

Kick-Off Event

'Europe Goes Local'

31 May – 2 June 2017

Hotel Lev, Ljubljana

Report on the event



Erasmus+

With the support of the Erasmus+ programme

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The kick-off event of the project was hosted by MOVIT, the Slovenian National Agency of the Erasmus+ youth programme. About 150 participants came together to discuss key issues related to improving municipal-level youth work. The event particularly highlighted the connections between European and local initiatives.

The background of the event

The role of the Kick-Off Event within the project

The National Agencies of the Erasmus+ youth programme and their partners decided to implement the project "Europe Goes Local – Supporting Youth Work at the Municipal Level", a long-term collaborative effort to raise the quality of youth work in particular through enhanced cooperation between various stakeholders and in line with the legal base of the Erasmus+ programme.

The project involves National Agencies (AT; BEFL; CH; DE; DK; EE; FI; FR; HR; HU; IS; IT; LI; LT; LV; NO; NL; PT; SI; SK), the SALTO-YOUTH Participation Resource Centre, the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth, the European Youth Forum and two networks: POYWE and InterCity Youth. JINT, the Belgian-Flemish National Agency of the Erasmus+ youth programme, is responsible for the overall coordination of the project. The project runs from July 2016 until May 2019.

Connected to the European level activities, each National Agency executes its own national strategy throughout the three-year implementation period. National Working Groups steer this national process and tailor the activities to the national realities and specificities of local youth work in each country.

The mapping exercise

A mapping exercise took place during the first project year to gather knowledge on the settings, structures, tasks and challenges of youth work at the municipal level. The outcomes of this study help to define the directions and themes for further activities within this Strategic Partnership.

The output of the mapping exercise is an analytical paper that contains an overview of the key policy and structural frameworks as well as practices of youth work at the municipal level also identifying related challenges. The following questions were discussed:

- Policy frameworks that defines the role, institutional structure and resources of youth work at the municipal level including the role of the National Agencies of the Erasmus+ youth programme;
- Stakeholders, roles, target groups in youth work at the municipal level;
- Methods, practices, challenges concerning recognition of youth work, availability of support for quality development, continuity in funding.

The Kick-off Event was allowed members of the National Working Groups and other stakeholders to reflect on the outcomes of the mapping exercise, exchange thoughts on good practices and challenges of municipal level youth work and propose the next steps of the Strategic Partnership.

Overall goals of the Kick-off Event

- Strengthen strategic initiatives towards the development of local youth work in the project countries and at the European level.
- Clarify further directions and reinforce commitment from all actors involved in the project.

Specific objectives of the Kick-off Event

- Establish a shared understanding of the project's framework - its background, intentions, strategic aims and activities (including the possibility of developing a European charter for youth work at local level).
- Present the results of the mapping exercise and reflect on the achievements, development potentials, trends and challenges in municipal youth work.
- Enhance connections between relevant European development initiatives and youth work at the local level and explore opportunities to strengthen these links.
- Consolidate National Working Groups and strengthen national processes towards quality development of municipal level youth work.
- Obtain commitment from European actors to address the challenges of local youth work in Europe.

- Encourage networking, peer learning and mutual exchange of youth work practices and tackle challenges.
- Identify the support needed to be undertaken in the strategic Partnership and beyond.

Participants in the event

The majority of participants came from municipal level youth work. Each project country was represented by 5 to 7 participants who:

- had a key role in municipal level youth work and strategies;
- were willing to follow the whole implementation period of the project;
- had a potential multiplier role in the national level activities of the project;

Besides the national delegations, European networks, projects and institutions were also present at the event.

The flow of the event

Selected methodology

The methodological approach was selected to create enough space for reflection on relevant issues in relation to municipal level youth work, to ensure better understanding of the overall project framework, as well as to provide time for consolidation of national initiatives to be implemented after the event. Therefore, the methodological approach was a combination of inputs, large group discussions, as well as smaller group processes (e.g. workshops, team meetings and open agenda sessions).

The event had two general facilitators (Tea Jarc and Darko Markovic) and five general rapporteurs (Manfred Zentner, Sladjana Petkovic, Dunja Potocnik, Marti Taru, Ondřej Barta).

Themes covered during the event

Mapping the challenges of youth work at the municipal level

Related sessions: Realities of Youth Work at the Municipal Level - presentation of the results of a mapping exercise; Youth Worker Café – joint reflection on the trends identified via the mapping exercise; 5 thematic working groups (in parallel)

On the first day, after presentation by the researchers of the main findings, participants were able to reflect on them in a World Café session whereby 8 to 10 persons sat together

and exchanged their opinions in three rounds. Each discussion round was steered by a guiding question.

Five parallel thematic workshops were organised on the second day of the event with a focus on the challenges and good practices of municipal level youth work. A 20-minute presentation on a particular successful initiative was followed by group work. The 5 key themes defined by the Europe Goes Local project included the following: Developing the quality of youth work; Reaching out to marginalised groups; Integrating European projects in everyday municipal youth work; Managing municipal youth work and Cross-sectoral cooperation. These 5 sessions were a great opportunity to deepen the reflections about challenges faced by municipal youth work.

Inputs and resource persons during the thematic workshops were as follows:

Theme 1: Developing the quality of youth work
Facilitator: Matej Cepin Resource person: Jenny Andersson, Jonas Agdur (Representatives of KEKS) Title: The Logbook Rapporteur: Ondras Barta
Theme 2: Reaching out to marginalised groups
Facilitator: Simona Muršec Resource person: Annemette Krabbe (Head of Department, Gentofte Municipality) Title: Innovative approach to active youth participation in the Municipality of Gentofte Rapporteur: Dunja Potocnik
Theme 3: Reaching out to marginalised groups
Facilitator: Nina Milenkovič Kikelj Resource person: Claudius Siebel (Program Officer Key Action 2, JUGEND für Europa) Title: Introduction to the "Municipality Goes International" initiative Rapporteur: Manfred Zentner
Theme 4: Managing municipal youth work
Facilitator: Lara Kastelic Resource person: Simon Stefan (Abteilungsleitung offene Jugenarbeit/Kinder- & Jugendinteressen, Landeshauptstadt Kiel) Title: Municipal youth work strategy of the capital city Kiel/German Federal Land Schleswig-Holstein Rapporteur: Sladjana Petkovic
Theme 5: Cross-sectorial cooperation
Facilitator: Biba Rebolj Resource person: Hans Migchielsen (Vice-chair, InterCity Youth), Henny Wibbelink (Strategic Advisor, Municipality of Hertogenbosch) Title: Good Practices of the municipality of Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands Rapporteur: Marti Taru

Overview of the current discourse in youth work with a municipal level dimension and peer-learning

Related sessions: Learning to fly: youth work does youth politics; What is going on in Europe? - Snapshots from current European developments and discourses in the field of youth work; Inspirational market – 8 to 10 parallel mini-workshops presenting key European/local/national policies, good practices and debates about youth work

Two plenary inputs were dedicated to the current debates on and topical issues of youth work in Europe.

In his keynote presentation entitled "Learning to fly: youth work does youth politics", Professor Dr. Werner Lindner argued that youth work practitioners needed to develop certain 'political savviness' in order to better navigate themselves in the current political arenas and to position youth work in their local/national contexts more effectively. After the presentation, there was time for short comments, remarks and questions.

The afternoon of the second day started with a presentation titled 'What is going on in Europe?' briefly addressing current European developments and discourses in the field of youth work.

It was followed by a large Inspirational Market that offered 21 sessions in two rounds. While the first round focused mostly on certain European-level practices and topics, round two was a real opportunity for peer learning whereby the participants in the event had space to share some good practices from local level youth work.

Inputs during the inspirational market:

- Presentation of the Aware and Active project (Larissa Pompe; Marco Frimberger)
- Introduction to the Euth Project (Evaldas Rupkus)
- The latest developments of the EU Youth Strategy (Ivan Hromada)
- Introduction to the "Declaration of Principles of Professional Open Youth Work" (Marc Boes)
- The political recognition of youth work in Europe (Koen Lambert)
- The interaction between youth work and social work (Tanya Basarab)
- Democracy Reloaded: How to engage youth in municipal decision-making? (Stephanie Nowakowski; Éva Járosi)
- Activities of the European Youth Forum (Jo Deman)
- 100% Youth City – Quality Label for Youth Friendly Cities. With the support of Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic partnership (Carlos Santos)
- Partispace (Pieter - Jan Uyttersprot)
- Summer jobs for young people under 18 years: how youth can work support youngsters to find and get summer jobs and why we should do it! Case: Summer job voucher, Helsinki city <http://kesaseteli2017.munstadi.fi/in-english/> (Merja Hovi; Maritta Sipilä)

- LOL: Link On Labour vs Coworking Space (Massimo Capano)
- New youth centre at a municipality; progress so far... (Renārs Peksis)
- Overview of good practices of Estonian youth work on local level (The Estonian national delegation)
- CONCRECITY - THE GAME (Gloria Lombardo)
- The Budget Game (Hannes Vanmeenen)
- Recognition and validation of Youth Workers (Ilaria Zocco)
- Youth work at the district of Perg (Karin Peham-Strauß)
- Inclusion in youth work - Recommendations from the model project in NRW (Martina Leshwange)
- Jovem Autarca – “Young Mayor” (Teresa Ferreira)
- REparticipation – An approach to build more sustainable communities at local level (Barnabás Gulyás)

Planning the next steps of the project at the European, national and local level

Related sessions: 'Europe goes Local'- strategic aims and background of the project; National and European teams' meeting; Gallery of proposals made by National and European teams; Europe goes local – next steps in the project; Panel discussion – What is European about youth work at municipal level?

The event allowed time for National Working Groups to plan their activities for the next two years of the project. Each group came up with concrete steps to start the national level activities for the project.

Stakeholders delegated by European institutions or networks discussed the project's objectives and desired outputs with the members of the Steering Group.

Every group created a poster displaying plans for future activities. The posters were exhibited in an interactive Gallery of national and European plans. In this dedicated gallery space the participants were able to get first-hand information about what other national and European teams were planning to do after the event in the framework of the Europe Goes Local project.

The final part of the third morning of the conference was devoted to a panel discussion, where the representatives of different stakeholder groups (youth workers, Erasmus+ national agencies, youth researchers, national authorities and European institutions) had an opportunity to share their views on the outcomes of the event, as well as point out some future directions for the Europe Goes Local project.

Members of the panel discussion:

- Tomi Kiilakoski, senior researcher, Finnish Youth Research Network
- Barbara Zupan, senior advisor, Urad RS za mladino/Office for Youth

- Tanya Basarab, representative of EU-CoE youth partnership
- Hans-Georg Wicke, head of NA, JUGEND für Europa - National Agency Erasmus+ YOUTH IN ACTION in Germany
- Neda Zaborsky, head of MJA Riehen office, Mobile Jugendarbeit Basel+Riehen (MJA)
- Jazie Veldhuyzen, board member, Bvjong (the Netherlands)

Content-related Outcomes of the Kick-off Event

The participants in the event discussed challenges that are significant in municipal level youth work. Content-related outcomes are categorised into the five themes that were introduced during the workshop sessions.

A) Managing Municipal Youth Work

Most participants highlighted the need to rethink the identity of youth work at the municipal level and strengthen the role of local youth services in recognising **its essence, role and value**.

A demand for a **knowledge-based approach** has appeared, which influences all aspects of municipal level youth work from policy-making to practice. This knowledge-based approach can support the development of strategies and plans and it can also stimulate innovation. The use of **indicators, evaluation and monitoring** should become inseparable components of municipal level youth work.

Municipal level youth work is a complex arena and the main challenge is how to bring the different parts together and how to facilitate communication between the various actors. Youth work might act as a mediator between the stakeholders.

The **participation of young people** in decision-making is fundamental both for youth policies and for youth work policies. Communication in a manner that engages young people in the entire process is a key to success in local level youth work. **Empowerment schemes** for young people can contribute to more inclusive municipal youth work and youth policy-making.

One of the main challenges mentioned by participants was the **shortage of resources** in municipal level youth work in terms of the lack of and uneven access to funding as well as the limited availability of human resources. The **administrative burden** might also hinder the effectiveness of municipal level youth work.

B) Developing the Quality of Youth Work Policy and Practice

The participants in the event concluded that quality youth work must be **strategic, relevant and innovative with clear outcomes that are further disseminated**. Quality development can be defined in terms of the following learning process: defining indicators; setting aims in relation to the indicators; measuring the indicators. It requires systems, i.e. a set of tools to gather and utilise knowledge in order to improve youth work.

The participants in the event invited municipalities to develop indicators.

Quality management can be explicit (direct youth work laws and strategies), implicit (youth work is included in other strategic documents/laws) or neither (youth work takes place without any umbrella documents shielding it and yet it seems to work well enough).

Accountability and quality development is approached in various ways: top-down approaches (assessment of given tasks); assessment and quality development tools (to be used at the municipality level); involvement of young people (quality and efficiency dialogues).

Prof. Dr. Werner Lindner pointed out in his presentation that evaluation and empirical data were only a part of the picture leading to the recognition of youth work. Better recognition can only be achieved if youth work enters the political arena in the following manner

- Political decision-making needs to be understood and influenced by the youth sector.
- **“Youth workers should advance their qualification in lobby work skills.”**
- **Young people should be engaged in the quality development of youth work.**

C) Finding an adequate and constructive role and position in cross-sectoral cooperation

Awareness-raising and the need for **intra-sectoral cooperation** was mentioned more often than cross-sectoral cooperation during the event. In terms of connections and interlinkages, only the vertical linkage between the local and European levels was pointed out. The nature of interlinkages between and the roles and responsibilities of different actors were not mentioned.

There was just a very **vague and general idea that cooperation and cross-sectoralism** were necessary and useful. However, there was no specific mention of any partners or the relationships between them.

The presenter of **“Learning to fly”** suggested that **youth work needed to connect to other actors** and fields if it was to strengthen its position in power games and in decision-making and to have a stronger say when it comes to allocation of resources. Decision-making in contemporary democratic societies and power structures is essentially **a game of finding allies, building coalitions, convincing others, etc. – hence building coalitions and finding allies is a crucial part of gaining and exercising social and political influence.**

D) Integrating European Projects in Everyday Municipal Youth Work

According to the perception of participants, European projects (Erasmus+) help locals to feel European! It could be a very important input to transferring European values, not only for young people but also for the municipality in general.

For the successful integration of European / international projects **clear plans are needed (action and implementation plans, personnel development plans, networks, structures for international youth work on the local level, communication/PR strategy...)**

A **local network is essential for European projects** (cross-sectoral, e.g. with schools, youth NGOs, sport, culture, social work). These networks might have other approaches to European programmes (Erasmus + education) and/or other contacts and can provide additional support.

The need of European projects for financial and human resources and capacities that might not be available in municipal youth work poses an obvious challenge.

Language barriers should not be disregarded. Municipalities often cannot respond to calls for cooperation and cannot take part in projects initiated in English as language capacities within the public authority may be limited.

Limited availability can also be an obstacle. It is mainly officers responsible for youth who can be involved in activities / cooperation. Due to the nature of a youth officer's work, it is often not possible for them to be away from their office for a couple of days to take part in an activity or to get engaged in a process.

Another obstacle is that youth workers are at a distance from direct internal decision-making: A youth officer in the structure of a local authority is usually not in a position to make decisions or pledge a commitment, which often makes a youth officer in a project less able to engage in processes, initiate change, involve partners etc.

E) Reaching out to marginalised groups

Youth work has two approaches in relation to its target group. One says that youth work should focus on marginalised youths while the other theory argues that youth work should be accessible to everyone, including young people, to give them knowledge, skills and entertainment – enabling them to learn in a fun and informal way and that it has to be universal for all young people.

Youth work is definitely different from social work and it has to build its identity separately from it even when we consider the marginalised target groups.

The main principle of reaching out to marginalised groups as was suggested by participants is as follows: **Ownership of the process by young people is the foundation.** It is important not only to work with marginalised youths but we also have to create a context where young people feel included and would like to get engaged. Youth work should be about participation and informal learning – about developing an entrepreneurial mind-set.

Youth work with marginalised groups requires special training and knowledge development and a mediating role played by youth workers between the different policy areas in these cases is a key factor.

Annex I

Agenda of the event

Wednesday, May 31st

10:00-14:30	Registration of participants
12:00 - ongoing	Optional warm-up activities
<i>13:00 - 14:30</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
14:30-15:00	Official opening in the plenary
15:00-15:30	'Europe goes Local' - strategic aims and background of the project, by Koen Lambert, Director of JINT vzw, the Flemish National Agency of the Erasmus+ youth programme
15:30-16:30	Realities of Youth Work at the Municipal Level - presentation of the results of a mapping exercise, by Sladjana Petkovic and Manfred Zentner
<i>16:30-17:00</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
17:00-18:30	Youth Worker Café – joint reflection on the trends identified via the mapping exercise
18:30-19:15	National and European teams' meeting
<i>19:30-20:30</i>	<i>Dinner</i>
Evening	Free time

Thursday, June 1st

9:00-10:00	Good morning! "Learning to fly: youth work does youth politics" input by Professor Dr. Werner Lindner, Ernst-Abbe-University, Jena
10:00-10:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
10:30-12:00	5 thematic working groups (in parallel): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the quality of youth work policy and practice • Reaching out to marginalised groups • Integrating European projects in everyday municipal youth work • Managing municipal youth work • Finding an adequate and constructive role and position in cross-sectoral cooperation
12:00-12:15	<i>Break</i>
12:15-13:00	Plenary presentations of the working groups' outcomes
13:00 - 14:30	<i>Lunch</i>
14:30-15:00	What is going on in Europe? - Snapshots from current European developments and discourses in the field of youth work.
15:00-15:15	Opening of the Inspirational market
15:15-16:00	Inspirational market – 8 to 10 parallel mini-workshops presenting key European policies, good practices and debates related to youth work
16:00-16:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:30-17:15	Inspirational market – 8-10 parallel mini-workshops about inspirational practices from youth work at local or national level
17:15-17:30	Plenary moment
17:30-19:00	National and European teams' meeting
20:00-	<i>Dinner</i> Celebration of the 20 th anniversary of MOVIT

Friday, June 2nd

9:00-10:30	Good morning! Gallery of proposals made by National and European teams Summary of trends and insights
<i>10:30-11:00</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:00-12:00	Panel discussion – What is European about youth work at municipal level?
12:00-12:15	Europe goes local – next steps in the project, by Judit Balogh, project manager and Uroš Skrinar, Steering Group member
12:15-12:45	Evaluation of the event
12:45-13:00	Closing the event
<i>13:00-14:30</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
After lunch	Departures from the hotel

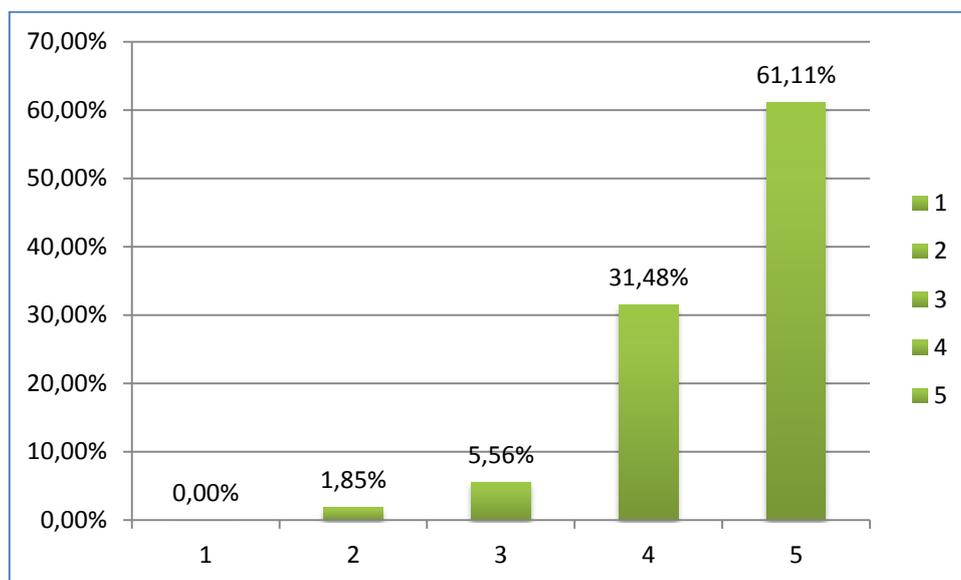
Annex II

Evaluation report

This evaluation report is a summary of the evaluations given by participants after the event. The number of complete answers was 56.

BEFORE THE EVENT

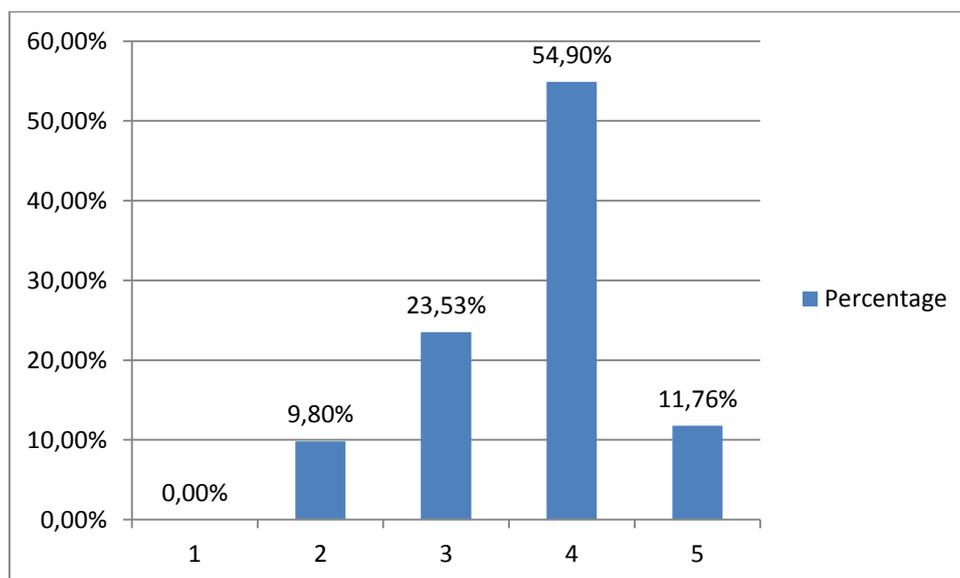
Evaluation of the registration procedure and quality of information before the event (1 = very negative – 5 = very positive)



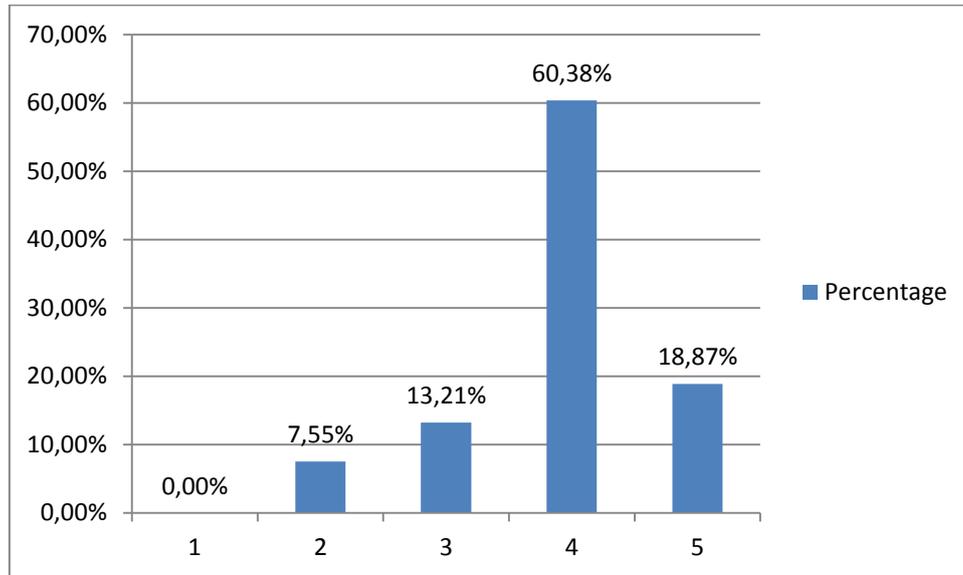
ATTAINMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Fulfilment of the objectives of the kick-off event (1 = not at all fulfilled – 5 = completely fulfilled):

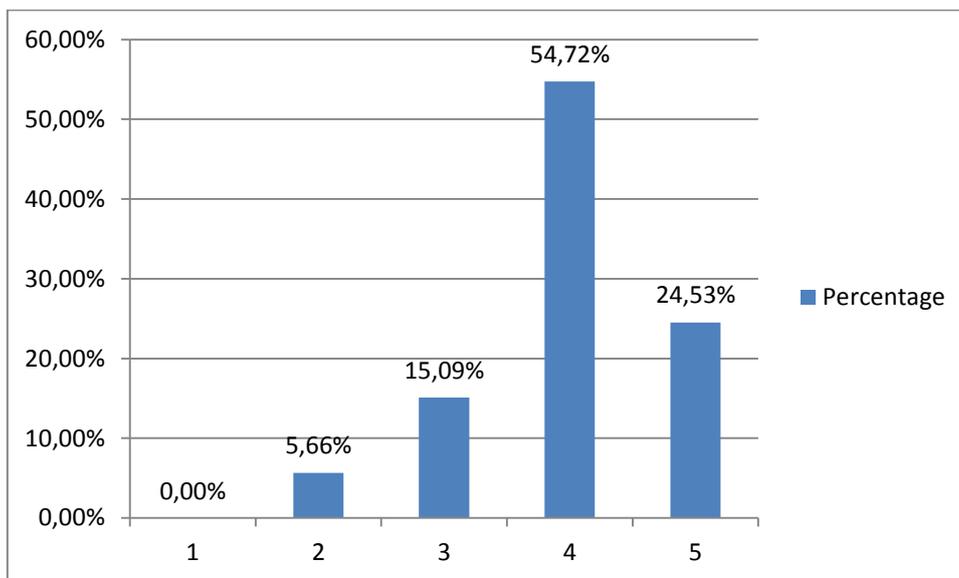
To get familiar with and reflect on the outcomes of the mapping exercise (settings, structures, tasks and challenges of youth work at the municipal level)



To exchange good practices and challenges of municipal level youth work



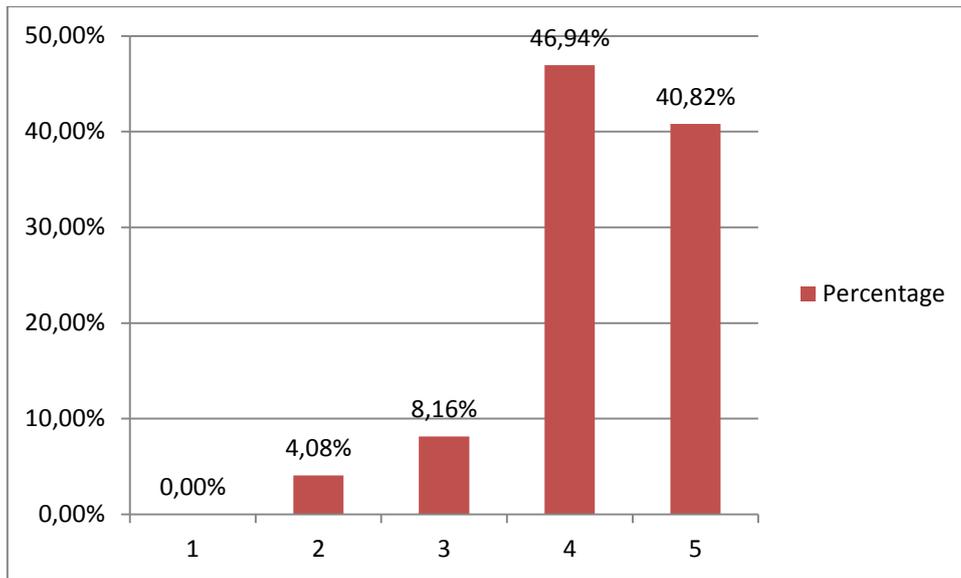
To envisage and engage in the next steps of the "Europe goes local" project



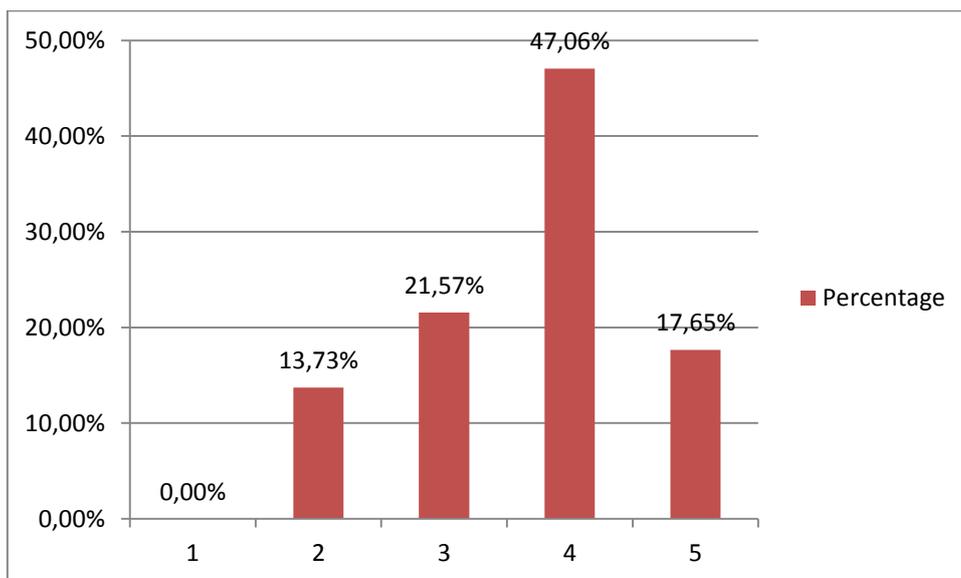
SATISFACTION WITH EACH SESSION

Level of satisfaction with each session (1 = very unsatisfactory – 5 = very satisfactory)

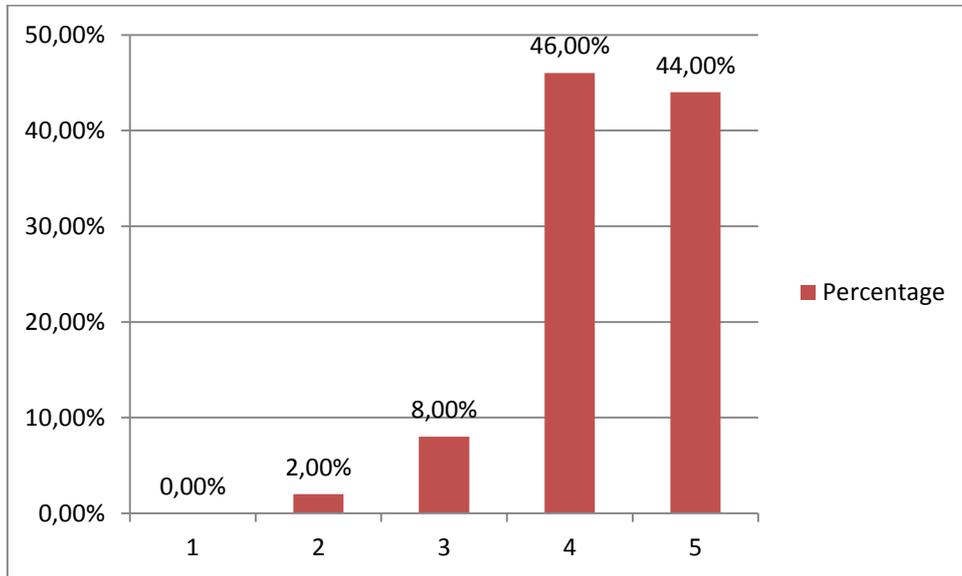
Official opening and intro to 'Europe goes Local' in the plenary



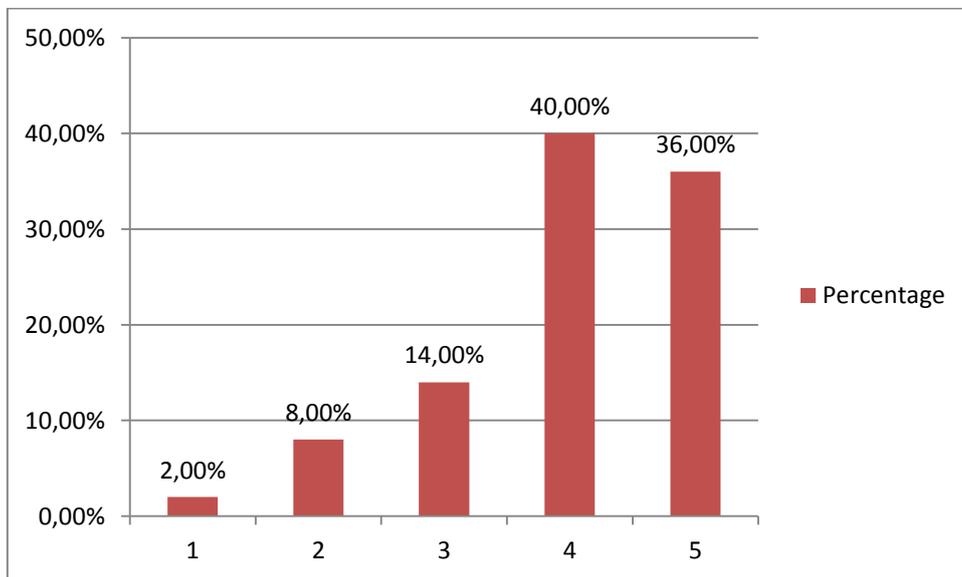
Presentation of the results of the mapping exercise



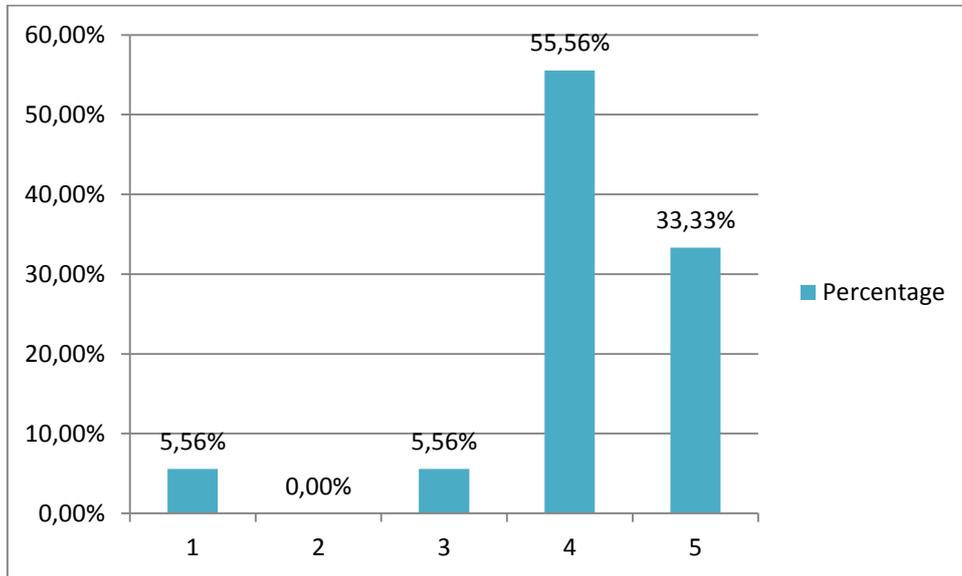
Youth Worker Café



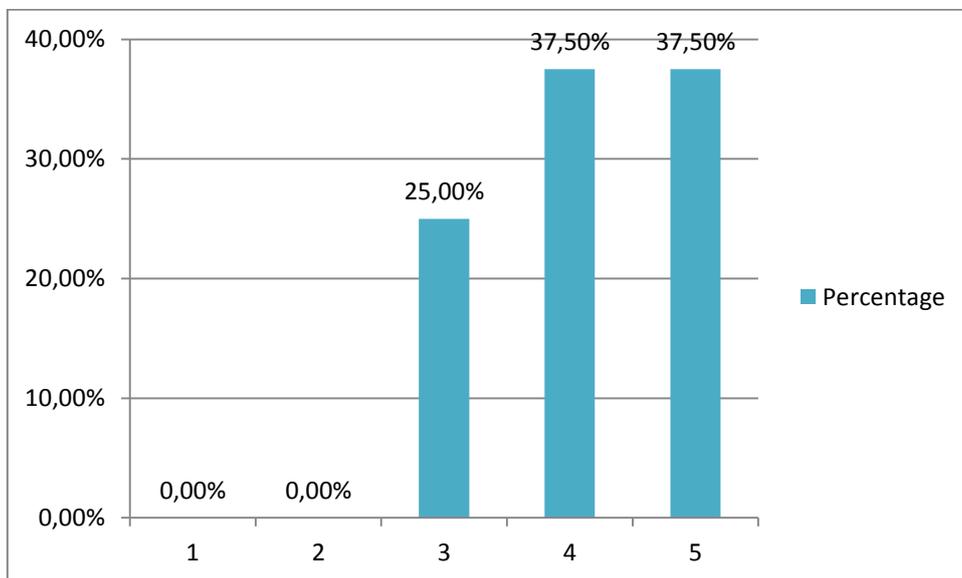
Input "Learning to fly: youth work does youth politics"



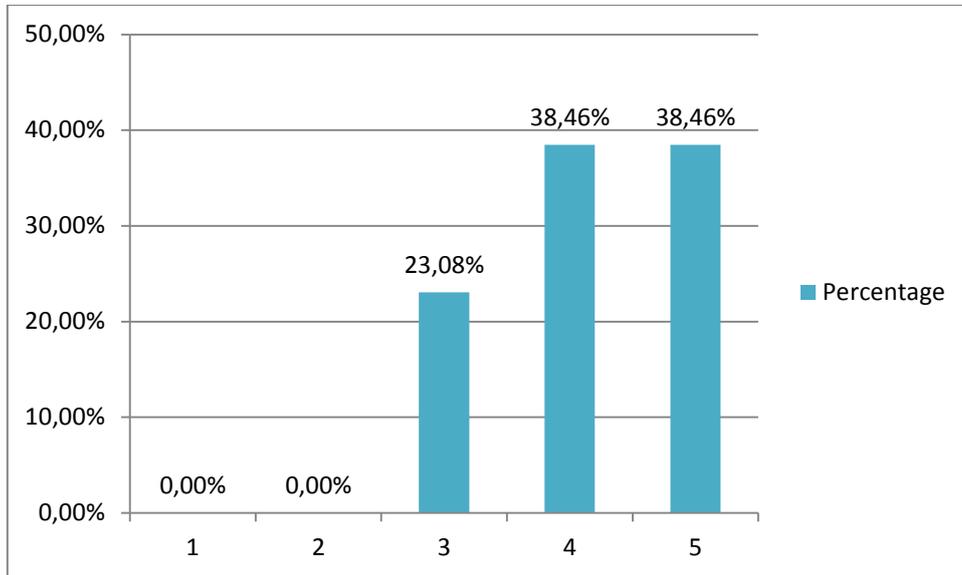
Workshop “Developing the quality of youth work policy and practice”



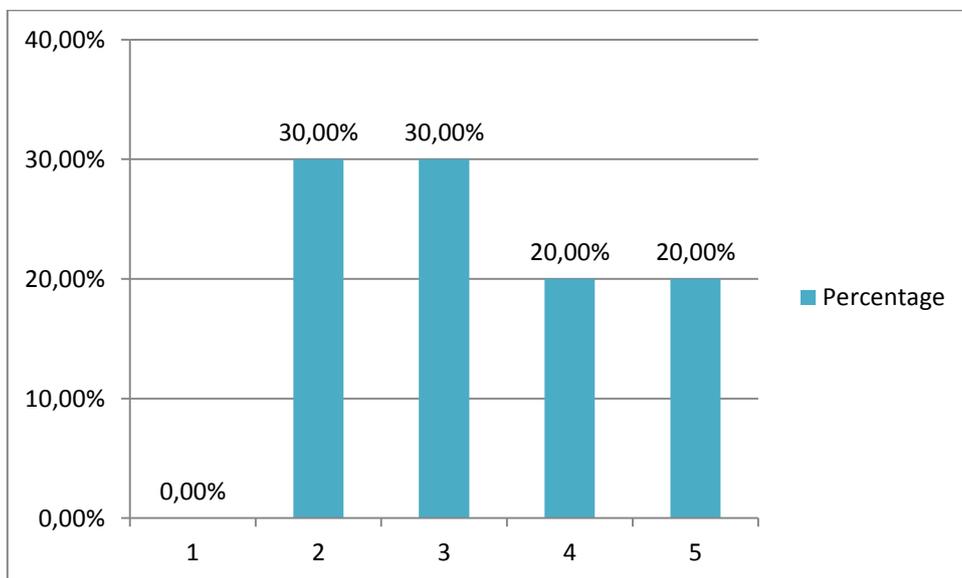
Workshop “Reaching out to marginalised groups”



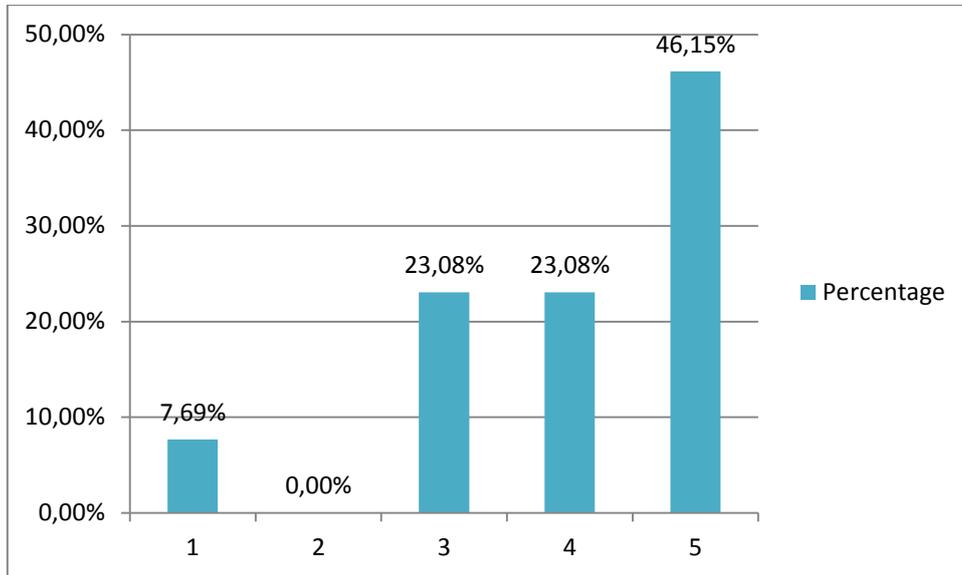
Workshop “Integrating European projects in everyday municipal youth work”



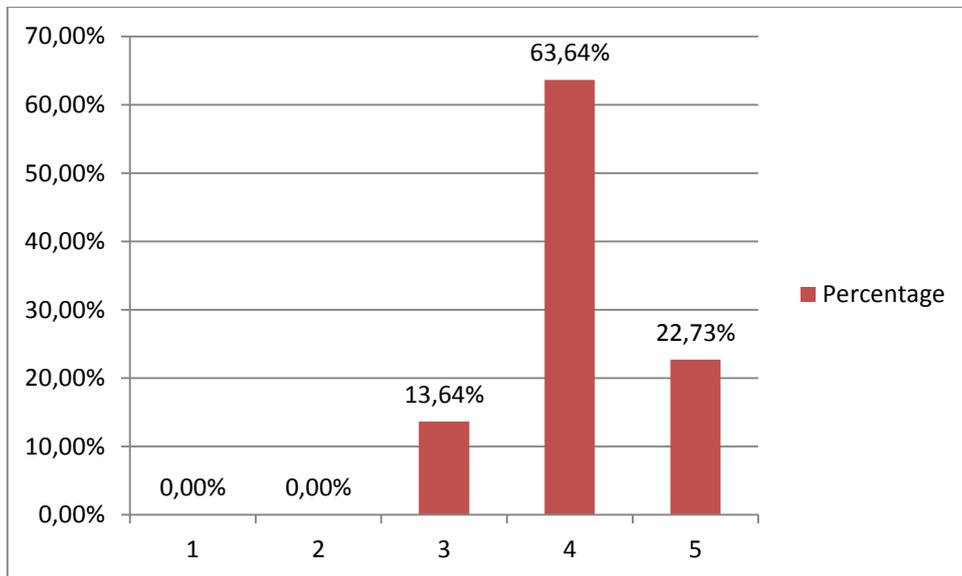
Workshop “Managing municipal youth work”



Workshop "Finding an adequate and constructive role and position in cross-sectoral cooperation"



What is going on in Europe? - Snapshots

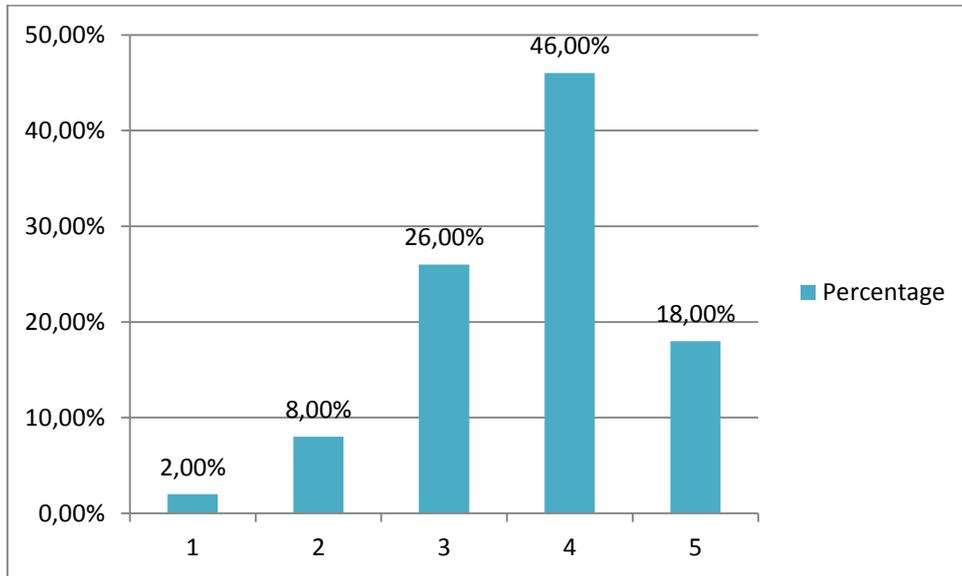




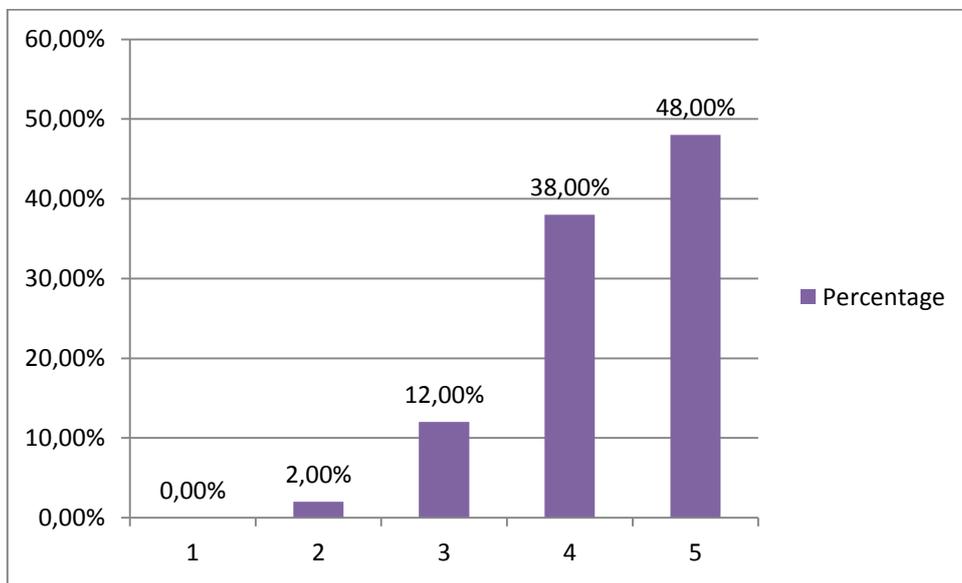
EUROPE GOES LOCAL

Supporting Youth Work at the Municipal Level

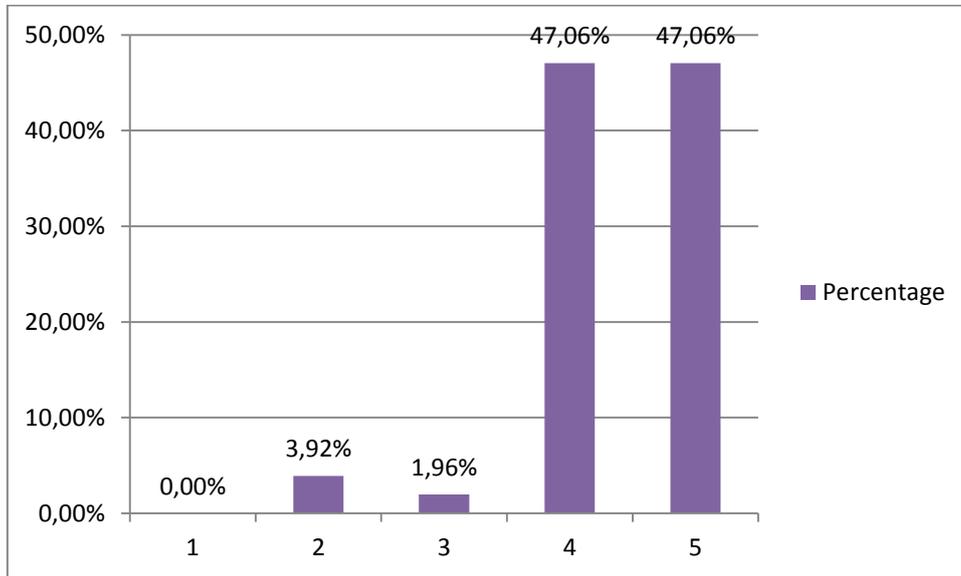
Inspirational market



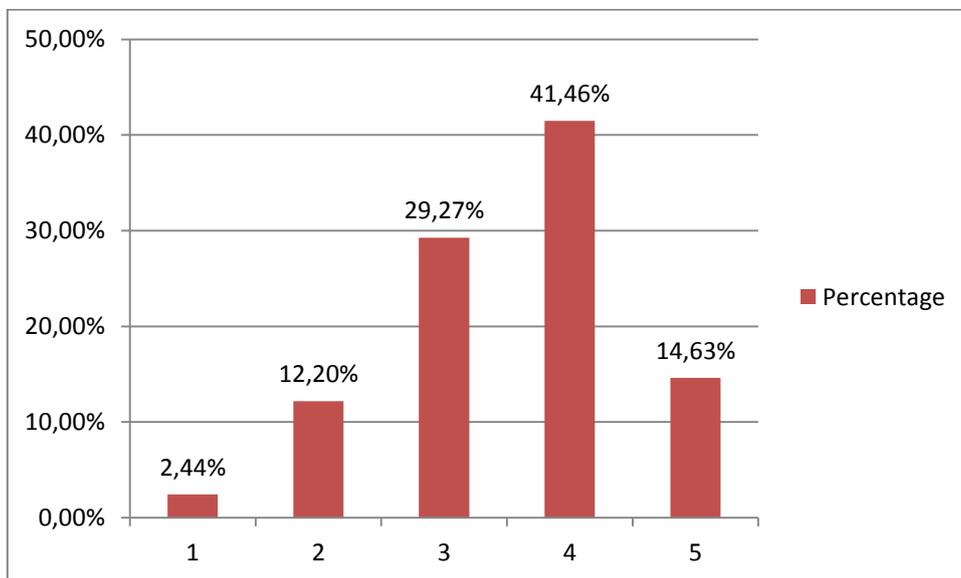
National and European teams' meeting



Gallery of proposals made by National and European teams



Panel discussion – What is European about youth work at municipal level?



Next steps in the project

