

Research-based Analysis of Youth UK Participant Survey: Civil Society Final Report

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Section 1 Introduction

This report presents evidence on how the mobility placements provided by the Erasmus+ programme have helped its participants to acquire particular skills and competences. This report is one of three thematic reports, each focusing on a different skill area. This report presents findings on the impact of Erasmus+ on participants' involvement and understanding of civil society. The other reports focus on acquiring skills and youth workers.

1.2 Erasmus+

Erasmus+ is the EU programme for education, training, youth and sport. The programme runs between 2014-2020 and supports activities in education, training, youth and sport across all sectors of lifelong learning including higher education, further education, adult education, schools and youth activities. In each country Erasmus+ is run by a National Agency. The UK National Agency is a joint venture between The British Council and Ecorys UK.

1.2.1 About RAY MON

The majority of Erasmus+ Youth National Agencies take part in Research-based Analysis of Youth (RAY). This involves a series of research to investigate and evaluate the impact of the Erasmus+ programmes. The research aims to contribute to a better understanding of international youth work and youth learning mobility and provides evidence that will enable policy development in the youth field in Europe as well as to the development of international youth work and learning mobility practice.

RAY-MON is the name of the RAY monitoring survey. The UK has been involved in RAY-MON since 2014, during which time two surveys have been run; in 2015-16 and 2017-18. The data collection was centred on young people and youth workers involved in Erasmus+ Key Action 1 and Key Action 3:

- Key Action 1 aims to provide opportunities for individuals to improve their skills, enhance their employability and gain cultural awareness. Key Action 1 covers the five fields of higher education, vocational education and training, schools, adult education and youth. Under Key Action 1 organisations are able to apply for funding to run mobility projects to offer structured study, work experience, job shadowing, training and teaching opportunities to staff and learners.
- Key Action 3 covers any type of activity aimed at supporting and facilitating the modernisation of education and training systems. Key Action 3 covers the field of youth only. Under Key Action 3, the Erasmus+ programme funds

strategic activities supporting policy reform across the EU in and the field of youth.

The two surveys were fielded to different respondents in two sequential waves (autumn and spring) and each used the same questionnaire (although some small changes were made). Participants were surveyed either at the end of the project or at the end of their period abroad. For this analysis the two years of data were combined to provide sufficient numbers per group of interest (outlined in Section 1.2.2).

This analysis used data collected from participants not leaders. The findings in this report are therefore based on the views and experiences of participants only.

1.2.2 Groups of interest

There are four participant groups that are of specific interest to this analysis. These groups are based on the different activities undertaken by Erasmus+ participants and are:

1. Youth exchanges (Key Action 1, young people)
2. Youth worker mobility (Key Action 1, youth Workers)
3. European Volunteering (Key Action 1, young people), and
4. Structured dialogue with policy-makers (Key Action 3, young people).

Throughout the report comparisons are made between these four groups.¹

Some participants in the data were excluded from this analysis. In 2015 an additional participant group was covered by the survey; Advanced Planning Visits. These projects involved sending participants on trips to meet up with partners and plan activities. These participants were not included in the analysis for this report due to small numbers. In addition, the data contained a small number of participants of a specialist project type called Transnational Cooperation Activity, which funds grants for individuals to attend training or conferences abroad on a wide variety of topics. The experiences of these participants can be very varied and the numbers were small, hence they have also been excluded for this analysis. Finally, any participants for projects where the UK was neither the funding nor sending country were excluded.

1.3 Analysis methods used

The analysis was conducted in two steps. At the first step a set of descriptive statistics were run, comparing the distribution of key outcomes across the four

¹ The number of survey respondents from each group can be found in Table A1 in Appendix 1 of this report.

groups. The differences in distribution were tested formally using Chi-square tests. The descriptive step was used to identify where there were large differences in key outcomes across the four participant groups.

At the second step regression analysis was used to test whether those differences in key outcomes remained once other participant characteristics were taken into consideration. If the difference is no longer significant then this indicates the differences seen in the descriptive step were likely to be caused by differences in the profiles of the participant groups. However, if the difference remains significant then this suggests the differences are genuine.

The regression models allow us to control for a range of socio-demographic characteristics. These include: age, gender, residency, nationality, main language, education, parent's education, special needs, whether or not the participant lives in a rural area, whether or not the participant faces obstacles, whether they feel that they have opportunities, their occupational status, and their reasons for participating.

1.3.1 Weighting the data

The analysis has been carried out on unweighted data. Weights are usually required to adjust for known differences in selection probabilities (for example, where individuals belonging to a specific sub-group are more likely to be selected for the sample) or where there are differences in response behaviour (for example, if individuals with specific characteristics are more likely to respond to the survey than others, then they will be over-represented in the responding sample, which can lead to bias). In each instance the researcher requires reliable information about the target population in order to generate the weights. Without reliable, robust population data the researcher risks generating a set of weights that do not adjust the sample in the correct manner, which could result in an increase in bias, rather than a reduction.

Whilst there are some population data available from the projects, it is known to contain duplicates. The duplicates exist because participants are able to attend more than one project. However identifying and removing these duplicates would not be straightforward. These duplicates mean the population data is not a true representation of the population of *individuals* who took part in the projects, i.e. the target population for this analysis, hence weighting the sample to this data could potentially introduce bias into the sample. It was not possible to identify an alternative set of population figures for this specific population, since the target population have self-selected themselves onto the projects and are therefore different to a general sample of young people. It was therefore deemed less risky and more transparent not to weight the sample.

In addition, the purpose of the analysis is to compare across groups, rather than make assertions about the wider population of participants. This reduces the importance of weighting, since the focus is on relationships that are internal to the data.

1.3.2 Potential biases and caveats

In interpreting the results of this analysis, and more broadly the outputs of the evaluation survey, it is important to consider its limitations and the sources of potential bias. There are two (related) potential sources that we would like to draw attention to:

1. **The absence of a baseline survey.** The results we present are generated by the descriptive and multivariate analysis of post-project perception and self-evaluation data. No baseline data was used. Participants were asked their views solely upon completion of their project and we have no information as to their views before their participation. As such, we cannot measure the 'distance travelled' during the project or if their views have indeed changed during the project. Furthermore, we cannot show if any potential change is induced or caused by their participation (in addition to baseline measures, a comparison group would also be required).

However, the analysis does pinpoint participants' perceptions and evaluations and the between-group comparisons allow observing the differential potential for impact between key groups. (Nonetheless, we cannot tell if differences are a product of the project itself or whether they simply are an outcome of the types of people who decide to pursue participation in the different types of projects)

2. **Self-reported evaluation and satisficing.** The post-project survey is designed as a self-completion questionnaire where respondents are asked to assess the impact the project had on them across a variety of dimensions. The literature on social cognition and survey methodology identifies 'satisficing' as one of the main potential risks to such questions, whereby:
 - Respondents do not thoroughly think about what the question is asking but might choose an option that they believe is in line with what is expected of them; or
 - Choose an option that is socially desirable.

Additionally, the phrasing of some questions might contribute to the effects mentioned above. In some instances questions are somewhat unbalanced and leading in favour of a positive response.

Finally, it is important to note that as long as the potential biases described above similarly affect all respondents (and the patterns are similar across groups) the validity of the between-groups comparisons is not likely to be affected.

1.3.3 Structure of the report

The report contains two main sections. The first covers findings for all participants, comparing across the four participant groups of specific interest. The second section looks specifically at participants who faced obstacles.

The full output of the analysis (descriptive tables and regression output) is provided in an (Excel) appendix. Charts of specific interest are presented in the main text.

Section 2 Findings from the analysis

In this section we outline how the projects affected the understanding, views and intentions of the participants towards civil society.

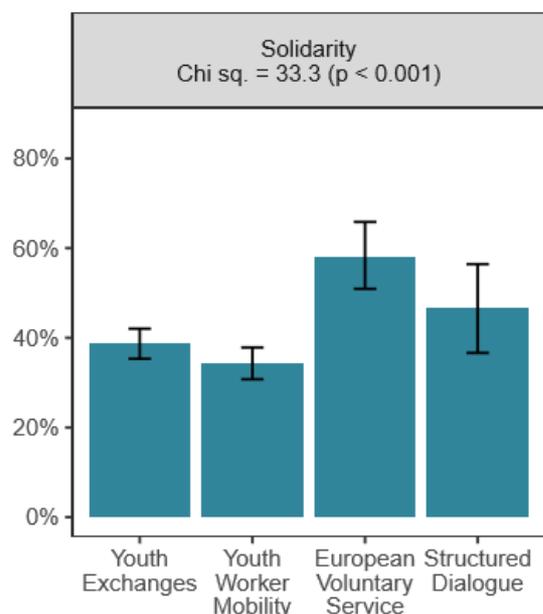
2.1 New knowledge about civil society

Participants were asked whether their involvement in the project had taught them something new about seven different aspects of civil society, namely; solidarity with people facing difficulties, democracy, cultural diversity active citizenship, human rights, the inclusion of disadvantaged or marginalised people in society, and discrimination.

2.1.1 Solidarity with people facing difficulties

Nearly two-fifths (38%) of all participants reported learning something new about solidarity. Participants in the European Voluntary Service were much more likely than participants in other groups to say they had learnt something new about solidarity, 58% of European Voluntary Service participants said they had learnt something new, compared with around a half (47%) of Structured Dialogue participants, 39% of Youth Exchange participants and just over a third (34%) of Youth Worker Mobility participants. This difference remained once differences in group profile had been taken into account. The proportion of European Voluntary Service participants who felt they had learnt something new from the project remained significantly higher than all other groups, even after controlling for differences in socio-demographic profile and the participant's motivations for joining the project.

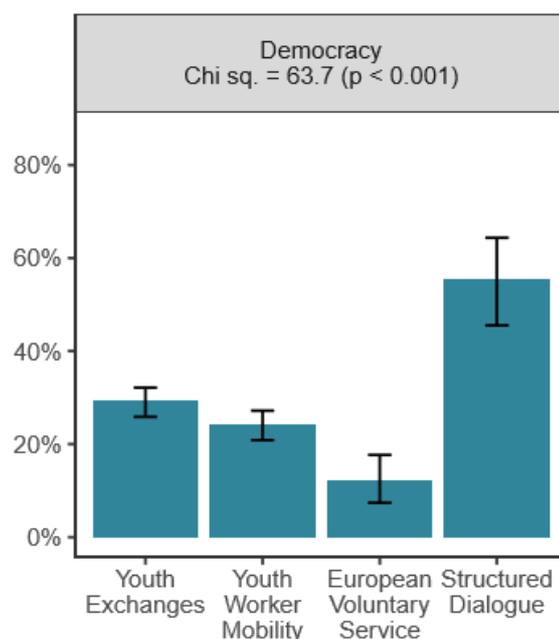
Figure 2.1 The proportion agreeing they had learnt something new about solidarity by participant group



2.1.2 Democracy

Just over a quarter (27%) of all participants reported learning something new about democracy. Structured Dialogue participants were significantly more likely than participants in any of the other groups to say they had learnt something new about democracy; 55% of them said they had learnt something new, compared to 29% of Youth Exchange participants, 24% of Youth Worker Mobility participants, and only 12% of European Voluntary Service participants. The differences between groups was still present when differences in group profile had been taken into account. The proportion of participants who felt they had learnt something new about democracy was significantly higher amongst Structured Dialogue participants than other participant groups.

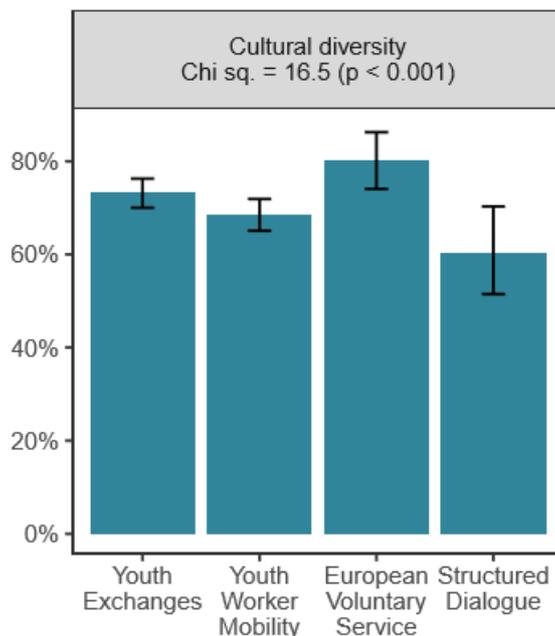
Figure 2.2 The proportion agreeing they had learnt something new about democracy by participant group



2.1.3 Cultural diversity

The majority (71%) of participants reported learning something new about cultural diversity. For all the participant groups, the proportion of participants who agree that they had learnt something new about cultural diversity was higher than for any of the other topic areas covered. Participants in all groups were more likely to agree that they had learnt something new about cultural diversity than to disagree.

Figure 2.3 The proportion agreeing they had learnt something new about cultural diversity by participant group



Within the topic of cultural diversity, the European Voluntary Service participants were most likely to agree they had learnt something new as a result of their participation, 80% saying they had learnt something new, compared to 73% of Youth Exchange participants, 68% of Youth Worker Mobility participants and 60% of Structured Dialogue participants. Once background characteristics had been controlled for, these differences between groups remained significant, with European Voluntary Service and Youth Exchange participants being much more likely to say they had learnt something new than Structured Dialogue participants.

2.1.4 Active citizenship

Nearly two-fifths (38%) of all participants reported having learnt something new about active citizenship. There was a significant difference between the proportion of participants who agreed that the project had taught them something new about active citizenship, participation in civil society and democratic life. Agreement ranged from 49% for Structured Dialogue participants to 27% for European Voluntary Service participants. However, once information was included about the participant’s socio-demographic background and their reasons for joining the project, the differences between groups were no longer significant. This suggests the reported differences in new understanding about active citizenship were mainly due to differences in the profiles of the different groups.

2.1.5 Human rights, fundamental rights

When asked about new understanding of Human Rights, over a third (37%) of all participants reported having learnt something new. The Structured Dialogue participants were much more likely than the participants of other groups to report that they had learnt something new, with 58% of Structured Dialogue participants stating this, compared to less than 40% of participants in each of the other groups. However, once socio-demographic differences and reasons for participating had been accounted for, these differences between groups was no longer significant, suggesting again that the differences reported by participants are due to underlying differences in group profile.

2.1.6 Inclusion of disadvantaged or marginalised people in society

There was only a small degree of difference in the proportion of participants who felt they had learnt something new about disadvantaged or marginalised people in society. Over two-fifths (43%) of all participants reported learning something new. This ranged from 37% of Youth Exchanges participants to 54% for European Voluntary Service participants. The differences were not large enough to follow up using multivariate analysis methods as it was unlikely that differences this small would remain once any socio-demographic differences had been accounted for.

2.1.7 Discrimination and non-discrimination

There were only small and non-significant differences between groups in the proportion of participants who felt they had learnt something new about discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cultural background, religion, disability, nationality etc. Over two-fifths (44%) of all participants felt they had learnt something new about discrimination, this ranged from 43% of Youth Exchanges participants to 50% of Structured Dialogue participants. Again, these differences were not followed up using multivariate analysis methods as they were too small to warrant further investigation.

2.2 Agreement with civil society aims of the projects

Participants were asked whether they agreed with two specific project aims that related to civil society. These were: the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that their involvement with the project would improve their ability to achieve something in the interests of the community or society, and the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that their participation in the project would improve their ability to get along with people from a different cultural background. The majority of participants agreed to both statements; 89% of all participants agreed or strongly agreed to the first statement, whilst 95% of all participants agreed or strongly agreed to the second.

2.2.1 The participant's ability to achieve something in the interests of the community or society

Participants were far more likely to agree with the statement than to disagree, with around 40% of the participants in each group strongly agreeing and less than 15% of participants in each group disagreeing or disagreeing strongly. However, there was very little variation in the distribution of responses between groups and there were no significant differences when controlling for the participant's socio-demographic background characteristics and their reasons for participating.

2.2.2 The participant's ability to get along with people from a different cultural background

This question also provoked a very similar range of responses from the participants in each group. As above, the majority of participants agreed with the statement, with over half in each group strongly agreeing and only 3% or fewer of the participants in each group strongly disagreeing. However, there was very little variation in the responses by group.

2.3 Participant's perceptions of how the project affected them

This section covers a series of questions that sought to understand whether and how the project affected the participant's subsequent involvement in six areas of civil society. Participants were asked to state whether, as a result of the project, they had engaged in civil society, actively supported the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities, participated in democratic life, volunteered, appreciated cultural diversity, and were committed to work against discrimination, to a greater extent than before, to the same extent as before, or less than before.

2.3.1 Engage in civil society

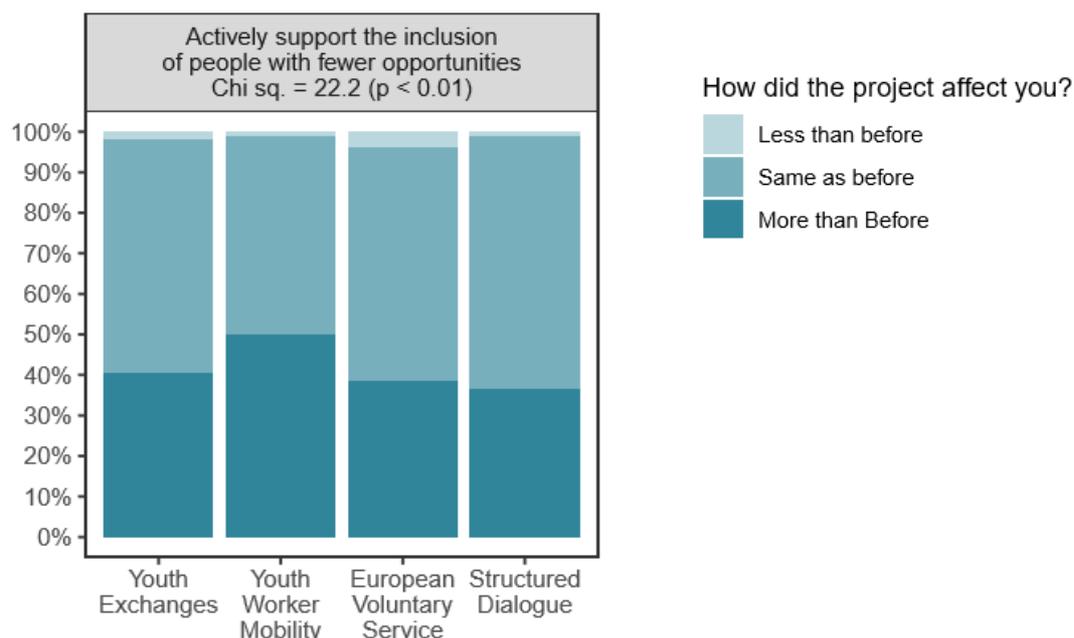
Just over a third (34%) of all participants said they were more likely to engage in civil society as a result of the project. There is some evidence of a greater impact for participants of Structured Dialogue and Youth Worker Mobility projects, where 39% of the participants in each group say they will be more likely to engage in civil society than before as a result of the project, compared with 29% of Youth Exchange participants and 28% of European Volunteer Service participants.

2.3.2 Actively support the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities

Just under half (44%) of all participants said they were more likely to actively support the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities as a result of the project. Half of the Youth Worker Mobility participants said they were more likely to actively support the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities as a result of their involvement, compared to 41% of Youth Exchange participants, 38% of European Volunteer Service and 37% of Structured Dialogue participants. Once controlling for differences in socio-demographic characteristics and the reasons for participating in

the project, these differences remain, with Youth Exchange and Structured Dialogue participants significantly less likely than participants in the Youth Worker Mobility group to say they would be more likely to actively support the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities as a result of their involvement.

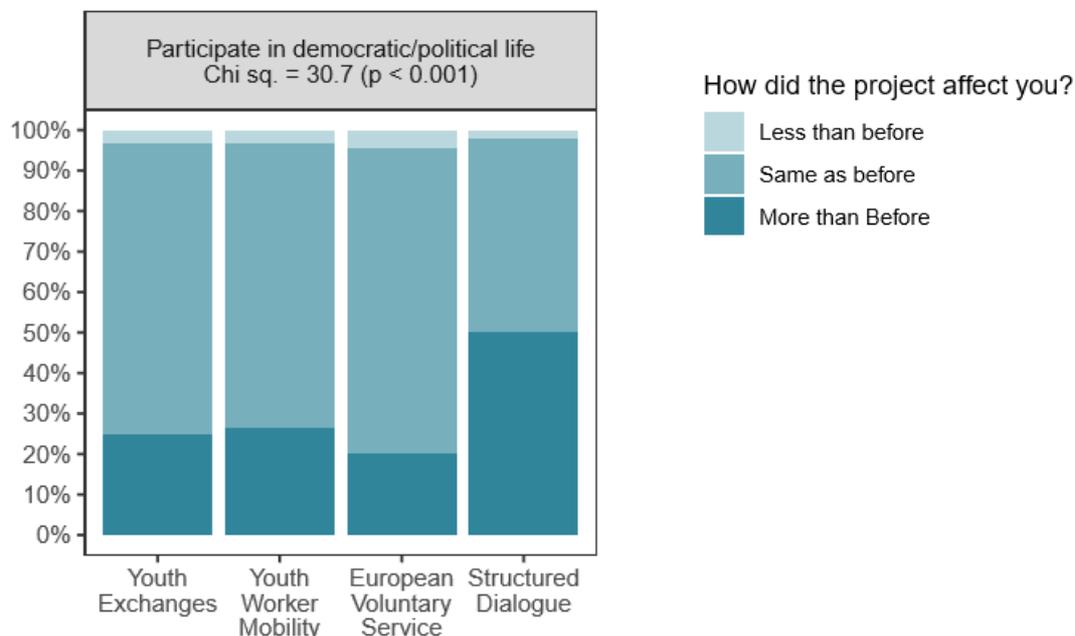
Figure 2.4 Actively supporting the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities by participant group



2.3.3 Participate in democratic/political life

Just over a quarter (26%) of all participants said they were more likely to participate in democratic life as a result of the project. Half of the participants on Structured Dialogue projects said that they were more likely to participate in democratic or political life as a result of their participation, compared with 26% of Youth Worker Mobility participants, 25% of Youth Exchange participants and 20% of European Volunteer Service participants. These differences persist even after controlling for differences in socio-demographic characteristics and reasons for participating. Participants on Youth Exchange projects and those on the European Volunteering Service were significantly less likely than Structured Dialogue participants to say they would be more likely to engage in democratic or political life as a result of the project.

Figure 2.5 Participating in democratic or political life by participant group



2.3.4 Engage in voluntary activities

Over two-fifths (42%) of all participants said they were more likely to volunteer as a result of the project. Nearly half (48%) of Structural Dialogue participants said they were more likely to engage as a result of their involvement, compared to 44% of Youth Worker Mobility, 42% of Youth Exchange, and 35% of European Volunteer Service participants. However, these differences became non-significant once differences in socio-demographic characteristics and reasons for participating were taken into account, which implies that the differences in engagement intention were largely due to differences in group profile

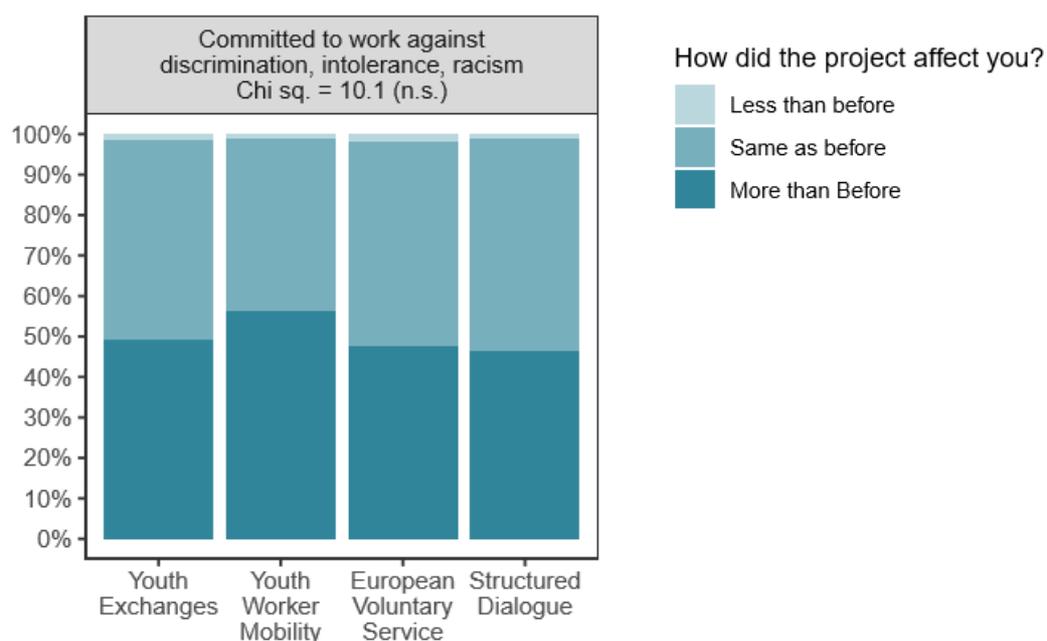
2.3.5 Appreciate cultural diversity

The majority (67%) of all participants said they were more likely to appreciate cultural diversity as a result of the project. Across all groups, this area of civil engagement had the highest proportion of participants saying that they were more likely to take this action as a result of their involvement with the project. However, there was very little variation in the response patterns across groups, meaning there were no significant differences between groups, with 69% of Youth Worker Mobility, 67% of European Volunteer Service, 65% of Youth Exchange and 63% of Structured Dialogue participants saying they were more likely to appreciate cultural diversity than before.

2.3.6 Committed to work against discrimination, intolerance, xenophobia or racism

Over half (52%) of all participants said the project had made them more committed to work against discrimination. 56% of participants in the Youth Worker Mobility group said they were more likely to work against discrimination, intolerance, xenophobia and racism as a result of their involvement, in each of the other groups the corresponding proportions were just under half. These differences remain even when any differences in socio-demographic characteristics and the reasons for participating in the project had been taken into account. Youth Exchange and Structured Dialogue participants were significantly less likely to say they would be more likely to work against discrimination as a result of their participation than Youth Worker Mobility participants.

Figure 2.6 Committed to working against racism by participant group



2.4 Perceived impact of the project

Participants were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that their involvement with the project was likely to affect their contact with people in other countries and their membership of political or social organisations.

For both statements, participants were more likely to agree than disagree that their involvement in the project would impact on their behaviour, with 81% overall agreeing that they would establish contacts in other countries and 62% saying they would become a member of a political organisation or social movement. However,

there were some differences between groups that are highlighted below. For all participant groups, the proportion of participants agreeing they would become a member of a political or social organisation as a result of their participation was lower than the proportion agreeing they would establish contacts in other countries.

2.4.1 Established contacts with people in other countries

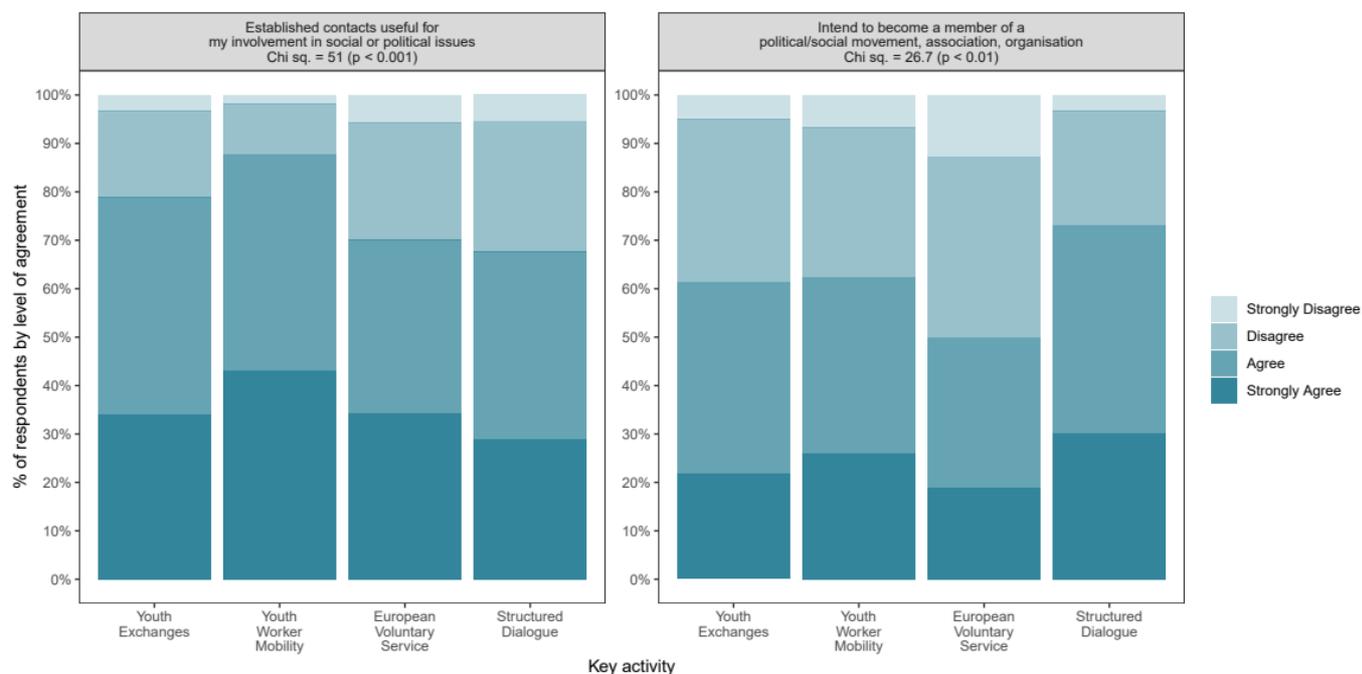
Participants from the Youth Worker Mobility group were most likely to agree that their project would help and encourage them to establish contacts with people in other countries, which would be useful for their involvement in social or political issues; 43% strongly agreed, with a further 45% agreeing. Participants involved in Youth Exchanges were the second most likely to agree, their corresponding figures were 34% strongly agreeing and 45% agreeing. Structured Dialogue participants were the group least likely to agree with the statement (although participants within this group were still more likely to agree with the statement than disagree) with 29% strongly agreeing and a further 39% agreeing.

These differences remained significant once differences in socio-demographic characteristics and reasons for participating were taken into account, with participants of the European Volunteer Service, Structured Dialogue and Youth Exchange groups significantly less likely to agree with the statement than those in the Youth Worker Mobility group.

2.4.2 Intend to become a member of a political and/or social movement, association or organisation

Structured Dialogue participants were the group most likely to agree with the statement, with 30% strongly agreeing and a further 43% agreeing. Youth Worker Mobility (26%) and Youth Exchange participants (22%) were next most likely to strongly agree. Participants to the European Volunteer Service were the group most likely to strongly disagree with the statement; 13% strongly disagreed, compared to 7% or less in all other groups. However, these differences became non-significant once differences in socio-demographic characteristics and reasons for participating were taken into account, suggesting the different levels of agreement are caused by underlying differences in group profile

Figure 2.7 The proportions agreeing they intend to take actions by participant group



2.5 Impact of the project on perceived importance of different areas of civil society

Participants were asked whether they felt their involvement with the project had impacted on how important they felt seven different areas of civil society were to them. These areas were: justice, human rights, individual freedom, democracy, equality, solidarity with people facing difficulties, and tolerance. Participants were asked whether their involvement in the project made them feel each specific area was more important, not changed or less important.

For each of these areas, a substantial proportion of participants indicated that their involvement in Erasmus+ had made the subject more important to them. The majority of all participants (64%) said tolerance had become more important to them, the corresponding figures for other subjects were; 63% for solidarity, 62% for equality, 59% for individual freedom, 55% for human rights, 48% for democracy and 40% for justice.

However, there was very little variation in the distribution of responses by participant group for a number of these areas. Specifically, there were no significant differences between groups as to whether participants felt the issues of individual freedom, equality, and tolerance had become more important since their involvement.

There were small differences between groups when looking at justice and human rights, however, these differences became non-significant once the participant's

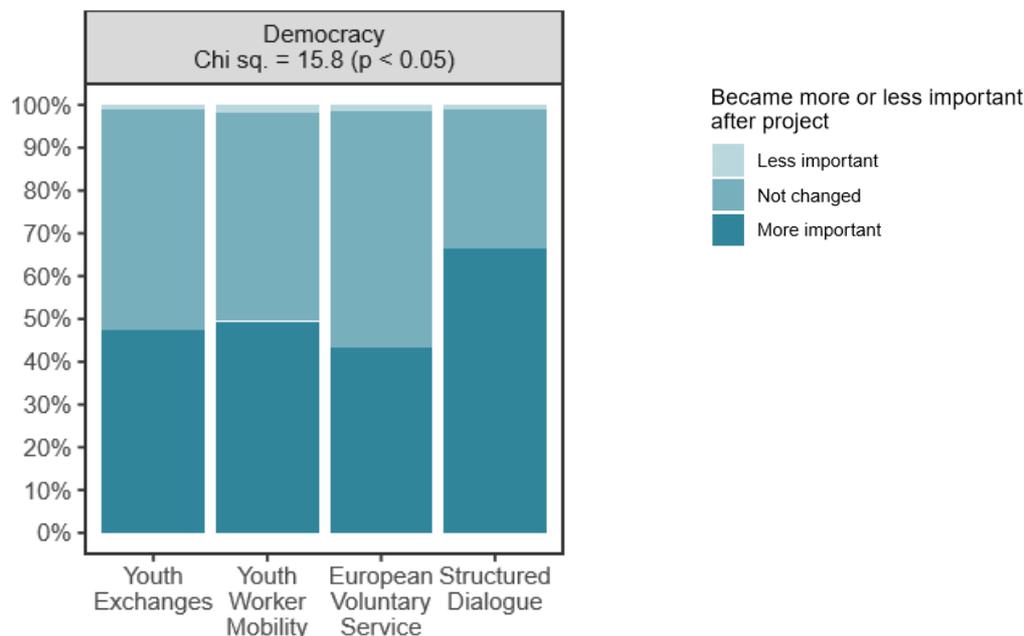
socio-demographic characteristics and their reasons for participating were taken into account. This suggests the differences were largely caused by differences in group profile.

There were larger differences when looking at democracy and solidarity with people facing difficulties, these are described further below.

2.5.1 Democracy

Structured Dialogue participants are much more likely than participants in other groups to say democracy had become more important to them as a result of being on the project, with 66% participants saying this, compared to less than 50% in all other groups. These differences remained significant when the participant’s socio-demographic characteristics and their reasons for participating had been taken into account. European Volunteer Service participants are significantly less likely than Structured Dialogue participants to say they democracy has become more important to them as a result of their involvement.

Figure 2.8 Increased importance of democracy by participant group



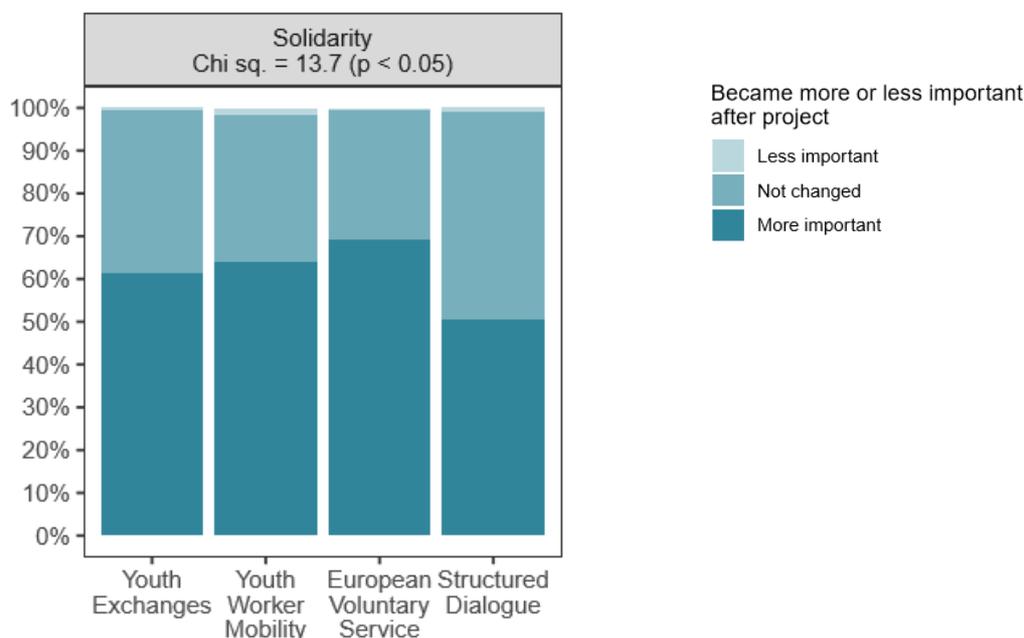
2.5.2 Solidarity with people facing difficulties

European Volunteer Service participants were more likely than those in other groups to say solidarity was more important to them as a result of being involved with their project, with 69% of these participants saying so, compared to 64% of Youth Worker Mobility participants and 62% of Youth Exchange participants. Structured Dialogue

participants are much less likely than the other groups to say this, with 51% doing so.

The differences remain after controlling for the participant’s socio-demographic characteristics and their reasons for participating in the project. Participants in the European Volunteer Service and Youth Worker Mobility are significantly more likely than participants of Structured Dialogue to say solidarity with people facing difficulties had become more important to them because of their participation on the project.

Figure 2.9 Increased importance of solidarity by participant group



2.6 Summary of findings

The evidence presented in this report shows Erasmus+ has had a positive effect for all participants on their understanding and awareness of civil society.

The projects collectively appear to have had a particular impact on knowledge and attitudes around **cultural diversity**, with a large proportion (70%) of all participants saying they had learnt something new about cultural diversity, two thirds (67%) of all participants saying they appreciated cultural diversity more than before, and the vast majority (95%) of all participants saying that the project had improved their ability to get along with people from another cultural background.

The positive effects were seen in other areas too, with the majority of participants across all projects reporting that the key values of **equality, solidarity, tolerance,**

and **individual freedom** had become more important to them since being involved with Erasmus+.

The evidence suggests Erasmus+ might also have a positive effect on participant's subsequent actions, with 62% of all participants intending to become a member of a **political group** or **social movement** as a result of their participation.

Whilst no single participant group is most engaged/involved on all outcomes, three key findings emerged in the course of the analyses that compared the four groups of interest:

1. The **outcomes around democracy and democratic involvement were generally more positive for Structured Dialogue participants than the other participant groups**, there were a number of significant differences in these areas that remained after controlling for differences in socio-demographic characteristics. They were the group most likely to say they had learnt something new about democracy and that democracy had become more important to them. They were also the group that said they were more likely to participate in democratic life as a result of their participation and most likely to agree that they would become a member of a political or social organisation because of their participation.
2. **Participants on the Youth Worker Mobility projects were significantly more likely to have positive outcomes that relate to intended actions**, particularly those related to integration and building social networks with other groups; they were the participant group most likely to say their participation had made them more likely to support those with fewer opportunities and more committed against racism. They are also the group who are most likely to say they will establish contacts with people in other countries as a result of their participation.
3. Finally, when looking at positive outcomes around solidarity, **participants in European Volunteer Service projects were more likely than other groups to say they have learnt something new about solidarity** and most likely to say that issues around solidarity with people facing difficulties had become more important to them as a result of participating in the project.

Section 3 Participants facing obstacles

The analysis was repeated to identify the impact of the projects for participants who face obstacles in their life, covering obstacles to areas such as **access to education, access to employment, active participation** in society, mobility. It includes specific issues with health, disabilities, living in remote or deprived areas, living in an area of conflict, language problems, money problems, past convictions, issues around gender, ethnic minority status, sexual orientation or social background, and family responsibilities.

Two comparisons have been carried out:

1. The first draws comparisons between participants who face obstacles and those who do not. Participants from different projects have been grouped together to provide sufficient sample size.
2. The second comparison focuses on participants who face obstacles and compares key outcomes for participants who face obstacles who were involved in Youth Exchanges and those who face obstacles and were involved in Youth Worker Mobility projects (there were too few participants who face obstacles on the other projects types to allow them to be included in the comparison).

3.1 Defining disadvantage

Information from questions q39 (Do you feel you are faced with obstacles?) and q40 (What obstacles do you face?) was used to identify participants who face obstacles in their life. The responses to these questions were used to construct an index running from 0 to 20 (where 20 is the maximum number of obstacles an individual was able to list, when combining the answers to q39 and q40). This scale was then used to create a dichotomous variable where participants are said to be facing obstacles if they had listed three or more obstacles (35% of the overall sample), but were not facing obstacles if they had listed zero to two obstacles (65% of the sample)².

3.2 New knowledge about civil society

Participants were asked whether their involvement in the project had taught them something new about active citizenship, human rights, the inclusion of

²The logic is that an individual facing three or more obstacles is more likely to experience some disadvantage, given the cumulative impact of the obstacles. As a sensitivity test, a number of the analyses were run to compare participants who had listed 1+ obstacles with participants who had listed none. The findings were all in the same direction but less likely to be significant. The differences between participant groups was starker when the definition was based on 3+ obstacles.

disadvantaged or marginalised people in society, discrimination, solidarity with people facing difficulties, democracy, and cultural diversity. For each of these seven areas, participants who face obstacles were more likely than participants who did not face obstacles to say their involvement in the project had taught them something new.

With the exception of cultural diversity, the differences between the two groups of participants was sufficiently large to be statistically significant. For cultural diversity participants facing obstacles were still more likely to say they had learnt something new but the difference was too small to be significant. The largest difference was for democracy, where there was an eight percentage point difference between the two groups, with a third (33%) of participants facing obstacles saying they had learnt something new, compared to a quarter (25%) of participants who do not face obstacles.

When looking only at participants who faced obstacles, it could be seen that there were significant differences in the proportions of each participant group who felt they had learnt something new about solidarity, democracy and the inclusion of disadvantaged or marginalised groups. Participants on Youth Exchanges were more likely than participants on Youth Worker Mobility projects to say they had learnt something new about solidarity (47% versus 37%) and democracy (38% versus 25%), whereas Youth Worker Mobility participants who faced obstacles were more likely than Youth Exchange participants who faced obstacles to say they had learnt something new about the inclusion of disadvantaged groups (53% of Youth Worker Mobility Participants, versus 43% of those on Youth Exchanges). The differences for these outcomes are in the same direction as the differences for all participants in Section 2.1.

3.3 Agreement with civil society aims of the projects

Participants were also asked whether they agreed with two statements relating to specific project aims, specifically: the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that their involvement with the project would improve their ability to achieve something in the interests of the community or society, and the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that their participation in the project would improve their ability to get along with people from a different cultural background. Participants who face obstacles were more likely to strongly agree with both statements, however, the differences were non-significant for the statement concerning the participant's ability to get on with people from other cultural backgrounds.

Regarding the statement about their ability to achieve something in the interests of the community, participants who face obstacles were significantly more likely to strongly agree with the statement; 45%, compared to 35% for participants who do

not face obstacles. However, the total proportion in agreement (strongly agree plus agree) was 89% for both participant groups, meaning both groups are equally likely to agree with the statement, but those who face obstacles agree more strongly.

There were no significant differences between participant groups. The responses of Youth Worker Mobility participants who faced obstacles were very similar to those of the Youth Exchange participants who faced obstacles.

3.4 Participant's perceptions of how the project affected them

Participants were asked a series of questions about whether their participation with the project affected their subsequent involvement in different areas of civil society. Participants were asked to state whether, as a result of the project, they had engaged in civil society, actively supported the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities, participated in democratic or political life, volunteered, appreciated cultural diversity, and were committed to work against discrimination, to a greater extent than before, to the same extent as before, or less than before.

Within each of these areas, the proportion of participants saying their involvement had left them 'more likely than before' to engage was higher amongst those who faced obstacles than those that did not. With the exception of participating in democratic life, these differences between groups were statistically significant.

When looking within the participants who face obstacles, there was a significantly higher proportion of Youth Worker Mobility participants who felt they were more likely to support the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities as a result of participating, than Youth Exchange participants (56% versus 45%). Similarly, a significantly higher proportion of Youth Worker Mobility participants who faced obstacles said they were more likely to engage with civil society as a result of their participation than Youth Exchange participants who faced obstacles (43% versus 33%). These patterns reflect the patterns seen for all participants in Section 2.3.

3.5 Perceived impact of the project

Participants were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that their involvement with the project was likely to affect their contact with people in other countries and their membership of political or social organisations.

For both statements, participants facing obstacles were significantly more likely to agree, and more likely to strongly agree, that their involvement in the project would impact on their behaviour, compared to participants who do not face obstacles.

Within the group of participants who face obstacles, Youth Exchange participants were significantly more likely than Youth Worker Mobility participants to agree

overall that their involvement would make them more likely to become a member of a political or social organisation (75% versus 66%), however, the proportion strongly agreeing was very close for both groups. These proportions do not reflect those for all participants. There were no significant differences for contact with people in other countries.

3.6 Impact of the project on perceived importance of different areas of civil society

Participants were asked whether their participation with the project had impacted on the importance they attached to seven different areas of civil society: justice, human rights, individual freedom, democracy, equality, solidarity with people facing difficulties, and tolerance. Participants were asked whether their involvement in the project made them feel each specific area was more important, not changed or less important.

There were no significant differences between participant groups as to whether they felt justice and individual freedom had become more important since their involvement on the project.

With each of the remaining areas (human rights, democracy, equality, solidarity with people facing difficulties, and tolerance) there were significant differences between the two participant groups, where participants facing obstacles were more likely to say the issue had become more important to them as a result of their involvement.

Looking only at participants who face obstacles, there were significantly higher proportions of Youth Mobility Worker participants than Youth Exchanges who felt Human Rights and Justice had become more important to them as a result of participating in the project. The differences between these participant groups for all participants was not significant, although the proportions for Youth Worker Mobility are higher than the proportions for Youth Exchanges for both these outcomes, suggesting a degree of consistency.

3.7 Summary of findings

For each outcome there were two comparisons. The first compared the outcomes of participants who face obstacles and participants who do not (participants from different projects were grouped together to provide sufficient sample size). **The evidence suggests Erasmus+ had a bigger impact for participants who face obstacles.** Whenever there were significant differences, the participants who faced obstacles were consistently more likely than those who did not to report positive outcomes.

The findings for the second set of comparisons were more mixed. These comparisons focus solely on participants who face obstacles and compared key outcomes for participants who face obstacles were involved in Youth Exchanges and participants who face obstacles and were involved in Youth Worker Mobility projects. There were no systematic patterns regarding the direction of key outcomes:

- Youth Exchange participants *facing obstacles* were significantly more likely than Youth Worker Mobility participants facing obstacles to report gaining a better understanding of **solidarity** and **democracy**, and to say that they are more likely to become members of a **political** or **social organisation**.
- Youth Worker Mobility participants *facing obstacles* were significantly more likely than Youth Exchange participants facing obstacles to say they have gained a better **understanding of the inclusion of disadvantaged groups**, were more likely to **support the inclusion of disadvantaged groups**, were more likely to **engage in civil society**, and more likely to report that **Human Rights and Justice** had become more important to them.

Appendix A: Data Preparation

This section contains additional information on the steps taken to check and prepare the files for analysis.

The first step involved appending the 2015/16 data to the 2017/18 dataset. The merging required some adjustments to be made to address differences in variable coding and ensure consistency between the two data files. This included mapping the variables from the two surveys to identify questions that were inconsistent, making sure any string variables were the same length and checking consistency in outcome codes.

All variables were retained at this stage, so a variable relating to a question that existed in the 2015/16 survey but not the 2017/18 survey was present in the data file but appears as missing data for the 2017/18 cases, and vice versa for questions that are on the 2017/18 survey but not the 2015/16 survey. The merged data file contained 1907 cases (587 from 2015/16 and 1302 from 2017/18).

The next step was to identify cases that were not in scope and remove them from the data set. There were 53 cases in the combined data that belonged to Key Action group KA218 (Transnational Cooperation Activity). These were dropped from the file to leave 1854 cases in the combined data. Further to this, any cases where neither the funding country OR spending country was the UK were dropped. There were 71 of these cases out of the 1854 cases that remained in the file. The final combined data file therefore contains 1783 cases (534 remaining from the 2015/16 data and 1249 from the 2017/18 data).

The table below shows the breakdown of these cases by Key Action group and activity type. These are the four groups that were compared in the analysis.

Table A1: Sample sizes per participant group

Analysis group ID	Key Action 1 (KA105)	Key Action 3 (KA347)	Total
Youth Exchanges	796	0	796
Youth Worker Mobility	722	0	722
European Voluntary Service	164	0	164
Structured Dialogue	0	101	101
Total	1682	101	1783

Appendix B: Output

All tables and graphs pertaining to this analysis are included in the digital appendix. The appendix has the following folder structure. The portions in **bold** are relevant to this report.

Folder: Resources and results

1. Civil society report

1. Descriptive tables

- **General frequency tables**
- **Disadvantaged-only frequency tables**

2. Descriptive graphs

- **General graphs**

3. Regression tables

- **Regression tables**

2. Facing obstacles

1. Descriptive tables

1. **Civil society**
2. Skills
3. Youth work

2. Graphs

1. Overall graphs for participants facing obstacles
2. Graphs for participants facing obstacles by subgroup

3. Skills report

1. Descriptive tables

- General frequency tables

2. Descriptive graphs

- General graphs

3. Regression tables

- Regression tables

4. Youth work report

1. Descriptive tables

- General frequency tables

2. Descriptive graphs
 - General graphs
3. Regression tables
 - Regression tables