



Department  
for Education

**Consultation Response Form**

**Consultation closing date: 30 June 2014**  
**Your comments must reach us by that date**

# **REVIEW OF THE BALANCE OF COMPETENCES**

**CALL FOR EVIDENCE ON THE  
GOVERNMENT'S REVIEW OF THE BALANCE  
OF COMPETENCES BETWEEN THE UNITED  
KINGDOM AND THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND  
YOUTH**

If you would prefer to respond online to this consultation please use the following link: <https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations>

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

If you want all, or any part, of your response to be treated as confidential, please explain why you consider it to be confidential.

If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it to be confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

<b>Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reason for confidentiality:	

Name: James Edleston	
Please tick if you are responding on behalf of your organisation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Name of Organisation (if applicable): British Youth Council	
Address: CAN Mezzanine 49-51 East Road London N1 6AH	

If your enquiry is related to the DfE e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the Ministerial and Public Communications Division by e-mail: [consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk) or by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the Department's ['Contact Us'](#) page.

## **YOUTH QUESTIONS**

### **General Issues**

16 What evidence is there that EU action in the area of Youth benefits or disadvantages the UK?

#### Comments:

BYC calculates the UK youth sector receives about €10m (£8.6m) a year from the European Youth in Action fund, now part of Erasmus plus. See more at:

<http://www.cypnow.co.uk/cyp/news/1077351/eu-withdrawal-threaten-uk-youth-funding#sthash.bgykkYsL.dpuf>

As youth sector funding in the UK becomes more scarce EU sources become even more crucial to support good quality youth work that broadens young people's horizons and provides opportunities for local, national and international engagement.

As part of the European Youth Forum, BYC's daily work is directly influenced by the outcomes of Structured Dialogue and the work of the European Youth Forum, including their campaigns such on young voter turnout (League of Young Voters) and Votes@16.

See below.

## 20 Has the adoption of the Structured Dialogue had any impact on your sector?

### Comments:

The British Youth Council is the National Youth Council of the UK and so has the responsibility to convene the National Working Group for Structured Dialogue. It currently brings together the National Youth Council, the National Ministry (Cabinet Office) and the National Agency (British Council) to plan each cycle, share ideas and review the process.

Structured Dialogue (SD) is a relatively new process, but an ambitious and unique one in that it aims to enable young people to participate in EU and national youth policy development, in direct dialogue with decision-makers at national and European level. SD has been effective in engaging young people across the UK in European affairs, it has facilitated a huge amount of youth-led research and consultation, and has been instrumental in launching new EU initiatives such as the Youth Guarantee and the campaigns including Quality Internships. Also, from the last trio of presidencies, the Council of Ministers have adopted 4 resolutions that should now be implemented in each EU member state

Structured Dialogue has also been essential in providing the impetus and funding for many policy meetings between young people and decision-makers in the UK, and between a rich mix of youth organisations as we try to develop our reach and diversity in consultations, workshops and activities. The outcomes of the UK research can be viewed at [www.ukya.org.uk](http://www.ukya.org.uk)

There are of course areas for improvement, including balancing powers in policy workshops – allowing more space for young representatives, transparency of final document drafting processes, national government commitment to the outcomes, and the logistics in terms of travel and the timing of information received. We would also like to see younger people represented from other EU countries at the policy conferences. However, we have been impressed with how flexible and organic the process has been and through robust review processes it has improved year on year since it was launched 4 years ago.

22 What international bodies or arrangements are important to your sector beyond the EU?

Comments:

BYC supports the UK delegation to the Commonwealth Youth Council, and so the Commonwealth and its institutions are important to us.

We are also part of a network of youth focussed NGOs who are working to ensure youth involvement in the post 2015 negotiations and that young people are considered in whatever new framework for international development emerges. As part of this we are exploring what kind of youth participation at the UN might be most meaningful and effective.

Our work is underpinned by the UNCRC and the UK's review for the implementation of the convention is important to help us monitor the country's progress on youth participation.

We are interested in all spaces for global governance where decisions are made that affect the lives of young people in the UK, or on issues that they care about. Recently this has also included the G8/G20.

23 Has the EU had an impact on young people's opportunities to have a voice in policy and decision making, or on organisations' work to involve young people in shaping services?

Comments:

The EU has had a huge impact on BYC youth voice and policy work. EU funding now supports a large amount of BYC national youth policy work, including regional conventions, a huge youth leadership development programme, Equality4U meetings (for faith, diaspora and other groups) and many other UK youth voice meetings.

Erasmus + funds non-formal learning and youth policy work where it is very difficult to find other sources. It also recognised a gap in funding youth work and youth participation as national Government sources have been reduced, and has made an exception to fund national youth policy meeting that do not require a European partner. Without this funding BYC and UK Youth Parliament's work would have struggled to deliver these activities over the last 3 years.

## Youth Programmes

25 What are the benefits or disadvantages of having EU rather than national funding for activities under the Youth Programme?

Comments:

The benefits are that it is specifically funding non-formal learning and youth policy which is limited in the UK. EU funding also allows funding for exceptional costs such as support worker costs for those with fewer opportunities. There is no funding limit for exceptional costs. This therefore allows for inclusive and wide reaching projects where support costs are not a problem or burden.

We have spoken to many applicants, including local authorities and charities, and many said they were in desperate funding situations. Many spoke of Youth in Action being one of few funding streams available for non formal learning for national and transnational projects. One of the priorities of the Youth in Action funding is inclusion, and there was specific funding for young people with special needs. Many disability charities and those working with young people with fewer opportunities saw Youth in Action as a unique funding stream that actively encouraged projects for this target group. Another positive aspect of the programme was that the co-financing for the European Voluntary Service (EVS), youth exchanges, etc was minimal, which meant that young people could do volunteering for up to year with most of the costs covered. This was different to many other volunteering programmes available.

The disadvantage is that it can be a lengthy and complicated application process, however the new Erasmus + programme has made some moves to simplify this. Another disadvantage is that for most of the Erasmus + Programme, apart from Key Action 3 – for national youth policy meetings - applicants need a European partner, which may be a problem for some applicants and may limit the funding for local grassroots projects in the UK. Finally, informal groups of young people are no longer allowed to apply in the new Erasmus + programme.

26 What do you think about the criteria and conditions set by the EU for applying for and receiving funding?

**Comments:**

See above. On the whole it is good, and we are pleased to see more 'lump sum' funding through Erasmus+, which will reduce the administrative burden.

However, two areas of concern are:

1. Inflexibility – Many youth projects evolve with the changing circumstances young people find themselves in, and it is a fact that many project plans can only ever be best guesses at what may be possible or the right thing over an 18 month period. However, the reality of young people's changing lives is not really acknowledged in Erasmus+ and applicants are expected to have concrete and detailed plans, and cannot claim expenses not part of the original application.
2. Staff costs – There is not enough allowance for staff costs and overheads, and this particularly makes small projects very difficult to fund.

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

<b>Please acknowledge this reply.</b>	
E-mail address for acknowledgement:	

Here at the Department for Education we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, please confirm below if you would be willing to be contacted again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
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All DfE public consultations are required to meet the Cabinet Office [Principles on Consultation](#)

The key Consultation Principles are:

- departments will follow a range of timescales rather than defaulting to a 12-week period, particularly where extensive engagement has occurred before
- departments will need to give more thought to how they engage with and use real discussion with affected parties and experts as well as the expertise of civil service learning to make well informed decisions

- departments should explain what responses they have received and how these have been used in formulating policy
- consultation should be 'digital by default', but other forms should be used where these are needed to reach the groups affected by a policy
- the principles of the Compact between government and the voluntary and community sector will continue to be respected.

If you have any comments on how DfE consultations are conducted, please contact Aileen Shaw, DfE Consultation Coordinator, tel: 0370 000 2288 / email: [aileen.shaw@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:aileen.shaw@education.gsi.gov.uk)

**Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.**

Completed responses should be sent to the address shown below by 30 June 2014

Send by post to:

International Education Division, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT.

Send by e-mail to: [BalanceofCompetence.consultation@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:BalanceofCompetence.consultation@education.gsi.gov.uk).