European Commission

Youth in Action

Overview of activities 2007-2011

The Youth in Action (YiA) Programme is the EU Programme for all young people. It promotes mobility, non-formal learning and intercultural dialogue among European youth, and encourages the inclusion of all young people, particularly those with fewer opportunities, by supporting a large variety of activities, including youth exchanges, transnational voluntary service as well as training and networking for youth workers.

This overview aims at presenting the main outcomes of the YiA Programme over the five-years period 2007-2011.

Youth in Action in a nutshell

Established by Decision N° 1719/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006, YiA covers the years 2007-2013.

It supports the cooperation in the field of youth in the European Union by:

- offering non-formal learning opportunities to young people, with a view to enhancing their skills and competences (employability) as well as their active citizenship and feeling of being European (participation);
- offering to youth organisations and youth workers training and cooperation opportunities, with a view to enhancing the professionalism and the European dimension of youth work in Europe.

It includes 5 Actions corresponding to 5 general objectives:

- Action 1 - Youth for Europe: Promoting young people's active citizenship through youth exchanges, youth initiatives and youth democracy projects;
- Action 2 - European Voluntary Service: Developing solidarity and tolerance through voluntary activities abroad to the benefit of local communities;
- Action 3 - Youth in the World: Fostering mutual understanding while encouraging cooperation with Partner countries of the world;
- Action 4 - Youth Support Systems: Developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and youth organisations;
- Action 5 - European cooperation in the youth field: Encouraging European cooperation in the youth field.

YiA has been allocated a global budget of EUR 885 millions for the 2007-2013 period.

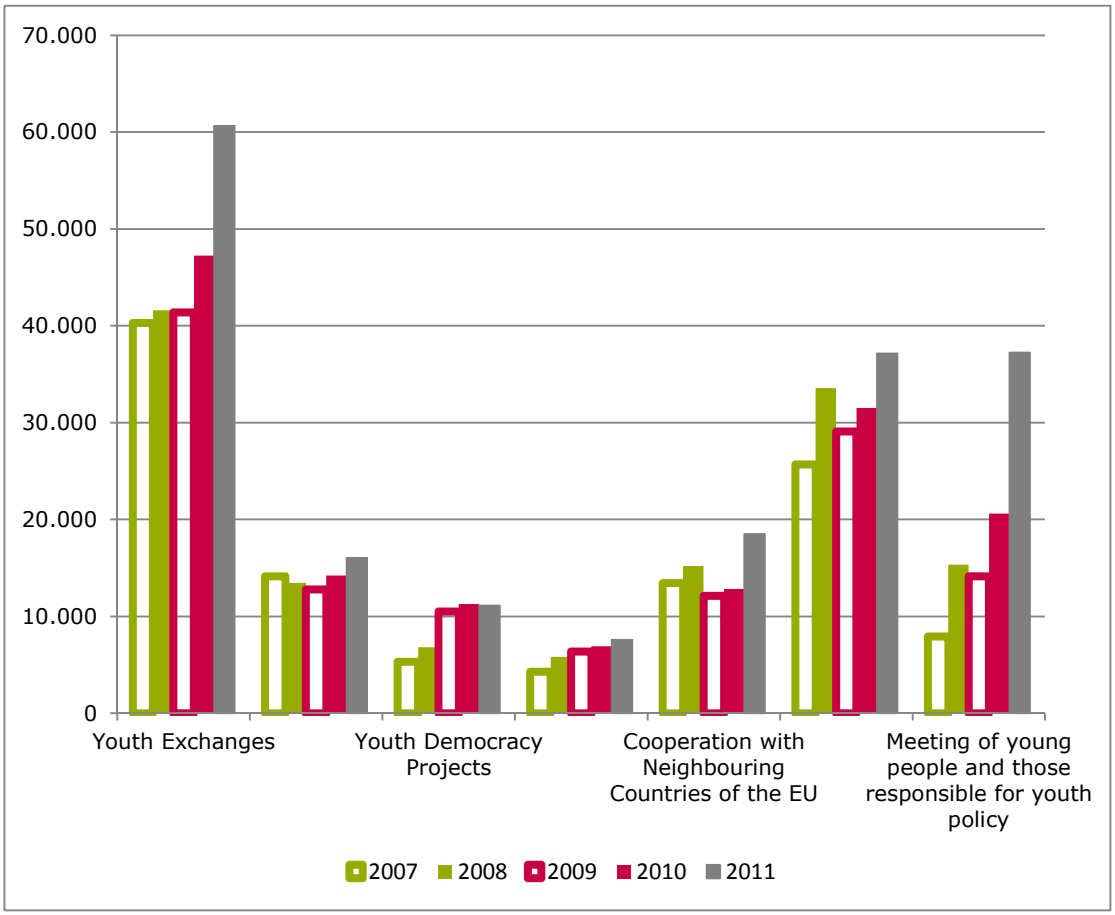
It is open to the participation of the following "Programme Countries":

- the 27 Member States of the European Union;
- the EFTA/EEA countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway;
- the following candidate countries: Croatia (since 2011), Turkey;
- Switzerland (since 2011).

Actions 2 and 3 are also open to the participation of "Partner Countries", with an emphasis on the Neighbouring Countries of the EU:

- Eastern Europe and Caucasus;
- Mediterranean Countries;
- South East Europe.

Figure 1 - Number of participants



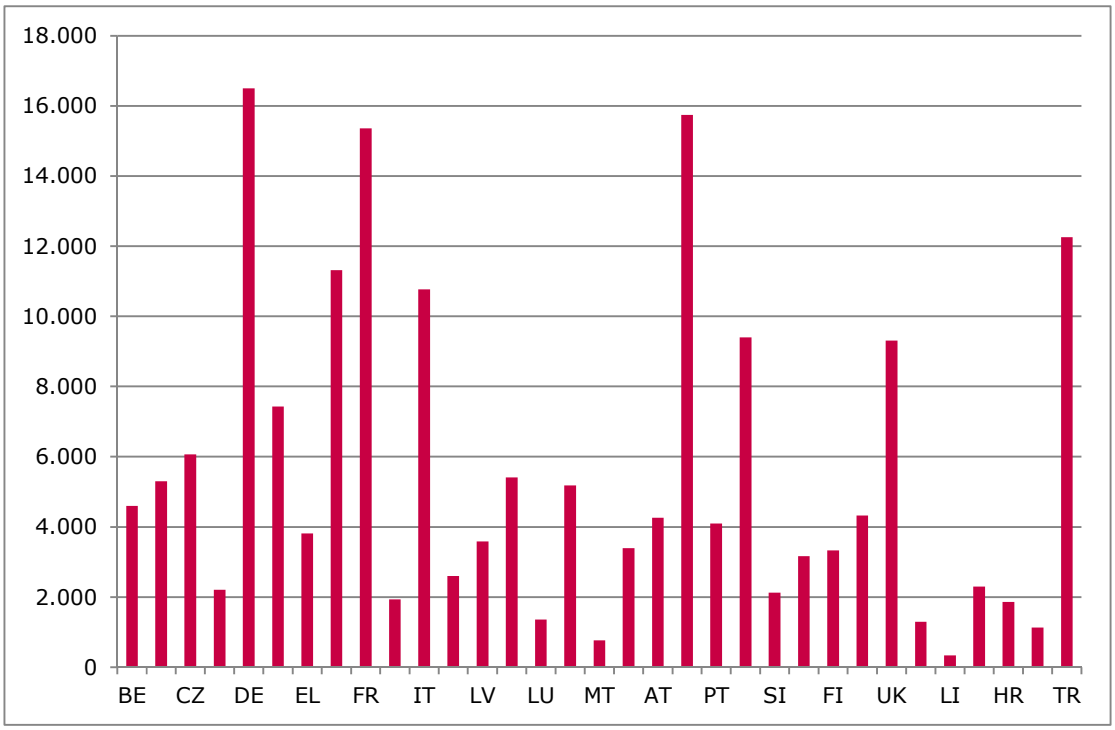
Outcomes 2007-2011 - General overview

A general overview of the achievements of the Programme over the five years 2007-2011 is presented in Annex 1.

The main quantitative outcomes are the following:

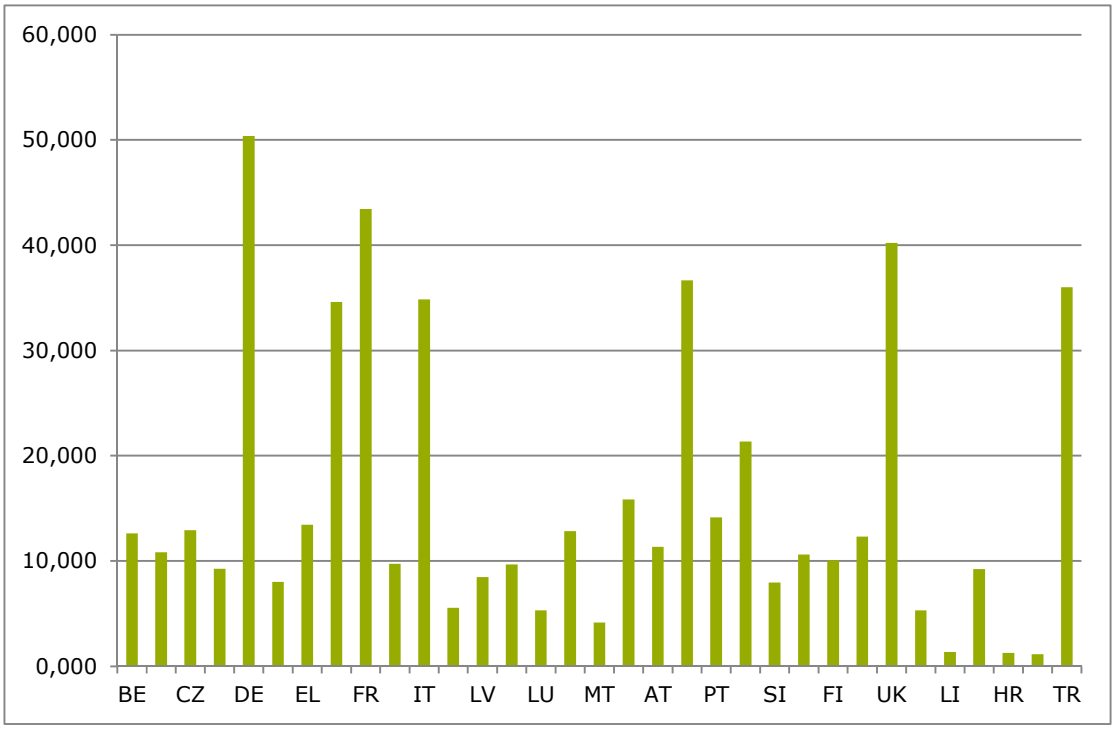
- close to 725 000 persons (541 000 young people and 184 000 youth workers) have participated in YiA;
- close to 40 000 projects were granted out of 82 000 projects submitted;
- YiA involved in 2011 around 27 000 promoters (youth organisations, informal groups of young people, public bodies...). According to an analysis of 2011 data, the Programme presents a significant renewal rate from year to year in terms of promoters receiving financial support (only 39% of the 2011 beneficiaries were already beneficiaries of YiA in 2010).

Figure 2 - Number of participants per Country (year 2011 only)



The operational appropriations allocated to YiA from 2007 to 2011 amount to EUR 705 million (EUR 614 million from the annual EUR27 budget and EUR 91 million corresponding to additional appropriations including contributions from the EFTA/EEA and candidate countries). These funds have been fully used. The breakdown per Action of the Programme is presented in Annex 2.

Figure 3 - Decentralised funds allocated per Country 2007-2011 (in MioEUR)



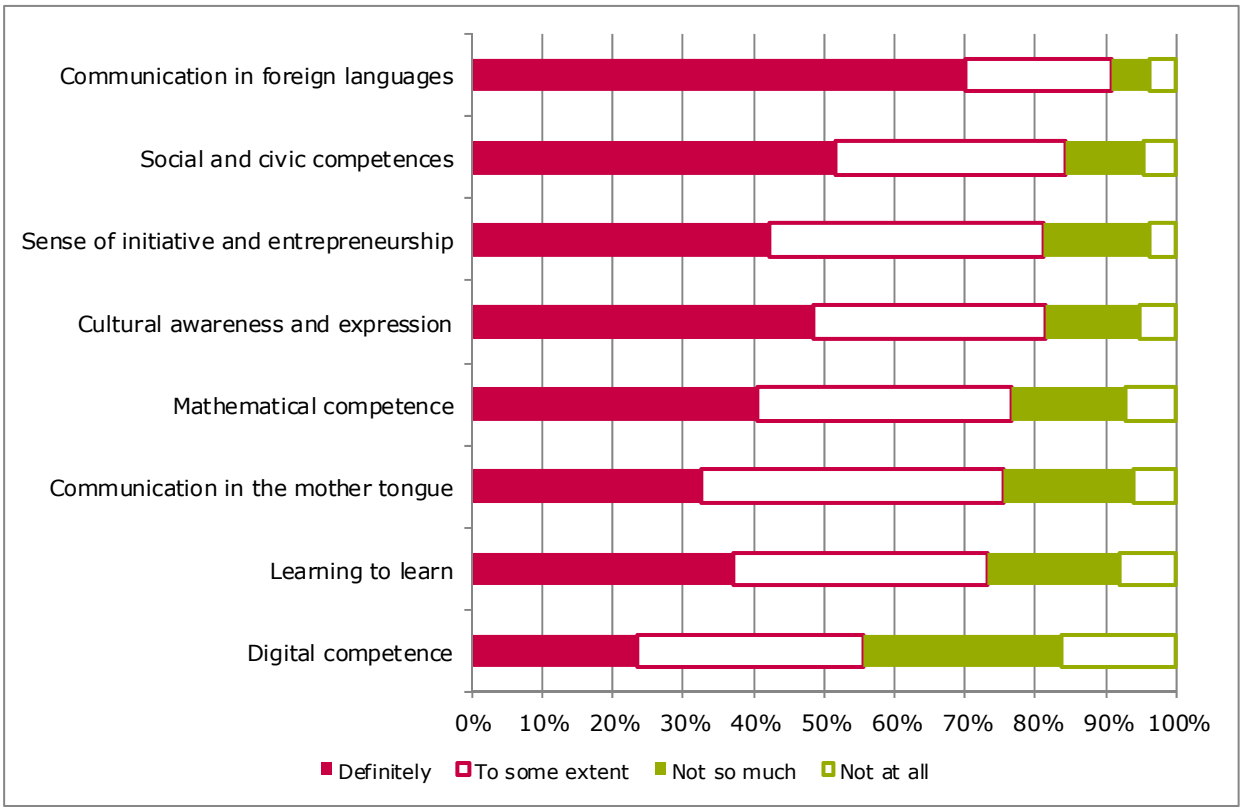
The Programme is well on track in achieving its objectives. A survey launched in March 2011 among a sample of 5 300 YiA participants (young people, youth workers, youth organisations) provides a very positive picture of the qualitative impact of the Programme, as regards the skills and competences developed by participants, as well as their being active citizens or feeling European:

- 91% of young people consider that having participated in a YiA project has increased their competences in foreign language;
- 75% learned better how to identify opportunities for their personal or professional future;
- 73% declared they felt more European;
- 92% of youth workers consider they gained skills and knowledge which they would not have developed otherwise;
- 73% of youth organisations stated the number of international projects of their structure had increased.

The following graph displays the average appreciation by young participants, for each of the key competences[1], of the extent to which they have increased their competences thanks to their participation in a project supported by the Youth in Action Programme.

[1] Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning.

Figure 4 - Increase in key competences



Main activities supported by the Programme

Action 1 - Youth for Europe

This Action, which encompasses three sub-Actions (Youth Exchanges, Youth Initiatives, Youth Democracy Projects), involves the bigger number of participants: around 347 000 young people took part in around 15 000 projects from 2007 to 2011.

Most Youth Exchanges were multilateral ones, involving groups of young people from more than three different countries, a tendency reinforced over the period:

	Youth Exchanges 2007-2011	
	Number of projects	Number of participants
Bilateral youth exchanges	1.903	55.735
Trilateral youth exchanges	531	17.424
Multilateral youth exchanges	4.553	149.850
Itinerant youth exchanges	248	8.142
Total	7.235	231.151

Youth Initiatives are amongst the most demanded sub-Actions of the Programme, with only one third of the projects submitted being awarded. They are often seen as having a low threshold for participation, which make them especially valuable for young people with fewer opportunities. These activities are particularly suitable for developing soft skills, triggering group dynamics and stimulating young people's entrepreneurial spirit, notably with a social dimension. This is reflected in the March 2011 survey; participants in Youth Initiatives declared:

- having definitely learned better how to cooperate in a team (77%) or how to develop a good idea and put it into practice (56%);
- having definitely achieved something in the interest of the community or society (62%).

The Youth Democracy Projects were introduced only in 2007 (contrary to Youth Exchanges and Youth Initiatives which were part of the successive European Programmes for young people since 1989). This sub-Action took off in the following years (see figure 1).

Action 2 - European Voluntary Service

The number of volunteers has increased since the beginning of the Programme and was close to 7 600 in 2011. In total close to 31 000 young people have participated in the European Voluntary Service under Youth in Action, bringing the total number of volunteers to more than 55 000 since the creation of this scheme.

EVS is a powerful learning experience for young people, stimulating their sense of initiative, autonomy, responsibility, coupled with a strong dimension of competences-development and values-acquisition. EVS has also a positive impact for the hosting communities. This is reflected in the March 2011 survey. Thanks to EVS, young participants:

- feel more confident to move around on their own in other countries for purposes of study, internship, work, travel, etc. (76% replied "definitely"; 19% "to some extent");
- have a clearer idea about their professional career aspirations and goals (76%); they plan to engage in further educational opportunities (87%) and also believe that their job chances have increased (75%);
- feel more aware of common European values (85%) and are more committed to the inclusion of disadvantaged people (81%).

Furthermore, organisations involved in EVS declared that the EVS project was perceived as enrichment by the local environment/community (86%).

Action 3 - Youth in the World

The bulk of the budget allocated to this Action supports projects involving young people (through Youth Exchanges) or youth workers (through Training and Networking activities) from the Neighbouring Countries of the Union; over the period more than 72 000 persons (from Programme Countries or Partner Countries) took part in such activities[2].

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[2] It can be noted that, on top of the YiA budget allocated to this strand of the Programme, funds have been made available through the Balkan Youth Window (funded under the IPA Instrument): over the period 2007-2011 EUR 5 million have supported the participation of an additional 8 400 young people and youth workers.

The participants from the Neighbouring Countries having participated in YiA since 2007 (including those involved in the European Voluntary Service) originated from the following regions:

	Number of participants (2007-2011) from		
	Eastern Europe and Caucasus	Mediterranean Countries	South-Eastern Europe
European Voluntary Service	1.396	220	575
Coop. with Neighbouring Countries	14.342	5.394	8.050
Total	15.738	5.614	8.625

Furthermore 154 projects have been granted (out of 926 projects submitted) aiming at reinforcing the cooperation in the youth field with other countries of the world.

Action 4 - Youth Support Systems

Most of the budget allocated to this Action supports Training and Networking activities of those active in youth work ("youth workers").

Over the period more than 53 000 youth workers participated in various activity formats proposed under this Action, with more than 2 400 projects granted:

	Training and Networking (2007-2011)	
	Number of projects	Number of participants
Job Shadowing	137	340
Feasibility Visit	276	2.730
Evaluation Meeting	85	1.687
Study Visit	81	1.634
Partnership-Building Activity	243	5.639
Seminar	446	11.725
Training Course	1.128	28.355
Networking	35	1.175
Total	2.431	53.285

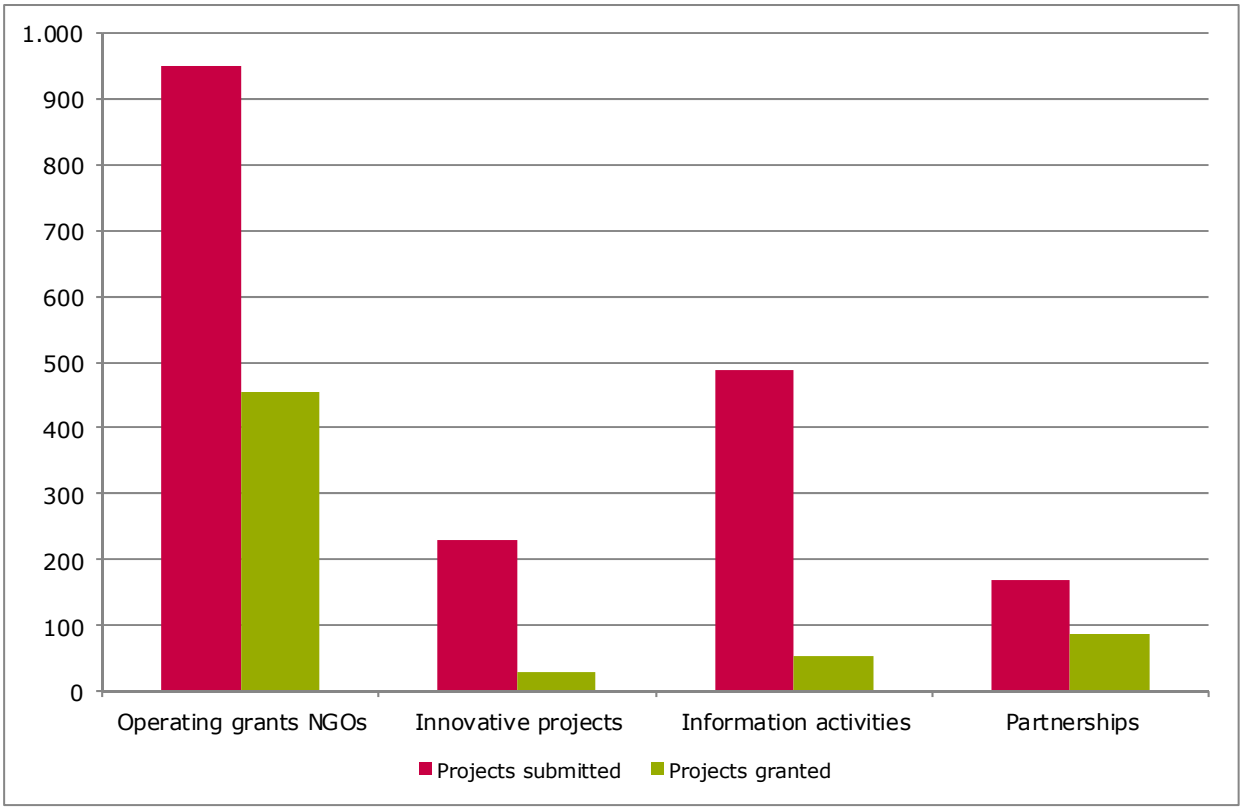
Moreover close to 104 000 youth workers took part in activities directly managed by the National Agencies through their Training and Cooperation Plans.

Since 2007 Action 4 also offers the following funding opportunities:

- every year around 100 European Youth NGOs receive a grant aimed at co-financing their operating costs. This financial support is provided either on the basis of an annual selection or in the context of three-years framework agreements (a call for such pluriannual agreements has been published for the years 2008-2010 and again in 2010 for the years 2011-2013);

- projects encouraging innovation and quality: two calls for proposals have been published (in 2007 and 2009) with a view to selecting such projects;
- information activities for young people and those active in youth work and youth organisations: three calls for proposals have been published (two in 2008, of which one specifically aimed at supporting information activities linked to the 2009 elections to the European Parliament, and one 2010) with a view to selecting such projects;
- partnerships: since 2008 an annual call aims at selecting partnership projects with regional or local public bodies or European NGOs.

Figure 5 - Projects submitted and granted



Action 5 - Support for European cooperation in the youth field

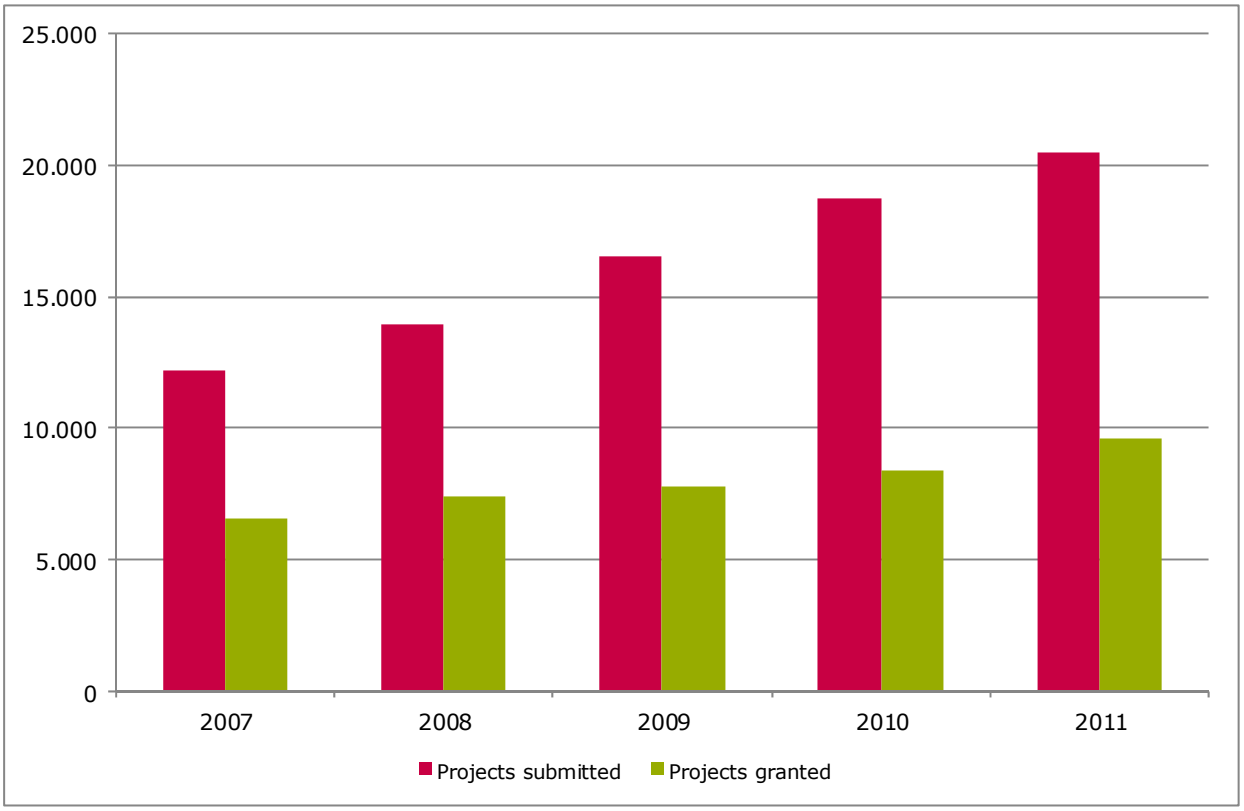
This Action mainly supports cooperation, seminars and Structured Dialogue between young people, those active in youth work and those responsible for youth policy. There has been a steady increase in the numbers of projects submitted, projects granted and participants over the five years of the take off phase of this new strand of the Programme (see figure 1).

According to the March 2011 survey, participants in activities supported under this Action consider that the projects had – amongst others – the following outcomes:

- an increased interest on European topics (59%);
- an increased perception of Europe's multi-culturality (70%).

Action 5 also supports aimed at bringing about better knowledge of the youth field as well as partnerships with international organisations.

Figure 6 - Projects submitted and granted (all Actions of the Programme)



Youth in Action - 2007-2011 - Outcomes - General overview

Annex 1

	Youth Exchanges	Youth Initiatives	Youth Democracy Projects	European Voluntary Service	Cooperation with Neighbouring Countries	Training and Networking of youth workers	Meeting of young people and those responsible for youth policy	Sub-total	Cooperation with other Countries	Specific calls for proposals under Action 4	Other sub-Actions	Sub-total	**Total**
Decentralised management through National Agencies													
Commitments (in MioEUR)	140,2	50,9	34,3	184,3	31,1	62,9	17,5	521,2					521,2
Number of projects granted	7.179	7.240	630	11.204	2.194	8.704	721	37.872					37.872
Number of participants	229.545	70.693	43.612	26.732	60.259	152.282	94.264	677.387					677.387
Centralised management by the Commission or the Executive Agency													
Commitments (in MioEUR)	2,3		0,5	37,6	8,4	3,3	0,5	52,6	13,3	27,6	90,1	131,1	183,7
Number of projects granted	56		16	476	416	157	18	1.139	154	657		811	1.950
Number of participants	1.606		1.413	4.240	11.863	4.675	987	24.784		22.526		22.526	47.310
Total													
Commitments (in MioEUR)	142,5	50,9	34,8	221,8	39,5	66,2	18,0	573,8	13,3	27,6	90,1	131,1	**704,8**
Number of projects granted	7.235	7.240	646	11.680	2.610	8.861	739	39.011	154	657		811	**39.822**

Number of participants	231.151	70.693	45.025	30.972	72.122	156.957	95.251	702.171	22.526	22.526	**724.697**

Youth in Action - 2007-2011 - Budget per Action

Annex 2

	Implementation of YiA - Annual outturm (in MioEUR)					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	**Total**
Action 1 - Youth for Europe						
Youth Exchanges	26,689	27,462	28,142	29,229	31,015	142,537
Youth Initiatives	9,370	9,850	10,023	10,399	11,256	50,899
Youth Democracy Projects	7,513	6,837	6,965	6,287	7,206	34,808
Total	43,572	44,149	45,131	45,915	49,477	228,244
Action 2 - European Voluntary Service						
Total	40,434	42,966	44,622	44,366	49,441	221,830
Action 3 - Youth in the World						
Cooperation with the Neighbouring Countries of the European Union	7,486	8,096	7,558	7,632	8,740	39,513
Cooperation with Other Countries of the World	2,305	2,490	2,565	2,675	3,268	13,302
Total	9,791	10,585	10,123	10,307	12,008	52,815
Action 4 - Youth Support Systems						
Training and networking of those active in youth work and youth organisations	12,149	12,656	12,828	13,849	15,262	66,744
Support for the structures of the Programme	12,647	13,210	13,695	14,003	14,714	68,269
Other sub-Actions	6,121	9,125	8,597	9,220	8,271	41,335
Total	30,917	34,992	35,120	37,072	38,246	176,348
Action 5 - Support for European cooperation in the youth field						
Meetings of young people and those responsible for youth policy	3,224	3,607	3,533	4,219	6,040	20,623
Other sub-Actions	0,775	1,035	0,800	1,469	0,900	4,979
Total	3,999	4,642	4,333	5,688	6,940	25,602
Grand total	128,713	137,335	139,329	143,348	156,113	**704,838**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

General information on Youth in Action:

http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc74_en.htm

Youth in Action Programme Guide:

http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc443_en.htm

Survey on the impact of the Programme:

http://ec.europa.eu/youth/focus/focus1757_en.htm

Interim Evaluation Report:

Report from the Commission:

http://ec.europa.eu/youth/focus/focus1757_en.htm

External evaluators Report:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/evalreports/index_en.htm