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## REPORT FORM

### 1<sup>st</sup> round of National Consultations of the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle of the Structured Dialogue Period: Trio Presidency Poland-Denmark-Cyprus

**DEADLINE: Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2011.**

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Please find below a report form allowing your National Working Group to communicate the results of the national consultation to the European Steering Committee. The input you will provide through this form will serve as a common base for the discussions at EU level.

The Secretariat of the European Steering Committee will gather the reports from all Member States and compile them thematically. These thematic compilations will be used as background documents for the EU Youth Conference in Warsaw on 5-7<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

In order to allow the European Steering Committee to integrate the results of the national consultations in the preparation of the EU Youth Conference in Warsaw, we kindly ask you to please send this report form filled to the European Steering Committee for the implementation of the structure dialogue (**mail To: [antoine.mertzeisen@youthforum.org](mailto:antoine.mertzeisen@youthforum.org), Cc: [Karolina.Wysocka@men.gov.pl](mailto:Karolina.Wysocka@men.gov.pl)**) and to your national government by **Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2011**.

The European Steering Committee kindly asks you to **please, fill this form in English language and to return it in typed format (No PDFs please)**. Please note that the trio presidency intends to publish the results, best practices and methodological summary.

#### **Technical details of the consultation:**

Please provide the requested information on your National Working Group filling in the form:

Details of the contact person	
Name	Vesna Milošević, Nina Milenković Kikelj, Uroš Skrinar (Slovenian youth team for structured dialogue)  Kamal Izidor Shaker – president of National Youth Council
E-mail address	<a href="mailto:strukturirani.dialog@mss.si">strukturirani.dialog@mss.si</a>
Institution	National Youth Council of Slovenia (MSS) and Youth Network MaMa
Position	Slovenian youth team for structured dialogue and the President of National Youth Council of Slovenia.

EU Member State	Slovenia
<b>Members of the National Working Group (number and names)</b>	
The new National Working Group was not formed yet due to the holiday period and the absence of most youth organizations, national authorities etc. Small team of youth have worked actively on the structured dialogue process in Slovenia, whereas the official National Working Group will be established under the leadership of National Youth Council of Slovenia in September.	
Youth Organisations	/
National Authorities	/
National Agencies	/
Others	/
<b>Level of the consultation (national, regional, local)</b>	
National	Yes/No
Regional	Yes/ <b>No</b> (inconvenient period of the year because of the holiday period and lack of time)
Local	Yes/ <b>No</b> (inconvenient period of the year because of the holiday period and lack of time)
Estimated number of young people participating to the overall consultation	180

**1. Please describe in a few words (Maximum 500) the methodology used for the consultation (Meetings, E-questionnaire, ...)**

We have decided to do an **e-questionnaire for the youth** because of the inconvenient period in the year (holiday period), when most youth are on vacation and are therefore unavailable for meetings and discussions.

The e-questionnaire consisted of 10 short questions that were adopted to be as youth-friendly as possible. The e-questionnaire was sent via different channels to reach unorganized youth as well as organized youth (through member organizations' mailing lists and via personal e-mails, publishing on web-pages, publishing on social networks such as Facebook, etc.).

Before the e-questionnaire was disseminated among youth, the **original questionnaire** (in the form sent by Polish presidency) was **sent to the experts in this field**, in order for the team to get the grasp of the topics and be able to prepare the youth-friendly questionnaire easier.

## 2. Comments, suggestions and/or best practices on the consultation process

### Better timing:

- An adequate time for better preparation for the consultations should be provided before the youth conference. The time was inconvenient for the preparation of the consultations because on the holiday period. The youth were therefore hard to reach in the process of the consultations.
- More time is needed before the consultations in order to have time to apply for the Youth in Action funds and assure financing of the structured dialogue.

### Youth-friendly questionnaires:

- The guiding questions sent by ESC should be more youth-friendly and simple.
- At the same time, the guiding questions about the cooperation non-EU countries on organization level were more suitable for the organized youth to answer. Whereas the unorganized youth and youth with fewer opportunities don't have much experience in (project) cooperation with organizations from foreign countries and because of that fact, many were automatically excluded from the process.
- Also, a part of the topic of the consultations was not familiar to many young people in Slovenia as there is small percentage of people cooperating with EE and Caucasus because of different reasons. Therefore, the questionnaire was not answered by some people as many didn't have such experience and didn't want to participate in the process of consultations.

### Summary of the results of the consultation:

Please present the results of the consultations, where relevant, with a paragraph per topic (maximum 500 words) **synthesising the main outcomes of the consultation.**

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## 1. Interest in international youth cooperation

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- Which EU neighbouring regions/countries are most interesting for young people from your country to cooperate with and why?  
*Ex-Yugoslav countries (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Macedonia, Monte Negro, Kosovo) and other countries in South-East Europe (Albania, etc.):*
  - *Because of smaller cultural difference, similar language and joint history.*
  - *Because of family connections and relations, cultural and sports connections, joint events and business opportunities and already established partnerships.**Eastern Europe:*
  - *Because of business opportunities.*
  - *Because it is a whole new experience.*
- What are the reasons for NOT getting involved in such cooperation?
  - *Mostly because of administrative obstacles (visa etc), and complicated procedures.*
  - *Lack of finances.*
  - *Geographical barriers.*
  - *Differences in cultures and different communicational channels.*
  - *Also because of the language barriers and non-attractiveness.*

- *Youth don't have enough knowledge about programs like Youth in Action, European Voluntary Service.*
  - *Many youth are not active enough in the youth centres, youth councils and other youth organizations and therefore they don't know about all the opportunities.*
  - *Youth are passive, not interested in mobility, they lack the confidence, some are too much attachment to home, they fear of the changes.*
- **What could increase youth interest and knowledge about EU neighbouring countries?**
    - *Web page with all available information about work and life in these countries, with all the contacts of youth organizations from South-East, EE and Caucasus countries.*
    - *Fewer stereotypes.*
    - *Promotional campaigns from non-EU countries.*
    - *Study, work, volunteering exchanges and international projects and programmes: Youth exchanges in youth organizations and at schools.*
    - *Work practice as a part of educational programs.*
    - *More money in Youth in Action programs for cooperation with neighbouring countries.*
    - *Non-EU countries should be included as partners in Youth in Action programmes.*
    - *More inclusion of youth in NGOs and youth organizations that encourage and co-finance youth mobility.*
    - *Cheaper travel costs and more travel connections to these countries.*
- **What is the specific attitude towards cooperation with youth from Eastern Europe and Caucasus countries among youth in your country?**
    - *There is interest in cooperation with these countries, but too much is still unknown (connections, procedures, etc.).*
    - *There are no prejudice or negative views. Positive attitude.*
    - *Stereotypes: war, political instability, no roads, danger, mafia, etc.*
    - *Caucasus is considered exotic, many youth don't even know the names of the countries or their capitals, let alone the contacts of youth partner organizations.*
    - *Awareness of administrative obstacles.*
    - *Awareness of bad travel connections to these countries.*
    - *Awareness of financial limits in cooperation with these countries.*
    - *Awareness of problems of youth organizations in these countries.*

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## **2. Cooperation with youth from the EU neighbouring countries in the area of mobility in non-formal education and volunteering**

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2.a) What could be the main value of cooperation between young people from the EU and neighbouring countries in the area of non-formal education and volunteering (on personal, social and cultural level)?

***On personal level:***

- *The experience of work, education and living/staying in another country strengthens personal growth and confidence.*
- *Learning about another country: politically, socially, culturally, geographically etc.: language, life-style.*
- *Gaining intercultural competences. Cultural diversity, communication,*

- acceptance, learning to be patient.*
- *Strengthening the European identity and feeling as European citizens.*
- *Forming friendship and widening own social network.*
- *Getting life-experience in addition to school-knowledge.*
- *Breaking stereotypes.*

***On social and cultural level:***

- *Intercultural exchange and information exchange – getting to know new people, cultures, habits, languages.*
- *Mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence.*
- *Awareness of one's own home environment in comparison with mobility experience.*
- *Transfer of new knowledge into one's home environment.*
- *Exchange of good practices.*
- *Establishing new and strengthening the existing NGOs in EU neighbouring countries.*
- *New cooperation.*
- *Mobility programs strengthen the joint conscience and joint identity.*
- *Breaking stereotypes.*

- **Could you give any concrete examples of successful cooperation in these aspects (from experience)?**

***Personal experience of youth and youth organizations:***

- *Organization “Slovene Philanthropy” is helping to establish voluntarism in the countries of Western Caucasus, Ossetia-Alania and in the Ex-Yugoslav countries.*
- *Each EVS volunteer or Erasmus student has personal good experience in the area of mobility (non-formal education and volunteering).*
- *Cooperation with a political NGO in Moldavia that enabled me a study visit in Moldavia.*
- *As a trainer I was facilitating training about conflict solving for NGOs from Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.*
- *I was active in volunteer camp called “Multiculti friendship”.*
- *Summer course and practice.*
- *Erasmus exchange.*
- *Youth exchanges.*
- *A girl from Russia was on EVS in our NGO. I learned writing a report for Youth in Action programme 😊.*
- *14 day summer school in Ukraine and Moldavia.*
- *International events.*
- *Debate tournament.*
- *Cooperation in the field of international defence. I learned communication and acceptance.*
- *I have been on a seminar in Armenia in YiA programme for preparation of the mobility projects between Eastern Europe and EU countries.*
- *Working campus in Vojvodina, Serbia.*
- *We were a partner organization in organizing an Acrobats Convention.*
- *Conference attendance.*
- *SALTO education.*
- *Cooperation between our faculty in Ljubljana and Kosovo faculty.*
- *Project of active citizenship with National Youth Council in Croatia.*
- *Study visits.*

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**2.b) What are the barriers and obstacles (administrative, political, social, cultural) in the cooperation with young people from the EU neighbouring countries?**

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- The obstacles are mainly **ADMINISTRATIVE**:

*Trouble in acquiring visas, residence permits, difficulties in applying for funds, procedures, lack of structures, lot of documentation and complicated procedures etc.*

- The lack of **FINANCING** and programmes:

*Don't know where to find sources for cooperation between NGOs in these countries. Problem that these countries are not considered programme partners in Youth in Action programmes.*

*Also youth organizations from these countries are not financially very wealthy.*

*Lack of long-term finances in for cooperation.*

*Organizational expenses and logistics problems.*

*Finance discrimination: only children of wealthy families can afford to travel.*

- **The STEREOTYPES** and prejudice about danger, backwardness and political conditions in these countries, about their religion and political views.

- Not knowing the countries; the **LACK OF KNOWLEDGE**, lack of media attention and public debate about these countries and bad information flow from these countries.

- **LACK OF EXPERIENCE**: Youth who do not have a lot of experience in project work and organization and those that do not have established social networks are afraid to participate in or organize such cooperation.

- **Lack of contacts from youth organizations** and NGOs in EU neighbouring countries and the lack of long-term financial resources for NGOs from non EU countries.

- The fact that they are not in the EU. Different social development of the countries compared to EU.

- The feeling that one person cannot change anything.

- Only the obstacles in the thinking that it is impossible to cooperate.

- Inability to speak the local languages

- **How can these obstacles be reduced? Provide ideas on concrete actions/tools, good practices.**

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- *Changing legislation to enable more mobility.*

- *Bilateral agreements between states which would enable education and employment in another country.*

- *Raising awareness and more media attention (more positive news from Caucasus and EE).*

- *Raising awareness about existing connections, projects, good practices, youth organizations, NGOs.*

- *More funds and more projects on international voluntarism and project of cultural binding with Caucasus (EU setting the priorities of cooperation with certain geographical regions).*

- *Establishing similar projects as those that have connected new EU member to the old EU members (Leonardo da Vinci, Erasmus, Youth in Action, EVS).*

- *Where there is a will, there is a way.*

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- Which barriers and solutions are specific for cooperation with youth from Eastern Europe and Caucasus?

**BARRIERS:**

- *Negative connotation with Caucasus and stereotypes: poverty, famine, dirt, mafia, inferiority of the region.*
- *Administrative obstacles: especially residence permits, visas, complicated procedures.*
- *Problems of youth organizations in EE and Caucasus:*
  - a) *Financial problems: youth organizations from EE and Caucasus need 100% reimbursement of expenses otherwise they cannot afford the cooperation.*
  - b) *Non-continuity of youth organizations in this region: the organizations stop existing (the contact people are impossible to reach after that), new are formed, not serious enough to be able to cooperate with them.*
  - c) *Not enough knowledge about the NGOs and youth organizations in EE and Caucasus. It is difficult to get in touch with serious organizations and difficult to find them through internet, social network, etc.*
  - d) *Their organizations are not financially and organizationally strong enough to cooperate in international projects.*
- *Distance and bad roads, bad travel connections (planes, trains, etc.).*
- *Finance discrimination: only children of wealthy families from EE and Caucasus can afford to travel.*
- *Gender discrimination: troubles in acquiring visa for women of EE and Caucasus that cooperate in projects because of prejudice and thinking they are sex workers.*

**SOLUTIONS:**

- *Attract funding and partners from organizations.*
- *Acknowledgement: credit points for volunteering (ECTS), multicultural competences in human resource management (in getting a job)*
- *Disseminate more information about these countries in order to break the stereotypes.*
- *include the countries as possible partners in Youth in Action programmes.*

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**2.c) What concrete new actions and tools are needed in the EU for the development of cooperation with youth from the EU neighbouring countries?**

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- *Web page with all available information about work, job vacancies and life in these countries.*
  - *Different promotional campaigns.*
  - *Connecting of National Employment Agencies of these countries.*
  - *Establishing formal opportunities for youth from neighbouring countries.*
  - *Informational trips and study visits from EU into these countries.*
  - *Establishing national agencies in these countries and adding neighbouring countries among the partner organizations.*
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- How to support the existing structures of youth organizations in order to foster such cooperation?
    - *Internal politics and welfare systems of countries have to adopt.*
    - *Professional support should be given to the youth organizations.*
    - *The national agencies should be established and they should help with promotion, execution and education of youth workers.*
    - *Financial stimulation (for projects and for organizations) should be established and/or strengthened. Finances should be given under “easier” conditions:  
Paying in advance (because youth organizations are mostly without funds;  
Clear and simple procedures and forms to fill-in;  
Enable them applying to the big projects despite having no experience in such projects  
Enable and establish mentoring from for example bigger and more experienced organizations.*
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- What specific tools are necessary to foster the creation of contacts and networks?
    - *Internet access for all organizations and youth involved.*
    - *Web page with all available information about work and life in these countries, with all the contacts of youth organizations, projects, networks from non-EU countries and collection of best practices.*
    - *Establishing and financing the project of youth organizations’ networking.*
    - *Establishing and enabling youth-friendly environment for cooperation: internet, social networks, cheap plane tickets, cheap telephone calls, available accommodation, scholarships and funds, less administrative barriers.*
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- Which tools are needed specifically for cooperation with young people from EECA?
    - *Same tools as for other countries.*

*Additional:*

    - *Adjusted financial policy: refunding of all travel costs and material costs for youth from these countries when involved in projects.*
    - *Expanding of Youth in Action programs to these countries and emphasis on these countries.*

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### **3. Participation of young people in democratic life in Europe and international youth cooperation**

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- What influence does international youth cooperation have on youth participation in democratic life in Europe at various levels (on civil society engagement, participation in elections, volunteering, involvement in processes of policy-making etc)?
  - *It plays the major role (But not just participation of youth on international, but also on local and regional level is very important.) Also youth that are active on international scale usually become more sensible and active in the local and regional environment.*
  - *Positive at all levels, but unfortunately still not recognized and acknowledged (as ECTS, as a value, as advantage in hiring procedure).*
  - *By international youth cooperation youth become active citizens, they learn how to face with everyday problems, how to participate in society, etc. They get the motivation, they learn jointly, they exchange of best practices and all these bring international bonding and increases participation.*