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Léargas Research Forum 2020

The Impact & Experience
of European Programmes in Ireland

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**Good Practice Case Studies
in Erasmus+ Youth Strategic Partnerships**

Anne Molloy, RAY Network/Léargas





What is an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership – Key Action 2 (KA2)?

“transnational projects designed to develop and **share innovative practices** and **promote cooperation**, peer learning, and exchanges of experiences in the fields of education, training, and youth”



What is a Strategic Partnership – Key Action 2 (KA2)?

Strategic Partnerships support a wide and flexible range of activities in order to implement innovative practices, promote development and modernisation of organisations, and support policy developments at European, national and regional level.



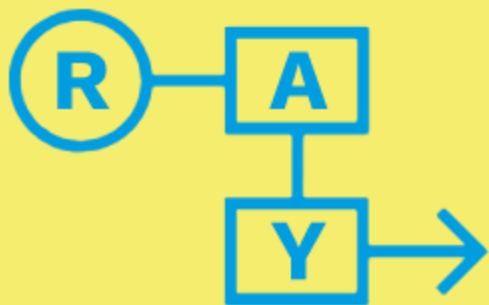
What is a Strategic Partnership – Key Action 2 (KA2)?

There are two kinds of Strategic Partnership; those supporting innovation and those supporting the exchange of good practices.



What is the Aim of Strategic Partnerships?

“support the development, transfer and implementation of innovative practices at organisational, local, regional, national or European levels.”



Research-based analysis of European youth programmes

We are a research network with partners in 34 European countries with 29 languages.

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Aim

The aim of this research project – across 16 European countries – is to explore the role, impact and potential of Erasmus+/Youth in Action strategic partnerships as instruments to foster innovation and the exchange of good practices in the youth sector and related fields



Methodology

- Case studies at national level
- Analysis of key project documents (applications, reports, products)
- Explorative interviews with key project stakeholders



Methodology

- Supervised by Prof Maurice Devlin, Maynooth University
Dept of Applied Social Studies
- National Analysis  European Report



National Analysis

1. How have transnational strategic partnerships defined innovation and good practice, respectively, in the context of their projects?
2. How do transnational strategic partnerships seek to support the fostering of innovation and the strengthening of good practice?
3. How are the results of transnational strategic partnerships – intellectual outputs and/or best practice – typically shared, and how adequate are these sharing approaches?



Research Question

“How have transnational strategic partnerships defined innovation and good practice, respectively, in the context of their projects?”

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Case Study: National Youth Council of Ireland Screenagers

 national youth council of ireland
COMHAIRLE NAÍSIÚNTA NA NÓG

SCREEN AGERS INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH PROJECT

USING ICT, DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA IN YOUTH WORK

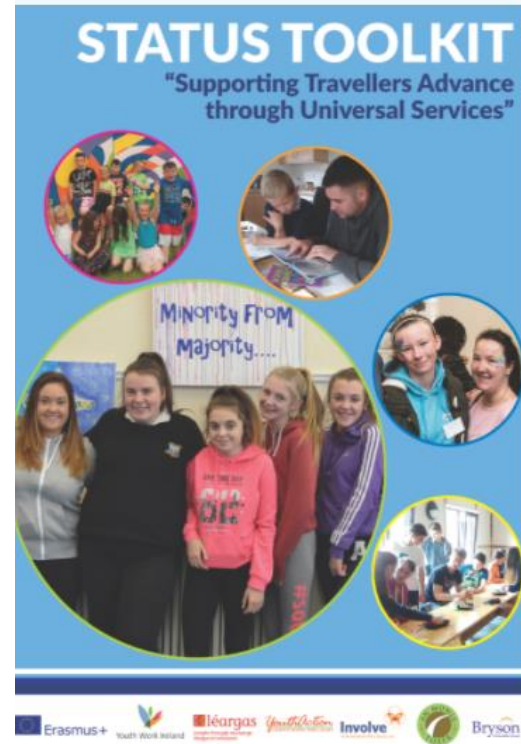
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Case Study

Youth Work Ireland

“STATUS Supporting Young Travellers Advance through Universal Services”





Identifying gaps in youth work, based on the expertise and knowledge of the organisation

“we also thought before we started that someone else must have done this type of work already – but then we found that there wasn’t that much,”

“We weren’t plucking it of the air and saying it’s a nice thing to do..... anyone can put a statistic in a needs analysis but it’s the expertise and knowledge of the organisation”

“It is such a new practice in youth work, there was no coordinated policy around it, there was nothing from decision makers or government on what to do”



Developing added value solutions for the youth sector

“[we were] dealing with an issue that everyone knew about for years but nobody seemed to crack, these tools that existed weren't doing the trick because it wasn't about a lack of tools,”

“It wasn't really about the innovation activities; it was more innovation in responding to and supporting youth workers around those activities. That was what was important”



Different perspectives on innovation

“there were occasions where we had to clarify what each of us interpreted as innovative practice, and what was different and what was unique, and what were the cultural differences”.



Research Question

How do transnational strategic partnerships seek to support the fostering of innovation and the strengthening of good practice?



Providing an evidence base through research and consultation

“One thing that everyone said was needed is research. Everyone had a similar concern – no uniformity, no policy, so it was like everyone wanted to explore the issue, had similar feelings about what needed to be done – research – and that’s where the focus on innovation was”

“The issue was we needed to step up in terms of our knowledge and skills in terms of using this medium because young people are using it, so we need to know more”



Focusing on a clearly identified target group

“If you want a change in an organisation it has to come from the youth workers up and the management down and we had to make it practical - like one of the indicators is traveller engagement as an agenda item on board meetings. If you have that discussed at every board meeting, you’d have to have progress.”

“when you engage in research with your member orgs, you’re asking them to tell you about their experience but the quid pro quo is we want to use this to inform policy so that we can make things better for youth workers on the ground”



How do transnational strategic partnerships seek to support the fostering of innovation and the strengthening of good practice?



Research Question

How are the results of transnational strategic partnerships – intellectual outputs and/or best practice – typically shared, and how adequate are these sharing approaches?

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- Dissemination through networks
- Working with multipliers at each project stage



Research Question

How do innovation and good practice have an impact beyond the partnership carrying a project, on the specific youth work context of the project as well as the wider youth sector?

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- Providing a solution to a problem or barrier for the youth sector
- Providing training and support to youth work organisations
- Providing quality outputs tools that can be used in the sector
- Contributing to national and European youth policies



European Findings

- Strategic Partnerships have the potential to foster innovative practices
- The youth sector lacks evidence and knowledge to clearly define what innovation in the context of European youth work is or should be
- Lacks the infrastructure to foster innovation strategically and scale innovative practices comprehensively for adoption in youth work, youth policy and youth research.
- In consequence, the terms *innovation* and *good practice* are oftentimes used as catchphrases.



RAY INNO » Research project on the role of innovation in European youth work and European youth policy

- <https://www.researchyouth.net/>