



by Susie Green

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“Sweet, sorted, sound... Made to make your mouth water...Sweet!

Do you know the slang phrase “sweet”? It’s said on the streets of London when something’s cool, right, good. We want to show you the new **Youth in Action Programme**, but hidden around are references to sweets.....how many can you find? (Answers are upside down at the end of the article.) Keep reading, and keep counting, the winner might get some sweets...

Many of you will know our old YOUTH programme like the back of your hand. Since the beginning of 2007 there has been a new Youth in Action programme. It’s not a really new approach, just improved after hearing what people had to say.

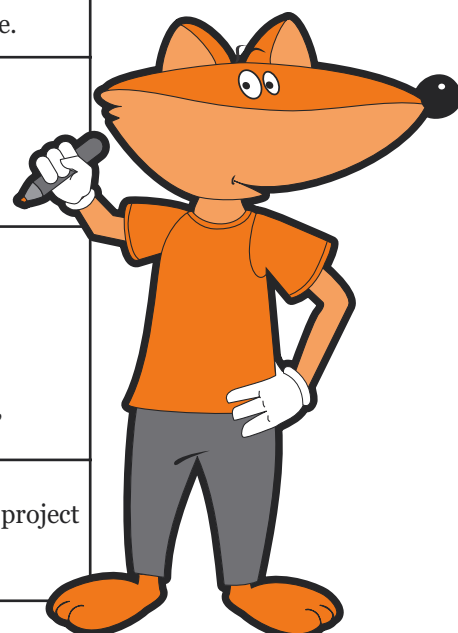
We don’t want to go through every detail here, just the new, exciting bits. And to show that the main priorities overlap quite a lot with the campaign ideals of All Different All Equal.

Maybe the Programme could be a way to put into Action on a grass roots youth work level those principles of Diversity, Participation and Human Rights?

For detailed information check out the new Programme Guide at http://ec.europa.eu/youth/yia/index_en.html

So open your hand (and project applications) and smile...

Who ?	Young people (13 – 30) Youth leaders and organisations Youth policy makers and administrators
What ?	There are still 5 actions, but related to the old programme some activities have changed around, and each of the actions has a name.
Why ?	Four main priorities: 1. Active participation of young people in democracy, 2. Cultural diversity, 3. European Citizenship, 4. Inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities
Where ?	EU countries, EFTA (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway), Accession (Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey). All of these have a National Agency responsible for the programme and adapting it to the local reality. Partner countries (neighbourhood policy): SEE, EECA, Euromed, it’s full of eastern promise Rest of the world (with very specific conditions) taste the rainbow, feel the rainbow
When ?	Still 5 deadlines related to project implementation periods. The reporting periods are often taken into account of the whole project cycle now, so the duration of projects is one whole length now.



Three in 1, chocolate, surprise and a toy?

Well, we can't give you the chocolate, but there are surprises and things to play around with in the new Action 1, Youth for Europe. And there are three main parts to it. The first part is our old friend youth exchanges - still groups of young people, but now 13 - 25 years old. There should still be a definite intercultural learning part and active involvement of the young people themselves in the whole project (not just the exchange itself). Priority will still be given to multilateral projects, and more focus on Advanced Planning Visits and the child protection issue. 3 in 1: Old Action 3, Youth initiatives, now in Action one, and it's open for 18 - 25 year olds (or from 15 with extra support). Length isn't everything, so I'm told, and so initiatives are now 2 months to 18 months long, including all the work you have to do before and after the project itself.

Break out of the ordinary

A new addition to the YiA programme is what's called Democracy projects. What the ***** are they? Well, they must be theme-based partnership projects, with at least 2 countries, and in each country 2 organisations. A Democracy project is about exchanging experience, promoting dialogue, overcoming obstacles to participation and getting young people more involved in the decision-making process. Hence the term "democracy". It fits really well with the 'participation' priority of the campaign, and could be a great way of putting those ideas into action, and in a democratic way. To quote an English paint commercial, "It does what it says on the tin".

Imagine the ambassador's reception... "Monsieur, with these international cooperation projects you're really spoiling us..."

This is about international cooperation with partner countries and the "rest of the world". A new concept in the new programme. This Action 3 helps you work, rest and play in supporting the activities with partner countries under the Actions 1, 2 and 4. The main priorities of the programme, such as inclusion, participation and citizenship can be seen by this effort to make the programme wider in the world and more inclusive with a more diverse target group - although it goes without saying that there will be practical and financial limits. We think it's a bon-bon idée anyway....

Possibilities for Action 3, Youth of the World through the other actions:

Exchanges - must have at least 1 EU member state. One or more partner groups from neighbouring partner country. Remember the balance.

Initiatives - programme countries only for 2007, being considered for future

Democracy - programme countries only EVS - There always has to be a programme country involved in the project (either hosting or sending).

Youth-pass the sweet tin...

Another important ingredient to the Youth in Action programme is Youthpass. So, you've heard the name already? Or maybe you haven't? It's basically an opportunity for young people, and those who work with them, to record their non-formal learning experience they get through the projects in the different Actions. It's supported by the European Commission and by international youth work in other European countries, and provides a method for valorising skills acquisition and key competences. In two words, it's international, and it's non-formal. Every participant in every project carried out in the YiA programme will have the opportunity to be supported to complete their own Youthpass.

Valorisation is a priority for projects in the whole YiA programme - recognising and disseminating the value and learning in a project. It's possible to receive up to 10% again of a project budget to use for the valorisation of a project.

So open the tin, and see what's in...you never know what you're going to get until you try.

Have a break, have a

European Voluntary Service experience. It's not about making money, but about making a positive contribution to other communities across Europe and beyond. The new programme is for 18 - 30 year olds, although it may vary per country, and there is an option being discussed as I write this about involving 16 and 17 year olds, as long as there is appropriate support before, during and after. Developing new competences and contributing to the local community while increasing skills, this is EVS in a nutshell.

One, Two, Many and you might turn Bertie

Who's Bertie? Well, he doesn't really matter: it's more to do with the counting numbers. This is the new thing. EVS projects must involve between 1 and 100 volunteers - so collective or group volunteering projects are now possible. Brings a whole new aspect to "doing it together"....

Action 4: training and networking projects, different combinations of numbers of countries and partners.

Rest of the world: this will be through annual calls for proposals, centralised, with thematic/regional priorities set in calls. The main areas of working will be on exchanging good practice, training & development, partnerships and networks, exchanges. Cooperation with countries from Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific, Latin America and Asia are particularly encouraged.

And don't forget the valorisation of the learning that's possible through Youthpass. It's better than just a certificate to give your kids a treat....

Makes children happy (and adults too), after Eight subsections.....

The new Action 4 is ready and raring to go to raise the bar on quality. Many of the old activities are still possible here. This all-encompassing action provides the support needed to run youth projects. This includes funding for European bodies, European Youth Forum, NA structures, SALTOS, partnerships with public bodies etc. There are eight subsections under Action 4, have a look in the new Programme Guide for more detail on criteria and possibilities (see the link at the end of this article).

Remember that all activities carried out through Action 4 have two focuses: to support project development in the rest of the programme and to promote exchanges cooperation and training in European youth work. It's important that adults who work with/for young people should enjoy a taste of skills development, partnership contact and learning how to make their projects more sustainable and with a wider impact, but don't forget the Haribo philosophy to "make children happy" – it's the young people that should benefit from these activities ultimately. After all it's called the "Youth in Action" programme, not the 'Youth Leader in Action' programme. Don't forget Youthpass, and that it's available for youth leaders as well – it could be appropriate for many activities possible under the new Action 4.

Wotalotigot!

So now you might know a bit more about what's different, and we hope it makes your mouth water. For more precise information about the Youth in Action programme, the ages, criteria and application forms, contact your National Agency or have a look at the Programme guide on http://ec.europa.eu/youth/jia/index_en.html

Keep it sweet, geezer!

With thanks to Hanne, Leigh + Chris, the young people who gave inspiration for this article.

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Do you eat the red ones last?

It may be last, but it's definitely not least. There's even more to come, is your mouth watering yet? Chomping at the bit to get started? The new Action 5 has a reserve for cooperating with international organisations (Council of Europe, UN etc), with developing methods for analysing/ comparing results of studies, and also for Meetings and seminars between young people, youth workers and policy makers especially during presidencies of the EU. These last ones hope to ensure and encourage input from young people to EU debates. Based around European priorities, these projects hope to enhance the promotion and impact of youth work: Priorities: 2007 – social inclusion and diversity, 2008 – intercultural dialogue, 2009 perspectives for continued cooperation. The sky's the limit!

Mars: "helps you work, rest and play"

Haribo: "makes children happy (and adults too)"

Cadbury's Fudge bar: "a finger of fudge is just enough to give your kids a treat"

Smarties, Nestle: "Wotalotigot!"

Ferrero Rocher: "Monstieur, with these ferrero rocher you're really spoiling us..."

Liquorice Allsorts, Cadbury-Schwepes: "One, Two, Many and you might turn Bertie"

Nestle: "Have a break, have a KitKat"

Nestle's butterfinger: "Break out of the ordinary"

Kinder surprise: "Three in 1, chocolate, surprise and a toy"

Skittles: "taste the rainbow, feel the rainbow"

Fry's Turkish delight, Cadbury: "Full of eastern promise"

M&Ms: "Open your hand and smile"

Starburst: "Made to make your mouth water"