

**Research-based
analysis of European
youth programmes**

EVIDENCE-BUILDING RESEARCH PROJECT ON WHO IS MISSING IN THE EU YOUTH PROGRAMMES (RAY-MISS)

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE FOR 2025

30 SEPTEMBER 2024

Please note that, to ease contract and project administration, we are using 2025 to switch from an annual mid-year cycle to a two-year calendar cycle. This concept note and its accompanying budget therefore cover one calendar year, from January 2025 until December 2025 – this is the first part of the switch. For 2026 and 2027, we will then use a two-year concept note and budget – the second & final part of the switch.

This concept note is a preview and is subject to change.

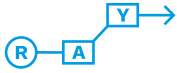


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1. CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

European youth programmes are intended to reach ALL young people, and in particular young people with fewer opportunities. The findings of RAY-MON show that most likely European youth programmes only reach a limited segment of this target group. Furthermore, it can be assumed that also a limited share of potential applicants actually seeks for funding in the context of European youth programmes.

Therefore, we will explore which types of potential applicant organisations/groups/networks/youth do not apply for funding, and why by dissecting the application and selection process in order to identify possible structural mechanisms hindering potential applicant organisations/groups/networks/youth. Additionally, we aim at further exploring which young people with fewer opportunities and special needs are underrepresented in projects funded by European youth programmes, and why. While recognizing there are many individual reasons which may influence a young person's participation in the European youth programmes, we recognize the pivotal role organisations play in reaching young people with fewer opportunities. Consequently, in order to begin exploring why young people with fewer opportunities and special needs are missing or underrepresented, this project will have a primarily organisational focus.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

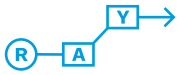
2.1. OVERALL AIM OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

This research project aims to explore who is missing from the European youth programs, by attempting to understand which potential applicants do NOT submit applications for funding programmes, why some applicants are not selected and which young people do not participate in projects funded through European youth projects – and why.

2.2. KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The key objectives of this research project are to explore:

- The application and selection process for organisations/groups/networks to determine structural impediments to participation in the European youth projects.
- The application and selection process for youth to determine structural impediments to participation in the European youth projects.
- To create a profile of which young people with fewer opportunities and special needs are underrepresented in projects funded by European youth programmes.
- To develop supports and changes in the application and selection process to eliminate barriers to participation for eligible organisations/groups/networks/youth.



3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.1. CORE RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE PROJECT

The core research questions of the project are:

- Which types of organisations/groups/networks are significantly underrepresented in projects applied for within and funded through European youth programmes, and why?
- Which young people are significantly underrepresented in projects applied for within and funded through European youth programmes, and why?
- What are the obstacles of young people and organisations to become involved in European youth programmes?
- How can young people and organisations/groups/networks that are underrepresented in the European youth programmes be better supported in order to become involved in these programmes?

3.2. UNDERPINNING RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE PROJECT

- Is there a selection bias for eligible organizations/networks/groups where they may not receive funding because they are unprepared to apply?
- How does the application process influence an organisations/group/networks willingness and capacity to apply for funding?
- How does the application process influence a young person's willingness and capacity to apply for participation in the European youth programmes?
- Is there adequate support material/information to assist interested parties in completing the application process?
- How much additional/supplementary support is necessary to submit an application and how is an application selected?
- Are there organisations who would likely not be able to participate in a similar project under the current conditions?
- What systematic changes need to be implemented for participation of deterred, eligible applicants more likely?

4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND INSTRUMENTS

4.1. MODULE 1: DATA ANALYSIS

In the initial module of this research project, a comparative analysis of RAY MON data will be carried out in order to identify youth who are missing and underrepresented, particularly focusing on youth with fewer opportunities. Bearing in mind, the RAY MON data is not representative for all participants in the European Youth Programs so we are limited by the data that is available.



4.2. MODULE 2: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

In the second module of this research project, we will explore the complexities of the application process through an analysis of applications. This module would first look at anonymized application data¹ received from National Agencies to compare accepted and rejected applications. If possible, review of “application guidance materials” provided during the application process will also be analysed.

4.3. MODULE 3: EXPERT INTERVIEWS WITH NATIONAL AGENCY STAFF

In the third module of this research project, we will conduct interviews with National Agency staff about the application process to explore the overall process as well as themes of inclusion, visibility, promotion, and thresholds.

4.4. [OPTIONAL] MODULE 4: CASE STUDIES

In this optional module, case studies (which could include interviews, Focus Groups, and/or observations) with organisations working with youth and youth who are: 1) not participating in EUYP, 2) participated once but never got back, 3) currently going through the application process for the first time etc. will be included. The selection of cases would be informed from the information discovered in Module 1². This optional case module serves to dive deeper into the applications’ potential structural obstacles with participation, the effectiveness of the promotion of the programmes, and personal aspects hampering or encouraging their participation.

4.5. MODULE 5: SURVEY

In the fifth module of this research project, multilingual online survey built on the data collected from the previous modules addressed to young people and organisations/groups/ networks eligible but not taking part in European youth programmes. Ideally, National Agencies/national researchers would map eligible organisations that do not participate to send the survey invitation directly to increase the response rate in an atmosphere of survey fatigue.

5. RESEARCH SCHEDULE

The project will start on January 1, 2025. The following table provides an overview of main activities at transnational and national level for the planned duration of the research project:

Time period	Activities at transnational level:	Activities at national level:
01.2025 – 06.2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalization of concept note with RAY MISS working group 	

¹ Access to the application data will have to be given by the National Agencies. The transnational team will work with National Agencies to ease the anonymization process of the application data.

² For example, if the data analysis demonstrates youth from a certain minority is missing, we would recommend the national researchers seek organisations working with youth from this minority to be included in the case study.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of research instruments, (interview guidelines) 	
01.2025 – 06.2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis of RAY MON data for module 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather and anonymize application data to be analysed by the transnational research team
07.2025 – 12.2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document analysis of application data provided by the NAs 	
Throughout 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and implementation of multilingual survey Analysis of survey findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping of eligible organisations for Module 5 survey Translation of multilingual survey into national languages Case Study by participating NAs (optional)
Throughout 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of research reports, policy briefs, fact sheets, infographics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of research reports, policy briefs, fact sheets, infographics

6. PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS

The following table provides an overview of basic and optional contributions to the research project by project partners:

Basic contribution of partners	Optional contributions of partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial contribution to the transnational costs of the research project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case Studies at national level with organisations and youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translation of survey questions for the multilingual survey into national languages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the working group of the research project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support in distributing the findings of the research project at national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translation of research reports and/or fact-sheets into national languages

7. RESEARCH PARTNERS

Research partners of this project are the RAY Network partners in Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden. Further partners are always welcome to join.

8. NEXT STEPS

The working group for the project will be established in early 2025. A final concept note including a refined research design and adjusted research schedule will be developed in the first half of 2025 together with the working group.