

YOUTH POLICY EVALUATION REVIEW



Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth



EUROPEAN UNION

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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Youth policy evaluation review

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Welcome to this first publication on youth policy evaluation in Europe!

For over 20 years, the partnership between the European Union and the Council of Europe in the field of youth (hereinafter EU–Council of Europe youth partnership) has been gathering, analysing and disseminating knowledge for better youth policy and practice. It functions as a “think tank” and a laboratory, gathering and producing knowledge, translating it for its effective use in youth policy and practice, developing and testing new approaches and considering traditional themes and innovative trends.

The EU–Council of Europe youth partnership has supported knowledge-based youth policy development in a variety of ways, including by organising thematic events and training on youth policy, publishing the *Youth policy manual*, a youth knowledge book on cross-sectoral youth policy, and “Youth policy essentials”, as well as by organising the massive open online course (MOOC) on youth policy and other activities focused on the same theme. The EU–Council of Europe youth partnership collects, analyses and publishes information on the conditions of young people and on youth policy and practice in the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCYC), supported by a network of EKCYC correspondents and the Pool of European Youth Researchers (PEYR). Yet little is known in Europe about the national realities of youth policy monitoring and evaluation.

Based on the principle of promoting knowledge-based youth policy and taking into account the benefits of youth policy evaluation, this review aims at supporting those involved at diverse levels in evaluating youth policy design and implementation, in order to enhance youth policy’s relevance, effectiveness and impact.

The 2018 Annual Meeting of EKCYC correspondents undertook a first reflection on approaches to youth policy evaluation based on case studies at country level. The conclusions of that reflection were that youth policy evaluation is very complex – it involves a variety of stakeholders, each with their own perspectives on the purpose of such exercises – and there is little knowledge of how it takes place at country level.

In 2019, EKCYP correspondents pursued this objective of gathering knowledge on how youth policy evaluation takes place and analysing how it can better support youth policy and practice. This review is the first result of that process.

This study provides an overview of youth policy evaluation at national level, including a selection of nine national and two European level case studies to help the readers better understand different approaches, methods and aspects of youth policy evaluation. The mid-term evaluation of the current EU Youth Strategy and the series of international reviews of national youth policies undertaken by the Council of Europe are integrated into Chapter 4, which presents case studies for several countries, highlighting the added value of international initiatives in the field. It concludes with a section explaining concepts, theoretical approaches and methods of policy evaluation, as well as with a practical checklist.

Monitoring and evaluation of public policies, including youth policy, contribute to ensuring accountability as they offer the information needed to understand how each policy is planned and implemented and allow the sharing of different perspectives on the same policies, thus helping to understanding the resulting benefits, shortcomings and even losses. Monitoring and evaluation of policies also support the dialogue held during policy formulation and implementation and contribute to legitimating policies by allowing public participation, including youth participation.

Therefore, monitoring and evaluation support the development of knowledge-based youth policy and interinstitutional and public communication. They support the dissemination of the learning outcomes, results and impact of youth policy. All these benefits of monitoring and evaluation of youth policies are important reasons for learning more about how youth policy evaluation is conducted in Europe.

The needs of young people are evolving even faster than the context of public policies. The learning outcomes of monitoring and evaluation of youth policy are extremely valuable to support decision makers in amending and adapting youth and all policy targeting young people to better answer those changing needs.

This review pays special attention to impact evaluation because it contributes to the accountability, learning and communication of youth policy, offering policy makers, stakeholders and young people information on the meaningful and lasting (short- or long-term) change generated by youth policy. Impact evaluation informs about the results achieved by the policy, which is relevant when planning new policies, so as to ensure their future impact, and provides data to decision makers when planning budgets.

The horizontal, trans-sectoral nature of the youth policy and the numerous correlations needed with other sectoral policies, such as education, social inclusion, employment, health, sport and housing, should also be kept in mind. In this context, monitoring and evaluation are needed to increase the accountability of each institution and stakeholder involved and they allow the promotion of specific results in the field of youth to all relevant policy makers.

Participation of young people in the policy process is an important principle in the youth field and the review also takes into consideration participation in evaluation. The participation of policy beneficiaries in the policy process, including its monitoring

and evaluation, is very important for each sectoral policy in a democratic society. By participating in youth policy evaluation, young people learn to exercise active citizenship. This is an investment that they take with them as they make the transition to informed, active and involved adults.

The review includes the result of a survey conducted among the EKCYP and PEYR on the evaluation of national youth policy across Europe, followed by expert discussions in June 2019 and November 2019. The publication presents several good practices of concrete ways youth policy or elements of youth policy are evaluated throughout Europe. Definitions are presented at the beginning to clarify the meaning of the most important concepts used. A final section of the review presents the conceptual framework underlining the idea of knowledge-based policy and provides short presentations of the main theoretical and conceptual approaches in policy evaluation, when they can be used and for what purpose, as well as what advantages and challenges each of those perspectives entail. This review concludes with a practical checklist on youth policy evaluation. The checklist and the whole content of this review should be seen as a complementary resource and not as prescriptive methodology for youth policy evaluation initiatives.

DEFINITIONS

Youth policy

Policy cycle

Policy transfer and policy learning

Knowledge-policy nexus

Evaluation



Chapter 2

Definitions

This review of the youth policy evaluation practice in Europe uses specific concepts that are defined in this section. For a more detailed discussion of concepts and theories in policy evaluation, please see Chapter 5.

Youth policy

According to the EU–Council of Europe youth partnership in its Glossary on youth and its “Youth policy essentials” publication, youth policy is understood as a range of policies, and co-ordination of the policies, that seek to support young people in transition to becoming active members of society.¹ The main areas of youth policy are (lifelong) learning and education, the labour market and social inclusion, civil society and participation, and health. With the aim of offering young people better support, there is a trend towards increasing integration of interventions across three dimensions: cross-ministerial (collaboration between ministries and their subordinate agencies); cross-sectoral (collaboration between for-profit and not-for-profit organisations and the public sector); and cross-level (collaboration between different levels of public administration and other organisations, from municipal to European). Public policy measures have a different scope. They range from short-term measures having only local significance for a clearly bounded target group to multi-annual policies that seek to influence virtually all young people over a long period of time (and through this, the entire society).

1. Glossary on youth, <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/glossary>, accessed 22 November 2019. See also the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights.

Policy cycle

Public policy is a highly complex enterprise. It seeks to remedy different societal problems and bring about positive change in society for different social groups. Social policy measures have different time horizons and demand different resources for addressing the problems effectively. Policies are developed and implemented by and within various institutions at different levels, from organisational and local level to national and supranational level. When we add the comparative perspective – patterns of public policies in different countries, policy learning and transfer, co-operation of countries on a particular theme such as supporting youth – then things get far more complex. This complexity inevitably leaves its mark on the youth policy. Being a relatively recent development within the public sector and a relatively minor policy area that often entails co-ordination and integration of policies that are already operating, it is quite normal that youth policy is not clear-cut and not easily disentangled from policies in spheres like education, social inclusion, the labour market and integration. It is helpful to think of a public policy intervention as a cyclical process that starts with identification of the problem to be remedied and the setting of an agenda, continues with formulation of policy alternatives and choosing which one to implement, follows this with the planning of resources and implementation of the policy and, finally, ends by evaluating the policy and undertaking changes, if necessary. In this process, policy makers have to take into account a range of information inputs, such as stakeholders' opinions, institutional limitations, availability of resources, and other circumstances that may change. Because policy decisions are taken by officials who are held accountable to the wider public, not by experts in a narrow field, policies inherently bear a significant footprint of political and administrative bargaining.

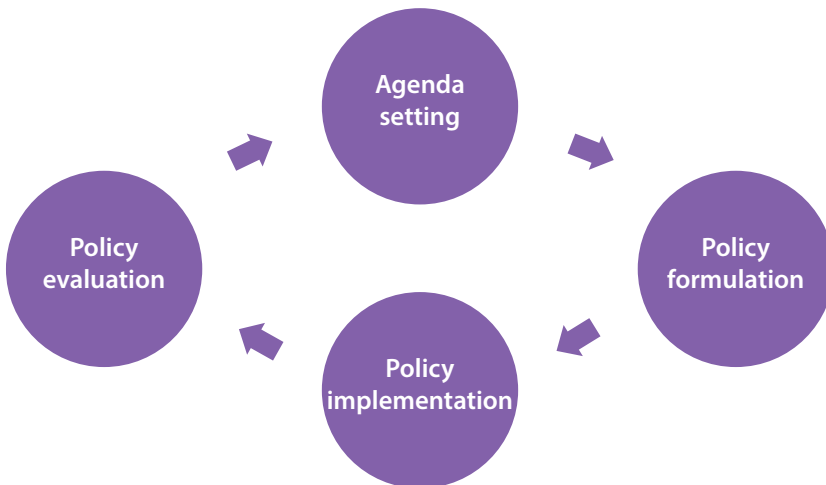


Figure 1. A cyclical model of public policy (see Knill and Tosun 2008)

Each phase in the policy cycle is associated with a specific type of research and evaluation. In the problem identification and agenda-setting phase, background

research is carried out to chart the area of intervention. In the policy formulation phase, different scenarios are developed and their anticipated impacts projected, and this information is used for choosing which policy to implement. This analysis also includes a review of the resources – financial, organisational, and other – that are needed for carrying out the policy measures. In the implementation phase, monitoring and formative evaluation methods are used to ensure that policy actions are carried out as planned and that the promised results are delivered. Information collected from these activities is fed into ongoing policy implementation activities. In the policy evaluation phase, the focus is on understanding the outcomes and societal impacts of the intervention. This may include both intended and planned outcomes as well as unanticipated outcomes.

Policy transfer and policy learning

In the policy cycle model, all steps may be inspired and informed by policies that have been implemented earlier or are being implemented elsewhere. Countries as well as administrative units at the subnational level which are pursuing certain policy goals have adopted policies by looking at other similar policy initiatives carried out elsewhere. Importantly, international organisations such as the OECD and United Nations, national and international think tanks, and civil society organisations have also influenced policies.

To varying degrees, reflection, analysis and learning are part of the development of policy measures. Knowledge generation and transfer is, however, only one part of policy processes and cannot be equated with policy making. Policy learning is concerned mainly with increasing understanding why and how a particular intervention functions under given circumstances and whether it would be as successful in different settings. The knowledge generated has the potential to be used to support the development of policies.

Knowledge-policy nexus

Policy-relevant research is often carried out outside policy-making institutions – by universities, think tanks, consultancy firms, and other specialised companies – with a general or specific objective.

There are many ideas about how knowledge can be transferred from research to policy, such as knowledge brokering, knowledge exchange, knowledge management, dissemination, knowledge mobilisation, and many more.² Two main models describe this process: linear models and relationship-based models.

- ▶ The linear models suggest a one-way process: the new knowledge produced by researchers gets disseminated to public sector actors and incorporated into policy and practice. Knowledge is seen as a product, generalisable across contexts; it does not result from a co-creation process.

2. See the University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education homepage, https://web.archive.org/web/20110301120304/http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/rspe/KM_Products/Terminology/index.html, accessed 14 October 2019.

- ▶ The relationship models focus on the interactions among people producing and using the knowledge. The emphasis is on the sharing of knowledge, the development of partnerships and the fostering of networks of stakeholders with common interests. It is believed that success in producing and using policy-relevant information depends on effective relationships. In this model, an important difference is that policy-relevant knowledge is seen to come from multiple sources such as research, policy and practice. The entire area of transferring knowledge into action is highly complex, with many interdependent aspects and factors.

Evaluation

Evaluation is linked to the notion of using quality evidence for supporting policy processes. In this report, which proceeds from a rather general notion of using evidence and research for informing public policy, we understand evaluation as a complex practice involving policy makers, practitioners, researchers that aspires to contribute to well-being of people, using high-quality social research methods and data. We can think of evaluation as of a process – and of any evaluation report as an outcome of the process – that seeks to describe the value of a policy measure using data and research methods that are deemed appropriate by those involved in an evaluation exercise. Importantly, the value of a policy may vary as it depends on who is asked – typically a stakeholder group or a target group – and for whom an intervention may have different value.

Ex ante or prospective evaluation attempts to forecast the effects of a concrete intervention, including its costs and also its possible unintended effects. A specific type of prospective evaluation is the regulatory impact analysis (RIA) that is used to scrutinise planned legislative changes.

Monitoring is a systematic process of collecting data during the implementation of an intervention for the purpose of tracking the progress against set goals and objectives.

Formative evaluation differs from monitoring in that it focuses on organisational processes and details. Its main goal is to give feedback so that implementation of an intervention can be assessed and amended where deemed necessary. Formative assessment can be defined as *a rigorous assessment process designed to identify potential and actual influences on the progress and effectiveness of implementation efforts*.

Ex post, summative, impact evaluation is a type of evaluation that retrospectively focuses on describing the societal outcomes of implementing an intervention. One may also say that this type of evaluation seeks to uncover whether a policy indeed delivered the societal results it was planned for.

Participatory evaluation

Youth participation was the first principle to be put into use in developing the youth field in European institutions and participation of young people in evaluation of public policies addressing them directly is held dear in the youth field. Participatory evaluation is a general set of principles on how to carry out an evaluation, not a specific data or data analysis method. Specifics of participatory evaluation include

involving different stakeholders in the generation and interpretation of data on the intervention being evaluated. As such, by definition it is not a type of evaluation, which explicitly seeks to provide objective, unbiased information about a policy.

Internal and external evaluation

Evaluation research may be carried out by a public administration organisation, by an independent organisation, or by a combination of both. When it is carried out by an agency that is responsible for implementing a policy, then this is called internal evaluation or assessment. When evaluation is carried out by an independent research or consultancy organisation, this is called external evaluation. Often teams are formed for evaluation where some members come from the implementing agency and some join in from independent organisations.

OVERVIEW OF YOUTH POLICY EVALUATION IN EUROPE

Objectives

Methodology and data gathering

Indicators and fields

State structures responsible for the design, co-ordination and implementation of youth policy

Main objectives and indicators for youth policy evaluation

The structures and stakeholders for youth policy evaluation

Integration of youth research and policy evaluation in youth policy making

Main challenges and implications for the future

Key findings



Chapter 3

Overview of youth policy evaluation in Europe

Objectives

In the context of this study, a survey covering 30 countries³ was carried out with the network of EKCYP correspondents. The survey aimed to gather data and information for an assessment on models of youth policy monitoring and evaluation applied across Europe, including how youth policy is monitored and evaluated in practice across the Council of Europe member states. The survey also identified good practices that highlight specific aspects of evaluation, which are further developed in Chapter 4 of this study.

Methodology and data gathering

The link to the online survey instrument together with an invitation to participate in the survey was sent to all EKCYP correspondents and other stakeholders and 34 questionnaires were completed, covering the situation in 30 countries. All calculations were based on the 34 responses. For countries where two responses were submitted by two different people, a combined input for the respective country was determined before calculating the statistics presented in this chapter. The survey was carried out during the period from 6 to 20 June 2019. A detailed discussion in the EKCYP annual meeting was followed by three weeks during which the correspondents were able to complete the survey. Based on the survey results and other information gathered during EKCYP annual meetings, the authors selected nine national case studies for further reflection and learning by those initiating or carrying out monitoring, evaluation of youth policy or both. The examples selected reflect a geographic and methodological diversity across Europe.

3. The countries are listed in Appendix 2.

Indicators and fields

The survey gathered data about the content and structure of youth policy evaluation in Council of Europe member states, including general information, information on the state structures responsible for youth policy (design, co-ordination and implementation), on youth policy monitoring and evaluation, on the framework of youth policy monitoring and evaluation, on examples of good practice and on challenges for youth policy evaluation and the making of youth policy (see Table 1). The survey instrument consisted of closed-ended and open-ended questions (see Appendix 1 for more details).

Table 1. Dimensions of the survey instrument

Dimension	Sub-dimensions
General information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Name of the Expert ▶ Country
State structures responsible for the youth policy (design/ co-ordination/ implementation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Existence of a body for the design/co-ordination/ implementation of government policies for youth (permanent or temporary) ▶ Type(s) of policy documents ▶ Youth policy objectives and indicators
Youth policy monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ <i>Ex ante</i> evaluation ▶ Process evaluation, also monitoring of implementation ▶ Impact evaluation
Framework of youth policy monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Structures in charge of youth research and evaluation of youth policy in the country ▶ Main stakeholders involved in youth policy evaluation ▶ Youth research and policy evaluation integration into youth policy making
Examples of good practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Why it can be considered a good practice to use research in youth policy planning, monitoring or evaluation processes ▶ Titles and authors of monitoring or evaluation reports
Challenges for youth policy evaluation and youth policy making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Main challenges for youth policy evaluation and youth policy making in the country

State structures responsible for the design, co-ordination and implementation of youth policy

In most countries (N=30) covered by survey, there are one or more permanent government bodies responsible for youth policy. The structures (such as ministries, institutes or agencies) that are responsible for the design, co-ordination and implementation of youth policy are quite diverse among the member states. For example, in Greece it is the General Secretariat for Youth, in Portugal the Portuguese Sport and Youth Institute, in the Slovak Republic the Department for Youth in the Ministry for Education, Science, Research and Sport, and in Ukraine the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The majority of the countries have at least some youth policy documents, except for those countries having a high level of decentralisation regarding youth policy. As to the type of policy documents, the largest number of countries have a youth strategy (N=19), followed by a youth law (N=16), a youth programme (N=13) and a youth plan (N=12).

Main objectives and indicators for youth policy evaluation

Sustainable indicators and monitoring are important for progress measurement, identification of strengths and weaknesses, sharing experiences, improving effectiveness, and accountability to stakeholders. A lack of high-quality, comprehensive data and research limits evidence-based decision making in youth policy. We can observe quite a diverse picture among member states as concerns the main objectives and indicators for youth policy evaluation.

Only a small number of the countries have a detailed list of quantitative youth policy evaluation and monitoring indicators. We can clearly distinguish the following trends:

- ▶ countries with a precise list of indicators that are linked to different youth strategic documents and their implementation plans and other strategic documents, for example, the Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020 (Estonia),⁴ and the National Youth Strategy Action Plan 2018-2020 (Serbia);
- ▶ countries where a comprehensive list or overview of the main objectives and indicators for youth policy monitoring and evaluation does not exist because of the cross-sectoral approach of youth policy and the involvement of many different ministries and public administrations in the design and implementation of youth policy. Table 2 shows examples from Estonia and Ukraine, which provide youth policy objectives and youth policy indicators that are used for youth policy evaluation and monitoring in those countries.

4. www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/nak_eng.pdf.

Table 2. Youth policy documents, objectives and indicators in selected countries

Youth policy documents	Youth policy objectives	Youth policy indicators
<p>Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020 (Estonia)⁵</p>	<p>The main objective of the Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020 is that the young person has ample opportunities for self-development and self-realisation, which supports the formation of a cohesive and creative society</p> <p>Sub-goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Young people have more choices in terms of discovering their own creative and developmental potential ▶ Young people are at a lower risk of exclusion ▶ Greater support for the participation of young people in decision making ▶ The youth field operates more efficiently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The proportion of the young people aged 18-24 with a basic or lower level of education, who do not continue their studies ▶ The youth unemployment rate among young people aged 15-24 ▶ The involvement of young people in youth work (% of all young people) ▶ Regional availability of youth work provision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the number of young people per hobby school – the number of young people per youth centre ▶ The number of opportunities for organised participation (youth councils) ▶ Satisfaction of young people with youth work ▶ Proportion of youth workers participating in training programmes per year
<p>Youth Field Programme 2019-2022, Estonia⁶</p>	<p>The main objective of the Youth Field Programme 2019-2022 is to ensure that young people have ample opportunities for self-development and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The proportion of young people aged 18-22 with a lower level of education level who are not studying ▶ The satisfaction of young people involved in youth work (%)

5. www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/nak_eng.pdf.

6. www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/9_noorteprogr_2019_22.pdf.

Youth policy documents	Youth policy objectives	Youth policy indicators
	self-realisation, which supports the formation of a cohesive and creative society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The involvement of young people in youth work (% of all young people) ▶ The involvement of young people in youth work in municipalities where the population consists mostly of non-Estonian speaking people compared to the Estonian average (% of all young people) ▶ The number of young people per hobby school ▶ The number of young people per youth centre
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The number of opportunities for organised participation (youth councils) ▶ The proportion per year of youth workers who have increased their competences after participating in youth work training
The Social Programme “Youth of Ukraine”, 2016-2020		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Demographic indices ▶ Education ▶ Employment ▶ Financial situation ▶ Health ▶ HIV/AIDS prevention ▶ Legal offences among youth ▶ Youth mobility ▶ Access to information and communication technologies ▶ Civic activity and youth engagement ▶ Youth policy implementation

Quite a large number of countries do not have a detailed list of quantitative youth policy indicators, but instead they have a comprehensive list of youth policy objectives that are described in youth policy documents, for example the Youth Law of Luxembourg (2008, 2016), the National Youth Plan 2018-2021, Portugal, and the National Youth Strategy, 2014-2020, Czech Republic (see Table 3 for more details).

Table 3. Youth policy documents and objectives in selected countries

Youth policy documents in selected countries	Youth policy objectives
<p>Youth Law (2008, 2016), Luxembourg⁷</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide a favourable environment, promote the development and integration of young people in society ▶ Promote personal fulfilment and social and professional development of young people ▶ Contribute to the education of young people as responsible and active citizens, respectful of democracy, values and the fundamental rights of society ▶ Work towards equality of chances and combat the mechanisms of exclusion and failure ▶ Work towards gender equality ▶ Promote solidarity and mutual understanding of young people in a multicultural society ▶ Promote active citizenship ▶ Help young people to become autonomous ▶ Promote creativity and a spirit of initiative in young people ▶ Promote non-formal education and support active organisations in this field ▶ Work for inclusion and social cohesion (Article 1 (7)) ▶ Promote the academic success of children and youth and prevent dropping out of school (Article 1 (12)) ▶ Promote learning of the country’s languages thereby promoting social and academic integration (Article 1 (13))

7. <http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/loi/2016/04/24/n3/jo>.

Youth policy documents in selected countries	Youth policy objectives
<p>National Youth Plan 2018-2021,⁸ Portugal</p>	<p>This aim of this instrument is the implementation of youth policy with a view to strengthening the special protection of young people within the framework of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ formal and non-formal education. Priority: ensure the realisation of the right to education and education from a holistic and inclusive perspective, in particular by bringing non-formal and informal learning into the formal education system, focusing on the development and recognition of skills with a view to integrating young people into active life and promoting the exercise of citizenship and civic participation, according to their specific circumstances; ▶ employment. Priority: to promote the realisation of the right to decent and inclusive employment, faster and better access to the first job and combating the precariousness of employment; ▶ housing. Priority: to promote the realisation of the right to housing, guaranteeing young people access to adequate housing, guaranteeing a degree of freedom in student, professional and family mobility; ▶ health and well-being. Priority: to ensure the realisation of the right to health, taking into account the promotion of health policies and programmes and a healthy lifestyle for the well-being of young people and the acquisition of skills that enhance the quality of adult life. <p>The definition of the strategic areas resulted from a wide consultation process with young people and the main players in the youth sector (namely youth organisations, leaders of associations, youth technicians, academia and municipalities). There were 4 000 responses to an online youth survey, the results of a National Youth Forum, group interviews, the results of a survey of municipalities and the contributions of the organisations that make up the Youth Advisory Board. The involvement of all government areas allowed for the inclusion of about 250 measures.</p>

8. <https://jovem.cascais.pt/en/node/754>.

Youth policy documents in selected countries	Youth policy objectives
National Youth Strategy, 2014-2020, ⁹ Czech Republic	<p>Strategic goals of the youth policy of the Czech Republic for the period 2014-2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ To facilitate equal access of children and youth to rights ▶ To facilitate equal access of children and youth to information ▶ To create favourable and sustainable conditions for the participation of children and youth in leisure-based and non-formal education ▶ To expand and make more attractive the offer of leisure activities and to motivate children and youth to make active use of them ▶ To support the increase of young people's cross-border mobility ▶ To improve conditions for employment and the employability of youth ▶ To promote comprehensive and harmonious development of children and youth with emphasis on their physical and mental health and moral responsibility ▶ To promote active involvement of children and young people in decision-making processes and in influencing social and democratic life ▶ To create favourable conditions for volunteering for young people, including valuing and recognising voluntary activities ▶ To facilitate inclusion of children and young people with fewer opportunities ▶ To motivate children and youth towards a life based on the principles of sustainable development and to develop their environmental literacy ▶ To encourage the development of competencies in children and young people for safe and creative use of media

Trends in youth policy evaluation across the member states

In the member states that participated in the survey, implementation monitoring has been carried out at least once (56.7%) (see Table 4 for more details). However, quite a large number of the respondents indicated that no impact evaluation or *ex ante* evaluation (33.3%) has been carried out and 36.7% indicated that at least one general evaluation of the policy implementation has not been carried out.

9. www.msmt.cz/areas-of-work/sport-and-youth/youth-strategy-2014-2020?lang=2.

Table 4. Monitoring of implementation or impact evaluation of national youth policy, N=30

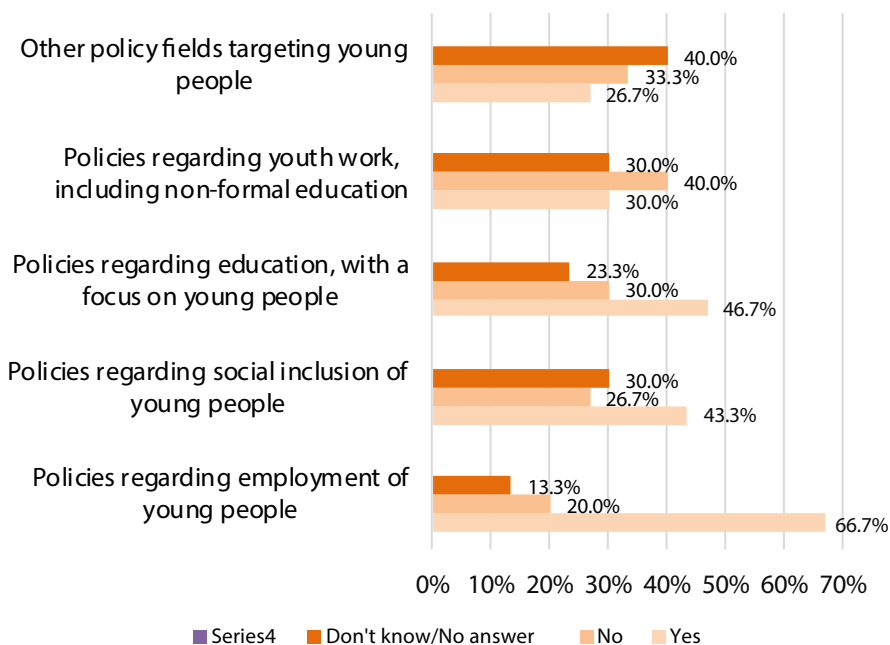
	Yes	No	Don't know
<i>Ex ante</i> evaluation has been carried out at least once	36.7%	33.3%	30%
Implementation monitoring has been carried out at least once	56.7%	23.3%	20%
At least one impact evaluation has been carried out	43.3%	33.3%	26.7%
At least one general evaluation of the policy implementation has been carried out	46.7%	36.7%	16.7%

When it comes to youth policy sectors, *ex ante* evaluations, implementation monitoring and impact evaluations are carried out most often for the policies regarding employment of young people (see the figures below for more details). When it comes to other policy fields targeting young people, the respondents indicated the sports, culture and leisure sectors.

Ex ante evaluations

Policies regarding the employment of young people are most often evaluated *ex ante* in the countries participating in the survey – in over 66.7% of cases. This is followed by policies regarding education and social inclusion, which are evaluated *ex ante* in about half of the participating countries. On the other hand, policies regarding youth work are evaluated *ex ante* in only 31% of the countries participating in the survey.

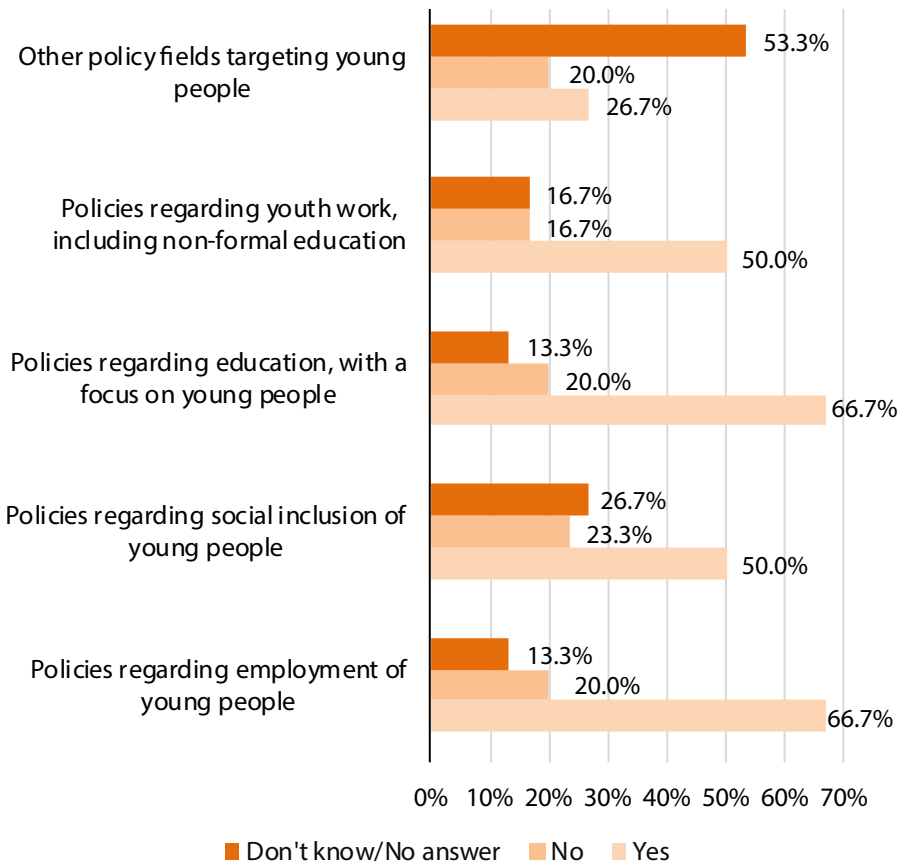
Figure 2. Ex ante evaluations by the youth policy sectors, N=30



Process evaluation or monitoring of implementation

Process evaluation is the most frequently applied approach. Policies regarding employment and education are monitored and the implementation process is evaluated in 66.7% of the countries participating in the survey. Moreover, in the case of process evaluation or monitoring of implementation, policies regarding youth work are taken into account in half of the participating countries.

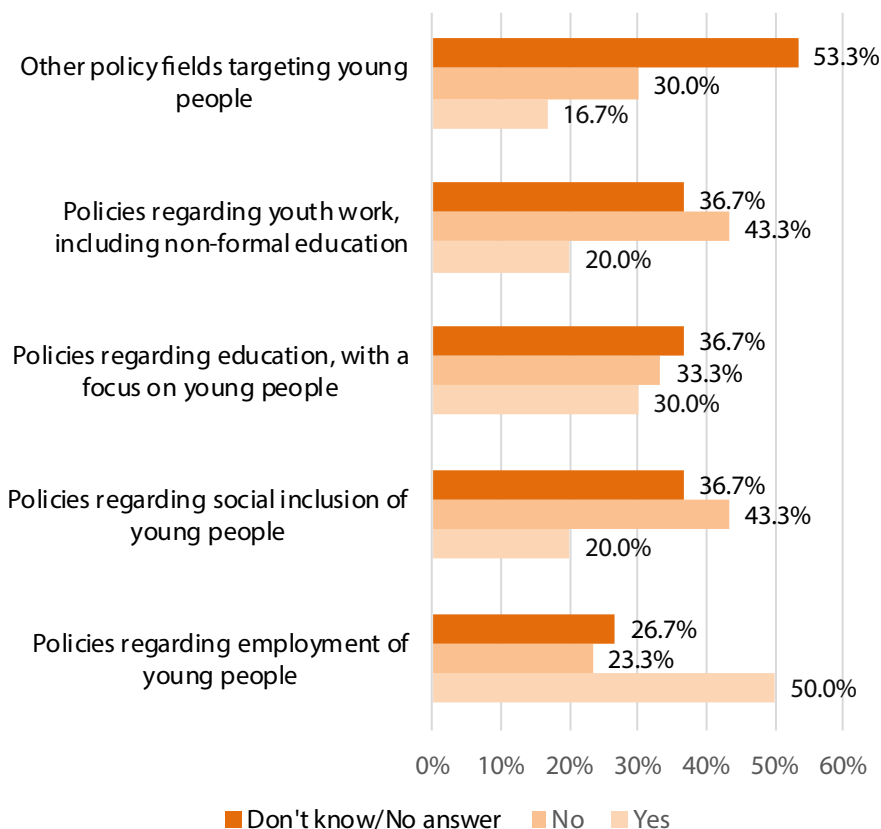
Figure 3. Implementation evaluation of policy interventions by the youth policy sectors, N=30



Summative or impact evaluation

Impact evaluation is conducted in the least number of cases, with the policy regarding youth employment once again being the focus of evaluations of policies concerning and targeting young people. Taking into account the difficulty of establishing impact indicators for youth work and social inclusion initiatives targeting young people, these policy fields have so far been the subject of fewer impact evaluations in participating countries.

Figure 4. Impact evaluations of policy interventions by the youth policy sectors, N=30



The structures and stakeholders for youth policy evaluation

The structures and main stakeholders involved in youth policy evaluation are diverse among the Council of Europe member states and can be ministries, agencies, youth experts and researchers, representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), young people, trades unions and other local stakeholders. They are also strategic partners in the youth field. In quite a large number of the countries, there is a ministry or department in charge of youth policy implementation and monitoring. In addition, there are several universities and/or university departments, private structures and civil society organisations in charge of youth policy evaluations.

There is a dedicated public research institute in more than one fourth of the countries that participated in the survey (26.7%). Other countries only have private structures (10%). A small number of countries do not have a structure in charge of youth research and evaluation of youth policy (6.7%) (see Table 5 for more details).

Table 5. Structures in charge of youth research and evaluation of youth policy, N=30

Structures in charge of youth research and evaluation of youth policy	%
There is a dedicated public research institute	26.7%
There are one or several universities or university departments	13.3%
There is an administrative structure subordinated to or part of the main institution in charge of the youth policy	16.7%
There are only private structures (think tanks, other civil society organisations, etc.)	10.0%
Other organisational forms	23.3%
There is no structure in charge of youth research and evaluation of youth policy	6.7%
No answer given	3.3%

A few examples of the structures that are responsible for youth policy evaluation and monitoring in some countries are described below.

In Luxembourg, a research group is active in youth policy implementation and monitoring. At the University of Luxembourg, the main youth research group is entitled “Youth research: context and structures of growing-up”. From an interdisciplinary perspective, this group investigates the situation of young people by utilising a mix of different research methodologies. A substantial share of the research projects is jointly funded by the state and the University of Luxembourg. A co-operation agreement between the ministry in charge of youth policy (the Ministry for Education, Children and Youth) and the University of Luxembourg, signed in 2007, serves as the contractual basis for the institutionalised and recurring co-operation between youth policy and youth research. The institutional construction mirrors the policy approach of “evidence-based policy making”. The co-operation agreement stipulates the existence of a steering committee based on equal representation by both the state and the University of Luxembourg. There are no mechanisms in place to periodically and systematically evaluate the effects of policy measures and programmes with respect to their intended objectives.

Another good example of youth policy evaluation and monitoring is the youth survey carried out in Luxembourg. Based on an online questionnaire, it aims at monitoring the situation of young people in Luxembourg over a long-term perspective. It provides important data not only for basic research but also for policy makers and practitioners in the youth field and allows comparisons by time.

In Belgium (the French-speaking community), there is a dedicated structure in charge of youth policy evaluation and monitoring: The Childhood, Youth, and Youth Welfare Observatory (Observatoire de l’Enfance, de la Jeunesse et de l’Aide à la Jeunesse – OEJAJ).¹⁰ The observatory reports on policies in the fields of youth and youth welfare with regard to health, leisure, participation, services for children and the young, school dropouts, and adoption.

¹⁰ www.oejaj.cfwb.be/index.php?id=5212.

In Serbia, in contrast to the examples from other countries, “there is no established structure in the Republic of Serbia which ... focus[es] exclusively on youth research and evaluation of youth policy. However, a number of institutions are involved in youth-related research: Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Interior, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, Institute for Sociological Research and Institute of Psychology of the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, Institute of Public Health”.

Integration of youth research and policy evaluation in youth policy making

In the majority of countries, youth policy evaluation results are not always used to directly support the decision-making process. Only one fifth of the respondents indicated that existing systematic and regular research on the situation of youth are used to support the decision-making process (26.7%), while only a very small number of the respondents (3.3%) replied that there is no integration of youth research and policy evaluation into youth policy making.

Table 6. Integration of youth research and policy evaluation in youth policy making, N=30

Integration of youth research and policy evaluation in youth policy making	%
Existing research results are sporadically used to support the decision-making process	23.3%
Existing systematic and regular research on the situation of youth are used to support the decision-making process	26.7%
Evaluation is conducted in order to document the implementation of the youth policy or most of the youth policies	16.7%
Evaluation of former policies is conducted before planning a new one, in order to support the choice of a policy option	10.0%
Other ways of integrating research and policy evaluation into youth policy making	6.7%
No integration of youth research and policy evaluation into youth policy making	3.3%
No answer given	13.3%

Main challenges and implications for the future

The survey participants highlighted a number of challenges for youth policy evaluation and monitoring:

- ▶ a lack of professional capacity for youth policy evaluation and insufficient expertise of youth policy makers and youth policy evaluators;

- ▶ a lack of knowledge, interest and understanding of how institutions function and take decisions; the lack of a relationship between youth policy evaluation and youth policy making;
- ▶ results of the evaluation processes are still rarely taken into account to improve youth policy making;
- ▶ a lack of effective mechanisms for harmonised and coherent work with government authorities and local self-governing bodies related to youth issues;
- ▶ a lack of sustainable youth policy indicators, making it difficult to measure progress;
- ▶ a need for improvement in the quality of data about youth work and youth policy measurements and systematic (re)use of gathered data in order to shape more comprehensive and knowledge-based youth policy;
- ▶ a lack of financial resources for establishing systematic structures for youth policy evaluation and youth policy making;
- ▶ no systematic co-operation between research, evaluation and further policy planning, with some exceptions in cases where specific projects are funded by international agencies, where such research and evaluation are often included in the process;
- ▶ the cross-sectoral approach of youth policy makes it difficult to define which policy strategies, programmes and projects are worth monitoring under the label of “youth policy evaluation and monitoring” and what kind of instruments and procedures should be used; a lack of co-operation across national youth policy – there are many stakeholders with different objectives, which do not always align; there is no universal way of measuring and evaluating impact.

Key findings

This overview is based on a survey and expert reflection undertaken with EKYP correspondents from 30 countries. The survey gathered general information, information on state structures responsible for the youth policy (design/co-ordination/implementation), on youth policy monitoring and evaluation, on the framework of youth policy monitoring and evaluation, on examples of good practice and challenges for youth policy evaluation and the making of youth policy.

- ▶ The paradox of youth policy data and the lack of its use. Almost all countries mentioned at least one evaluation document. They also mentioned regular surveys or reporting on youth or on implementation of youth policy. Yet what seems to come through, as survey participants highlighted in the challenges section, is that the capacity to draw conclusions from those results and learning for youth policy is limited or lacking. In other words, there is a lot of data, but it is little used.
- ▶ Diversity of structures and approaches – similarity in little transfer of learning to policy. The survey revealed that structures and legal regulation for youth policy evaluation and monitoring are quite diverse among the member states. There is also a diversity of approaches to how policy evaluation is undertaken (in-house by the ministries in charge or by specialised structures, or through

outsourcing). Most countries expressed frustration with the incongruity of the timing of evaluation, on the one hand, and of policy planning, on the other. This often leads to the shelving of the knowledge learned from evaluation exercises rather than it being integrated into planning the next policy cycles.

- ▶ Only a small number of the countries have a detailed list of quantitative youth policy evaluation and monitoring indicators. We can clearly distinguish the following groups:
 - countries with a precise list of indicators that are linked with different youth strategic documents and their implementation plans; and
 - countries where a comprehensive list or overview of the main objectives and indicators for youth policy monitoring and evaluation does not exist because of the cross-sectoral approach of youth policy and the involvement of many different ministries and public administration bodies in the design and implementation of youth policy.
- ▶ Survey participants list the following as the main challenges for youth policy monitoring and implementation: the lack of financial resources for establishing systematic structures for youth policy evaluation and youth policy making; the lack of professional capacity for youth policy evaluation; the lack of effective mechanisms for harmonised and coherent work with government authorities and local self-governance bodies; and the lack of sustainable youth policy indicators.
- ▶ The quality of data collection about youth work and youth policy measurements needs to be improved and special emphasis should be placed on systematic (re)use of gathered data to support more comprehensive and knowledge-based youth policy.
- ▶ The cross-sectoral approach of youth policy makes it difficult to define which policy strategies, programmes and projects are worth monitoring under the umbrella of “youth policy evaluation and monitoring” and what kind of instruments and procedures should be used.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE OF EVALUATIONS CONDUCTED FOR OR CONNECTED TO YOUTH POLICY

Context of the evaluation practice examples presented

Practices of youth policy evaluation in Europe

Key findings



Chapter 4

Examples of good practice of evaluations conducted for or connected to youth policy

Context of the evaluation practice examples presented

The following case studies have been selected as illustrative of good practice of certain aspects and elements in youth policy evaluation. They are not aimed at presenting the best practice in Europe, nor do they represent the “champions” of youth policy evaluation, given that the diversity of approaches and practices do not allow such a classification.

These case studies have been selected as the first results of the survey on youth policy evaluation among EKCYP correspondents. Based on the analysis of the preliminary results and on the information submitted, nine national cases were written up during the period July to November 2019. The information was subsequently completed by desk analysis of documents available online or sent by the EKCYP correspondents and checked for accuracy by national correspondents.

The cases presented refer to the situation regarding institutional and policy at the moment of drafting this review or at specific policy evaluation moments in the past that may have significantly changed by the time the analysis is published (as in the examples from Armenia, Luxembourg and Romania). Most of these cases represent specific evaluation exercises and reports, conducted and drafted once or twice, rather than as part of a regular and constant practice. They have been chosen as examples illustrating specific aspects of evaluation and should not be taken as comprehensive good practice models. The examples from Finland and France are exceptions to this general practice and represent long-term programmes of research or policy experimentation including evaluations. For these cases too, the information provided in this

review refers to data available at the moment of drafting (July to November 2019). Given that *ex ante* evaluations are carried out in the drafting stages of legislative or policy initiatives and are often not published as separate initiatives, the examples below do not cover such approaches.

The nine national cases have been chosen with geographic diversity and diversity of content in mind and present approaches and paths for youth policy evaluation, assessment or review for any interested policy maker.

The aim was therefore to present:

- ▶ several types of evaluation focusing on youth policy;
- ▶ different approaches to youth policy evaluation across Europe, conducted at national and European level;
- ▶ evaluations with different objectives: national policies, European policies implemented at national level, national strategies, national programmes, policy experimentation;
- ▶ evaluation using different methods, including extensive youth participation as a good practice (although not all the examples cover this dimension well);
- ▶ evaluations using different tools;
- ▶ evaluations suitable for centralised or decentralised youth policy.

As this research focuses on national realities, the Council of Europe youth policy reviews and the European Union mid-term evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy were included as examples from European level, highlighting how policy evaluation helps set standards or support improvement at national level.

Practices of youth policy evaluation in Europe

Country	France
Why was this country chosen?	The Youth Experimentation Fund (FEJ), which provides a large number of evaluations for innovative policy proposals piloted by different stakeholders, is an example of good practice for carrying out and using evaluations in the field of youth policy and other policies targeting young people. Information and recommendations from evaluations of policy experiments targeting youth and supported by the FEJ are relevant and used in policy making in the fields of justice, education and culture, when the planned measures target young people.
Scope, aims and focus of the evaluation(s)	The National Institute for Youth and Popular (non-formal) Education (Institut national de la jeunesse et de l'éducation populaire – INJEP) presents annual statistical data on young people in France (aged 15-29) using 78 indicators of interest for the youth policy or any policy targeting young people. The relevance and usefulness of these data is

Country	France
	<p>reinforced by the result of a yearly Youth Barometer for France (covering young people aged 18-30). Both documents show the situation of young people on French territory in a given year and allow analysis of trends and even predictions (based on statistical regression) useful for policy planning and any <i>ex ante</i> evaluation of new policies.</p> <p>The institute also manages the Youth Experimentation Fund, which supports pilot/experimental projects for the development of innovative local policies in the field of youth. Created in 2009 and still ongoing in 2019, the FEJ is defined as a “public policy laboratory”, putting experimentation at the service of youth policy. Its goal is to improve students’ academic success and the social and professional integration of young people under 25 years of age. This is done through calls for thematic projects launched to any public or private organisation wishing to propose innovative action or to reform existing structures to make them more effective. All policy experiments are monitored and evaluated using a dedicated methodology.</p>
Type of evaluation(s)	Formative and summative evaluations.
Responsible institution(s) and institutional involvement	The INJEP is the main institution in charge of the FEJ. Since 2016, it has integrated the resource centre of the FEJ (la Mission d’animation du Fonds d’Expérimentation pour la Jeunesse – MAFEJ) and provided support for both the Youth Barometer and the evaluation of the Youth Guarantee initiative.
Methods used for data collection and analysis	The French strategy is to provide funds for policy experimentation. These policies are closely evaluated using quantitative data (statistical secondary analysis and survey) and qualitative research (interviews, focus groups, observation). Methods used for data collection and analysis are adapted to the piloted policy and the capacity of the policy promoter.
Participation of young people in the evaluation and participation of other stakeholders	As the underlying conceptual framework for the FEJ is the innovation and diffusion model in policy making, this implies a focus on participation, collaboration and exchanges, as there is a large number of young people and stakeholders involved in youth policy experiments at local level who are also mobilised for testing and evaluation of the piloted youth policies and initiatives.

Country	France
<p>Outputs and results of the evaluation(s)</p>	<p>The resource centre of the FEJ developed a monitoring and evaluation methodology for the funded policy innovation projects targeting young people. Every six months and at the end of the projects, the project leaders and evaluators submit to the FEJ an implementation report describing the actions taken with regard to the deployment of the piloted policy. This information is analysed in light of the initial application file, and the final report is published on the FEJ website.</p> <p>The FEJ results and the 78 statistical indicators on youth and the Youth Barometer show the effectiveness and impact of innovative ways to fight discrimination and harassment among young people in the school environment, the best tools for information provision in schools, school orientation and school counselling, the most effective measures for better professional integration of young people, results of policy experimentation in the field of youth health, best practices in supporting young entrepreneurs, and the importance of professionalisation of stakeholders working with young criminals for their future reintegration (Institut national de la jeunesse et de l'éducation populaire, 2018).</p> <p>Additionally, INJEP presents synthesis reports on specific fields where the funded policy experiments showed results and impact, including a report on the impact of the piloted policies on employment (in 2014), or the effectiveness of initiatives against youth discrimination (in 2019).</p> <p>The lessons of the experiments funded by the FEJ and evaluated according to standard methodology can guide the choice of new public policies. Thus, these lessons have substantially encouraged the work of the Joint Ministerial Committee of Youth (Comité Interministériel de la Jeunesse – CIJ).</p>

Country	Luxembourg
<p>Why was this country chosen?</p>	<p>The Luxembourg youth report is a good example of continuous data collection on the situation of young people. The aim of this report is to systematically review knowledge about the living conditions of young people</p>

Country	Luxembourg
	in the country and to consolidate into a report. The youth report is aimed at various addressees in the fields of politics, praxis and science and can fulfil specific functions and goals for these addressee groups.
Scope, aims and focus of the evaluation(s)	Youth Survey Luxembourg was implemented, in 2010 and 2015, as a co-operation project between the University of Luxembourg and the Ministry for Education, Children and Youth (ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de l'Enfance et de la Jeunesse). It aims to provide empirical findings on different aspects of young people's lives in the country, such as their health, political participation and social engagement, among other topics. The evaluation consists of three main parts: a socio-demographic description of the target group; six empirical topics (youth in school and extracurricular educational and learning worlds; youth in transition to the world of work; integration and participation deficits of young people with a migration background; poverty, poverty risk and social exclusion of children and adolescents; health and well-being in adolescence; and participation and volunteering: young people as actors in politics and society). The third part is devoted to analysing perspectives and challenges for youth research, youth work and youth policy in Luxembourg.
Type of evaluation	The evaluations of the Luxembourgish youth situation and policies are both formative and summative.
Responsible institution(s) and institutional involvement	The University of Luxembourg and the Ministry for Education, Children and Youth (ministère de l'Éducation nationale, de l'Enfance et de la Jeunesse) are the responsible institutions for the evaluation.
Methods used for data collection and analysis	A mixed methods (triangulation) methodology is used for the data collection and analysis. It is therefore a systematic compilation of knowledge about the current situation of young people in Luxembourg using existing survey data and secondary data analysis. In addition, expert interviews, focus groups and discourse analysis are carried out.
Participation of young people in the evaluation and participation of other stakeholders	The Luxembourg youth report presents information about participatory models of data collection (with the central contributions being from the participating stakeholders from science, politics and practice). However, no evidence is available on the involvement of young people in the evaluation.

Country	Luxembourg
Outputs and results of the evaluation(s)	The analysis of this unique data source provides much needed evidence for the quinquennial National Report on the Situation of Youth in Luxembourg and other ongoing research projects at the university. Additionally, it provides a rich set of research findings, which will help other specialists, researchers and the government to develop better policies and improve young people's lives in Luxembourg.

Country	Finland
Why was this country chosen?	<p>The Finnish model is an example of good practice because it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. involves competent academic research bodies in co-operation with young people's organisations involved in youth policy (the State Youth Council, the Finnish Youth Research Network and Society); b. there is continuous communication between practice and evaluation, as evaluation is used in developing the policy models themselves.
Scope, aims and focus of the evaluation(s)	<p>In Finland, extensive research on young people is conducted through both the evaluation of the youth policy and the assessment of the youth situation. The youth policy and all policies targeting young people are supported by the use of the annual Youth Barometer and other surveys. They study the values, well-being and everyday life of young people aged 15-29 who live in Finland and they are useful for policy planning and any <i>ex ante</i> evaluation of new policies.</p> <p>Other studies conducted by experienced researchers at the State Youth Council are relevant and valuable sources of data and information for policy making. The one-stop guidance centre (Ohjaamo) model for providing information to young people who are "NEET" (not in education, employment or training) has been systematically evaluated several times. Policies for employment, including the Youth Guarantee, which targets vulnerable young people, and the programme dedicated to young people who are "NEET", are also evaluated systematically.</p>

Country	Finland
	All policies targeting young people, including the education policy for upper secondary and tertiary levels, the employment policy targeting youth and the youth policy (covering out of school and job activities for young people) were the subject of an OECD evaluation in 2019.
Type of evaluation(s)	A diversity of approaches are used, including formative and summative evaluations, as well as other research and studies targeting the situation of young people, using youth indicators which are useful for a better understanding of youth policy and/or for shaping youth policy interventions.
Responsible institution(s) and institutional involvement	<p>The State Youth Council and the Finnish Youth Research Society are co-operating on reports on young people and their living conditions, including the Youth Barometer and other surveys and research studies.</p> <p>The State Youth Council is an expert body on youth work and youth policy appointed by the government. It was funded in 2016 and is composed of invited members who have a four year mandate and who have broad experience regarding the living conditions of young people.</p> <p>Evaluations of policies, including interventions that target young people, are also carried out by state organisations.</p>
Methods used for data collection and analysis	<p>Various research methods are used in the studies carried out by researchers who are members of the Finnish Youth Research Society, with a focus on quantitative methods and the use of surveys and statistical data. However, qualitative methods are also used.</p> <p>The continuous evaluation approach for the one-stop guidance centre (Ohjaamo) model for providing information to young people who are “NEET” is relevant for the “adaptive programming” model of public intervention development (Valters C., Cummings C. and Nixon H., 2016).</p>
Participation of young people in the evaluation and participation of other stakeholders	Both the Youth Act and the Local Government Act involve regulations on the participation of young people and hearing their views. Both the municipal and the state authorities have to offer and organise possibilities for young people to participate in and influence matters that concern youth work and policy at the local, regional and national levels, including the evaluation of the youth policy and other measures targeting youth.

Country	Finland
Outputs and results of the evaluation(s)	<p>The OECD report Investing in Youth: Finland (OECD 2019), is part of the series Investing in Youth that builds on the expertise of the OECD on youth employment, social support and skills. The results of this assessment are still to be integrated into the Finnish public policies, as the report provided a large number of recommendations but was published only recently¹¹ in May 2019. According to the OECD, “[d]espite the outstanding performance of the Finnish education system, there is room to raise completion rates in upper secondary education. In particular, one in four vocational students do not obtain their upper secondary degree within two years after expected graduation” and young people who failed to complete upper secondary education account for nearly half of all “NEETs”.¹²</p> <p>This report emphasises that Finland can do more to assess the effectiveness and impact of specific youth policy initiatives. While youth research is very well developed, the report finds that the evaluation capacity is not so well developed at the level of public authorities with responsibilities related to young people. It further recommends developing this capacity and including evaluation of each initiative as a part of the policy measure design (OECD, 2019b).</p>

Country	Malta
Why was this country chosen?	<p>The Maltese case is a good example of formative evaluation of a policy targeting young people (among other target groups) in order to inform youth policy development.</p>
Scope, aims and focus of the evaluation(s)	<p>The objective of the Implementation and Evaluation Report 2014-2016 of the National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion – Malta 2014-2024 is twofold, namely: (a) to analyse the progress that has been registered in the six dimensions of well-being presented in the policy; and (b) to identify any emerging trends and challenges that could either arise from or lead to poverty and social exclusion.</p>

11. The present case study was drafted in September 2019.

12. OECD press release, 07/05/2019, [Finland should do more to improve job prospects of low-skilled youth](#).

Country	Malta
	<p>The National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and for Social Inclusion – Malta 2014-2024 is the main policy document for combating poverty and social exclusion, and provides a comprehensive framework in which to effectively address this dynamic reality. The strategy is complemented by a number of other national strategies and policy documents that aim to promote well-being in its various dimensions, including the National Youth Policy Towards 2020 – A shared vision for the future of young people. This is not evaluated separately, but its implementation is informed and influenced by the evaluation of the National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion.</p>
Type of evaluation(s)	Formative evaluation.
Responsible institution(s) and institutional involvement	Ministry for the Family, Children’s Rights and Social Solidarity
Methods used for data collection and analysis	<p>According to the implementation and evaluation report of the social inclusion policy, “[a]part from progress reports drawn up by relevant stakeholders ... developments were also measured through statistical analysis arising from a review of general economic and living conditions indicators published by Eurostat and the National Statistics Office (NSO). These were complemented by relevant in-house statistics compiled by the different Ministries.”(Ministry for the Family, Children’s Rights and Social Solidarity, 2017: 9)</p>
Participation of young people in the evaluation and participation of other stakeholders	<p>The Implementation and Evaluation Report 2014-2016 of the National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion – Malta 2014-2024 is carried out by the Ministry for the Family, Children’s Rights and Social Solidarity in co-operation with the Ministry for Education and Employment, the Ministry for Health and the Ministry for Justice, Culture and Local Government.</p> <p>However, no evidence is available on the involvement of young people in the evaluation.</p>
Outputs and results of the evaluation(s)	<p>The evaluation for the period 2014-2016 of the National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion has been published by the Ministry for the Family, Children’s Rights and Social Solidarity. The policy is planned for the period 2014-2024.</p>

Country	Malta
	<p>The evaluation has been carried out for the first two years of the strategy's implementation.</p> <p>For the period 2014-2016, a large number of specific interventions have been integrated into the National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion – Malta 2014-2024, including the Youth Guarantee scheme (Ministry for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity, 2017: 16)¹³, the education measures to primarily engage youth in education and training, and co-operative educational and youth work initiatives such as the Youth Village project and the Outreach and Detached Work with Youth scheme. The evaluation did not assess the impact of the initiatives, but the coverage by the youth policy.</p> <p>A major strength emanating from the National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and for Social Inclusion – Malta 2014-2024, is government's commitment to setting up a national structure to benchmark, monitor and evaluate progress towards poverty reduction and social inclusion. The results of the evaluations are used in order to support decisions on the implementation of the strategy.</p> <p>Specifically, for the social inclusion measures targeting youth, based on the results of the strategy evaluation and additional peer review, the Maltese delegation participated in the peer review on Social Inclusion, Health and the Equalisation of Opportunities for Young People with Disabilities, Zagreb (Croatia), 13-14 September 2018.¹⁴ The peer review showed that disability issues concerning young people should be more salient in the Maltese policy.</p>

13 .The report states that: "Jobsplus has a number of programmes which specifically focus on young people. These range from personal action plans, advisory services, employability programmes and work exposure schemes to traineeships and training courses. Through the initiatives listed in the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan, launched in 2014, the Maltese Government is committed to provide a second chance education to individuals with a low level of education and to help them enter the labour market with the aim of retaining their employment and progressing in their career."

14. <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=9178&furtherNews=yes>.

Country	Czech Republic
Why was this country chosen?	In the Czech Republic, both a mid-term and a final evaluation of the Youth Strategy were undertaken and a set of statistical indicators were used to measure the progress of youth situation during and after the implementation of the strategy. This is an example of systematic, formative and summative evaluations of the main youth policy document and plan in a country, in this case the Czech National Youth Strategy.
Scope, aims and focus of the evaluation(s)	<p>The focus was on the implementation and impact of the Youth Strategy. The mid-term evaluation in 2017 was concerned with implementation and mid-term results based on available statistical data.</p> <p>In 2018, the Supreme Audit Office of the Czech Republic underlined the challenges related to evaluation of the youth strategy, which were due to the lack of indicators in the strategy and the fact that the Ministry for Education, Youth and Sports did not have information about the implementation tools used by other sectors.</p> <p>As a result, the Ministry for Education, Youth and Sports set up a new cross-sectoral group on the evaluation of the National Youth Strategy in 2018 and started planning the impact evaluation.</p>
Type of evaluation(s)	Formative and summative evaluations.
Responsible institution(s) and institutional involvement	<p>The responsible institution for the evaluation of the National Youth Strategy is the Ministry for Education, Youth and Sports.</p> <p>The mid-term (formative) evaluation of the National Youth Strategy 2014-2020 was conducted by a team from the ministry.</p> <p>The final evaluation of the same strategy was commissioned to an external expert. The summative evaluation of the previous National Youth Strategy (2007-2013) was also conducted by an external consultant.</p>
Methods used for data collection and analysis	Youth policy monitoring and evaluation in the Czech Republic are based on data collection within the project Youth in Numbers (Mladez v cislech), which analyses the achievement of target levels of the 13 strategic goals in the National Youth Strategy for the period 2014-2020 through quantitative indicators.

Country	Czech Republic
Participation of young people in the evaluation and participation of other stakeholders	<p>The main stakeholders involved in the systematic approach in youth policy evaluation include representatives of young people, as well as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. representatives of the government (Ministry for Education, Youth and Sports and other ministries and their subordinate organisations); 2. the National Youth Council and youth NGOs and other young people, who are involved through national youth conferences and other national events; 3. other stakeholders involved through national youth conferences and through the Youth Chamber, the advisory body to the minister responsible for youth, including youth researchers (members of the Pool of European Youth Researchers), other representatives of academia and representatives of youth entrepreneurs.
Outputs and results of the evaluation(s)	<p>The National Youth Strategy in the Czech Republic was implemented for the periods 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 and evaluations were conducted mid-term (in 2017 for the strategy covering the period 2014-2016) and at the end of the implementation. All evaluation reports are available online in Czech.</p> <p>Evaluation results are considered by experts within the Ministry for Education, Youth and Sports when substantiating decisions and measures in the field of youth and for the implementation of the strategic objectives and priorities of the National Youth Strategy.</p> <p>Since 2012, in response to the need for the creation, implementation and evaluation of National Youth Strategy 2014-2020, the Department for Youth at the Ministry for Education, Youth and Sports has co-ordinated 12 working groups focusing on the main topics in the youth field.</p>

Country	Estonia
Why was this country chosen?	<p>The Youth Guarantee in Estonia can be considered to be an example of good practice because it features a significant amount of collaboration between ministries, across sectors and also between specialists and experts at grass-roots level.</p>

Country	Estonia
	<p>There is monitoring of implementation of the eight measures that constitute the policy mix of the Youth Guarantee in Estonia. However, there is no unified system for monitoring the activities, and different systems are being used.</p> <p>Evaluation and monitoring is fairly complex, with up to eight measures/services composing the Youth Guarantee being monitored and evaluated separately, but in synergy with the provisions of the Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020.</p>
<p>Scope, aims and focus of the evaluation(s)</p>	<p>The Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020 is a government document that frames public policies addressing young people in the youth field. The overall goal of the development plan is that “the young person has ample opportunities for self-development and self-realisation, which supports the formation of a cohesive and creative society”.</p> <p>The main goal of the Youth Guarantee scheme in Estonia is to provide support to young people in their transition to adulthood but in particular to the labour market. To that end, the Youth Guarantee is implemented using eight different policy measures. The Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan can be downloaded from the Ministry of Social Affairs website.</p>
<p>Type of evaluation(s)</p>	<p>Formative evaluations.</p>
<p>Responsible institution(s) and institutional involvement</p>	<p>The responsible institution for the evaluation of the Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020 is the Ministry for Education and Research.</p> <p>The responsible institution for the evaluation of the Youth Guarantee in Estonia is the Ministry of Social Affairs.</p>
<p>Methods used for data collection and analysis</p>	<p>Non-experimental designs have been used to carry out the analysis. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies have been used. However, the number of studies carried out is still small and the data collected is still insufficient. Monitoring has made use of mainly quantitative administrative data. Sources of data have included organisational administrative data, the Youth Prop-Up Programme database, interviews with implementing officials and interviews with young people.</p>

Country	Estonia
<p>Participation of young people in the evaluation and participation of other stakeholders</p>	<p>The Youth Guarantee recommendation is implemented jointly by the Ministry of Social Affairs, which is responsible for implementation and the Ministry for Education and Research. To guarantee a successful partnership, the Ministry of Social Affairs has formed a working group including representatives of relevant stakeholders, including the Estonian Youth Council, to co-ordinate Youth Guarantee-related partnerships and monitor plan implementation. The working group enhances co-operation between specialists and representatives of different interest groups related to implementation of the Youth Guarantee</p>
<p>Outputs and results of the evaluation(s)</p>	<p>There is no single impact evaluation of the strategy. However, the design of the strategy was informed by several studies in the areas relevant for young people (for example, education, social work, employment and population). The Ministry for Education and Research has published an implementation report of the Youth Field Development Plan for 2014. The report describes activities carried out as part of implementation of this strategy. The ministry has also published overviews of the youth sector activities as part of its annual reports, giving a brief overview of activities carried out in the field, complemented by statistics. According to the reports, developments in the youth field are positive.</p> <p>All eight services within the Youth Guarantee scheme are monitored at the aggregate level (such as the number of participants and activities and the budget). Intervention effectiveness has been assessed in the case of the My First Job service and the Youth Prop-Up Programme. Mid-term evaluation of the My First Job service was carried out in 2016-2017 and covered the period 1 January 2015 to 30 September 2016.</p> <p>The Youth Prop-Up Programme is being closely monitored using an original monitoring system created for this programme. In the database, data is recorded regarding the situation of young people after exiting the programme.</p> <p>As a result of the mid-term evaluation, changes were made to the My First Job service (the largest service in the Youth Guarantee scheme):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ the minimum age of enrolment was lowered from 17 years to 16 years;

Country	Estonia
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ the requirement that only young people without vocational education are eligible was removed; ▶ the mandatory length of a subsidised job contract was reduced from two years to one.

Country	Serbia
Why was this country chosen?	The evaluation practice in Serbia represents an example of good practice due to the systematic evaluation of the main youth policy documents and plans in the country: the National Youth Strategy and the Youth Service Package, which includes a final evaluation of the previous youth strategy, a formative evaluation of the current strategy and a youth programme implemented in connection with the youth strategies.
Scope, aims and focus of the evaluation(s)	<p>The National Youth Strategy 2015-2025 was evaluated in 2017. It “lays down the basic principles of action, directions of activity and expected results of the activities of all youth policy actors towards the improvement of social position of young people and the creation of conditions for full achievement of their rights and interests in all areas”. The previous youth strategy, for the period 2008-2014, and the Action Plan 2009-2014 were also evaluated. The evaluations of the national youth strategies focused on assessment of the implementation and impact of the strategies from national through to local level. They concluded with recommendations for the future development of the youth sector in Serbia.</p> <p>Moreover, the Youth Service Package and the relevant programmes and measures funded from the Republic of Serbia budget and targeted at youth were also evaluated. The coverage, effectiveness and the gross and net impact of the Youth Service Package were included in the evaluation. In addition, the analysis included the net impact of the labour market measures targeting youth – the Professional Practice and Acquisition of Practical Knowledge – implemented by the National Employment Service, as well as the evaluation of other relevant targeted programmes and measures aimed at youth employment and funded from the national budget, but implemented by other institutions and supported by the Ministry of Youth and Sport (such as youth office</p>

Country	Serbia
	<p>services or civil society organisations' programmes contributing to youth employment and employability enhancement).</p> <p>Therefore, the evaluations aimed at answering questions related to the effectiveness, sustainability and impact of all interventions targeting youth in Serbia, and especially the interventions for youth employment in the evaluation from 2016.</p>
Type of evaluation(s)	Formative and summative evaluations.
Responsible institution(s) and institutional involvement	<p>The Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Serbia was the main authority responsible for the evaluation of the national youth strategies. The evaluation from 2017 was conducted by the Institute for Economic Sciences.</p> <p>The Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit co-operated on the evaluation of the Youth Service Package 2013-2015.</p>
Methods used for data collection and analysis	<p>The evaluations presented in this case study used diverse methodologies, based mainly on qualitative assessments of information from interviews, meetings and visits. A methodology using existing data and interviews in order to determine the gross and net impact of the evaluated interventions and services was also employed. Since 2015, an annual survey has been conducted as part of National Youth Strategy implementation and the resulting data were used for the evaluation published in 2017.</p>
Participation of young people in the evaluation and participation of other stakeholders	<p>The evaluations are based on co-operation between Serbian institutions, international institutions (the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the United Nations Population Fund in Serbia).</p> <p>Youth representatives and youth NGOs were consulted for all evaluations.</p>
Outputs and results of the evaluation(s)	<p>The Report on the evaluation of the level of realisation of the objectives of the National Youth Strategy for 2015-2017 (the Action Plan for the period 2015-2017) was published online in Serbian in 2017. The Report underlines that implementation of the strategies and services under evaluation has not been taking place long enough to generate a significant impact.</p>

Country	Serbia
	<p>The Evaluation of the National Youth Strategy (2008-2014) in the Republic of Serbia and Action Plan (2009-2014) was published in January 2015 and is available in both Serbian and English. The development of the National Youth Strategy 2008 in Serbia is hailed nationally and internationally as a “model process”, because it came about at the initiative of the civic youth sector and because it involved the broadest spectrum of stakeholders as well as a large number of young people. However, the evaluation in 2015 found that effectiveness, sustainability and impact had not been achieved as planned, although significant progress could be reported. The report also listed as challenges issues related to interinstitutional co-operation, involvement of young people in activities but less involvement in decision making, the lack of availability of local youth policy infrastructure, the absence of systematic monitoring before the evaluation, too little investment in difficult problem areas, single activities conducted for a particular objective, and donor-driven financial investments.</p> <p>The document entitled Evaluation of the Youth Service Package and the Relevant Programmes and Measures Funded from the Republic of Serbia Budget and Targeted at Youth was published in 2016.</p> <p>All the evaluations concluded that strategies are very important in structuring the general action taken by the Serbian Government regarding young people.</p>

Country	Armenia
<p>Why was this country chosen?</p>	<p>The Armenian case represents an example of good practice due to the systematic evaluation of the main youth policy document in the country: the National Youth Strategy.</p> <p>It also demonstrates the importance of having a dedicated institution for youth research and youth policy evaluation and their positive role in promoting youth policy evaluation.</p>
<p>Scope, aims and focus of the evaluation(s)</p>	<p>The 2013-2017 Strategy for the State Youth Policy of the Republic of Armenia was evaluated in 2016. Both the strategy and the Concept of State Youth Policy of the Republic of Armenia for 2015-2025 were developed based</p>

Country	Armenia
	<p>on the National Youth Report of Armenia Parts I and II, Aims and Expectations of Armenia's Youth published in 2011-2012. The strategy targets young people (aged 16-30), young families, young workers and youth NGOs. The goal of the State Youth Policy is to create the necessary socio-economic, legal-political, cultural and spiritual conditions for realisation and development of youth potential and for promotion of youth participation aimed at development and empowerment of the Republic of Armenia and at strengthening its national security.</p> <p>According to the Report on the Monitoring and Evaluation of the 2013-2017 Strategy for the State Youth Policy of the Republic of Armenia, the strategy was evaluated from the perspectives of compliance with youth needs (external relevance), logical structure (internal relevance), measurability, etc., in order to develop the 2018-2022 Strategy for the State Youth Policy of the Republic of Armenia.</p>
Type of evaluation(s)	Formative evaluation.
Responsible institution(s) and institutional involvement	<p>The Republic of Armenia Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs was the authority co-ordinating the state youth policy from 2007. Before that, the sector was co-ordinated by the Ministry of Culture and Youth Affairs. Within the framework of the 2019 government structural reforms, youth sector co-ordination has been transferred to the Ministry for Education, Science, Culture and Sport.</p> <p>Until April 2019, youth studies, as well as youth policy evaluation, was undertaken by the Youth Studies Institute, which has since closed, based on a government decision of 10 January 2019.</p>
Methods used for data collection and analysis	<p>The analysis was based on the theories of strategic plan development and the information received from research studies. In particular, the information was collected through the following methods: document analysis, expert interviews and group discussions (focus groups). Statistical analysis was carried out on a project database, which was created to include all projects funded within the grant scheme, component of the State Youth Strategy.</p>

Country	Armenia
<p>Participation of young people in the evaluation and participation of other stakeholders</p>	<p>The main stakeholders involved in youth policy evaluation are the state bodies, international organisations and NGOs dealing with youth issues.</p> <p>These bodies and organisations participate in the evaluation of youth policy implemented by the state, as well as providing information, materials, experiences and experts, according to the answers given to the survey for this review on youth policy evaluation.</p>
<p>Outputs and results of the evaluation(s)</p>	<p>The “Report on the Monitoring and Evaluation of the 2013-2017 Strategy of State Youth Policy of the Republic of Armenia” was published online in 2016, in Armenian, with an executive summary in English.</p> <p>The evaluation found the Concept of State Youth Policy of the Republic of Armenia for 2015-2025 to be relevant, in other words, in line with the needs of young people in 2016. Although the same report found that implementation of the 2013-2017 Strategy for the State Youth Policy of the Republic of Armenia showed progress in five priority areas ((1) youth participation, (2) youth employment and socio-economic issues, (3) youth well-being and health, (4) spiritual and cultural values among youth, (5) sustainability of education and recognition of non-formal education), the evaluation report also showed that there are still needs that remain unaddressed or that have not been sufficiently targeted during the period 2013-2016.</p> <p>The evaluation process resulted in the creation of a database for all the projects funded by the State Youth Strategy and proposed a transparent online application system.</p>

Country	Romania
<p>Why was this country chosen?</p>	<p>The Romanian case represents an example of good practice for the formative evaluation of a programme supporting both public and private (NGO-led) youth projects, as part of the larger youth policy. It shows the evaluation of interventions in the youth field with a limited budget and limited time for implementation, as all projects funded by the Romanian youth programmes are for less than one year.</p>

Country	Romania
Scope, aims and focus of the evaluation(s)	<p>In 2016 the Ministry of Youth and Sports conducted an evaluation of the programmes supporting youth projects funded from the national budget. The evaluation looked at the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the activities. These programmes support: youth centres, various youth projects for young people and students at national and local levels and research in the field of youth. All programmes are designed with annual priorities in line with the objectives of the National Youth Strategy 2012-2020 and target all young people aged 14-35.</p> <p>The evaluation focused on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the programmes run by the Ministry of Youth and Sports.</p>
Type of evaluation(s)	<p>Formative evaluation.</p>
Responsible institution(s) and institutional involvement	<p>The Ministry of Youth and Sports is the main body in charge of youth policy and its evaluation. The evaluation was contracted out and conducted externally by a research institute.</p>
Methods used for data collection and analysis	<p>The methodology of the evaluation included a survey among NGOs implementing youth projects with the support of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, thorough desk research using the database of projects funded by the Ministry of Youth and Sports over five years (2010-2015), interviews, focus groups, case studies of selected projects and an expert panel.</p>
Participation of young people in the evaluation and participation of other stakeholders	<p>The evaluation was conducted by a research institute contracted by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The methodology included consultation with all relevant stakeholders, both internal and external to the Ministry of Youth and Sports and its county offices as well as youth NGOs, but did not involve not direct consultation with young people.</p>
Outputs and results of the evaluation(s)	<p>The Evaluation of Youth Programmes and Activities supported by the Ministry of Youth and Sports was published online in Romanian in December 2016.</p> <p>The evaluation has shown that these programmes are relevant to the needs of young people, but that the effectiveness, efficiency, usefulness and sustainability of the projects depend mainly on three factors: (1) staff available for youth activities, (2) the budget allocated by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and (3) successful (promotion of youth projects and the services available).</p>

Country	Romania
	<p>The evaluation recommended that more attention be paid to studies and research to strengthen the relevance of the youth programmes implemented by the Ministry of Youth and Sports.</p> <p>It also recommended investing in human resources in the youth field for more effectiveness of the planned projects and an online platform for project applications and management for more efficiency.</p> <p>Projects for training human resources have been implemented by the Ministry of Youth and Sports since 2016, while one of the youth programmes supported is in the field of youth research. The recommendation was carefully considered, however, due to administrative bottlenecks there is still no online platform for project applications and management.</p>

Evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy	
<p>Why was this case chosen?</p>	<p>The interim evaluation of the European Union Youth Strategy 2010-2018 (EU Youth Strategy) conducted in 2016, is a great example of an evaluation of youth policy co-operation with general objectives at an international level and implementation conducted at national and other levels. It can be a good example for youth policy implemented in a decentralised or very decentralised way.</p>
<p>Scope, aims and focus of the evaluation(s)</p>	<p>The European Union Youth Strategy 2010-2018 was the framework for European co-operation in the youth field for 2010-2018. Its legal basis lies in the Council Resolution adopted in November 2009 on a renewed framework for European co-operation in the youth field. The EU Youth Strategy set out to improve the situation of young people in Europe by creating more and equal opportunities for them in education and in the labour market and by promoting their active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity. Building on the first framework of the “open method of co-ordination (OMC)” in the youth field, the EU Youth Strategy went beyond youth-specific initiatives by adding a mainstreaming dimension with a view to linking EU youth policy to the EU strategies for education, employment and social inclusion.</p> <p>Under the framework, EU Member states had been invited to co-operate on youth-related issues by setting common objectives and possible initiatives in eight fields of action,</p>

Evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy

	<p>covering both core areas of youth policy (participation, voluntary activities, culture and creativity, youth and the world) as well as areas addressing young people's socio-economic issues (education and training, employment and entrepreneurship, health and well-being and social inclusion).</p> <p>The purpose of [the] evaluation was twofold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ to evaluate the EU Youth Strategy and, within it, the Council Recommendation on the Mobility of Young Volunteers across the EU, in order to provide an assessment of its relevance, coherence, effectiveness, EU added value, efficiency and sustainability; and ▶ to identify ways of improving the implementation and governance of the EU Youth co-operation framework for the period 2015-2018 and also inform the renewal of the Youth Strategy in the post 2018 period (EC 2016: 1-2).
Type of evaluation(s)	Formative evaluation.
Responsible institution(s) and institutional involvement	The European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture was responsible for evaluating the strategy. It subcontracted an independent company to carry out the evaluation study.
Methods used for data collection and analysis	<p>The evaluation was conducted from March 2015 to February 2016. Mixed methods of data collection were used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ mapping of activities conducted at national and EU level; ▶ two online surveys: (i) of young Europeans aged 15-30, with 719 respondents; and (ii) of youth organisations, with 250 organisations which responded; ▶ interviews with 126 national stakeholders in 28 EU countries; ▶ 10 case studies involving 36 stakeholder interviews and covering eight countries. <p>Between evaluations, the EU Youth Report consisted of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ a European Commission communication (prepared in collaboration with the European Council) presenting the main results of the latest three-year cycle of the EU Youth Strategy; ▶ a staff working document giving an overview of the situation of young people in the EU;

Evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ a staff working document giving a comprehensive summary of actions taken at the national and EU levels to implement the EU Youth Strategy. <p>In 2018 the situation of the youth in Europe was visible in a Youth Barometer, corroborated with data from Youth Wiki.</p>
Participation of young people in the evaluation and participation of other stakeholders	<p>The evaluation conducted in 2016 for the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018 involved consultations with a range of EU and national-level stakeholders who participated in the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy over the 2010-2015 period, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ young people, consulted directly through a survey and indirectly through the involvement of youth and volunteering organisations; ▶ youth ministries; ▶ national youth councils; ▶ national agencies for the Erasmus+ programme.
Outputs and results of the evaluation(s)	<p>The evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018, conducted in 2016, was the first external evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy since it was launched in 2010. It covered the period 2010-2015 and represented a mid-term evaluation of the strategy. According to the monitoring plan,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">until this external evaluation, the monitoring of progress in the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy was undertaken internally, through reporting from Member States and key stakeholders resulting in the Joint EU Youth Reports in 2012 and 2015 (EC, 2016: Executive Summary).</p> <p>The resulting report was published online on the European Commission website.</p> <p>As a result of previous evaluation exercises and acknowledging the need for better monitoring and evaluation, the EU created in 2019 an expert group on indicators to review the indicators dashboard for the youth field and to generate policy indicators and benchmarks, as appropriate, tailored to the needs of member states and sectors concerned, in order to measure progress and results of the new European Youth Strategy: Engage, Connect and Empower.</p>

Evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy

The evaluation looked at how EU countries work together on policy for young people. The report concluded that:

[d]uring its first five years, the EU Youth Strategy was implemented in a rather negative economic context. The situation of young people deteriorated in terms of unemployment, social exclusion and risk of poverty in the aftermath of the economic crisis in Europe. This meant that initiatives to ease youth unemployment and to improve education and training moved up the policy agenda in most Member States and at EU level. (EC, 2016: 1-2)

The evaluation found that the EU Youth Strategy was successful in triggering concrete changes at national and organisational level and in the adoption of common approaches and principles across the member states:

[t]he Strategy had some direct influence on the policy agenda in the majority of Member States although the level and strength of influence varied and it was not the only contributing factor but national and contextual factors were also influential (EC, 2016: Executive Summary).

Most changes identified were in core areas of youth policy: volunteering, internationalisation and mobility, youth work and a cross-sectoral approach to youth policy (EC, 2016: Executive Summary).

Council of Europe international reviews of national youth policy

Why was this case chosen?

The international reviews of national youth policies conducted by the Council of Europe represent an important source of information and inspiration for European governments on the definitions, aims and measures designed specifically for youth policies across Europe. They allow for a comparative view and view over time of the definitions and approaches of youth policies and their observed outcomes, impact and in some cases, sustainability. They offer, to decision makers and practitioners in the field of youth policy evaluation, an in-depth perspective on the indicators and descriptors that can be used to review a youth policy in accordance with its content and objectives.

Council of Europe international reviews of national youth policy

Scope, aims and focus of the evaluation(s)	<p>According to the Council of Europe website:</p> <p>[a]n international review of national youth policy is the most complex and comprehensive of measures fostering youth policy evaluation and development. This process involves wide-ranging commitment, from political to financial, from both the requesting country and the Council of Europe.</p>
Type of evaluation(s)	<p>The reviews provide a qualitative insight into national youth policy through the triangulation of documentary evidence, interviews with policy makers and operational managers, and interviews with practitioners on the ground and young people. They are not evaluation reports, avoiding making any assessment of the youth policies or implementation, although they give feedback for the continuation of these policies. The reviews use some approaches specific to the illuminative evaluation.</p>
Responsible institution(s) and institutional involvement	<p>The reviews were carried out by experts mobilised by the Council of Europe, usually comprising a governmental representative, a member of the Advisory Council for Youth, a member of the Council of Europe Secretariat, and three experts/researchers, one of whom serves as the rapporteur.</p>
Methods used for data collection and analysis	<p>The main methods and documents included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ the preparation of a national report by the host country about the youth policy and situation of young people in the country, based on existing data and documents; ▶ two intensive field visits to the country to study particular perspectives, through interviews and panels, in order to consider (a) the top-down intentions and delivery of policy and (b) the bottom-up understanding and experience of policy; ▶ the production of an international report by the team of experts, first shared and “tested” at a national hearing in the host country; ▶ the presentation of the international report at an international hearing in front of the Joint Council on Youth (prior to its approval by the Joint Council).

Council of Europe international reviews of national youth policy

Participation of young people in the evaluation and participation of other stakeholders	The youth policy reviews were designed as policy level reports based on the experiences of the policy makers and NGOs, including organisations with large membership and the capacity to consult with young people. Direct consultation with young people was part of the methodology of a large part of these reviews (although not all of them).
Outputs and results of the evaluation(s)	<p>In total, the national youth policies of 21 countries were reviewed between 1997 and 2014 and published on the Council of Europe website.</p> <p>Each review was summarised in a report. Following the first seven reviews, a synthesis report was drafted. It endeavoured to construct, from the material available, a framework for assisting the understanding of “youth policy”. A similar “synthesis” exercise took place after a further seven reviews, reflecting both on the unfolding and evolving process of carrying out the reviews and on new themes and issues for “youth policy” that had not emerged or been apparent within the initial framework. A third synthesis report did not focus exclusively on the final seven reviews but also drew together some of the conclusions and challenges that had emerged over the two decades of reviews, as well as consider[ing] some lessons for the future.¹⁵</p>

Key findings

- ▶ Evaluation of youth policies is not a general practice in Europe. The case studies and the survey show that there are even fewer impact evaluations than the evaluations of policy implementation. This situation can explain why youth policy makers need to make significant efforts, often with little evidence, to initiate and motivate intersectoral co-operation targeting young people and to secure budgets for youth policies.
- ▶ In many cases the evaluation of youth policy is promoted by international practices and international organisations such as the Council of Europe (supporting the international reviews of national youth policies), the European Union (promoting the implementation and evaluation of the EU policy at national level) and UN agencies (UNICEF, UNDP). The involvement of international organisations also facilitates policy transfer of best practices between countries.

15. www.coe.int/en/web/youth/national-youth-policy-reviews.

- ▶ Due to both the personal involvement of policy makers and NGO representatives in some countries and of international organisations and experts in other contexts, there are several examples of evaluations that can be an inspirational starting point for further youth policy evaluations in Europe. The evaluations presented are not perfect, but they contribute to showing youth policy results and promoting youth policy in larger debates on how to approach youth needs. They therefore represent examples of what can be done at national, but also at regional or local level when assessing youth policies or interventions.
- ▶ Challenges for the development of youth policy evaluations include:
 - a lack of dedicated resources. A vicious circle must be broken, because the lack of evaluations generates a lack of information on the effects and impact of youth policy and doesn't allow for informed decisions to increase this impact. On the other hand, the lack of compelling information raises issues of resource allocation.
 - a lack of co-operation with different institutions and co-operation targeting youth is an issue that can be also solved if compelling information on the value of youth policy is available, based on evaluations.
 - developing and selecting the most appropriate indicators and indicators that are easy enough to measure in order to facilitate the evaluation. In this respect, several examples of good practice are available, and efforts are being made both at national and European level.
- ▶ Even when evaluations are carried out, timing is not always well synchronised with policy-making agendas. In many cases, data is underused and evaluation is not very well promoted. For example, in most of the countries, evaluation of national youth policies is only available in national languages and policy transfers are not necessarily encouraged. All governments have internal reporting mechanisms that rely on internally or externally gathered data. These may be surveys, barometers, or sometimes more comprehensive statistical data which are largely used to argue for certain policy initiatives. Such data could potentially contribute to better learning, if taken out of these reporting exercises and debated with relevant stakeholders.
- ▶ From the data analysed, it is not possible to understand the hierarchy of knowledge that impacts policy planning and the importance of evaluation reports in policy planning. Further research, peer learning and capacity building needs to be put in place to increase the youth sector's understanding of the value of youth policy evaluation.
- ▶ In other cases, EU initiatives, like the EU Youth Guarantee, can be a supportive factor in putting in place monitoring and evaluation frameworks, including indicators and plans. The outputs of these monitoring and evaluation exercises represent a fertile base for policy learning and transfer to other policies affecting young people.

CONCEPTS AND THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO EVALUATION

Youth policy

Policy cycle

Policy learning and transfer

Evaluation and public policy

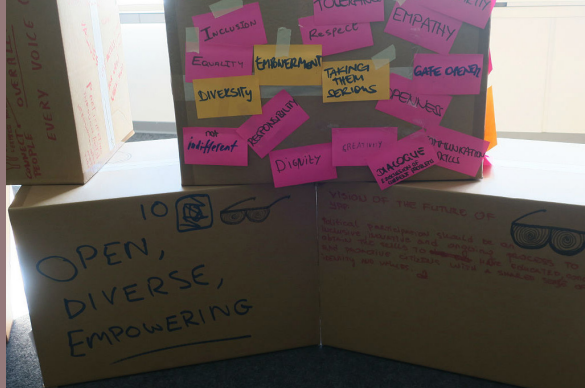
Types of evaluation

Evaluation research paradigms

Participatory evaluation

Illuminative evaluation

Summary of the conceptual framework



Chapter 5

Concepts and theoretical approaches to evaluation

Youth policy

A notable milestone in the development of youth policy as a distinct policy area was the European Commission White Paper¹⁶ on Youth – *A New Impetus For European Youth* in 2001 (EC 2001).

Nowadays, youth policy is understood as policy actions, and co-ordination of such actions, that seek to create conditions for supporting development of young people so that their transition to increased independence and adulthood might be seamless. According to the EU–Council of Europe youth partnership in its Glossary on youth:

[t]he purpose of youth policy is to create conditions for learning, opportunity and experience, which ensure and enable young people to develop ... knowledge, skills and competences. This is in order to allow young people to be actors of democracy; integrate into society; and, in particular, enable them to play an active role in both civil society and the labour market. The key measures of youth policies are to promote citizenship learning and the integrated policy approach.¹⁷

16. European Commission White Papers are documents containing proposals for European Union (EU) action in a specific area. ... The purpose of a White Paper is to launch a debate with the public, stakeholders, the European Parliament and the European Council in order to arrive at a political consensus. Adapted from https://eur-lex.europa.eu/summary/glossary/white_paper.html.

17. Glossary on Youth, <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/glossary>, accessed 22 November 2019. See also Siurala L. (2005), "A European framework for youth policy", Council of Europe Publishing.

The definition used in the “Youth policy essentials” publication (2019) also focuses on the transition from childhood dependency to independence:

[y]outh policy is a strategy implemented by public authorities with a view to providing young people with opportunities and experiences that support their successful integration into society and enable them to be active and responsible members of their societies, as well as agents of change.

The definition originates from a Council of Europe recommendation, which points out four other dimensions that play a significant role in the lives of young people:

- ▶ physical and mental health;
- ▶ informal, non-formal and formal learning;
- ▶ participation;
- ▶ inclusion (Council of Europe 2015).

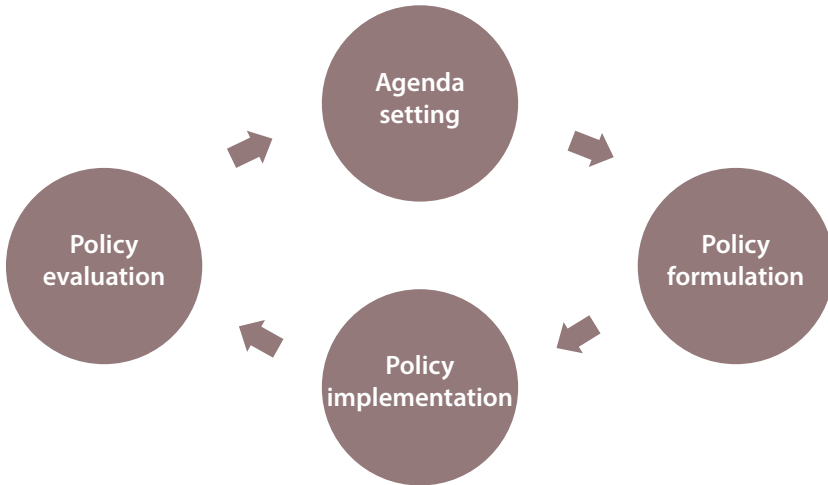
Both definitions emphasise aspects that are of importance in people’s lives in general – (lifelong) learning, social inclusion, participation and health – and also in the lives of young people. All these dimensions are supported by a range of public policies. Developing and carrying out interventions in these areas used to be the responsibility of specific ministries and their subordinate agencies, but this division into “silos” has been changing in recent decades, when there has been a shift towards integration of the activities of different ministries. This change also underpins the development of cross-sectoral youth policy, together with increased public policy awareness and attention to the situation of young people in society. In fact, the prefix “cross-” has at least a triple usage: “cross-ministerial” meaning the collaboration between ministries and their subordinate agencies, “cross-sectoral” meaning collaboration between organisations from different societal sectors of business – not-for-profit and the public sector, and “cross-level” meaning collaboration between different levels of public administration and other organisations (Taru 2017). European policy documents on young people contain a great variety of conceptual understandings on what cross-sectoral youth policy is and what its objectives are. At the same time, the documents are characterised by a lack of shared social and/or policy practices that would be recognised as youth policy. Frequent themes that feature in youth policy reviews published between 1997 and 2017 include education, employment, non-formal learning, social protection and equal opportunities, justice and delinquency, leisure, and related terms. The issues rarely have been treated as single issues or issues within the area of responsibility of one institution; instead, countries have conceptualised and addressed them as spanning across areas of responsibility of more than one ministry (Nico 2017). There is a significant overlap between the definitions in policy documents and in country reviews. It is these social issues and related public policy goals, as well as collaborating ministries and agencies implementing the policies, which constitute the backbone of youth policy.

Policy cycle

Policies in the youth field are to a significant degree defined by the given public administration system. It is helpful to think of public policy interventions as a cyclical process that starts with the identification of the problem to be remedied and the

setting of an agenda. It continues with formulation of policy alternatives and choosing which one to implement, followed by planning of resources and implementation of the policy and, finally, evaluating and undertaking changes, if necessary.

Figure 5. A cyclical model of public policy (Knill and Tosun 2008)



According to the policy cycle model, different successive phases can be distinguished in developing, implementing and changing or terminating a policy.

In the problem identification and agenda-setting phase, problems are defined and issues are raised, either by executive or legislative branches.

The White Paper on Youth – *A New Impetus for European Youth* is an example of how the situation of youth was identified as a policy challenge at the level of the European Union (EC 2001).

In the policy formulation and decision-making phase, an agenda item is translated into an authoritative decision: a law, rule or regulation, an administrative order, or a resolution. By definition, this phase is prescriptive, as the goal at this stage is to formulate a new policy. There are two steps in policy formulation:

- ▶ first, alternative policy proposals are developed and put forward for consideration; a no-action option is also considered. Policy analysts, usually public officials employed by ministries and agencies, bring these alternatives to the attention of political decision makers along with their recommendations.
- ▶ one policy option is chosen. This is usually accomplished by achieving the support of a majority. The result is a binding decision **by elected or appointed officials** who are not necessarily experts in the field but who are presumably accountable to the public.

In the implementation phase, the authorised policy will be administered and enforced by a governmental agency. The agency must follow the instructions stated in the policy, but will probably be called upon to provide missing pieces and to make

judgments as to intent, goals, timetables, programme design and reporting methods. In terms of policy analysis, this stage is essentially analytical and descriptive as it focuses on interventions that are already being carried out.

The European Youth Strategy was implemented in three cycles (2010-2012, 2013-2015 and 2016-2018); each of the cycles was monitored and these evaluation results were fed into European policy processes.¹⁸

In the evaluation phase, the effectiveness and efficiency of the intervention will be analysed. Analysis of effectiveness provides information on the degree to which the goals were achieved. The analysis may focus only on the effects of an intervention on outcome variables, or it may also seek to determine whether there were unintended consequences of the intervention. Efficiency refers to the relationship between costs and benefits, or the amount and type of resources that have been spent on implementing an intervention that was planned to bring about certain changes in society. Results of the evaluation feed into the next policy processes and help to design policies for the next cycle.

The evaluation of the European Youth Strategy 2010-2018 established that the strategy had been relevant to the needs of young Europeans and had provided a broad and flexible framework for co-operation. Opinions were mixed regarding the coherence of the strategy internally and externally, with other policies. The main EU added value for member states was that it provided them with policy inspiration, knowledge and expertise, leverage and legitimacy, opportunities and resources to move towards common objectives, and increased visibility of some topics (such as volunteering) or processes. The evaluation found the strategy partially effective in triggering concrete changes at national and organisational level. The cost of EU youth co-operation was found to be reasonable in relation to the results. Based on the conclusions, five recommendations for the next European Youth Strategy were generated: (a) focus on a smaller number of clearly defined objectives; (b) improve EU co-ordination of the youth agenda and of the implementation instruments; (c) better involve local and regional youth policy makers; (d) raise the bar of EU youth co-operation and formulate more ambitious objectives and (e) set up a monitoring framework which captures the achievements of the EU Youth Strategy and consider developing mutual learning on progress achieved (EC 2018: 16-8).

Theory of change (TOC) and programme theory (PT) serve the purpose of describing why and how a concrete intervention affects society and brings about the desired and planned change. While PT focuses more specifically on the intervention and its impacts, the TOC is somewhat more general as it takes a wider look at the phenomena addressed. The main value and contribution of both is that clearly formulating the TOC and PT makes the details and processes that are believed to be important clear and visible. This creates an explicit understanding of the intervention and how it is expected to work, which in turn enables the formulation of shared terms that is a necessary prerequisite for effective communication about

18. See European Commission, European Youth Strategy 2010-2018, homepage, https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy/strategy-2010-2018_en, accessed 2 December 2019.

the intervention. Especially important is that this way of thinking allows critical examination of assumptions about the problem at hand; reliance on uncritical or under-critical assumptions is one of the major reasons why programmes fail to deliver results (see Fox et al. 2016: 42-58; Centre for Theory of Change). Reliable and valid understanding of the circumstances and possibilities is crucial for making amendments to the programme at later stages.

The previous European Youth Strategy originated from the concern that “Europe’s future depends on its youth. Yet, life chances of many young people are blighted”. Youth in general, and vulnerable youth in particular, were identified as a societal group, which was in need of public policy support. The main mechanism through which the situation of young people, especially that of vulnerable young people, could be improved, was providing them with opportunities to develop individual skills, which at that time were conceptualised to a large extent using the lifelong learning key competences. Hence, the TOC underlying the European Youth Strategy identified young people as in need of support so that they could transit smoothly from childhood dependency to active adulthood in European society, and an increased level of individual competences was seen as the main causal mechanism that would support this transition and participation in society in general. Programme theory specified how this would happen. According to the PT, EU member states’ policies, and co-ordination of those policies in eight key “fields of action” was expected to lead to substantial improvement in youth transition and participation. The eight key fields of action were education, employment, creativity and entrepreneurship, health and sport, participation, social inclusion, volunteering and youth and the world. Youth work was seen as a field of activities designed specifically for young people. Countries were to implement policies that support young people in these areas and, importantly, exchange information and co-ordinate these policies through the open method of co-ordination (EC 2009).

Policy learning and transfer

It is not uncommon that identification of social problems and the development of interventions may be inspired by public policy initiatives that have been already launched in other countries, in other policy sectors. A range of terms has been used to describe these processes (Stone 2012: 1-17):

- ▶ the notion of diffusion of policies originates from the United States, from the research on how states adopt the policies of other states;
- ▶ the concept of policy transfer looks at how policies are transferred among countries via an exchange of goals, institutions, administrative tools, ideologies and experts;
- ▶ policy convergence refers to policy design and development resulting from larger structuring forces such as industrialisation, globalisation or regionalisation. In the case of the European Union, the European Commission may be seen as an actor responsible for some convergence of national policies;
- ▶ policy translation entails a considerable amount of reflection upon concrete policy measures in trying to identify reasons for success or failure and how a measure would perform under different circumstances and conditions.

Policy learning is concerned mainly with increasing the understanding of why and how a particular intervention functions under certain conditions and circumstances and whether it would also be as successful in different settings. The central question is “Under what circumstances and to what extent can a programme that is effective in one place be successfully transferred to another place?” (Rose 1991: 3-30). Real-life policy learning is a highly complex affair because a single policy intervention is embedded in a wider public administration system and is developed and implemented within a myriad of interrelated interventions. Transplanting it into another institutional environment, into different societal circumstances, calls for understanding all significant parts of the equation on how the intervention “works”.

A range of online databases are available that contain descriptions and analysis of interventions to address particular problems, target groups and situations. Three such databases that may prove useful in the youth field are introduced below, but there are others.

- ▶ The website Evidence Based Programs¹⁹ provides access to a number of interventions the effectiveness of which has been tested using high-quality research methods. One can find there programmes in the areas of early childhood, education, employment and welfare, housing, health care, substance abuse prevention and treatment, crime and violence prevention.
- ▶ The website of Blueprints Programs²⁰ provides a comprehensive, trusted registry of evidence-based interventions (programmes, practices and policies) that are effective in reducing antisocial behaviour and promoting a healthy course of youth development and adult maturity. It addresses problem behaviour, education, emotional well-being, physical health and positive relationships.
- ▶ The Campbell Collaboration²¹ is an international research network that produces high-quality, transparent and policy-relevant evidence syntheses, plain language summaries and policy briefs in the social sectors. It contains a link to other evidence portals,²² where one can search for high-quality programmes in the areas of the labour market, social welfare, education, health and in other sectors.
- ▶ The EC database on labour market measures²³ presents a range of practices that are considered to be good practice. The practices have been considered valuable by practitioners and/or by policy makers, but in most cases rigorous research has not been carried out.

Public policy measures have a different scope. They range from short-term measures having only local significance for a clearly bounded target group, to multi-annual

19. Evidence Based Programs homepage, <https://evidencebasedprograms.org/>, accessed 21 November 2019.

20. Blueprints Programs homepage, <https://www.blueprintsprograms.org>, accessed 21 November 2019.

21. Campbell Collaboration homepage, <https://campbellcollaboration.org/>, accessed 21 November 2019.

22. Campbell Collaboration homepage, <https://www.campbellcollaboration.org/evidence-portals.html>, accessed 21 November 2019.

23. Evidence based practices, a website maintained by the EC, <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1251&langId=en>, accessed 6 April 2020.

development plans that seek to influence virtually all young people over a long period (and through this, the entire society). For instance, financing a project in a municipal youth centre over a period of three weeks is a very concrete public policy measure in the area of youth work. At the other end of the scale we find the establishment of a unit in the ministry that is responsible for developing, implementing and evaluating youth policy in the entire country, including adopting legal acts, planning multi-annual development plans in the field, allocating finances from various sources, engaging in cross-national, cross-ministerial and cross-sectoral collaboration, etc. At the cross-national level, one encounters policy initiatives that seek to influence the youth field in many countries. In between these extremes there are a myriad of policy measures that differ with respect their scope.

Evaluation and public policy

Nowadays it is widely believed that evaluation research is important and supports growth of prosperity and social justice (OECD 2012: 4, 6-7). It does so by improving various policy decisions, from service provision to legislation, from organisational and local level to cross-national level. In OECD countries, integration of regulatory impact analysis, which is currently the most widespread form of evaluation in public administration in developed countries, into public policy began in the 1970s and gained momentum in the 1990s (Deighton-Smith, Erbacci, Kauffmann 2016: 10). In the European Union, the European Commission has been paying attention to improving the quality of regulations for a long time and in 2002 adopted the Better Regulation Programme. The programme also featured obligatory impact assessments.²⁴ The Better Regulation Package adopted in 2015 sees that regulatory impact analysis and impact evaluation of regulations are of high importance in assuring a high quality of regulations. The better regulation approach foresees the utilisation of research and different forms and types of evaluation at all levels and stages of policy processes (EC 2017).

Evaluation is linked to the notion of using quality evidence to support policy processes, which is wider than the specific notion of evidence-based policy making that is associated with the New Labour government in the United Kingdom from 1997 to 2010 (Smith and Haux 2017: 141-3). This evaluation review proceeds from a rather general notion of using evidence and research to inform public policy. For the purposes of this review, evaluation is understood as:

a social and politicized practice that nonetheless aspires to some position of impartiality or fairness, so that evaluation can contribute meaningfully to the well-being of people in that specific context and beyond. (Mark et al. 2006: 5-6)

We can think of evaluation as a process – and also as an outcome of the process – that seeks to describe the value of a policy measure using various data and research methods. Importantly, the value of an intervention varies and depends on who is asked – typically a stakeholders' group or a target group – and a policy does not necessarily have the same value for all. It is fair to say that evaluation in public policy

24. European Commission, REFIT – making EU law simpler and less costly, https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-making-process/evaluating-and-improving-existing-laws/refit-making-eu-law-simpler-and-less-costly_en, accessed 6 September 2019.

contexts is a complex enterprise, full of controversies, debates and discussions. As a player in public administration, and a newcomer, evaluation has to struggle with more established players such as ideologies, institutions and interest groups. Cairney 2016, Greve 2017, and Hemerijk 2017 discuss some of the problems and questions around evaluation of public policy and give the reader a good sense of the environment, expectations and possible contributions of evaluation and evidence to better governance. The work by OECD helps to understand the current “state of play” of evaluation in developed countries, including the EU, which can be summarised as promising (OECD 2019a). From the policy perspective, it is best to think of evaluation and evidence as one type of input to policy processes. In addition to this, policy makers typically have to deal with a multitude of requests and inputs from various groups and take into account institutional limits and path dependencies, and other factors.

Nowadays there is a general consensus that policy processes can hardly be called comprehensively rational, consisting of uniform identification of the problem to be addressed, having a general and lasting consensus on what is the best solution, implementing the intervention effectively and efficaciously, and reaching an objective conclusion about the impact of the intervention. Instead, policy makers are subjected to a permanent flow of information, requests from stakeholders, institutional limitations and uncertainties about financial futures. High-quality research, including evaluations, is one type of inputs among others and is not capable of altering the general process of policy making in general (see Cairney (2016), Chapter 2). Various models have been developed for describing policy processes; Knill and Tosun (2008: 495-519) present six such conceptual models:

- ▶ the institutional model that looks on policy processes through the lens of institutions or rules that govern policy processes;
- ▶ the rational model that makes an assumption that actors are capable of making optimal policy decisions when they weigh the costs and benefits of achieving a goal;
- ▶ the incremental model that sees policies evolving through limited changes only, because the knowledge and cognitive capacity of decision makers is limited;
- ▶ the group model, according to which policies are the result of an equilibrium reached in a group struggle, which is determined by the relative strength of each interest group;
- ▶ the elite model, according to which policies are determined by governing elites; and
- ▶ the policy cycle model.

These and other models also provide useful tools for analysing integrated youth policy. None of them provides a comprehensive description of the reality and it is best to think of them as of a set of complementary theories that enrich each other. Real life is far more complex than any of the theories separately can grasp.

When returning to the notion of the policy cycle, each phase of the policy cycle can be supported by a specific type of evaluation. In the agenda-setting phase, the emphasis is on studying the social, economic and environmental background of a problem to be addressed. In the policy development phase, emphasis is on

forecasting the effects of potential policies. This is a forward-looking activity for all dimensions: forecasting outcomes, planning resources and allocating the financial means that would be necessary for implementing a policy. In the implementation phase it is providing feedback that would be useful for increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of a policy measure. In the policy evaluation phase the focus is on retrospectively establishing the outcomes of an intervention, possibly also its unintended consequences. Although this is a backward looking activity that focuses on what has already happened, establishing causal links between an intervention and societal outcomes is a highly complex and challenging task.

Table 7. Policy phases and type of evaluation

Policy phase	Type of evaluation
Problem identification and agenda-setting	Background research, such as secondary research of existing reports, analysis of administrative data, and also new original research in the policy area.
Policy formulation and decision making	Prospective or <i>ex ante</i> evaluation that seeks to forecast potential outcomes and the resources needed to implement different policy options. It is used to support making a choice between alternatives.
Policy implementation and budgeting	Formative evaluation or monitoring that seeks to provide feedback on implementation of a policy measure so that the planned outputs of an intervention are achieved.
Policy evaluation	Retrospective, <i>ex post</i> , summative or impact evaluation seeks to establish the impact of a policy on the selected societal features. This type of evaluation may include also analysis of unintended or unplanned consequences and/or cost–benefit analysis that helps to describe the efficiency of a policy.

Types of evaluation

Based on the notion of a policy cycle, we can distinguish three different types of evaluation as presented in Table 7:

- ▶ prospective or *ex ante* evaluation;
- ▶ monitoring or formative evaluation;
- ▶ retrospective or *ex post* evaluation.

Ex ante evaluation

Ex ante or prospective evaluation attempts to forecast the effects of a concrete intervention, including its costs, and also its possible unintended effects. A specific type of prospective evaluation is regulatory impact analysis (RIA) that is used to scrutinise planned legislative changes. As a tool in policy makers’ hands, RIA focuses on ensuring that a systematic and rigorous process of identification and assessment of the potential impacts of government action is undertaken. This includes

quantifying the expected costs and benefits of a regulatory measure, assessing the effectiveness of the measure in achieving its policy goals and determining whether there are better alternative approaches available. As a decision process, RIA complements regulatory policy, including public consultations, by developing a better understanding of the likely impact of regulatory options and communicating this information to policy makers. RIA may be used for both proposed and existing regulations (OECD 2009).

Monitoring and formative evaluation

Monitoring is a systematic process of collecting data during the implementation of an intervention for the purpose of tracking the progress against set goals and objectives. It provides management and all stakeholders with information on the extent of achievement of stated targets and goals, allowing them to make informed decisions and take remedial action whenever deviations from initial plans are detected (OECD DAC Glossary 2002; EC 2014).

Formative evaluation differs from monitoring in that it focuses on more organisational detail. Its main goal is to give feedback so that the quality of implementation of the intervention can be assessed and amended where deemed necessary. Formative assessment can be defined as *a rigorous assessment process designed to identify potential and actual influences on the progress and effectiveness of implementation efforts*. Formative evaluation enables researchers to explicitly study the complexity of implementing projects and suggest ways to answer questions about context, adaptations, and response to change (Stetler et al. 2006). Implementation of a policy is a complex process, especially if several ministries are involved. A range of public administration theories describe the processes that take place when an intervention is implemented. The majority of them take a top-down view of implementation and focus on how more general processes and circumstances influence concrete processes and circumstances. Street-level bureaucracy theory starts from the bottom – from public officials who carry out activities in immediate contact with beneficiaries. As such, it has an opposite focus, from bottom to top (Fox et al. 2016).

Ex post and summative evaluation

Ex post or summative evaluation is a type of evaluation that retrospectively focuses on describing the societal outcomes of implementing an intervention. One may also say that this type of evaluation seeks to uncover whether a policy indeed delivered the societal results it was planned for. It is also called a summative evaluation because its goal is to sum up the effects of an intervention. This, however, does not mean that *ex post* evaluation can be carried out only when an intervention has been terminated. Carrying out a summative evaluation is also justified when an intervention has been implemented for a sufficient length of time to generate an outcome.

The purpose of carrying out *ex post* or summative evaluations is to document the direct causal effect of an intervention. This, in turn, helps to understand to what extent and in exactly what ways the intervention influenced societal features of interest.

Empirically speaking, the task is to establish a causal model that links intervention outputs to societal outcomes.

Evaluation research paradigms

In terms of research paradigms that relate evaluation research to social research more generally, post-positivist, constructivist and scientific realist paradigms can be distinguished.

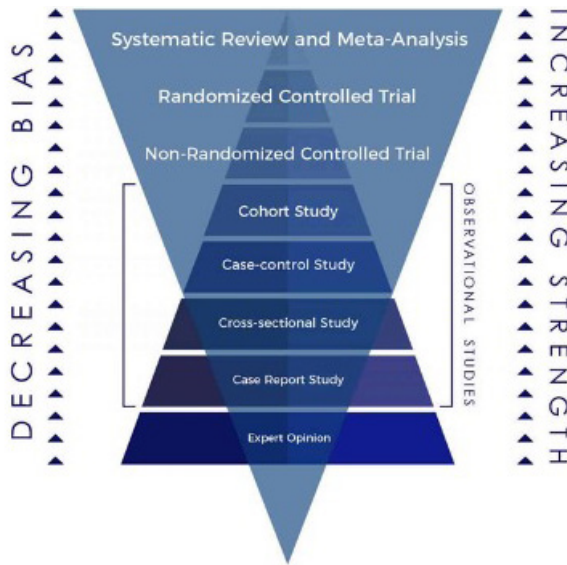
Post-positivism

The underlying belief that defines research carried out within the limits of this paradigm is that there is an objective reality out there, which is not influenced by researchers' interests or activities. Since reality is objective, the task of a researcher is to uncover features of this reality using appropriate research methods and data for that purpose. For a researcher carrying out an evaluation exercise, the task is to establish the least biased estimates of impacts when carrying out an *ex post* or summative evaluation.

Capturing reality in all of its complexity is not believed to be possible, however. Even though the core ideas underlying experimental and quasi-experimental research designs are simple, it is virtually impossible to fulfil the main requirement of experimentation – random distribution into experimental and control groups so that both groups are exactly the same and the one and only difference between them is the experience of an intervention. Then, if there is a difference in the outcome, it can be attributed only to the intervention because there simply is no other distinguishing factor. Because random distribution is not possible, there cannot be 100% certainty that estimates of effects are indeed unbiased. It is believed that different types and designs of research return results that vary in the degree of likelihood of bias and that some methods return more credible results in general. Today, there is a consensus on the types of research that are seen as capable of delivering the least biased estimates and other types that have a lower capability of delivering unbiased estimates.

Research projects utilising experimental designs are considered to be the least affected by threats to internal validity and have the greatest potential to produce unbiased results. Non-experimental designs have a higher likelihood of producing biased results as they are more jeopardised by threats. At the bottom of what is known as the hierarchy of evidence one finds expert opinions, case studies and cross-sectional studies, which, when assessed by their (theoretical) potential to produce unbiased results, rank lower than (quasi-) experimental designs. However, the experimental design is not the end point in the quest for unbiased estimates of the effects of policy interventions. In addition to experimental research, meta-analyses, systematic reviews and overviews of systematic reviews are carried out to achieve an even higher level of credibility of the knowledge about the effects of particular interventions. Being based on the results of a number of experimental research projects, the knowledge generated through generalisation of high credibility individual research is considered to be even more credible than that generated in individual projects using (quasi-) experimental design.

Figure 6. Hierarchy of evidence. Source: Sollid (2016)



There are a number of research methods that are compatible with this paradigm. Research undertaken within this paradigm is concerned with testing or discovering causal relationships and research methods that are suitable for this goal are therefore preferred. In particular, quantitative research using experimental or quasi-experimental designs, statistical methods that mimic experimental design, and systematic reviews and meta-analysis building on experimental research are deemed particularly suitable for delivering unbiased estimates of the effects of programmes. However, qualitative data and methods too are in place inasmuch as they help to test a hypothesis, for example, in an early phase of research.

An important feature of this approach is that it relies on theories about the objective reality. Indeed, if reality is there, then a description of it is helpful for understanding and explaining the significance of different factors and relationships between factors and circumstances. The scientific realist approach to evaluation relies on theories when building a causal path from the intervention to outputs, outcomes and impacts of the measure.

Realistic evaluation and social mechanisms

Realistic evaluation, or scientific realism, attempts to understand and outline how causal mechanisms and environmental circumstances have brought about a change in society as a result of implementing an intervention. It seeks to establish the effect accurately but in addition, it attempts to identify exactly how the intervention led to the observed outcomes. One of the key tenets of realist evaluation is the idea that empirical evidence alone cannot establish causal connections between variables. It is necessary to explain why the relationships come about – what goes on in the system that connects inputs to outputs, or an intervention to societal outcomes. Programme theories that outline the ideas of how implementation of a policy influences society

are the focus of realist evaluation (Dalkin et al. 2015). The question that an evaluator working in a realist evaluation framework seeks to answer is “What works, for whom, in what context and to what extent?” It not only focuses on “what works”, but also seeks to describe the circumstances. Evaluation reports should take into account contexts and circumstances and shed light on context-mechanism-outcome pattern configurations (see Davies, Nutley, Tilly 2000). This approach to evaluation attempts to picture an intervention within its context and understand how it “works”, that is, how outcomes follow from the intervention in real life, not under conditions where the (potential) effects of selected variables have been deliberately excluded or at least minimised, as is attempted in (quasi-) experimental research. Within the “what works” paradigm, the spectrum of research procedures, research designs and data sources that are valued is wider than in the impact evaluation strand, which sees experimental research as the “gold standard”. In the “what works” realist evaluation paradigm, qualitative research that seeks to understand the world in naturalistic, subjective settings, namely as perceived by actors themselves (rather than under objective – to be understood as defined by the by-standing researchers – experimental conditions) has its rightful place. Either in combination with quantitative methods or separately, the use of qualitative methods in evaluation research has the potential to enhance understanding of the social mechanisms of an intervention, and how it brings about the intended (and unintended) effects (Davies 2000: 291-316); (Davies, Nutley, Smith 2000: 4-9); (Mullen 2015: 310-335).

Realist evaluation has perhaps the strongest potential to support policy learning across borders, as well as from other sectors, because it provides the fullest account of why a concrete intervention “works”. Being aware of the circumstances and mechanisms responsible for success (best practice examples) helps to predict whether the intervention will also deliver superior results under different circumstances, and/or what needs to be taken into account, what adjustments need to be undertaken, in order to make it work. This concern is highly relevant when it comes to peer learning and policy transfer and implementing measures that have proven useful in other countries, which differ in terms of institutions, social situation, legislation and other factors.

Social constructionist approach

The responsive constructivist approach to evaluation is based on the belief that there is no given, objective social reality and that the observed reality is constructed by people through interactions in daily life. Beliefs and actions of people combine and create social and political reality. These beliefs in turn are based on interpretations of perceptions of reality, they are not automatically given.

As is characteristic of social constructivism in general, in evaluation too it is believed that there can be – and actually are – different understandings of reality when it comes to wording statements that describe a concrete intervention, either how it is implemented or what its outcomes are. The social constructionist view of evaluation (research) goes a step further and emphasises the centrality of questions of common understanding and joint evaluation, which are to be elaborated in interactions between different stakeholders’ groups. In addition, researchers are to be integrated into this process as representatives of an expert group. Knowledge about the evaluation is built upon – constructed – through the process of interaction between stakeholders’

groups. As such, this approach is actor-oriented and seeks to collate different interpretations and perspectives on a particular phenomenon rather than to establish objective knowledge and unbiased estimates that would be the aim of a positivist evaluation project (Dessouky 2016: 15-25). Within this evaluation paradigm, the role of the evaluator is to build a narrative whereby different viewpoints are represented. One can say that the evaluation procedure results in a range of “stories” about the policy being evaluated, told by different stakeholders from their point of view, which all need to be recognised (Kushner 1996: 189-200). The procedure of constructivist evaluation is highly complex and demanding in terms of achieving accepted statements about the object of the evaluation (Guba, Lincoln 2001).

The list of data collection and analysis methods includes interviews, observations and other methods of qualitative research. Quantitative data and methods may also be used, although they will be viewed not as a source of unquestionable truth about reality but as an input into debates and discussions about a policy.

Participatory evaluation

Participation of young people in evaluation of public policies addressing young people is held dear in the youth field – youth participation was the first principle that was put to use in developing the youth field in European institutions. Participatory evaluation may therefore have a special significance in the youth field.

Participatory evaluation is a relatively new method for carrying out evaluation. It involves different stakeholders’ groups in the generation and interpretation of data on the intervention being evaluated. As such, it does not pertain specifically to any of the other types of evaluation described.

Distinctive features of participatory evaluation include the belief that the participation of stakeholders’ groups brings benefits to the evaluation and the active involvement of groups that usually are not engaged in the evaluation process. Essentially, participatory evaluation is a set of principles that complement various research methodologies rather than one concrete method or type of data. The word “participatory” in the term refers to the different degrees, levels, and ways of taking an active part in different stages of the evaluation process. Participation in the data collection phase is relatively easy and has only a minor impact on the entire evaluation exercise, but is probably the most widespread form of participation. Co-designing research tools and methods, analysing data, lobbying and policy re-design based on the evaluation results, are more demanding but take place more rarely. Participation in management of an evaluation exercise, identifying research problems, designing methodology and writing up the report and conclusions are the most demanding phases – but also the most infrequent ways in which young people participate.

Benefits of participatory evaluation include practical aspects such as having access to hard-to-reach groups, mass data collection, building trust between science and policy and involving lay knowledge in research, as well as value-based aspects such as empowering people, respecting different forms of expertise and democratising science.

Because participatory evaluation is a set of rather general principles, not a specific type of data or a specific method, it can be used within any of the evaluation paradigms and for any evaluation purposes (Richardson 2017).

Illuminative evaluation

To help understand the effects of innovation in education, there is an approach to evaluation that seeks to shed light on the relationship between study programmes and what happens in the classroom when teachers convey the content to pupils. Illuminative evaluation is an anthropological method designed to help understand the connection between the programme and actual educational outcomes, and how the outcomes are brought about. As such, illuminative evaluation may be useful in youth work contexts for understanding the interaction between youth workers and young people. This type of evaluation seeks to provide the authentic views or feelings of insiders – in the case of youth work settings, these may be both young people and youth workers. The research goal is to report accounts, descriptions and analyses of the learning experiences as deemed meaningful and appropriate by the members or the participants under study (see Chirwa (2015): 100-107).

Illuminative evaluation methods may be useful for describing and documenting the effects of youth work and non-formal learning in an integrated youth policy but, more generally, in social policy contexts, which are still poorly understood.

Summary of the conceptual framework

Evaluation of cross-sectoral youth policies entails evaluation of sectoral policies and evaluation of collaboration between the organisations responsible for developing and delivering those policies. The most common policy areas with relevance for youth policy include education and learning, the labour market and training, social inclusion, participation and health.

Evaluation refers to assessing and determining the value of a policy for a certain group of stakeholders. This can be done using different approaches – while the positivist approach cherishes the goal of objectively describing implementation and the impacts of policies, the constructivist approach appreciates the position according to which different groups may have different views on the value of a given intervention. Finally, a realist evaluation seeks to describe causal mechanisms that connect a policy and its social outcomes.

In the framework of a policy cycle, different types of evaluation are used for different phases: in the policy planning phase, prospective evaluation seeks to predict the resources needed for implementation of a policy and its possible outcomes. In the implementation phase, formative evaluation seeks to describe whether implementation of a policy goes according to plan and, if necessary, what needs be done to ensure that it follows that plan. In the evaluation phase, summative evaluation seeks to document the societal impacts of the policy.

In the youth field, participatory evaluation holds a special position because participation of young people is among the core values of the youth field; it is also among the core values of public administration in general. Participatory evaluation is a set of general principles that values different viewpoints held by different stakeholders' groups.

CHECKLIST ON YOUTH POLICY EVALUATION



Chapter 6

Checklist on youth policy evaluation

The checklist below presents the general stages and step-by-step actions for a complete evaluation process of policies in general, which are also applicable to youth policy. This is not intended as a mandatory process, but rather as guidelines from which to start. All steps and actions can be adapted to the context and specific situation of any institution, organisation or stakeholder engaged in youth policy evaluation.

STAGE	USE OF INDICATORS AND THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM
Planning stage	<p>During the planning stage, the following issues are the most important as regards indicators.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Defining the goal and the specific objectives of the policy and defining the related indicators (output and result indicators). 2. Defining the indicator system by taking into account the size of the youth policy intervention and the elements to be monitored and evaluated. In practice, this is done by drafting the indicator fiches, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ name, type and level; ▶ definition and purpose; ▶ unit of measure; ▶ method of calculation; ▶ disaggregation; ▶ method of data collection and measurement; ▶ data sources and tools to be used;

STAGE	USE OF INDICATORS AND THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ frequency of collection; ▶ values for baseline, actual value and target. <p>3. Consulting with stakeholders, including young people, on the evaluation plan. Adding objectives and indicators, if needed.</p> <p>4. Designing the monitoring system and undertaking a quality check of the indicators identified. In practice, this is done by drafting the monitoring procedures, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ responsibility for collection; ▶ responsibility for reporting; ▶ location of data storage; ▶ frequency of reporting on collected data. <p>5. Designing the evaluation system and identifying the data needed to evaluate the youth policy. In practice, this is done by drafting the evaluation plan with the help of the following questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What will be evaluated (the scope of the evaluation)? ▶ When will the evaluation be conducted – <i>ex ante</i>, interim, or <i>ex post</i> – and for what purpose? ▶ Which evaluation criteria will be used? ▶ Which evaluation design will be used for the impact evaluation? ▶ Which institutional involvement is envisaged: internal, external or independent evaluation? ▶ How will young people be involved? ▶ How will other stakeholders be involved? <p>6. Carrying out <i>ex ante</i> evaluation. The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, including the indicator system, will be assessed during the <i>ex ante</i> evaluation. In this way one can ensure that a monitoring system will deliver data on indicators (output and result indicators) for the purpose of the <i>ex post</i> evaluation.</p> <p>Carrying out <i>ex post</i>, impact evaluation. This needs to be prepared from the planning stage. At this point one should know what data and indicators are needed for the evaluation. If data are not collected and the collection is not prepared from the outset, it may not be possible to carry out impact (counterfactual) evaluation due to a lack of data. Moreover, for impact evaluation, in particular if an <i>ex post</i> counterfactual evaluation is planned, baseline data need to be collected before starting implementation of the youth policy.</p>

STAGE	USE OF INDICATORS AND THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM
Implementation stage	<p>During the implementation stage, the use of indicators, monitoring and preparing evaluation require consideration of the following issues.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collecting and updating information on indicators, in accordance with the procedures set. 2. Continuous improvement of the monitoring system, that is, addition or clarification of indicators if those set up proved inadequate (using the criteria presented in the previous section, for example, if data is not available/cannot be collected), despite <i>ex ante</i> evaluation 3. Carrying out interim evaluations in which the framework of the M&E system, including the indicator system, is assessed for adequacy in the light of its actual utilisation (as opposed to the theoretical setting at the planning stage). 4. Making sure young people are consulted, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ through surveys and other research or data collection methods (interviews, focus groups), thus allowing young people to put forward their perspective on the youth policy implementation; ▶ through meetings allowing young people to give their input on the youth policy implementation and preliminary evaluation findings; ▶ through other innovative methods, if possible. 5. Compiling information on indicators and the progress achieved and reporting on such progress (annual activity/accountability reports). 6. Ensuring that the monitoring system will deliver data on indicators (output and result indicators) for the purpose of the <i>ex post</i> evaluation.
Evaluation stage	<p>During the evaluation of any given youth policy, the following steps are most important.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deciding on the evaluation questions and methods to be used according to the evaluation plan, the evaluation criteria and the design established in the evaluation plan. 2. If an independent evaluation has been planned, the selection of an independent evaluator should take place at this stage. 3. Assessing the performance of the intervention on the basis of performance and monitoring indicators.

STAGE	USE OF INDICATORS AND THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM
	<p>4. Making sure young people are involved, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ through surveys and other research and data collection methods (interviews, focus groups), thus allowing young people to put forward their perspective on the youth policy implementation; ▶ through meetings allowing young people to give their input on the youth policy implementation and preliminary evaluation findings; ▶ through other innovative methods, if possible. <p>5. Collecting data for other indicators that have been identified as necessary for an adequate evaluation and assessing the intervention's performance based on these further indicators.</p> <p>6. Taking into account the recommendations of the <i>ex ante</i> evaluation as regards the indicators and the M&E system.</p> <p>7. Reviewing indicators linked to a possible review of the youth policy (and the youth strategy, if there is one).</p> <p>8. Reviewing the monitoring system (quality of indicators, data collection and their transfer to the users) during which the framework of the M&E system, including the indicator system, is assessed for adequacy in the light of its actual utilisation (as opposed to the theoretical setting at the planning stage).</p> <p>9. Except in the case of <i>ex post</i> evaluations, continuing to monitor the system delivering data on indicators (output and result indicators) for the purpose of the <i>ex post</i> evaluation.</p>

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APPENDICES



Appendix 1

Online questionnaire used for the review on youth policy evaluation

Dear EKCYP member,

The EU-Council of Europe youth partnership is currently implementing a research project on youth policy evaluation. In that context, we are carrying out an analysis on models of youth policy monitoring and evaluation in Europe, including the practical ways for carrying out youth policy evaluation and approaches that exist across the member states.

In order to do so, we are conducting a short survey among EKCYP members and other stakeholders.

For any additional question, clarifications or comments or if you would like to send any documents related to the survey, please contact one of the consultants: Ruta Brazienė (ruta.braziene@gmail.com), Marti Taru (marti.taru@tlu.ee) or Irina Lonean (irina.lonean@gmail.com).

Thank you very much in advance for devoting time to participate in the survey!

General information

Your name

Country

Part A. State structures responsible for the youth policy (design/co-ordination/implementation)

1. Please, indicate whether there is a body for the design/co-ordination/implementation of government policies for youth. Choose the relevant option.
2. Yes, there are one or more permanent government bodies responsible for youth policy.
3. Yes, there are one or more temporary government bodies responsible for youth policy.
3. No, there are no governmental bodies responsible for youth policy at national/federal level (please proceed to question 3).

1. If you answered “yes” to the previous question, please provide the full name of the body/ies (in English and in the original country language). If you have information on the establishment of the body/ies, please provide it here

2. What type of youth policy document(s) do you have in your country (multiple choice answer).

1. Youth Law.
2. Youth Strategy.
3. Youth Programme.
4. Youth Plan (Implementation Plan).
5. Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan.
6. Another policy document _____

3. What are the main objectives and indicators for youth policy monitoring and evaluation in your country? Please include the list of indicators in the space provided, or send us the relevant document(s), or links to web-based resources.

Part B. Youth policy monitoring and evaluation

For the purpose of this questionnaire, we suggest the following definitions:

- ▶ *Ex ante* evaluation focuses on analysis of the anticipated impacts of the planned programme.
- ▶ Process evaluation, also monitoring of implementation, is the systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and mid-term results in terms of service delivery to target groups as defined in the implementation plan. Process evaluation should provide information that is also credible and useful for adjusting implementation of the project, programme or policy so that its objectives can be achieved to the highest degree possible.
- ▶ Summative or impact evaluation is the research providing credible empirical evidence on the causal impact of a project, programme or policy on the desired outcomes. It may include also cost–benefit analysis and analysis of unintended consequences and indirect effects. Its wider aims may include determination of the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Summative evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors.

4. Has monitoring of implementation or impact evaluation of national youth policy been conducted in your country?

Please tick “yes” only when you are able to clearly identify the report. Please tick “no” if you are not sure about the existence of a report.

	Yes	No	Do not know
<i>Ex ante</i> evaluation has been carried out at least once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring has been carried out at least once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least one impact evaluation has been carried out	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least one general evaluation of the policy implementation has been carried out, covering at least one of the following evaluation criteria: relevance of the policy, effectiveness, efficiency or sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Has *ex ante* evaluation, implementation monitoring or impact evaluation of policy interventions been carried out in your country in the following youth policy sectors? Please tick “yes” only when you are able to clearly identify at least one example and “no” if you are not sure. Evaluations may take the form of project reports, government reports, dissertations, journal articles, book chapters, or other formats. Please tick the box corresponding to your answer for each line.

Part C. Framework of youth policy monitoring and evaluation

	Yes	No	Do not know
Policies regarding employment of young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policies regarding social inclusion of young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policies regarding education, with a focus on young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policies regarding youth work, including non-formal education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other policy field targeting young people. Please specify _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Is there any structure in charge of youth research and evaluation of youth policy in your country?

1. There is a dedicated public research institute.
2. There are one or several universities or university departments.
3. There is an administrative structure subordinated to or part of the main institution in charge of the youth policy.
4. There are only private structures (think thanks, other civil society organisations, etc.).
5. Other organisational form. Please specify _____
6. There is no structure in charge of youth research and evaluation of youth policy.

7. What are the main stakeholders involved in youth policy evaluation? Please describe how young people, youth organisations, trade unions or other structures are involved in youth policy evaluation.

8. How is youth research and policy evaluation integrated into youth policy making in your country? (Please select the most appropriate answer).

1. Existing research results are sporadically used to support the decision-making process.
2. Existing systematic and regular research on the situation of youth are used to support the decision-making process.
3. Evaluation is conducted in order to document the implementation of the youth policy or most of the youth policies.
4. Evaluation of former policies is conducted before planning a new one, in order to support the choice of a policy option.
5. There are other ways of integrating research and policy evaluation into youth policy making. Please specify. _____
6. There is no integration of youth research and policy evaluation into youth policy making.

Part D. Examples of good practice

9. Please share what you consider to be a good practice of using research in youth policy planning, monitoring or evaluation processes in your country. Please describe the practice and provide a brief explanation of why you chose this particular example. When describing it, please explain what you think the impact of this particular practice was. If there are no such good practices in your country, please also indicate this.

10. Please provide the authors and actual titles of any monitoring or evaluation reports that you identified in the previous questions. Please provide links to the documents that are available online or send them to the researchers (Ruta Braziene (ruta.braziene@gmail.com), Marti Taru (marti.taru@tlu.ee) or Irina Lonean (irina.lonean@gmail.com)).

11. In your opinion, what are the current challenges for youth policy evaluation and youth policy making? Please describe briefly.



Appendix 2

Countries included in the survey analysis

	Country
1	Armenia
2	Azerbaijan
3	Belarus
4	Belgium (French-speaking community)
5	Bosnia and Herzegovina
6	Bulgaria
7	Croatia
8	Cyprus
9	Czech Republic
10	Estonia
11	Finland
12	France
13	Georgia
14	Germany
15	Greece
16	Liechtenstein
17	Lithuania
18	Luxembourg
19	Malta
20	Montenegro
21	The Netherlands
22	North Macedonia
23	Poland
24	Portugal
25	Romania
26	Serbia
27	Slovakia
28	Sweden
29	United Kingdom
30	Ukraine



Authors

Irina Lonean has a PhD in Political Sciences with extended expertise in grass-roots youth work and youth work methodologies and practices, youth participation methodologies, inclusion, youth employment and educational policies. Irina gained experience working for over 10 years in national and international NGOs with a mission to promote democracy and youth participation and for over seven years of experience of working in programmes and policy evaluations in Romania and at European level. In 2016 Irina worked as advisor to the Secretary of State for Youth within the Ministry of Youth and Sports on policy planning, monitoring and evaluation.

Marti Taru is a researcher at Tallinn University in Estonia. He has a background in research on young people – youth work, youth and public policy, participation in society – and his current interests are in youth, youth work, public policy and evaluation. Within the wider youth, youth policy and youth work framework, he works on youth and employment and the role of youth work in supporting young people's personal development and integration into society. Marti Taru was national correspondent to the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy until 2017 and currently is a member of Pool of European Youth Researchers.

Ruta Braziene holds a PhD in Social Sciences (Sociology). She is Chief Researcher at the Lithuanian Research Centre, and an Associate Professor at Vilnius University, Lithuania. Her areas of expertise include youth transition from the education to the labour market, youth labour market integration, youth social exclusion, living conditions and quality of life, housing provision for the youth, youth policies development and youth policy evaluation. She has more than 20 years of scholarly and practical experience with universities, local governments and NGOs in central and eastern Europe, the United Nations and the European Commission, as well as more than eight years of experience of ESF evaluations. She is the (co)author of more than 20 scholarly publications on youth.

Tanya Basarab is a research and youth policy officer at the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership, where she works on the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy, youth policy evaluation, youth work and social inclusion of young people. Having studied international relations with a focus on development, she has been engaged with civil society organisations in the youth, community development, active citizenship, social and anti-poverty fields. Her contributions have focused on governance, civil dialogue, participatory democracy, social inclusion and rights-based policy processes. She has co-ordinated and been involved in editorial work on Youth Knowledge Books 23 to 26 in the series published by the youth partnership and other educational material. She is currently ad-interim Manager of the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership.

For over 20 years, the partnership between the European Union and the Council of Europe in the field of youth has been gathering, analysing and disseminating knowledge for better youth policy and practice. Based on the principle of promoting knowledge-based youth policy and taking into account the benefits of youth policy evaluation, this review aims at supporting those involved at various levels in evaluating youth policy to enhance its relevance, effectiveness and impact. The lessons learned from the monitoring and evaluation of youth policy are extremely valuable to decision makers as they work to develop agile and adequate policy proposals to address young people's needs.

In 2019, the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy correspondents contributed to showing how youth policy evaluation happens across 30 countries in Europe, what positive approaches exist and how young people are involved in such processes. The resulting review is the first publication in the youth sector on this topic. It seeks to answer the following questions.

- ▶ What are the key concepts and steps in the youth policy monitoring and evaluation cycle, and how are young people involved?
- ▶ What is the real situation at national level?
- ▶ What good practice can be shared to inspire further initiatives?
- ▶ What are the strengths of investing in youth policy monitoring and evaluation?
- ▶ How can they contribute to promoting better understanding and a better impact of such policies in young people's lives?

<http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int>
youth-partnership@partnership-eu.coe.int

The **Council of Europe** is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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The member states of the **European Union** have decided to link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

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