

Annex 5 - Action Fiche for ENPI Regional East Action Programme 2011 part II

1. IDENTIFICATION

Title/Number	Eastern Partnership Youth Programme CRIS : ENPI/2011 / 023-076		
Total cost	EUR 5.5 million EU contribution		
Aid method / Method of implementation	Project approach – Direct centralised management		
DAC-code	15110	Sector	Public Sector Policy and Administrative Management

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Sector context

This new regional programme in the sphere of Youth in the Eastern Partnership region¹ forms part of the broader agenda for collaboration between the European Commission and the Eastern Partnership region set out in the revised ENPI East Regional Strategy Paper (RSP) 2010-2013 and the ENPI East Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) for the same period, in which Youth is identified as one of the priority areas for funding. The programme is designed to reflect the national and regional priorities within the Eastern Partnership region in line with the Joint Communication "A new response to a changing Neighbourhood"², as well as priorities in the youth policy sphere within the European Union.

In the countries of the Eastern Partnership region, youth affairs are recognized as a priority area by all national governments. The priorities within the youth field, as identified in the course of the Needs Assessment³, are closely matched to priority areas within the European Union in the sphere of youth⁴ i.e.:

- Employability of young people, skills development, lifelong learning;
- Social inclusion of youth, access to services, opportunities;
- Health of young people – addressing key health concerns, promoting healthy lifestyle;
- Promotion of participation and active citizenship of young people.

¹ The beneficiary countries of the Eastern Partnership are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine

² See: Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions : "A new response to a changing Neighbourhood" COM(2011)303 of 25.05.2011.

³ An extensive consultation exercise was conducted by the expert team in the period December 2010 to May 2011.

⁴ See: 'Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018), Council of the European Union, (2009/C 311/01) 'Addressing the concerns of young people in Europe – implementing the European Youth Pact and promoting active citizenship';' European Commission White Paper: A New Impetus For European Youth', Commission of The European Communities, Brussels, 30.05.2005.

The following needs and key challenges relating to the youth sector in the Eastern Partnership region were identified in the needs assessment:

- The complex nature of the needs of the youth population demands an integrated, cross-sectoral approach to policy responses. The capacity of Eastern Partnership countries is limited in this regard at present, and needs to be strengthened;
- Where ministries with a portfolio for youth policy and affairs are in place, their remit is often too narrow in order to tackle the broad range of issues contained in the youth sphere, and they have rather limited capacity in terms of human and financial resources. Moreover, youth issues are often not mainstreamed sufficiently within other ministries (such as education, health, social affairs, labour) whose policy areas clearly relate directly to the needs of the youth population;
- There is a need for greater involvement of civil society actors, and the greater inclusion of young people, into the identification of needs of the youth population and formulation and implementation of responses at the policy and practice levels;
- There is relatively limited regional collaboration in the sphere of youth at present;
- There is a need to afford greater attention to responding to the needs of disadvantaged groups within the youth population, in order to address the significant levels of inequality that exist in these societies, as reflected in the large disparities in living conditions and life opportunities within the youth population;
- There is a need to devote greater attention and efforts to the development of a more comprehensive system of youth work, and associated development of the role of youth workers, in order better to respond to the needs of young people;
- The spheres of lifelong learning and non-formal education deserve prioritization as a response to the needs of young people, and the economies of the Eastern Partnership region.

The current programme will help the beneficiaries (from the policy and civil society sectors) to address the abovementioned challenges through a range of activities delivered at a regional level, working with and for the key beneficiaries – young people living in the Eastern Partnership region. This will be achieved through:

- The strengthening of regional dialogue and collaboration in the youth sphere within the region of the Eastern Partnership, and between the EU and countries of the Eastern Partnership;
- Capacity-building activities in the youth policy sector, with broad stakeholder engagement in this process;
- Projects targeted at the needs of key groups in the youth population.

The programme is demand-driven, and aims to foster the principle of ownership and development of capacity in the youth sector, in accordance with the Paris Declaration and the European Commission's Backbone Strategy on "Reforming Technical Cooperation and Project Implementation Units for External Aid."

2.2. Lessons learnt

The lessons learnt for the new programme are drawn from the range of relevant EU-funded programmes in this region, and related studies (on education, social inclusion, employment and skills, etc), as well as the longstanding EU commitment in ENPI South region in the sphere of Youth (EuroMed Youth). It also draws on the extensive range of programmes and

activities conducted by other international donors, which include a certain number of joint programmes with the EC, in the region in the youth sphere.

- Policy level lessons: There has been a tendency for activities of donor and other organizations to focus on those aspects of the policy process that relate to identification of priorities and production of strategic plans, without adequate follow on activities aimed at sustainability of the policy cycle and tackling the challenges of implementation, review and evaluation;
- At the level of implementation, review and evaluation, there tends to be limited engagement of a broader range of stakeholders in the policy process (such as youth organizations, other civil society actors, expert communities, youth population in general);
- At the level of project implementation by non-governmental actors, there is a need to expand the opportunities for organizations to be able to participate more actively in such schemes, and thus broaden the geographical impact of these activities, and build the capacity of a larger group of organizations and their staff;
- At the level of the participation of young people in EU-funded programmes, notwithstanding the clear benefits afforded to certain groups in the youth population through involvement in such programmes as Youth in Action, Erasmus Mundus, these activities clearly benefit the better educated, more privileged young people from higher social backgrounds, and from predominantly major urban centres. There is a need to extend the impact of EU funding to more disadvantaged target groups within the youth population, such as those living in rural areas, young people with disabilities, discriminated young women, youth from ethnic minorities, etc.;
- The evidence produced by those activities that do target the needs of more disadvantaged youth, for instance through skills development, is that significant impacts can be achieved, such as tangible increase in employability of young people after participation in projects. These activities are also seen as having an impact more broadly on the communities in which the young people live.

2.3. Complementary actions

In the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy, the current programme will provide a complementary action to the longstanding Euromed Youth programme in ENPI South. Within the Eastern Partnership region, there is a substantial range of ongoing actions in the sphere of Youth, funded by the EU and by other donors. The Youth in Action Programme (2007-2013), funded by EU, offers opportunities to support youth exchanges, voluntary service as well as the training and capacity-building of youth workers and organisations from the Eastern Partnership countries. Ongoing programmes funded by other donors (including Council of Europe, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, World Bank, etc) cover, between them, a broad spectrum of sectors and priorities (education and skills, employment, social protection, health, migration, citizenship and participation, etc), and include actions that are targeted specifically at youth, or which focus on issues that affect young people significantly, but where youth is often not identified as the key or only target group (e.g. trafficking of human beings, unemployment, drug abuse, etc).

The current programme will provide significant added value, through its emphases on regional collaboration, on capacity-building of policy and civil society sectors in the sphere of youth, on the promotion of a cross-sectoral approach to youth policy and youth affairs (including mainstreaming of youth across policy sectors), and its activities in reviewing developments in the youth sphere in the region.

2.4. Donor coordination

The need to strengthen and extend coordination and collaboration among donors, and between donors and beneficiary countries, was noted frequently during the Needs Assessment. This programme – in line with the aims of the Paris Declaration, the European Consensus on Development, will contribute to more effective donor coordination and interaction with the beneficiary countries through the activities envisaged, in particular, under Component 1 of this programme. In this regard, through the synergies created and exploited by the programme, SALTO Eastern Europe and Caucasus Resource Centre as well as international organizations will be invited to contribute to the activities of the programme notably by sharing good practice and know-how in the sphere of Youth in the Eastern Partnership region.

3. DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

The overall objective of the programme is to support and strengthen the response of the Eastern Partnership countries to the needs of youth in their societies, through the promotion of regional cooperation between policy institutions, youth organizations, youth workers⁵ and youth populations.

The specific objectives of the programme are:

- To support capacity development of government and civil society actors in the youth sector, and encourage the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders, including young people, in youth policy formulation, implementation and evaluation;
- To facilitate the mainstreaming of youth issues across relevant policy spheres, and thus foster a cross-sectoral approach to responding to the needs of youth;
- To facilitate the development of a more comprehensive evidence base for youth policy and youth affairs, and associated capacity-building in the effective use of these resources;
- To target the needs of disadvantaged young people through a combination of activities, including a focus on the development of youth work.

3.2. Expected results and main activities

In order to address the key priorities identified for the programme, it will be delivered through a combination of two components: capacity development, and a grants scheme. The programme will thus provide holistic coverage of the youth sphere – from capacity-building in the policy domain, to the delivery of practical projects involving young people.

Component 1: Capacity development of national and local public sector and civil society actors.

Expected results:

- Increased capacity among governmental stakeholders in policy development in the youth sphere, including the development of effective cross-sectoral approaches to responding to youth-related issues, and the mainstreaming of youth affairs across policy domains;
- Increased capacity among governmental and civil society stakeholders with regard to the acquisition and deployment of skills and methods for the analysis of youth affairs, and the associated development of a stronger evidence base for youth policy;

⁵ Those who work, on a professional or volunteer basis, with young people in supporting their social and personal development, principally in non-formal/informal learning contexts.

- Increased capacity among civil society stakeholders to engage effectively with the policy process, with regard to policy formulation, implementation, review and evaluation;
- Increased regional cooperation in youth policy development among stakeholders in the Eastern Partnership region.

Planned activities: The programme envisages the following activities within Component 1

An Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit will be established in one of the countries of the Eastern Partnership region, to serve as a regional base for the provision of technical cooperation to governmental and non-governmental stakeholders through capacity building, communication and analytical activities. The Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit will act, furthermore, as a catalyst for donor coordination in the youth sphere in the Eastern Partnership region. There is no existing analogous entity in this sphere in the region, and the Unit will thus provide significant added value to the development of more effective responses to the needs of the youth population. To ensure a cohesive approach across the region, a network of National Youth Liaison Officers will be formed in each Eastern Partnership country. This network can subsequently serve as the foundation for the creation of national Units.

The Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit will act as the focal point for the Programme, and as a regional forum for the discussion of policy development and youth service provision in the Eastern Partnership region, through delivery of the following indicative activities:

- As a liaison point for interaction with regional and EU stakeholders;
- Coordination of the network of National Youth Liaison Officers;
- Training activities for governmental and non-governmental actors including youth organisations in the sphere of youth policy development and youth work;
- Communications activities, including
 - the launch and maintenance of a website;
 - promotion of the work of the Programme among stakeholder communities (governmental, non-governmental, international donor);
 - engagement with the mass media in the Eastern Partnership region and in EU member states;
 - engagement with the commercial sector (national and international companies) to promote the programme and invite active contribution / support;
 - attention will be given to the need to engage youth who do not have access to the internet, and youth who have fluency only in their local language;
- Organization of events, study visits to Eastern Partnership and EU countries for the purpose of learning from best practice, meetings and consultations;
- Analysis and evidence base development, through the identification and conduct of joint studies addressing key issues;
- Collection and dissemination of data concerning developments in the youth sphere in the Eastern Partnership region, including the collection of information on the activities of SALTO Eastern Europe and Caucasus Resource Centre, international donors and regional organizations.
- Ensuring monitoring, coordination and visibility of the selected projects through the grants scheme mentioned below. A dedicated website and regular newsletters will provide information on the projects and the related events at regional level.

Component 2: Grants Scheme

The grants scheme will provide support to disadvantaged young people living in rural or deprived urban areas in Eastern Partnership countries. It will also make a contribution to raising awareness of the nature of youth work in the region, and identification of best practice approaches in this sphere.

Priority in awarding grants will be given to those projects that demonstrate a clear commitment to, and capacity for, regional collaboration. In addition, extensive networking among project teams working on related thematic areas around the Eastern Partnership region will be promoted and facilitated, to ensure that peer learning and exchange of best practice occurs. The Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit and National Youth Liaison Officers will provide support to this aim.

Expected results

- An increased number of young people from disadvantaged sections of the population will have participated in projects aimed at addressing a range of issues affecting their lives and their communities;
- The projects delivered will have addressed a wide range of priority themes, relating to local, national, regional and EU priorities, in the spheres for example of non-formal education and skills development, health, citizenship and participation, environment, inter-cultural and inter-ethnic dialogue;
- The skills acquired and developed by young people through their participation will have had a positive impact on their personal and social development, evidenced through increased employability, greater civic participation, increased self-esteem, enhanced understanding of their role in society and their relations with others, including young people from other cultures, countries, etc;
- The grants scheme will have contributed to the development of greater social inclusion of young people, and social cohesion between young people and their communities on inter-social, inter-ethnic, inter-generational bases;
- The lessons learnt from the implementation of the grants scheme will, with the support of the Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit, have fed into the evidence base and broader public and policy debates in the Eastern Partnership region, regarding youth policy development and the provision of services for the youth population;
- The capacity of the youth sector – at the governmental level (national and local) and civil society level (non-governmental organizations, youth workers and others involved in the grants scheme) will have been increased as a result of their experience in the implementation of projects.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

Risk 1. Regional instability. Recent events have indicated that there is a potential for instability in the Eastern Partnership region, including tensions in external relations involving partner countries; internal political and social conflict, including societal protests against governments and their policies; and worsening economic situation in partner countries. An escalation of such trends in one or more partner countries can have an impact on the delivery of the programme. However the programme's activities are intended to support the development of greater social cohesion, and more effective responses to the needs of young people, who are a key actor in the transformations seen in these countries.

Risk 2. Institutional instability. Institutional partners in the Eastern Partnership region (e.g. ministries of Youth) can show tendencies towards instability (regular restructuring, large turnover of staff), combined with a relative lack of capacity to absorb additional

responsibilities. Furthermore, it can be the case that ministries covering other policy sectors may not see youth as a priority, and thus display a low level of commitment to the programme. This risk is mediated by the programme's engagement with a broad range of stakeholders, from governmental and non-governmental sectors, and its commitment to facilitating ownership of the programme by these actors.

Risk 3. Low commitment to the programme and low levels of ownership. There is a risk that ownership and commitment among such a broad range of stakeholders (policy institutions, civil society organizations) can be problematic, given the diversity of their priorities, and institutional cultures. This risk is mitigated by the design of the programme, which has been developed on a demand driven basis. The task of further promoting ownership and commitment among stakeholders will be conducted primarily by the Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit.

Risk 4. Limited stakeholder capacity. The issue of capacity variation and weaknesses at both governmental and civil society levels constitutes a potentially significant risk. This is addressed and mitigated through the programme's support for capacity-building among the stakeholders involved in the activities of component 1, with training and other activities tailored to specific needs.

Risk 5. Difficulties are encountered in reaching key target groups. The majority of young people in the Eastern Partnership region do not participate in organized activities. Furthermore, in the case of certain disadvantaged groups, a considerable degree of isolation from mainstream social engagement can be seen, and this affects the information flow to these young people, and their ability to make their voices heard. There is, accordingly, a risk that the programme will not be able to involve these key beneficiaries into its activities. This will be mitigated through effective communication activities conducted by the Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit and through the focus of the grants scheme on engaging with disadvantaged youth. This will be reinforced by a careful monitoring carried out by the Unit to ensure that key target groups do indeed benefit directly from the work of the programme and in particular from the projects financed through the grants scheme.

Risk 6. Uneven delivery of the grant scheme across the region and within countries: Variation in the capacity and commitment of civil society organisations across the region may lead to an uneven pattern of grant awards (for example, between countries, between urban and rural areas). Grant scheme management should take measures accordingly to ensure equity of access and opportunity for participants, particularly focusing on participants who traditionally have been under-represented in such schemes; and to ensure that the capacity of NGOs, and their associated needs for capacity-building, are effectively addressed.

3.4. Crosscutting Issues

The programme will contribute to the goals of **good governance** through its strengthening of capacity in the policy and services sphere, through the inclusion of a broad range of societal stakeholders in the activities of the programme, and the promotion of active participation among young people in community-based projects.

Gender is identified as a key cross-cutting theme, as young female people represents a vulnerable group (with regard to restrictions of employment/economic opportunities, risks of becoming victims to human trafficking, abuse; risks related to health problems, etc). The programme will address such priorities through capacity building in the policy sphere, and

through projects involving young people, with young female participants identified as one of the target groups.

Environmental sustainability, including climate change issues, will be prioritised through inclusion as key themes in community-based activities under the grants scheme. This is seen as a thematic priority that offers a good scope for regional collaboration between young people and civil society and governmental actors in addressing common problems.

The **human rights** of young people will be addressed comprehensively through both components of the programme: in the capacity development of the policy domain, the question of the rights of youth should form a focal point; and in community based activities, questions of inter-ethnic relations, the rights of internally displaced persons, migrants, disabled youth, youth living in post-conflict zones, should be treated as priority cases in the award of projects.

3.5. Stakeholders

Governmental sector: At the level of national governments, the key stakeholders will be those ministries that hold the youth affairs portfolio, or which play a key role in cross-sectoral coordination of government policy.

Bearing in mind the cross-sector nature of policies relating to youth, the programme will actively engage with other ministries whose policies address youth as a key target group. These should include Ministries (or agencies) responsible for education (including vocational training), health, labour.

State-funded service providers for youth: Key stakeholders in this sphere can include:

- Youth centres
- Advice centres for youth (e.g. on healthcare, employment, civil rights)
- Out-of-school educational establishments

Non-governmental sector: Stakeholders in this sector cover both youth policy development, and/or the provision of services for youth. They include, indicatively:

- Youth councils on national and sub-national levels
- Youth organizations, or youth-led organizations
- Organizations for which youth is a primary target group
- Charity organizations with a focus on youth issues
- Foundations with a focus on youth, or a majority youth membership

Youth population: It is an aim of the programme to promote conditions in which young people are able to participate actively in societal developments, and have the opportunity to make their voice heard. The communications activities of the programmes, along with the capacity-building that will occur as a result of the grants scheme, will contribute to young people's engagement as stakeholders, both in the programme, and in their communities and societies as a whole.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Method of implementation

Direct centralised management.

4.2. Procurement and grant award procedures

1) Contracts

All contracts implementing the action must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the Commission for the implementation of external operations, in force at the time of the launch of the procedure in question.

Participation in the award of contracts for the present action shall be open to all natural and legal persons covered by the ENPI Regulation.

2) Specific rules for grants

The essential selection and award criteria for the award of grants are laid down in the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions. They are established in accordance with the principles set out in Title VI 'Grants' of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget. When derogations to these principles are applied, they shall be justified, in particular in the following cases:

Financing in full (derogation to the principle of co-financing): the maximum possible rate of co-financing for grants is 90%⁶. Full financing may only be applied in the cases provided for in Article 253 of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities.

Derogation to the principle of non-retroactivity: a grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun only if the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the grant is awarded, in accordance with Article 112 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget.

4.3. Budget and calendar

Indicative breakdown of overall amount by main components:

- Component 1 : EUR 3 million
- Component 2 : EUR 2.5 million

It is anticipated that the beneficiary countries will provide an in-kind contribution to the programme through supporting Component 1, by appointing a National Youth Liaison Officer and making available adequate working space and equipment for that Liaison Officer effectively to conduct the tasks required.

The tender for the Technical Assistance and the Call for Proposals will be launched once the financial decision has been made by the Commission. The indicative timeframe for the implementation of the programme is 36 months.

⁶ The maximum possible rate of co-financing for grants has been raised from 80% to 90% taking into account the low financial capacity of the targeted groups of young people.

4.4. Performance monitoring

Performance monitoring will be overseen by Headquarters in collaboration with EU Delegations, the Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit, and supported by the ENPI Result Oriented Monitoring Team (ROM).

Indicators of the programme will relate to, inter alia:

- The number of governmental and civil society sector participants benefitting from training, study visits, know-how exchanges, specialized seminars, and other capacity-building activities coordinated by the Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit
- The volume of information provided on the Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit website, and the level of usage of the website by users in the Eastern Partnership region and beyond
- The quantity of pan-regional activities relating to the programme that cover participants from across the Eastern Partnership region
- The number of projects successfully completed under the grants scheme
- The number of sustainable partnerships in the sphere of Youth initiated both among local actors in the region, and with counterparts in the EU
- Individual interviews of young people will be held before their involvement in the programme and one year later in order to measure the impact on their self-esteem and skills development
- The number of youth to have participated actively in the Programme
- The proportion of female-male participants in the Programme
- The degree of inclusion of ethnic minority groups in the activities of the Programme

Where data are available for comparative purposes, the Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit, in collaboration with local institutions, will establish baseline values before the programme, and target values with and without the action for the overall project programme. A performance monitoring scheme and related key indicators will be defined for the monitoring and evaluation of each project to be selected through the Call for Proposals. The Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit will provide support to this activity, by acting as a forum for the establishment and publication of performance indicators, through training of stakeholders in evaluation tools, monitoring the implementation of projects, and measuring their progress and impact.

4.5. Evaluation and audit

It is envisaged that a mid-term and final external evaluation of the project will be carried out in the course of the project's implementation, by independent consultant. The evaluation will refer to the objectively verifiable indicators of achievement embedded in the logical framework. In addition, external audits will be carried out if required. These evaluations and audits will be funded from sources other than the project budget, since no commitment will be possible once the validity of this Decision has expired ("N+1" rule will apply).

4.6. Communication and visibility

The Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit will, in line with the Communication and Visibility Manual, develop a comprehensive communication and visibility strategy to promote the work of the programme across the Eastern Partnership region, and among EU member states. In order to ensure coverage across the region, EU Delegations and the network of National Youth Liaison Officers will play a key role.

The Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit will launch a programme website with associated interactive networking features to communicate the activities of the programme, and to elicit feedback and input from young people and other stakeholders across the region. The website will include information about the call for proposals, and subsequently host information on projects funded under Component 2. It will also display information on programmes and projects related to the youth field in the Eastern Partnership region, funded by other donors.

The website will include one or more platforms in order for identified groups (Youth workers, Youth experts, Young people etc.) to exchange ideas and information in the field of youth, through online articles, blogs and other interactive means. Crucially, the Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit and the National Youth Liaison Officers will ensure that communication about the programme reaches those segments of the youth population, and their communities, that do not have adequate access to the internet and other electronic information sources. This will be achieved through interaction with mass media (television, radio, printed, online media) at national and local levels, including media focused on young people; and through direct communication and visibility activities (e.g. information days held in youth centres; collaboration with the commercial sector - e.g. supporting the sending of SMS messages to young people; through collaboration with institutions in which young people are being educated/trained, or are working – such as education establishments, the armed forces, governmental, commercial and non-governmental sector organizations). In order to reach young people living in isolated rural areas, communication can be achieved in collaboration with National Youth Liaison Officers, through, e.g., Ministries of Agriculture and other relevant institutions.