Guidelines on "Shaping Inclusion & Diversity Strategies for NAs"

"In every job that must be done, there is an element of fun"

Abstract

Building a strategy is at the same time exciting and challenging. This document presents a few steps to follow to create your NA Strategy on Inclusion and Diversity. Based on the international Crash Course organized in Lisbon, Portugal in March 2016, by SALTO Inclusion, SALTO Cultural Diversity and the Portuguese E+ Youth NA.

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INTRODUCTION

Inclusion and diversity are important elements of the Erasmus+: Youth in Action programme. Everybody should have the opportunity to participate in international youth projects!

The European Commission together with the SALTO Inclusion and SALTO Cultural Diversity resource centres developed the Erasmus+ "Inclusion and Diversity Strategy in the field of youth (2015-2020)". This ID Strategy aims to do the following:

- Create a common understanding of those who may be considered as young people with fewer opportunities and build a coherent framework of support for the Erasmus+ programme feature "Equity and Inclusion".
- Increase the commitment to inclusion and diversity from different actors in Erasmus+: Youth in Action.
- Promote Erasmus+: Youth in Action as a tool to work with young people with fewer opportunities and actively reach out to disadvantaged groups.
- Reduce obstacles for young people with fewer opportunities to participate in the programme and help applicants to overcome obstacles.
- Support organisers in developing quality projects that involve or benefit young people with fewer opportunities (e.g. provide training, tools, funding, coaching etc.).
- Link where relevant to other initiatives that benefit young people with fewer opportunities – both cooperation with other sectors (joined-up, cross-sectoral approach) as well as for youth policy and projects at local, national and international levels.
- Invest in the intercultural and social skills of young people and youth workers as well as their competences to manage and work with diversity in all its forms.
- Increase the recognition of the experience and skills gained by young people with fewer opportunities in Erasmus+ and by the youth workers working with them.
- Ensure that the focus on inclusion and diversity is present in all stages of Erasmus+: Youth in Action management, including promotion, support for applicants, selection of projects and evaluation and dissemination of project outcomes.

In order to bring the European Inclusion & Diversity Strategy to the national level, The SALTO Inclusion & SALTO Cultural Diversity resource centres organised a three day crash course for representatives from different E+ Youth NAs, to develop draft their national inclusion & diversity strategy. The course also focused on sharing practical tools to implement the strategy and ways to involve other stakeholders. The event took place from 15 to 18 March 2016 in Lisbon, Portugal, in partnership with the Portuguese E+ Youth NA.

The course proposed a journey with different steps in strategy planning. It created a space to discuss challenges and solutions while elaborating and implementing a strategy for inclusion and diversity. And last but not least, the course provided tools for strategy implementation.

These are some of the main questions which were addressed during the course:

- What is a strategy?

- What elements are needed to develop a strategy, specifically on inclusion & diversity?
- How to build a strategy?
- What are the challenges and –more important – what can be solutions?
- How can you create mutual support?
- How do you make your strategy visible to the outside world?

You will find a brief overview of the answers to these questions in the following pages.

A. UNDERSTAND THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

In elaborating a strategy, the first step to take is to understand *why there is a need for a strategy, to define the reasons of a strategy.*

It is important to look at the national context and analyse which elements influence a strategy on inclusion and diversity for Erasmus+. Try to answer the question:

What is the added value that the strategy will bring in your work and in the lives of young people?

If needed, refer to European documents such as the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy in the field of Youth, the EU youth report 2015 and other relevant documents, compare the situation of young people with fewer opportunity at the national level with the EU level.

Make sure that you describe the national context clearly and easy to understand why in that specific context is needed to elaborate a strategy for inclusion and diversity.

The next step is to analyse to which specific needs does the strategy answers to. For understanding to whom the strategy is for and to create an update document, connected to the reality, the need analyse should look to the needs of:

- The beneficiaries of Erasmus+ program.
- The young people directly.
- The staff of the NA (inclusion officers, staff, manager).
- The National Agency priorities and directions.

Some guiding questions for gathering the information, are:

1. What are the needs of your NA regarding inclusion and diversity? (It is important to involve in this discussion as many colleagues as possible, including the NA manager).
2. What resources (financial, materials, human resources) are available at the level of your NA in order to support an inclusion and diversity strategy?
3. What other relevant stakeholders you could involve in a strategy for inclusion and diversity?
4. Who are your beneficiaries? And what they need in term of inclusion and diversity?
5. What are the needs of young people with fewer opportunities from your country?
6. What motivates you as inclusion officer to work on this topic? What do you need in order to do your best in terms of inclusion and diversity?

B. DEVELOPING YOUR STRATEGY

1. Need analysis

After gathering all the information, you need to analyse which of those elements are valid and relevant for the strategy. Define the starting point of your strategy and analyse the context. The analysis can be based on the European level, the national and even organisational level (NA) or personal level (needs of beneficiaries, young people and even inclusion officers).

2. Values Vision Mission

With the context defined and analysed, the next step is to clearly express the vision, the mission, values of the strategy.

- The Values are those beliefs or principles that guides you / your NA in what you do. Values that are shared by the all the staff involved in inclusion and diversity work, and cannot be changed easily.
- The Vision is how would the community look like, if the values in which you belief (regarding inclusion and diversity), were shared and practiced by everyone.
- The Mission is a public statement about what do you do to make your vision come true.

3. Objectives

After defining the values, vision and mission, the next step is to define the objectives of the strategy. There can be general objectives, the ones that gives the general directions and specific objectives.

An approach of the objectives is that it should be *SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic (relevant) and time bound*.

Based on the experience of the participants of the crash course, defining the objectives is not all the time an easy job, but in order to make it easier, some advisers are:

- To know the needs of all the stakeholders mentioned and to turn that into specific objectives.
- To know the data, numbers and to analyse them.
- To take into account objectives of the other stakeholders – to know their objectives and how to get them on board.
- The programme needs to be digested to fit the needs of others (it should make sense to them).

- To work together with the people that you want to get on board, to think how to fit the programme to their needs: young people and organisations working with them, to hear what they would like and need. They can be involved by approaching them directly (going to their communities, working with networks / organisations that can reach them) or inviting them to meetings, involving them in some planning events, conferences.
- To manage expectations by sending a realistic message to beneficiary about the programme Erasmus+ and what it can offer (otherwise it can be disappointing). Setting realistic objectives of the strategy.

4. Action plan

After defining the objectives, it is important to define a concrete and realistic action plan. For each objective there are at least two main activities that should be defined. The activities are the steps that lead you to achieve your objectives.

A detailed action plan should include indicators, monitoring and evaluation procedures, a draft planning of resources, defining the responsible persons of that actions and mentioning the time frame for its implementation.

The action plan can take many forms. Important is to have some activities that contribute in reaching the objectives proposed in the strategy. The action plan can be revised yearly, taking in consideration also the agenda of NA.

An example of an action plan:

Objective	**Action**	**Indicator**	**Monitoring and evaluation**	**Resources needed**	**Responsible person/ Stakeholders involved**	**Time frame**
A1. More participation of young people with fewer opportunities in the program	A.1.1 - Organize a national training course on inclusion and diversity for youth workers	Number of participants (32) Number of projects applied after the TC	Participants list Questionnaire Interviews	Financial support Trainers	Inclusion officers NA Trainers from the National network International expert?	July – September 2016
A2.						

The participants of the course declared that to work on an action plan it takes a long time. The activities should be planned in a realistic time frame. It is also important that the action plan reflects activities that bring long term sustainability.

Possible challenges faced in developing an action plan are:

- To keep yourself being realistic and efficient when thinking of actions.
- Not to be stuck in moment when the process is not going well, even if it might be challenging overcome it.
- Sometimes is good to keep doing things and not to spend too much time on deep analysing and planning.
- Some needs are obvious, some not and don't be afraid to make mistakes, you will learn from it.
- Find out where you can make the biggest difference or/and create synergies.
- Keep the focus, sometimes less is more, because sometimes there are very limited resources, and there is the need to focus on just few things.
- It is also important to check what already exists, and build on it.

In the activities plans elaborated during the course, some of the activities mentioned were:

- Adapting guidelines for encouraging new NGO to apply for funding in Erasmus+ program.
- Organising rock'n'roll camps (partnering up with the existing initiatives/festival).
- Organise international activity: TCA, Tool fair on inclusion in 2017.
- Gives more support, coaching, one-to-one feedback, etc. to newcomer or inclusion organisation.
- Increase the visibility of the success stories, show case moments with great projects, promoting examples, present them at TCA activities.
- In the process of assessing projects, create some 'strings' to give advantages (more points) to newcomers, grass root NGOs or inclusion projects (see what is possible) – maybe additional funding (or earmark a % of budgets).
- Propose more positive discrimination / affirmative actions.
- Make the application form/tools more inclusive/application process.

In elaborating the strategy, it is indicated to maintain the connection with the reality. If possible, visit some of the projects on inclusion and diversity and also to talk with the persons that were involved in the projects.

Interacting with some concrete projects will:

- Increase your motivation to continue your work on social inclusion and diversity. Seeing concrete examples makes it easy to understand why you are doing what you do.
- Connect the strategy with the practice and analyse what has a real impact.
- Underline the importance of the impact of the project – what actually comes out of a project.
- Make's you to see what it is needed at the grassroots level and it can give ideas about improving the strategy.

Elaborating and implementing a strategy is a tedious process which requires a lot of time and energy. In order to make it a sustainable process it is important to engage more persons on board.

In term of resources needed for elaborating and implementing a strategy, there are financial resources and human resources. In order to tackle the lack of financial resources it is important to look for co-funding from other sources, to develop arguments that can secure more resources (strategy document can be one), to use all the resources available in creative ways (TCA money e.g. refugees, EVS, link to international events).

The human resources challenges can be solved by hiring extra staff (or freelancers), motivate the colleagues / allies, find synergies with other actors, cooperate, generate win-win situations, involve volunteers and bring together organisations with similar aims (find common ground, reinforcing each other's achievements by cooperating).

5. Evaluation and monitoring planning

In the process of elaborating the strategy it is important to plan also the evaluation and monitoring process. The evaluation is a systematic process; from which you can extract conclusions that leads to change. The monitoring process is about a continuous process of collecting data. Both evaluation and monitoring are processes that needs to be planned and needs a responsible team for doing it. Both processes are highly connected with the indicators, which are quantitative and qualitative. During the monitoring phase the indicators shows the statues of the strategy and during evaluation the indicators can be changed or improved. It is important to plan the monitoring and the evaluation in order to see if objectives are reached and to steer/adapt the process (redirect). These processes are important also to show off and justify your actions. It is important to analyse the results and its impact on the groups whose needs you take in consideration in elaborating the strategy. It is also recommended to evaluate the process, how it went and how efficient was it how much did you gain for how much results).

The monitoring processes should be continued, from the starting point of the strategy. Evaluation should be at least yearly, in order to allow adjustments.

If there are objectives with a certain deadline, it is good to evaluate the process at regular intervals. A suggestion is also to have a neutral evaluator from outside, if there is the lack of funding it can be also involved a volunteer (e.g. master thesis students).

The evaluation tools are diverse. From *questionnaires* through which you can evaluate the partnership and other stakeholders, to *focus groups*, *meetings*, using the resources from *other networks* (e.g. RAY network) and even add questions in the *participant report* (access in mobility tool); Survey in EVS and YW mobility.

C. PEER SOLUTIONS TO DIFFERENT CHALLENGES

During the course, the participants were invited to list challenges that they think they could encounter in elaborating and implementing a strategy. After choosing and listing at least one challenge, the group offered solutions to that challenge.

The result of that work is presented below:

Needs analysis about inclusion & diversity

1. *We want to work on inclusion and diversity, but how do I find out the most urgent needs in my country?*
   - Have a look at the existing data: e.g. barometers & dashboards (e.g. employment, housing, educational performance, etc.), youth reports, etc.
   - Organise a meeting/round table/working lunch/etc. with experts from the fields e.g. youth workers, social workers, ministry staff, university professors, young people themselves.
   - To have a list of a few questions that you can ask from those people who know (in their field) more about the situation of young people: e.g. you can collect answers by phone, email, questionnaire (e-survey).
   - Often a little reward/return helps to get the response rate up e.g. gadget, invitation to conference, acknowledgement in a publication. Or develop a few good arguments to convince them to participate (appeal to their motivation: helping the world, applying their valuable knowledge. Also see 'how to motivate organisations to come to your meetings' and take the information from them.
   - Go out and meet the beneficiaries in their own biotope. Ask them for their "help" so that you can help them better (give funding), involve them in your strategy development.
   - You could have a look at the target groups you are already reaching (well) with E+ in your programme and see which groups you are not reaching. You can then decide to focus on them.
   - But also check with which target groups you have (potentially) good contacts and cooperation with one or the other person (that works with the target group or is from the target group). You need a personal link to someone 'on the inside', or create one (see also: "How to get people to your meetings" or "How to get researchers/experts on board").
   - There is always an element of preference (a subjective decision): discuss with your colleagues where you see most potential benefit, with which target groups you have best contacts (a foot in the door), which are the 'easiest' to attract (or maybe you want to challenge yourself and work with the not so easy ones!! Beware of pistachio effect). Look for which cooperation would be most beneficial and sustainable, if needed 'vote' (even though a carried common decision is better, creates more ownership).

2. *How do I sell ID to my colleagues, manager and how do I get their time (and also money for inclusion).*
    - OK, there is a need in my country, but how do I sell ID to my own colleagues and hierarchy?
    - Show the bigger picture: how working on ID also contributes to the objectives of the NA (or make sure ID becomes part of your NAs aims). Inclusion is not 'extra work' (well it is, to a certain extent) but it is another way to reach what the NA and programme stands for!
    - Show the European ID Strategy (NAs implement the programme and this strategy), explain that many NAs are doing this Strategic Partnership on Inclusion (if peers do it, it must be ok), it also needs to be explained in the work-plan and report = it is something you need to do with your NA within E+.
    - Showcase the impact of inclusion in the programme to convince your colleagues or manager e.g. success stories of young people (meet them, personal testimony, handkerchief moment), research done on the impact e.g. Inclusion analysis of the RAY-data (see www.salto-youth.net/inclusionresearch/), common project visit to a great inclusion project.
    - Find the link to national priorities, policies that managers/colleagues are sensitive to. Or to other (inter)national events e.g. UN declaration of rights of child, the refugee 'crisis', Paris-Brussels-Istanbul-etc. attacks.
    - Show how the manager can use the inclusion work and achievements towards e.g. National Authorities, media, other stakeholders, etc.

3. *Don't do it alone, create buy-in and cooperation from your colleagues*
    - Share this responsibility with other colleagues (even though it is good for SALTO Inclusion/Diversity and COM to have 1 contact person = ID Officer). Let colleagues co-decide because it's creating a sense of ownership. It becomes also their strategy too.
    - Take a collective decision (e.g. approved by head/board) that Inclusion & Diversity is important and that you need to take time for it – and that it is not only you. Have preferably more info on how, who, what, you are supposed to do. Have a political green light for implementing your strategy and have collaborative conscious decisions.
    - Involve colleagues in priority-setting so that the strategy is also theirs (they have contributed) = ownership.
    - Create a working group on inclusion in your office. Give people small but concrete and realistic tasks. Create a sense of achievement (so work towards tangible results).
    - If useful, invite inclusion experts to help steer your work, or invite colleagues from the other parts of E+. Makes it more 'important', give the high level approach to it.
    - Create a pleasant atmosphere: e.g. inclusion coffee & cake, go to nice place (hosted in an inclusion NGO?) for your meeting, do not just organise meetings where you only discuss but make the meeting short, snappy and fun, use different methodologies (bring it alive).
    - Recognise people for their contribution: e.g. thank you, give credit to them during presentations, welcome their ideas, little gadgets (made by a sheltered work place), an 'inclusion badge' or certificate.
    - Give colleagues an inclusion experience (to make them feel more connected to the topic) e.g. wheelchair immersion parcours, blind restaurant, office volunteering as homework help,

have a meeting in a remote area with limited provisions (to understand geographical disadvantage).

- Inform regularly about the achievements (see also 'how to coordinate the inclusion work with a variety of officers).
- Disseminate the ideas and tools you got from the ID Strategy Course in Lisbon.
- Ask help when you need it (very specific requests – not general wishy washy involvement), mostly nice colleagues don't say no and help you out.

4. *OK, we don't do it alone, but how do we coordinate the work with a variety of officers (inclusion, KA2, TCA, communication officer, etc.)*
   - Create a (spoken or written) newsflash about inclusion & diversity: e.g. 10 min update on your office meetings, a short email every X time. Keep it to the point (factual, achievements), not lots of background. Make the link to colleagues' work (what consequences does it have for them: e.g. inclusion expert, organisation info, success story for newsletter, link to training & TCA).
   - Agree on one 'central person' that collects information and then spreads it. Could be 'inclusion & diversity officer' (or maybe TCA). This person keeps the overview, steers the process (ownership), makes sure that tasks are done, secure funding for activities (e.g. liaise with TCA).
   - Make things visual: a mind map/sequence diagram/list of different Inclusion actions (step by step) and indicate with post-its or colours what has been achieved (results) and what are next steps – and by whom/by when. Hang this in a central place (e.g. coffee corner, lunch table?) so that everybody can see and also knows who is (should be) doing what.
   - Create a 'check-list' for inclusion (or SALTO could), an easy 7 step reminder about how your NA (your colleagues) should deal with inclusion (Rough example 1 find out if a new contact is "inclusion" 2 if inclusion, inform ID officer and give name/contacts 3 send inclusion info material 4 invite for an exploratory meeting & set up a plan of action 5 send to TCA partner finding/course 6 support/coach during application 7 invite to showcase moment after project) – put this list next to each colleague's phone. Of course 'inclusion' is more complicated than that, but it makes it digestible for colleagues.

5. *We don't have time to work on inclusion on top of all the other urgent programme management we do. How to get more human resources?*
   - Cooperate with other organisations in the field? Create synergies, join other train instead of running your own full blown offer activities. E.g. send inclusion organisations to Inclusion training by the NAs or SALTO (your co-funding is appreciated though ;-)
   - Activate the cloud of people around your NA who are committed to the programme and inclusion e.g. ex-EVSers, volunteers from the field, committed youth workers, young people from the target group themselves. They give you extra heads and hands, but of course you also need to invest in their cooperation. Same principles go for them as for getting your colleagues on board (see above: small, concrete, fun, recognition).
   - Kill two birds with one stone: add an inclusion element to the existing work you do e.g. assessors training (add inclusion focus there), showcase events (invite successful and new inclusion organisations), publications (add a box, a chapter, a pointer about inclusion), an

inclusion focused workshop at a bigger conference with targeted guests… That way you don't need to create many 'inclusion specific' things. However, sometimes you need to have some specific attention (e.g. partner-finding, etc.).

- If you don't have time to do things yourself, you can outsource some of the inclusion work. You can look for alternative funding to make this possible (e.g. national funds, foundations, etc.).
- Collect good arguments (together with your inter/national colleagues, or coordinated by SALTO?) that could convince your head of NA/board/European Commission to give more space in people's tasks for inclusion & diversity (or hire extra staff).
- Discuss with in your NA if there are other 'less important' (time consuming) tasks that you can reduce/stop.
- Check if there are other possibilities with your National Authorities: e.g. system of social secondment (e.g. teachers that work for a year in a different sector), support programmes for employing specific target groups (e.g. professional integration, hiring support for long-term unemployed/for young workers, migrant groups).
- Offer traineeships for youth work/social work/psychology/… students. Do you have motivated volunteers? Euro-peers? Maybe they can contribute to inclusion? (However, it also takes time, money and conscious efforts to keep students/volunteers happy and motivated!).

6. *Building up and implementing your strategy.*

- If time is an issue (it probably is), take quality time to work on your strategy: lock yourself away, go to a different meeting place away from the office (without phones/email/usual disturbances), take part in an Inclusion Colleague Support Group (focussed time), put an 'Do Not Disturb – Inclusion In Progress'- sign on your office door/desk, or sit in an 'Inclusion Room' (away from your desk)… E.g. start with an hour per week and amend as you go along. But stick to it!
- Try out some pilot projects, learn from them and then roll it out more widely.
- Set up realistic goals and clear timed steps (see report of the ID Strategy Course).
- Be realistic that E+ doesn't resolve 'all problems' YPFO are facing, nor does it improve the 'social care system'. But you can contribute in a modest way (better than nothing). Focus on what E+ YiA CAN do (e.g. train inclusion workers, bring a bit of brightness in difficult times, get extra EVS-hands in your organisation, positive attitudes).
- And also be realistic that an international experience is not for each and everybody (some young people are too difficult to reach/not interested, the programme is too difficult/exclusive for some organisations because of admin). We can only do what is within our reach. But we should at least try to reach as many as possible (and not stick to the 'easy ones').
- The clearer your strategy (and detailed action plan), the easier it is to stick to it (and check the boxes of achievements one by one).
- Less is more: focus on one or two special target groups for a certain time. Without excluding any other target groups of course.

- Analyse what has the biggest impact for the (relatively) least effort. Find out what is most urgent/important (must have) and what is more accessary (would be nice). Focus on the essence.
- Set up trajectories. 1) find out which organisations actively work with the target group you want to reach, 2) find the right people within that organisation (champions, decision makers,…) 3) take them step by step to E+: an info meeting at their place (with the boss?) to present the advantages of E+ and how it can help reach their objectives, a national meeting with like-minded organisations, an international taster (where they can also find partners)… 4) support them with any application ideas, etc.

7. *How to get feedback from colleagues on our ID strategy proposal*

- Just mailing it around and waiting for feedback probably only works on a few colleagues.
- Maybe if the boss sends it that creates more reaction. (Not sure if 'authority' is the best method but it works for some).
- Or combine with an element of fun e.g. the best feedback proposal gets a price, block the road to the coffee machine and they can only pass if they give a comment on the ID strategy ☺ .
- Integrate a (forced) feedback moment e.g. at a team meeting, at the away-days of the office.
- Be specific: just asking "give me feedback" doesn't work. Ask specifically for ideas on a specific topic, which elements they see most/least realistic, what is missing. This triggers a lot more response.
- Link to colleagues' tasks/background: ask your EVS-officer if your strategy would be beneficial for more YPFO volunteering (appeal to their expertise), ask a minority colleague if they feel your ID approach would 'in their opinion' be successful in reaching to that particular minority, etc.
- Recognise them for their efforts: give them an inclusion chocolate, inclusion coffee & cake (if they give feedback), a kiss (might not work for every inclusion officer), an inclusion gadget (a pimped gadget with an inclusion sticker/message)

8. *How to decide which stakeholders to include and which not – and in what stage of the process*

- Make an overview of what competences and resources the different stakeholder groups (e.g. teachers, employment agencies, care institutions, prisons) could bring to your work/needs in order to carry out your strategy. If certain competences/contributions they bring are double, you can focus on one or the other profile.
- But also check within those stakeholder groups if you have (potentially) good contacts and cooperation with one or the other person. You need a personal link to someone 'on the inside', or create one. (see also: "how to get people to your meetings" or "How to get researchers/experts on board").
- There is always a preference (a subjective decision): discuss with your colleagues where you see most potential benefits, with which stakeholder groups you have best contacts (a foot in the door), which are the 'easiest' to work with (or maybe you want to challenge yourself and work with the not so easy ones), which cooperation would be most beneficial and sustainable. If needed 'vote' (even though a carried common decision is better, creates more ownership).

Reaching out to new groups

How to make E+ more known as a 'tool' (possibility, efficient methodology) for young people with fewer opportunities? So you know which (underrepresented) group(s) you want to get (more) on board in the E+ programme, how do you know how to 'sell' the programme? How can the programme fit to their needs?

9. *Which are the actors/stakeholders that are working with the target group you want to involve more in the programme? (Potential beneficiaries you could target)*
    - Ask around. Maybe some colleagues or previous applicants are/were working with the target groups. Pick their brains.
    - Have a look at the organisational landscape in your country (in social address book, online, approved organisations under one or the other ministry/governmental institution). What are the networks in place?
    - Which of them are in contact with the target group. Also think of unusual suspects e.g. not only focus on specialised youth & inclusion organisations, you could also think of employment offices, social welfare, schools, sports clubs, justice, mental health organisations (who also serve young people).
    - Google = mail, phone or visit them (or your network of multipliers). Better have your 'elevator pitch' prepared.
    - Ask young people themselves. What organisations, activities, public actors, etc. are they in contact with (who could potentially be an applicant).
    - Ask experienced applicants, they might be in contact with specialised organisations.

10. *Find out the needs and aspirations of the NGOs and young people*
    - Organise a meeting/round table/Focus group with NGOs and young people from the field to discuss e.g.
        - What are the needs of the NGOs and young people?
        - Explore together how the E+ programme could help them reach their objectives?
        - What are their sensitivities (which arguments would work on them)?
        - What would be the obstacles they see to participate/apply?
        - What type of communication works best for them?
    - An alternative could be to have a list of a few questions that you can ask from the NGOs or young people: e.g. you can collect answers by phone, email and questionnaire.
    - Often a little reward/return helps to get the response rate up e.g. gadget, invitation to conference, acknowledgement in a publication. Or develop a few good arguments to convince them to participate (appeal to their motivation: helping the world, applying their valuable knowledge …).
    - You could have a look at the target groups you are already reaching (well) with E+ in your programme and see which groups you are not reaching. You can then decide to focus on them.

11. Convince the new ID organisations to come to your meetings

- Pay for their expenses (travel, parking,…) and feed them ;-)
- Make it 'fun' (keep it pleasant): no boring methods, an informal drink after the meeting, etc.
- Create an appealing element in your meeting that they can do something with (e.g. results of a study about young people you did, an interesting speaker, life story of a famous young person, networking possibility, getting your latest publication…).
- Make your events 'catchy' enough (in title, in visuals, in wording, in content).
- Make them feel important (they are because you need to increase inclusion!!!). Explain how their participation in the contribution will help your work, how much you need them (but not necessarily go on your knees), how you see their contribution (give them space, role in the meeting), recognise their effort (gadget, reception, publication, thank you email).
- Show what you are doing with their input, give them credit for it (mention them/their organisations in your report).
- Communicate from their point of view (use 'you' instead of 'we/NA'), this creates more buy-in (an important marketing rule). See things from their side (e.g. best time of the day/week to have meetings).
- Ask NGOs what is interesting for them – and address those needs at the meeting.
- Instead of trying to drag them to your meeting, go to other meetings where they are (e.g. conferences, sectorial meetings,..) and ask for a 'stand', a short input, a workshop, where possible (and again make this appealing and from their point of view).

12. Convince the new ID organisations of doing E+ projects

- Go out to them, talk to them - rather than just sending 'cold' info material or invitations and create a link, a personal connection.
- Find the right person within the NGOs, those with an open mind, those who have done international projects when they were young, those who are in a decision making position, etc.
- Find out what these contact persons are sensitive too – which arguments would get them on board. Show them how you or the programme can provide what they are looking for or how it can help reach their aims or solve their problems (e.g. using international as a new methodology, exchanging/connecting with likeminded organisation abroad and learn from them, money for 'something extra' beyond the usual activities they offer, the benefit for their young people, etc.).
- Targeted promotion of the programme. Send user-friendly plain language information that shows E+ YiA from their perspective (to attract them). Follow up with phone calls and invitations to meetings (people do not change their work because of a leaflet).
- Staff working with the target group probably need to convince their managers (to do international projects). Draw up a list of arguments that help to convince the decision makers in the organisations (e.g. the impact of an international project like RAY, the support available- financial and other).
- Showcase examples (bring in contact) of similar organisations who have successfully gone abroad with young people, show what the impact was on the lives of young people preferably of similar target group so that they can identify with it (peer approach = peer marketing), success stories.

- Set up a step-by-step trajectory (see also: Building your strategy). Allow them to be in the driver's seat with you and leave space for them to suggest ways of cooperation (e.g. maybe it is easier for them to have the NA as a speaker at their meeting, rather that they have to come to your office).
- Organise a training together around a theme of interest to them – or send them to an international offer about this theme of interest (e.g. Training Calendar).
- Check if our YiA-style training fits to their needs (e.g. time of the day, length, can they leave from home for a few days, do they get time off from their manager) and adapt accordingly (e.g. make your offer shorter, at different moment, with a 'training certificate' so that the participant can justify to the manager his/her absence, residential or not, single rooms, more or less formal). Take away their obstacles to participate.
- Show them what support there is available for inclusion & diversity: money, consultation, supportive approach, application coaches (e.g. BE-FR), publications, training (TCA, SALTO), money for special needs/exceptional costs, etc. Help with the application and administration.

13. How to convince experienced applicants to do ID projects

- Bring them together to explain what Inclusion & Diversity is about (eg definition).
- Give them arguments why it would be good to open up their projects to young people with fewer opportunities: play the emotional/moral card, extra support/money, it 'fits their organisation' (PR), pressure that they should 'move to the next level' (instead of doing same thing application round after application round), they get coaching. Other arguments?
- Provide them training on 'inclusion and diversity' matters, SALTO Inclusion and SALTO Diversity publications, team them up with inclusion organisations (collaborative efforts).
- In countries where there are a lot more applications than funds available, you could suggest that doing inclusion projects will give them more chances to be funded. (Also think of how to avoid tokenism that they just get someone /a few young people on board with fewer opportunities to improve their chances to be funded!!).
- Do a tour/mailing to all accredited hosting organisations in your country, to explain the idea of Short-Term EVS and inclusion – and gently convince them to be open for volunteers with fewer opportunities too. HOWEVER, we need to ensure that they also have the seriousness and capacity to support young people with special needs appropriately!!! Offer training to 'skill them up'.

14. How to motivate those experienced organisation/applicants to inspire/help/support newcomers (inclusion organisations) in the program?

- Give them the floor to show off their successful project (recognition of their achievement), make them a role model.
- Tell them they really are doing good work and that they can inspire others (make them feel good about it).
- Link it to the possibility for them to take part in an international training (TCA, SALTO) = give them something in return (that is part of your usual possibilities, doesn't cost you extra).
- Or send the experienced and newcomer organisation together to an (inter)national training, where they can 'work as a tandem' and learn from each other during the training process

(check concrete ideas for the organisation, how would you do it, etc.). This also creates a personal link (more likely/easy to contact each other after the course).
- Give them something in return: gadget, thank you, travel reimbursement, invitation to yearly dissemination event and nomination for 'youth award'.

Applying for projects

Small organisations find the administrative side for projects very daunting and time-consuming. Some solutions showed at this challenge are presented below.

15. *Change the programme*

- Make the application/implementation/reporting process more flexible for Inclusion & Diversity projects = convince the COM to work on this.
- Make the questions of the application/reporting 'understandable' and user-friendly. Apply human plain language that all people can understand (also non-native speakers). Get a 'plain language label' for the forms and programme guide. > ID Steering group could propose improvements.
- Adapt the administrative procedures to the small scale inclusion/youth projects, instead of having the same complicated forms for 150000€ projects and 5000€ projects.

16. *Provide extra support*

- Send coaches to help ID organisations, they can (should) be paid from non-programme funding i.e. national funds, etc. or volunteers (peer system).
- Connect beginning organisations with experienced organisations for peer support and coaching (we need to find arguments to convince the experienced organisations to do so, thank them for their time and commitment, give them arguments so that experienced project writers and their bosses see this as valuable work).
- Create easily understandable 'helping questions' (an explanatory guide) to coach newcomers through the application (and reporting) procedure, or the best would be to make the questions of the application/reporting themselves 'understandable' and user-friendly. Finnish NA developed a concept.

17. *Extra arguments and promo*

- We need to have arguments to convince those organisations such as: "it is a one-time effort, but could lead to a life-time of change", "it gets better after the first time". Any other arguments you use in your offices?

18. *How can we have impact with inclusion strategy if our NA only has enough money to fund 1 out of 5 applications?*

- Earmark funds for specific groups/profiles/thematic – find out with COM how to operationalise this (within the rules – or create new rules).

- Choose the projects/organise activities that have most impact/sustainability/multiplying effect. That way the same amount of money goes further.
- Train your assessors to apply the 'proportionality principle' more rigorously and give more points to the inclusion applications (because we want more of them).
- Revert to the YiA 'priority' system, where projects on inclusion got (more) priority. Check with the COM.

Monitoring our inclusion efforts / achievements

19. How can we collect reliable data on inclusion projects and the number of young people with fewer opportunities that are really disadvantaged or at risk of exclusion (not just ticking boxes)

- Better understanding amongst beneficiaries, assessors of what inclusion is (when to tick the box)
- Stress the 'comparative disadvantage' when it comes to young people with fewer opportunities (explain that it is more than just ticking a few boxes).
- A question about the extra support (adapted programme) the young people with fewer opportunities would need should make clearer what is meant with 'true ex/inclusion'.
- We should be extremely careful with labelling and stigmatising young people = privacy and confidentiality is important. How can we find out that the young people are really in dire straits without making them feel as 'the disadvantaged contingent'.
- Organise dissemination/information meetings about inclusion, about what it means (and what not), what are the tools available if they would apply, what extra support, etc. Inform about your national ID Strategy.
- Add a session on 'What is inclusion?' to each training, webinar, info session.
- Address the "definition" of inclusion in your (online) consultation for project applicants.
- Create a clear leaflet about what is inclusion, with a few explanatory examples (both bad and good) to make the point (and what they can get when they would be inclusion organisation). Send this to all applicants/assessors. Or add a similar explanation to the Programme guide.

20. Improving the data

- Make sure the data in Epluslink/Report module/mobility tool can be 'corrected' by the NAs based on the knowledge of the project, on the info delivered from the assessors, on the on-site visits. There will remain an element of subjectivity in 'classifying' young people as fewer opportunities or not.
- There needs to be a distinction in the data between inclusion projects about an ID related theme, and inclusion projects that actually involve young people with fewer opportunities and how many.
- Adapt the way data is collected: e.g. in the questions ask in a clearer way why the participants in a project would be considered to have fewer opportunities than their peers and maybe combine that with some other indicators of inclusion (area they live in, income.).

- Another way would be to focus on the exceptional costs and special needs applied for. To get this, beneficiaries have to argue more that their group is in need of additional support – so this is maybe a better indicator for 'inclusion'?
- Extract the data easily from Epluslink with quick reports (filter by topic).

21. How can we document the impact E+ YiA has on young people with fewer opportunities.

- RAY is a great project for this. Use their system/data.
- SALTO Inclusion has done some research on RAY data regarding the impact of YiA on young people with fewer opportunities and the effect of projects about inclusion topics. Available at www.salto-youth.net/inclusionresearch/ . You could do a similar comparison on your national data (if sample big enough).
- RAY is currently also doing some more longitudinal impact study of participants that went through E+ YiA projects. SALTO Inclusion will keep an eye on that to see that also 'inclusion profiles' are documented.
- All NAs can pick-up on some success stories of YPFO that went on a project and document them in a useable format eg short clip, a two pager, etc. Share with the network and the wider world. Keep them ready for media, for conferences, for training (if they agree to be your ambassador).

22. One thing is to have the data, but how can we make sense of it, analyse it and adapt our strategies to the findings – without having time, money, and skills for it?

- Cooperate with (master) students (e.g. social work, psychology), who need to find topics for their master thesis. They (and universities/higher education) are often very happen to have a 'real life' subject so that their thesis has practical use.
- Recent graduates often are also looking for traineeships or first work experience to put on their CV.
- Of course, having a student/graduate doing this research for you also requires time to introduce this person to your processes, data, etc. You need to foresee time to create a supportive environment for this person so that her/his work can be as accurate and qualitative as possible (so it is not a completely free solution without time-investment).

23. How to create efficient follow-up or support/mentoring system for organisations that we train to write (and implement) E+ inclusion projects?

- Organise a TCA training on this topic, to exchange ideas and different practices. Check the existing tools and approaches. Inventory & document them.
- Do less but spend more time on follow-up.
- Explore options with applicants (participants) before they go on an international activity/training about what they think they could do with their experience abroad, create commitment to do something after a course/activity. Develop an action plan together.
- If they deliver the action plan, the option could be to waive the participation fee?

Cross-sector cooperation

Youth is not an island, young people are in contact with so many other 'actors' than only youth work: schools, vocational training, sports, social work, employment offices, employers, police (and sometimes justice), parents, culture.

24. *How can we promote cross-sector cooperation? Combine forces with other sectors? Have a wider impact than 'only' youth sector?*
    - Understand what the other sectors will get from the cooperation with youth sector. Take a few steps in their shoes. Analyse what is the common ground (issues both are working on/for e.g. target groups, activities, info sessions, media, etc.).
    - Create places where "activists" from different sectors can meet e.g. cross-sector TCA-events, send youth workers to other sector events/cross-sector events, open your TCA events to other profiles. This allows sectors to get to know each other and create a personal link (to break down prejudice between sectors and learn about each-others' strong sides.).
    - Co-operate with the other E+ NAs in your country. Start small (e.g. meeting, common info session, common website) to explore (and get to know each other) and build up on that. Find what you can do in common – and who would be the best person to liaise with (personal link).
    - Organise cross-sectoral TCA events together with the other sectors (examples of UK, EE, PL, HR). Make a list of concrete things you (youth NA) can offer to the other sectors (e.g. info in your newsletter, trainer, methodology, contacts…).
    - Share the way you are working on Inclusion with the other E+ NAs in your country. And find out what they are doing on inclusion. Be careful not to make it look that 'we do it better' but just to share and inspire.
    - When organising a youth (work) event, ask your guests to invite another guest from a different sector e.g. young person comes with a school coach, youth worker comes with an officer of the employment office, etc. (it has been tried and worked in RO).
    - Organise round tables/events to discuss common issues (e.g. school leaving, refugee integration, radicalisation) and approaches. With whichever sectors is linked to that (so the content become the common ground, not the sector or programme). Avoid just a 'cold invitation' but call them and tell them why you 'need' them, make them feel appreciated, needed, create a personal link.
    - Present the results of what you are achieving in the youth sector. To show that youth sector also achieves great things. To gain recognition from the other sectors (who sometimes think they are 'more important' or 'better'). Get rid of the 'small brother'-syndrome ;-) We are doing great things to. We can show it in a neutral way, looking for synergies rather than competition.
    - Inform each other about current projects, send them publications, information material, attend their meetings and invite them to yours.

25. *How to get (public) research institutions/experts interested to help you (NA) with inclusion & diversity e.g. mapping the needs of specific sectors, analyse what (and why) E+ YiA could be beneficial to inclusion work that these other sectors are doing.*
    - Find the right person inside the research institution that has an interest (passion) in this field. Similar interest is a good basis for cooperation. Of course, this person (and institution) also needs to be economically viable. Explore together where you could get funds for his/her contribution to your research.
    - If no money, master (and PHD) students are often looking for 'useful' thesis/research projects that have practical benefits (rather than something abstract or theoretical). So cooperate with faculties or higher education institutes.
    - Build up a network of researchers/experts that are sympathetic to your cause (inclusion & diversity). Invite them to your conferences and activities (as a test – for a fee) and keep contact with them, create a personal link. Invite them to your events, send them your publications, etc. They can help you in your 'needs assessment' or other research projects later on, or put you in contact with other useful people (or PHD-students).
    - Analyse what you can offer the researchers e.g. access to young people/youth workers (e.g. for their research projects), possibility to experiment new methodologies, put their theories to the test (most of social research is done on students at the faculty, but why not offer your network – within ethical limits of course).
    - Look within your own networks if you can find the right profile for your research needs e.g. in your pool of trainers, an ex-volunteer, (friends or family of) NA staff with a background in social sciences. Because of their link to the NA/programme/inclusion, they might be more inclined to cooperate.

26. *How to involve National Authorities on inclusion & diversity (to get them on board, to support the cause)?*
    - Have a meeting to discuss the European ID Strategy and how you are translating that to the national context in your own ID strategy.
    - Point out where there could be possible cooperation (e.g. link with national programmes, possibilities for extra funding to address some lacks in the E+ programme, communication to the sector e.g. to recognized/subsidized organisations, etc.).
    - Present the benefits for the national authorities to be involved and support the national ID strategy.
    - Create a tailor-made report for them: they are sensitive to different arguments than youth workers (e.g. numbers, impact, return on investment, success stories, good practices).
    - Make the link to other policies (e.g. youth strategy, ID strategy, national policies) and how the NA (your ID strategy) is helping to reach those policy objectives. Concrete numbers please!

27. *How can we get support from local companies to obtain support (financial, in kind) for inclusion projects?*
    - Show examples of inspirational ID projects. Bring them in direct contact with young people (testimonials), show the impact E+ has.
    - Create a clear list of ways where there they could be involved (financially) in the project, what are the usual needs of a project.
    - Also list what they would get in return: social PR, but also visibility? E.g. mention them in media/press release, if they fund a creative project they get a free concert/exhibition, etc.? Putting their logo on NA communication if they give 'structural funds' (not specific to a project). Using their branded 'stuff' or products. Organise visits for staff of the sponsor to the activity – do a common 'fun' or 'volunteering' activity with the young people.
    - Possibility of corporate volunteering (employees go for X time in the project with the EVS volunteer, or help in e.g. catering at an exchange, etc.).
    - Start small, experiment and once you have a concept that works, you can expand on that and offer it to other companies.

D. IMPLEMENTATION OF YOUR STRATEGY

The implementation of the strategy is a challenging process itself. In order to facilitate the implementation phase there are some examples of tools for effective strategy:

- Organise consultations, focus groups, questionnaires, etc. to build the document in close relation with the beneficiaries.
- Create buy-in from different stakeholders.
- Start with small steps and widening approach step by step.
- Create an inclusion manual to present the flow and different tools which you can use in strategy to get newcomers on board.
- Offering coaching programs to beneficiaries – potentially international network of coaches/multipliers.
- Develop guidelines (on international level) how to fill application form, accreditation form.
- Involve students in the work for the strategy - have trainees/students from universities.
- Generate crossover events (LTTC for KA2).
- Organise national activities with an international leg/link.
- Share the results and organise at the end showcasing, dissemination-impact event.

In implementation of the strategy, there are also recommendation on things that didn't work in drawing up the ID Strategy & its implementation. Below are some tips on what not to do in this process:

- Don't give up! Keep in mind: "there isn't mountain high enough"! "In every job that must be done, there is an element of fun".
- Don't try to insist on getting accurate data and doing analysis, don't get stuck with it.
- Do not forget to follow up activities. Use evaluation events to follow up, as you have beneficiaries at one place, invite all those who implemented projects already, beneficiaries and participants. Using it also for taking qualitative interviews for RAY. It's also a network moment for them and a chance to understand better the programme.
- Don't do it on your own. Motivate your colleagues, get them involved in the process of drafting the strategy (by showing them some project examples, testimonies).
- Start in time, invest in preparation. Get the support of your manager.
- Don't rush the process too much, give some time to digest. Maybe put a draft onside for some days and do not think about it.
- KISS – keep it short and simple. Don't use too complicated words and too long documents. Use simple and understandable language.
- Don't try to do everything, focus on few priorities. Generate a step by step approach.
- Decide what kind of strategy you want (more general, political or more concrete, action focused strategy).
- Be a role model to others: by having your own strategy you are showing to beneficiaries that strategic planning is important.

- Don't forget to involve media. For communicating your strategy to the right people try also to work with some media which has a notion of social and youth issues (this will also help you to pass the message you wanted in a way you wanted).
- Don't forget to set up an (realistic) deadline for finalizing the strategy. Establish by what time you want to have strategy ready.
- Don't forget to use TCA for the implementation of the strategy. Try to establish some models and concept of activities which work and use TCA to support them.

E. COMMUNICATE YOUR STRATEGY

How to get the programme & inclusion in it in the public eye

A strategy needs to have visibility. The document once produced should be promoted towards relevant stakeholders. In addition involving partners (as describe above) the strategy should be promoted also in the media. Below are some advices on how to attract media.

Look for an iconic project in the field of inclusion (e.g. working with 'hot' target group e.g. refugees, boat building, young people helping old folks, super diversity e.g. project with 30 y people with roots from 30 different countries etc.) = news value, send the information to the media.

Look for 'incredible' actions, activities, impact, events, achievements (related to an E+ project): former refugee doing EVS with refugees, performances, dramatic injustice (e.g. young person not allowed in the country because passport problem, etc.), rock climbing with people with disability… = something that is visual or impressive and communicated to the media.

See also Making Waves and cooperate with your Communication Officer.

- What about working with an advertising agency? Sometimes they do a campaign for free for social organisations/purposes (a way of CSR).
- Adapted info material (to staff working with young people).
- Use the language of the target group (mostly youth worker, probably not the young people themselves), use 'you' instead of 'we' or 'E+' as a subject (that puts them at the centre).
- Structure the information material from the perspective of the organisations (not from the perspective of the programme), show clearly what is in it for them.
- Use pictures that are realistic and relevant to the target group (no Colgate smile white kids only)
- KISS – keep it short and simple, also in communication your strategy.
- Tell a story, make it practical and give relevant examples.
- Answers the questions that journalists they might have.
- Involve the target group you want to reach (youth workers? Young people?) in the development of your info material. They know best what appeals to them. Put your info material to the test (get feedback) before printing.

REMINDER: cold communication does not work (just sending a leaflet and hope something happens) – also follow up with a phone call, an invitation for a meeting (create a personal link), visit of a coach / multiplier / peer organisation. Share stories and give to the strategy a person touch!

F. CONCLUSIONS

Generating a strategical document on inclusion and diversity it's a demanding process which involves resources such as time, data, passion, energy and commitment. To make the process more enjoyable it is recommended to have peer support, to involve other colleagues and to make your work visible. The strategy needs to follow a structure and to be connected with the reality of the beneficiaries (NGOs), the work of the NA, your own motivation and with the life of the young people.

The strategy needs to be a lively document, which is an inspiration and which is the frame that supports more projects addressing inclusion and diversity topics.

In order to maintain the motivation up and to share the results, the community of strategical thinkers on inclusion and diversity should keep in touch, use online tools to communicate, share the strategy when it's ready and have a summary in English (use also Google translate to English) and offer feedback one to each other.

If the process of building a strategy would be an object, this object would be…

When asked how the participants would have described the process of drafting a national strategy, they declared that for them the course was like:

- A heart balloon to spread love and a sunshine balloon – to remember that 'every job that must be done has an element of fun'.
- A suitcase and a bigger suitcase full of extra tasks. There's more work to come.
- A plane that have the motto 'meet your dreams'; 'In every journey there is a first step' is the message to the world.
- Some steps towards question marks ('what are you doing here?'). There's a firework on the back and an infinity symbol – We'll always work together.
- An umbrella. Embrace diversity – it works in our favour.
- Hot air balloon and a sunshine – with the message "I would love to include you".
- A postcard addressed to Erasmus+ stakeholders with the message "the strategy is almost done".
- Picture of the steps along a river – 'you never step twice in the river'.
- A balloon that needs to be blown up 'blow your own happiness and dare to fly'.
- A ship on the sea – it doesn't matter where we are, we'll find the shore and discover something beautiful.
- The rain - 'when I came with the rain', but the strategy brings sun and coherent ideas.
- The pastel de nata and a Lisbon tram climbing up a hill – strategy writing is now in the middle of the hill and on its way. Remembering the vision!
- An umbrella at the seaside – "The strategy is offering an umbrella to everyone in need".
- A rainbow – "travelling together is so much fun"
- A luggage with the motto "enjoy the ride, plan the world… and rule it"!