

Youth Partnership

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



Youth Policy Evaluation Review

Authors: Irina Lonean; Ruta Braziene and Marti Taru
Co-ordinator: Tanya Basarab

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1. Introduction

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 developing youth policy, publishing “Youth policy manual”, youth knowledge book on cross-sectoral youth policy and “Youth policy essentials”, organising the MOOC on youth policy. The dimension that has been less in the focus is the evaluation of youth policy implementation and impact, key to improving the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of planning and delivery of youth policy at different levels.

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 youth sector serve as examples for the youth policy evaluations undertaken in Europe. The new strategy of the Council of Europe youth sector is also being designed with attention to evaluation of the change it brings and its impact. The evaluations of youth policy are generally conducted under the assumptions that: when quality is ensured, demonstrating the positive impact of youth policy and sound management of resources dedicated to youth are prerequisites for sustainable social and political support, giving way to allocating needed resources. In this context the evaluation is introduced to understand the impact, quality and management of the youth policies.

However, preliminary data and discussions within the network of EKYP correspondents showed there is little evidence on how this works in national contexts, hence the proposal to bridge the gap through this policy evaluation review.

Based on the principle of promoting knowledge based youth policies, the review aims at supporting those involved at diverse levels in youth policy design and implementation in evaluating it, in order to enhance youth policies’ relevance, effectiveness and impact.

The review includes the presentation of the conceptual framework underlining the idea of knowledge-based youth policy, providing for different perspectives on the role and importance of policy evaluation in general and youth policy evaluation specifically. The second section of this review includes a general introduction to monitoring and evaluation, defining the two interconnected steps in policy making and presenting particularities for youth policy evaluation. The third sections presents the result of a survey conducted among EKYP and PEYR members on the evaluation of youth policies across Europe and section four presents several case studies of the different concrete ways youth policies or elements of the youth policies are evaluated around Europe. This review is concluded by a practical checklist on actions to be taken by youth policy responsible institutions in order to conduct the evaluation.

2. Evidence based youth policy making. A brief introduction

2.1. Evidence based evaluation in Europe

The main goal of this section in the review is to outline briefly the main terms that are deemed important and that are used in public policy evaluation today. None of the terms is explored extensively though. The terms appearing in this section can be used for describing and analysing the survey database as well as the best practice descriptions.

Nowadays it is widely believed that evaluation research counts and supports growth of prosperity and social justice (OECD 2012: 4, 6-7¹). It does so by improving various policy decisions, from service provision to legislation, from organisational and local to cross-national level. In OECD countries, integration of regulatory impact analysis, which currently is the most widespread form of evaluation in public administration in developed countries, into public policy began in 1970s and gained momentum in 1990s (Deighton-Smith, Erbacci, Kauffmann 2016: 10²). In the European Union, European Commission has been paying attention to improving the quality of regulations since 2002 when the better regulation programme was adopted. The programme featured also obligatory impact assessments.³ Better Regulation Package adopted in 2015 sees that regulatory impact evaluation (RIA) and impact evaluation of regulations are of high importance in assuring a high quality of regulations. The better regulation approach foresees utilisation of research and different forms and types of evaluation at all levels and stages of policy processes (EC 2017⁴). The significance of evaluations and assessments is likely to increase because the focus in European Union regulations is now shifting toward improving the quality of regulations, from producing new regulations (Golberg 2018: 70-1⁵).

Evaluation is linked to the notion of using evidence for supporting policy processes. The specific notion of evidence-based policy-making is associated with a concrete context and time period: the period of New Labor government from 1997 to 2010 (Smith and Haux 2017: 141-3⁶). This paper proceeds from a general notion of using evidence and research for informing public policy. For the purposes of this paper, evaluation is understood as:

...a social and politicised practice nonetheless aspires to some positions of impartiality or fairness, so that evaluation can contribute to meaningfully to the well-being of people in that specific context and beyond (Mark et al 2006: 5-6, cited in Fox et al 2017: 4).

Evaluation in public policy contexts is a complex enterprise, full of controversies, debates and discussions. As a player in the public administration, and a new-comer, evaluation has to struggle

¹ OECD 2012. *RECOMMENDATION OF THE COUNCIL ON REGULATORY POLICY AND GOVERNANCE*, <http://www.oecd.org/gov/regulatory-policy/49990817.pdf>, accessed 16 July 2019.

² Deighton-Smith, R., Erbacci, A. and Kauffmann, C. 2016. *Promoting inclusive growth through better regulation: The role of regulatory impact assessment*. OECD Regulatory Policy Working Papers No. 3, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5jm3tqwqp1vj-en>, accessed 16 July 2019.

³ 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, visited 6 September 2019.

⁴ European Commission 2017. COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT. *Better Regulation Guidelines*. Brussels, 7 July 2017. SWD (2017) 350. <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/better-regulation-guidelines.pdf>, visited 6 September 2019.

⁵ Golberg, E. 2018. *'Better Regulation': European Union Style*. Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business & Government, Weil Hall, Harvard Kennedy School, M-RCBG Associate Working Paper Series No. 98, https://www.hks.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/centers/mrcbg/files/98_final2.pdf.pdf, visited 6 September 2019.

⁶ Smith, K. And Haux, T. (2017), Evidence-based policy-making (EBPM). In Greve, B. (ed.) *Handbook of social Policy Evaluation*. Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 141-160.

with more established players like ideologies, institutions, interest groups. Cairney 2016⁷, Greve 2017⁸, Hemerijk 2017⁹ open 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.¹⁰

Youth field in general and youth policies in particular are an integral part of public administration. Hence, youth field policy initiatives are subsumed to the evaluation like policies of other sectors. At the level of European Union, the following notion of evidence based policy making, which also frames utilisation of evaluation, is adopted:

Evidence-based policymaking is about improving the way we gather, share and understand evidence of young people’s living conditions, values and attitudes. The results are shared with other relevant policy fields.¹¹

The adopted definition is broad, and does not define either evidence or evidence based policymaking. The question “What counts as evidence in public policy?” is a highly contested one and there is no definite answer to that. Also the other core concept – evidence based policymaking – has no clear definition. However, the definition states clearly that there must be exchange and cooperation between different sectors. Arguably exchange of information and collaboration are the essence of youth policy, and therefore evidence based policymaking is seen as key for youth policies.

At the level of the EC, five youth field policy initiatives have been subsumed to evaluation using European Commission better regulation guidelines (Tymowski 2018: 97¹²):

- Youth Guarantee¹³,
- Youth Employment Initiative,
- European Solidarity Corps,
- Erasmus¹⁴,
- EU youth strategy¹⁵.

When assessing an intervention, evaluation ought to focus on aspects that can be causally linked to that particular intervention – on aspects that are caused by implementing a particular intervention. It is necessary to distinguish between causal effects of an intervention on the one hand and causally not connected changes that may bear relevance also in the context of a particular intervention.

⁷ Cairney, P. 2016. *The Politics of Evidence-Based Policy Making*. Palgrave Macmillan.

⁸ Greve, B. (ed.) 2017. *Handbook of social policy evaluation*. Edward Elgar.

⁹ Hemerijk, A. (ed.) 2017. *The uses of social investment*. Oxford University Press.

¹⁰ OECD. 2019. *Better Regulation Practices across the European Union*. OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264311732-en>.

¹¹ European Commission, Youth, Evidence based policy making, https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/policy-making_en, visited 6 September 2019.

¹² Tymowski, J. 2018. EU Youth Strategy. European Implementation Assessment. European Parliamentary Research Unit, Ex-Post Evaluation Unit, PR 615.645, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/615645/EPRS_STU%282018%29615645_EN.pdf, visited 7 September 2019.

¹³ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:73591c12-8afc-11e6-b955-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_2&format=PDF

¹⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/10102/2018/EN/SWD-2018-277-F1-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF>

¹⁵ <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/10102/2017/EN/SWD-2017-281-F1-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF>
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/615645/EPRS_STU%282018%29615645_EN.pdf

However, how do you know what aspects are causally linked to an intervention? Establishing causal effects and differentiating them from non-causal changes is one task of evaluation research.

For instance, when we observe that youth unemployment rate in the EU has decreased from 24% in 2013 to 15% in 2019¹⁶ and EU Youth Guarantee was launched in 2013, then what portion of youth unemployment decrease can be attributed to the YG and what portion to other factors, like economic growth of European economies since 2013¹⁷?

Social research, including evaluation research, features a range of methods for establishing direct or causal effects between an intervention and its outcomes. Concrete methods will be briefly mentioned in the section on evaluation paradigms.

Evaluation is an aspect of a public policy processes and institutions and is best analysed as such, not as an independent field of activity even though evaluation has evolved into an independent business sector. From this point of view, evaluation is a tool for improving governance and, through this, a tool for improving societal development and well-being of members of a society.

2.2. Theory of change

Important for evaluations are the concepts of **theory or change (TOC)** and **programme theory (PT)**. Both TOC and PT serve the purpose of describing the causes why and how a concrete intervention interferes with society and brings about the desired and planned change. While the 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 them is that formulating clearly the TOC and PT makes details and process 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 to formulate shared terms that is a necessary prerequisite of effective communication about it. Especially important is that this way of thinking allows to critically examine assumptions about the problem at hand; reliance on un- or under-critical assumptions is amongst major reasons explaining why programmes fail to deliver results (see Fox et al 2017: 42-58; Centre for Theory of Change¹⁸). Reliable and valid understanding of the circumstances and possibilities is crucial for making amendments to the program at later stages.

2.3. Research paradigms in evaluation

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

Post-positivism

The underlying belief that defines research carried out within limits of this paradigm is that there is 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

¹⁶ European Commission. n.d. Youth Guarantee and Youth employment Initiative Factsheet.

¹⁷ Eurostat, table TEC00115, last update: 11 September 2019, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tec00115/default/table?lang=en>, visited 11 September 2019.

¹⁸ What is theory of change? Centre for theory of change homepage, <https://www.theoryofchange.org/what-is-theory-of-change/>, visited 3 September 2019.

methods and data for that purpose. For a researcher carrying out an evaluation exercise, the task is to establish least biased estimates of impacts when carrying out ex post or summative evaluation.

There are a number of research methods that are compatible with this paradigm. In particular, quantitative research using experimental or quasi-experimental design, systematic reviews and meta-analysis building on experimental research, are deemed especially suitable for delivering unbiased estimates of programme effects.

However, capturing reality in all of its complexity is believed not to be possible in real world. Even though the core ideas underlying experimental and quasi-experimental research designs are simple, in real life it is virtually impossible to fulfil the main requirements of experimenting – random distribution into experimental and control group. The consequence is that researchers can not be 100% sure that estimates of effects indeed are 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 types of research that are seen as capable of delivering least biased estimates and other research that has a lower capability for that.

Research projects utilising experimental designs are considered least threatened by the threats to internal validity and have the greatest potential to produce unbiased results. Non-experimental designs have a higher likelihood to produce biased results as they are more jeopardised by the threats. In the bottom of what is known as 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. On top of experimental research, meta-analyses, systematic reviews and overviews of systematic reviews are carried out to achieve even a higher credibility of the knowledge about the effects of particular interventions. Being based on results of a number of experimental research projects, the knowledge generated through generalization of high credibility individual research is considered even more credible than that generated in individual projects using (quasi-)experimental design.

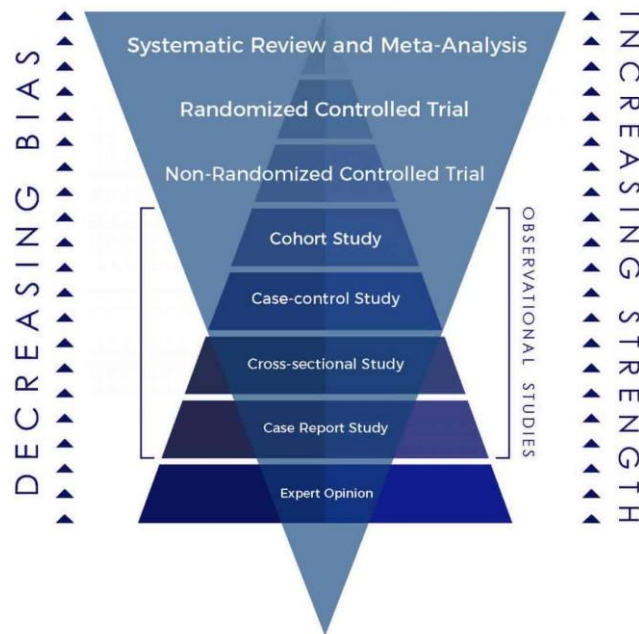


Figure 1. Hierarchy of evidence¹⁹

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 significance of different factors and relationships between factors and circumstances.

Also scientific realist approach to evaluation relies on theories when building a causal path from the intervention to outputs to 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 brought about a change in society as a result of implementing an intervention. It seeks to establish the effect possibly accurately but in addition to this, it attempts to identify how exactly the intervention lead to observed outcomes. The question that an evaluator working in realist evaluation framework seeks to answer is “what works, for whom, in what context and to what extent”. It is not focusing on “what works” only but seeks to describe circumstances too. Evaluation reports should take into account contexts and circumstances and shed light on context-mechanism-outcome pattern configurations (see Davies, Nutley, Tilly 2000²⁰). This approach to evaluation attempts to picture an intervention within its context and understand how it ‘works’ i.e. 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 minimized, as it is attempted in (quasi-)experimental research. Within the ‘what works’ paradigm, the spectrum of research procedures, research designs, data sources that are valued is wider than in the impact evaluation strand, which sees (post-)positivist experimental research bearing the mark of gold standard. In the ‘what works’ realist evaluation paradigm, qualitative research that seeks to understand ‘the world’ in naturalistic, subjective (as perceived by actors themselves) settings (rather

¹⁹ Matthews, J. 2017. *Evaluating scientific evidence*. http://www.foodinsight.org/Evaluating_Scientific_Evidence, last accessed 3.1.2018.

²⁰ Davies, H., Nutley, S., Tilley, N. (2000). Debates on the role of experimentation. In Davies, H., Nutley, S. and Smith, P. (eds) *What works? Evidence-based policy and practice in public services*. The Policy Press.

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 a potential to enhance understanding social mechanisms of an intervention, and how it bring about the intended (and unintended) effects (Davies 2000²¹; Davies, Nutley, Smith 2000: 4-9²²; Mullen 2015²³).

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

Responsive constructivist and social constructionist approach to evaluation

Responsive constructivist approach to evaluation is based on beliefs that there is no given, objective social reality and that 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.

Like it is characteristic to social constructivism in general, also in evaluation 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 are its outcomes. Social constructionist view of evaluation (research) goes a step further and emphasizes the centrality of common understandings and joint evaluation questions, which are to be elaborated in interactions between different stakeholder groups, and researchers are to be integrated in this process as representatives of an expert group. Knowledge on the evaluation is built – constructed – through the process of interactions between stakeholder groups. As such, this approach is actor-oriented seeking to collate different interpretations and perspectives on a particular phenomenon rather than seeking to establish objective knowledge and unbiased estimates that would be the objective of a positivist evaluation project (Dessouky 2016).²⁴

Within this evaluation paradigm, fourth generation sees the role of the evaluator in building a narrative where 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 be recognised (Kushner 1996²⁵). The procedure of constructivist evaluation is highly complex and demanding in terms of reaching to accepted statements about the

²¹ Davies, P. (2000). Contributions from qualitative research In Davies, H., Nutley, S. and Smith, P. (eds) *What works? Evidence-based policy and practice in public services*. The Policy Press. P. 291-316.

²² Davies, H., Nutley, S., Smith, P. (2000). Introducing evidence-based policy and practice in public services. In Davies, H., Nutley, S. and Smith, P. (eds) *What works? Evidence-based policy and practice in public services*. The Policy Press. P. 1-11.

²³ Mullen, E.J. (2015), Reconsidering the “Idea” of Evidence in Evidence-based Policy & Practice. *European Journal of Social Work* April, 2015, 310-335. doi: 10.1080/13691457.2015.1022716.

²⁴ Dessouky, N.F.E (2016), Public policy evaluation theory: from first to fifth generation. *EPRA International Journal of Economic and Business Review*, Vol 4, Issue 4, pp. 15-25.

²⁵ Kushner, S. 1996. The limits of constructivism in evaluation. *Evaluation*, Vol2(2), p.189-200.

evaluand (Guba, Lincoln 2001²⁶). The fifth generation evaluation sees the role of a researcher in that the researcher supports the evaluation process with bringing an alternative viewpoint – research informed opinions – to the scene.

The list of data collection and analysis methods includes interviews, observations and other methods of qualitative research.

2.4. Knowledge transfer from researchers to policy makers

Evaluation research is carried out with an aim to produce information that is useful for assessing the quality of implementation of a policy measure, or a mix of policy measures, over a specified time frame. As explained in this report, this information may come in different forms – it can be an assessment of outputs and outcomes, or costs and benefits, be an estimate of the number and/or share of target to whom it was intended to reach, and so on. The specific feature of this information is that it is intended to be used in public policy decision-making. There are many ideas around and about how knowledge can be transferred from research to policy, like knowledge brokering, knowledge exchange, knowledge management, dissemination, knowledge mobilization, and many more.²⁷ Transfer of knowledge to policy is a natural, inseparable aspect of evaluation – evaluation, by definition, is carried out with an aim to inform policy. We can think on two types of models that describe this process: linear models and relationship based models. Linear model suggests 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, generalizable across contexts. Relationship models develop further the linear model and focus on the interactions among people 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. Hence it is believed that the success depends on effective relationships. In this model, an important difference is that knowledge is seen to come from multiple sources like research, theory, policy, practice. However, all these processes take place within public sector, and this does significantly influence the interactions between actors and modes of knowledge transfer. Local and national circumstances are the most important factor that frames different modes of knowledge transfer that are embedded in institutions and practices (Best & Holmes 2010²⁸). The entire terrain of transferring knowledge to action is highly complex, with many interdependent aspects and factors. Cairney et. al. suggest in order to effectively channel knowledge to policy, researchers have to behave much like other stakeholder groups: build networks and connections with policy makers and policy making institutions, the flow of information to public sector institutions should be permanent not a one-off dissemination of state-of-the-art knowledge, researchers should familiarize themselves with how

²⁶ Guba, E.G., Lincoln, Y.S. 2001. Guidelines and checklist for constructivist (a.k.a fourth generation) evaluation. http://www.dmeforpeace.org/sites/default/files/Guba%20and%20Lincoln_Constructivist%20Evaluation.pdf, accessed 31 August 2019.

²⁷ For an overview of terms, see 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.

²⁸ Best, A., Holmes, B. (2010) Systems thinking, knowledge and action: towards better models and methods. *Evidence & Policy*, vol 6, no 2, 2010, pp.145-59.

policies are developed, implemented, evaluated (Cairney, Oliver & Wellstead 2016²⁹). Fox et. al. suggest a range of factors that researchers wanting to influence policy should take into account. These include mapping beneficiaries and knowing whom to approach to, being accessible, providing relevant information in a timely manner, providing credible information, “translating” research findings into more easily understandable forms, “teaching” and supporting decision-makers in making use of the information, and personal contacts with policy people and enthusiasm (Fox et al 2017: 242-257).

Both of these approaches are tied to research paradigms. The linear model assumes that knowledge is created by researchers and then needs to be transferred to policy-makers. To that end, a range of tools and methods can be employed, from producing reader friendly policy briefs to presentations to collaboration events where researchers present their work. The relationship model does assume that in creation of knowledge, interactions between researchers and policy makers play important if not crucial role. In this model, producing policy briefs is not enough although it does not hurt. Instead, various collaboration methods would be advised like joint working groups, joint management boards where also researchers are involved, and other similar undertakings which bring researchers, policy makers and practitioners together (see Fox et al 2017: 241-258). As mentioned earlier, this approach gives researchers a more significant role in policy processes but also assumes that researchers themselves get more invested in policy processes.

2.5. Policy learning and transfer from one place to another, form one sector to another

Policy transfer refers to transferring knowledge about policy interventions, administrative arrangements and institutions in one political setting (now or in the past) is used for developing policies, and related arrangements in another political settings – in another country, in different times, under different socio-economic conditions. Nowadays this form of policy making is fairly widespread and there are institutions that support exchange of ideas like, for instance, exchange of best practices or learning from peers in another country. Policy learning is concerned mainly with increasing the understanding of why and how a particular intervention functions under certain conditions and circumstances (in country A) and whether it would be as successful also in different settings (in country B). As such, it is a part of policy transfer process. The central question addressed asks “Under what circumstances and to what extent can a programme that is effective in one place transfer to another?” (Rose 1991).³⁰

However, real life policy transfer and policy learning are more complex than studying successes and circumstances of one particular intervention because a single intervention is embedded in a wider public administration system. During stable times, changes in public sector in general are incremental, and a new measure is adapted to fit the existing system, not vice versa. Hence, what counts is the overall style of learning and policy making characteristic to a specific country. Below are

²⁹ Cairney, P., Oliver, K., Wellstead, A. 2016, To Bridge the Divide between Evidence and Policy: Reduce Ambiguity as Much as Uncertainty. *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 76, Iss. 3, pp. 399–402. DOI: 10.1111/puar.12555.

³⁰ Rose, R. (1991). What is Lesson-Drawing? *Journal of Public Policy*, Volume 11, Issue 1, pp. 3-30.

described three distinct model of policy transfer that rely on different ways of learning (see Cairney 2017).³¹

Policy emulation model

Policy emulation model suggests learning from other countries and regions and adopting those practices that are backed by evidence gathered from high quality research, ideally from experimental or quasi-experimental research, and secondary analyses of those reports. This model emphasizes relying on evidence that ranks high on the hierarchy of evidence that has roots in positivist evaluation. Experimental and quasi-experimental studies, meta-analysis and systematic reviews are amongst studies that are most valued under this model while expert opinions, user testimonies and cross-sectional attitude polls rank the lowest.

In recent decades, many countries, large international organisations (e.g. OECD) and other actors have put a lot of effort into building and making publicly accessible databases that contain descriptions of policy interventions that have been found effective and for which there is convincing evidence of their effectiveness. There are different online databases that store evaluations of programs and program descriptions that are relevant for the youth field; below are mentioned just three:

- The website Evidence Based Programs provides access to a number of interventions effectiveness of which has been tested using high quality research methods. One finds there programs in the areas of early childhood, education, employment and welfare, housing, health care, substance abuse prevention and treatment, crime and violence prevention. <https://evidencebasedprograms.org/>.
- Website Blueprints Programs provides a comprehensive, trusted registry of evidence-based interventions (programs, practices and policies) that are effective in reducing antisocial behavior and promoting a healthy course of youth development and adult maturity. It addresses problem behavior, education, emotional well-being, physical health and positive relationships. <https://www.blueprintsprograms.org>.
- The Campbell Collaboration 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. <https://campbellcollaboration.org/>. It contains a link to other evidence portals, <https://www.campbellcollaboration.org/evidence-portals.html>, where one can search for high quality programs in the areas of labor, social welfare, education, health, and in other sectors.

Such research is published also in peer-reviewed academic journals. Often also think tanks, research organisations, and other actors involved in evaluation and knowledge production, upload evaluation reports on their websites.

Storytelling model

Storytelling model is similar to the policy emulation model in that the best practices are borrowed from other countries or regions. The difference lies in what is concerned good evidence. In this model, user testimonies and satisfaction has taken a more significant place than in the case of strictly

³¹ Cairney, P. (2017). Evidence-based best practice is more political than it looks: a case study of the ‘Scottish Approach’. *Evidence & Policy*, Vol 13, No 3, pp. 499–515.

experimental research. Storytelling-style policy transfer and learning is supported extensively by the EC. For instance, EC database on labor market measures presents a range of practices that are considered good practice but in most cases, no high quality evidence is presented <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1251&langId=en>. The practices have been considered valuable by practitioners and/or by policy makers but in most cases rigorous research has not been carried out. Hence it is not possible to exclude the possibility that the observed (and reported) effects of the evaluated policy measure were not due to the methods that were employed during evaluation, rather than by the measure itself.

Improvement science model

Improvement science model suggests learning and borrowing from other sectors where a project or a program has been implemented successfully. When a policy program has been identified as a success story, then it can be transferred to other sectors and/or scaled up from a small successful pilot projects into a large program. A range of sectors have a potential to offer the youth sector examples of programs that could be successfully implemented also in the youth sectors: health, criminal prevention, education, sports, life-long learning and there are more. Obviously, the success of any transition from one sector to another heavily depends on specifics of institutional and organizational setup of a concrete country, on its social and political conditions, political regime and on other circumstances that all need be taken into account when planning and executing a transition of an intervention.

In recent decades, policy learning with help from large international organisations has become more and more common. European Union too is one such organization which initiates and supports implementation of certain interventions by all EU member states.

3. Monitoring and evaluation of youth policies

3.1. What is monitoring?

Monitoring is a continuous, systematic process of collecting data prior to and during the implementation of an intervention for the purpose of tracking the progress against set goals and objectives. It provides management and all stakeholders of an intervention with invaluable information of the extent of achievement of stated targets and goals, allowing them to make informed decisions and take remedial actions whenever deviations from initial plans are detected. (OECD DAC Glossary 2002³²) In even simpler terms, „to monitor means to observe. Monitoring of outputs means to observe whether intended products are delivered and whether implementation is on track.“ (EC 2014³³)

The purposes of monitoring, and its benefits if these purposes are achieved, are to:

- Measure the results produced by a public intervention in order to assess whether it is on track against its goal and objectives;
- Provide unique information about the performance of public interventions at national, regional, local or sector levels, and also about performance of the entities involved (government, individual ministries and agencies, managers and their staff);
- Account for material, financial and human resources and support the decision for necessary adjustments to them whenever is needed;
- Provide opportunities for beneficiaries and other stakeholders to participate in the monitoring process (participatory monitoring);
- Provide relevant monitoring data for evaluations.

3.2. What is evaluation?

Nowadays it is widely believed that evaluation research counts and supports growth of prosperity and social justice (OECD 2012: 4, 6-7³⁴). It does so by improving various policy decisions, from service provision to legislation, from organisational and local to cross-national level. Integration of regulatory impact analysis – currently the most widespread form of evaluation in public administration – began in 1970s and gained momentum in 1990s (Deighton-Smith, Erbacci, Kauffmann 2016: 10³⁵). In the European Union, European Commission has been paying attention to improving the quality of regulations since 2002 when the better regulation programme was adopted. The programme featured also obligatory impact assessments for public policies.³⁶ Better Regulation Package adopted

³² OECD 2002, Glossary of Based Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Management, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

³³ European Commission 2014. Guidance Document on Monitoring and Evaluation, https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/2014/working/wd_2014_en.pdf, visited 6 September 2019.

³⁴ OECD 2012. *RECOMMENDATION OF THE COUNCIL ON REGULATORY POLICY AND GOVERNANCE*, <http://www.oecd.org/gov/regulatory-policy/49990817.pdf>, accessed 16 July 2019.

³⁵ Deighton-Smith, R., Erbacci, A. and Kauffmann, C. 2016. *Promoting inclusive growth through better regulation: The role of regulatory impact assessment*. OECD Regulatory Policy Working Papers No. 3, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5jm3tqwqp1vj-en>, accessed 16 July 2019.

³⁶ 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, visited 6 September 2019.

in 2015 emphasises the importance of that regulatory impact evaluation (RIA) and impact evaluation of regulations. s (EC 2017³⁷).

There is no universal agreement on the definition of evaluation itself. However, one of the most commonly used definitions of evaluation is the one developed by OECD/DAC. Evaluation is *“the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An 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. Evaluation also refers to the process of determining the worth or significance of an activity, policy or program, to an assessment, as systematic and objective as possible, of a planned, on-going, or completed development intervention”*. (OECD DAC Glossary 2002)

Evaluation shows how far a policy or programme has achieved its objectives, how well it has used its resources and what has been its impact. It also shows what works and what doesn't, the good practices and lessons learned in the implementation of an intervention.

Participatory evaluation is a relatively new method for carrying out evaluation. Its specifics is involving different stakeholders' groups in generation and interpretation of data on the intervention being evaluated. It can be used within any of the evaluation paradigms and for any of the evaluation purposes. (Richardson 2017).

3.3. Differences between monitoring and evaluation

The distinction between evaluation and monitoring can sometimes be blurred since both involve some form of data collection, analysis, and reflection on the implications for action. However, monitoring tends to be a continuous process, while evaluation is typically periodic and involves a greater element of analysis and reflection. Monitoring is integral for insightful evaluation because it provides a sufficient base of information is available about how a project or program was implemented, including whether and in what ways it deviated from its intended design.

Evaluations, like monitoring, can apply to many things, including an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector or organization. While both monitoring and evaluation aim to provide information that can help inform decisions, improve performance and achieve planned results, evaluations are done independently to provide managers and staff with an objective assessment of whether or not they are on track (efficiency and effectiveness, but also impact and sustainability). They are also more rigorous in their procedures, design and methodology, and generally involve more extensive analysis.

³⁷ European Commission 2017. COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT. *Better Regulation Guidelines*. Brussels, 7 July 2017. SWD (2017) 350. <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/better-regulation-guidelines.pdf>, visited 6 September 2019.

Table 1. Monitoring and evaluation of youth sector intervention compared

CRITERIA	MONITORING	EVALUATION
Frequency	Regular, ongoing	Episodic
Main action	Keeping track/oversight	Assessment
Basic purpose	Improving efficiency Adjusting work plan	Improve effectiveness, impact, future programming
Focus	Inputs/outputs, process outcomes, work plans	Effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, impact, sustainability
Information sources	Routine systems, field visits, stakeholder meetings, output reports	Surveys (pre-post project) Special studies
Undertaken by	Project/program managers Community / youth workers Supervisors Community (beneficiaries) Donors and other Stakeholders	External/independent evaluators Community (beneficiaries) Project/program managers Donors

3.4. Why monitoring and evaluating youth policies?

In general, monitoring and evaluation of public policies:

- contribute to ensuring accountability in the sector it is conducted – as they offer the information needed to understand how each policy is planned and implemented
- support learning in the field and the development of better future policies
- offer support for inter-institutional and public communication and promotion on the results and impact of the policy in question
- allow the participation of stakeholders, including policy beneficiaries, to the policy process

All the above-mentioned advantages provided by monitoring and evaluation to public policy development and implementation are of great value in the sector of youth and for youth policies. We need to keep in mind the horizontal / trans-sectorial nature of the youth policy and the numerous correlations needed with sectorial policies like education, social inclusion, employment, health, sport, housing etc. In this context, **monitoring and evaluation are needed to ensure accountability of each involved institution and stakeholder and they allow the promotion of specific results in the field of youth to all policy makers that need to be informed and interested by youth issues.**

The needs of young people are evolving even faster than the context of other public policies. Therefore, the **learning outcomes of monitoring and evaluation of youth policies are extremely valuable to support decision makers in amending and adapting youth policies to better answer the needs of young people.**

Participation of young people in evaluation of public policies addressing young people is held dear on the youth field. Participatory evaluation therefore may bear special significance in the youth field. The participation of policy beneficiaries to the policy process, including its monitoring and evaluation, is very important for each sectorial policy in a democratic society. However, for **youth participation to youth policies** has an even more important role.

It contributes to:

- **higher policy relevance**, as needs of the concerned beneficiaries are better known,
- **increased accountability**, as beneficiaries can ask directly for proper policy implementation,
- **providing a way of learning citizenship roles**, as young beneficiaries involved in youth policy evaluation grow into adults with higher and better-informed interest for public and civic participation.

3.5. Evaluation criteria and evaluation questions

The evaluation criteria and evaluation questions constitute the backbone of an evaluation. Defining questions is an essential part of the start-up of any evaluation. Together with the evaluation criteria evaluation questions frame your evaluation by specifying what information needs to be produced (on outcomes, factors influencing these outcomes etc.). Evaluation criteria help focus evaluation objectives by defining the standards against which the initiative will be assessed.

Table 2. Evaluation criteria and questions

CRITERIA	MAIN QUESTIONS (examples)
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are youth policy objectives in line with young people's needs? - Can be planned objectives met through the implementation of planned interventions and the achievement of envisaged results? (internal relevance) - Are youth policy consistent and coherent with other policies targeting young people?
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the evaluated youth policy achieving its objectives? - The outputs/results produced lead to achieving objectives? - What have been the successes and difficulties? how appropriate have the solutions chosen? - What is the influence of internal and external factors to generating outputs?
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the policy providing value-for-money?! - Could the outputs be produced with less resources? - Even though targets may be reached, are they being reached in a way that makes the policy too costly to continue? - Is the policy implemented in a timely manner? - The institutional system in place to implement the policy is/was efficient (structure, procedures, process)?
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are outcomes achieved sustainable? - Are there any sustainability risks (institutional, legislative, environmental, societal etc.)? - What measures need to be taken to set them aside and ensure sustainability?
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How is the policy changing (directly or indirectly) the life of young people? - To what extent have the results contributed to immediate/intermediate/wider change? - What worked, why and how – which are the policy elements with more impact? - What are the factors affecting, positively or negatively, the impact?

3.6. Evaluation types

Literature in the field of evaluation distinguish several types of evaluations (some of them overlapping). The table below offers a simple presentation of the most well-known evaluation types.

Table 3. Evaluation types

PERSPECTIVE	EVALUATION TYPES
Timing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ex-ante 2. Interim 3. Ex-post
Purpose	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prospective (coincide with ex-ante evaluation) 2. Formative or process (coincide with interim evaluation, focused on learning and “shaping” an intervention, its relevance, effectiveness and efficiency) 3. Summative (coincide with ex-post evaluation, focused on accountability, impact and sustainability)
Institutional involvement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internal – carried out by the institution in charge with the policy 2. External - carried out by external experts under the coordination of the institution in charge with the policy implementation 3. Independent - carried out by independent actors from the institution in charge with the policy implementation, like NGOs or think tanks
Design of the impact evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Theory based 2. Counterfactual impact evaluation

Ex ante or prospective evaluation

Ex ante or prospective evaluation attempts to forecast effects of a concrete intervention, including its costs and also possible unintended effects. A specific type of prospective evaluation is Regulatory Impact Analysis (RIA) that is used to scrutinise planned legislative moves. 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 actions is undertaken. This includes quantifying the expected costs and benefits of a regulatory measure, assessment of the effectiveness of the measure in achieving its policy goals as well as determining whether there are superior 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 2009³⁸).

³⁸ OECD 2009. Chapter 1. Regulatory Impact Analysis: A tool for Policy Coherence. In *Regulatory Impact Analysis: A tool for Policy Coherence*, OECD Publishing, https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/regulatory-impact-analysis/regulatory-impact-analysis_9789264067110-1-en, visited 10 September 2019.

Figure 2. Evaluation timing

Formative evaluation

Formative or process evaluation focuses on how a certain action is implemented. The main goal of formative evaluation is to give feedback so that quality of the implementation of the intervention could be assessed and amended when 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 implementation projects and suggests ways to answer questions about context, adaptations, and response to change (Stetler et al 2006³⁹).

Implementation of an intervention in a public administration system is a complex process, especially if several ministries are involved. A range of public administration theories describe the processes that are relevant for understanding processes in public administration structures which implement policy intervention financed from public purse. Majority of them take top-down view on implementation and focus on how more general process and circumstances influence more concrete processes and circumstances. Street-level bureaucracy theory starts out 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 up (Fox et al 2017).

Ex post or retrospective evaluation

Ex post or retrospective evaluation is evaluation that focuses on describing actual outcomes of implementing an intervention. This type of evaluations may be also called summative evaluations because their 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

39 Cheryl B Stetler, C.B., Legro, M.W., Wallace, C.M., Bowman, C., Guihan, M., Hagedorn, H., Kimmel, B., Sharp, N.D., and Smith, J.L. 2006. The Role of Formative Evaluation in Implementation Research and the QUERI Experience. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 2006 Feb; 21(Suppl 2): S1–S8. doi: [10.1111/j.1525-1497.2006.00355.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1525-1497.2006.00355.x)

summative evaluation is justified when an intervention has been implemented long enough so that outcomes and impact have had sufficient time to occur.

3.7. Impact evaluation of youth policies

Among the evaluation criteria, impact is the most difficult to define and assess. Most often impact is defined as the meaningful and lasting (short or long term) change generated by a policy or other type of intervention. When speaking about youth policies, **impact is generally seen as the change generated (directly or indirectly) by the policy in the life of young people.**

In order to determine a positive change in the life of young people, youth policies generate results concerning:

- *personal and professional development of young people;*
- *personal and professional development of youth workers;*
- *quality development within the participating youth organisations;*
- *local communities the youth organisations work in.*

Two approaches can be used in order to evaluate the impact of any intervention: the theory-based evaluation or the counterfactual impact evaluation.

Theory based evaluation

The theory-based evaluation starts from the idea that any planned intervention is determined by a theory of change that will produce effects and results, but also a lasting impact, by addressing some needs or problems, with a series of resources and activities, in a given context. The theory of change can be explicit in the policy or programme, or implicit (although it is not formulated, it can be deduced and "reconstructed").

In this context, the theory-based evaluation tests the logical and practical links between the elements of the theory of change for the evaluated intervention: needs, resources, activities, supportive and disruptive factors, immediate and sustainable results. Qualitative and quantitative research and evaluation methods are used for this approach, and their combination in a methodological mix is recommended. Complex methods such as cost-benefit assessment, cost-effectiveness assessment, realistic assessment, multi-criteria analysis are ways in which theory-based assessment can be performed.

Counterfactual evaluation

Counterfactual evaluation is a way of evaluating the impact by applying experimental or (most often) quasi-experimental research methods and using econometric and statistical tools. Impact is measured at the level of the beneficiaries of the evaluated intervention. It is important that this impact measurement is comparable to other similar measurements. The impact, thus measured at the level of the beneficiaries, integrates both the results of the intervention, as well as the effects of the contextual factors, positive or negative, and is called gross impact. In order to determine the exclusive impact of the evaluated intervention, the beneficiaries are placed in a treatment group. A second, untreated group, comparable to the treatment group, is selected. This second group is called the control group. The same dimensions / variables measured at the treatment group level are also measured at the control group level, and the results are compared. The entities in the two treatment

and control groups can be individuals, organizations, companies, institutions, cities, depending on the type of intervention evaluated.

The difference between the values of the impact variables recorded in the treatment group and those recorded in the control group represents the net impact of the evaluated intervention, which can be attributed exclusively and directly to it. To better understand how net impact occurs, and whether positive or negative factors generate differences between net and gross impact, methods of collecting and qualitatively analysing information can also be used to complete a counterfactual assessment.

3.8. Methods used for evaluation

The evaluation techniques or methods are the third key element needed in order to carry out an evaluation. There are more than 50 methods, most of them used for social science research as well, which are useful/used in evaluations. Most often used methods in evaluations (EC, 2013, EALSED Sourcebook⁴⁰) are:

- surveys
- interviews
- case studies
- focus groups
- expert panels
- Delphi surveys
- multi-criteria analysis
- SWOT analysis
- statistical analysis, including descriptive statistics and regression analysis
- cost-benefit analysis for the evaluation of policies efficiency
- cost-effectiveness analysis for the evaluation of policies efficiency.

⁴⁰ European Commission, DG REGIO, 2013, „EVALSED: The resource for the evaluation of Socio-Economic Development”, https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/guide/evaluation_sourcebook.pdf, visited 03 October 2019.

4. Overview of youth policy evaluation in Europe

4.1. Objectives

In the context of the youth policy evaluation review, a survey research was carried out. It has covered 32 countries, aiming to carry to provide data and information for an assessment 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.

4.2. Scope

This overview is based on a **survey research of EKCYC members and other stakeholders** carried out in 32 countries. The invitation to participate in the survey research has been sent to all EKCYC correspondents. 36 responded to a survey. All calculations are carried out using 36 responses. Survey period June 6-20, 2019. Countries: UK, Principality of Liechtenstein, Malta, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Greece, Portugal, The Netherlands, Poland, Slovak Republic, Republic of Serbia, Croatia, Georgia, The Republic of Belarus, Azerbaijan, Finland, Romania, Cyprus, Republic of North Macedonia, Armenia, France, Belgium - French-speaking Community, Sweden, Czech Republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Montenegro and etc.

4.3. Indicators and fields

The survey instrument is aimed at gathering information about State structures responsible for the youth policy (design/coordination/ implementation); youth policy monitoring and evaluation; framework of youth policy monitoring and evaluation; examples of good practices; current challenges for youth policy evaluation and youth policy making and etc. The survey instrument consists of closed-ended and open-ended questions (please see Annex 1).

4.4. State structures responsible for the youth policy design, coordination and implementation

In the largest number of the countries (N=32) covered by survey, there is one or more permanent government body responsible for youth policy. In one country, there is one or more temporary government body responsible for youth policy. By the type of the policy documents, the largest number of countries have a Youth strategy (24.7%), Youth law (20%), Youth Programme (17,6%), Youth Plan (15,3%) and Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan (12.9%) (For a more detailed for youth policy documents and countries please see table 4).

Table 4. Countries by type of youth policy documents, N=36

Country	Youth Strategy	Youth Programme	Youth Plan	Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan
Montenegro	*		*	
Germany	*	*		*

Country	Youth Strategy	Youth Programme	Youth Plan	Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan
Bulgaria	*		*	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	*			
Czech Republic	*			
Republic of Armenia				
Ukraine	*	*		
Sweden				
France	*	*		*
Belgium - French-speaking Community			*	
France	*	*	*	*
Belarus		*	*	*
Armenia				
Republic of North Macedonia	*		*	*
Cyprus	*		*	*
Ukraine	*	*		
Romania	*			*
Finland		*		
Azerbaijan	*	*		
The Republic of Belarus		*	*	
Georgia	*	*	*	
Croatia				
Republic of Serbia	*		*	
Slovak Republic				
Poland	*			
The Netherlands		*		

Country	Youth Strategy	Youth Programme	Youth Plan	Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan
Portugal	*	*	*	*
Greece	*			
Luxembourg		*		*
Lithuania	*	*	*	
Malta	*	*		*
Principality of Liechtenstein				
UK				
Estonia	*		*	*

4.5. Main objectives and indicators for youth policy evaluation

Sustainable indicators and monitoring are important for progress measurement, identification strengths and weaknesses, sharing experiences, improving effectiveness, accountability to stakeholders. Lack of high quality, comprehensive data and research limits evidence-based decision making in youth policy. Concerning the main objectives and indicators for youth policy evaluation, we can observe quite diverse picture among member states. We can clearly distinguish the following trends: 1) some countries have a precise list of indicators that are linked with in different youth strategic documents and their implementation plans, for example: Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020 (Estonia), The National Youth Strategy Action Plan 2018-2020 (Serbia) and etc. 2) in some countries a comprehensive list or overview of the main objectives and indicators for youth policy monitoring and evaluation does not exist because of the cross-sectorial approach of youth policy and the involvement of many different ministries and public administrations in the design and implementation of youth policy.

Table 5. Youth Policy Documents, Objectives and Indicators in Selected Countries

Youth Policy Documents	Youth Policy Objectives	Youth Policy Indicators
Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020 (Estonia)	is that the young person has ample opportunities for self-development and self-realization, which supports the formation of a cohesive and creative society. Sub-goals: 1. Young people have more choices in terms of discovering their own creative and developmental potential 2. Young people are at a lower risk of exclusion 3. Greater support for the participation of young people in decision-making	1. The proportion of the young people aged 18- 24 with basic education or lower, who do not continue their studies 2. The youth unemployment rate amongst young people aged 15-24 3. The involvement of young people in youth work (% of all young people) 4. Young people per hobby school* 5. Young people per youth centre 6. The organized opportunities to participate (youth councils) 7. The youth workers participating training programmes in a year
Youth Field	To ensure young people ample opportunities	1. The proportion of not studying young

Youth Policy Documents	Youth Policy Objectives	Youth Policy Indicators
Programme 2019-2022 (Estonia)	for self-development and self-realization, which supports the formation of a cohesive and creative society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. people with low education level aged 18-22 2. The satisfaction of young people involved in youth work (%) 3. The involvement of young people in youth work (% of all young people) 4. The involvement of young people in youth work in municipalities, which population consists mostly of non-Estonian speaking people compared to Estonian average (% of all young people) 5. Young people per hobby school 6. Young people per youth centre 7. The organized opportunities to participate (youth councils) 8. The proportion of youth workers participating in youth work trainings and improving their competences in a year
Social Programme "Youth of Ukraine" for 2016-2020, (Ukraine)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demographic indices; 2. Education; 3. Employment; 4. Financial situation; 5 Health; 6. HIV/AIDS prevention; 7. Legal offences among youth; 8. Youth mobility; 9. Access to information and communication technologies; 10. Civic activity and youth engagement; 11. Youth policy implementation.

Table 6. Youth Policy Documents and Objectives in Selected Countries

Youth Policy Documents	Youth Policy Objectives
Youth law (2008, 2016), Luxembourg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a favourable environment, promote the development and integration of young people in society 2. Promote personal fulfilment and social and professional development of young people 3. Contribute to the education of young people as responsible and active citizens, respectful of democracy, values and fundamental rights of society 4. Work towards equality of chances and combat the mechanisms of exclusion and failure 5. Work towards gender equality 6. Promote solidarity and mutual understanding of young people in a multicultural society 7. Promote active citizenship 8. Promote the access of young people to autonomy 9. Promote sense of initiative, creativity and spirit of initiative of young people 10. Promote non-formal education and support active organisations in this field. 11. Work for inclusion and social cohesion (Art. 1,7) 12. Promote the academic success of children and youth and to prevent school dropout (Art. 1,12) 13. Contribute to the learning of the languages of the country thereby promoting social and academic integration (Art. 1,13).
2018 - 2021 National Youth Plan, Portugal	<p>This instrument has as its mission the concretization of youth policies with a view to strengthening the special protection of protection of young people within the framework of Article 70^oof the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic.</p> <p>Formal and Non-Formal Education; Job; Cheers; Housing; Environment and Sustainable Development; Equality and Social Inclusion and Governance and Participation. The definition of the strategic areas resulted from a wide consultation process developed among young people and the main actors of the sector (namely youth organizations, associative leaders, youth technicians, academia and municipalities). In order to carry out the plan, the four thousand 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 organizations that make up the Youth Advisory Board. The involvement of all government areas allowed for the inclusion of about 250 measures.</p>
The main strategic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing a better standard of living and equal opportunities for a decent life. 2. Creating

priorities of the National Youth Strategy 2016 - 2025	conditions for effective observance and protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, and systematic integration and interaction of different categories of young people. 3. Creating opportunities for the involvement of young people in the monitoring and implementation of policies and decisions that affect them. 4. Equal access to quality education and other forms of personal and professional development. No system for monitoring and evaluation is publicly available. There were efforts for developing such system applicable for each strategic goal but although developed with support of the OSCE Mission in the country, the matrix is not publicly available
Project Youth in Numbers (Mladez v cislech: which reflects meeting the 13 strategic goals (SG) of the national Youth Strategy for the period 2014 – 2020 (Koncepcie podpory mladeze na obdobi 2014 – 2020	SG1: To facilitate equal access of children and youth to rights SG 2: To facilitate equal access of children and youth to information SG 3: To create favourable and sustainable conditions for the participation of children and youth in leisure-based and non-formal education SG 4: To expand and make more attractive the offer of leisure activities and to motivate children and youth to make active use of them SG 5: To support the increase of cross-border mobility of young people SG 6: To improve conditions for employment and employability of youth SG 7: To promote comprehensive and harmonic development of children and youth with emphasis on their physical and mental health and moral responsibility SG 8: To promote active involvement of children and young people in decision-making processes and in influencing the social and democratic life SG 9: To create favourable conditions for volunteering for young people including valuation and recognition of voluntary activities SG 10: To facilitate inclusion of children and young people with fewer opportunities SG 11: To motivate children and youth towards a life based on the principles of sustainable development and to develop their environmental literacy SG 12: To encourage the development of competencies in children and young people for safe and creative use of media

The most often in the member states that participated in the survey implementation monitoring has been carried out at least once (65.5%). (For a more detailed please see Table 7). However, quite large part of the respondents indicated that no impact evaluation (37.9%) and at least one general evaluation of the policy implementation has been carried out has been carried out (35.5%).

Table 7. Monitoring of implementation or impact evaluations of national youth policy, N=36

	Yes	No	Do not know
Ex ante evaluation has been carried out at least once	43.3%	33.3%	23.3%
Implementation monitoring has been carried out at least once	65.5%	24.1%	10.3%
At least one impact evaluation has been carried out	41.4%	37.9%	20.7%
At least one general evaluation of the policy implementation has been carried out	48.4%	35.5%	16.1%

When it comes to youth policy sectors, the most often ex ante evaluations, implementation monitoring and impact evaluations are carried out in the field of Policies regarding employment of young people (For a more detailed please see the figures below). When it comes to other policy fields targeting young people, the respondents indicated sports, culture, leisure and etc.

Ex ante evaluations

Policies regarding the employment of young people are most often evaluated ex-ante in the countries participating to the survey – in over 68% pf the cases. Policy regarding education and social inclusion follow, being evaluated ex-ante in about half of the survey participating countries. On the other hand, policies regarding youth work are evaluated ex-ante in only 31% of the countries participating to the survey.

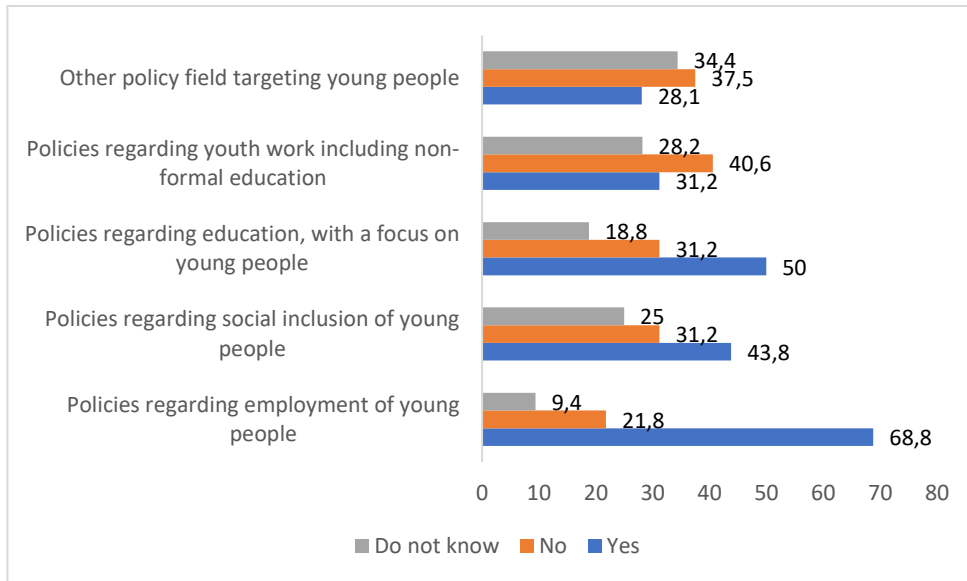


Figure 3. Ex ante evaluations by the following youth policy sectors, N=36

Process evaluation or monitoring of implementation

Process evaluation or monitoring of implementation are the most often conducted evaluations. Policies regarding employment are monitored and the implementation process is evaluated in almost 72% of the countries participating to the survey. In almost as many (almost 69%) the education policies focusing on youth people are also evaluated. Moreover, in the case of process evaluation or monitoring of implementation, policies regarding youth work are taken into account in over half of the countries participating to the survey.

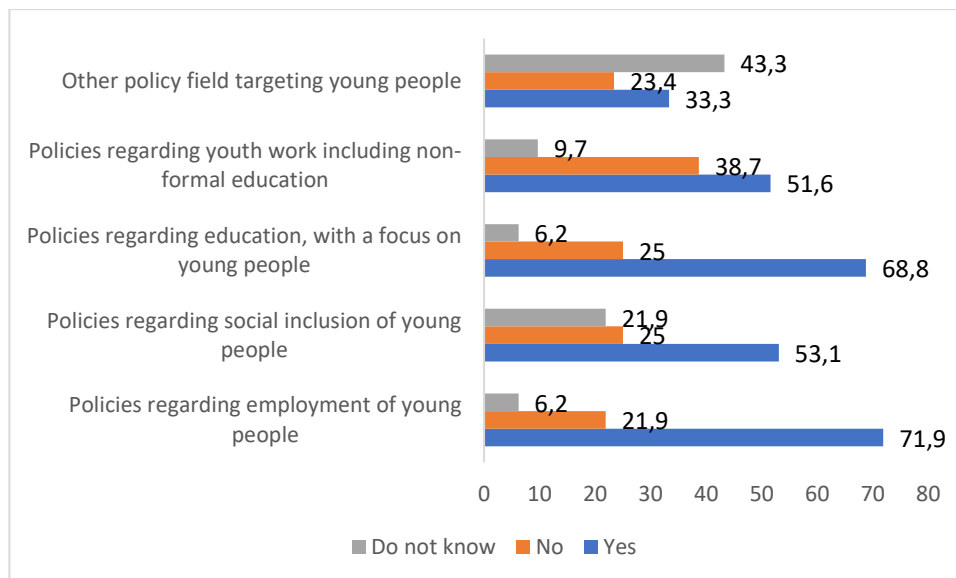


Figure 4. Implementation monitoring of policy interventions by the following youth policy sectors, N=36

Summative or impact evaluation

Impact evaluation is conducted the least, with the policy regarding youth employment being, in this case too, the focus of evaluations of policies concerning and targeting young people. Taking into

account to the difficult process of establishing impact indicators for youth work and social inclusion initiatives targeting young people, these are the policy fields less concerned by impact evaluations so far in Europe.

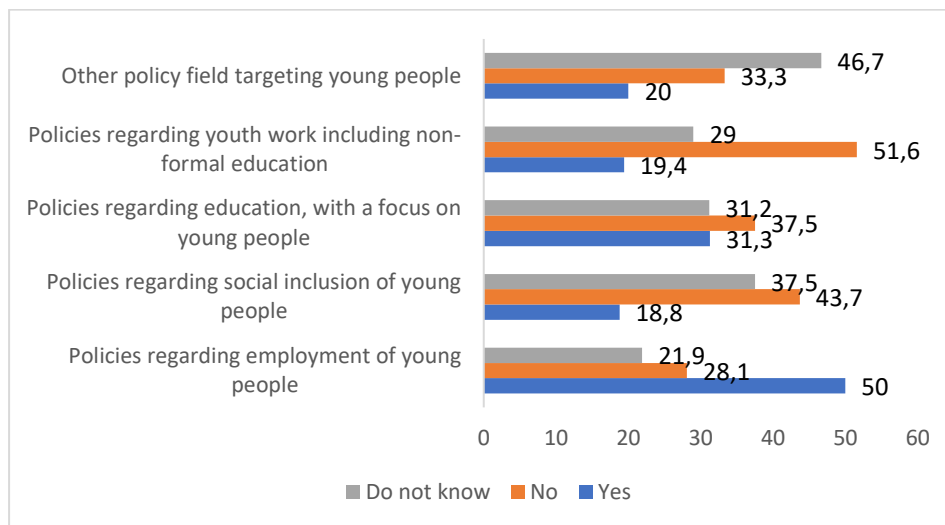


Figure 5. Impact evaluations of policy interventions by the following youth policy sectors, N=36

4.6. The structures and stakeholders for youth policy evaluation

The main stakeholders involved in youth policy evaluation are diverse: representatives of the ministries, youth experts and researchers, NGO representatives, young people, trade unions and other local stakeholders. They are also strategic partners in youth field.

The structures of youth research and evaluation of youth policy are quite diverse between countries. In most countries, there is a Ministry or Department in charge for youth policy implementation and monitoring. In addition, there are several Universities and University Departments, private structures, civil society organisations that are in charge of youth policy evaluations. For example, “there is no established structure in the Republic of Serbia which would focus 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 of). One of the divisions of the "Centre for Youth Events Implementation" State Non-Profit Organization implemented youth research for the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs in 2013-2019” (Serbian EKCYP correspondent).

In only almost one fourth of the countries is a dedicated public research institute (24.3%).

of Sport and Youth Affairs in 2013-2019. researchers, In some countries, e.g. Luxembourg the research groups. 'Youth Research: Context and Structures of Growing-up' at the University of Luxembourg is the main youth research group in Luxembourg. From an interdisciplinary perspective, this group investigates the situation of young people utilising a multi-methodological approach. A substantial share of the research projects is jointly funded by the state and the University of Luxembourg. A cooperation agreement between the ministry in charge of youth policy (the ministry

of Education, Children and Youth) and the University of Luxembourg, signed in 2007, serves as the contractual basis for the institutionalised and recurring cooperation between youth policy and youth research. The institutional construction mirrors the policy approach of 'evidence-based policy-making'. The cooperation agreement stipulates a steering committee based on equal representation by both the state and the University of Luxembourg. There are no mechanisms in place to evaluate on a periodic and systematic way the effects of policy measures and programmes with respect to their intended objectives. The Youth Survey is another important research project. Based on an online questionnaire, it aims at monitoring the situation of young people in Luxembourg on 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. First results will be published in 2020. There are also ad hoc evaluations, such as the 2012 Youth Pact assessment which evaluates the implementation of the Youth Pact as an instrument to foster cross-sectorial policy. There are no further periodic or ad hoc monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to monitor the effects of policy measures and programmes against the intended objectives. Furthermore, the youth observatory (observatoire jeunesse) is an important national body in charge of monitoring youth issues with the mission to prepare, coordinate and initiate surveys, recommendations, analysis, studies and reports on the different aspects of the situation of young people in Luxembourg. The observatory is not established yet but will play an important role in monitoring youth policy in Luxembourg.

In some countries, there are structures in charge for youth policy evaluation and monitoring. For example, The Childhood, Youth, and Youth Welfare Observatory (Observatoire de l'Enfance, de la Jeunesse et de l'Aide à la Jeunesse - OEJAJ) is a department of the Ministry of the French Community of Belgium. The Observatory must report on policies in the childhood, youth and youth welfare fields with regard to health, leisure's, participation, services for children and young, school dropout, and adoption according to the decree of 12 May 2004.

Table 8. Structures in charges of youth research and evaluation of youth policy, N=36

Structures in charges of youth research and evaluation of youth policy	%
There is dedicated public research institute	24.3%
There are one or several universities or university departments	10.8%
There is an administrative structure subordinated or part of the main institution in charge with the youth policy	16.2%
There are only private structures (think thanks, other civil society organizations etc.)	8.1%
Other organizational form	18.9%
No structure in charge of youth research and evaluation of youth policy	21.7%

Integration of youth research and policy evaluation in youth policy making

Only one fifth of the respondents had indicated that existing systematic and regular research on the situation of youth are used to support the decision-making process (24.3%), only a very small part of the respondents pointed out that there is no integration of the youth research and policy evaluation to youth policy making (5.4%).

Table 9. Integration of youth research and policy evaluation in youth policy making, N=36

Integration of youth research and policy evaluation in youth policy making	
Existing research results are sporadically used to support the decision-making process	24.3%
Existing systematic and regular research on the situation of youth are used to support the decision-making process	24.3%
Evaluation is conducted in order to document the implementation of the youth policy or most of the youth policies	13.5%
Evaluation of former policies is conducted before planning a new one, in order to support the choice of a policy option	8.1%
Other way of integration of research and policy evaluation to youth policy making.	5.4%
No integration of the youth research and policy evaluation to youth policy making	5.4%
Not answered to the question	18.9%

4.7. Main challenges and implications for the future

The survey answers allow identifying challenges in the following areas:

- Interinstitutional cooperation (taking into account the cross-sectorial nature of the youth policy)
- Using statistical data (if they have not been planned for youth policy in advance)
- Improving data collection
- There is no systematic cooperation between research, evaluation and further policy-planning
- Measuring impact (large no. of variables and long periods of time)
- Resources and expertise
- Timing of evaluation vs. timing of policy making
- Absence of effective monitoring and evaluation systems

5. Case studies of evaluations conducted for or connected to youth policies

Country	France
<p>The reason for signalling this measure</p>	<p>The evaluations of youth policies in France and the regular provision of large data on the young people in France is adequate for the youth policy in France. It proves particularly relevant for policies targeting young peoples in any field, as provided by the examples of specific sectorial policies.</p> <p>Information and recommendation from evaluations of policy experiments targeting youth and supported by the YEF are relevant and used in policy making in the field of justice, education, culture, when the planned measures are targeting young people.</p> <p>The Youth Experiment Fund (YEF) mechanism, providing a large number of evaluations for innovative policy proposals, that are piloted by different stakeholders, is a good practice for carrying out and using evaluations in the field of youth policies and other policies targeting young people.</p>
<p>Youth policy (or policy targeting youth) evaluation/assessment</p>	<p>All youth policies are supported by the use of the annual statistical data covering young people between 15 and 29 and the Youth Barometer (covering young people between 18 and 30) provided by the National Institute for youth and popular (non-formal) education (<i>Institut national de la jeunesse et de l'éducation populaire - INJEP</i>).</p> <p>Several evaluation studies are conducted in France in the field of youth policy. The National Institute for youth and popular (non-formal) education is managing a Youth Experiment Fund (YEF), supporting pilot/experiment projects for the development of innovative local policies in the field of youth. Created in 2009 and ongoing in 2019, the Youth Experiment Fund is defined as a “public policy laboratory”, putting experimentation at the service of youth policies. 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 structure wishing to propose an innovative action or to reform existing devices to make them more effective. According to a dedicated methodology, all policy experiments are monitored and evaluated.</p> <p>Last but not least, other youth policies are evaluated, including the Youth Guarantee, offering its beneficiaries enhanced support, accompanied by a guarantee of income. The policy was innovative according to several dimensions (collective support, priority given to the professional situation of young people, active mediation also turned towards the companies etc.).</p>

<p>Result of the evaluation/assessment (report, study, article, etc.) and a very short description.</p>	<p>INJEP presents every year the statistical data on young people in France and the Youth Barometer for France. For 2019, the statistical data⁴¹ are available online. The Youth Barometer conducted in 2018 is also public online⁴².</p> <p>Additionally, INJEP publishes the results of the Youth Experiment Fund – YEF on specific periods of time.</p> <p>The final evaluation of the Youth Guarantee was published in 2018.⁴³</p>
<p>Period / Timeline</p>	<p>The Youth Experiment Fund (YEF) was created in 2009 and continues its implementation based on the evaluation of each innovative local youth policy supported by the fund.</p>
<p>Responsible institution</p>	<p>The National Institute for youth and popular (non-formal) education (<i>Institut national de la jeunesse et de l'éducation populaire - INJEP</i>) is the main institution in charge for YEF. Since 2016 it integrated the resource centre of the Youth Experiment Fund - YEF (la mission d'animation du Fonds d'expérimentation pour la jeunesse - MAFEJ) and provided support for the Youth Barometer and the Evaluation of the Youth Guarantee as well.</p>
<p>Aims and goals of the evaluation presented as the learning case</p>	<p>INJEP presents every year the statistical data on young people in France on 78 indicators of interest for the youth policy or any policy targeting young people. The relevance and usefulness of these data is reinforced by the result of a yearly Youth Barometer for France. Both documents show the situation of young people on France territory on a given year and allow analysis of trends and even predictions (based on statistical regression) useful for policy planning and any ex-ante evaluation of new policies.</p> <p>The resource centre of the Youth Experiment Fund - YEF developed a monitoring and evaluation methodology of the funded policy innovation projects targeting young people. Every six months, the project leaders and the evaluators submit to the EYF an implementation report describing the actions taken with regard to the deployment of the experimented policy. This information is analyzed by the MAFEJ in the light of the initial application file. At the end of the experiment, the project leader and the evaluator submit a final report which, after reading and analysis, is published on line on the EYF website. Additionally, INJEP presents synthesis reports on specific fields where the funded policy experiments had results and impact, including a report on the impact on employment of the experimented policies (in 2014), or the effectiveness of initiatives against youth discrimination (in 2019).</p>

⁴¹ Institut national de la jeunesse et de l'éducation populaire, 2019, *Chiffres-clés de la jeunesse 2019*.

⁴² CREDOC., 2018, *Baromètre DJEPVA sur la jeunesse 2018*, Lucie Brice-Mansencal, Radmila Datsenko, Nelly Guisse, Sandra Hoibian et Sophie Lautié, INJEP Notes & rapports/Rapport d'étude.

⁴³ Comité scientifique en charge de l'évaluation de la Garantie Jeunes, 2018, *Rapport final d'évaluation de la Garantie Jeunes*.

	<p>On the other hand, the final evaluation of the Youth Guarantee assesses the effectiveness and the impact of the Youth Guarantee implementation in France. The evaluation attempted to answer three questions: (1) To what extent did the Youth Guarantee reach the intended target group? (2) How has the Youth Guarantee been implemented, and in particular, what effects has it had on the organization and the support practices of at local level? (3) What were the effects of the Youth Guarantee for its beneficiaries?</p>
<p>Outcomes and effects reported of the youth policies</p>	<p>In the case of the 78 statistical indicators on youth and the Youth Barometer, data presented show the progress of youth situation on some fields and the continued presence of challenges in other fields.</p> <p>In the case of the Youth Guarantee, even if the mobilization of local actors for the review of eligible young people and their orientation towards Youth Guarantee has been uneven across the territories, it seems to have reached its target and addressed the most vulnerable young people. The evaluation did not highlight any significant defect in the design of the device. But if funded a great diversity in the way local missions in charge implemented the tools provided by the policy in their communities, with real successes, but also, sometimes, significant difficulties. Concerning the impact, the support provided by the Youth Guarantee has been critical for most beneficiaries. The latter seem to make a very rigorous use of the allowance received - which often includes a contribution to the family budget, itself very constrained in many cases. The counterpart logic associated with the allocation seems to be well understood, and the related control that may lead to sanctions seems not only accepted but even often approved by the young beneficiaries.</p> <p>In the case of the Youth Experiment Fund results, positive results of policy experimentations show the effectiveness and impact of innovative ways in fighting discrimination and harassment among young people in school environment, the best tools for information provision in schools, school orientation and school counseling, 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, the importance of professionalization of stakeholders working with young criminals for their future reintegration in the society.⁴⁴</p>
<p>Research design of the evaluation</p>	<p>The main theoretical framework underlining the evaluation and knowledge-based youth policies in France is the theory of rational public policy, considering the ambition to provide and analyse 78 statistical indicators provided by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies, as well as additional indicators in the Youth Barometer collected through a national survey of 4,500 young people in metropolitan France</p>

⁴⁴ Institut national de la jeunesse et de l'éducation populaire, 2018, Rapport d'activité du FEJ | 2015 - 2017

	<p>and overseas aged 18 to 30.</p> <p>However, the French strategy is to provide funds for policy experimentation that are closely evaluated using quantitative data (statistical secondary analysis and survey) and qualitative research (interviews, focus groups, observation). This is relevant in for the innovation and diffusion model in policy making⁴⁵, based on testing innovative intervention on smaller scales before recommending them for rolling-up or scaling up.</p> <p>The evaluation of the Youth Guarantee in France is primary based on a set of quantitative method, using both secondary statistical data and survey data and applying a difference-in-difference counterfactual method for the impact evaluation.</p>
Existing effects of the evaluation on policy or practice (implemented recommendations, etc.)	<p>The lessons of the experiments funded by the YEF and evaluated according to MAFEJ methodology can indeed be of a nature to guide the choice of new public policies. Thus, the capitalization of these lessons has substantially nourished the work of the Joint Ministerial Committee of Youth (Comité interministériel de la jeunesse - CIJ), which made it possible to make evaluation results the basis of reflection for the implementation of new measures for youth.⁴⁶</p> <p>The report on the results of YEF for 2015-2017 mention evaluation results taken into account for the design of policies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - prevention of crime and radicalization of young people - education, namely policies aiming at improving schools results of young people, preventing school and university dropouts, - the “cultural democratization” - etc.⁴⁷
Existing focus on collaboration and exchanges in the evaluation (process and result)	<p>As the underlying conceptual framework for the Youth Experiment Fund is the innovation and diffusion model in policy making, this implies the focus on collaboration and exchanges, as there is a large number of stakeholders involved in youth policy experiments, testing and evaluations.</p>

Country	Finland
The reason for signalling this measure	<p>The Finish model is a good practice because it:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. involves a competent academic researcher in cooperation with young people’s organisations involved in the youth policy (the State Youth Council) 2. there is a continuous discussion between practice and evaluation,

⁴⁵ Christopher M. Weible, Paul A. Sabatier, 2017, *Theories of the Policy Process*.

⁴⁶ Institut national de la jeunesse et de l’éducation populaire, 2018, Rapport d’activité du FEJ | 2015 - 2017.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

	evaluation is used in developing the policy models themselves.
Youth policy (or policy targeting youth) evaluation/assessment	<p>All youth policies are supported by the use of the annual Youth Barometer. It studies the values, well-being and everyday life of young people aged 15–29 who live in Finland. Other studies carried out by the State Youth Council are relevant and valuable sources of data and information for policy making</p> <p>Policies for labour market inclusion of young people, including the Youth Guarantee targeting vulnerable young people and the program dedicated to young NEETs are evaluated.</p> <p>All policies targeting young people, with a focus on 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) are the subject of an OECD evaluation in 2019.</p>
Result of the evaluation/assessment (report, study, article, etc.) and a very short description.	<p>The Youth Barometer has been carried out in Finland annually since 1994. The Youth Barometer 2018 is on the theme of politics and influence in Europe.⁴⁸</p> <p>The Youth Guaranty evaluation in Finland is available online in Finnish.</p> <p>The OECD Report: Investing in Youth: Finland⁴⁹, is part of the series Investing in Youth builds on the expertise of the OECD on youth employment, social support and skills.</p>
Period / Timeline	The Youth Barometer has been carried out in Finland annually since 1994. All other evaluations and studies cover different periods of time.
Responsible institution	The State Youth Council and the Finish Youth Research Society are cooperation form reports on young people and their living conditions, including the Youth Barometer.
Aims and goals of the evaluation presented as the learning case	<p>The Youth Barometer shows the situation of young people on Finland on a given year and a given theme every year. It allows analysis the values, well-being and everyday life of young people useful for policy planning and any ex-ante evaluation of new policies.</p> <p>One stop guidance-centre (Ohjaamo) model for providing information to young NEETs has been evaluated systematically.</p> <p>On the other hand, the evaluation of the Youth Guarantee assesses the effectiveness and the impact of the Youth Guarantee implementation in Finland.</p> <p>From the OECD perspective, the series “Investing in Youth” builds on the</p>

⁴⁸ Sami Myllyniemi & Tomi Kiilakoski, 2018, *Youth Barometer 2018. Influence On The Edge Of Europe*.

⁴⁹ OECD, 2019, *Investing in Youth: Finland*, Investing in Youth, OECD Publishing, Paris.

	expertise of the OECD on youth employment, social support and skills.
<p>Outcomes and effects reported of the youth policies</p>	<p>According to the results of the 2018 Youth Barometer, the young people have chiefly participated by voting, with purchase decisions and by discussing political issues. 66% of the young people feel that membership of the European Union has been of benefit to Finland. The share is at its highest level in the history of the Youth Barometer since 1994.</p> <p>According to the OECD Report: Investing in Youth: Finland, show “that youth employment rates (55%) are above the OECD average (53%), but lower than other Nordic countries. But the unemployment rate among 15-29-year olds reached 15% in 2017, seventh highest in the OECD area. With a strong demand for high-skilled workers and persistent shortages in high-skilled jobs, low-skilled youth struggle in the Finnish labour market. Young people who failed to complete upper secondary education account for nearly half of all NEETs. Despite 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.”⁵⁰</p>
<p>Research design of the evaluation</p>	<p>The main theoretical framework underlining the evaluation and knowledge-based youth policies in Finland is the theory of rational public policy.</p> <p>The Youth Barometer represents a survey of 1,901 young people aged between 15 and 29 living in mainland Finland.</p> <p>Various research methods are used in the studies of the Finish Youth Research Society, with a focus on quantitative methods and the use of surveys and statistical data.</p> <p>The continuous evaluation approach for the one stop guidance-centre (Ohjaamo) model for providing information to young NEETs is relevant for the “adaptive programming” model of public intervention development.⁵¹</p>
<p>Existing effects of the evaluation on policy or practice (implemented recommendations, etc.)</p>	<p>The Youth Barometer is not providing policy recommendations, but its continuity since 1994 shows the social and political interest for the results presented every year.</p> <p>Existing evaluations of Ohjaamo and the Youth Guarantee are used for the continuous development of the inclusion and employment policy.</p> <p>The results of the OECD Investing in Youth evaluation are still to be integrated in the Finish public policies, as the report provided a large number of recommendations, but was published recently⁵², in May 2019.</p>

⁵⁰ OECD Press release. [Finland should do more to improve job prospects of low-skilled youth](#).

⁵¹ Craig Valters, Clare Cummings and Hamish Nixon, 2016, *Putting learning at the centre: adaptive development programming in practice*

Existing focus on collaboration and exchanges in the evaluation (process and result)	Most of the studies on young people, including assessment of the youth policy or other policies targeting young people in Finland are done in cooperation between the State Youth Council and the Finish Youth Research Society.
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Country	Malta
The reason for signalling this measure	The Maltese case is a great example for the use of formative regular evaluations of a policy targeting young people (among other target groups).
Youth policy (or policy targeting youth) evaluation/assessment	The National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion, Malta 2014-2024 is evaluated periodically. Although the National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and for Social Inclusion is the main policy document for combating poverty and social exclusion by providing a comprehensive framework to effectively address this dynamic reality, the strategy is complemented by a number of other national strategies and policy documents that aim to promote wellbeing in its various dimensions, including the National Youth Policy Towards 2020: A shared vision for the future of young people, which was not evaluated.
Result of the evaluation/assessment (report, study, article, etc.) and a very short description.	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 & Social Solidarity. ⁵³ Specifically, for the social inclusion measures targeting youth, based the results of the strategy evaluation and additional peer review, the Maltese delegation participated to the peer review on “Social inclusion, health and the equalisation of opportunities for young people with disabilities”, Zagreb (Croatia), 13-14 September 2018 ⁵⁴ .
Period / Timeline	The policy is planned for the period 2014-2024. The evaluation has been carried for the first 2 years of the strategy’s implementation.
Responsible institution	The responsible institution for the implementation and the evaluation of the social policy and the policy for the social inclusion of young people is the Ministry for the Family, Children’s Rights & Social Solidarity
Aims and goals of the	The objective of the 2014-2016 implementation and evaluation report of

⁵² The present case study is drafted in September 2019

⁵³ Ministry for the Family, Children’s Rights & Social Solidarity, *Implementation and Evaluation Report 2014-2016*. The National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion, Malta 2014-2024.

⁵⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=9178&furtherNews=yes>

<p>evaluation presented as the learning case</p>	<p>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 wellbeing 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> <p>The objective of the peer review on “Social inclusion, health and the equalisation of opportunities for young people with disabilities” in Croatia was to discuss and share experiences on ways to improve the access, availability and quality of services for young people with disabilities, in particular in the areas of health, education and employment. Specifically, the peer review investigated which are the key elements to support and ensure equal access to services for young people with disabilities.</p>
<p>Outcomes and effects reported of the youth policies</p>	<p>For the period 2014-2016 has been targeted by a large number of specific interventions and interventions integrated in the National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion, Malta 2014-2024, including the Youth Guarantee Scheme⁵⁵, the education measures to primarily engage youth in education and training, cooperative educational and youth work spaces, like the Youth Village Initiative and the Outreach and Detached Work with Youth. While it was too soon to evaluate the impact of these initiatives in 2016, the coverage of the youth policy was significant for the Maltese policy in general.</p> <p>However, the peer review in 2018 shows disability issues concerning young people should be more salient in the Maltese policy.</p>
<p>Research design of the evaluation</p>	<p>The main concepts and theoretical framework for the <i>Implementation and Evaluation Report 2014-2016 of the National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion, Malta 2014-2024</i> is the one of evidence-based policy making, as this evaluation is a formative one for the implementation of the strategy.</p> <p>According to the implementation and evaluation report of the social inclusion policy, “apart from progress reports drawn up by relevant stakeholders on the implementation of the policy actions presented in the strategy, 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</p>

⁵⁵ Ministry for the Family, Children’s Rights & Social Solidarity, *Implementation and Evaluation Report 2014-2016. The National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion, Malta 2014-2024.* “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.”(p. 16)

	complemented by relevant in-house statistics compiled by the different Ministries.” ⁵⁶
Existing effects of the evaluation on policy or practice (implemented recommendations, etc.)	A major strength emanating from the National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and for Social Inclusion, is Government’s commitment to set 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 decision in the implementation of the strategy.
Existing focus on collaboration and exchanges in the evaluation (process and result)	<p>The <i>Implementation and Evaluation Report 2014-2016 of the National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion, Malta 2014-2024</i> is carried out in cooperation by the Ministry for the Family, Children’s Rights & Social Solidarity, the Ministry for Education and Employment, the Ministry for Health and the Ministry for Justice, Culture and Local Government.</p> <p>The peer-to-peer review focusing on the social inclusion, health and the equalisation of opportunities for young people with disabilities is supported by international cooperation in the field of social inclusion of young people.</p>

Country	Czech Republic
The reason for signalling this measure	Including both a mid-term and a final evaluation and a set of statistical indicators measuring the progress of youth situation during and after the implementation of the strategy, the practice in Czech Republic represents a good practice for the systematic: formative and summative evaluations of the main youth policy document and plan in a country: the national youth strategy.
Youth policy (or policy targeting youth) evaluation/assessment	<p>The National Youth Strategy 2014-2020 has been evaluated.</p> <p>According to Youth Wiki: “Youth Strategy 2014-2020 consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pillars determining the set principles upon which the expected impact of Strategy 2020 on young people is based. - Horizontal priorities taking into account the priority areas of intervention across all strategic and operational goals. - Strategic goals referring to a defined idea of how Youth Strategy 2020 should contribute in specific areas of youth policy in the long term, until 2020. - Operational goals are breaking down this vision in terms of the short, medium and long-term fulfilment of the strategic objectives. - Measures defining specific directions to take to achieve the desired operational goals. <p>Pillars reflect the reality of prolonging the transitional period during which</p>

⁵⁶ Ibid. P. 9.

	<p>young people test out life before they fully enter the adult world. This reality is also reflected in the three pillars of Strategy 2020:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Facilitating the transition of young people into independent individuals responsible for their own lives, their family, community and society; 2. A focus on the realistic needs and opportunities of young people; 3. Promoting young people’s potential for societal development. <p>Youth strategy 2020 includes 5 horizontal priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Equal opportunities 2. Inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral approach 3. Support for non-formal education (including leisure-based education) and quality youth work 4. Involving young people in the decision-making process and participation 5. Intergenerational solidarity” <p>The strategy covers 13 strategic objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. To facilitate equal access of children and youth to rights 7. To facilitate equal access of children and youth to information 8. To create favourable and sustainable conditions for the participation of children and youth in leisure-based and non-formal education 9. To expand and make more attractive the offer of leisure activities and to motivate children and youth to make active use of them 10. To support the increase of cross-border mobility of young people 11. To improve conditions for employment and employability of youth 12. To promote comprehensive and harmonious development of children and youth with emphasis on their physical and mental health and moral responsibility 13. To promote active involvement of children and young people in decision-making processes and in influencing social and democratic life 14. To create favourable conditions for volunteering for young people including valuation and recognition of voluntary activities 15. To facilitate inclusion of children and young people with fewer opportunities 16. To motivate children and youth towards a life based on the principles of sustainable development and to develop their environmental literacy 17. To encourage the development of competencies in children and young people for safe and creative use of media 18. To offer children and young people a variety of paths to culture, art and traditions” <p>The previous youth strategy, the National Youth Strategy (2007 – 2013) was also evaluated.</p>
<p>Result of the evaluation/assessment (report, study, article, etc.) and a very short description.</p>	<p>The mid-term evaluation of the National Youth Strategy 2014 – 2020 is conducted internally by the senior official of Youth Policy Unit - Youth Department, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.</p> <p>The final evaluation of the same strategy is commissioned to an external</p>

	<p>expert.</p> <p>The final evaluation of the previous National Youth Strategy (2007 – 2013) has been conducted</p> <p>All evaluation reports are available in Czech.</p>
Period / Timeline	National Youth Strategies have been implemented for the periods 2014 – 2020 and 2007 – 2013. Evaluations have been conducted mid-term (in 2017 for the strategy covering the period 2014-2020) and at the end of the implementation.
Responsible institution	The responsible institution for the evaluation of the National Youth Strategy is the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
Research design of the evaluation	<p>Youth policy monitoring and evaluation is based on data collecting, namely within the project Youth in Numbers (Mladez v cislech) which reflects meeting the 13 strategic goals (SG) of the national Youth Strategy for the period 2014 – 2020 through identified quantitative indicators.</p> <p>An extended list of indicators is covering the operational goals of the current National Youth Strategy and quantitative data are collected.</p>
Existing focus on collaboration and exchanges in the evaluation (process and result)	<p>The main stakeholders involved in a systematic approach to youth policy evaluation are on four levels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Governmental level (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and other ministries and their service organisations are involved) 2. External level (external independent experts are involved: Ondrej Barta, Hana Marikova) 3. Other external stakeholders are involved through National Youth Conferences and through the advisory body of the minister responsible for youth called “Youth Chamber” 4. National Youth Council and youth NGOs and non-organised young people are involved through National Youth Conferences and National

Country	Estonia
The reason for signalling this measure	Youth Guarantee can be considered to be a good practice because it features significant amount of collaboration between ministries, across societal sectors and also between specialists and experts at grass-roots level. In terms of evaluation and monitoring, it constitutes a fairly complex case that cannot be addressed easily.
Youth policy (or policy targeting youth) evaluation/assessment,	Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020 is a governmental document currently in force that frames public policies addressing young people in the youth field. It can be accessed here https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/nak_eng.pdf

including:	
<i>overall objective and specific objectives of the policy measure</i>	<p>The overall goal of the development plan can be worded as follows: 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 Development Plan has four sub-goals:</p> <p>Sub-goal 1: young people have more choices in terms of discovering their own creative and developmental potential.</p> <p>Sub-goal 2: young people are at a lower risk of exclusion.</p> <p>Sub-goal 3: greater support for the participation of young people in decision making.</p> <p>Sub-goal 4: the youth field operates more efficiently.</p>
<i>target group</i>	<p>As per Youth Work Act, youth field targets young people 7-26 years old. Actually different measures target different age groups within this age range. The reason is that young people of different age also have different needs and benefit from different activities and developmental environments.</p>
<p>Result of the evaluation/assessment (report, study, article, etc.) and a very short description.</p> <p><i>If available: link to the published document</i></p>	<p>There is no single impact evaluation of the strategy. Designing of the strategy was informed by several studies in the areas that bear relevance for young people (e.g. education, social work, employment, population, etc).</p> <p>The Ministry of Education and Research has published implementation report of the Youth Field Development Plan for 2014. The report describes activities carried out as part of implementation of this strategy; the report can be accessed here https://www.valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/arengukavad/nak_2014-2020_2014_aruanne.pdf (in Estonian only).</p> <p>The ministry has also published overviews of the youth sector activities as part of its annual reports:</p> <p>These reports too give a brief overview of activities carried out in the field, complemented with statistical figures. According the reports, developments in the youth field are positive.</p>
Period / Timeline	The development plan covers time period 2014-2020
Responsible institution	The Ministry of Education and Research
Aims and goals of the evaluation presented as the learning case	<p>Youth Guarantee in Estonia has the main goal to provide young people support in their transition to society but in particular to labour market. To that end, the YG is implemented using eight policy measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My First Job, which is a subsidised job program that also contains subsidised job training component. This is the largest service by budget. • Workshops directed to youth, introducing labour market and working life. This is the most populous measure. • Youth Guarantee Support System, which is a social work based support

	<p>program for NEET youth in municipalities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Prop-Up programme, which is a consulting program for NEET youth. • Youth Summer Work Programme. • Community Practice Programme, which means spending some time in an NGO. • Mobile workshops that introduce certain professions and jobs. • Youth Initiatives that are essentially youth projects. <p>Youth Guarantee implementation plan can be downloaded from the Ministry of Social Affairs website https://www.sm.ee/et/noortegarantii</p> <p>An overview of Youth Guarantee in Estonia can be found on the EC Youth Guarantee website https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1161&langId=en&intPagId=3331</p> <p>All eight services are monitored at the aggregate level (number of participants, budget, activities).</p> <p>Intervention effectiveness has been assessed in the case of My First Job and Youth Prop-Up Program.</p> <p>Mid-term evaluation of the service My First Job was carried out in 2016-2017 and covered the period 01.01.2015 to 30.09.2016; the report can be accessed here https://www.ibs.ee/wp-content/uploads/L%C3%B5pparuanne-FINAL-.pdf (in Estonian, with executive summary in English).</p> <p>Youth Prop-Up program is being closely monitored using an original monitoring system created for this program. In the database, data on young people's situation after exiting the program is recorded. An overview of the analysis can be found here https://ank.ee/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/%E2%80%9ENOORTETUGILA%E2%80%9C2015-2017STATISTILISTEANDMETEANALU_U_SJARUANNE.pdf</p>
Outcomes and effects of the youth reported	There are no impact evaluations of the program available.
Research design of the evaluation, including:	For carrying out the analysis, non-experimental designs have been used.
<i>main concepts and theoretical framework used</i>	Conceptual parts of the studies have been largely informed by the policy goals and policy vocabulary that is relevant for the Youth Guarantee program.
<i>main methodologies used</i>	Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies have been used. However, due to the fact that only a couple of specific studies have been carried out there is also a lack of specifically collected data. Monitoring has made use of mainly administrative data that is quantitative.
<i>source(s) of data used in the evaluation</i>	Organisational administrative data, Prop-Up Programme database, interviews with implementing officials, interviews with young people.
Existing effects of the	As a result of the mid-term evaluation, the largest service of the YG – My First Job

<p>evaluation on policy or practice (implemented recommendations, etc.)</p>	<p>– was changed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum age of enrolment was changed from 17 years to 16 years, • The requirement that only young people without vocational education are eligible was dismissed, • The mandatory length of subsidised job contract was reduced from two years to one year.
<p>Existing focus on collaboration and exchanges in the evaluation (process and result)</p>	<p>The Youth Guarantee recommendation is implemented jointly by the Ministry of Social Affairs, which is responsible for implementation of the recommendation, and the Ministry of Education and Research. To guarantee successful partnership, the Ministry of Social Affairs formed a working group coordinating Youth Guarantee-related partnerships, monitoring plan implementation and incorporating relevant parties. The working group enhances cooperation between specialists and representatives of different interest groups related to the Youth Guarantee implementation.</p> <p>In the working group, also the need for (further) evaluation is assessed and monitoring and evaluation results are discussed.</p>
<p>Adequateness: is the evaluation conducted adequate to the existing youth policy it assesses? Why?</p>	<p>Implementation of the eight measures that constitute the policy mix of Youth Guarantee in Estonia are monitored. There is no unified system for monitoring the activities, different systems are being used. Monitoring and impact evaluation of Youth Guarantee is complicated for several reasons:</p> <p>Nearly all services were implemented already before YG Recommendation was adopted. Some of the measures were amended when implementation of the YG started, but the changes were minor so that it is hard if not impossible to point out when exactly implementation of a measure started. Youth Guarantee Support System is an exception here as its activities started in spring 2018 and there was no similar measure running before that.</p> <p>Nearly all services are carried out also outside the YG programme – the measures are financed from several financial sources so that the volume of each service that is financed from the YG, constitutes only part of the entire volume of the service. A further challenge is that the services may slightly differ across financing sources but the differences are not large ones. Youth Guarantee Support System is an exception as it is financed only as a part of the YG.</p> <p>Some of the services are linked with each other; for instance, a young person who is enrolled to Youth Prop Up Program may be advised to pick up My First Job and/or other programs. This blurs boundaries between individual services and increases complexities when it comes to monitoring and/or evaluation.</p> <p>Evaluation of effects of majority of the services individually would be challenging because of lack or absence of data that would satisfy the requirements of (quasi)experimental evaluation. In this respect, the services My First Job and Youth Guarantee Support System look best as they are based on registry data which also could be used for evaluation research. Importantly, the registries can be also</p>

	<p>cross-linked with other national registries that contain information that are relevant for evaluation of individual services and the entire Youth Guarantee program.</p> <p>It is fair to conclude that existing reports only scratch the surface. This is understandable as assessing the goodness of the services and their impacts would be a highly and challenging enterprise.</p>
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Country	Serbia
The reason for signalling this measure	Including a final evaluation of the last two youth strategies and a youth programme implemented in connection with the youth strategies, the practice in Serbia represents a good practice for the systematic summative evaluation of the main youth policy documents and plans in a country: the national youth strategy and the Youth Service Package.
Youth policy (or policy targeting youth) evaluation/assessment	<p>The National Youth Strategy 2015-2017 has been evaluated. „ The National Youth Strategy 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 NYS is based on the government’s strategic orientation to work with and for young people, and, starting from the goal set in the Law on Youth, it seeks to ensure conditions for enabling young people to reach their full potential, participate actively in society, while contributing not only to their own development but also to the development of society.”</p> <p>The previous youth strategy, for the period 2008-2014, with action plan 2009-2014 has been evaluated.</p> <p>Moreover, the Youth Service Package and the Relevant Programmes and Measures Funded from the Republic of Serbia Budget and Targeted at Youth have been evaluated.</p>
Result of the evaluation/assessment (report, study, article, etc.) and a very short description.	<p>The Report on the evaluation of the level of realization of the objectives of the National Youth Strategy for a period 2015-2017 (the Action Plan for the period 2015-2017) has been published online in 2017 in Serb.</p> <p>The Evaluation of the National Youth Strategy (2008-2014) in the Republic of Serbia and Action Plan (2009 – 2014) has been published in January 2015 and it is available in both Serb and English.</p> <p>The Evaluation of the Youth Service Package and the Relevant Programmes and Measures Funded from the Republic of Serbia Budget and Targeted at Youth has been published in 2016.</p>
Period / Timeline	The evaluated National Youth Strategies in Serbia have been implemented

	<p>in 2009-2014 and 2015-2017 according to the Action Planes annexed to the strategic documents.</p> <p>The Youth Service Package was delivered between 2013 and 2015, and is also foreseen in the National Employment Action Plan (NEAP) 2016 and the Employment and Social Reform Programme (ESRP).</p>
Responsible institution	<p>The Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Serbia was the main responsible authority 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 (MoLEVSA), the Ministry of Youth and Sport (MoYS) and the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit (SIPRU) cooperated for the evaluation of the Youth Service Package 2013-2015.</p>
Aims and goals of the evaluation presented as the learning case	<p>The evaluations of the National Youth Strategies aimed at presenting the results of assessments on the implementation and impact of the strategies from the national through local levels. They conclude with recommendations for the future development of the youth sector in Serbia.</p> <p>The evaluation of the Youth Service Package includes the evaluation of the coverage, effectiveness and the gross and net impact of the Youth Service Package. In addition, the analysis includes the net impact of the Professional Practice and Acquisition of Practical Knowledge measures, implemented by the National Employment Service (NES), 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 (e.g. youth office services or civil society organisations' programmes contributing to youth employment and employability enhancement).</p> <p>Therefore, the evaluations aim at answering evaluation questions related to the effectiveness, sustainability and impact of all interventions targeting youth in Serbia, and especially the interventions for youth employment in the case of the evaluation from 2016.</p>
Outcomes and effects reported of the youth policies	<p>The development of the National Youth Strategy 2008 in Serbia is hailed internationally and nationally 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 and a large number of young people as well. However, the evaluation in 2015 finds that effectiveness, sustainability and impact are not achieved as planned, although there is an important progress to be reported. Issues related to inter-institutional cooperation, involvement of young people in activities, but less in decision</p>

	<p>making, local youth policy infrastructure available, absence of systematic monitoring before the evaluation, too little investment for problems too large, single activities conducted for a particular objective, donor driven financial investments have been underlined by the report.</p> <p>The Evaluation of the Youth Service Package and the Relevant Programmes and Measures Funded from the Republic of Serbia Budget and Targeted at Youth didn't identified significant progress among services beneficiaries, but the Report on the evaluation of the level of realization of the objectives of the National Youth Strategy for a period 2015-2017 underlines that the short time for the implementation of the strategies and services under evaluation is not enough to generate significant and very visible results.</p> <p>Another outcome of the evaluation is the idea that the strategies are very important in structuring the general intervention of the Serbian Government for young people.</p>
<p>Research design of the evaluation</p>	<p>The evaluations presented in this case study have 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 has been also employed. Since 2015 an annual survey is conducted as action implementing the National Youth Strategy and in this way data for the evaluation are available and have been used for the evaluation published in 2017.</p>
<p>Existing effects of the evaluation on policy or practice (implemented recommendations, etc.)</p>	<p>The general goal of the evaluations was to take action towards improving and enhancing the selected programmes and measures on the basis of the findings of these very evaluations.</p> <p>All three evaluations presented recommendations for the responsible ministers: the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs for the measures for youth employment. There is no follow-up report on the recommendations' implementation, but changes reported in 2017 compared to 2015 show the importance of the evaluation and progress in recommendations' implementation.</p>
<p>Existing focus on collaboration and exchanges in the evaluation (process and result)</p>	<p>The evaluations are based on a co-operation between Serbian institutions, the international institutions (the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the United Nations Population Fund in Serbia).</p> <p>Youth representatives and youth NGOs have been consulted for all evaluations.</p>

Country	Armenia
The reason for signalling this measure	The Armenian case represents a good practice for the systematic summative evaluation of the main youth policy documents in a country: the national youth strategy.
Youth policy (or policy targeting youth) evaluation/assessment	<p>The 2013-2017 Strategy for the State Youth Policy of the Republic of Armenia has been evaluated in 2016.</p> <p>Republic of Armenia State Youth Policy Strategy for 2013-2017 and the Concept of State Youth Policy of the Republic of Armenia for 2015-2025 have been developed based on the reports of the "National Youth Report of Armenia" Part I, Part II, "Aims and Expectations of Armenia's Youth" published in 2011-2012. 1st Part of the report covers the main outcomes of the sociological survey conducted within the framework of the National Youth Report of Armenia. The aim of the survey was to reflect the views of the Armenian youth towards different spheres of life, as well as the assessment of the ongoing processes in Armenia. The option 2nd Section of the report is an analytical section entitled "The Youth in Armenia and Development of the Ethno-Socio-Cultural System in Armenia", which is based on a survey of the Armenian youth's aspirations and expectations published by the UNDP Armenia Office. The goal of the research was to find out about the youth issues, aspirations and expectations of the Armenian youth. The surveys, focus groups and expert and in-depth interviews and their primary analysis are presented.</p> <p>The strategy is targeting young people (16 to 30 years old), young families, young workers and youth NGOs.</p> <p>The goal of State Youth Policy is creating necessary socio-economic, legal-political, cultural and spiritual conditions for realization 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>The Strategy has 6 objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognition of the Concept of State Youth Policy at all levels, as well as raising awareness of young people on the state youth policy 2. Ensuring integrated approach to youth policy at state, regional and local levels by taking into account the specific nature of challenges and needs of young people in regional and local areas 3. Ensuring state support for the socio-cultural, spiritual and physical, educational and scientific development of young people, as well as for the implementation of initiatives by young citizens for the benefit of the society as a whole 4. Provision of guaranteed social services for young people for education, culture, spiritual and physical development, health care and professional development 5. Taking measures aimed at prevention of internal and external

	<p>migration by young people</p> <p>6. Ensuring the development of evidence-based state youth policy and increase of its effectiveness, the improvement of state youth policy development and implementation process and its sustainability</p> <p>The Strategy included 5 priority with dedicated action plans for (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.</p>
Result of the evaluation/assessment (report, study, article, etc.) and a very short description.	The Report on the Monitoring and Evaluation of the 2013-2017 Strategy of State Youth Policy of the RA has been published online in 2016, in Armenian, with an executive summary in English.
Period / Timeline	The Concept of State Youth Policy of the Republic of Armenia was drafted for the period 2015-2025, with a period of superposition over the Republic of Armenia State Youth Policy Strategy for 2013-2017.
Responsible institution	<p>Since 2007, the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs has been the authority coordinating the youth state policy. Before that, the sector was coordinated by the Ministry of Culture and Youth Affairs. Within the framework of the 2019 Republic of Armenia Government structural reforms, the youth sector coordination has been transferred to the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport.</p> <p>Until April 2019, youth studies, as well as youth policy evaluation was done by the Youth Studies Institute (closed in based on Government decision of 10.01.2019)</p>
Aims and goals of the evaluation presented as the learning case	<p>According to the Report on the Monitoring and Evaluation of the 2013-2017 Strategy of State Youth Policy of the RA, the Strategy has been evaluated from the perspectives of youth needs compliance (external relevance), logical structure (internal relevance), measurability, etc., to develop the 2018-2022 Strategy for State Youth Policy of the Republic of Armenia. Besides, a need has arisen to evaluate to what extent the Strategy, together with its activities, has been implemented so far.</p> <p>The evaluation findings are expected to be used to organize a more effective process of developing the 2018-2022 State Youth Policy of the Republic of Armenia.</p>
Outcomes and effects reported of the youth policies	The evaluation finds the Concept of State Youth Policy of the Republic of Armenia for 2015-2025 relevant, in other words in line with the needs of the young people in 2016. Although the same reports finds that the

	implementation of the Republic of Armenia State Youth Policy Strategy for 2013-2017 generated progresses in the area of the 5 priorities ⁵⁷ , according to the evaluation report, there are still unaddressed needs or needs that have not been sufficiently targeted in the period 2013-2016.
Research design of the evaluation	The analysis is 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.
Existing focus on collaboration and exchanges in the evaluation (process and result)	<p>The main stakeholders involved in youth policy evaluation are the State bodies, international organizations, youth non-governmental organizations dealing with youth issues.</p> <p>These bodies and organizations participate in the evaluation of youth policy implementing by the state providing with data, information, materials, experiences and experts.</p> <p>According to the answers to the survey for this review on the evaluation of the evaluation of youth policies.</p>

Country	Romania
The reason for signalling this measure	The Romanian case represents a good practice for the formative evaluation of a programme supporting both public and private (NGO) lead youth projects, as part of the larger youth policy. In this way the Romanian case is of interest for the evaluation of interventions in the youth field with limited budget and limited time of implementation, as all projects funded by the Romanian youth programmes are less than one year long.
Youth policy (or policy targeting youth) evaluation/assessment	<p>Once every two years the Ministry of Youth and Sports conducts a general research on the situation of the youth (Youth Barometer) that can be used to inform all policy decisions.</p> <p>In 2016 the Ministry of Youth and Sports conducted an evaluation of the programmes supporting youth projects with the national budget. The evaluation regarded 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 level 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-</p>

⁵⁷ The Strategy included 5 priority with dedicated action plans for (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

	2020 and target all young people between 14 and 35.
Result of the evaluation/assessment (report, study, article, etc.) and a very short description.	The Evaluation of Youth Programmes and actions supported by the Ministry of Youth and Sports was published online in Romanian in December 2016.
Period / Timeline	The evaluation conducted covered the period 2010-2015.
Responsible institution	The Ministry of Youth and Sports is the main institution in charge for youth policy and its evaluation.
Aims and goals of the evaluation presented as the learning case	The evaluation focused on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the programs of Ministry of Youth and Sports.
Outcomes and effects reported of the youth policies	The evaluation of youth programs of Ministry of Youth and Sports has shown that these programs are relevant to the needs of young people, but that the effectiveness, efficiency, usefulness and sustainability of the projects depend mainly on three factors: staff available for youth activities, budget allocated by the Ministry of Youth and Sport, success communication actions about youth projects and services available.
Research design of the evaluation	The methodology of the evaluation included a survey among NGOs implementing youth projects with the support of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, a thorough desk research of the database of projects funded by the Ministry of Youth and Sports for 5 years (2010-2015), interviews, focus-groups, case studies of selected projects and an expert panel.
Existing effects of the evaluation on policy or practice (implemented recommendations, etc.)	<p>The evaluation recommended more attention 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 starting in 2016, while one of the youth programmes supported is in the field of youth research. Due to administrative bottlenecks, although the recommendation was carefully considered, in 2019 there is still no on-line platform for projects application and management.</p>
Existing focus on collaboration and exchanges in the evaluation (process)	The evaluation was conducted by a research institute contracted by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The methodology included the consultation of all relevant factors: internal and external to the Ministry of Youth and

and result)

Sports and its county offices.

6. General conclusions

Based on the conceptual framework, practical guidelines, the general assessment of youth policy evaluation in Europe based on the survey conducted and the case studies, the following conclusions can be formulated:

- Evaluation of youth policies is not a general practice in Europe and, in many cases, it is promoted by international practices and international organisations, like UN agencies (UNICEF, UNDP), the European Union etc. As such, one can notice several tentative to generate policy emulation, as a form of policy transfer, from international organisations to national youth policy makers.
- There are not enough resources, both financial and human resources, to conduct extensive evaluation of youth policies and most specifically of policies concerning youth work in all countries in Europe. However, very good practices can be learned from the evaluation of national employment policies targeting young people and European youth policies.
- The lack of impact evaluation of youth policies can explain why youth policy makers need to make important efforts to initiate inter-sectoral cooperation targeting young people and to secure budgets for youth policies. In a nutshell, it seems to be a lack of evidences on the impact of youth policies, but this is due to the absence of research, not to the absence of youth policy results.
- The most commonly used theoretical approach when planning evaluation of youth policies in European countries is the post-positivism, showing an optimistic perspective on the possible results and utility of the evaluation. However, this approach is not confirmed in practice by a direct „translation” of the new found knowledge in political decisions. Therefore, if the design of most of the youth policy evaluations identified for case studies is a post-positivist one, the evaluations are conducted in many cases with great attention to stakeholders’ inputs, falling under the responsive constructivist approach or the constructivist approach. This later is encouraging the participation of young people to the evaluation, as a key concept for both youth work and evaluation.

7. Checklist on 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 indicators and result indicators) 2. Defining the indicator system by taking into account the size of the youth policy intervention/elements to be monitored and evaluated. Concretely this is done by drafting the indicator fiches, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Name, type and level</i> ○ <i>Definition and purpose</i> ○ <i>Unit of measure</i> ○ <i>Method of calculation</i> ○ <i>Disaggregation</i> ○ <i>Method of data collection/measurement</i> ○ <i>Data sources and tools to be used</i> ○ <i>Frequency of collection</i> ○ <i>Values for baseline, actual value and target</i> 3. Designing the monitoring system and undertaking a quality check of the indicators identified. Concretely this is done by drafting the monitoring procedures, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Responsible for collection</i> ○ <i>Responsible for reporting</i> ○ <i>Location of data storage</i> ○ <i>Frequency of reporting on collected data</i> 4. Designing the evaluation system and identifying the data needed to evaluate the youth policy. Concretely this is done by drafting the evaluation plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>what will be evaluated (the scope of the evaluation reported to the youth policy of interest?)</i> ○ <i>when evaluation will be conducted and to what purpose – ex-ante and/or interim and/or ex-post evaluation?</i> ○ <i>which evaluation criteria will be used?</i> ○ <i>which evaluation design will be used for the impact evaluation: theory based and/or counterfactual evaluation?</i> ○ <i>which institutional involvement is envisaged: internal, external or independent evaluation?</i> 5. Carrying out ex-ante evaluation, the M&E system will be assessed in the ex-ante evaluation, including the indicator system. In this way one can ensure that monitoring system will deliver data on indicators (output and result indicators) for the purpose of the ex-post evaluation. 6. Ex-post/impact evaluation needs to be prepared from the planning stage. At this moment one should know what data/indicators are needed for the evaluation. If data is not collected/collection is not prepared from the outset, impact (e.g. counterfactual) evaluations might not be carried out due to lack of data. Moreover, for impact evaluation and in particular if an ex-post counterfactual evaluation is planned, baseline data need to be collected before starting the implementation of the youth policy.
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. Permanent improvement of the monitoring system, i.e. elimination/addition of indicators if set up ones proved inadequate (judging by the criteria presented in the

STAGE	USE OF INDICATORS AND THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM
	<p>previous section, e.g. if data is not available/cannot be collected), despite ex-ante evaluation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Carrying out interim evaluations, in which framework the M&E system, including the indicator system, is assessed for adequacy, in the light of its utilisation (as opposed to theoretical setting in the planning stage). 4. Compiling information on indicators and the progress achieved and reporting on this progress (annual activity/accountability reports) 5. Ensuring that the monitoring system will deliver data on indicators (output and result indicators) for the purpose of the ex-post evaluation!!!
<p>Evaluation stage</p>	<p>During the evaluation of the youth policy, these are the most important steps to be taken:</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 design established through the evaluation plan 2. If an independent evaluation has been planned, the selection of the independent evaluator is needed at this stage 3. Assessing the interventions' performance on the basis of performance/monitoring indicators 4. Collecting data for other indicators identified as needed for an adequate evaluation and assess the intervention's performance based on these further indicators 5. In this context, one need to take into account the recommendations of the ex-ante evaluation as regards the indicator and M&E system 6. Reviewing indicators linked to a possible review of the youth policy (and if the case of the youth strategy) 7. Reviewing the monitoring system (quality of indicators, data collection and their transfer to the users) in which framework the M&E system, including the indicator system, is assessed for adequacy, in the light of its utilisation (as opposed to theoretical setting in the planning stage). 8. Excepting the case of ex-post evaluations, continuing to monitoring system delivering data on indicators (output and result indicators) for the purpose of the ex-post evaluation

Annex 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/coordination/ implementation)

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

2. If you answered yes to the previous question, please provide the full name of the body (in English and in original country language) and if you would have information, please provide the data of the establishment of the body

3. What type of youth policy document(s) are in your country (multiple choice answer)
 1. Youth Law
 2. Youth Strategy
 3. Youth Programme
 4. Youth Plan (Implementation Plan)
 5. a Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan
 6. another policy document _____

4. **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 by implementation plan. Process evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful also for adjusting implementation of the project, programme or policy so that its objectives would be achieved to a possibly high degree.
- **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-and-benefit analysis and analysis of unintended consequences, indirect effects. Its wider aims may include determination 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.

5. **Has monitoring of implementation or impact evaluations of national youth policy been conducted in your country?**

Please tick 'yes' only when you firmly are able to identify the report. Please tick 'no' if you cannot be sure about existence of the report.

	Yes	No	Do not know
Ex ante 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"/>

6. **Has ex ante evaluation, implementation monitoring or impact evaluations of policy interventions been carried out in your country in the following youth policy sectors?** Please tick 'yes' only when you firmly are able to identify at least one example and 'no' if you cannot be sure about existence of any instance. These evaluations may come in the shape of project reports, government reports, dissertations, journal articles, book chapters, or other formats. Please tick the box corresponding to your answer for each line

	Yes	No, none	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"/>

Part C. Framework of youth policy monitoring and evaluation

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

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

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

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

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. Other way of integration of research and policy evaluation to youth policy making. Please specify _____
6. No integration of the youth research and policy evaluation to youth policy making

Part D. Examples of good practices

- 10. Please share what you consider a good practice of using research in youth policy planning, monitoring or evaluation processes in your country. Please describe the case and provide a brief explanation of why you chose this particular case. When describing it, please explain what you think**

was the impact of this particular example? If there are no such good practices in your country, please also indicate this.

11. Please provide concrete titles and authors of any monitoring or evaluation reports that you identified in the previous questions. Please provide links for 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)).

12. To your opinion, what are current challenges for youth policy evaluation and youth policy making? Please describe briefly.
