

Youthpass



YOUTHPASS STRATEGY

The strategy for recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning in the European youth field

SALTO TRAINING & COOPERATION





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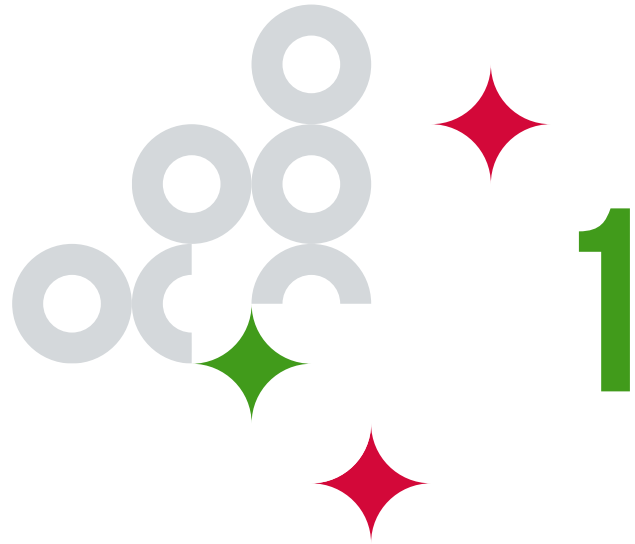
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Youthpass





INTRODUCTION

The year the Youthpass Strategy was published – 2021 – finds the European youth work community anticipating the new generation of the EU youth programmes, with their increasingly diverse and broad scope of options for young people and youth workers to learn and take action. It also finds us at the inception of the European Youth Work Agenda and the Bonn Process – a concentrated effort across Europe’s youth work community to strengthen the quality and recognition of and innovation in youth work. Finally, 2021 finds us, like society at large, severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, societies have been developing rapidly over the last few years, and so have topics related to youth work, volunteering, education and the world of work. The pandemic, however, has accelerated many of these processes and even to an extent shaken the foundations and settings for youth work, volunteering, and for European cooperation in these fields.

These increasingly complex and rapidly changing times put **a spotlight on the significance of competences and the settings in which they are developed**. It is important to increase the visibility of the value of non-formal and informal learning in youth work and volunteering. We need to ensure that those involved in the youth field understand the educational value of their experience, and that this educational value connects to other processes at European, national and regional levels that boost the visibility and applicability of individuals' competences, regardless of where they were developed. Most countries in Europe have systems in place to validate the learning acquired in non-formal and informal contexts.¹ However, it may not always be evident that also the competences developed in youth work contexts are relevant for such validation systems.

That being said, these rollercoaster times require us to **revisit the competences needed in today's world, notably the ability to learn**. This ability is **key to continuous competence development and facilitates the transfer of competences in various contexts**, which is particularly important in a rapidly

changing world.² Learning to learn has acquired even greater importance against the backdrop of the pandemic, with traditional learning settings and learning support challenged and an ever greater need for the ability to manage one's own learning.

Youthpass is a certificate and an educational approach that helps young people and youth workers who participate in the EU youth programme activities **become more aware of their learning and develop their ability to learn**. It is a recognition and validation instrument that helps participants to document the competences they have acquired and in turn present them in relevant contexts. With its emphasis on individual support and development, it is **tailored to youth work and volunteering contexts**. As such, Youthpass contributes to the current societal challenges in the broader sense, to the policy processes behind the development of youth work, and to the validation of non-formal and informal learning. It has the potential to encourage greater synergies and boost efforts to strengthen the learning dimension of youth work.

¹ Commission Staff Working Document. → Evaluation of the Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning.

² European Commission (2020). → LifeComp. The European Framework for Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Key Competence.

The Youthpass Strategy describes how Youthpass can maintain and strengthen its value in light of the changing needs and contexts of its target groups and the European Union youth programmes for 2021-2027. Further, it contributes to the implementation of policy processes to improve the quality and impact of youth work and non-formal and informal learning in Europe.

This strategy document aims to serve as a basis for the work of the SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre in developing Youthpass together with the European Commission and the National Agencies for the EU youth programmes. It also seeks to offer inspiration and guidance for other organisations and stakeholders that wish to create greater awareness and visibility of the learning value of youth work and volunteering across Europe.



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POLITICAL CONTEXT

The Youthpass Strategy stems from the following policy context:


- The EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027³ calls for greater recognition of non-formal and informal learning through youth work, as well as for the more systematic use and further development of quality tools.
- The Youthpass Strategy aims to contribute to the implementation of the European Youth Work Agenda,⁴ the strategic framework for the innovation, quality and recognition of youth work in Europe. The Agenda, to be implemented through the Bonn Process, is designed to further develop strategies and actions that allow non-formal and informal learning in the area of youth work to be recognised and validated, and give recognition to the contribution of youth work towards young people's empowerment.
- The Council Conclusions on education and training of youth workers (2019)⁵ emphasise the need to recognise the variety of youth worker competences

³ Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field:
→The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027.

⁴ Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the Framework for:
→Establishing a European Youth Work Agenda.

⁵ Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on:
→Education and training of youth workers.





and invite the Member States and the Commission to enhance the recognition of non-formal learning in youth work.

- The strategy connects to the European Skills Agenda through the evaluation of the Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning.⁶ The evaluation suggests, among other measures, to enhance guidance to enable European transparency tools such as Europass and Youthpass to strengthen their role in validation processes.⁷
- The Council of Europe's Recommendation on youth work⁸ invites Member States to promote the recognition of the values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding developed through participating in and delivering youth work, and to give increased support to implementing existing and future European frameworks and agendas on the recognition of non-formal and informal learning.

Youthpass is part of the European Union youth programmes, a quality measure that helps to increase the learning impact of participation in these programmes. The legal bases for Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes 2021-2027 refer to Youthpass as one of the Union tools and measures that foster the quality of the programmes and enhance the recognition of competences development in the context of non-formal and informal learning.^{9/10} It implements the EU framework of key competences for lifelong learning (2018)¹¹ and thus connects to the European Education Area.¹²

⁶ COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 20 December 2012 on the:
→Validation of non-formal and informal learning.

⁷ European Commission (2020).
→Study supporting the evaluation of the Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

⁸ Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on:
→Youth work.

⁹ Regulation (EU) 2021/817 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing:
→Erasmus+: the Union Programme for education and training, youth and sport.

¹⁰ Regulation (EU) 2021/888 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing:
→The European Solidarity Corps Programme.

¹¹ COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 22 May 2018 on:
→Key competences for lifelong learning.

¹² →European Education Area.

3

THE VISION, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE YOUTHPASS STRATEGY

The underlying vision for the Youthpass Strategy is to achieve broad visibility and understanding of the learning value of the youth field as well as of the competences developed through involvement in the youth field.

The strategy aims to support young people and youth workers through greater recognition of learning in European youth contexts. It strives to promote and facilitate the recognition of learning outcomes in this area, specifically those achieved within the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes.



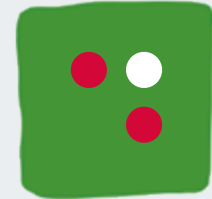


Aim 1:

To strengthen the **recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning through Youthpass**, as a quality feature in the EU youth programmes.

Aim 2:

To set the **direction for the further development of Youthpass** to enable better recognition of learning in the EU youth programmes, to respond to the evolving needs of young people and youth workers, and to outline measures that **reinforce its quality implementation**.



Aim 3:

To amplify the **visibility and recognition of the learning value of youth work**, considering the full spectrum of learning taking place in youth work (with both young people and youth workers considered learners, encompassing all dimensions of recognition, and considering the various phases of validation).

Aim 4:

Through experiences made with Youthpass, to inform **relevant policy processes**, support the **development of related youth (work) policies at European and Member State level**, and to make **systemic efforts** to promote the recognition and validation of learning.





4

SOME INSIGHTS INTO YOUTHPASS SO FAR

Youthpass is a European recognition instrument for identifying and documenting learning outcomes that are acquired in projects under the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps programmes. Youthpass promotes individual reflection and awareness about learning and helps to make learning outcomes visible for the learners themselves as well as for others. It aims to reinforce reflective practices in youth work and solidarity activities, thereby enhancing their quality and recognition. It also supports the continued pathways of young people and youth workers and raises visibility of the value of European engagement.

Launched in 2007, the **Youthpass certificates have by June 2021 been issued for more than 1,1 million times**. Since its inception Youthpass has been available to participants of the EU Youth in Action and Erasmus+ youth programmes, and in 2019 was extended to include the newly launched European Solidarity Corps. The Youthpass certificate is embedded in a deliberate process that helps put learning on the agenda and reflect on learning process and outcomes. It is a voluntary tool that is available to all participants of these programmes, young people and youth workers alike.

The 2013 Youthpass Impact Study¹³ revealed that the **main value of Youthpass lies in enhancing attention to learning in the supported projects and in raising participants' awareness about learning** as such and about the outcomes of their personal learning process. The 2020 RAY monitoring survey of Erasmus+ youth projects¹⁴ confirmed that reflecting on learning and self-assessment in the Youthpass context helps raise participants' awareness of their development. According to the survey, the majority of Youthpass owners who had used Youthpass in the process of applying for a job, internship or further studies declared that it had been helpful in that regard. Therefore, in projects where Youthpass and reflection has been implemented, it is regarded as a valuable tool that helps raise the quality and impact of the projects through the participants' improved awareness of their newly acquired competences and their enhanced capability to describe them.

¹³ Kloosterman, P., Taru, M., (2013)
→ Youthpass Impact Study. Young people's personal development and employability and the recognition of youth work.

¹⁴ Böhler, J., et al, (2020).
→ Research Report. RAY-MON. Effect and outcomes of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action programme. Transnational Analysis.

5

ROLE AND NATURE OF YOUTHPASS IN 2027

The following key words describe how we envision the Youthpass concept in 2027.

Holistic:

The concept of Youthpass should continue to embed the three broad elements – the recognition tool, the process and strategic action – each of which supports the others. They all will have been strengthened and developed further.

Framework-setting:

The work with Youthpass as a strategic framework will be forward-looking and clearly linked to the policy processes that contribute to the development of European youth work. It will play a supporting role in creating synergies and connecting the stakeholders and initiatives that contribute to the topics of recognition and validation, and in building capacity within the community of practice.

Conceptual:

Youthpass will have a strong role in exploring, conceptualising and highlighting learning in the youth field in all its diversity. The work around Youthpass will include promoting debates and building evidence about learning in youth work. Besides non-formal learning, the conceptual work with Youthpass will involve strengthening the role of informal learning and its recognition in youth work.

Evidence-based:

The mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Youthpass Strategy and tool will ensure that both correspond to the needs of the target groups and are adjusted to any emerging needs.



Targeted:

As far as possible, the Youthpass solutions will provide for the specific needs of its target groups and contexts. This will include considering possible requirements for information and guidance, as well as corresponding to the formats within the youth programmes. It must also be ensured that Youthpass corresponds to the need for recognition of the large group of youth work practitioners.

Inspirational:

The Youthpass concept, tool and principles may serve as a model and inspiration for further recognition practices in the youth field. It may inspire debates on recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning in youth work and volunteering, for developing recognition/validation frameworks at national level, and for the quality of youth work practice and the documentation of the learning taking place within.



Cooperation-based:

The implementation of Youthpass and the development of strategic measures for recognition is based on the involvement of and dialogue with all the relevant stakeholders, with strong emphasis on the cross-sectoral basis of youth policy building in Europe.

Established:

Information and communication will have ensured broad awareness and a good understanding of the role of learning in youth work and of the value of Youthpass. The conceptual, qualitative and quantitative development of the Youthpass tool as well as reinforced guidance will lead to balanced implementation throughout the various activity types and target groups of the instrument as well as in different countries.



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FIELDS OF ACTION

The Youthpass Strategy proposes the following three Fields of Action. They describe the measures required to meet the aims and objectives of this strategy, while helping to shape the characteristics and role of Youthpass in 2027 as described in the section above.



1

Implementation and further development of Youthpass:

Establish Youthpass as a Union transparency tool that promotes and facilitates the identification and documentation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes across all Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps actions.

2

Learning and recognition:

Develop the potential of learning and recognition practices in the youth field and through youth work organisations. This will inspire innovative action to enhance the impact and quality of that work.

3

Policy support:

Inform and support the development and implementation of systems and policies on recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning in the youth field, and create opportunities for peer learning and exchange on systemic solutions that enhance the learning value of youth work in Europe.



A note on the relationship between the three Fields of Action: **The first Field**, 'Implementation and Development of Youthpass', forms the core of the strategy. **The second** capitalises on Youthpass as a beneficial model for strengthening learning in the youth field and aims to promote its quality. As such, it is regarded as the second priority of this strategy. **The third Field**, which aims to inform and support systems and policies, is important for creating a mutually beneficial link between policy and practice, and is considered the third priority. All three Fields complement and reinforce each other, both the entire Fields of Action as well as specific measures therein.



Field of Action 1:

IMPLEMENTATION AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTHPASS

This Field of Action combines measures required to implement and develop Youthpass as a Union transparency tool and to promote and facilitate the identification and documentation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes across all Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps actions.

- ✓ Development of the Youthpass concept and tool, as described below in the section 'Further development of Youthpass as a recognition instrument'. Flexibility is one of the key words in this context, given the need to respond to the diversity of the current and emerging needs of the various actors and target groups within the youth work community of practice and the European programmes.
- ✓ Communication and outreach measures to raise awareness about learning and reflection as a quality aspect in youth work and in the EU programmes across all actions. These measures will be based on a strategic communication concept for Youthpass and include, among others, working with the community of practice and disseminating inspiring examples. They will also aim to raise awareness of organisations of the benefits of validation when it comes to the visibility and impact of their core activities.





- ✔ Educational support materials to help beneficiaries explain Youthpass to participants and accompany them throughout the different phases of their projects. This includes describing what a quality Youthpass process means, and providing information and support to beneficiaries so they can prepare, implement and follow up learning reflection and documentation. The support materials will consider the possibly diverging needs of different support persons in the youth work community of practice, e.g., youth workers, trainers, mentors, coaches, etc.
- ✔ While youth workers and their learning facilitation competences are key to the quality of any project, information needs to be developed that addresses young people directly, especially with a view to supporting recognition and validation in activities where participants are not supported by youth workers. Such targeted information will assist young people in actively describing their own learning outcomes and thereby increase the educational value of the Youthpass process for them. This guidance can also support young people in making use of their reflection in their later educational or career paths.
- ✔ Developing strategies and tools for better recognition and validation of the learning of youth workers, trainers and other youth work practitioners in the youth programmes. To address the needs of the broad target group of youth workers regarding the recognition of their competence development, the Youthpass concept may need to include different or additional elements that extend beyond the learning activities funded by the two European youth programmes.



- ✓ The development and implementation of targeted training measures, based on a strategic training approach for Youthpass. While developing training measures, it must be ensured they are compatible with the European Training Strategy and in particular with the competence models for youth workers and trainers. Also, there must be support for the implementation of the Youthpass process in other training activities carried out in the National Agency network. To support the quality of Youthpass implementation in such training measures at national and European level, the community of trainers needs to be targeted.
- ✓ Cooperation with the network of National Agencies and SALTO RC-s of the Erasmus+ Youth and the European Solidarity Corps programmes. The implementation of Youthpass as a project quality aspect strongly depends on the awareness and support of the National Agency network. Some colleagues in the agencies have already been given a specific role in implementing Youthpass and promoting recognition in their countries (see the paragraph on Youthpass Officers in the 'Governance' section). However, further work needs to be done to raise the entire National Agency network's awareness of the learning value of youth projects and obtain its active support in promoting recognition and validation of learning through Youthpass as a cross-cutting quality issue. That requires enhanced contact with and support for National Agency colleagues on the part of SALTO T&C RC. The necessary support will consist of information and guidance, prepared materials that the National Agencies can adjust as needed and disseminate, regular opportunities for exchange and training, support for tackling learning and Youthpass with multiplier and other networks of the National Agencies, and inclusion in consultative and co-creative processes.

Field of Action 2:

LEARNING AND RECOGNITION

This Field of Action aims to strengthen awareness and recognition of the learning value of youth work, in particular through the capacity-building of youth work organisations. The scope of proposed measures goes beyond the European youth programmes to seek synergies within the community of practice in youth work and in volunteering.



- ✔ Measures to explore and explain learning, competence development and its recognition in youth work in Europe, with a particular focus on informal learning as well as non-formal learning. This means building evidence, promoting debates, supporting peer learning and raise greater general awareness about the learning value of youth work.
- ✔ Awareness-raising and capacity-building of the different youth work practitioners as facilitators of learning, and of organisations on enhancing the learning value of youth work. For this, the Youthpass process can serve as a model. These measures include opportunities to explore and debate the applicability of the Youthpass process type of methodology in youth work practice; training and information materials; and other possible tailor-made tools.

- ✔ Offer support to and promote cooperation and synergies among processes and initiatives in the youth work community of practice that relate to the various dimensions of recognition and validation phases, particularly the strategic initiatives funded by the Erasmus+ programme. Such cooperation can open up possibilities to raise quality by learning from each other, and in cooperation with the European Commission, by coordinating actions to help the processes and practices initiated within the youth field to gain better visibility and impact and to contribute to relevant policy processes. Initial measures to boost awareness of such initiatives and to discuss their challenges could be followed by spaces for support and cooperation, for example in the form of a thematic exchange.
- ✔ Recognition, quality and innovation are high up on the agenda for youth work development in Europe. There are already numerous practices in Europe that seek to recognise and validate learning in the youth field; the work related to Youthpass could promote and inspire the quality approaches, processes and tools that serve the same cause – to raise the awareness and impact of learning in youth work. Suitable measures, for example a label, should be explored with a view to raising the visibility of and trust in such quality recognition approaches, as well as assuring further support to the quality of these approaches.



Field of Action 3:

POLICY SUPPORT

The purpose of this Field of Action is to contribute to policy development and implementation in areas that relate to the learning value of youth work and to recognition and validation, and to promote the role of youth work and more specifically of Youthpass in such developments. This Field of Action calls also for active cooperation among stakeholders from other relevant sectors, notably those active in the validation of non-formal and informal learning.



- ✔ Lessons learned from the implementation of Youthpass and the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning within the two EU youth programmes, in particular evidence about the learning taking place in supported projects and effects of the recognition and validation practices and experiences in these contexts, need to be disseminated through appropriate channels and presented in a format that can inform the development of policy and practice at different levels. Exemplary solutions and recommendations for validation procedures in the youth field could be developed.
- ✔ Synergies should be sought with the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy and the European Youth Work Agenda. Future National Activity Planners (FNAP-s), linked to the EU Youth Strategy, offer insights into systemic developments and priorities at national level and will be an important basis for identifying synergies and potential for cooperation. Synergies and complementarities also need to be ensured with the other strategies developed in the context of the EU youth programmes – the European Training Strategy, Inclusion and Diversity Strategy, and the Youth Participation Strategy.



- ✓ The development work around Youthpass and the support provided to National Agencies can enhance the youth field's contributions to relevant policy debates and systemic developments. They can help inspire, develop and support the implementation of policy decisions and the outcomes of mutual learning activities at national and European level.
- ✓ The contributions of the community of practice to the policy processes related to recognition and validation need to be strengthened by a coordinated approach. Through regular cooperation and exchange, as well as through cooperation with the field of volunteering and other related areas, youth work organisations and actors can lend more visibility to the nature of their work, be more effective in explaining its nature, and be more unified in their communication with authorities and other stakeholders.
- ✓ Youthpass communication also involves informing the broader youth work community about European policy developments related to recognition and validation and to support informed practice and further policy implementation. It also includes collecting and presenting information regarding the state of the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning in youth work to political stakeholders in the youth field as well as to other interested actors.



7



FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTHPASS AS A RECOGNITION INSTRUMENT

In order for Youthpass as a recognition instrument to support the above-mentioned aims and objectives of the strategy, it will need to strengthen its core value and be developed further both conceptually and technically. Youthpass should maintain its role as the European recognition tool that, by encouraging a conscious reflection process, highlights and reinforces the learning value of the activities implemented under the two EU youth programmes. Youthpass should be made available to support all these various activities, and should be promoted as a quality feature within the programmes.

By 2027, Youthpass as a recognition instrument should reflect the following characteristics:

- The focus of the evolved Youthpass will be on reflecting, identifying and documenting the learning that takes place within all the different formats and activities supported by the two programmes. The motivation for using Youthpass should be the desire to help participants to **become more aware of their learning and reinforce, identify and document it**, and thereby to improve the quality of the projects.
- All participants of the Erasmus+ Youth and the European Solidarity Corps and their successor programmes will continue to **have the right** to go through the Youthpass process and acquire endorsed documentation of their learning outcomes. Youthpass remains voluntary for users, in line with the characteristics of non-formal and informal learning. Youthpass will also better reflect the nature of non-formal and informal learning in that it **puts the needs of the learner in the spotlight**, for example by enabling learners to co-create their individual Youthpass profiles. While the process must remain simple for young people to use, the future participant accounts will give young people greater ownership over their reflection process and the description of their learning outcomes from various projects they have been involved in.
- **The central element and starting point** of implementing Youthpass will be – more than it was – **the reflection process** which raises awareness of learning outcomes acquired in the different phases of involvement in the projects. Youthpass will offer a digital reflection tool but also other support tools that help to design such a process according to the specificities of the projects and needs of the target groups.
- The evolved Youthpass will better **support the entire learning process related to the supported projects**, including preparation and follow-up as well as – where relevant – the various activities within one project. The **set-up of Youthpass will be flexible and aligned with the diversity of the projects** and activity types supported by the youth programmes.
- The setup of the future Youthpass instrument will allow a summary **description of competences developed** through learning activities supported by the youth programmes that is collected and displayed in participants' online profiles. This is anticipated to enable them to connect their competence descriptions to other platforms, for example Europass or other professional platforms/instruments, which will scale up the benefits of Youthpass for the holders' further educational or professional pathways.

- The **needs of youth workers and trainers in their capacity as learners and Youthpass holders** in the context of the two programmes and beyond will also be carefully considered. Youthpass will offer a relevant recognition tool for this target group, with a suitable competence framework and possibly with an adjusted branding that better reflects the professional nature of the youth workers' development.
- The learning outcome descriptions in the Youthpass system will continue to be aligned with the **European framework of key competences for lifelong learning**. Solutions will be developed to provide better support for the reflection on and documentation of acquired competences, especially for those that are most frequently developed in the context of youth work and volunteering. The development of such solutions will be inspired by existing (more detailed) competence frameworks such as LifEComp. For describing youth worker competence development, the **competence models** developed within the European Training Strategy are a suitable basis.
- Youthpass will be a **modern recognition instrument** that reflects the state of the art of technological developments. This will improve its **user-friendliness and attractiveness** and enable it to interface with other systems, notably those of the European Commission, as appropriate.
- The Youthpass developments pay special attention to **supporting young people with fewer opportunities**, to ensure they can fully benefit from the non-formal and informal learning activities and derive a positive impact for their personal development and future pathways. All future Youthpass developments will contribute towards improving the **accessibility and inclusiveness** of the Youthpass tool and process(es). This includes improving the accessibility of web tools and online publications for people with special needs and/or disabilities. Utmost care will be taken to make the tool and process easy to use for all Youthpass target groups.
- It will continue to be a **multilingual** tool that provides quality translations of the online tool, the certificates, and other support materials.
- It will also **support online learning activities** implemented within the youth programmes, including those designed as self-paced learning tools. The community of practice will be consulted on the need for a possible special format of the recognition tool.

8

TARGET GROUPS OF THE STRATEGY

The table below offers an overview of the target groups of the Youthpass Strategy in regard to the main measures foreseen.



Young people

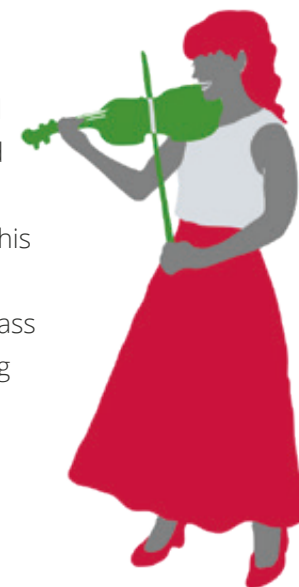
- Target group of the Youthpass instrument
- Information and support through youth workers
- Also direct, attractive and motivating information through Youthpass website and other tools

Youth workers

- Target group of the Youthpass instrument: Special setup needed
- Information about the nature and value of learning in youth projects and the potential of Youthpass in this
- Information, guidance and educational material on how to support learning in youth work activities
- Information about relevant policy processes at European level
- Tools to help explain Youthpass to participants

Trainers and multipliers

- Target group of the Youthpass instrument: Special setup needed
- Information about and educational support for tackling the nature and value of learning in youth projects and the potential of Youthpass in this
- Support for mainstreaming Youthpass process throughout various training and information activities
- Information about relevant policy processes at European level
- Tools to help explain Youthpass to participants



Youth work organisations

- Inspiration, information and capacity-building for strengthening the learning value of their work
- Solutions that enable visibility and recognition of their approach to working with recognising learning in youth work (e.g. a label)
- Information about relevant policy processes at European level



National Agencies and SALTO RC-s

- Promoting awareness of the learning value of the youth and solidarity projects among all NA staff
- Information, support and visibility materials that can be adjusted to national contexts
- Support for developing and implementing educational measures (training et al.) based on the needs in their context
- Support and inspiration for recognition/validation developments at national level
- Information about relevant policy processes at European level

Authorities, incl. European Commission

- Information on experiences and results of the EU youth programmes in regard to learning, recognition and Youthpass
- Contributions to debates on recognition and validation practices and procedures



9

INSTRUMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

The **main instrument** for implementing the strategy is the multilingual **Youthpass website and technical tool** that consists of the user environment and the Youthpass database for documenting learning and issuing the certificates. The Youthpass website is also the main source of guidance and educational materials, and a channel for Youthpass-related news and other information.

Further instruments foreseen for implementing the strategy include:



For information and visibility

- The European Commission's communication strategy for the youth programmes, including key programming documents such as the Programme Guides of the two youth programmes;
- The EU Youth Portal as a gateway for young people into the youth programmes and an information channel;
- A communication concept for Youthpass that describes the necessary communication measures and channels, including social media;
- Publications on Youthpass and on learning and recognition/validation in youth work (including handbooks, leaflets, essays, research reports, etc.);
- Regular policy briefs;
- Newsletter and website of the SALTO-YOUTH network;
- News and information channels related to the Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps programmes, at European, regional and national level, in particular the information channels of the National Agencies;
- Other European events and stakeholder platforms related to youth, non-formal and informal learning, recognition and validation.

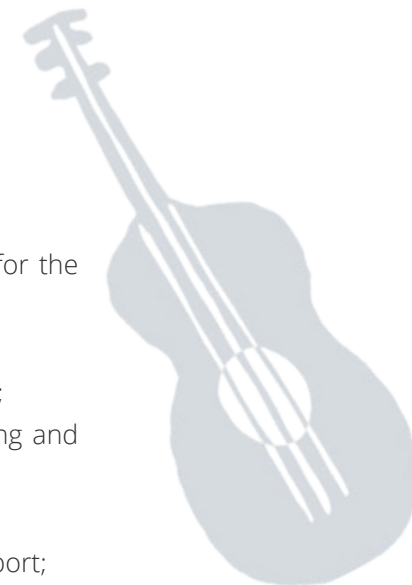


2

For educational activities and cooperation

The TCA/NET framework of the National Agencies of the EU Youth programmes play an important role for the implementation of the following activities:

- Face-to-face, blended and online learning and training activities for beneficiaries, multipliers and partners;
- Series of activities (seminars, workshops, working groups or other formats) to enable exchange, learning and cooperation within the community of practice – to be defined together with the community;
- Activities (conferences, etc.) that support mutual learning and development of national level processes;
- Face-to-face and online meetings with the National Agency colleagues to provide regular and ad-hoc support;
- Cooperation between National Agencies and multipliers and trainers on national and regional level;
- Cooperation activities within the SALTO-YOUTH network.



3

For knowledge-building

- Monitoring concept for Youthpass and its measures, including the annual overview of Youthpass developments;
- Youthpass database (on youthpass.eu);
- Research instruments developed in cooperation with the RAY framework and other research partners.



10

IMPLEMENTING ACTORS

With Youthpass being anchored within the EU youth programmes, the central coordinating stakeholders of this strategy are **the European Commission and the SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre**, the main implementers of the strategy at the European level. According to the mandate of the thematic SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres adopted in 2019, the Resource Centres are responsible for improving the quality and impact of Erasmus+ projects in the field of youth. In doing so, they act as hubs of knowledge and expertise that connect the outcomes of the EU youth programmes with relevant policy development.

The cooperation partners notably include **the National Agencies and SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres** that implement the EU youth programmes. They are invited to use the strategy, throughout the measures outlined under the three Fields of Action, for guidance and inspiration when taking strategic action at the national/regional level. Specifically, they are invited to plan measures to enhance the visibility and recognition of the learning value of youth work and the youth programmes, and of Youthpass as a scheme to document and display this value on the individual level. They contribute to





the Youthpass developments with the knowledge and insights gained from the implementation at the national level. Furthermore, the way the National Agencies and the SALTO network implement Youthpass in their own activities and the way they explain it, has a strong influence on how Youthpass is perceived by beneficiaries and further stakeholders. Support by National Agencies and potentially by regional SALTO Resource Centres is needed to ensure the Youthpass certificates and other materials are multilingual. The SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre strives to offer continuous support to the National Agency network in their work on recognition and validation, through relevant materials, cooperation activities and other support to national processes where relevant and possible.

Moreover, the SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres work with further programme strategies, notably the European Training Strategy, the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy and the Youth Participation Strategy. These relate to the current document in that they reinforce the quality of the youth programmes from their specific perspectives. Synergies need to be enhanced with these strategies as well as with other roles occupied by the SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres to ensure

the suitability of the various aspects of the Youthpass concept for the specific target groups of the SALTO-s.

The awareness and conviction of **youth workers, trainers and other multipliers** who in particular work in the context of the EU youth programmes is crucial for the practical and quality implementation of Youthpass, which in turn ensures it has the greatest possible impact for their participants. It is important that they convey the relevance and importance of reflection and documentation of learning to the participants in their activities and support them in this process, independently of the nature of the activity.

Some of the measures described in the strategy call for cooperation with **other associated stakeholders**, such as organisations active in the youth field - the community of practice -, local/regional/national authorities and European working groups, platforms and institutions, in order to ensure a connection to other relevant policy and practice frameworks and settings. This group also includes researchers and stakeholders from other sectors such as education or employment, with an interest in topics relating to the recognition and validation of learning in non-formal and informal contexts.





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GOVERNANCE

The Youthpass Strategy guides the work of the SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre that is responsible for the implementation of Youthpass in close cooperation with the European Commission and with the support of further stakeholders.

As far as the Youthpass Strategy is concerned, the European Commission has a two-fold mission. When implementing EU funding programmes such as the Erasmus+ programme and the European Solidarity Corps, the Commission aims to ensure that the main





actors are provided with the necessary tools for quality implementation. The Commission also plays a key role in implementing policy cooperation frameworks, such as the EU Youth Strategy that underlines the need for recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes through youth work, to which the Youthpass Strategy can contribute.

The most important governance body when it comes to the strategy is the Youthpass Advisory Group, which consists of institutional and independent experts. They are expected to follow up on and monitor the implementation of the Youthpass Strategy and the triennial action plans and, where appropriate, contribute to the developments in their context. The Youthpass Advisory group's composition is regularly reviewed.

As for the Youthpass Officers in the National Agencies, a horizontal role is foreseen within the National Agencies for colleagues who transmit Youthpass-related information from and to stakeholders in their countries, help organise the translations of the Youthpass related materials, and strategically support the implementation of the Youthpass Strategy on national and where appropriate European levels. The action plans for the strategy implementation are co-created by the National

Agencies and the SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre. Sufficient time should be ensured for the Youthpass Officers to fulfil these tasks. Their work will be supported by regular online and face-to-face meetings with SALTO Training and Cooperation and the European Commission.

According to the SALTO mandate, the regular meetings of the SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres and the European Commission will support the implementation of the strategy.

Timeline: The Youthpass Strategy serves to guide the work around Youthpass mainly during the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes and during the current EU Youth Strategy, which will run through to the end of 2027. The work related to the strategy will be organised through triennial action plans that set out broader aims and processes for the respective periods, accompanied by brief annual work plans that specify more concrete measures.

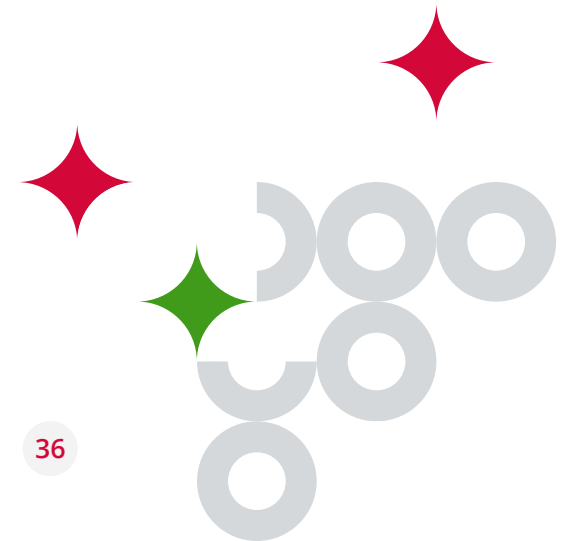
The strategy is to be reviewed during the last triennial action plan, in light of the monitoring data and research results described below.





MONITORING, EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

12



INDICATORS FOR MONITORING THE STRATEGY

The following general indicators are proposed for monitoring the development and implementation of the Youthpass tool and strategy:

- Technical and conceptual **development of the Youthpass instrument** as outlined in this strategy. This will include outcomes of surveys or other evaluation measures to explore the impact of these developments;
- **Implementation of other initiatives and processes** as described in the strategy, for example educational measures or input to recognition debates, by SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre and other strategy stakeholders;
- **Use of Youthpass:** generally as well as under the various activity types supported by the Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps programmes. The aim is to achieve greater and more balanced use of Youthpass across all activity types. Youthpass statistics will be made available according to the 2018 Youthpass monitoring concept;
- **Use of Youthpass in various programme countries.** The aim is to achieve greater and more balanced use of Youthpass across countries.
- **Youthpass information and communication outreach**, in regard to Youthpass-related news that is disseminated through the SALTO newsletter; increased outreach through the Youthpass website; increased outreach through the SALTO Training and Cooperation social media channels;
- **Reach of online support measures:** participation in online learning activities, downloads of online publications;
- **Availability of Youthpass certificates in various European languages**, as well as translated versions of other support materials.



2

EVALUATION

The basis for evaluating the impact of this strategy will be the reports of the triennial action plans, more specifically the achievement of milestones and goals foreseen in them. As part of these reports and besides outlining the indicators above, also surveys to National Agencies can be considered to explore developments, efforts and challenges at the national level.

Besides exploring the impact of the strategy, its implementation can be supported by an evaluation of and possible subsequent improvements to the work of the strategy's central stakeholders, notably the SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre.

3

RESEARCH

An impact study should be carried out a few years into the strategy's implementation to explore in depth the nature of Youthpass implementation and its impact. Its outcomes will be a strong basis for further reflections and actions. A second impact study can be considered towards the end of the strategy period.

RAY's regular monitoring surveys provide valuable regular scientific insight into Youthpass and the learning- and recognition-related aspects of the two EU youth programmes. The regular surveys could be complemented by research focusing on Youthpass-relevant topics.

Scientific initiatives will also be needed to fulfil some of the tasks and roles described in this strategy, notably to conceptualise the informal nature of learning in youth work.





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DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Youthpass Strategy was drawn up by the SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre in cooperation with the European Commission. This included consultations with the Youthpass Advisory Group, National Agencies and other experts in youth work, volunteering, and recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning.



The SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre cordially thanks all those who contributed to the development of this strategy through the consultations. We hope we have managed to list all contributors below; should we have missed out someone, please forgive us. Our thanks go to:

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