addressed the consolidation of the All Different – All Equal Campaign is the one that has been evaluated by the team and others as least achieved, because it is least relevant from the point of view of the participants' realities and projects, and represents a purely internal strategic concern of the institution. To the extent that some of the training team members have been involved in the campaign, some learning from that experience has seeped

into the LTTC. This said, the campaign is long over and it is hard to see which of its results might have been consolidated through this course.

IV.1.j. Overall outcomes and impact of the LTTC Enter!

This section summarises the outcomes and impacts of the LTTC Enter! that have been explored in more depth in Part III of this report, in relation to three main areas – educational, policy and institutional outcomes and impact.

Educational outcomes and impact

In educational terms, the evaluation concludes that the approx. 30 participants that followed the LTTC from start to finish have received training to varying degrees of depth in most of the themes and contents identified as important in the course framework. It must be noted that this list was long and contained almost all contents that the DYS has some competence in, and therefore the team was obliged to establish some priorities in the development of the course. While human rights education, social rights and cooperation between policy and practice were most prominent, other themes and priority issues for the DYS were also addressed, if with less emphasis. Nevertheless, the extent to which participants are now capable of translating the training they received into improved practice in the contexts where they work remains to be seen. Some participants have clearly been using the course as a means of improving their practice; others saw it as an opportunity to develop and run a project with extensive support for its development and implementation (including ‘privileged’ access to a funding source). At least 26 projects focusing on improving the access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods have been implemented to varying degrees of completion, ranging from ongoing to finished. These projects involved more than 1000 active beneficiaries and it is estimated that they have reached more than 16,000 passive beneficiaries. Another five projects have been developed but are stalled, and it is unclear whether any of them will get off the ground, the participants who developed them have learned from the experience. The LTTC has further sensitised its participants to the need of assessing and improving the quality of their work with young people on an ongoing basis, using quality standards, that with some further refinement and testing could be developed into a quality concept for work in this field. In some contexts, the projects, and their association to the LTTC and by extension to the Council of Europe, have been able to raise the awareness of the local community and even authorities of different kinds for the value of non-formal education and youth work for improving the access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. At least in these contexts, the informal recognition of non-formal education and youth work has been improved. Further, the participants of the LTTC have begun the planning for the establishment of a network, although it is too early to be able to assess the extent to which it is likely to be a network in more than name. Nevertheless, several participants have taken the network idea seriously and have taken the responsibility on themselves for animating the discussion with their colleagues through the e-learning platform.

Policy outcomes and impact

The LTTC has given a lot of attention to the question of policy and the contribution cooperation with policy actors can make to improving the effectiveness and sustainability of this kind of work. The evaluation finds two main outcomes of importance in this regard. First, participants have developed project follow-up plans

that include a policy dimension – in other words, a dimension of action to improve poor policies, develop new ones where they are missing or to engage policy actors with mandates and budgets in work to improve the access to social rights of disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Second, participants' and their projects experiences have been used for the explicit development of recommendations on the access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. A side effect of these two outcomes is that the DYS now has a better understanding of the policy gaps and needs of this field of youth work, of which it had relatively little experience until recently. These positive outcomes notwithstanding, the actual policy impact of the LTTC remains to be seen. Within the Council of Europe system this is likely impact is likely to be relatively important considering the plans for a specific recommendation on the access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and that the forthcoming Youth Ministerial Conference will tackle the issue of 'youth rights'. The experience of the LTTC and the Enter! Project more broadly will be an important source of information for both initiatives. However, in broader policy terms, the lack of engagement of local authorities with the projects of participants is of concern. A lot will depend on the follow-up to the LTTC and to the Enter! Project, especially in relation to the improvement of the involvement of local authorities and other key policy actors at the local level.

Institutional outcomes and impact

In institutional terms, the DYS has gained experience and expertise in a field to which it has traditionally little access – local level youth work in disadvantaged neighbourhoods – and has gained insights into how to develop its engagement with this field of work which is certainly in need of complementary support and training. The DYS should be in a position as a result of this experience of better assess what of added value it can offer this field. In addition, as a result of the participants' projects, the Council of Europe and the DYS have gained credibility and legitimacy in the field of social youth work in some contexts. Nevertheless, this is an immediate outcome, the consolidation and leveraging of which will require longer-term investment and attention. Further, the evaluation finds that the institution should now also be in possession of information and experience that can be used for understanding the most appropriate and realistic role of the European Youth Foundation as regards this very underfunded field of work. Finally, with the rolling out of the LTTC as part of the Enter! Project, which has been announced as an intersectoral intervention, the DYS has gained some insights into what it can and cannot expect from intersectoral cooperation under similar conditions. In other words, as a result of the experience of this LTTC, the DYS might be better informed about what does and does not work in intersectoral cooperation projects within the Council of Europe system and may be able to avoid some of the usual pitfalls also encountered in the context of the LTTC's implementation.

IV.2. Recommendations

The following recommendations relate to aspects of the conceptualisation, preparation and implementation of the LTTC and the inter/intrasectoral cooperation supporting it. They are intended to inform the planning of any future edition of this training offer or any other training that might be offered in follow-up to this pilot experience.

IV.2.a. Social analysis & choice of course model:

The evaluation finds that the current course model is well adapted to supporting local youth workers and leaders in developing projects, but that some improvements could be made, as follows:

More in depth social analysis of training needs of the target group: As it stands, the social analysis on which this LTTC concept has been developed is based on an understanding of the problems and challenges faced by young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and while this is important, it would also be important to undertake some more in depth analysis of the training needs of youth workers and youth leaders working at the forefront of this kind of social benefit youth work in the local context. The LTTC has revealed some weaknesses in the general level of competence of this target group in relation to project and financial management, fundraising, but also in relation to the articulation and communication of their work, skills for engaging with the policy sector and even at the level of the practice of non-formal education with young people. It is, therefore, recommended that in anticipation of further editions of this LTTC that some evidence is gathered as to the needs of relevant categories of youth worker and youth leader. This would also be an opportunity to gather information about what kind of training offers are missing (at other levels – local, national) and would receive the most response from the field. To the extent possible, this should be conducted in a ‘scientific’ manner, rather than exclusively relying on the usual partner organisations of the DYS and self-reporting of youth workers and youth leaders.

Make better use of DYS experience: The evaluation finds that this LTTC would have benefited from the consideration of some previous experiences of the DYS in training for cooperation across policy and practice sectors (the 50/50 training model developed in the early 1990s) and for educators working in the field of social inclusion (The Long Term Training Course on Social Inclusion piloted in the late 1990s). Both of these experiences are extensively documented, and some of the key figures involved in the development of these courses are still active in the DYS and the broader community of practice involved in DYS training activities. Some perspectives from their development and evaluation would be relevant for the further specification of the approach and curriculum of this kind of course.

Consider specialisation of the training offer: Based on the results of such efforts at collecting evidence of the training needs of the field, it would be relevant to consider whether the ‘one course fits all’ model is the most appropriate for this kind target group. It is worth considering whether several more specialised courses of a shorter duration, or a more specialised long term training course with fewer elements, could impact the field in a more visible manner.

Retain the aim; revise the objectives extensively: The evaluation finds that the aim of the LTTC as currently formulated is quite adequate and realistic. This said the objectives of the course as currently formulated are far too focused on strategic concerns of the institution largely coherent with those of the Enter! Project as a whole, and require more educational content. These should be extensively revised and specified taking into account elements of this evaluation specific to this issue and the evidence gathered about the training needs of the field.

Develop and communicate realistic expectations: The evaluation concurs with the opinion of the training team and some others concerned that a training course, even a long-term training course supporting projects, cannot change the situation of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods extensively, or sustainably. For significant improvements, there needs to be significant political will behind local governmental intervention efforts. Civil society and youth organisations have a supporting role to play, as does this kind of intervention. The LTTC has, however, helped young people to get to know their rights. This is a good starting point for developing their competence to advocate on their own behalf and to overcome victimhood. Supporting youth workers and youth leaders to empower the young people they work with is a key objective of the course and represents a realistic expectation concerning the potential impact of such a training intervention in relation to the broader context of access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Europe. Future editions of this course should not be saddled with unrealistic expectations as concerns their potential impact.

IV.2.b Structure & features of the LTTC

Duration of the course: The evaluation finds that the project implementation phases between residential seminars were very long, contributing to problems in participant retention. Traditional LTTCs have just 1 project implementation phase between two residential seminars, habitually lasting between 6 and 9 months. The expectation is that the project should be largely completed by the time of the 2nd residential seminar. Such an expectation might be made explicit in the context of future courses, with shorter project implementation phases, even if a consolidation seminar or interim meeting is retained.

Mentoring & regional mentoring meetings (& project visits): While not extensively visible as a key element of the course, these have been of the utmost importance to the potential of the course to support participants and should be maintained as integral elements of the course with adaptations considering the evaluation conclusions in this respect outlined above.

Bilingualism: The evaluation finds that if offering a course in 2 languages then it is important that all aspects of the course are available in both languages, in other words, resources (financial and human) should be available to make sure that all course materials are available in both languages, including the contents generated by the e-learning platform, documentation and websites. Further, all team members should have a basic working knowledge of both working languages so as to be able to communicate with all participants to some degree and to ensure that they can follow what is happening on the e-learning platform in their 2nd language.

Involvement of local authorities: The evaluation finds that the involvement of

local authorities in the course was generally poor. The initiators of the LTTC have rightly assumed that their involvement is important for the sustainability of project action, but measures for securing their involvement have not been sufficiently well thought through. Largely, securing the involvement of local authorities has been left up to the initiative and capacity of the participants, for whom it was a significant challenge. On the one hand, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities has not been willing or able to convince its members with participants in the course to engage. On the other hand, few members of the Congress had participants in the course. Some deeper reflection with the members of secretariat of the Congress and possibly one or two prominent members who have been supportive to its involvement in this intersectoral project might help to find some answers to the question of how to get the members of the Congress to engage in more depth, whether as supporters of the projects or with participants. This must be done as part of the intersectoral planning of any next course and take place well enough in advance of recruitment and selection to have an impact on those procedures. Second, the question of what constitutes ‘support from a local authority’ needs to be reconsidered. The profile of participants as currently formulated states that participants should be ‘supported by a local authority, if possible’, and many participants selected had a ‘support letter’ stating that they were. But, in practice this support meant different things. In some cases, it meant be allowed to take time off work to participate in the course, in others it meant a commitment to engage with and support the project the project carrier was planning in the LTTC, in others again the project carrier was able to convince the local authority to provide a support letter in order that their application be taken seriously, but without any undertaking on the part of the authority in question to do anything more. Hence, a further specification of what ‘support from a local authority’ means should be foreseen. This will, at the very least, ensure that candidates engage in some form of discussion with local authorities as part of their application process. Third, some consideration should be given to the idea of whether local authority representatives should not be explicitly targeted as participants – in their capacities as managers of youth work programmes and projects – in addition to youth workers with affiliations to local authorities. While the ideal scenario would be that youth workers and local authority representatives would apply as pairs to develop a common project, this is likely an unrealistic expectation, although it has never been tried out. Doing so would imply several preparatory steps – some surveying of interest on the part of local authority employees in relevant positions, the stronger engagement of the Congress in the planning and implementation of the training, some adaptation of the training to the specific needs of local authorities and a much more targeted and work intensive recruitment procedure.

Profile of participants: The evaluation finds that a large number of participants did not meet profile when recruited, although on the basis of the applications, the team could not necessarily have assessed this. While this does have some implications for recruitment and selection procedures (see next section), it should not necessarily be judged negatively. If anything, it reveals some considerations that would need to be taken into account when developing further European educational interventions of a complementary nature. In the first place, it is an indicator for the generally poor level of competence of NGOs and youth work providers acting locally in some content areas of the course – project management, the European dimension and access to social rights with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In the second place, it reveals that the institutions wishing to develop such complementary training offers need to undertake more precise social analysis, so as

to identify the training needs of those they wish to target for such course offers and not only the situation of the young people such trainees will be working with. Third, and as mentioned above, it reveals that a ‘one course fits all approach’ may not be as valuable as several courses addressing more specific training needs with more specific target groups. Hence, it is recommended to specify the profile of participants (in other words, to the extent possible ambiguities concerning what is meant by specific aspects of the profile need to be eliminated) to ensure that the course can deliver on competence development for its target group/s. A diversity of profiles in one course does have added value, but this needs to be balanced with the feasibility of the training offer.

- **Recruitment & selection:** Ensuring that recruitment and selection procedures provide teams with the wherewithal to adequately compose groups of participants according to the described profile has always been a challenge for the DYS. On the one hand, measures taken to ensure a larger number of applicants (online application procedure, etc) have not necessarily improved the quantity of qualified candidates applying for DYS courses, and have often only increased the workload involved in selection procedures. Further, accessing relevant target publics does not seem to have become any easier despite the ‘viral’ manner in which information and calls spread through the Internet. The experience of this course shows that relying on the usual channels for recruitment (organisations already within the networks touched by the DYS, Internet dissemination, the website of the DYS and even dissemination of information through the Statutory Bodies) do not guarantee a large number of quality applications from which to make an adequate selection. Other forms of recruitment would be necessary, some of which require extensive effort and time investment by the initiators – stocktaking of relevant organisations at the local level, acceptance of ‘snail mail’ and ‘email’ applications, dissemination of information by word of mouth by telephone and in person to person encounters, and through more informal channels, longer periods of time to ensure recruitment, etc. In relation to selection, better quality and more accurate information about candidates would be needed than is currently guaranteed by application forms involving a lot of writing. Some simple methods to access such information could be used, but require a larger time investment than purely documentary application procedures – internal DYS pre-selection of max. 2 candidates per place on the course, followed by a more in depth selection conducted by the team including interviews (telephone / Skype) and / or an online assessment centre exercise on the ACT-HRE platform (for example). One way or another, in future editions of the course, both recruitment and selection need to be begun much earlier than for this pilot experience and need to be conducted in calmness without extensive time pressure.

Quality concept: The quality standards developed for the projects in this LTTC were a good start in the direction of the development of a more in depth quality concept for this kind of work. However, they need to be prioritised (i.e. differentiated into hard and soft criteria) and further specified (so that differing interpretations of what they mean are not as obvious as in this pilot experience). They should also be compared to the criteria of the European Youth Foundation so that relevant overlaps and coherences can be highlighted.

E-learning: Some further consideration of how to make the most of the e-learning potential represented by the ACT-HRE platform for complex and long duration courses like this LTTC has to take place. Either less emphasis should be placed on e-learning (thereby freeing up capacity and energy for investment in other aspects of the course) or more facilitation, technical support and resources have to be put into it to make it work. Expectations towards the potential of e-learning in its current form to animate the participants' communication and exchange throughout the course need to be lowered. Other measures to ensure the maintenance of the group dynamic between residential seminars should be reflected upon. Aspects of e-learning identified as challenging for the learning styles of participants (at the latest during the 1st residential seminar should be reduced in importance – for example, in the case of this group reading and writing based assignments. Teams conducting new editions of the course should receive some general training for e-learning and for using the platform in advance of the course launch. Something similar should be organised for the participants (at the latest during the 1st residential seminar). Reflection on which technical improvements might be made to the platform to ensure user-friendliness and the functions needed by the course for learning purposes (i.e. for group assignments, for collection of relevant statistics, etc) should be undertaken in the planning of any next edition of the course.

Assessment and certification: Further consideration should be given to how to assess and certify such Long Term Training Courses. In some cases, the team considered the egalitarian approach taken (i.e. all participants that did not drop out of the course got a certificate of participation) somewhat unfair given that some participants worked significantly harder than some others who were rewarded with the same certificate. In addition, the choice of self-assessment tools to be used in the context of the course should be reconsidered to ensure the maximum level of even informal recognition of the certification provided.

IV.2.c. Curriculum & contents:

Approach: The team concluded that as the course goes on, more space should be given to participants to demonstrate what they can and do and to deliver some of what they know how to do with the young people they work with to the other participants, as a means of valorising their work and developing their confidence.

Key concepts: Some key concepts of this course might be rethought, in terms of their general relevance, and might in future editions of the course be given a different level of emphasis. Three main conceptual areas stand out as requiring reconsideration:

- **'Youth' policy:** while clearly the DYS has most competence and capacity to work with participants on improving the potential for youth policy to have a positive impact on access to social rights of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, youth policy per se may not be the most relevant of policy areas for achieving substantive impact. Hence, it is recommended to reconsider the space given to 'youth' policy over policy more broadly and some more attention might be given to specific sectoral policy areas of relevance to the participants, through expert input, for example.
- **Access to social rights:** at the end of the course it has to be questioned whether the concept of access to social rights is as relevant as some other frameworks for understanding the challenging conditions in which young

people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods find themselves. While the human rights dimension of access to social rights must be reiterated, it nevertheless might be even more difficult for participants to convince authorities of the need to improve the situations of young people in such neighbourhoods when it is framed as a demand for rights. At the same time, broader frameworks for the conceptual understanding of the issues and challenges facing young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods exist and take into account the rights dimension, such as for example, the quality of life and social mobility concepts currently favoured by the social policy division of the Council of Europe. At the very least, a variety of conceptual approaches to the issue should be presented within the context of any future courses to help participants understand the issue.

- **'Disadvantaged neighbourhoods'**: the concept of disadvantaged neighbourhoods has been variously understood in this course with mixed results for the development of the participants' projects and the general relevance of project action. It may be relevant to consider the specification of what is meant by 'disadvantaged neighbourhood' in the context of the call for applications and in the quality concept of the course, taking into account, of course, the many pitfalls involved in that (see above). At the same time, it might be worth considering whether a focus on disadvantaged young people with particular attention to the disadvantage caused by geography would be relevant.
- **Violence & exclusion**: it may also be discussed in all earnestness whether the situations of exclusion treated by participants' projects and in which some of the participants themselves live in the communities where they are active, do not constitute forms of violence. While this has not been significantly debated or developed in this LTTC, it may be a relevant point for the specification and conceptualisation of future courses.
- **Conflict**: this theme has been less prominent in the course (i.e. in the participants' realities) than was anticipated given its importance in the objectives. Its place in the course should be reconsidered. Specifically, it should be reconsidered if it is the multicultural nature of the communities concerned that can be seen as the primary cause of conflicts in those contexts, or whether ideas about conflicts emanating from social inequalities, and exacerbated by racism and discrimination of 'Others' would not be a more relevant approach to the issue.

Project funding: The question of whether it is the role of such a course to coach participants extensively in the use of the funding mechanisms available to them so that they will get their project funded should be addressed in the development of the curriculum for future courses

Project management: The course curriculum should focus more emphasis on the development of the project management skills and not only project development competence of the participants, taking it that the collection of evidence of the general training needs of the field confirms this need identified on the basis of this first pilot experience of the LTTC Enter!

Research: More attention should be paid to research data in the course contents, especially when it comes to the social analyses of participants' projects.

Competence for engagement with established structures and bureaucracies: The extent to which the participants of this course continue to have difficulties in communicating and articulating the value (in educational terms and in terms of impacts on access to social rights for young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods) to funders and other partners is noteworthy and questions the extent to which the course has been able to raise the competence these participants to work in ‘established’ bureaucratic systems, especially those that regulate funding for their work. In the future, and again if this training need is corroborated by further evidence of the training needs of the field, skills for the articulation and communication of the value of the work being done through (non-formal) educational work by youth workers and leaders in disadvantaged neighbourhoods should be prioritised among the list of competences to be developed.

Policy recommendations: The work on the development of the policy recommendations in the evaluation seminar was one of the most challenging exercises in the LTTC for these participants. Given their difficulties with articulating their work in more abstract terms, especially in writing, this exercise took a lot of time and effort. It should be reconsidered how to do this in the most effective manner in future editions of the course, especially if it is unclear how they will be followed-up. It should be avoided that this becomes a source of potential tension and frustration in future courses.

IV.2.d. Inter/intra-sectoral cooperation

In light of the clear dissatisfaction with the quality and effectiveness of the intersectoral cooperation in support of this course, especially on the part of the initiating partner, the DYS, the following recommendations concerning how to improve it seem appropriate:

Statutory Bodies: The role of the statutory bodies in the LTTC was never really defined, and it seems that involvement at the level of ‘pure’ oversight in the usual manner of the Statutory Bodies’ responsibility for elements of the DYS programme did not motivate sufficiently for such to actually happen. While the representative of the Advisory Council was a little more involved, this involvement extended to optional consultation with participants whose projects addressed her areas of expertise and not to direct involvement in the training. It seems reasonable that the Statutory Bodies should be tasked with ensuring their own representation in any coordination body such as the RSG from the very outset. This requires some facilitation in advance of the first meeting of the coordinating body, to ensure their nomination and presence. This representation should further be based on the relevant experience of the representatives concerned for the tasks required of them vis-à-vis the course. By matter of course, the (representatives of) Statutory Bodies should receive regular updates about the course of development of the training and aspects they might be able to support the secretariat or participants with. Representatives of the Statutory Bodies might be associated to different programme elements within the LTTC according to their expertise and experience (for example, representatives of governments could be asked to share their insights into cooperation with civil society, etc). An approach to facilitating this might be to invite these representatives to attend the part of the 1st preparatory meeting for the training course that deals with roles and responsibilities to ensure they are briefed and fully understand the concept of their involvement in the course. The ways in which these representatives are expected to feedback from the LTTC to their

respective Statutory Committees and with which objectives should be formulated in advance and agreed in the bureaus of such.

Other Directorates and Institutions of the Council of Europe: The experience of this course shows that the other institutional partners did not develop a strong sense of ownership for the course. The manner in which the course was planned and later rolled out did not really lend itself to such ownership developing – the RSG was responsible for the entire Enter! Project and a further level of coordination and cooperative planning with the intersectoral partners specific to the needs of the LTTC would have been useful. It is acknowledged that civil servants at the Council of Europe already spend an inordinate amount of time in meetings, and that the suggestion to institute another coordination method requiring even more meetings will not meet with enthusiasm. But, the evaluation finds that other methods for mutual information and exchange on next steps, for example communication of written reports by email or information of the website, are simply nowhere near as effective and tend to be ignored for want of a better way of putting it. This kind of mechanism would also ensure that the partners in other sectors of the Council of Europe have a chance to understand the concept of the training in depth and to contribute with expertise and content suggestions relevant to the actual training. It would provide the opportunity for them to plan effectively for their own participation in residential seminars. In addition, partners should be expected to make some form of ‘investment’ in the intersectoral cooperation – through the allocation of some funds or human resources for the activity. In the purely formal sense, this ensures a certain level of accountability, as their department will be bound to justify the use of resources. Finally, in the ongoing development of the course, a staff member on the side of the DYS must be tasked with facilitating intersectoral cooperation. This refers not only to the facilitation of the coordination mechanism mentioned above, but also to facilitation in the broader sense – regular communication and updating (if necessary by telephone rather than email), timely invitations to participate in residential seminars or to recommend experts, etc.

Role of the Reference and Support Group (RSG): The evaluation finds that the RSG saw itself as responsible for the oversight of the Enter! Project as a whole, and has not taken its support functions as regards the LTTC enough into account. The extent to which the members of the RSG truly understood the expectations towards them in regard of involvement in the LTTC is not entirely clear, but it seems that the RSG has also not developed a strong sense of ownership for the course. Hence, in the future, such an oversight and support body must be actively initiated into its responsibilities towards the course. Its first meeting is already too late to deal with the question of expectations in terms of contributions and support. The institutions invited to participate must be impressed upon that they should nominate persons with relevant expertise and the capacity to follow the course from start to finish. This is admittedly tricky given the ‘voluntary’ nature of their engagement in such a body and the easy misunderstanding that they are ‘represented’ – this almost guarantees the bureaucratisation of the process. This might be compensated for by the more active involvement of the members of the RSG in course elements – residential seminars, e-learning, project visits and mentoring meetings. Nevertheless, it is acknowledged that without extensive facilitation and some logistical support (i.e. left to the initiative of the RSG members themselves, based on invitation only) this kind of involvement will not be easily forthcoming. As in the case of intersectoral cooperation, the active support of a body like the RSG requires active facilitation for which responsibilities need to be defined and staffed.

European Youth Foundation: While the European Youth Foundation is also an institution of the Council of Europe, it deserves special and separate attention because the evaluation finds that the relationship between the LTTC and the European Youth Foundation is one of the only aspects of inter/intra-sectoral cooperation that functioned well. It must also be acknowledged that without the financial support of the European Youth Foundation, many of the 17 projects primarily funded by the EYF would never have been implemented. Nevertheless, some improvements could be made in the way the cooperation functions.

- **Involve EYF in the planning from the outset:** In the first place, in future editions of the course in which EYF funding is to be extensively used, the staff of the EYF should be more actively involved in the planning of the course. In particular, this applies to the development of the ‘quality concept’ of the course as it applies to participants’ projects. Both the staff of the EYF and the LTTC noted that there are significant potential overlaps between the quality standards applied to projects by each and that these should be harmonised, to the extent possible. This would be a first step towards making the EYF procedures more accessible to this kind of target group, which had significantly difficulty in articulating the value of their work in the manner of funding applications (while the evaluation acknowledges that the EYF procedures are much simpler than some others).
- **Reflect on the barriers to access to funding:** In anticipation of further editions of the course, and taking it access to social rights or even social exclusion more broadly is established among EYF’s priorities in the medium term, then more explicit thought should be given to what makes the use of funding mechanisms like those offered by the EYF so complicated for this kind of target group and what more fundamental administrative / procedural changes might be implied by any conclusions drawn. This reflection goes well beyond the planning of future LTTCs and relates more broadly to the role of the European Youth Foundation in the funding landscape. The evaluation has found that the framework conditions for this kind of local ‘social benefit’ youth work are very poor – it seems they neither fit into what is often referred to in German as *Jugendhilfe* (literally, ‘youth help’) nor into the more general and common category of leisure time oriented youth work and, therefore, falls through the gaps in the national funding landscape. Further, as this kind of work rarely has an international dimension, it also falls through the cracks in the international, and especially European, funding landscape which, interestingly enough, is increasingly focused on ‘young people with fewer opportunities’.
- **Reflect on whose responsibility it is to fund this kind of work:** Hence, the question raised is whose responsibility should it be to fund this kind local social benefit youth work? In relation to the European Youth Foundation, a reflection is yet to be undertaken as concerns the real potential for impact of the level of funding it is able to dedicate in the medium to long term to projects addressing social inclusion. On the one hand, we can from this pilot experience that other funding was not available for this kind of project. On the other, it remains questionable whether the European Youth Foundation’s role should include the funding of purely local projects that to all intents and purposes should be supported by local or national authority programmes for social inclusion of young people.
- **Develop a mixed funding concept engaging local authorities:** One approach that might partially address this question of division of

responsibilities to make co-funding from a local authority a hard criteria for funding from the European Youth Foundation for this kind of project. However, this only serves to dissimulate the problem of the lack of availability of support for this kind of work in the local context, as in such circumstances the European Youth Foundation will likely only receive applications from those youth initiatives that can access funds from local authorities. So, in conclusion, it is recommended that the proposed reflection about the role of the European Youth Foundation include discussion about how to integrate local authority support into its funding concept. This might require an altogether different approach – such as that the European Youth Foundation attempts, with the support of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, to develop a European fund for the social inclusion of young people in disadvantaged local neighbourhoods. This would shift the responsibility for the financing this kind of work, in part at least, away from the project carriers, and onto a body that is supposed to have some influence on the standards of work and conduct in local authorities. This would also suit the working approach of the Council of Europe, which is badly adapted to making direct interventions at the local level.

- **Leverage relationships across the funding landscape:** Finally, the European Youth Foundation is well networked in the European funding landscape, through relationships with other foundations and funding initiatives, and could consider how to leverage those relationships to the benefit of such a fund or this kind of work in general. This is largely an advocacy task and would require a mandate and some planning, but is not incompatible with the potential role of the more ‘proactive’ European Youth Foundation implied by its interest and cooperation in the LTTC Enter!