

Assessment of the existing Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities structures' effectiveness and relevance to date within the overall landscape of the Erasmus+ governance and the existing structures supporting the implementation of the programme (including National Erasmus+ Offices).

First results

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A man with dark hair, a beard, and glasses is pointing at a tablet held by a smiling woman with long dark hair. They are both looking at the screen. The background is a bright, out-of-focus office or home setting with a window. A large blue geometric shape is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Executive Summary

Executive Summary (EN)

Aims, objectives and scope of the assessment

This report sets out the main findings of the study “Assessment of the existing Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities structures’ (SALTOS) effectiveness and relevance to date within the overall landscape of the Erasmus+ governance and the existing structures supporting the implementation of the programme (including National Erasmus+ Offices)’.

The main objective of the study is to provide an assessment of and evidence-based conclusions on the impacts that the current SALTOS have on the implementation of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes and the effectiveness, relevance and added value of their work to stakeholders active in the fields of Youth and Education & Training. The findings of this study are based on desk research, literature review, interviews conducted with relevant stakeholders, and an online survey. The assessment and conclusions are based on the work of the SALTO network since 2018 and covers the impact of their activities on the previous generation of the Erasmus+ (2014-2020) and European Solidarity Corps (2018-2020). SALTO activities under the new generation of these programmes are only covered to a limited degree¹.

The study focuses on the direct beneficiaries of SALTO’s activities, research and materials (e.g. Erasmus+ National Agencies, National Erasmus Offices, EU level stakeholders, youth trainers, youth workers, youth organisations). Therefore, the impact of SALTO activities and outputs on individuals and youth in general are outside the scope of this study.

Overview of the methodology

The data collection activities used for this report were as follows:

- ▶ Desk research: Qualitative and quantitative data on the activities and outputs of the SALTOS between 2018-2021 were gathered through desk research and a literature review. This included data provided by the European Commission, including National Agency Annual Work Programmes and Yearly Reports, Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Annual Work Programmes and Annual Reports, and mandates of the SALTOS. Additional sources were gathered for each SALTO, such as reports, evaluations, tools and strategies available through the SALTO websites and further sources. The baseline data was defined through the research and supporting documents from an internal assessment of the SALTOS carried out between 2012 and 2015 by the European Commission.
- ▶ Scoping Interview²: one group scoping interview was conducted with representatives from the European Commission (DG EAC).
- ▶ Interviews: 22 semi-structured interviews were carried out with representatives from the European Commission (DG EAC); EU level stakeholders (European Youth Forum; European Youth Forum’s Pool of Trainers; RAY Network; LifeLong Learning Platform); Erasmus+ National Agencies; National Erasmus Offices; SALTO staff members. These were complemented by five written contributions from TCA officers.
- ▶ Survey: an online survey was launched to collect all additional relevant information and views from the target groups concerned. Quantitative and qualitative analysis of an online survey targeted at Erasmus+ National Agencies, direct beneficiaries of the work of the SALTOS, and the individual SALTOS, was carried out and gathered 81 replies.

The results of the desk research, the interviews and the survey are presented in Annex 2 and Annex 3 of this study.

Key findings

The SALTO Resource Centres were first established in the year 2000. Over time, the network has evolved to adapt to new EU level policy and programme priorities, and better respond to the needs of its target audience. Following a reorganisation of the SALTOS carried out in 2018, the network currently comprises of seven youth Resource Centres: of these, three have a thematic focus (Inclusion & Diversity; Participation & Information; Training & Cooperation); three have a regional focus

¹ Evidence for the year 2021 is limited as Erasmus+ National Agencies Yearly Reports are yet to be published.

² Scoping interviews are short, loosely-structured interviews that aim to ensure the Research team has a thorough understanding of the context and objectives of the study, in order to further refine the research methodology.

(EuroMed; Easter Europe & Caucasus; South East Europe); one has a programme focus (European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre). Furthermore, the SALTO network also includes a Resource Centre that focuses on education and training, beyond youth (SALTO Education & Training TCA).

The SALTO as a network

The findings from the desk research and consultations for this study reveal that the SALTO network as a whole provides meaningful contributions to the Youth and Education and Training fields.

The study shows that the SALTOs positively contribute to improving the quality, impact, and sustainability of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, by developing helpful resources and materials, and providing spaces through their activities (e.g. events, training courses, seminars, etc.) for coordination and cooperation amongst all relevant stakeholders active in the implementation of the programmes. This positive contribution is particularly evident under Erasmus+, mostly due to the longer history of this programme compared to the more recent European Solidarity Corps. Crucial to the SALTO network's positive impact on Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps are the number, variety, and high quality of activities and outputs produced by the SALTOs. These strengthen the role of the SALTOs as knowledge hubs. In this capacity, the SALTOs help create awareness of the programmes and their priorities among key stakeholders (e.g., direct beneficiaries, Erasmus+ National Agencies), respond to their enquiries, and support them where relevant. SALTO resources are perceived to be exhaustive, clear, easily accessible, and are frequently used to provide evidence and context for policy work. Furthermore, these resources are found to be beneficial in the design, implementation and evaluation of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps projects. A success factor identified by the study is the SALTOs' good knowledge of their target audiences, which is due to their continued efforts to carry out needs assessments and conducting consultations.

The study shows that the work of the SALTO network remains relevant to address specific needs (e.g. effective communication to young people, inclusion of participants with special needs among others) in the fields of Youth and Education & Training. Furthermore the research shows that SALTOs are able to adapt changing contexts, and ensure their activities and outputs respond to the needs of their target audience and multiple stakeholders (i.e. the European Commission, Erasmus+ National Agencies, other SALTOs, youth organisations, youth workers, education and training stakeholders, and other beneficiaries). Since the establishment of the SALTO network, the EU policy context on Youth and Education & Training has changed significantly (e.g. the European Solidarity Corps programme being launched in 2018; Erasmus+ broadening its scope with an increased focus on inclusion and diversity in youth policy and programmes). Furthermore, the overall global context has posed additional and unprecedented challenges (e.g. the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on youth mobility and exchange programmes). However, the SALTOs have successfully responded to these challenges by widening their scope of action and exploring new ways of working (e.g. online tools) to ensure their stakeholders continue to benefit from their activities.

Strong inter-SALTO cooperation is singled out as a key element that positively contributes to making the work of the network and of each individual SALTO more impactful. This cooperation is facilitated by continuous formal and informal opportunities for exchanges between the SALTOs (e.g. working groups, virtual and in person meetings) to share information and ensure coordination. However, the study shows that this cooperation happens mostly between SALTOs working on youth, with SALTO E&T playing a more independent role from the rest of the network.

The relevance of the network is evident in the youth field, as the SALTOs not only provide a crucial contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, but also support the meaningful implementation of broader EU youth policy priorities and instruments, such as the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027. Moreover, the study highlights the positive contribution of the SALTO Education & Training, notably via the provision of a common platform for the cooperation of Erasmus+ National Agencies at EU level. However, the impact and relevance of the work of this SALTO tends to remain less visible compared to that of the SALTOs active in the field of youth.

The SALTOs provide EU added value as they represent a centralised contact point for Erasmus+ National Agencies and other stakeholders to obtain information and resources. The SALTO network is seen as a unique EU-wide structure that possesses deep specialist knowledge in the fields of Youth and Education & Training. Furthermore, the network serves a purpose that is not already covered by other existing structures, and can support newcomers to the programmes. The SALTOs also play a crucial role as a 'communication channel' between the European Commission, Erasmus+ National Agencies and beneficiaries of the programmes. The SALTOs not only ensure that these stakeholders are up to date with EU policy development, but they also foster the inclusion of a European perspective in the work of Erasmus+ National Agencies and programme beneficiaries.

The study also shows a strong and sustained demand for an EU-wide network such as the SALTOs, as currently there are no other structures at national or European level that can successfully replicate the work the Resource Centres do to support the implementation of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes.

Individual SALTOs

The positive contribution of the SALTO as a network is also reflected in the work of the individual Resource Centres.

In terms of the thematic youth-focused SALTOs, the [SALTO Inclusion & Diversity \(I&D\)](#) is overall effective in promoting inclusion and diversity in Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps and remains particularly relevant in the context of a renewed commitment to diversity and inclusion in EU policy. The Inclusion & Diversity Strategy as well as activities such as ID Talks and the Inclusion Training for Trainers were identified to be particularly effective and relevant outputs, specially by providing organisations with good and practical examples of inclusive projects. Despite this, areas for improvement include further ensuring that young people with fewer opportunities participate in the programmes, by increasing its cooperation with grassroots organisations and exploring additional inclusion dimensions.

The [SALTO Participation & Information \(P&I\)](#) is effective in increasing and improving the quality of participation in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, and in implementing high quality information activities. However, as with [SALTO I&D](#), there are areas for improvement with regards to fostering the participation of young people with fewer opportunities and increased efforts to provide information. The Youth Participation Strategy stands out as a tool that has helped create a common understanding of youth participation, and activities such as the Communication and Information Officers Staff Training (CIOST) training and Think Tanks events have been identified as outputs of added value.

Furthermore, the [SALTO Training & Cooperation \(T&C\)](#) has positively contributed to increasing the quality of youth work, particularly in the context of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps projects. This positive contribution is not only linked to the high quality of trainings provided (e.g. Knowledge, Management and Staff Trainings), with the European Training Strategy playing a key role, but also to the promotion and implementation of validation tools such as the Youthpass. This positive impact is evidenced by the consistent increase in certificates issued between 2018-2020 and Youthpass' positive impact on the quality of projects.

The [European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre \(ESC RC\)](#) has provided a crucial contribution to the programme it supports by ensuring stakeholders have a better understanding of the concept of solidarity and its role in the European Solidarity Corps.

With regards to the regional SALTOs, [SALTO EuroMed](#), [SALTO Eastern Europe and Caucasus \(EECA\)](#), and [SALTO South-East Europe \(SEE\)](#) have all positively contributed to the promotion of Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps in their respective region, by acting as Contact Points and establishing InfoCentres in partner countries.

Finally, the [SALTO Education & Training \(E&T TCA\)](#) positively impact on the implementation of the Erasmus+ programme, particularly through the organisation of Training and Cooperation Activities (TCAs). However, due to activities being primarily targeted at Erasmus+ National Agencies, rather than broader groups of beneficiaries, the work of this SALTO tends to be less visible compared to the activities and outputs of the other Resource Centres.

Conclusions and recommendations

The 2018 reorganisation of the SALTOs, while not radically changing the overall objectives and mandate of the network, provided an opportunity to further define areas of work and mandate of the concerned Resource Centres. This resulted in increased expertise, specialisation, and capacity to respond to needs, further highlighting how a more tailored approach to the structure and functioning of the SALTO network improves its impact and relevance.

The SALTOs implement a broad range of activities and develop a broad variety of outputs, adopting often innovative approaches, which positively contribute to increasing the effectiveness of their work, allowing them to cater for the needs of their target audience. Consequently, the SALTOs carry out crucial work that provides an essential and unique contribution to the effective implementation of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes. Their work is considered necessary and useful, with the network being seen as an overarching, neutral structure, playing a crucial role both in ensuring the success of EU programmes, and promoting EU values across the continent.

The study identifies the following recommendations under each of the three evaluation criteria (effectiveness, relevance, EU added value). The recommendations focus on areas for improvement for which the research activities provided strong evidence.

Recommendations to increase the effectiveness of the SALTO as a network:

- Review the communication channels used by the SALTO network and identify areas in which communication to stakeholders can be streamlined through further collaboration between SALTOs and an improved dissemination strategy. This could include improving the network's web presence, through a more user-friendly and accessible website, and a more streamlined usage of newsletters and social media channels.

- ▶ Develop additional outreach and impact indicators across SALTOs, to gather and present disaggregated data in their reporting to the European Commission. These indicators would provide additional information to bridge current data gaps, and would allow to better evaluate and eventually increase the impact of the network.
- ▶ Improve the outreach and effectiveness of SALTO materials by increasing the number of languages in which they are translated.

Recommendations to increase the effectiveness of individual SALTOs³:

- ▶ For SALTO I&D, consider assessing whether there is a need to re-focus their activities and trainings in order to increase the involvement of young people with fewer opportunities in EU youth programmes and identify steps to be taken for this SALTO to further increase its direct impact on this specific target group.
- ▶ For SALTO EuroMed, consider carrying out an internal assessment of how its work is affecting the participation of young people from the region in EU youth programmes to help identify areas in which SALTO EuroMed's offer could be further improved and streamlined.
- ▶ For SALTO SEE, consider encouraging this SALTO to conduct an internal assessment to evaluate the role and resources available to selected Contact Points in the region for these to provide better quality support to programme beneficiaries.
- ▶ For SALTO E&T TCA, increase the visibility of this SALTO's work among Education & Training stakeholders other than National Agencies, as well as other SALTOs. This could take the form of a dedicated communication campaign to promote the work of this SALTO, and include a revision of the current SALTO websites, so ensure the work of this SALTO is adequately referenced.

Recommendations to increase the relevance of the SALTO as a network:

- ▶ Encourage SALTOs to conduct regular assessments of activities and outputs produced by the Resource Centres to ensure that activities and resources remain relevant to the needs of all target groups, and are further tailored to cover relevant topics.
- ▶ Improve internal cooperation between the regional and thematic SALTOs during the design and implementation of materials and activities, as closer collaboration would ensure that resources reflect the needs of stakeholders beyond the EU, increasing the outreach of Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps.
- ▶ Increase the cooperation between the SALTO Resource Centres and the National Erasmus+ Offices in countries not associated to the programme. Further cooperation would allow National Erasmus+ Officers to acquire knowledge of and contacts in the youth sector and to ease the transition towards this area of work. Increased cooperation between NEOs and regional SALTOs in particular, could also have a potentially positive impact on the participation of people from countries not associated to the programme and improve the relevance of SALTO materials and activities for stakeholders from these countries.

Recommendations to increase the relevance of individual SALTOs⁴:

- ▶ For SALTO T&C, consider establishing a strategic cooperation with SALTO E&T TCA to reach a wider range of stakeholders that can support its work on the validation and recognition of youth work, as well as the professional development of youth workers. A stronger partnership with SALTO E&T TCA could help SALTO T&C better understand the needs of stakeholders active in the Education & Training sector and better adapt its offer to this group, thus contributing to the wider recognition of youth work and youth workers across EU Member States.
- ▶ For SALTO EECA, consider carrying out an assessment of how the current geopolitical situation in Ukraine affects the relevance of its work in the region, particularly with regards to the participation of young people in EU youth

³ For SALTO P&I, SALTO T&C, SALTO ESC RC and SALTO EECA, no specific recommendations under this assessment criteria were identified by the Research team.

⁴ For SALTO I&D, SALTO P&I, SALTO ESC, SALTO T&C, SALTO EuroMed and SALTO SEE no specific recommendations under this assessment criteria were identified by the Research Team.

programmes, and the involvement of youth organisations and youth workers in peacebuilding and reconciliation activities.

- For SALTO E&T TCA, consider encouraging this SALTO to conduct an internal assessment of the relevance of its work for the overall Education & Training sector to better understand how this Resource Centre can further contribute to the overall EU goals in this specific sector.

Recommendations to increase the EU added value of the SALTO as a network⁵:

- Maintain and further strengthen the existing structure of the SALTO network as a core pillar of the implementation of the EU youth programmes.
- Ensure SALTOs continue to benefit from the support of EU funding programmes, to continue to effectively achieve the objectives set in their mandates and deliver high quality outputs that are seen as needed and useful by their target audience.
- Further explore the potential of the SALTO network to strengthen national level youth policy, particularly in regions and countries where this is less developed. As part of National Agencies, the SALTOs already streamline EU youth policy priorities in their respective host countries. However, this role could be expanded in the future to further support the implementation of EU policies such as the EU Youth Strategy or the European Youth Work Agenda, and could be particularly impactful in regions where youth policy and youth work are not as developed.

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Note de synthèse (FR)

Buts, objectifs et portée de l'évaluation

Ce rapport présente les principales conclusions de l'étude «Évaluation de l'efficacité et de la pertinence des structures SALTO (Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities) existantes dans le cadre du paysage global de la gouvernance Erasmus+ et des structures existantes soutenant la mise en œuvre du programme (y compris les bureaux nationaux Erasmus+)».

L'objectif principal de l'étude est de fournir une évaluation et des conclusions fondées sur des données probantes concernant l'impact des structures SALTO actuelles sur la mise en œuvre des programmes Erasmus+ et du Corps européen de solidarité, ainsi que l'efficacité, la pertinence et la valeur ajoutée de leur travail pour les parties prenantes actives dans les domaines de la jeunesse et de l'éducation et de la formation. Les résultats de cette étude sont fondés sur une recherche documentaire, une analyse de la littérature, des entretiens menés avec les parties prenantes concernées et une enquête en ligne. L'évaluation et les conclusions se fondent sur le travail du réseau SALTO depuis 2018 et couvrent l'impact de leurs activités sur la précédente génération d'Erasmus+ (2014-2020) et du Corps européen de solidarité (2018-2020). Les activités SALTO dans le cadre de la nouvelle génération de ces programmes ne sont couvertes que de manière limitée⁶.

L'étude se concentre sur les bénéficiaires directs des activités, de la recherche et du matériel liés aux structures SALTO (par exemple, les agences nationales Erasmus+, les bureaux nationaux Erasmus, les parties prenantes au niveau de l'UE, les formateurs de jeunes, les travailleurs de jeunesse, les organisations de jeunesse). Par conséquent, l'impact des activités et des résultats de SALTO sur les individus et les jeunes en général n'entre pas dans le cadre de cette étude.

⁵ The research team did not identify any specific recommendations for any of the individual SALTOs under this assessment criteria.

⁶ Les éléments de preuve pour l'année 2021 sont limités car les rapports annuels des agences nationales Erasmus+ doivent encore être publiés.

Aperçu de la méthodologie

Les activités de collecte de données utilisées pour ce rapport sont les suivantes:

- ▶ Recherche documentaire: Des données qualitatives et quantitatives sur les activités et les résultats de SALTO entre 2018 et 2021 ont été recueillies par le biais de recherches documentaires et d'une analyse de la littérature. Les données recueillies ont été fournies notamment par la Commission européenne, et plus particulièrement par les programmes de travail annuels et les rapports annuels des agences nationales, les programmes de travail annuels et les rapports annuels d'Erasmus+ et du Corps européen de solidarité, ainsi que les mandats des structures SALTO. Des sources supplémentaires ont été recueillies pour chaque structure SALTO, telles que des rapports, des évaluations, des outils et des stratégies disponibles sur les sites web SALTO et d'autres sources. Les données de référence ont été définies grâce aux recherches et aux documents d'appui d'une évaluation interne des structures SALTO réalisée entre 2012 et 2015 par la Commission européenne.
- ▶ Entretien exploratoire⁷: un entretien exploratoire en groupe a été réalisé avec des représentants de la Commission européenne (DG EAC).
- ▶ Entretiens: 22 entretiens semi-structurés ont été menés avec des représentants de la Commission européenne (DG EAC); des parties prenantes au niveau de l'UE (Forum européen de la jeunesse; Équipe de formateurs du Forum européen de la jeunesse; Réseau RAY; LifeLong Learning Platform); des agences nationales Erasmus+; des bureaux nationaux Erasmus; des membres du personnel SALTO. Ils ont été complétés par cinq contributions écrites de responsables TCA (Training and Cooperation Activities).
- ▶ Enquête: une enquête en ligne a été lancée pour recueillir toutes les informations supplémentaires pertinentes et les points de vue des groupes cibles concernés. L'analyse quantitative et qualitative de cette enquête ciblant les agences nationales Erasmus+, les bénéficiaires directs du travail des structures SALTO et les structures SALTO elles-mêmes, qui a permis de recueillir 81 réponses, a été réalisée.

Les résultats de la recherche documentaire, des entretiens et de l'enquête sont présentés dans les annexes 2 et 3 de cette étude.

Principales conclusions

Les centres de ressources SALTO ont été créés en 2000. Au fil du temps, le réseau a évolué pour s'adapter aux nouvelles priorités des politiques et programmes de l'UE et mieux répondre aux besoins de son public cible. À la suite d'une réorganisation des structures SALTO en 2018, le réseau comprend actuellement sept centres de ressources pour les jeunes: trois qui s'articulent autour d'un axe thématique (Inclusion et diversité; Participation et information; Formation et coopération); trois, autour d'un axe régional (EuroMed; Europe orientale et Caucase; Europe du Sud-Est); le dernier étant axé sur un programme (Centre de ressources du Corps européen de solidarité). En outre, le réseau SALTO comprend également un centre de ressources qui met l'accent sur l'éducation et la formation, au-delà de la jeunesse (TCA SALTO Education & Training).

Les structures SALTO en tant que réseau

Les résultats de la recherche documentaire et des consultations pour cette étude révèlent que le réseau SALTO dans son ensemble apporte des contributions significatives aux domaines de la jeunesse et de l'éducation et de la formation.

L'étude montre que les structures SALTO contribuent positivement à l'amélioration de la qualité, de l'impact et de la durabilité des programmes Erasmus+ et du Corps européen de solidarité, en développant des ressources et du matériel utiles, et en offrant par le biais de leurs activités (par exemple, des événements, des cours de formation, des séminaires, etc.) un cadre pour la coordination et la coopération entre toutes les parties prenantes actives dans la mise en œuvre des programmes. Cette contribution positive est particulièrement évidente dans le cadre d'Erasmus+, principalement en raison de l'ancienneté de ce programme par rapport au Corps européen de solidarité, plus récent. Le nombre, la diversité et la qualité des activités et des résultats produits par les structures SALTO sont des éléments essentiels pour l'impact positif du réseau SALTO sur Erasmus+ et le Corps européen de solidarité. Ces éléments renforcent le rôle des structures SALTO en tant que pôles de connaissances. À ce titre, les structures SALTO contribuent à faire connaître les programmes et leurs priorités aux principales parties prenantes (par exemple, les bénéficiaires directs, les agences nationales Erasmus+), répondent à leurs demandes et

⁷ Les entretiens exploratoires sont des entretiens courts et peu structurés qui visent à s'assurer que l'équipe de recherche a une compréhension approfondie du contexte et des objectifs de l'étude, afin d'affiner la méthodologie de recherche.

les soutiennent le cas échéant. Les ressources SALTO sont perçues comme étant exhaustives, claires, facilement accessibles, et sont fréquemment utilisées pour obtenir des données factuelles ainsi qu'un contexte au travail politique. En outre, ces ressources sont jugées utiles pour la conception, la mise en œuvre et l'évaluation des projets Erasmus+ et du Corps européen de solidarité. Un facteur de réussite identifié par l'étude est la bonne connaissance qu'ont les structures SALTO de leurs publics cibles, ce qui est dû à leurs efforts continus pour réaliser des évaluations des besoins et mener des consultations.

L'étude montre que le travail du réseau SALTO reste pertinent pour répondre à des besoins spécifiques (par exemple, une communication efficace avec les jeunes, l'inclusion de participants ayant des besoins spéciaux, entre autres) dans les domaines de la jeunesse et de l'éducation et de la formation. En outre, l'étude montre que les structures SALTO sont capables de s'adapter à des contextes changeants et de faire en sorte que leurs activités et leurs résultats répondent aux besoins de leur public cible et des multiples parties prenantes (c'est-à-dire la Commission européenne, les agences nationales Erasmus+, les autres SALTO, les organisations de jeunesse, les animateurs de jeunesse, les parties prenantes de l'éducation et de la formation et les autres bénéficiaires). Depuis la création du réseau SALTO, le contexte politique de l'UE en matière de jeunesse et d'éducation et de formation a considérablement évolué (par exemple, le programme du Corps européen de solidarité a été lancé en 2018; Erasmus+ a élargi son champ d'action en mettant davantage l'accent sur l'inclusion et la diversité dans les politiques et les programmes de jeunesse). En outre, le contexte mondial global a posé des défis supplémentaires et sans précédent (par exemple, l'impact de la pandémie de COVID-19 sur la mobilité des jeunes et les programmes d'échange). Toutefois, les structures SALTO ont réussi à relever ces défis en élargissant leur champ d'action et en explorant de nouvelles méthodes de travail (par exemple, les outils en ligne) afin que leurs parties prenantes continuent de bénéficier de leurs activités.

Une forte coopération entre les structures SALTO est identifiée comme un élément clé qui contribue positivement à rendre le travail du réseau et de chaque structure SALTO plus efficace. Cette coopération est facilitée par des possibilités continues d'échanges formels et informels entre les structures SALTO (par exemple, groupes de travail, réunions virtuelles et en personne) pour partager des informations et assurer la coordination. Cependant, l'étude montre que cette coopération se produit principalement entre les structures SALTO œuvrant dans le domaine de la jeunesse, SALTO E&T jouant un rôle plus indépendant du reste du réseau.

La pertinence du réseau est évidente dans le domaine de la jeunesse, car les structures SALTO apportent non seulement une contribution cruciale à la réalisation des objectifs des programmes Erasmus+ et du Corps européen de solidarité, mais soutiennent également la mise en œuvre efficace des priorités et instruments plus larges de la politique de la jeunesse de l'UE, tels que la stratégie de l'UE en faveur de la jeunesse 2019-2027. En outre, l'étude souligne la contribution positive de SALTO Education & Training, notamment via la mise à disposition d'une plateforme commune pour la coopération des agences nationales Erasmus+ au niveau de l'UE. Cependant, l'impact et la pertinence des travaux de cette structure SALTO tendent à rester moins visibles par rapport à ceux des structures SALTO actives dans le domaine de la jeunesse.

Les structures SALTO apportent une valeur ajoutée à l'UE car elles représentent un point de contact centralisé qui permet aux agences nationales Erasmus+ et aux autres parties prenantes d'obtenir des informations et des ressources. Le réseau SALTO est considéré comme une structure unique à l'échelle de l'UE qui possède des connaissances spécialisées et approfondies des domaines de la jeunesse et de l'éducation et de la formation. En outre, le réseau sert un objectif non couvert par d'autres structures existantes, et peut soutenir les nouveaux venus dans les programmes. Les structures SALTO jouent également un rôle crucial en tant que «canal de communication» entre la Commission européenne, les agences nationales Erasmus+ et les bénéficiaires des programmes. Les structures SALTO permettent non seulement à ces parties prenantes d'être au courant de l'évolution des politiques de l'UE, mais elles favorisent également la prise en compte d'une perspective européenne dans le travail des agences nationales Erasmus+ et des bénéficiaires des programmes.

L'étude montre également une demande forte et soutenue pour un réseau à l'échelle de l'UE tel que les structures SALTO, car il n'existe actuellement aucune autre structure au niveau national ou européen qui puisse reproduire avec succès le travail que les centres de ressources effectuent pour soutenir la mise en œuvre des programmes Erasmus+ et du Corps européen de solidarité.

Structures SALTO individuelles

La contribution positive des structures SALTO en tant que réseau se reflète également dans le travail de chaque centre de ressources.

En ce qui concerne les structures SALTO thématiques axées sur la jeunesse, [SALTO Inclusion & Diversité \(I&D\)](#) est globalement efficace à l'heure de promouvoir l'inclusion et la diversité dans Erasmus+ et le Corps européen de solidarité et reste particulièrement pertinent dans le contexte d'un engagement renouvelé en faveur de la diversité et de l'inclusion dans la politique de l'UE. La stratégie d'inclusion et de diversité ainsi que des activités telles que les ID Talks et la formation des formateurs à l'inclusion ont été identifiées comme particulièrement efficaces et pertinentes, notamment en fournissant aux

organisations de bons exemples pratiques de projets inclusifs. Malgré cela, un des aspects à améliorer consiste notamment à veiller à ce que les jeunes ayant moins d'opportunités participent davantage aux programmes, en augmentant la coopération de ce SALTO avec les organisations citoyennes et en explorant des dimensions d'inclusion supplémentaires.

La structure [SALTO Participation & Information \(P&I\)](#) est efficace pour accroître et améliorer la qualité de la participation aux programmes Erasmus+ et du Corps européen de solidarité, et pour mettre en œuvre des activités d'information de haute qualité. Cependant, comme pour [SALTO I&D](#), il existe des points à améliorer en ce qui concerne la promotion de la participation des jeunes ayant moins d'opportunités et les efforts déployés pour fournir des informations. La stratégie de participation des jeunes se distingue comme un outil qui a contribué à créer une compréhension commune de la participation des jeunes. Des activités telles que la formation du personnel des agents de communication et d'information (CIOS) et les événements des groupes de réflexion ont été identifiés comme des résultats à haute valeur ajoutée.

En outre, [SALTO Training & Cooperation \(T&C\)](#) a contribué positivement à l'augmentation de la qualité du travail de jeunesse, notamment dans le cadre des projets Erasmus+ et du Corps européen de solidarité. Cette contribution positive n'est pas seulement liée à la grande qualité des formations dispensées (par exemple, les formations en matière de connaissances, de gestion et de personnel), pour lesquelles la stratégie européenne de formation joue un rôle clé, mais aussi à la promotion et à la mise en œuvre d'outils de validation tels que le Youthpass. Cet impact positif est attesté par l'augmentation constante du nombre de certificats délivrés entre 2018-2020 et par l'impact positif du Youthpass sur la qualité des projets.

Le [Centre de ressources du Corps européen de solidarité \(CR ESC\)](#) a apporté une contribution cruciale au programme qu'il soutient en veillant à ce que les parties prenantes aient une meilleure compréhension du concept de solidarité et de son rôle dans le Corps européen de solidarité.

En ce qui concerne les SALTO régionaux, [SALTO EuroMed](#), [SALTO Europe orientale et Caucase \(EECA\)](#) et [SALTO Europe du Sud-Est \(SEE\)](#) ont tous contribué positivement à la promotion d'Erasmus+ et du Corps européen de solidarité dans leur région respective, en faisant office de points de contact et en établissant des InfoCentres dans les pays partenaires.

Enfin, le programme [SALTO Education & Training \(E&T TCA\)](#) a un impact positif sur la mise en œuvre du programme Erasmus+, notamment par l'organisation d'activités de formation et de coopération (TCA). Cependant, étant donné que les activités sont principalement destinées aux agences nationales Erasmus+, plutôt qu'à des groupes de bénéficiaires plus larges, le travail de cette structure SALTO a tendance à être moins visible que les activités et les résultats des autres centres de ressources.

Conclusions et recommandations

La réorganisation des structures SALTO en 2018, si elle n'a pas radicalement changé les objectifs et le mandat globaux du réseau, a été l'occasion de définir plus précisément les domaines de travail et le mandat des centres de ressources concernés. Cela s'est traduit par un renforcement de l'expertise, de la spécialisation et de la capacité à répondre aux besoins, soulignant encore une fois comment une approche plus adaptée à la structure et au fonctionnement du réseau SALTO améliore son impact et sa pertinence.

Les structures SALTO mettent en œuvre un large éventail d'activités et développent une grande variété de résultats, en adoptant des approches souvent innovantes, ce qui contribue à accroître l'efficacité de leur travail et leur permet de répondre aux besoins de leur public cible. Par conséquent, les structures SALTO effectuent un travail crucial qui apporte une contribution essentielle et unique à la mise en œuvre efficace des programmes Erasmus+ et du Corps européen de solidarité. Leur travail est considéré comme nécessaire et utile, le réseau étant considéré comme une structure globale et neutre, jouant un rôle crucial à la fois pour assurer la réussite des programmes de l'UE et pour promouvoir les valeurs de l'UE sur le continent.

L'étude identifie les recommandations suivantes pour chacun des trois critères d'évaluation (efficacité, pertinence, valeur ajoutée de l'UE). Les recommandations se concentrent sur les domaines d'amélioration pour lesquels les l'étude a apporté des preuves solides.

Recommandations visant à accroître l'efficacité de SALTO en tant que réseau:

- Examiner les canaux de communication utilisés par le réseau SALTO et identifier les domaines dans lesquels la communication aux parties prenantes peut être rationalisée par une collaboration accrue entre les structures SALTO et une stratégie de diffusion améliorée. Cette démarche pourrait inclure l'amélioration de la présence du réseau sur le web, grâce à un site web plus convivial et plus accessible, et une utilisation plus rationnelle des bulletins d'information et des canaux de réseaux sociaux.

- ▶ Développer et promouvoir une stratégie commune pour la collecte et l'analyse de données sur l'impact des activités et des publications SALTO. Cela pourrait inclure l'élaboration d'indicateurs communs de sensibilisation et d'impact, à utiliser pour recueillir et contrôler des données ventilées.
- ▶ Promouvoir la traduction des documents SALTO dans toutes les langues officielles de l'UE et, le cas échéant, dans certaines autres langues.

Recommandations pour accroître l'efficacité de chaque structure SALTO⁸:

- ▶ Pour SALTO I&D, envisager de réaliser une évaluation indépendante de la manière dont les activités et les formations de cette structure SALTO peuvent contribuer à accroître la participation des jeunes ayant moins d'opportunités d'accès aux programmes de l'UE pour la jeunesse et aider à identifier les mesures à prendre pour que SALTO I&D augmente encore son impact direct sur ce groupe cible spécifique.
- ▶ Pour SALTO EuroMed, envisager d'entreprendre une évaluation indépendante afin de déterminer comment son travail affecte la participation des jeunes de la région aux programmes de l'UE pour la jeunesse et aider à identifier les domaines dans lesquels l'offre de SALTO EuroMed pourrait être encore améliorée.
- ▶ Pour SALTO SEE, envisager d'encourager cette structure SALTO à réaliser une évaluation interne afin d'évaluer le rôle et les ressources dont disposent les points de contact sélectionnés dans la région, pour que ceux-ci puissent apporter un soutien de meilleure qualité aux bénéficiaires des programmes.
- ▶ Pour SALTO E&T TCA, accroître la visibilité du travail de cette structure SALTO parmi les parties prenantes de l'éducation et de la formation autres que les agences nationales, ainsi que parmi les autres structures SALTO. Cela pourrait prendre la forme d'une campagne de communication dédiée visant à promouvoir le travail de cette structure SALTO, et inclure une révision des sites web SALTO actuels, afin de s'assurer que le travail de cette structure SALTO est adéquatement référencé.

Recommandations pour accroître la pertinence de SALTO en tant que réseau:

- ▶ Encourager les structures SALTO à effectuer des évaluations régulières des activités et des résultats produits par les centres de ressources afin de s'assurer que les activités et les ressources restent pertinentes pour les besoins de tous les groupes cibles et restent adaptées pour couvrir tous les sujets pertinents.
- ▶ Améliorer la coopération interne entre les structures SALTO régionales et thématiques lors de la conception et de la mise en œuvre de matériels et d'activités, car une collaboration plus étroite garantirait que les ressources reflètent les besoins des parties prenantes au-delà de l'UE, augmentant ainsi la portée d'Erasmus+ et du Corps européen de solidarité.
- ▶ Renforcer la coopération entre les centres de ressources SALTO et les bureaux nationaux Erasmus+ (NEO) dans les pays non associés au programme. Une coopération accrue permettrait aux responsables nationaux Erasmus+ d'acquérir des connaissances et des contacts dans le secteur de la jeunesse et ainsi de faciliter leur transition vers ce domaine d'activité. Une coopération accrue entre les NEO et les structures SALTO régionales en particulier, pourrait également avoir un impact potentiellement positif sur la participation de personnes issues de pays non associés au programme et améliorer la pertinence du matériel et des activités SALTO pour les parties prenantes de ces pays.

Recommandations pour accroître la pertinence de chaque structure SALTO⁹:

- ▶ Pour SALTO T&C, envisager d'établir une coopération stratégique avec SALTO E&T TCA afin de toucher un plus large éventail de parties prenantes susceptibles de soutenir son travail sur la validation et la reconnaissance du travail de jeunesse, ainsi que sur le développement professionnel des animateurs de jeunesse. Un partenariat renforcé avec SALTO E&T TCA pourrait aider SALTO T&C à mieux comprendre les besoins des parties prenantes actives dans le secteur de l'éducation et de la formation et à mieux adapter son offre à ce groupe-cible, contribuant ainsi à une plus grande reconnaissance du travail de jeunesse et des animateurs de jeunesse dans les États membres de l'UE.
- ▶ Pour SALTO EECA, envisager de procéder à une évaluation de la manière dont la situation géopolitique actuelle en Ukraine affecte la pertinence de son travail dans la région, notamment en ce qui concerne la participation des jeunes aux programmes de l'UE pour la jeunesse, et l'implication des organisations de jeunesse et des animateurs de jeunesse dans les activités de consolidation de la paix et de réconciliation.

⁸ Pour SALTO P&I, SALTO T&C, SALTO ESC RC et SALTO EECA, aucune recommandation spécifique au titre de ce critère d'évaluation n'a été identifiée par l'équipe en charge de l'étude.

⁹ Pour SALTO I&D, SALTO P&I, SALTO ESC, SALTO T&C, SALTO EuroMed et SALTO SEE, aucune recommandation spécifique au titre de ce critère d'évaluation n'a été identifiée par l'équipe en charge de l'étude.

- Pour SALTO E&T TCA, envisager d'encourager cette structure SALTO à effectuer une évaluation interne de la pertinence de son travail pour l'ensemble du secteur de l'éducation et de la formation afin de mieux comprendre comment ce centre de ressources peut contribuer davantage aux objectifs globaux de l'UE dans ce secteur spécifique.

Recommandations pour augmenter la valeur ajoutée pour l'UE de SALTO en tant que réseau:

- Maintenir et renforcer davantage la structure existante du réseau SALTO en tant que pilier central de la mise en œuvre des programmes de l'UE en faveur de la jeunesse.
- Veiller à ce que les structures SALTO continuent à bénéficier du soutien des programmes de financement de l'UE pour continuer à atteindre efficacement les objectifs fixés dans leurs mandats et fournir des résultats de haute qualité considérés comme nécessaires et utiles par leur public cible.
- Explorer davantage le potentiel du réseau SALTO pour renforcer la politique de la jeunesse au niveau national, en particulier dans les régions et pays où celle-ci est moins développée. En tant que parties intégrantes des agences nationales, les structures SALTO mettent déjà en œuvre les priorités de la politique de la jeunesse de l'UE dans leurs pays d'accueil respectifs. Cependant, ce rôle pourrait être élargi à l'avenir pour soutenir davantage la mise en œuvre des politiques de l'UE telles que la stratégie de l'UE pour la jeunesse ou l'agenda européen du travail de jeunesse, et pourrait avoir un impact particulier dans les régions où la politique et le travail de jeunesse ne sont pas aussi développés.

Avertissement: Ce document a été préparé pour la Commission européenne; toutefois, il n'engage que ses auteurs et la Commission ne peut être tenue responsable de l'usage qui pourrait être fait des informations qu'il contient.

Zusammenfassung (DE)

Ziele, Anliegen und Umfang der Bewertung

Der vorliegende Bericht enthält die wesentlichen Ergebnisse der Studie „Bewertung der bisherigen Wirksamkeit und Relevanz der bestehenden Strukturen der ‚Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities‘ (SALTOs) im allgemeinen Kontext der Verwaltung von Erasmus+ und der Unterstützung der Durchführung des Programms (einschließlich der nationalen Erasmus+-Büros) durch die bestehenden Strukturen“.

Das Hauptanliegen der Studie besteht in der Bereitstellung von einer Bewertung und evidenzbasierten Schlussfolgerungen zu der Wirkung der derzeitigen SALTOS auf die Durchführung der Programme Erasmus+ und Europäisches Solidaritätskorps sowie zu der Wirksamkeit, Relevanz und dem Mehrwert von deren Arbeit für die in den Bereichen Jugend, allgemeine und berufliche Bildung aktiven Interessenträger. Die Ergebnisse dieser Studie gründen auf Sekundärforschung, Literaturrecherche, Interviews mit relevanten Interessenträgern und einer Online-Umfrage. Die Bewertung und Schlussfolgerungen richten sich auf die Arbeit des SALTO-Netzwerks seit 2018 und decken die Wirkung von dessen Aktivitäten auf die vorherige Generation der Programme Erasmus+ (2014-2020) und Europäisches Solidaritätskorps (2018-2020) ab. SALTO-Aktivitäten im Rahmen der neuen Generation dieser Programme sind nur begrenzt abgedeckt¹⁰.

Die Studie konzentriert sich auf die direkt und unmittelbar Begünstigten der Aktivitäten, Studien und Materialien des SALTO-Netzwerks (z. B. nationale Erasmus+-Agenturen, nationale Erasmus-Büros, Interessenträger auf EU-Ebene, Fachkräfte in der Fortbildung von jungen Menschen und in der Jugendarbeit, Jugendorganisationen). Somit ist die Wirkung der Aktivitäten und Ergebnisse des SALTO-Netzwerks auf einzelne Personen und die Jugend im Allgemeinen nicht Gegenstand dieser Studie.

Die Methode im Überblick

Zur Erstellung dieses Berichts wurden die folgenden Datenerhebungen durchgeführt:

- ▶ Sekundärforschung: Qualitative und quantitative Daten zu Aktivitäten und Ergebnissen der SALTOS im Zeitraum 2018-2021 wurden mittels Sekundärforschung und Literaturrecherche erhoben. Dies beinhaltet u. a. von der Europäischen Kommission bereitgestellte Daten, einschließlich Jahresarbeitsprogrammen und Jahresberichten von den nationalen Agenturen, von Erasmus+ und dem Europäischen Solidaritätskorps, sowie Mandate der SALTOS. Für die einzelnen SALTOS wurden zusätzliche Quellen herangezogen, darunter Berichte, Bewertungen, Instrumente und Strategien, wie sie über die Websites der SALTOS und anderweitig verfügbar gestellt wurden. Zur Festlegung der Ausgangsdaten dienten die Studienunterlagen sowie zugehöriges Material aus einer zwischen 2012 und 2015 von der Europäischen Kommission durchgeführten internen Bewertung der SALTOS.
- ▶ Rahmeninterview¹¹: Es wurde ein Gruppenrahmeninterview mit Vertreterinnen und Vertretern der Europäischen Kommission (GD EAC) durchgeführt.
- ▶ Interviews: Es wurden 22 semi-strukturierte Interviews mit Vertreterinnen und Vertretern der Europäischen Kommission (GD EAC), Interessenträgern auf EU-Ebene (Europäisches Jugendforum, Fachkräftepool Fortbildung des Europäischen Jugendforums, RAY Network, LifeLong Learning Platform), Angehörigen der nationalen Erasmus+-Agenturen und nationalen Erasmus-Büros sowie mit SALTO-Mitarbeitenden durchgeführt. Diese Interviews wurden durch fünf schriftliche Beiträge von TCA-Mitarbeitenden ergänzt.
- ▶ Umfrage: Über eine Online-Umfrage wurden alle sonstigen relevanten Informationen und Ansichten der betroffenen Zielgruppen eingeholt. Es wurde eine quantitative und qualitative Analyse der 81 Rückmeldungen auf eine Online-Umfrage durchgeführt, die sich an nationale Erasmus+-Agenturen, unmittelbar Begünstigte der Arbeit der SALTOS und die einzelnen SALTOS richtete.

Die Ergebnisse der Sekundärforschung, der Interviews und der Umfrage finden sich in den Anlagen 2 und 3 zu dieser Studie.

Wichtigste Ergebnisse

Die ersten SALTO-Ressourcententren wurden im Jahr 2000 eingerichtet. Seitdem hat sich das Netzwerk weiterentwickelt, um sich an neue Politiken auf EU-Ebene und Programmprioritäten anzupassen und den Bedürfnissen der Zielgruppe besser zu entsprechen. Die SALTOS wurden im Jahr 2018 neu organisiert; das Netzwerk besteht zurzeit aus sieben Jugendressourcententren, davon drei mit thematischem Schwerpunkt (Inclusion & Diversity; Participation & Information; Training & Cooperation), drei mit regionalem Schwerpunkt (EuroMed; Eastern Europe & Caucasus; South East Europe) und eines mit programmatischem Schwerpunkt (European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre). Das SALTO-Netzwerk umfasst zudem ein Ressourcententrum, das auf die Aus- und Fortbildung im Erwachsenenbereich ausgerichtet ist (SALTO Education & Training TCA).

¹⁰ Die Datenlage für das Jahr 2021 ist dünn, da die Jahresberichte der nationalen Erasmus+-Agenturen noch nicht vorliegen.

¹¹ Rahmeninterviews sind kurze, grob strukturierte Interviews, mit denen sichergestellt werden soll, dass das Studienteam über umfassende Kenntnis des Studienhintergrunds und der Studienziele verfügt, um die Studienmethode präzisieren zu können.

SALTO-Netzwerk

Die Ergebnisse der Sekundärforschung und der Konsultationen im Rahmen dieser Studie zeigen, dass das SALTO-Netzwerk insgesamt wichtige Beiträge in den Bereichen Jugend, Aus- und Fortbildung liefert.

Die Studie zeigt, dass die SALTOs positiv zur Verbesserung der Qualität, Wirkung und Nachhaltigkeit der Programme Erasmus+ und Europäisches Solidaritätskorps beitragen, indem sie hilfreiche Ressourcen und Materialien entwickeln und über ihre Aktivitäten (z. B. Veranstaltungen, Fortbildungen und Seminare) Räume der Koordination und Kooperation zwischen allen relevanten aktiv an der Durchführung der Programme beteiligten Interessenträgern bereitstellen. Dieser positive Beitrag zeigt sich insbesondere für Erasmus+, was vor allem darauf zurückzuführen ist, dass dieses Programm länger besteht als das Europäische Solidaritätskorps. Entscheidend für die Positivwirkung des SALTO-Netzwerks auf Erasmus+ und das Europäische Solidaritätskorps sind die Anzahl, die Vielfalt und die hohe Qualität der Aktivitäten und Ergebnisse der SALTOs. Diese stärken die Rolle der SALTOs als Wissenszentren. In dieser Rolle fördern die SALTOs die Popularität der Programme und ihrer Prioritäten bei den wichtigsten Interessenträgern (z. B. unmittelbar Begünstigte, nationale Erasmus+-Agenturen), beantworten deren Anfragen und unterstützen diese bei Bedarf. Die Ressourcen von SALTO werden als umfassend, klar und gut zugänglich wahrgenommen und werden häufig als Datengrundlage und Hintergrund für die politische Arbeit genutzt. Darüber hinaus werden diese Ressourcen als nützlich für die Entwicklung, Durchführung und Evaluation von Projekten im Rahmen von Erasmus+ und des Europäischen Solidaritätskorps betrachtet. Als Erfolgsfaktor ermittelte die Studie die gute Kenntnis der SALTOs in Bezug auf ihre Zielgruppen, die auf ihre kontinuierlichen Bemühungen, um die Durchführung von Bedarfsbewertungen und Konsultationen, zurückzuführen ist.

Die Studie zeigt, dass die Arbeit des SALTO-Netzwerks weiterhin relevant für die Erfüllung spezieller Bedürfnisse (z. B. wirksame Kommunikation gegenüber jungen Menschen, Einbeziehung von u. a. Teilnehmenden mit besonderen Bedürfnissen) in den Bereichen Jugend, Aus- und Fortbildung ist. Aus der Studie geht zudem hervor, dass die SALTOs in der Lage sind, sich an veränderliche Kontexte anzupassen und sicherzustellen, dass ihre Aktivitäten und Outputs den Bedürfnissen ihrer Zielgruppen und der verschiedenen Interessenträger (Europäische Kommission, nationale Erasmus+-Agenturen, andere SALTOs, Jugendorganisationen, Jugendarbeiter, Interessenträger aus dem Bereich Aus- und Fortbildung sowie andere Begünstigte) gerecht werden. Seit der Einrichtung des SALTO-Netzwerks hat sich der politische Rahmen in der EU im Bereich Jugend und Aus- und Fortbildung deutlich verändert (z. B. durch die Einrichtung des Programms Europäisches Solidaritätskorps im Jahr 2018 und die Erweiterung von Erasmus+ mit stärkerem Schwerpunkt auf Inklusion und Vielfalt in der Politik und in Programmen für die Jugend). Auch aus dem allgemeinen globalen Kontext ergeben sich zusätzliche und historische Herausforderungen (z. B. die Wirkung der COVID-19-Pandemie auf die Jugendmobilität und auf Austauschprogramme). Die SALTOs haben diese Herausforderungen jedoch erfolgreich bewältigt, indem sie ihren Aktionsbereich ausgeweitet und neue Arbeitsweisen erprobt haben (z. B. Online-Tools), um sicherzustellen, dass ihre Aktivitäten für ihre Interessenträger weiterhin nutzbringend sind.

Insbesondere die enge Zusammenarbeit zwischen den SALTOs hat positiv zur Wirksamkeit der Arbeit des Netzwerks und der einzelnen SALTOs beigetragen. Diese Zusammenarbeit wird durch kontinuierliche formelle und informelle Gelegenheiten zum Austausch von Informationen und zur Absprache zwischen den SALTOs unterstützt (z. B. in Form von Arbeitsgruppen, Online- und Präsenztreffen). Laut der Studie besteht diese Zusammenarbeit jedoch überwiegend zwischen SALTOs, die sich mit dem Thema Jugend befassen; SALTO E&T ist netzwerkunabhängiger aufgestellt.

Die Relevanz des Netzwerks im Bereich Jugend ist offenkundig, da die SALTOs nicht nur einen wichtigen Beitrag zum Erreichen der Ziele von Erasmus+ und des Europäischen Solidaritätskorps leisten, sondern auch die sinnvolle Umsetzung breiter angelegter Prioritäten und Instrumente der EU-Jugendpolitik, etwa der EU-Jugendstrategie 2019-2027, unterstützen. Die Studie unterstreicht zudem den positiven Beitrag des SALTO Education & Training, der sich insbesondere aus der Bereitstellung einer gemeinsamen Plattform für die Zusammenarbeit der nationalen Erasmus+-Agenturen auf EU-Ebene ergibt. Die Wirkung und Relevanz der Arbeit dieses SALTO sind jedoch im Vergleich zu den im Bereich Jugend aktiven SALTOs eher weniger sichtbar.

Die SALTOs bieten Mehrwert für die EU, da sie für die nationalen Erasmus+-Agenturen und andere Interessenträger eine zentrale Anlaufstelle für Informationen und Ressourcen darstellen. Das SALTO-Netzwerk wird als einzigartige EU-weite Struktur mit weitreichender Fachkenntnis in den Bereichen Jugend und Aus- und Fortbildung bewertet. Ferner dient das Netzwerk einem Zweck, der von anderen bestehenden Strukturen noch nicht abgedeckt wird, und kann Programmneulinge unterstützen. Die SALTOs spielen überdies eine wichtige Rolle als „Kommunikationskanal“ zwischen der Europäischen Kommission, den nationalen Erasmus+-Agenturen und den Programmbegünstigten. Die SALTOs sorgen nicht nur dafür, dass diese Interessenträger die neusten Entwicklungen in der EU-Politik kennen, sondern fördern auch die Einbeziehung einer europäischen Perspektive in die Arbeit der nationalen Erasmus+-Agenturen und Programmbegünstigten.

Die Studie belegt ferner einen großen und anhaltenden Bedarf für ein EU-weites Netzwerk wie das der SALTOs, da zurzeit keine anderen Strukturen auf nationaler oder europäischer Ebene bereitstehen, die die unterstützende Arbeit der

Ressourcententren bei der Durchführung der Programme Erasmus+ und Europäisches Solidaritätskorps erfolgreich übernehmen könnten.

Einzelne SALTOs

Der positive Beitrag des SALTO-Netzwerks spiegelt sich auch in der Arbeit der einzelnen Ressourcententren wieder.

Unter den jugendbezogenen SALTOs mit thematischem Schwerpunkt fördert das Ressourcententrum [SALTO Inclusion & Diversity \(I&D\)](#) insgesamt wirksam Inklusion und Vielfalt in den Programmen Erasmus+ und Europäisches Solidaritätskorps und ist insbesondere im Kontext der erneuerten EU-politischen Selbstverpflichtung zu Vielfalt und Inklusion weiterhin relevant. Die Strategie für Inklusion und Vielfalt sowie Aktivitäten wie die „ID Talks“ und das „Inclusion Training for Trainers“ wurden als besonders wirksame und relevante Ergebnisse bewertet, insbesondere weil sie Organisationen gute und praktische Beispiele für Inklusionsprojekte bieten. Verbesserungspotenzial besteht hingegen darin, dass noch weitergehend sicherzustellen ist, dass junge benachteiligte Menschen an den Programmen teilnehmen indem die Zusammenarbeit mit Basisorganisationen verstärkt und weitere Inklusionsdimensionen geprüft werden.

Das Ressourcententrum [SALTO Participation & Information \(P&I\)](#) ist wirksam mit Blick auf die Steigerung und Verbesserung der Qualität der Teilnahme an Erasmus+ und dem Europäischen Solidaritätskorps sowie die Umsetzung von hochwertigen Informationsaktivitäten. Wie beim [SALTO I&D](#) besteht Verbesserungspotenzial bezüglich der Förderung der Teilnahme von benachteiligten jungen Menschen sowie gesteigerter Bemühungen bei der Bereitstellung von Informationen. Hervorzuheben ist die „Youth Participation Strategy“ als Instrument das zu einem gemeinsamen Verständnis von der Beteiligung junger Menschen beigetragen hat, und Aktivitäten wie die Fortbildung „Communication and Information Officers Staff Training (CIOST)“ und Denkfabrikveranstaltungen wurden als Ergebnisse mit Mehrwert bewertet.

Zudem hat das Ressourcententrum [SALTO Training & Cooperation \(T&C\)](#) positiv zur Verbesserung der Qualität in der Jugendarbeit beigetragen, insbesondere im Rahmen von Projekten von Erasmus+ und des Europäischen Solidaritätskorps. Dieser Positivbeitrag ergibt sich nicht nur aus dem hochwertigen Fortbildungsangebot (z. B. zur Vermittlung von Wissen oder Verwaltungstechniken sowie Fachkräftefortbildungen) – wobei die „European Training Strategy“ eine zentrale Rolle spielt –, sondern auch aus der Förderung und Einführung von Validierungsinstrumenten wie Youthpass. Diese positive Wirkung wird durch den kontinuierlichen Anstieg bei den ausgegebenen Zertifikaten im Zeitraum 2018-2020 und die positive Wirkung von Youthpass auf die Qualität von Projekten belegt.

Das [European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre \(ESC RC\)](#) hat einen entscheidenden Beitrag zu dem von ihm unterstützten Programm geleistet, indem es bei den Interessenträgern für ein besseres Verständnis von dem Konzept der Solidarität und seiner Rolle im Europäischen Solidaritätskorps gesorgt hat.

Die SALTOs mit regionalem Schwerpunkt – [SALTO EuroMed](#), [SALTO Eastern Europe and Caucasus \(EECA\)](#) und [SALTO South-East Europe \(SEE\)](#) – haben allesamt einen positiven Beitrag zur Förderung von Erasmus+ und des Europäischen Solidaritätskorps in ihrer jeweiligen Region geleistet, indem sie als Anlaufstellen fungierten und Informationszentren in Partnerländern einrichteten.

Das Ressourcententrum [SALTO Education & Training \(E&T TCA\)](#) schließlich wirkte positiv auf die Durchführung von Erasmus+, insbesondere durch die Organisation von „Training and Cooperation Activities“ (TCAs). Weil die Aktivitäten dieses SALTO jedoch – statt an breitere Gruppen von Begünstigten – vorwiegend an die nationalen Erasmus+-Agenturen gerichtet waren, ist seine Arbeit weniger sichtbar als die Aktivitäten und Ergebnisse der anderen Ressourcententren.

Schlussfolgerungen und Empfehlungen

Die Neuorganisation der SALTOs im Jahr 2018 bot die Gelegenheit zur Konkretisierung der Tätigkeitsbereiche und des Mandats der beteiligten Ressourcententren, ohne jedoch die übergeordneten Ziele und das Mandat des Netzwerks zu stark zu verändern. Damit einher ging die Erweiterung der Expertise, der Spezialisierung und der Kapazitäten zum Eingehen auf Bedürfnisse. Dadurch wurde einmal mehr unterstrichen, dass ein individuellerer Ansatz bezüglich der Struktur und der Funktionsweise des SALTO-Netzwerks dessen Wirkung und Relevanz erhöht.

Die Bandbreite der Aktivitäten und Ergebnisse der SALTOs ist groß und die SALTOs wenden oftmals innovative Ansätze an, was sich positiv auf die Wirksamkeit ihrer Arbeit auswirkt und sie in die Lage versetzt, die Bedürfnisse ihrer Zielgruppen zu erfüllen. Somit ist die Arbeit der SALTOs eine sehr wichtige, da sie einen wesentlichen und einzigartigen Beitrag zur wirksamen Durchführung der Programme Erasmus+ und Europäisches Solidaritätskorps leisten. Die Arbeit der einzelnen SALTOs wird als notwendig und hilfreich bewertet. Das Netzwerk wird als neutrale Dachstruktur bewertet, die eine wichtige Rolle bei der Sicherung des Erfolgs von EU-Programmen und der Förderung der Werte der EU in Europa spielt.

Die Studie gelangt zu den folgenden Empfehlungen für die drei Bewertungskriterien (Wirksamkeit, Relevanz und Mehrwert für die EU). Die Empfehlungen betreffen Verbesserungspotenzial, wie es sich aus der Studie ableitet.

Empfehlungen zur Steigerung der Wirksamkeit des SALTO-Netzwerks:

- ▶ Die Kommunikationskanäle des SALTO-Netzwerks sollten überprüft werden und es sollten Bereiche ermittelt werden, in denen die Kommunikation gegenüber Interessenträgern durch eine engere Zusammenarbeit zwischen den SALTOs und eine verbesserte Strategie der Informationsverbreitung optimiert werden kann. Denkbar wären in diesem Zusammenhang z. B. eine verbesserte Webpräsenz des Netzwerks im Sinne einer benutzerfreundlicheren und besser zugänglicheren Website und ein optimierter Einsatz von Newslettern und Kanälen der sozialen Medien.
- ▶ Es sollte eine gemeinsame Strategie für die Erhebung und Analyse von Daten zur Wirkung der Aktivitäten und Veröffentlichungen von SALTO entwickelt und gefördert werden, z. B. durch die Entwicklung gemeinsamer Reichweiten- und Wirkungsindikatoren, die zur Erhebung und Überwachung von nicht aggregierten Daten dienen können.
- ▶ Die Übersetzung der SALTO-Materialien in alle EU-Amtssprachen und ggf. einige ausgewählte Nicht-EU-Sprachen sollte gefördert werden.

Empfehlungen zur Steigerung der Wirksamkeit der einzelnen SALTOs¹²:

- ▶ Für das SALTO I&D sollte die Durchführung einer unabhängigen Bewertung erwogen werden, um zu prüfen, wie durch die Aktivitäten und Schulungsmaßnahmen dieses Ressourcenzentrums eine verstärkte Teilnahme benachteiligter junger Menschen an EU-Jugendprogrammen erreicht werden kann, und um Schritte zu ermitteln, mit denen sich die unmittelbare Wirkung des SALTO I&D auf diese spezifische Zielgruppe weiter verbessern lässt.
- ▶ Für das SALTO EuroMed sollte die Durchführung einer unabhängigen Bewertung erwogen werden, um zu evaluieren, wie dessen Arbeit die Teilnahme junger Menschen aus der Region an EU-Jugendprogrammen beeinflusst, und um Bereiche zu ermitteln, mit denen sich das Angebot dieses Ressourcenzentrums weiter verbessern lässt.
- ▶ Für das SALTO SEE sollte die Anregung einer internen Bewertung erwogen werden, um zu evaluieren, welche Rolle ausgewählte Anlaufstellen in der Region einnehmen und welche Ressourcen ihnen zur Verfügung stehen, damit diese Programmbegünstigten noch hochwertigere Unterstützung bieten können.
- ▶ Die Sichtbarkeit der Arbeit des SALTO E&T TCA bei Interessenträgern aus dem Bereich Aus- und Fortbildung (außer den nationalen Agenturen) und bei den anderen SALTOs sollte erhöht werden. Dies könnte in Form einer gezielten Kommunikationskampagne geschehen, mit der die Arbeit dieses SALTO beworben wird, und könnte zudem die Überarbeitung der aktuellen SALTO-Websites umfassen, um sicherzustellen, dass die Arbeit dieses Ressourcenzentrums angemessen dargestellt wird.

Empfehlungen zur Steigerung der Relevanz des SALTO-Netzwerks:

- ▶ Die SALTOs sollten angeregt werden, die Aktivitäten und Ergebnisse der Ressourcenzentren regelmäßig zu bewerten, um sicherzustellen, dass die Aktivitäten und Ressourcen für die Bedürfnisse aller Zielgruppen relevant bleiben und stärker auf spezifische Themen zugeschnitten werden.
- ▶ Die interne Zusammenarbeit zwischen den SALTOs mit regionalem Schwerpunkt und solchen mit thematischem Schwerpunkt bei der Entwicklung und Nutzung bzw. Umsetzung von Materialien und Aktivitäten sollte verbessert werden, da durch eine engere Zusammenarbeit sichergestellt werden würde, dass die Ressourcen auch den Bedürfnissen von Nicht-EU-Interessenträgern entsprechen und dadurch die Reichweite von Erasmus+ und des Europäischen Solidaritätskorps vergrößert würde.
- ▶ Die Zusammenarbeit zwischen den SALTO-Ressourcenzentren und den nationalen Erasmus+-Büros in nicht mit dem Programm verbundenen Ländern sollte gestärkt werden. Durch eine engere Zusammenarbeit könnten die Mitarbeitenden der nationalen Erasmus+-Büros den Bereich Jugend besser kennenlernen und Kontakte in diesem Bereich knüpfen, was den Übergang hin zu diesem Tätigkeitsbereich vereinfachen würde. Insbesondere könnte sich eine verstärkte Zusammenarbeit zwischen den nationalen Erasmus+-Büros und regionalen SALTOs potenziell positiv

¹² Für die SALTOs SALTO P&I, SALTO T&C, SALTO ESC RC und SALTO EECA hat das Studienteam keine spezifischen Empfehlungen für diese Bewertungskriterien formuliert.

auf die Teilnahme von Menschen aus nicht mit dem Programm verbundenen Ländern wirken und die Relevanz der Materialien und Aktivitäten des SALTO-Netzwerks für Interessenträger aus diesen Ländern erhöhen.

Empfehlungen zur Steigerung der Relevanz der einzelnen SALTOs¹³:

- ▶ Für das SALTO T&C sollte die Einrichtung einer strategischen Kooperation mit dem SALTO E&T TCA erwogen werden, um mehr Interessenträger zu erreichen, die die Arbeit dieses Ressourcenzentrums bezüglich der Validierung und Anerkennung von Jugendarbeit sowie die professionelle Entwicklung von Fachkräften in der Jugendarbeit unterstützen können. Eine verstärkte Partnerschaft mit dem SALTO E&T TCA könnte dem SALTO T&C dabei helfen, die Bedürfnisse der Interessenträger aus dem Bereich der Aus- und Fortbildung besser zu verstehen und das Angebot besser auf diese Gruppe abzustimmen, was zu einer breiteren Anerkennung der Jugendarbeit und der in diesem Bereich tätigen Fachkräfte in den EU-Mitgliedstaaten beitragen würde.
- ▶ Für das SALTO EECA sollte die Durchführung einer Bewertung darüber erwogen werden, wie sich die aktuelle geopolitische Lage in der Ukraine auf die Relevanz der Arbeit dieses Ressourcenzentrums in der Region auswirkt, insbesondere mit Blick auf die Teilnahme junger Menschen an EU-Jugendprogrammen sowie die Beteiligung von Jugendorganisationen und der Jugendarbeit an friedensfördernden und versöhnenden Aktivitäten.
- ▶ Für das SALTO E&T TCA sollte die Anregung einer internen Bewertung bezüglich der Relevanz seiner Arbeit für den Bereich der Aus- und Fortbildung im Allgemeinen erwogen werden, um besser zu verstehen, wie dieses Ressourcenzentrum in Zukunft zu den allgemeinen Zielen der EU in diesem konkreten Bereich beitragen kann.

Empfehlungen zur Steigerung des Mehrwerts des SALTO-Netzwerks für die EU¹⁴:

- ▶ Die bestehende Struktur des SALTO-Netzwerks sollte als Hauptsäule der Durchführung der EU-Jugendprogramme erhalten und gestärkt werden.
- ▶ Es sollte sichergestellt werden, dass die SALTOs weiterhin von der Unterstützung aus den Förderprogrammen der EU profitieren, damit sie die in ihren Mandaten festgelegten Aufgaben auch in Zukunft wirksam wahrnehmen und hochwertige Ergebnisse liefern können, die den Bedürfnissen ihrer Zielgruppen entsprechen und von diesen als nutzbringend wahrgenommen werden.
- ▶ Das Potenzial des SALTO-Netzwerks bei der Förderung der Jugendpolitik auf der nationalen Ebene, insbesondere in Regionen und Ländern, in denen die Jugendpolitik weniger entwickelt ist, sollte weiter geprüft werden. Im Rahmen der nationalen Agenturen bringen sie die jugendpolitischen Prioritäten der EU bereits in ihren jeweiligen Gastgeberländern ein. Diese Rolle ließe sich jedoch noch erweitern, um die Umsetzung von EU-Politiken wie etwa der EU-Jugendstrategie oder der Europäischen Jugendarbeitsagenda stärker zu unterstützen, was in Regionen, in denen die Jugendpolitik und die Jugendarbeit weniger entwickelt sind, besonders wirksam sein könnte.

Haftungsausschluss: Dieses Dokument wurde für die Europäische Kommission erstellt. Es gibt jedoch lediglich die Meinung der Autorenschaft wieder. Die Kommission kann nicht für die Verwendung der darin enthaltenen Informationen verantwortlich gemacht werden.

¹³ Für die SALTOs SALTO I&D, SALTO P&I, SALTO ESC, SALTO T&C, SALTO EuroMed und SALTO SEE hat das Studienteam keine spezifischen Empfehlungen für diese Bewertungskriterien formuliert.

¹⁴ Das Studienteam hat für die einzelnen SALTOs keine spezifischen Empfehlungen für dieses Bewertungskriterium formuliert.

A photograph of a group of children and adults in a field. In the foreground, a young girl with brown hair, wearing a light blue shirt and denim overalls, is looking through a magnifying glass. She is holding a spiral notebook. In the background, other children and adults are visible, some looking at plants. The scene is outdoors with tall grass and trees. A blue diagonal overlay covers the left side of the image.

01

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Ecorys is pleased to submit this Report as the last key deliverable under the Request for Services (RfS) entitled: "Assessment of the existing Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities structures' effectiveness and relevance to date within the overall landscape of the Erasmus+ governance and the existing structures supporting the implementation of the programme (including National Erasmus+ Offices)", released under the DG EAC Framework Contract EAC-02-2019).

This Report builds on our Inception report of 24 February 2022, the Progress Report of 25 March 2022, and the Interim Report of 26 April 2022. It provides detailed and up to date information on the steps taken and activities carried out under all main Tasks of this assessment, as well as an analysis of the final findings from all research activities. It also provides the final recommendations emerging from our analysis by assessment criteria.

The Report is structured as follows:

- ▶ Chapter 1 provides an overview of the objectives of the study and of our methodology approach for the key data collection tasks;
- ▶ Chapter 2 provides a historic overview of the SALTO network;
- ▶ Chapter 3 includes our final findings based on our analysis of available data by evaluation criteria;
- ▶ Chapter 4 includes our final recommendations based on our analysis of available data by evaluation criteria.

This report is accompanied by the following Annexes:

- ▶ Annex 1: Final stakeholder engagement plan;
- ▶ Annex 2: Final Analytical Grid;
- ▶ Annex 3: Final Literature Review;
- ▶ Annex 4: Final Summary of the research consultations.

1.1 Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to carry out an assessment of the impacts that the current Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities (SALTO) structures have on the implementation of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes and the effectiveness, relevance and added value of their work to stakeholders active in the fields of Youth and Education and Training.

As summarised in [Figure 1](#), the study focused only on the direct beneficiaries of SALTO activities, research and materials (e.g. European Commission staff, Erasmus+ National Agencies (NAs), National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs), youth trainers, youth workers, youth researchers, youth and exchange organisations, education sector institutions and other Erasmus+ project promoters¹⁵).

¹⁵ Erasmus+ project promoters include Higher Education Institutions, Secondary Education Institutions, VET institutions or other relevant stakeholders in the field of Education and Training.

Figure 1: Scope of the study



Source: Ecorys 2022

More specifically, the study assessed whether the SALTO network activities and materials have:

- ▶ Contributed to an increase in the number of participants & projects submitted under Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps programmes;
- ▶ Contributed to an increase on the overall quality of the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps programmes;
- ▶ Led to an improved support from Erasmus+ National Agencies (NAs) and National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs) staff to youth workers, youth organisations, education sector institutions and other Erasmus+ project promoters in EU Member States and third countries associated to the programme and in third countries not associated to the programme;
- ▶ Had an impact on the overall quality, relevance and inclusiveness of projects submitted under the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps programmes;
- ▶ Led to an increased recognition of youth participation, youth exchanges, non-formal and informal learning and of youth work in the EU;
- ▶ Led to an increased cooperation and partnerships between NAs on the fields of youth, education and training;
- ▶ Led to the professional development and essential training of NA staff;
- ▶ Led to an increased in evidence-based policymaking, knowledge-building and innovation on the fields of youth, education and training.

The assessment of the SALTO network covered the impact of their activities on the previous generation of the Erasmus+ (2014-2020) and European Solidarity Corps (2018-2020) and, when available data allowed it, also covered their activities under the new generation of these programmes up to December 2021.

The study took place from 07 December 2021 until 31 July 2022, lasting 8 months, as specified in the RfS.

1.2 Methodological overview

This section presents an overview of the finalised step-by-step methodology to gathering and analysing the evidence required to meet the objectives of this study. It details the specific activities that were carried out to answer the research questions (assessing SALTO's relevance, effectiveness, and EU added value, as well as lessons learnt).

1.2.1 Task 0: Preparatory phase

The Research Team held an online Kick-off Meeting with the Steering Group on 9 December 2021.¹⁶ The meeting was attended by representatives from DG EAC Units B3, C3 and B4 as well as the team responsible for the implementation of the assessment.

The Kick-off Meeting was followed up by a group Scoping Interview, conducted on February 2nd 2022 with DG EAC representatives with extensive experience of working with the involved SALTOS. The aim of the scoping interview was to gain a thorough understanding of the issues to be covered in the study. The interviewed representatives were:

- ▶ Jadranka Vukovic Johnsson (DG EAC Unit B3)
- ▶ Lenka Zdrahalova (DG EAC Unit B3)
- ▶ Mathieu Orphanides (DG EAC Unit B3)

On the basis of the discussions held with the Steering Group and the outcomes of the Scoping Interview, the methodological approach and the Analytical Framework for this assignment were finalised by the Research Team and approved by the Commission together with the Inception Report on 24 February 2022.

1.2.2 Task 1: Review existing information related to the evolution of the SALTOS since their setting-up

Task 1 focused on defining the baseline of this assessment, based on available data prior to 2018 and the previous SALTO assessment carried out by the European Commission for the years 2012-2015 (Task 1.1), as well as on collecting data related to the structure and activities of SALTOS since 2018 (following the restructuring that defined their current asset) up to December 2021 (Task 1.2). For this task, the Research Team extracted qualitative and quantitative data on the SALTOS from documents provided by the Commission and the SALTOS, as well as from other documents publicly available on the SALTO website and the MySALTO platform. The research methodology for the literature followed these steps:

- ▶ Initial sources were screened, based on data supplied by the Commission, including National Agency Annual Work Programmes and Yearly Reports, Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Annual Work Programmes and Annual Reports, the mandates of the SALTOS and other relevant strategic documents¹⁷. The review also included some relevant SALTO publications (e.g Erasmus+ Inclusion and Diversity Strategy in the youth field), and some EU level publications (e.g 2020 RAY monitoring survey). The baseline data was further defined through desk research and relevant information from the internal SALTO assessment covering the years 2012-2015 carried out by the Commission.
- ▶ Additional sources were gathered for each SALTO: these primarily included reports, evaluations, tools and strategies available through the SALTO websites and other online resources.
- ▶ Gaps were identified and data information requests were sent to all SALTOS to provide additional information.

All the extracted data was saved in an excel database to facilitate the analysis of the evidence, the identification of progress, as well as the evaluation of achievements and changes over time, which can be consulted in Annex 2.

1.2.3 Task 2: Collect and review existing information related to the current activities of the SALTOS

Under this task, the Research Team conducted an in-depth review of the data collected under Task 1, with the aim to further understand SALTOS' policy context and activities, identify findings and draw conclusions that can be tested and triangulated with data collected through other research tasks under Task 3. This task was limited by the following factors:

- ▶ SALTOS do not seem to regularly collect and store data on the impact and outcomes of their activities and outputs. Even when such data is collected, methodologies tend to differ across SALTOS, leading to a lack of coherent approach

¹⁶ The meeting was carried out using Microsoft Teams.

¹⁷ These included the Erasmus+ Legal Base and Programme Guide (2014-2020) and the European Solidarity Corps Regulation and Programme Guide (2018-2020)

to data collection. This in turn results in limited information available on engagement in activities, or impact of social media activities by year;

- There is a discrepancy between data available between different SALTOs, with some SALTOs having provided detailed additional data sources (e.g. internal training evaluation reports) and others not providing any additional data to fill gaps.

The results of this analysis can be consulted in Annex 3.

1.2.4 Task 3: Key Stakeholder Consultations

The Research Team conducted two consultation tasks: an online survey (Task 3.1) and a series of key stakeholder interviews (Task 3.2).

The online survey was launched on 11 March 2022 and was open for contributions for 9 weeks, until 6 May 2022. The survey targeted three key stakeholder categories (NAs working on Youth and Education & Training; SALTOs; and direct beneficiaries), with the overarching objectives to gather views on the effectiveness, relevance and added value of the SALTO network, and to collect quantitative and qualitative information on SALTO's progress and achievements to date. The survey was administered in English using EU survey and received 81 responses in total. A full analysis and breakdown of responses as well as the geographical origin of the beneficiaries can be consulted in Annex 4.

The Research Team conducted 22 semi-structured interviews¹⁸ with relevant stakeholders having experience with the SALTO network and collected five written contributions¹⁹. Table 1 provides an overview of the breakdown of the interviews per stakeholder type. For the NAs, a selection of four Member States were included in the interview programme. This was based on suggestions received from the Steering Group as well as taking into account the following elements: prioritising NAs based in Member States not hosting a SALTO Resource Centre; population size; geographical balance; NA resource allocation for Youth and Education & Training activities. NAs not based in the selected four Member States were invited to contribute to study by participating in the online survey. Furthermore, it should be noted that, in the case of DG EAC and individual SALTOs, small groups interviews were conducted, thus the overall number of stakeholders contacted is larger than the abovementioned figures. All 22 interviews took place online. The final analysis of the key stakeholder interviews can also be consulted in Annex 4

Table 1: Final stakeholder interviews

Stakeholder type	Organisation	Type of contribution
European Commission	DG EAC - Unit B3	1 group interview
		2 individual interviews
Erasmus+ National Agencies	NA Spain	1 individual interview
		3 written contribution
	NA Czechia	1 group interview
		1 written contribution
	NA Denmark	1 individual interview
National Erasmus+ Offices		1 written contribution
	NA Cyprus	1 individual interview
	NEO Morocco	1 individual interview
	NEO Georgia	1 individual interview
SALTO Resource Centres	NEO Bosnia	1 individual interview
	SALTO Inclusion and Diversity	1 group interview
	SALTO Training and Cooperation	1 group interview
	SALTO Participation and Information	1 group interview
	SALTO South East Europe	1 group interview
	SALTO Eastern Europe and Caucasus	1 group interview
	SALTO EuroMed	1 group interview
	European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre	1 group interview
	SALTO Education and Training	1 group interview
EU level stakeholders	European Youth Forum	1 individual interview
	European Youth Forum Pool of Trainers	1 individual interview

¹⁸ Semi-structured interview is an interview method in which the interviewer has a agreed on a set of questions to guide and steer the conversation, but also allows for interviewees to speak more freely and explore specific topics or areas of interest for the study.

¹⁹ Due to the limited contact that National Agencies working in Education & Training have with the SALTO network (aside from SALTO E&T TCA), the TCA officers were requested to send their inputs through a written contribution instead of being invited to a full interview.

	RAY Network	1 group interview
	Life Long Learning Platform	1 individual interview

Source: Ecorys 2022

1.2.5 Task 4: Analyse the information based on the outputs of task 1, task 2 and task 3

The analysis of the data (Task 4) was separated into two sub-tasks: data analysis (Task 4.1) and Sdnthesis and triangulation (Task 4.2). The aim of Task 4 was to:

- ▶ Analyse the data and information obtained, using appropriate methodological tools;
- ▶ Measure results by using a multi-criteria analysis, including a cost-benefit assessment;
- ▶ Analyse the answers for the research questions.

Our step-by-step method for the analysis and triangulation of data included:

- ▶ Triangulation of evidence gathered from different stakeholders (consistency of views and opinions expressed by different stakeholder groups);
- ▶ Triangulation of information collected by different researchers (joined-up through regular team briefings/de-briefings);
- ▶ Methodological triangulation of evidence gathered through different methods (desk research, interviews, surveys, etc.);
- ▶ Theory/perspective triangulation (i.e., using multiple perspectives or theories to interpret data).

The results of our data analysis and triangulation can be consulted in Chapter 3 of this report.



2.0 Background and context

This section presents a short overview of the history of the SALTO Resource Centres in order to provide an understanding of the context and rationale for the SALTO's current scope and activities and set the scene for the analysis of the key findings in Chapter 3.

2.1 History of the SALTOs

The SALTO Resource Centres were established in 2000, to support the implementation of the European youth programmes (Erasmus +, and subsequently the European Solidarity Corps) with a particular focus on quality, capacity building, thematic and regional development, and knowledge. Each SALTO Resource Centre is hosted by a National Agency, and aims to support key stakeholders (e.g. NAs, direct beneficiaries of the programmes) to increase their knowledge of/participation in EU programmes and develop their expertise on key topics (e.g. participation; inclusion; youth work; education etc.). Moreover, they support the European Commission to implement the Erasmus + and European Solidarity Corps programmes, and can have either a thematic or regional focus.

As outlined in Table 2 below, the original SALTO network comprised of five thematic Resource and three regional Resource Centres.

Table 2 Overview of the original SALTO network (until 2018)

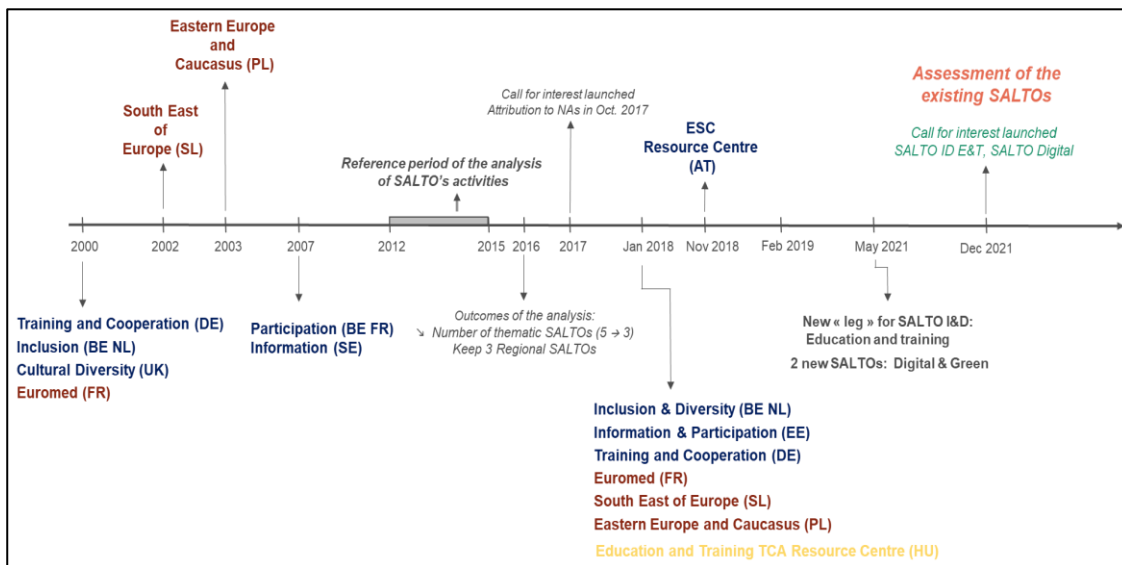
Thematic SALTOs	Host National Agency
Training and Cooperation	Germany
Inclusion	Belgium (Dutch speaking)
Cultural Diversity	UK
Participation	Belgium (French speaking)
Information	Sweden
Regional SALTOs	Host National Agency
EuroMed	France
Eastern Europe and Caucasus	Poland
South East Europe	Slovenia

Source: European Commission, internal assessment of the SALTOs between 2012-2015

However, over the years, the SALTO network has evolved to adapt to new priorities at EU level and changes within the EU programmes. More specifically, as a follow up to an assessment of the SALTOs carried out between 2012 and 2015 by the European Commission, the SALTOs were restructured to better respond to new realities and enhance their impact in implementing Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps, and EU youth policy more broadly. The restructuring led to a decrease of the number of thematic SALTOs from five to three (Inclusion & Diversity, Information & Participation, Training and Cooperation) but did not affect the regional SALTOs. These three new thematic SALTOs are the result of some thematic merges between Resource Centres. More specifically, the SALTO Participation & Information (SALTO P&I) is a thematic merge of the previous Resource Centre for SALTO Participation and SALTO Information; while the current SALTO Inclusion & Diversity (SALTO I&D) is a thematic merge of SALTO Cultural Diversity and SALTO Inclusion. The new SALTOs started their activities in 2018.

Another important step in the evolution of the SALTO network was the launch of the European Solidarity Corps programme in 2018. The programme aims to enhance the engagement of young people and organisations in accessible and high-quality solidarity activities, in order to strengthen cohesion, solidarity, democracy, European identity and active citizenship. In order to support the implementation of this programme, a new European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre (ESC RC) was established in 2018, and started becoming operational along with the new thematic SALTOs. Figure 2 provides an overview of the development of the SALTO network from 2000 to the present day.

Figure 2 Historic evolution of the SALTO network from 2000



Source: European Commission, 09 December 2021

The SALTO network currently consists of seven SALTO focusing on youth²⁰ and supporting the Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps programmes. These can be further split between “thematic” SALTOs (i.e. Resource Centres focusing on a specific topic/priority) and “regional” SALTOs (i.e. Resource Centres supporting the implementation of the programmes in a specific region). Additionally, a SALTO supporting Training and Cooperation Activities (SALTO E&T TCA) and focusing on Education and Training under Erasmus+ is also part of the network. More specifically:

- ▶ SALTO Inclusion & Diversity (I&D): Located in Belgium, this Resource Centre develops strategic actions to ensure the inclusiveness of the Erasmus+ and Solidarity Corps Programme, with the aim of improving the outreach and involvement of young people with fewer opportunities.
- ▶ SALTO Participation & Information (P&I): Located in Estonia, this Resource Centre develop strategic action to encourage youth participation in democratic life by acting as a source of inspiration and providing trustworthy, up-to-date information.
- ▶ SALTO Training & Cooperation (T&C): Located in Germany, this Resource Centre aims to develop strategic actions to ensure an overall quality approach to training activities in the youth field, and the recognition of non-formal and informal learning in youth work throughout Europe.
- ▶ European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre (ESC RC): Located in Austria, this Resource Centre supports National Agencies and organisations in the youth field and beyond with the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps programme. Their aim is to encourage solidarity as a core value in European societies and to promote the use of the European Solidarity Corps as a tool for understanding and living solidarity.
- ▶ Regional SALTOs: These are the SALTO Eastern Europe and Caucasus (EECA) (located in Poland), the SALTO EuroMed (located in France), and the SALTO South-East Europe (SEE) (located in Slovenia). Regional SALTOs support the participation of partner countries within Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps.
- ▶ SALTO Education and Training TCA (SALTO E&T TCA): Located in the Hungarian Erasmus+ National Agency, this Resource Centre SALTO supports National Agencies to improve their training and cooperation activities (TCAs) in the field of education.²¹

Since 2018, the SALTOs have been tailoring their activities to address needs of NAs, the European Commission, and partners, to create coherence between programme implementation and youth and education and training policies.

Furthermore, a renewed commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion and to supporting the green and digital transitions as key EU priorities of EU youth programmes for the new programming period (2021-2027), means that the SALTO network

²⁰ <https://www.salto-youth.net/about/>

²¹ <https://salto-et.net/>

once again evolved to meet these new horizontal priorities. Three new SALTOs are set up in 2022 to respond to these new horizontal priority areas:

- ▶ SALTO Inclusion and Diversity – Education and Training: this new Resource Centre will support the inclusion and diversity dimension in the Education and Training under Erasmus+.
- ▶ SALTO Digital: This new Resource Centre will support the digital dimension in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, in line with the Digital Education Action Plan.
- ▶ SALTO Green: This new Resource Centre will support the implementation of the green strategy of the future programmes.

A photograph of two women wearing hijabs. The woman in the foreground is wearing a dark blue hijab and a matching floral-patterned garment. She is holding a blue pen and looking down at a tablet. The woman in the background is wearing a light pink hijab and is also looking at the tablet. The background is blurred, showing some greenery and a building.

03

Final findings and
lessons learned

3.0 Final findings and lessons learned

This section presents the overview of the final findings and lessons learned from the analysis of the data collected under this assignment. The findings are organised around the three assessment criteria set for this assignment, namely Relevance, Effectiveness, and EU added value.

3.1 Effectiveness

Section 3.1.1 analyses the extent to which SALTO Resources Centres have been successful in contributing to improving the quality and impact of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps project implementation, and in acting as a service to the network of NAs and NEOs as evidence-based knowledge hubs. The section also assesses whether the Resource Centres, as a whole, have been successful in meeting the expectations of stakeholders and potential newcomers of receiving adequate training. Furthermore, Section 3.1.2 outlines key challenges and areas for improvement to further increase the effectiveness of the SALTOs. Lastly, Section 3.1.3 explores the successfulness (or not) of each individual SALTO in achieving its specific objectives.

3.1.1 Effectiveness of the SALTO as a network

Table 3 Effectiveness: summary of key findings (SALTO network)

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS: SALTO network
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The SALTOs have improved the quality and effectiveness of the projects under both Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, with differences in the network's contribution to the programmes mostly attributable to Erasmus+ longer history of implementation. The number, variety, and high quality of the activities and outputs produced by the SALTOs are crucial to improving the quality and the impact of the programmes. ▶ SALTOs are effective in acting as evidence-based knowledge hubs, with their activities and outputs generally perceived as being of high quality, adequate and innovative in terms of approach, structure and methods of delivery, as well as clear and accessible. Stakeholders make use of all types of resources developed by the SALTOs. However, these large number of resources can sometimes be difficult to process and navigate. ▶ SALTOs are valued for their knowledge and strong expertise. Not only SALTO staff members are experts themselves, but they also work extensively with external experts with specific knowledge of relevant areas of work, which positively contributes to making their work more impactful and effective. ▶ SALTO resources are generally perceived to be exhaustive and meet expectations, providing both newcomers and more experienced stakeholders with helpful resources. ▶ Strong cooperation between SALTOs is key to making the work of the network and of each SALTO more effective, as it allows Resource Centres to share knowledge, coordinate on tasks where relevant, and increase their expertise on cross-cutting areas of work.

Source: Ecorys's analysis, 2022

Improving the quality and impact of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps project implementation

The study shows that the SALTO network as a whole has been successful in contributing to improving the quality and impact of both the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps programmes, by developing high-quality materials and resources, as well as by providing opportunities for cooperation and networking among relevant stakeholders.

This view was shared by interviewed representatives from NAs, who highlighted that their work on both Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps greatly benefits from the wealth of resources produced by the SALTOs.²² The positive contribution of the SALTO network to the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes is further confirmed by the results of the

²² Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 3.

online survey: for both programmes, survey respondents indicated that the quality of the projects was the main element that benefits from the work of the SALTOS.²³ Examples of SALTO activities that effectively contribute to improving the quality and impact of the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, as highlighted during the interviews and the survey, include:

- ▶ Contributing to raising awareness among key stakeholders (e.g., direct beneficiaries, NAs, NEOs) of the programmes, as well as making their priorities more understandable and practical for beneficiaries;
- ▶ Providing resources, tools, and trainings that have a positive impact on the quality of projects and their implementation, with training courses seen as particularly helpful in establishing networks of NAs and beneficiaries;
- ▶ Acting as contact points to provide helpful information, responding to enquiries from stakeholders, and offering general support; as well as coordinating NAs and ensuring their cooperation in the implementation of the programmes.

While the literature review showed an overall lack of a systematic and coherent approach to data collection across SALTOS (e.g. not all Resource Centres systematically monitor the number of users reached via their website or social media; data on outputs and activities is not gathered according to a standardised methodology across SALTOS), existing anecdotal evidence points towards similar findings with regards to the network's successful contribution to the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps programmes.

As outlined in the literature review, several SALTOS have carried out assessments of activities and projects which can be considered a proxy to evaluate the effectiveness of the SALTOS in fostering improved project implementation under the two programmes. Some examples include the following:

- ▶ The evaluation report for a Mobility Taster event organised by SALTO I&D in Latvia in 2019 shows that there was a significant increase in knowledge of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes and confidence in further development of ideas among participants.²⁴
- ▶ Evidence from the literature review shows that the work carried out by SALTO T&C in its role as the manager of Youthpass activities positively contributes to the implementation of Erasmus+ projects: the 2020 RAY monitoring survey²⁵ of Erasmus+ youth projects, found that Youthpass was widely used in Erasmus+ projects, with 87% of project leaders stating that Youthpass was integrated into the project and the methodology²⁶.
- ▶ A survey of NAs responsible for Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps²⁷ commissioned by SALTO P&I²⁸ singled out the regular Communication and Information Officers Staff Training (CIOST) and Think Tank events as key activities effectively supporting the implementation of the programmes.

However, according to the interviews and the survey, this positive impact is more visible across the Erasmus+ programme.²⁹ Amongst all categories of interviewed stakeholders, Erasmus+ was indicated as the programme where the work of the SALTOS has been the most effective. The survey confirmed this trend, as responses indicated that only 57% of NA respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the SALTO network has improved the quality of European Solidarity Corps projects against 83% of them either strongly agreed or agreed that the SALTOS improved the quality of Erasmus+ projects.³⁰ Evidence from the consultations, however, showed that these differences between the two programmes are likely linked to external factors, which do not depend on the quality of the work carried out by the SALTOS.³¹ These external factors include different stages of programme implementation, with Erasmus+ having a much longer history compared to the European Solidarity Corps; as well as the inherently different nature of the two programmes, with Erasmus+ being more diverse in terms of actions covered compared to the strong focus on volunteering and solidarity in the European Solidarity Corps. Additionally, one SALTO interviewee mentioned that while their resources for Erasmus+ are larger, the differences between programmes is not particularly evident, as their work focuses on youth work more broadly and activities tend to include both programmes equally.³² This view was shared by other SALTOS representatives who participated in the survey, with one respondent stressing that their work relates to the youth field in general, rather than being focused on an equal split between the programmes; and another calling for increased cooperation between the SALTOS, NAs and the European Commission to establish a concerted monitoring system to better evaluate potential differences in the impact of the network.³³

²³ Ibid, p. 20

²⁴ SALTO I&D, Mobility Taster Latvia 2019 Evaluation

²⁵ Böhler, J., et al. (2020). Research Report. RAY-MON. Effect and outcomes of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action programme. Transnational Analysis.

²⁶ Böhler, J., et al. (2020). Research Report. RAY-MON. Effect and outcomes of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action programme. Transnational Analysis, p.47

²⁷ N=32

²⁸ SALTO P&I (2019), 2019 survey of National Agencies for E+ and ESC: Informing the work of SALTO PI

²⁹ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 3.

³⁰ Ibid, p. 20.

³¹ Ibid, p. 3.

³² Ibid, p. 4.

³³ Ibid, p. 20.

Effectiveness of SALTOs as knowledge hubs and meeting stakeholders' expectations

The study reveals that the SALTOs are effective in acting as evidence-based knowledge hubs, with their activities and outputs generally perceived as being of high quality, comprehensive and useful.

Survey respondents across all stakeholder types held positive views on SALTOs' activities and outputs. More specifically, NAs, direct beneficiaries, and SALTOs either strongly agreed or agreed that their content is of high-quality (89%; 80%; 100%, respectively) and that they are adequate in terms of approach, structure and methods of delivery (91%; 80%; 94%). Open questions in the survey further corroborated this view, with direct beneficiaries mentioning how the SALTOs have become somewhat of a quality 'trademark'.³⁴

The interview programme further confirmed these findings, with interviewees across stakeholder groups highlighting that the SALTOs are valued for their knowledge, and that the resources produced are based on strong expertise. In particular, NAs and EU-level stakeholders stated that not only SALTO staff members are experts themselves, as they have worked on the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps programmes for an extensive period of time, but also that SALTOs work extensively with external experts, including by setting up pools of experts with specific knowledge of relevant areas of work.³⁵ Moreover, interviewees mentioned that not only the SALTOs produce high quality resources, but they also adopt innovative approaches in their work. For example, the "adventure centered experiences", a training method used by the SALTO EECA to run contact-making seminars with outdoor activities, where groups go hiking together;³⁶ or promoting the use of online spatial proximity communication platforms as tools for youth work,³⁷ providing a stimulating meeting space for online interaction, mimicking what would happen in offline trainings, and allowing for informal moments and increasing interpersonal connections amongst participants, were mentioned as effective methods by direct beneficiaries. This is further supported by the evidence gathered through the literature review, which showed how several SALTOs produce outputs and materials in a wide variety of formats. Examples include the work of SALTO I&D on the Quality Mobility app³⁸ and the video material made available on their Youtube channel³⁹.

The interviews and survey also revealed that the resources produced by the SALTO are generally perceived to be exhaustive and meet stakeholders' expectations. Survey responses show that 83% of NAs and direct beneficiaries either agreed or strongly agreed that SALTO materials and outputs provide clear and accessible information. Moreover, 71% of NAs and 60% of direct beneficiaries agreed or strongly agreed that SALTO activities and outputs cover all relevant topics, providing thorough guidance and information to their target audience.⁴⁰ These findings were confirmed by interviewees: NA representatives underlined how the SALTOs create, share and promote resources that are helpful to them to clarify questions and doubts around the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, as NAs *"need guidance, clarifications, as there might be some grey areas that can be interpreted in different ways"*,⁴¹ and that SALTO newsletters are extremely useful to keep up to date with the latest policy developments in the Youth and Education and Training fields. Moreover, EU level stakeholders underlined that toolkits and publications by the SALTOs offer practical support and guidance on how to improve the quality of their activities, based on best practices, with one interviewee mentioning that *"Just a few days ago, when facilitating a meeting of the pool of trainers for the European Solidarity Corps, I used a SALTO publication for event management and moderation"*.⁴² Furthermore, several interviewees across stakeholder groups indicated that the work of the SALTOs has greatly impacted newcomers:⁴³ as outlined by an EU level stakeholder, the SALTOs *"help newcomers understand the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes: what to do, how to get involved, and how to fill in project applications"*,⁴⁴ and by providing information, including through online induction sessions and training courses⁴⁵, and other material available on their websites, partner findings tools (e.g. Otlas⁴⁶) and activities.

In terms of the most used SALTO resources, according to survey responses, tools, publication and materials are the type of SALTO outputs that both NA respondents (51%) and beneficiaries (53%) tend to make use of more frequently, followed by

³⁴ Ibid, p. 22.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 5.

³⁶ <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/eeca/activitieseeeca/adventureeducation/>

³⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/HOPplatform/videos/1204042857091038/>

³⁸ Quality mobility app (2020), available here: <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/qapp/>

³⁹ Available through the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCs_Dm7lo3_hgPnUvoT4DWw

⁴⁰ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 22.

⁴¹ Interview conducted with NA representative, 2022

⁴² Interview conducted with EU level stakeholder, 2022

⁴³ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 5.

⁴⁴ Interview conducted with EU level stakeholder, 2022

⁴⁵ For example, see <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/european-training-calendar/training/introduction-training-for-newcomers-to-youth-exchanges-bitrimulti.9849/>

⁴⁶ <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/otlas-partner-finding/>

seminars, conferences and events organised by SALTOS (with 51% of NA respondents and 23% of beneficiaries attending often, 31% of NAs and 47% of beneficiaries sometimes), and training courses (37% of NAs and 20% of beneficiaries attend these frequently, 40% of both sometimes).⁴⁷ While training courses are used less frequently compared to other resources/outputs, responses to open questions to the survey show that lower attendance is likely linked to time constraints on the side of the participants, rather than to the usefulness of the training courses itself. This is further confirmed by the fact that more than 80% of NAs and direct beneficiaries participating in the survey strongly agreed or agreed that all outputs and activities are useful for their work, with training courses having the highest percentage of strong agreement, above 60%, for both sets of respondents.⁴⁸

The interviews further supported these findings. Interviewed SALTO representatives underlined that efforts are made to ensure that all resources produced are mutually reinforcing, and can provide added value.⁴⁹ For example, the 'Cherry on the Cake' handbook by SALTO SEE explores all phases of youth exchanges and provides insights on what young people can learn in each phase, and how youth workers and youth leaders can facilitate the learning process,⁵⁰ and is the result of feedback gathered through a training course delivered over the course of a number of years. This approach is considered effective, as it is based on an activity of proven quality. Furthermore, interviewed NAs and EU level stakeholders highlighted the broad range of activities and outputs produced by the SALTOS as particularly effective, as the variety of the offer caters for different needs, interests, and levels of commitment (e.g., online vs in person training; short courses as opposed to long-term training opportunities).⁵¹

The evidence gathered through the literature review supports the above findings with regards to the effectiveness of the SALTOS as knowledge hubs, and their success in meeting stakeholders' expectations. The analysis was limited by the lack of a consistent reporting framework for SALTOS, which means that the activities reported are not directly comparable between SALTOS. However, a number of main trends were identified:

- Available data on outputs by the SALTOS shows a wide variation on the number of activities reported both between different Resource Centres and within the same SALTO for different years.⁵²
- ▷ Trainings: While SALTO SEE and SALTO EECA reported the highest number of training activities (reaching their peak in 2018 and 2019 respectively), the other SALTOS report between 1 and 10 training activities per year. For the year 2020, which was significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, some SALTOS (I&D, EECA) reported a reduction in training activities compared to previous years, while others (SEE, E&T TCA) reported an increase. For the ESC RC, there is a higher level of training activity in 2018, possibly due to the role played by this Resource Centre in the initial roll out of the programme.
- ▷ Seminars and events: numbers tend to vary more between years when compared to training activities. SALTO P&I reports the highest average number of activities, followed by the regional SALTOS. In 2020, the SALTO E&T also increased the number of seminars and events reported, as did SALTO I&D.
- ▷ Tools and participation activities: research data identified the SALTO I&D as the most active in reporting tools and publication activities.⁵³ Moreover, there seem to be variations in reporting of these activities between SALTOS, with the SALTO I&D and the ESC RC showing the highest level of consistent reporting for this activity type. Aside from these two SALTOS, the average annual figure reported in the Erasmus+ National Agency Annual Reports tends to be below 5 a year, including for all 3 regional SALTOS. Differences in numbers, however, might be connected to different approaches to reporting: for example, while SALTO I&D, as stated above, shows the highest number of publications between 2018-2021, this can be linked to the fact that newsletters are included under this category by this Resource Centres, while other SALTOS do not count these as publications.
- For the SALTOS for which data is available (SALTO I&D, SALTO P&I, SALTO T&C, SALTO SEE, and SALTO E&T TCA), evidence shows increased participation rates between 2018 and 2021, highlighting an overarching positive trend in terms of the effectiveness of the network.⁵⁴

⁴⁷ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 21.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 4.

⁵⁰ <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/see/resources/cherry-on-the-cake/>

⁵¹ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 4.

⁵² Annex 3 - Final Literature Review, p. 8.

⁵³ Ibid, p. 8. However, this is probably due to a very high number of 'newsletters' (11) and 'newsflashes' (9) reported.

⁵⁴ Ibid, SALTO fiches.

- Evidence from the literature review confirmed the effectiveness of training courses, with evaluations generally showing a high level of satisfaction from participants, and overall positive outcomes. For example, the Youth Workers Competence Model Massive Open Online Courses Massive Open Online Course (YOCOMO MOOC)⁵⁵ – an European Training Strategy online training course on competence-based development organised by the SALTO T&C and launched in 2020 in response to Covid-19 lockdowns to enable youth workers to learn meaningfully, resulted in 100 participants requesting a Youthpass certificate for completion.⁵⁶ Moreover, the final evaluation report Embracing Diversity (2019) training⁵⁷ by the SALTO I&D found that a majority of participants (84,6%) had developed a concrete idea to implement as a follow up to the course.

Effectiveness of SALTOs as result of a strong intra-SALTO cooperation

Findings across consultation activities (interviews and online survey) found that strong cooperation between SALTOs is a key element that positively contributes to making the work of the network and of each SALTO more impactful. Interviewed NAs and SALTOs staff underlined that inter-SALTO cooperation allows the Resource Centres to share knowledge and expertise, coordinate on tasks where relevant, and increase their expertise on cross-cutting areas of work. SALTO interviewees mentioned that such cooperation tends to happen both through formal and informal structures:⁵⁸ formal in-person meetings are organised once a year and are complemented by more informal virtual meetings to ensure ongoing cooperation. Working groups have also been established to discuss specific topics. Cooperation between SALTOs, moreover, also benefits from the use of online platforms (e.g. Basecamp or the mySALTO platform).

The survey further confirmed the importance of cooperation in the work of the SALTO network, as SALTO responses show that out of the 16 SALTO staff members who responded to the survey, 15 had cooperated with other SALTO Resource Centres.⁵⁹ The majority of SALTOs had engaged with the ESC RC (80%), SALTO I&D (73%), SALTO T&C (73%) and SALTO P&I (60%).⁶⁰ All respondents had engaged with the regional SALTOs, particularly with SALTO EECA (87%), closely followed by SALTO EuroMed (67%) and SALTO SEE (60%). While feedback on the impact of inter-SALTO cooperation is overall positive for all Resource Centres (with the exception of the SALTO E&T, as none of the SALTO respondents had engaged with this Resource Centre), the ESC RC received the most positive feedback, as 92% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that cooperation with this SALTO had both positively impacted their work and helped their SALTO to achieve its objectives.⁶¹ Moreover, cooperation with SALTO EECA received the most positive feedback among the regional SALTOs.⁶² Examples of effective cooperation mentioned by SALTO survey respondents included the Inclusion & Diversity Steering Group⁶³ coordinated by SALTO I&D, the HOP platform⁶⁴ and Mobility Taster activities by the ESC RC; and the “Spotlight on SALTO” webinar series⁶⁵ organised by regional SALTOs.

Furthermore, additional examples of effective cooperation between SALTOs were gathered through the literature review. These include SALTO EECA’s efforts to prioritise inclusion and active citizenship in line with local and national needs across all EECA countries,⁶⁶ through the establishment of a strong, long-term cooperation with the SALTO I&D. This cooperation started in 2014 and has been implemented on an ongoing basis since⁶⁷. In 2020, moreover, the SALTO EECA, SALTO EuroMed and SALTO SEE joined efforts to develop stronger cooperation with non-partner countries with the aim to support more and better-quality projects within the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps programmes⁶⁸. Other examples provided include the Mobility Taster⁶⁹ and the Tosca modular training for European Solidarity Corps project coordinators⁷⁰. Furthermore, according to the literature review, the ESC RC strongly relies on its cooperation with the other Resource Centres to build synergies and meaningfully contribute to EU youth policy. Examples of this cooperation include promoting and ensuring inclusion and diversity in the European Solidarity Corps together with SALTO I&D, cooperation on different

⁵⁵ <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/european-training-calendar/training/yocomo-systemic-an-ets-mooc-on-a-systemic-approach-to-competence-development-in-youth-work.9073/>

⁵⁶ SALTO T&C (2020), YOCOMO – and ETS online course on competence-based development for youth workers: Final Report

⁵⁷ Final evaluation report - Embracing Diversity training (2019)

⁵⁸ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 5.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 32.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/inclusionstrategy/idsteeringgroup/>

⁶⁴ <https://hop.salto-youth.net/>

⁶⁵ <https://www.salto-youth.net/about/spotlight-on-salto/>

⁶⁶ SALTO EECA (2021)

⁶⁷ SALTO EECA (2018), ZOOM EAST 2018

⁶⁸ National Agency Annual Report 2020

⁶⁹ <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/inclusiontraining/mobilitytaster/>

⁷⁰ <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/solidarity/training-support-community/tosca/about/>

competence models with SALTO T&C, the development of a “customer journey”⁷¹ together with SALTO P&I, as well as ensuring accessibility of partner countries to the implementation of the programme together with regional SALTOs.

Finally, it is worth noting that, while none of the SALTO respondents from other Resource Centre indicated that they had collaborated with SALTO E&T TCA, respondents from this SALTO indicated having cooperated with other SALTOs (SALTO T&C in particular).⁷² Differences in responses with regards to the level of cooperation with SALTO E&T TCA could be attributed to both a limited level of cooperation with this Resource Centre (due to its specific mandate and focus), as well as the cooperation not being seen as a key workstream/priority by other SALTOs.

3.1.2 Challenges and areas for improvement

While the SALTOs are successful in positively contributing to the implementation of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, and in acting as knowledge hubs for their stakeholders, a number of challenges remain, which can hinder the effectiveness of the SALTOs.

A key challenge that emerged from the interviews is the lack of capacity of SALTOs to handle the growing range of topics and tasks under their responsibility. The open answers in the survey indicated that several SALTO respondents stated that it is quite difficult for them to cover all relevant topics, adding that the mandate of the SALTOs narrows their scope and leads to the exclusion of important topics for their target groups⁷³. The expansion of the SALTOs mandate to cover digital and green topics was often cited by interviewed stakeholders as an example of how the increasing number of topics often overstretch the teams and resources of the SALTOs. As SALTOs are aware that they cannot cover all areas and needs with the resources available, they make efforts to combine different priorities into one which can have a negative impact on their overall effectiveness, as ensuring quality outputs and activities is a resource-intensive activity, both in terms of financial and human resources. Several interviewees across all stakeholder groups (European Commission; EU level stakeholders; NAs; SALTOs; NEOs) also underlined that SALTOs often operate with a small team, which can lead to a high workload per team member. The literature review also highlighted that for most SALTOs the level of activities has either stayed stable over the study period or the number of activities has increased, while their budget remains quite static in terms of overall allocations, as do their HR resources⁷⁴.

In terms of areas for improvement, feedback from both the interviews and the survey highlighted a need to increase efforts to ensure SALTO resources and outputs are more easily accessible and focused.⁷⁵ Interviewed NEOs, as well as a few NAs and direct beneficiaries, mentioned that SALTO materials are at times too elaborate, unclear, and not easily accessible or dispersed⁷⁶. While these interviews highlighted that the extent to which information is clear might also depend on the user’s prior experience and knowledge of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, as well as the structure of the SALTO network; NAs and direct beneficiaries suggested ways to improve SALTOs’ offer. These include:

- ▶ Ensuring that the SALTO website is more accessible and user friendly, (e.g., making sure that resources are properly classified and organised so that information can be easily accessed);
- ▶ Ensuring that SALTO activities (e.g. training, seminars, events) and outputs (online publications) are as inclusive as possible, by taking into account the needs of specific groups of users (e.g. people with disabilities);
- ▶ Ensuring that the material is translated in different relevant languages.

The survey supported these findings, as SALTO respondents, while positive regarding the quality of the content of their activities and outputs, shared more mixed views in the case of the accessibility of information (only 50% agreed that information is accessible while the other 50% were either neutral or disagreed). Moreover, multiple SALTO respondents pointed to the lack of user friendliness of the current SALTO website and the dispersion of information as issues to be addressed.⁷⁷

⁷¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8F07acA1Rs>

⁷² Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 32.

⁷³ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 22.

⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 8.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 6.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 22.

Lastly, another element that is possibly hindering the overall effectiveness of the SALTOs is the capacity of their direct beneficiaries to attend the training and events organised by the network. As mentioned before, the lower number of attendance in trainings and events compared to other resources/outputs from SALTOs is mostly linked to the time constraints on the side of the participants as shown by the open answers from the survey.⁷⁸ Another example of this lack of capacity to engage with SALTO trainings came from interviewed TCA officers, who mentioned that, due to their high workload, it was difficult to keep up with the SALTO training offer. This could be an area of further reflection, for the SALTOs to be more effective, both in terms of timing (e.g. avoiding moments of high workload in the year) and their number of training opportunities offered per year.

3.1.3 Effectiveness of individual SALTOs

Table 4 Effectiveness: summary of key findings (individual SALTOs)

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS: Individual SALTOs	
►	SALTO I&D is overall effective in achieving its objective to promote inclusion and diversity in Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, albeit with space for improvement with regards to ensuring that young people with fewer opportunities participate in the programmes.
►	SALTO P&I is overall effective in reaching its objectives to increasing and improving the quality of participation in Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, and in implementing high quality information activities. However, fostering the participation of young people with fewer opportunities, and increasing efforts in the field of information are areas for improvement.
►	SALTO T&C is effective in improving the quality in the delivery of youth work in Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps projects, with the Youthpass and European Training Strategy being seen as key tools.
►	ESC RC plays a crucial role in the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps programme, by deepening the understanding of the concept of solidarity and making it more practical for NAs and beneficiaries.
►	SALTO Euromed has been effective in acting as a Contact Point for Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, and has been successfully in supporting young people in the region to take part in the programmes, raising visibility of Erasmus+ and European solidarity Corps opportunities, increasing the number of organisations holding a European Solidarity Corps Quality Label or Erasmus+ accreditation in the region and fostering new regional partnerships between actors.
►	SALTO EECA has been effective in increasing the number of organisations with the Quality Label or accreditation, and supporting young people in the region to partake in the programmes, and meaningfully contributing to the increased quality of youth work and youth policy development at national level.
►	SALTO SEE has been playing a crucial role in promoting the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes in the region, specifically by facilitating the accessibility of the programmes by providing direct support and organising relevant activities, as well as acting as a Contact Point.
►	SALTO E&T TCA is successful in meeting its objectives under Erasmus+ and in reaching out to relevant stakeholders, including through the organisation of Training and Cooperation Activities (TCAs), however its work is not as visible as that of other SALTOs.

Source: Ecorys own analysis, 2022

SALTO Inclusion & Diversity

Research activities showed that the work of SALTO I&D is overall effective in achieving its objective to promote inclusion and diversity in Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, albeit with space for improvement with regards to ensuring that young people with fewer opportunities participate in the programmes.

Responses to the survey showed that both NAs and direct beneficiaries are on average very positive about the outputs of this SALTO. 95% of NAs and 72% of direct beneficiaries either agreed or strongly agreed that SALTO I&D is effective in organising training courses to exchange and reflect on inclusion practice and diversity management. Furthermore, 96% of

⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 23.

NAs and 81% of direct beneficiaries agreed or strongly agreed that this SALTO provides resources for individuals and organisations supporting young people with fewer opportunities; and 52% of NAs in promoting research on young people with fewer opportunities for evidence-based policy and practice. 45% of beneficiaries agreed and 27% strongly agreed with this statement (thus, 73% in agreement), whereas 30% of NA respondents agreed and 22% strongly agree (52% in agreement).⁷⁹

These findings were further supported by the feedback gathered through the interviews and the literature review. Interviewees across stakeholder groups recognised the important work carried out by this SALTO and the positive impact it has had since its establishment⁸⁰ and singled out the Inclusion & Diversity Strategy⁸¹ as a key tool providing a roadmap for NAs to follow, as well as trainings such as the ID Talks⁸² and Inclusion Training for Trainers⁸³, as particularly effective to foster diversity. The literature review, moreover, revealed that the number of participants in activities organised by the SALTO has been steadily increasing since its establishment (from 441 in 2018 to 775 in 2021⁸⁴); and that several evaluation reports from training activities (e.g. Embracing Diversity training⁸⁵ and Mobility Taster' Evaluation⁸⁶) highlight a high level of satisfaction from participants not only in terms of methodology and structure, but also in terms of outcomes, with attendees mentioning the knowledge gained and ideas developed as positive results. Beyond training and events, the literature review showed that this SALTO provides a wide range of media and publications to support the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, from booklets⁸⁷, practical guides⁸⁸, podcasts⁸⁹, to apps⁹⁰ and video material⁹¹. Moreover, the SALTO I&D newsletter is reported to reach about 10.000 subscribers⁹² and their social media outreach has continued to grow between the years 2018 to 2021, indicating that there has been a broadly effective media outreach activity from this SALTO. Data from the SALTO's online presence (website and social media), furthermore, suggests that it has a strong level of outreach among its stakeholders and that the resources and tools available on its website are relevant and widely used (e.g. in 2021 the SALTO's website registered 3,898,988 page views and 143,618 downloads of tools and resources). The survey indicated that the majority of NAs and other SALTOs regularly worked with SALTO I&D (respectively 66% and 73%), while a smaller number of beneficiaries (37%) reported having engaged with it.

Despite the overall positive feedback, the research also identified areas for improvement. For instance, the survey showed less positive feedback in relation to SALTO I&D's ability to increase the number of young people, with fewer opportunities taking part in Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps. Around a third of NA respondents and beneficiaries were either neutral or unsure with regards to the effectiveness of the work of this SALTO in this specific area, and indicated that more outputs and activities tailored to the needs of the target group and increased cooperation with organisations working with young people with fewer opportunities are needed.⁹³ Furthermore, interviewees across stakeholder groups mentioned that SALTO I&D actions would be even more impactful if further inclusion dimensions were to be explored, including an increased focus on intersectionality.⁹⁴ The literature review confirmed these findings: it highlighted how SALTO I&D is making conscious efforts to increase its outreach to young people with fewer opportunities, particularly by training youth workers who work with disadvantaged youth (and therefore increasing the likelihood that they will include this target group in their projects), and by implementing a new monitoring system within the Strategic Partnership for Inclusion (SPI) to evaluate how many young people with fewer opportunities have been reached by youth projects. However, the impact of these activities remains hard to measure.

SALTO Participation & Information

⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 25.

⁸⁰ Ibid, p. 25.

⁸¹ <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/inclusionstrategy/>

⁸² <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/inclusiontraining/idthatalks/>

⁸³ <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/inclusiontraining/inclusion4t/>

⁸⁴ Annex 3 – Final Literature Review, p. 11

⁸⁵ Final evaluation report - Embracing Diversity training (2019)

⁸⁶ SALTO I&D, Mobility Taster Vienna, March 2020, Summary of Evaluation from Participants

⁸⁷ SALTO Inclusion & Diversity, 2021, Inclusion A to Z, <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/inclusionpublications/inclusionatoz/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CInclusion%20A%20to%20Z%E2%80%9D%20is,activity%20from%20beginning%20to%20end.>

⁸⁸ SALTO Inclusion & Diversity (2021), A practical guide to creating inclusion and diversity strategy for National Agencies, <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/inclusionpublications/shapinginclusion/>

⁸⁹ Shaping inclusion and diversity podcast (2021), available here: <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/inclusionpublications/shapinginclusion/>

⁹⁰ Quality mobility app (2020), available here: <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/qapp/>

⁹¹ Available through the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCs_Dm7Io3_hgPnUvoT4DWw

⁹² <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/aboutinclusion/>

⁹³ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 23

⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 6.

The study showed that the SALTO P&I is overall effective in reaching its objectives to increase and improve the quality of participation in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, and in implementing high quality information activities. However, fostering the participation of young people with fewer opportunities, and increasing efforts in the field of information represent areas for improvement.

The survey also showed positive feedback from both NAs and direct beneficiaries on the effectiveness of SALTO P&I in organising training courses to exchange and reflect on inclusion practices and diversity management (53% of NAs and 67% of direct beneficiaries strongly agreed or agreed); providing resources for individuals and organisations supporting young people with fewer opportunities (47% of NAs and 50% of direct beneficiaries strongly agreed or agreed), and promoting research on young people with fewer opportunities for evidence-based policy and practice (40% of NAs and 67% of direct beneficiaries agreed or strongly agreed).

The interviews and the literature confirmed these findings. Interviewees from NAs for example, highlighted that SALTO P&I offers useful training sessions, singling out training courses for participation officers as being the most valuable. The literature review not only found that the number of participants in SALTO P&I activities has seen an almost fourfold increase since its establishment (from 447 in 2018 to 1,852 in 2020⁹⁵), but also regular CIOSST training and Think Tank events were among the highest rated activities among NAs in terms of value provided,⁹⁶ and identified the 2020 Youth Participation Strategy⁹⁷ as a key tool to foster youth participation in democratic life as well as in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes⁹⁸. The Strategy promotes youth participation across all activities, providing stakeholders a strategic vision for how to involve young people in decision-making processes, as well as how to find the best approach to youth participation when doing so.

Moreover, survey respondents (NAs and direct beneficiaries) agreed or strongly agreed that SALTO P&I is effective in promoting the participation of all young people in society (94 and 67%), and in promoting youth civic and political participation at all levels (94% and 50%).⁹⁹ However, as with SALTO I&D, opinions diverged more on whether SALTO P&I is effective in increasing the number of young people with fewer opportunities in Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps,¹⁰⁰ with the majority of respondents stating that they do not agree nor disagree (20% of NAs and 50% of beneficiaries) or do not know (47% of NAs). This was identified as an area where the work of this SALTO could be strengthened by ensuring increased cooperation with young people and youth organisations.¹⁰¹

Lastly, the survey revealed that SALTO P&I is effective in providing support and guidance to implement high quality information activities (93% and 67%), and communication was mentioned as a key area of work by SALTO interviewees too.¹⁰² However, information gathered through the literature review shows a need for a stronger focus on the visibility and communication of SALTO P&I's work to better respond to NAs' expectations of SALTO P&I producing easy to understand information to be handed on to the public, and acting as a bridge between the Commission, young people and youth workers, coordinating information and communication across the NA network, and playing a role in knowledge transfer between NAs¹⁰³. Nevertheless, based on analysis of the data available, it is clear that SALTO P&I has been investing in these areas and to some extent started covering these dimensions in its most recent offer.

SALTO Training & Cooperation

This assessment indicates that the activities conducted by the SALTO T&C have improved quality in the delivery of youth work in Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps projects activities, with the Youthpass and European Training Strategy being seen as key tools.

Both the survey and interviews showed that SALTO T&C is particularly effective in supporting NAs and direct beneficiaries. According to survey responses, large shares of NA respondents and direct beneficiaries who have engaged with this Resource Centre (percentages varying between 72-100% and 81-86% respectively, and across areas of enquiry) either agreed or

⁹⁵ Annex 3 – Final Literature Review, p. 17

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 17

⁹⁷ SALTO P&I (2020), Youth Participation Strategy: A strategy for enhancing youth participation in democratic life through the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, <https://participationpool.eu/resource-category/youth-participation/youth-participation-strategy/>

⁹⁸ SALTO P&I (2020), Youth Participation Strategy, p.27

⁹⁹ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 26

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 26

¹⁰¹ Ibid, p. 27

¹⁰² Ibid, p. 27

¹⁰³ SALTO P&I (2018), Erasmus+ National Agencies for Youth needs and priorities in the fields of Youth Participation and Information: Results of the Survey

strongly agreed that SALTO T&C is successful in organising training courses, including training of trainers, providing resources on the recognition of non-formal and informal learning and of youth work, and setting up online and offline platforms to promote cooperation.¹⁰⁴ These positive results were confirmed by interviewed NAs who indicated SALTO T&C as being particularly helpful, particularly due to trainings in TCA/NET and their work with the MySALTO platform for NA cooperation¹⁰⁵. Moreover, among interviewed EU level stakeholders, the European Training Calendar¹⁰⁶ was mentioned as a tool that can help both newcomers to get acquainted with the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, and more experienced trainers not to lose sight of developments. Furthermore, according to SALTO T&C interviewees, the Knowledge Management and Staff Training (KMST) is deemed particularly effective and helpful by their beneficiaries.¹⁰⁷

Survey responses showed a high degree of satisfaction with the SALTO T&C's ability to meet its objectives, as between 100-95% of NA respondents and between 100-72% of direct beneficiaries either agreed or strongly agreed the SALTO is successful and hence effective in promoting the use of validation tools as well as the design and implementation of tools and systems for recognition of non-formal and informal learning and of youth work, fostering the recognition of non-formal and informal learning and of youth work.¹⁰⁸ Although more than half of beneficiaries agreed or strongly agreed (62%) that SALTO T&C is effective in supporting the employability of young people and youth workers, the opinions of NAs were more neutral, with more than one third of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing (39%) with this statement, and almost two thirds being neutral (33%) or unsure (28%).¹⁰⁹ This positive contributions to youth work are confirmed by the information gathered through the literature review, which shows that, according to statistical data¹¹⁰, in its role as the manager of Youth Pass activities, the SALTO T&C managed to consistently increase the number of certificates issued between 2018 and 2020. This period of consistent expansion was however severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Lastly, the 2020 RAY monitoring survey¹¹¹ of Erasmus+ youth projects found that the majority of Youthpass owners¹¹² found it to be useful not just at an individual level, but also to raise the quality and impact of projects through the participants' improved awareness of their newly acquired competences and ability to describe them¹¹³. The impact of SALTO T&C in promoting the Youthpass is further substantiated by the increase in the number of participants in Youthpass related activities, which has grown exponentially (from 43 in 2018 to 580 in 2021¹¹⁴).

European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre

The assessment shows the crucial contribution of the ESC RC in the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps programme, by deepening the understanding of the concept of solidarity.

This finding is supported by evidence gathered across research activities (survey, interviews, and literature review). The survey showed that most respondents strongly agreed or agreed (83% of NAs and 81% of direct beneficiaries) that this SALTO is successful in promoting solidarity in the EU, and almost the entirety of respondents strongly agreed or agreed (94% and 82%, respectively) that the ESC RC is successful in supporting the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps.¹¹⁵ Equally, interviewees from the European Commission as well as EU level stakeholders mentioned the efforts made by the ESC RC to clarify the meaning of solidarity and making it more practical for NAs and beneficiaries, as a key contribution to the successful implementation of the European Solidarity Corps, and resulting in an increased number of applications. The literature review, furthermore, found that the '4 Thoughts for Solidarity' study¹¹⁶ was identified by the ESC RC 2021-2027 Strategy¹¹⁷ as one of the activities that were implemented in the pilot phase that were found to be particularly effective and impactful.

While the total majority of NA representatives participating in the survey agreed or strongly agreed (89%) that the ESC RC is successful in building a community of European Solidarity Corps organisations and ensuring coordination, a significantly lower share of direct beneficiaries agreed or strongly agreed (55%, combined) with this statement. Similarly, while 89% of

¹⁰⁴ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 27

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 7

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/european-training-calendar/>

¹⁰⁷ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 7

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 28

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Youthpass (2020), Youthpass Statistical Overview 2020, <https://www.youthpass.eu/downloads/13-62-492/Youthpass%20overview%202020.pdf>

¹¹¹ Böhler, J., et al, (2020). Research Report. RAY-MON. Effect and outcomes of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action programme. Transnational Analysis.

¹¹² <https://www.youthpass.eu/en/about-youthpass/statistics/>

¹¹³ Böhler, J., et al, (2020). Research Report. RAY-MON. Effect and outcomes of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action programme. Transnational Analysis, p.47

¹¹⁴ Annex 3 - Final Literature review, p. 14

¹¹⁵ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 28

¹¹⁶ IZ - Verein zur Förderung von Vielfalt, Dialog und Bildung (2020): 4thoughts for solidarity.

<https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-4062/4TDS%20Study%2020200501.pdf>

¹¹⁷ IZ - Verein zur Förderung von Vielfalt, Dialog und Bildung (2021), 2021-2027 Strategy

NA respondents strongly agreed or agreed that this Resource Centre is successful in organising events and partnership building activities, the opinions of beneficiaries were more mixed, with nearly half neither agreed, disagreed nor unsure (45%), and only one respondent disagreeing (9%).¹¹⁸ When asked how the activities and outputs of this SALTO could be improved, one respondent suggested a stronger focus on building long-term quality partnerships across Europe to create more lasting impacts on communities. However, the literature review partially contradicts this finding, as according to the information gathered, NAs report that support from SALTO ESC is most valued in creating a 'common narrative on understanding of solidarity in the network' and supporting 'TCA/NET officers in optimising the use of NET activities', with less need for support in expanding the network of stakeholders.¹¹⁹

SALTO Euromed

Research activities (interviews, survey and literature review) showed that, while NAs recognise the positive contribution of the SALTO Euromed to the promotion of Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps in the region, more should be done to monitor the impact of this SALTO, particularly towards direct beneficiaries of its work.

The survey revealed that NAs consider SALTO EuroMed to be effective in their activities and outputs and in achieving their objectives.¹²⁰ All NA respondents strongly agreed that this SALTO has been successful in acting as a Contact Point for Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, and has met its objectives in terms of promoting interregional cooperation area in the fields of youth and education & training, supporting young people in the region to take part in the two programmes, and raising the visibility of Erasmus+ and European solidarity Corps opportunities. Moreover, all NAs agreed or strongly agreed that SALTO EuroMed has been successful in providing resources on youth-related topics and international cooperation and increasing the number of organisations holding a European Solidarity Corps Quality Label or Erasmus+ accreditation in the region and has fostered new regional partnerships between actors.¹²¹ Feedback from direct beneficiaries, on the other hand, was less positive with only 2 of the 30 direct beneficiaries who responded to the survey mentioned engaging with this particular SALTO. This less positive feedback regarding the impact of SALTO Euromed, might be indicative of a need to better understand the effectiveness of this Resource Centre.¹²² This is further highlighted in the literature review, which found that, for this particular SALTO, data on participation and impact is rather limited, with the main source of information being a 2021 Evaluation of the implementation of the European Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes in the Southern Mediterranean Area¹²³.

SALTO Eastern Europe & Caucasus

Research activities (interviews, survey, literature review) showed that SALTO EECA has been effective in promoting Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps in its region of competence, including by increasing the number of organisations with the Quality Label or accreditation, and supporting young people in the region to partake in the programmes, and meaningfully contributing to the increased quality of youth work and youth policy development at national level.

The survey showed that NA respondents consider the work of SALTO EECA to be effective, with 67% to 100% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the SALTO EECA has been successful in acting as a Contact Point for Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps. Furthermore, this SALTO has been successful in promoting interregional cooperation in the youth and Education & Training fields, raising visibility of the two programmes, and increasing the number of organisations with the Quality Label or accreditation, and supporting young people in the region to partake in the programmes.¹²⁴

The literature review supported this positive assessment with the period of 2018-2021 being an adaptive one; InfoCentres set up in partner countries in 2017 and a large shift to online learning in 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic¹²⁵. Moreover, there has been consistent increase in the number of European Solidarity Corps volunteers and organisations accredited.¹²⁶ While participation data is limited, there is satisfaction from participants from Eastern Partnership (EaP)

¹¹⁸ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 29

¹¹⁹ Annex 3 - Final Literature review, p. 27

¹²⁰ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 30

¹²¹ Ibid, p. 30

¹²² Ibid, p. 31

¹²³ Service Civique (2021), Evaluation of the implementation of the European Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes in the Southern Mediterranean Area, Final Report, 2021

¹²⁴ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 31

¹²⁵ NA Annual Report 2020

¹²⁶ Annex 3 - Final Literature Review, p. 22

countries, with the 2018 report on youth policy in EaP countries¹²⁷ finding that 96,8% are satisfied with the participation in Erasmus+ mobility projects and 93,1% expressed a willingness to take part in learning mobility in the future,¹²⁸ and that mobility activities had contributed to the professionalisation of youth work in the region¹²⁹. The desk research and consultations revealed that this progress, and high level of satisfaction and effectiveness, can be attributed to SALTO EECA and specifically to training activities carried out on a regular basis to 'share the knowledge, experience and good practice examples of youth workers from the region'¹³⁰. Moreover, in relation to the European Solidarity Corps, the increased number of accreditations of organisations across all EaP countries suggests that there was a degree of effectiveness that can be linked to SALTO EECA activities.

These assessments are confirmed by the 2021 Eastern Europe and the Caucasus Regional Consultations on Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps report¹³¹, which found that in most EECA countries Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps related actions are perceived as important contributors to the increased quality of youth work and youth policy development at national level. This report also finds that SALTO EECA's contribution to youth work and youth policy is positive across all EECA countries; and that the SALTO EECA website is the most recognised point of contacts, with partnership search tools (such as Otlas¹³²) seen as essential for youth workers and young people across all EECA countries.

SALTO South East Europe

Evidence from the research activities (literature review, survey, interview) showed that the SALTO SEE has been playing a crucial role in promoting the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes in the region, specifically by facilitating the accessibility of the programmes by providing direct support and organising relevant activities, as well as acting as a Contact Point.

Among the NAs and direct beneficiaries who indicated engagement with SALTO SEE, all or most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that activities and outputs by SALTO SEE have been successful in providing resources on topics related to youth and international cooperation (100% for both groups), and increasing the number of organisations holding the Quality Label and Erasmus+ accreditation (71% and 86%, respectively).¹³³ Moreover, NAs and direct beneficiaries agreed or strongly agreed that this SALTO has promoted interregional cooperation in the youth and Education & Training fields (86% and 100%, respectively), raised visibility of Erasmus+ and ESC opportunities in the region (86% for both groups), fostered new regional partnerships among actors (86% and 100%, respectively), and supported young people in the region to take part in the two programmes (71% and 100%).¹³⁴

Furthermore, the MOVIT report by SALTO SEE¹³⁵ provides significant insight into the Erasmus+ programme effectiveness. Overall, the study finds that services provided by SALTO SEE are an important element in facilitating the accessibility of the programmes. Survey respondents stated that SALTO SEE services are perceived as either helpful or very helpful (around 80%) in all components, with reference to activities such as participation in international activities, publications, direct support and information, and activities supporting volunteering.

As regards the level of satisfaction with the SALTO SEE acting as a Contact Point for Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, while the survey showed a high level of satisfaction (with more than 80% of NA respondents and direct beneficiaries expressing positive views), the MOVIT report indicates some dissatisfaction with Info Centres within countries¹³⁶. This is due to the resources and capacities being too limited to fully respond to requests for support by organisations/potential programme beneficiaries.

SALTO Education & Training TCA

¹²⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland (2018), Youth Policy in Eastern Partnership Countries: Overview of youth policy in Eastern Partnership countries and its European support mechanisms, FRSE Publications, Warsaw

¹²⁸ NB, research conducted in 2016-17.

¹²⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs Poland (2018), p.83

¹³⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs Poland (2018), p.83

¹³¹ SALTP EECA (2021): eastern Europe and the Caucasus REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS on Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps June - July 2021, outcomes of the 2021 regional consultations.pdf (salto-youth.net)

¹³² <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/otlas-partner-finding/>

¹³³ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 31

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ MOVIT (2019), Implementation of the Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme in the Programme's Partner Countries in the Western Balkans – Strategic Analysis including Recommendations in the Field of Youth

¹³⁶ MOVIT (2019, p.49

Research activities (interviews, survey, and literature review) showed that the SALTO E&T TCA is successful in meeting its objectives under Erasmus+ and in reaching out to relevant stakeholders, including through the organisation of Training and Cooperation Activities (TCAs), however its work is not as visible as that of other SALTOs.

According to the survey, the totality of NAs and the majority of beneficiaries agreed or strongly agreed (100% and 75%, respectively) that the SALTO E&T TCA is successful in organising training opportunities to support stakeholders to participate in Erasmus+. ¹³⁷ Moreover, over half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed (73% and 63%, respectively) that the SALTO E&T TCA is successfully providing qualitative online and offline platforms and tools for improving the planning, implementation and evaluation of their projects under the Erasmus+ programme. Furthermore, 82% of NAs and 88% of direct beneficiaries either agreed or strongly agreed (82% and 88%, respectively) that the SALTO E&T TCA is successful in organising TCAs to share best practices and build partnerships. ¹³⁸

These findings were further supported by the interviews and the literature review. The latter found that, while the number of participants in activities organised by the SALTO E&T TCA has remained approximately constant since its establishment, data related to online (website and social media) engagement suggest that its outreach has significantly improved (e.g. from 43,923 page views in 2019 to 248,111 in 2021). ¹³⁹ The literature review, moreover, found that, according to a 2019 study on Training and Cooperation Activities (TCAs), ¹⁴⁰ the TCAs organised by the SALTO E&T TCA had fully or partially reached the aims the Guide for Erasmus+ National Agencies ¹⁴¹. Moreover the study shows that most NAs agreed that the TCAs contributed to increasing the impact of the Erasmus+ programme at systemic level. ¹⁴² Along these lines, interviewed NA representatives mentioned a number of activities and outputs that are particularly useful, including SALTO E&T TCA's trainings for TCA officers ('train the trainer'); the SALTO E&T TCA website providing a clear overview of the latest TCA offers and an easily accessible and user friendly TCA application process; an online induction training for newcomers on TCAs; Long Term Activities (LTAs), with the ones on accreditation and digitalisation being singled out as particularly useful. ¹⁴³

Despite the overall positive views on the work of the SALTO E&T TCA, it is relevant to note, when it comes to the work this Resource Centre carries out to achieve its objectives, there was a noticeable difference in the feedback shared in the survey by NA respondents and direct beneficiaries, with education and training organisations being consistently less positive on the extent to which this SALTO has created new synergies between stakeholders through TCAs, or improved their quality. ¹⁴⁴ This may be explained with the tendency of this SALTO to mostly cooperate with NAs, as showed by the literature review, which may have an impact on the extent to which its work is visible to a broader audience. This is further supported by feedback shared by interviewed EU level stakeholders who noted that the SALTO E&T TCA is not as visible, partially due to the specific remit of its mandate (compared to the other Resource Centres focusing on youth), and due to the fact that its target audience (e.g. education and training organisations, VET and higher education stakeholders) are not used to relying on a centralised EU structure such as the SALTOs and therefore tend to engage less. ¹⁴⁵ Along these lines, it is likely that lack of cooperation with other Resource Centres (the survey showed none of the SALTO respondents to the survey indicated to have engaged with the SALTO E&T TCA) affects the visibility and impact of this SALTO.

3.2 Relevance

Section 3.2.1 analyses the extent to which the SALTO network, as a whole, provides activities that are relevant for its different target groups and for the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes; as well as whether SALTOs' activities proved complementary to TCAs and networking activities from other stakeholders. Furthermore, Section 3.2.2 outlines remaining challenges and areas for improvement to increase the relevance of the SALTO network. Lastly, Section 3.2.3 explores the extent to which the work of each individual SALTO is relevant for their different target groups and for the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programme.

¹³⁷ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 31

¹³⁸ Ibid, p. 31

¹³⁹ Annex 3 - Final Literature Review, p. 28

¹⁴⁰ SALTO E&T (2019a), Taking stock of TCAs realized in the field of Education and Training between 2014-2018: Report of the research findings, https://salto-et.net/public/files/site/Taking_stock_of_TCAs_2020_web.pdf

¹⁴¹ bring added value and increased quality in the overall programme implementation; contribute to increasing the impact of the Programme at systemic level

¹⁴² TCA E&T WG, 'Consultation Paper' (2019), <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dMarfECMipUxs6t8p11UWRhGZPhLBrnHOYkD7nyHoeo/edit>

¹⁴³ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 32

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 15

3.2.1 Relevance of the SALTOs as a network

Table 5 Relevance: summary of key findings (SALTO network)

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS: SALTO network	
►	The work of the SALTOs is relevant to address EU needs and challenges particularly in the field of Youth, but views are more divided in relation to the network's relevance in the field of Education and Training, with NAs being on average more supportive of the work of the network in this area.
►	SALTOs have good knowledge of their target groups and make conscious efforts to identify and satisfy stakeholders' needs through assessments.
►	The SALTO network's role as a "communication channel" between the European Commission and NAs is particularly relevant, as the SALTOs can ensure that the needs of the NAs and direct beneficiaries are communicated to EU institutions and <i>vice versa</i> .
►	Ensuring better and more regular cooperation between regional and thematic SALTOs, and between Regional SALTOs and the NEOs remains a challenge.
►	The SALTO network has contributed to a higher number and higher quality of TCAs, and increased synergies. The TCAs organised by the SALTOs are very relevant to create synergies and knowledge transfer opportunities, due to good cooperation with NAs in the planning stages.

Source: Ecorys own analysis, 2022

The study shows that, overall, the work of the SALTO network is relevant to address EU needs and challenges. The majority of the stakeholders consulted through the survey and the interviews agreed that the activities and outputs of the SALTOs are particularly relevant in the field of youth: the SALTO network provides a crucial contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes¹⁴⁶. All respondents to the survey conducted¹⁴⁷ considered that the SALTOs have positively contributed to improving the quality, relevance, impact and sustainability of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps projects, with the majority of respondents strongly agreeing that SALTOs have improved the quality of Erasmus+ projects (63% of beneficiaries, 60% of NAs and 60% SALTOs)¹⁴⁸.

Feedback from the interviews conducted with the European Commission and NAs suggests that the work of the SALTO network is considered very relevant for the implementation of EU-level youth policy, such as the EU Youth Strategy¹⁴⁹. In relation to the network's relevance in the field of Education and Training, NAs agree that the SALTOs provide a positive contribution in Education & Training, for example through the organisation of TCAs and the management of the network of TCA officers. Despite this, as highlighted in section 3.1.3, direct beneficiaries participating in the survey expressed less positive feedback on the work of the SALTO E&T TCA, which focuses on the area of Education and Training, indicating that views on the relevance of the SALTO network in relation to this specific field are more divided.

NAs and SALTO staff members interviewed mentioned the ability of the SALTO network to adapt to changing needs and contexts, to ensure their activities and outputs remain relevant to the needs of their target groups¹⁵⁰. Since the establishment of the SALTO network and its recent reorganisation, not only the EU policy context on Youth and Education and Training has changed significantly, but the overall global context has posed additional and unprecedented challenges (e.g. the outbreak and the consequent impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic which significantly limited or prohibited the organisation of physical meetings, exchanges and trainings across the EU). According to the feedback gathered through the interviews with NAs and SALTOs, the SALTOs have successfully responded to these changes. For example, it was mentioned that, since inclusion has become an increasingly important issue, SALTO I&D has made efforts to widen its scope of action, and has started working with different groups of stakeholders working on youth (e.g. teachers, social workers and employment officers), further broadening its understanding of inclusion and diversity (e.g. by exploring intersectionality).¹⁵¹ Another example of the network's flexibility and responsiveness is the SALTOs' ability to adapt to the digital transformation which was further accelerated by the pandemic by developing online tools and platforms. This enabled stakeholders to continue to benefit from

¹⁴⁶ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 8 and 9

¹⁴⁷ Representatives from NAs, SALTO staff members and direct beneficiaries of the programmes

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 17

¹⁴⁹ https://europa.eu/youth/strategy/european-youth-goals_en

¹⁵⁰ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 9

¹⁵¹ Ibid, p. 10

their activities and have opportunities to continue exchanging over the pandemic, and has been relevant to developing stakeholders' technical capabilities and knowhow to integrate digital tools in their own work.¹⁵²

Findings also indicate that the SALTOS' activities and outputs overall tend to respond well to the needs of its multiple stakeholders (i.e. the European Commission, Erasmus+ National Agencies, other SALTOS, youth organisations, youth workers, education and training stakeholders, and other beneficiaries). NA and direct beneficiaries were strongly satisfied with the SALTOS' outputs and activities' coverage of relevant topics (71% of NA representatives and 60% of beneficiaries agreed or strongly agreed). All respondents reported positive views on how adequate the SALTOS' activities are to their stakeholders' needs (80% of NA representatives, 70% of beneficiaries and 75% of SALTOS agreed or strongly agreed).¹⁵³ The interviews confirmed these findings, with the majority of stakeholders indicating that the SALTOS have good knowledge of their target groups and make conscious efforts to identify and satisfy stakeholders' needs.¹⁵⁴ According to interviewed SALTOS, the Resource Centres carry out assessments and conduct discussions and consultations with stakeholders (e.g. participants to their activities, NA representatives, TC officers) on a regular basis to better address their needs.

Multiple interviewed stakeholders (EU level stakeholders; NAs) stated that the SALTO network fosters a better understanding of EU Youth and Education and Training policy fields, for example by supporting the European Commission in effectively implementing the EU Youth Strategy¹⁵⁵ and its Goals¹⁵⁶. Moreover, the European Commission and NA interviewees stated that the SALTO network provides supports by sharing recommendations on how to further strengthen their work, particularly in the field of youth (e.g. through activities promoted by SALTO T&C and SALTO P&I) as the number of activities is greater.¹⁵⁷ The literature review identified some examples of this work such as the SALTO P&I Think Tank on Youth Participation which brought several experts including from DG EAC and the Youth Partnership together to reflect on how to create spaces of meaningful youth participation in the contexts of rising populism and nationalism across Europe and the increase usage and influence of technology in political contexts¹⁵⁸.

Furthermore, interviewees from NAs mentioned that the SALTOS help them strengthen the European perspective in their work, which can be often limited by national agendas. Similarly, the SALTO network's role as a "communication channel" between the European Commission, NAs and beneficiaries was highlighted during the interviews as being particularly relevant. The SALTOS ensure that the latter are up to date with EU policy priorities in the field of Youth and Education&Training and developments in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes through information sharing tools (e.g. the SALTOS' newsletter) and training activities. The Resource Centres also serve as a space for discussion, where NAs and direct beneficiaries can share their needs, for the SALTOS to scale them up in their exchanges with the European Commission. To this end, the work of the SALTOS to bring NAs together through the networks of NAs and TC officers, fostering the exchange of knowledge and good practices and the organisation of joint activities (e.g. TCAs) was also mentioned as relevant¹⁵⁹.

Lastly, when it comes to the complementarity of SALTO activities with Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCAs) and networking activities from other stakeholders, the opinions expressed both by respondents to the survey and by participants in the interview programme are positive. Respondents to the survey (NA and SALTO staff members) agree or strongly agree that the activities of the SALTO Resource Centres have contributed to a higher number of TCAs (86% and 81% respectively)¹⁶⁰. 86% of NAs and 94% of SALTOS agree that SALTO activities contributed to increasing the quality of TCAs, and most respondents (86% of NAs and 94% of SALTOS) agree that SALTO activities increased synergies among relevant stakeholders.¹⁶¹ Similarly, when asked about the complementarity of TCAs organised by the SALTOS with TCAs either organised by Erasmus+ NAs or funded under Erasmus+, the views of respondents from NAs and SALTOS were very positive (i.e. 91% of NAs and 75% of SALTOS either agreed or strongly agreed that TCAs organised by SALTOS are complementary with those organised by NAs, and respectively 74% and 69% to those funded by the Erasmus+ programme).¹⁶² As emerged

¹⁵² Ibid, p. 10

¹⁵³ Ibid, p. 19

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 10

¹⁵⁵ https://europa.eu/youth/strategy_mk

¹⁵⁶ https://europa.eu/youth/strategy/european-youth-goals_en

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 8

¹⁵⁸ Annex 3 - Final Literature Review, p. 26

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 9

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 30

¹⁶¹ Ibid

¹⁶² Ibid.

from the interviews,¹⁶³ the TCAs organised by the SALTOs are very relevant to create synergies and knowledge transfer opportunities: they cooperate with Erasmus+ NAs to set up the TCAs and plan the annual agenda for the trainings together.

3.2.2 Challenges and areas for improvement

Research activities (interviews, survey, and literature review) showed a number of challenges remain to be addressed to further increase the SALTO network's ability to respond to the needs their stakeholders.

Some of the stakeholders interviewed from NAs and SALTOs emphasised the need for a better and more regular cooperation between regional and thematic SALTOs.¹⁶⁴ This is considered an important step to ensure that the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps increase their outreach to beneficiaries beyond the EU; and to ensure that the work of the thematic SALTOs can better benefit, contribute to, and be streamlined into the activities organised by the regional Resource Centres. The literature review showed evidence of cooperation between the ESC RC and thematic SALTOs (e.g. with SALTO I&D to promote inclusion and diversity in the programme) and with regional SALTOs (e.g. to ensure outreach in the regions), and some examples of cooperation between thematic and regional SALTOs. However, there is still space to build on these examples and further strengthen cooperation. Open-ended comments to the online survey called for stronger centralised coordination of all SALTOs by the European Commission, to harmonise activities and mandates and strengthen the relevance of their actions. Interviewees from NEOs,¹⁶⁵ moreover, mentioned the need to ensure stronger cooperation between the regional SALTOs and NEOs in partner countries, particularly for the latter to gain better knowledge and build stronger partnerships in the youth sector. This is considered particularly relevant given the recent introduction of youth in the mandate of NEOs.

The interviews also provided some elements for further reflection, to ensure that the activities and outputs of the SALTOs continue to be relevant for their target groups. For example, while the EU-level stakeholders consulted value and appreciate the efforts that the SALTOs make to provide platforms to exchange and coordinate, as they engage a community of practice enabling peer exchange and learning, these would be even more relevant if more grass-roots organisations were invited to contribute.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, few interviewees mentioned that while still relevant, the SALTO training offers to Erasmus+ NAs, could benefit from further tailoring. In other words, less but more tailored trainings could make the work of the SALTOs more relevant for their target audience.¹⁶⁷ These findings were echoed by the survey: while NAs and direct beneficiaries were very positive about the extent to which outputs and activities cover relevant topics and are accessible to their target audience, the views of SALTO respondents were much less positive with regards to also the coverage of relevant topics (only 38% agreed or strongly agreed and 56% were neutral or unsure) and the accessibility of information (50% agreed but 37% were neutral and 13% disagreed)¹⁶⁸. This possibly indicates a certain level of awareness from the SALTOs themselves that their offer can be improved by ensuring their activities and outputs are more relevant and accessible for their target audience. In their open ended comments to the survey, moreover, direct beneficiaries pointed to the need to give more visibility and space to grass-roots organisations to ensure their needs are catered to¹⁶⁹. Lastly, feedback to the open questions in the survey shows that increased efforts to translate material and resources would make these more relevant to the needs of the target audience.¹⁷⁰ While the literature review evidenced an effort towards multilingualism when it comes to the Youth Pass tool (i.e. managed by SALTO T&C), no data was found on specific efforts for translating resources on a systematic basis.

3.2.3 Relevance of individual SALTOs

Table 6 Relevance: summary of key findings (individual SALTOs)

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS: Individual SALTOs	
►	SALTO I&D is relevant to foster the inclusion of young people, in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, and promote cooperation among inclusion organisations. The strong and close cooperation between this SALTO and inclusion and diversity officers in Erasmus+ NAs is a success factor.
►	SALTO P&I has been particularly relevant to creating a common understanding of youth participation and how to best translate this concept in practice.

¹⁶³ Ibid, p. 9.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 10.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 10.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 20

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 25.

- ▶ The support offered by SALTO T&C to the NAs to strengthen the capacity of their TC officers is considered crucial. Increasing synergies with SALTO E&T and between the Youth and Education and Training sectors, could further increase the impact of this SALTO.
- ▶ The ESC RC plays a crucial role in further defining the meaning of “solidarity” and making the concept much more practical for organisations and beneficiaries alike.
- ▶ SALTO Euromed’s work to establish contacts between organisations in the region and in the EU, and their efforts to put in place Contact Points in partner countries were highlighted as examples of the relevant contribution by this SALTO to further engage with and provide support to stakeholders in the region.
- ▶ SALTO EECA provides relevant support to newcomers to the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps in the region as a good example of the relevance of support provided by regional SALTOs to organisations that may not be very familiar with EU programmes.
- ▶ SALTO SEE implements activities that are particularly relevant for the development of youth work in a region where youth work does not yet exist as a formally recognised professional field.
- ▶ SALTO E&T TCA is relevant to providing quality TCAs in the field of Education and Training, particularly through the support being provided to TCA officers. However, the activities of this Resource Centre remain less visible and less connected to the broader SALTO network.

Source: Ecorys own analysis, 2022

SALTO Inclusion & Diversity

As outlined in Section 3.1.3, the literature review showed a steady increase in the total numbers of participants in SALTO I&D activities, indicating continued demand and interest from stakeholders, and suggesting that these activities are considered relevant by their target groups. Beneficiaries and NAs who responded to the survey expressed a positive opinion on the relevance of the work of this SALTO to foster the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes and promote cooperation among inclusion organisations (i.e. respectively 81% and 84% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement¹⁷¹). This was also evidenced by the literature review, which showed that SALTO I&D’s activities contributed to developing the ‘Inclusion dimension’ of Erasmus+, and fostered international cooperation among inclusion organisations (e.g. 82% of participants to a 2019 activity reported establishing new contacts for future cooperation¹⁷²). While this SALTO is not necessarily directly in touch with young people with fewer opportunities, survey respondents underlined the relevance of the SALTO’s work in supporting organisations and NAs working on inclusion with 96% of NAs either agreed or strongly agreed and 81% of beneficiaries agreed that the SALTO is successful in *providing resources for individuals and organisations supporting young people with fewer opportunities*¹⁷³. Despite this, as outlined in Section 3.1.3, more can be done to ensure that efforts to provide relevant support and resources, result in an actual increase in the number of young people with fewer opportunities directly participating in the programmes, with some survey respondents calling for more systematic and disaggregated data collection on participation rates in the programmes.

The feedback gathered through the interviews confirmed the overall positive views shared by survey respondents. Interviewed NAs and EU level stakeholders highlighted that the strong and close cooperation between the SALTO I&D and inclusion and diversity officers in NAs was very relevant to support the development of national inclusion and diversity strategies, and to ensure that NAs are adequately trained in this field¹⁷⁴. An interviewee from the SALTO I&D itself mentioned the ID Talks¹⁷⁵ – series of online workshops on inclusion and diversity where youth workers, professionals and volunteers can share insights, research findings, and good practices – or as a good example of how this SALTO provides a space for stakeholders to exchange and learn from each other.¹⁷⁶ It is through these actions, that the work of the SALTO I&D remains also very relevant in relation to EU policy priorities, with inclusion and diversity having become a cross cutting topic in the work of the European Commission too.

SALTO Participation & Information

As for SALTO I&D, the literature review¹⁷⁷ showed a steady increase in the participation rates to activities (e.g. training, events, etc.) organised by SALTO P&I, which can be considered a proxy to evaluate the relevance of its outputs. The number of participants in activities (e.g. training, events, etc.) organised by SALTO P&I has seen an almost fourfold increase since its

¹⁷¹ Ibid, p. 22.

¹⁷² SALTO I&D, 2019, Partnership Building Activity – Inclusive Volunteering in the Social Economy, May 2019, Ankara

¹⁷³ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 22

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 11.

¹⁷⁵ SALTO I & D, ID Talks: <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/inclusiontraining/idthalks/>

¹⁷⁶ Annex 2 – Interim Summary of the Research Consultations, p p.

¹⁷⁷ Annex 3 – Final Literature Review.

creation (from 447 in 2018 to 1,852 in 2020¹⁷⁸). The survey indicated that less than half of NAs (43%) worked with SALTO P&I, while this is true of the majority of other SALTOs (60%). A smaller number of beneficiaries (20%) reported having engaged with it. Additionally, user statistics for 2020 showed that the Participation Resource Pool¹⁷⁹ launched in 2020 has received 4,550 visits from a very wide range of locations and the main age profile being those aged 25-34 (28.6%)¹⁸⁰. The Participation Resource Pool helps potential participants to find project examples, training tools, and best practices to create their own projects. The wide use of resources provided by the SALTO online and exponential increase in participation numbers suggests that these are perceived as relevant by its target groups. Evidence from a survey conducted with NAs by SALTO P&I itself shows that the SALTO's activities are very relevant to NAs, with those aimed at fostering communication and information being less highly valued.¹⁸¹

Data from the survey revealed positive feedback among all respondents on this SALTO's ability to successfully meet its objectives related to youth participation and providing relevant support and information to its stakeholders. In particular, NA representatives and beneficiaries rated very positively SALTO P&I's ability to promote the participation of young people in society (47% of NAs and 50% of beneficiaries agreed, and 47% and 17% strongly agreed), and to provide support and guidance to foster youth participation and implement high quality information activities (53% and 50% agreed, and 40% and 17% strongly agreed, respectively)¹⁸². The interviews confirmed this view, with stakeholders at all levels mentioning that the trainings organised by the SALTO P&I are relevant to increase youth participation and media literacy, and to foster greater outreach, and support a better understanding of digitalisation. To this end, the Participation Pool platform¹⁸³ was highlighted as a particularly relevant resource, where stakeholders can have access to a wide range of tools and materials, as well as inspiring practices.

Moreover, interviewees from NAs and SALTOs highlighted that the SALTO P&I provides relevant support to youth workers and the youth volunteering sector through communication activities, which are necessary in this area to give the youth field visibility within local decision making and encourage young people to actively engage. Interviews with NAs and SALTOs highlight that the work of the SALTO P&I has been particularly relevant to creating a common understanding of youth participation and how to best translate this concept in decision-making processes. A particularly relevant contribution in this area is the Youth Participation Strategy, which not only promotes youth participation across all actions under the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, but provides stakeholders with a strategic vision on how to involve young people when making decisions and how to take a quality approach to youth participation when doing so, fostering their involvement in achieving the aims of the strategy.¹⁸⁴

SALTO Training & Cooperation

The survey indicated that NAs and other SALTOs regularly work with SALTO T&C (respectively 51% and 73%), and a very large number of beneficiaries (70% of responses) reported having engaged with it¹⁸⁵. The high engagement rate with SALTO T&C suggests that its activities and outputs are perceived as relevant by stakeholders. Feedback to training activities organised by the SALTO and gathered in the literature review shows that satisfaction with regards to their relevance is high (e.g. feedback from a 2019 training course showed that a majority of participants found the methods and tools proposed highly relevant and would apply them in their work¹⁸⁶). However, it is important to note that while the number of participants in Youthpass related activities has increased exponentially between 2018 and 2021,¹⁸⁷ participation in activities in the framework of the European Training Strategy (ETS) has decreased (from 843 in 2018 to 614 in 2021¹⁸⁸), suggesting that perhaps the SALTO T&C could further tailor its efforts to ensure its ETS activities are more relevant to their target audience.

Survey data from beneficiaries and NA representatives showed positive views on the SALTO's ability to promote the design and use of tools and systems for recognition of non-formal and informal learning and of youth (with 67% of NAs strongly agreed and 33% agreed, and 38% of beneficiaries strongly agreed and 52% agreed)¹⁸⁹. The outcomes of the interview

¹⁷⁸ Annex 3 - Final Literature Review.

¹⁷⁹ SALTO P&I, Participation Pool: <https://participationpool.eu/>

¹⁸⁰ Data provided by SALTO P&I.

¹⁸¹ SALTO P&I (2019), 2019 survey of National Agencies for E+ and ESC: Informing the work of SALTO PI

¹⁸² Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 24

¹⁸³ SALTO P&I, Participation Pool: <https://participationpool.eu/>

¹⁸⁴ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 11

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 24

¹⁸⁶ SALTO T&C (2019) Report: The art to reflect: About meaningful reflection in trainings, Trainers skills workshop, 2019, Arnheim, Netherlands

¹⁸⁷ Annex 3 - Final Literature Review.

¹⁸⁸ Annex 3 - Final Literature Review.

¹⁸⁹ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 25

programme also suggest that stakeholders are very positive about the relevance of the support provided by the SALTO T&C's, particularly in relation to increasing the visibility and recognition of youth work.¹⁹⁰

Interviewed stakeholders also singled out the support offered by SALTO T&C to NAs to strengthen the capacity of their TC officers as crucial. Interviewed stakeholders place particular value on the work that the SALTO T&C does to foster the professional development of NA staff, in particular through the Knowledge Management Staff training (KMST).¹⁹¹ Interviewees from the SALTO highlighted that this Resource Centre not only supports NA staff members to increase its competences, but it also increases the visibility of youth workers and connects youth work initiatives with the education sector. SALTO T&C's work to develop and manage the YouthPass tool¹⁹² for recognition and validation of learning outcomes within Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps was also mentioned by interviewees as relevant. This goes beyond the development of the tool, as it encompasses information sharing and capacity building activities linked to its promotion and implementation, as well as the coordination of Youth Pass officers appointed within each NA.

In terms of making the work of the SALTO T&C more relevant, survey respondents from SALTOs and beneficiaries mentioned that increasing synergies with SALTO E&T and between the Youth and Education and Training sectors, as well as possibly increasing the number of materials translated in EU languages, could further increase the relevance of this SALTO's work.¹⁹³

European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre

Findings from the survey indicated that NAs and other SALTOs regularly worked with the ESC RC (respectively 51% and 80%), while a smaller number of direct beneficiaries (37%) reported having engaged with it.

As mentioned in Section 2.1.3, 61% of NAs and 36% of beneficiaries participating in the survey strongly agreed and 22% and 45% respectively agreed that the ESC RC is successful in promoting solidarity in the EU. Moreover, the majority of NA respondents strongly agreed (61%) or agreed (28%) that this Resource Centre is successful in *organising events and partnership building activities* while only one respondent disagreed.

The feedback gathered through the interviews confirms these findings.¹⁹⁴ Interviewed stakeholders mentioned several areas where the work of this Resource Centre has been particularly relevant. First, interviewees at EU level mentioned the importance of the work of the ESC RC in further defining the meaning of "solidarity" and making the concept much more practical for organisations and beneficiaries alike, through publications and tools. Moreover, according to interviewees, the ESC RC contributes to the network's role of "communication channel" between the European Commission and relevant stakeholders by coordinating networking activities such as webinars and meetings where DG EAC can participate and exchange information. These help NAs to discuss their needs and make sure that activities are coherent, including among NAs. Furthermore, some interviewees maintained that, moving forward, the European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre could be instrumental to increasing collaboration between SALTOs and NEOs by both facilitating the Quality Label accreditation process and creating stronger links between EU Member States and NEOs in neighbouring countries that would like to increase their activities in the field of youth.

SALTO Euromed

Interviewees from this SALTO mentioned that to keep their work relevant they had to adapt to the changing needs of organisations in the South-Med region, especially in the context of changing programmes and rules. However, both the work that the SALTO EuroMed does to establish contacts between organisations in the region and in the EU, and their efforts to put in place Contact Points in partner countries were highlighted as examples of the relevant contribution by this SALTO to further engage with and provide support to stakeholders in the region¹⁹⁵.

The evidence gathered in the literature review shows that the work conducted by SALTO EuroMed supports organisations in the region in participating in both the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps programmes, with high levels of satisfaction reported from participants in specific activities (e.g. an online survey of youth workers from the region showed that 44% of respondents were very satisfied, 44% were satisfied and only 13% were partially satisfied¹⁹⁶).

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 12

¹⁹¹ Some information on the Knowledge Management and Staff Training (KMST) is available here: <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/training-and-cooperation/nationalagencies/>

¹⁹² European Commission, YouthPass: <https://www.youthpass.eu/en/>

¹⁹³ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 25

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 12

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 13

¹⁹⁶ Service Civique Evaluation (2021), p.61

Lastly, one possible area for improvement was highlighted by one interviewed NEO who underlined that ensuring that tools and resources are available in languages other than English or French would increase their relevance and accessibility of the tools produced by the SALTO Euromed in the South-Med countries.

SALTO Eastern Europe & Caucasus

Interviews with NEOs highlighted the support for newcomers in the European Solidarity Corps in their region as a good example of the relevance of support provided by regional SALTOs to organisations that may not be very familiar with EU programmes. As pointed out by interviewed EECA staff members, their target groups are stakeholders from different countries who have different backgrounds and approaches to youth work. For this reason, they are committed to maintaining a constant dialogue with actors in the region to ensure the relevance of their activities, and to establish priorities for action within their set budget. For example, in 2021 they started a new activity called 'Coaching programme for newcomers in the European Solidarity Corps', designed to provide additional support for new organisations which are not familiar with European programs, but have capacity to work in the field of international volunteering. Along the same lines, interviewees from NEOs pointed to training activities organised by SALTO EECA as being very relevant to stakeholders who have limited experience of the programmes. Interviewees also mentioned that the geo-political situation in the region (e.g. notably the situation in Ukraine which has been developing since 2014) represents a challenge to their work¹⁹⁷.

Evidence gathered through the literature review has highlighted other examples of activities carried out by this SALTO that are considered relevant, such as the Information Centre network for Erasmus+ Youth. This has become an important tool of support for the implementation of the programme in the region, by setting up press conferences, organising consultations and carrying out social media activities¹⁹⁸.

SALTO South East Europe

Interviewees from the SALTO mentioned that the activities implemented by the SALTO SEE have had a significant impact on the development of youth work in the region, where youth work does not yet exist as a formally recognised professional field. This SALTO mentioned being particularly attentive to the needs of their target audience, with consultations taking place to assess needs, discuss with experts and organisations, and plan activities according to the feedback gathered. This helps this SALTO to provide activities that are of high relevance in a region that is vast and where the concept of youth work itself is perceived in a different way than in the EU¹⁹⁹. The SALTO's relevance is further evidenced in the literature review by feedback to the "Moving Forward" training report, where a large majority of participants found the inputs of the workshop topics and EU youth programmes relevant²⁰⁰.

SALTO Education & Training TCA

The vast majority of NA (91%) and beneficiary (63%) respondents to the survey agreed or strongly agreed that SALTO E&T TCA is successfully creating new synergies between stakeholders through training and cooperation activities, promoting quality and efficiency in TCAs, and improving the quality of these synergies. The totality of respondents from NAs and a strong majority of beneficiaries (75%) either agreed or strongly agreed that the training opportunities provided by the SALTO are relevant to support stakeholders participating in the Erasmus+ programme. A similar near consensus emerged on the relevance of TCAs organised by the SALTOs (82% of NAs and 88% of beneficiaries considered them successful)²⁰¹. Evidence gathered through the review of available documentation painted a positive picture of the satisfaction of participants in activities and TCAs organised by the SALTO²⁰².

Findings from the interviews however only partially confirmed these positive views. Interviewed stakeholders from the European Commission and NAs mentioned that this SALTO E&T TCA was created in response to the need for focused support in providing quality TCAs in the field of Education and Training, and that this SALTO is currently succeeding in this area, particularly through the support being provided to TC officers within NAs.²⁰³

¹⁹⁷ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 13

¹⁹⁸ National Agency Annual Report 2018

¹⁹⁹ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 13

²⁰⁰ SALTO SEE (2021), Moving Forward: The new European Youth Programmes and their Relevance for the Western Balkan Region: Report, Online Workshops, 2021

²⁰¹ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 28

²⁰² See Literature Review Annex 3

²⁰³ Annex 4 - Final Summary of the Research Consultations, , p. 13

Interviewees from the SALTO E&T TCA itself mentioned that the SALTO organises quarterly meetings with TCA officers, which are effective to share current needs, and hold strategic discussions to identify operational matters to improve the quality of the support provided to TCA officers and offer recommendations to the European Commission and NA Directors.²⁰⁴ In addition to these quarterly meetings, the SALTO E&T TCA also holds yearly meetings with key stakeholders within its network, to collect feedback to be then implemented. This helps this SALTO to keep track of the needs of its stakeholders and beneficiaries. Interviewed NA representatives and TC officers pointed out how this SALTO is very attentive to gathering their target groups' feedback and implementing it where possible to improve the relevance of their actions. Despite the overall positive feedback on the SALTO E&T TCA, it should be noted that one interviewee from the European Commission raised concerns about this Resource Centre potentially lagging behind compared to the rest of the network, possibly due to the lower visibility of its work and activities, as well as a lower level of cooperation with other individual SALTOs²⁰⁵. The survey showed that about one third of respondents from NAs and beneficiaries have worked with SALTO E&T TCA (respectively 31% and 27%), while no other SALTOs reported having engaged with it²⁰⁶.

3.3 EU added value

Section 3.3.1 analyses the EU added value of the SALTO as a network, and investigates whether the SALTOs serve a purpose that is not already taken care of through other existing means or instruments. The section also looks into the extent to which the cost-benefit ratio (i.e., the correlation between EU financial support and delivered outputs) is sufficiently high to justify continued EU support through the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, and analyses whether similar outcomes could be achieved at a better cost. Furthermore Section 3.3.2 includes an overview of ongoing challenges that undermine the EU added value of the SALTO network, and Section 3.3.3 provides an assessment of the EU added value of each individual SALTO.

Table 7 EU added value: summary of findings (SALTO network)

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS: SALTO network	
►	The SALTOs are unique and serve a purpose that is not already taken care of through other existing instruments. The presence of a network of Resource Centres at European level provides added value to the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, and the stakeholders involved in their implementation.
►	The SALTOs' unique position allows them to connect policies and programme structures at all levels, and actively contribute to achieving the European Commission's policy objectives in the field of youth and education & training.
►	EU support is crucial to ensure the SALTOs can continue to act as a supranational structure and as a supported neutral source of knowledge and information.

Source: Ecorys's analysis, 2022

3.3.1 EU-added value of the SALTO as a network

EU-added value of SALTOs as an unique resource at EU level

The study shows that the SALTO network serves a purpose that is not already taken care of through other existing means or instruments. The general view among most stakeholders (European Commission, SALTOs, most EU level stakeholders, most NEOs, and most NAs) is that the SALTOs are unique and that the presence of a network of Resource Centres at European level has brought added value to their work²⁰⁷, especially in the field of Youth²⁰⁸. The majority of the survey respondents (100% of NAs, 94% of SALTOs and 87% of direct beneficiaries) indicated that the presence of the SALTOs has brought added value²⁰⁹.

²⁰⁴ Ibid

²⁰⁵ Ibid

²⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 28

²⁰⁷ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p 15

²⁰⁸ Ibid, p.16

²⁰⁹ Ibid, p.34

Interviewed stakeholders acknowledged the difficulty of identifying other or similar institutional structures that would provide the same level of support that they currently receive from the SALTOS. For example, NAs, EU level stakeholders and NEOs highlighted the uniqueness of the support the SALTOS provide to smaller organisations (e.g. SALTOS' work on the Quality Label and accreditation procedures). Beyond this, interviewed NA and NEO representatives noted that the added value of the SALTOS lies in being an EU-wide structure that has deep, expert knowledge of the programmes and allows countries to learn from one another²¹⁰. Interviewed European Commission staff and EU level stakeholders also stated that having official, permanent programme structures, with a specific focus and mandate, designed to build and develop expertise is an "unparalleled"²¹¹ and "difficult to duplicate"²¹² expertise to have in the youth field.

Interviewees shared a variety of examples of how the SALTO network brings added value. One area mentioned by the European Commission and EU level stakeholders is the role of the SALTOS as a centralised point to obtain information and resources for NAs and other stakeholders²¹³. Interviewees mentioned that the existence of this larger Europe-wide network is helpful, notably because it takes the burden away from stakeholders to become knowledgeable about the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes on their own²¹⁴. The literature review also revealed that no other organisation is compiling and managing the data and information that the SALTO's events databases and platforms provide²¹⁵. Moreover, most stakeholder groups interviewed agreed that the SALTO network is helpful as it provides access to European-level tools and trainings that organisations in the field would usually struggle to access on their own²¹⁶. This is also supported by the survey respondents, where a majority (100% of NAs, 94% of SALTOS and 87% of direct beneficiaries) agreed that the presence of a European level network of Resource Centres such as the SALTOS has brought added value²¹⁷.

EU-added value of SALTOS as a bridge between stakeholders involved in the EU youth programmes

Moreover, the SALTO network brings added value by facilitating communication and connections between the European Commission and the different stakeholders operating in the field of Youth and Education & Training. Most interviewees mentioned that the SALTOS are well aware of the latest strategic developments happening at the EU level, while remaining close to the needs of NAs and those who are active on the ground at national level²¹⁸. As highlighted by an interviewee, the fact that the SALTOS *"are connected to the implementing structures of programmes, rather than being disconnected satellites"* further contributes to their impact and added value²¹⁹. The SALTOS' position is also seen by interviewees as a bridge that connects policies and programme structures at all levels and gives them a unique role, which is key for achieving the European Commission's policy objectives in the field of youth and education & training²²⁰. This finding is supported by the survey results which also show that the majority of respondents either agree or strongly agree that the activities and outputs of SALTOS have adequately responded to several key youth-specific and broader EU priorities for policy and funding, including promoting inclusion and diversity (where 100% of SALTOS, 97% of NAs, and 80% of beneficiaries agreed or strongly agreed that they responded adequately) and promoting democracy and participation (with 100% of SALTOS, 94% of NAs, and 77% of beneficiaries agreed or strongly agreed).²²¹ The findings of the literature review also support this, showing that the SALTOS have developed a wide range of materials and activities that are directly linked to EU priorities in the fields of Youth and Education and Training²²².

Another added value of the SALTO Resource Centres is their capacity to structure their work in a sustainable way. Interviews showed that there seems to be a low turnover rate amongst the experts regularly used by SALTOS²²³. This allows the SALTOS to act as repositories of knowledge and transfer this expertise to newcomers in the field.²²⁴ Interviewees across stakeholder groups mentioned that the SALTOS capacity to building trusting relationships with different stakeholders over time is also seen as a valued resource²²⁵.

²¹⁰ Ibid, p.16

²¹¹ Ibid

²¹² Ibid

²¹³ Ibid, p.17

²¹⁴ Ibid, p.10

²¹⁵ Annex 3 – Final Literature Review, p.59

²¹⁶ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 16

²¹⁷ Ibid

²¹⁸ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 16

²¹⁹ Interview with EU stakeholder, 2022.

²²⁰ Ibid,

²²¹ Ibid, p. 27

²²² Annex 3 – Final Literature Review, p. 14

²²³ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 16

²²⁴ Ibid p. 10

²²⁵ Ibid p. 16

In the field of Education & Training, while opinions are not unanimous, consultation activities indicate that the SALTOs provide significant added value to their direct beneficiaries (e.g. NAs and European Commission). The survey showed that this added value is especially recognised by NAs, as all NA survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the presence of the SALTO network has brought added value, particularly regarding the support provided to their participation in the Erasmus+ programme. However, several stakeholders at EU level mentioned that further work in the Education & Training field is needed, particularly on boosting the engagement of participants from the Higher Education and VET sectors,²²⁶ as well as ensuring further cooperation with the rest of the SALTOs network by improving coordination between NAs and SALTOs and clarifying the role of the Resource Centres.²²⁷

EU-added value of SALTOs as a supporters of youth policy at EU and national level

On the added value of the SALTOs in promoting structural changes in youth policy and youth frameworks at national level, survey respondents were not as positive, with more than half of NA respondents neither agreeing or disagreeing or being unsure (56%), and 40% of beneficiaries expressing a neutral view on this matter. This possibly highlights a lack of impact of SALTOs work beyond the programmes, and the SALTOs possible lack of reach towards national (as opposed to EU-wide) policy priorities²²⁸. On a similar note, various interviewed stakeholders mentioned that an increased role for SALTOs to be more involved in policy-making and policy-design, or for the SALTOs to cover all parts of the programmes could be explored²²⁹.

Regarding the alignment of the SALTO network work with the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programme objectives, it is clear that they play a key role in helping maintain the quality and inclusiveness of youth projects, with the majority of interviewees mentioning that without the SALTOs, the accessibility of the programmes would decrease, especially for new beneficiaries²³⁰. Several interviewees across stakeholder groups agreed that the SALTOs play a key role in encouraging newcomers to engage with Erasmus+ and supporting project quality for small and creative organisations²³¹. The survey responses also showed that a large majority of respondents agree or strongly agreed that the SALTOs succeed in promoting inclusion and diversity in the programmes, with all SALTO staff members (100%) agreeing or strongly agreeing (among which 81% agreed), 97% of NA respondents strongly agreed (with 69% of respondents strongly agreeing), and 80% of beneficiaries agreeing or strongly agreeing.²³²

Several European Commission and EU level interviewees also mentioned that, without the SALTOs, cooperation among relevant stakeholders would still exist, but it would not be as effective, as each organisations would have to rely on their own contacts and capacity²³³. Moreover, according to interviewees, the SALTOs play a special role in ensuring a balance and equality between participating countries in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes by providing a common resource that all countries can use, regardless of their resources and level of involvement with the programmes²³⁴. One EU Level stakeholder expressed that *“in order for Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps to be prioritised in all countries, some kind of coordination structure is needed”*²³⁵.

EU-added value of SALTOs as a structure supported by Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps

Research activity found a high level of agreement that SALTOs should continue to be supported through EU programmes. The majority of interviewees across stakeholder groups said that the SALTOs are heavily linked to EU funding because they have to implement the EU programmes, so it follows that the Erasmus+ should naturally fund them²³⁶. One European Commission interviewee mentioned that *“looking at other sources of funding does not make sense since Erasmus is the SALTO’s natural home for the kind of activities they do”*.²³⁷ Moreover, if SALTOs were to operate outside of EU programmes, their current status as a European structure would change, with implications on the way the SALTO network would be perceived by stakeholders as a neutral source of knowledge and information²³⁸. Several EU level interviewees, moreover, mentioned that national funding in the youth sector is volatile and unpredictable because it is prone to changes in priorities of national governments;²³⁹ therefore, without EU level support, the SALTO network would risk not being able to successfully

²²⁶ Ibid

²²⁷ Ibid, p. 16 and p. 35

²²⁸ Ibid, p. 34

²²⁹ Ibid, p. 16

²³⁰ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 16

²³¹ Ibid, p. 16 and p.19

²³² Ibid, p. 34

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Ibid, p. 17

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Ibid, p. 16

²³⁷ Interview with EU stakeholder, 2022.

²³⁸ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 16

²³⁹ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 15

perform its role. Furthermore, there was a general agreement that the SALTOs is necessary and needed, and that, if the network would cease to exist, it is very likely that a demand and need to re-establish similar EU-wide structures of cooperation, with a similar mandate and role as the current SALTOs, would arise. According to interviewees, this is because EU-wide programmes are complex and include many aspects that need taking care of, and therefore there is a need for a supranational coordination structure to provide support²⁴⁰. These views were further confirmed by the results of the survey, which highlighted the key role of the SALTOs play as coordinating structures, particularly between NAs and the Commission²⁴¹. Lastly, the majority of interviewees across groups stressed that if the discontinuation of the SALTO network would result in other stakeholders having to bear the burden of carrying out the the work the SALTOs are currently doing, putting further pressure on their capacity and efficiency²⁴².

Furthermore, feedback received from interviewees suggested that the SALTOs manage their resources well, and offer a range of outputs and activities that at time exceeds their responsibilities, and often relies on extra voluntary time and increased workload for their staff²⁴³.

The literature review confirmed this finding. For example, in 2018 SALTO SEE and SALTO reported the highest number of training activities across the network, even though in that same year they received the smallest allocation of financial resources among the SALTOs²⁴⁴. Moreover, for most SALTOs, human and financial resources have remained relatively static over the study period²⁴⁵. In addition, while bearing in mind that new SALTOs have emerged and been added to the network, the annual budget figures are still very similar to the annual allocations in 2013, meaning that, in total, the budget for SALTO activities has not increased substantially (if at all, in real terms) since 2013²⁴⁶. Considering that SALTO activities have either stayed the same or increased, while there have been no substantial changes in their financial or human resources, evidence seems to indicate that the SALTOs provide added value compared to their cost.

3.3.2 Challenges and areas for improvement

Regarding areas of potential improvements, stakeholders mentioned that further efforts could be made to improve the visibility of the SALTOs. This was echoed in the interviews, as NEOs and EU level stakeholders mentioned that it is difficult to know who-is-who in the SALTOs, and that the type of support they can offer is not always clear²⁴⁷. Survey results also support this view, with some of respondents mentioning the need for a clarification of the role of the SALTO network and improving its web presence²⁴⁸.

The study also highlights stronger cross-sectoral cooperation between the Youth and Education & Training sectors as another area of potential improvement. This was also a finding across the stakeholder consultations, with NAs mentioning that there should be closer cooperation between the SALTOs regardless of the different sectors they operate in, and calling for a more unified approach to Youth and Education & Training as well as increased joint planning and activities²⁴⁹.

Some EU level interviewees, moreover, noted that it would be worth exploring the idea of an increased involvement of the SALTOs in policy-making and policy-design, or in different parts of the programmes (such as VET or formal education). SALTO beneficiaries taking part in the survey highlighted that the Resource Centres could play a stronger role in connecting “*practice, policy, research to needs of young people*” and be more involved in youth policy-making both at European and national level²⁵⁰. Both interviewees and survey respondents, moreover, underlined that, since SALTOs are a respected EU brand, their work can help to put EU policy priorities such as the recognition of youth-work higher up on the political agenda at national level, with the potential to provide support for youth policy, particularly in regions where this is not as developed²⁵¹. Along these lines, further involvement in policy-making was identified as particularly relevant step forward in relation to the regional SALTOs²⁵².

²⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 17

²⁴¹ Ibid

²⁴² Ibid

²⁴³ Ibid

²⁴⁴ Based on comparisons between Figure 5 SALTO planned and realised budgets 2018-2020 on p. 13 and the findings on page 14-15 of Annex 3

²⁴⁵ Annex 3 – Final Literature Review, p. 5-8.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 20

²⁴⁸ Ibid

²⁴⁹ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 35

²⁵⁰ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 34

²⁵¹ Ibid, p. 15

²⁵² Ibid, p.18

3.3.3 EU-added value of individual SALTOs

Table 8 EU added value: summary of findings (individual SALTOs)

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS: individual SALTOs	
▶	SALTO I&D is appreciated for the new methodologies and training courses it provides, as well as cooperation opportunities among other stakeholders and organisations
▶	SALTO P&I is recognised as an important resource for building networks and partnerships, as well as training how to foster participation.
▶	SALTO T&C provides EU added value through its key role in the delivery of the European Training Strategy and the Youthpass.
▶	SALTO ESC is recognised for its strong voice for the European Solidarity Corps programme in the SALTO Network, sharing good practices and contributing to EU youth policy.
▶	SALTO EECA is appreciated for the unique opportunities it provides for international cooperation, exchange of experiences, and mobility.
▶	SALTO EuroMed provides added value by allowing organisations in the region to develop partnerships which would otherwise not be achievable.
▶	SALTO SEE helps overcome and ease administrative, linguistic, and cultural barriers that may be preventing organisations in the EU from forming partnerships with organisations in the region.
▶	SALTO E&T TCA is unique as it provides a platform for NA cooperation. Its work is highly appreciated by NAs as it helps them plan and organise their work and stay informed about TCA offers.

Source: Ecorys own analysis, 2022

SALTO Inclusion & Diversity

The literature review showed that participants to training courses organised by this SALTO appreciated the opportunity to learn about new methodologies and engage with stakeholders from across Europe, providing learning opportunities that would have not been available to participants otherwise²⁵³. While the survey findings did not specify whether respondents viewed SALTO I&D's work as new or particularly innovative, the survey data confirmed that around three quarters (74%) of NAs and beneficiaries agreed or strongly agreed that this SALTO organised successful training courses to exchange and reflect on inclusion practices and diversity management, as well as promoting strategic cooperation among inclusion organisations²⁵⁴, which aligns with the literature review data.

SALTO Participation & Information

The literature review showed the value of SALTO P&I as a resource for building networks and partnerships, with one particular activity being the Think Tanks²⁵⁵. The Think Tanks help co-create solutions to increase young people's active participation in society and decision-making, with a network of experts, policy-makers and practitioners selected to join²⁵⁶. Data available from SALTO P&I trainings shows that these are seen as networking opportunities and spaces to share good practices, and that participants recognise these as bringing added value to their work²⁵⁷. In the interviews, stakeholders mentioned that SALTO P&I's work is important to foster participation, with NAs specifically highlighting how SALTO P&I provides very good support in terms of the participation strategy and provides valuable training sessions for participation officers²⁵⁸.

SALTO Training & Cooperation

The literature review found that SALTO T&C provides EU added value through its key role in the delivery of the European Training Strategy and the Youthpass²⁵⁹. There is evidence of the value of the Youthpass in the 2020 RAY monitoring survey of Erasmus+ youth projects, which found that the majority of Youthpass owners who had used it to apply for jobs, internships

²⁵³ Annex 3 – Final Literature Review, p. 23

²⁵⁴ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 25

²⁵⁵ Annex 3 – Final Literature Review, p. 33

²⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 35

²⁵⁷ Ibid

²⁵⁸ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p5

²⁵⁹ Annex 3 – Final Literature Review, p. 27

or further studies found it to be a useful and valuable tool²⁶⁰. Regarding, the European Training Strategy, the large success of the Youth Workers Competence Model Massive Open Online Courses (YOCOMO MOOCs) can be considered as evidence of the value of work of SALTO T&C. This MOOC was an online training course on competence-based development provided in the context of the European Training Strategy. According to anecdotal evidence gathered through the literature review, it far exceeded expectations in terms of participation, with 880 participants from a very diverse range of countries enrolling by June 2020 to complete a total of 571 modules²⁶¹. Lastly, interviewed stakeholders across groups also highlighted the work that the SALTO T&C has done and continues to do to develop the Youthpass and the European Training Strategy as bringing added value²⁶².

European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre

The ESC RC is recognised for its strong voice for the European Solidarity Corps in the SALTO network. The work of this Resource Centre provides added value by sharing good practices and successfully supporting the implementation of the programme, while also contributing to promoting overarching values such as solidarity and volunteering, which are central to EU youth policy^{263 264}. However, the interviews indicated that there might still be room for improvement in terms of the visibility of this SALTO, as one EU level stakeholders was still not aware that SALTOs also support the European Solidarity Corps, mentioning that their member organisations consult resources from the Commission and NAs, rather than those developed by this SALTO²⁶⁵.

Regional SALTOs

Several interviewees across European Commission, NAs, and EU level stakeholders, as well as findings from the literature review, revealed that the added value of the regional SALTOs as a whole, is fostering European cooperation, broadening the geographical reach of projects, and promoting the inclusion of smaller and diverse organisations in the programmes^{266 267 268}. This claim is also supported by the findings of the survey, with the majority of NAs (75%) and beneficiaries (91%) agreed that the regional SALTOs promote interregional cooperation in the fields of youth and education & training²⁶⁹. For some interviewees, moreover, SALTOs' contribution to interregional cooperation is seen as essential, as NAs are mostly focused on providing opportunities in their respective countries, with regional cooperation becoming less of a priority²⁷⁰.

The survey findings showed that most respondents (NA and direct beneficiaries) agreed that regional SALTOs as a whole have been providing valuable support to the youth sector in their region of competence, with NA respondents highlighting the important role played by the regional SALTOs in administrating Quality Label applications.²⁷¹ While the latter finding was also highlighted by interviewed NEOs,²⁷² both NEO and European Commission representatives mentioned that there is nonetheless room for improvement in terms of the support that regional SALTOs offer to youth organisations and the youth sector in countries not associated with the programme. This is because these organisations, compared to as higher education institutions, tend to be less well informed about existing opportunities under the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes²⁷³.

Specific feedback on the added value brought by the regional SALTOs includes the following:

- **SALTO SEE** is considered to greatly contribute to cooperation and stability in a region characterised by a difficult history. According to interviewees from SALTO SEE, this Resource Centre plays a crucial role to increase the visibility and take up of EU youth programmes in South East Europe, and particularly in the Balkans: without its work, organisations and individuals would struggle to participate in Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, and regional cooperation would be negatively impacted. Furthermore, the findings from the 2019 MOVIT study on the "Implementation of the Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme in the Programme's Partner Countries in the Western Balkans" confirms that the activities and outputs of SALTO SEE allowed participants to connect with a community of

²⁶⁰ Ibid

²⁶¹ Annex 3 – Final Literature Review, p. 28

²⁶² Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 9

²⁶³ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 29

²⁶⁴ Annex 3 – Final Literature Review, p. 54

²⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 4

²⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 18

²⁶⁷ Annex 3 – Final Literature Review, p. 39

²⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 59

²⁶⁹ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p. 30

²⁷⁰ Ibid

²⁷¹ Ibid

²⁷² Ibid, p. 7

²⁷³ Ibid

stakeholders, fostering networking among organisations interested in future cooperation, with a view to promote Europe as an opportunity for young people in the region.

- ▶ **SALTO EECA's** added value is specifically linked to the guidance and support provided to countries that are not associated with the programmes and their representation in youth activities, but above all, to the promotion of European values in a region characterised by a changing political context and fragile pro-Europe attitudes. For SALTO EECA, the 2021 report from the "Eastern Europe and the Caucasus Regional Consultations on Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps" also provides evidence of EU added-value because of the unique opportunities it provides for international cooperation, exchange of experiences, and mobility²⁷⁴.
- ▶ **SALTO EuroMed's** added value is linked to its work on promoting and managing the European Solidarity Corps Quality Label and Erasmus+ accreditation, as well as the support and assistance provided to organisations going through these processes.²⁷⁵ Moreover, a 2021 evaluation of the implementation of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps in the EuroMed region carried out by the Civic Service Agency, highlights that partnership building activities and networking opportunities by SALTO EuroMed are considered crucial by actors in the region. Furthermore, the same evaluation mentions the 2019 MOSAIC seminar²⁷⁶, developed through cooperation between the French and Czech NAs, as a key example of partnership building activity, bringing together 23 European and 23 partner country organisations that wished to cooperate together within the framework of EU programmes. This allowed theoretical and practical information to be shared, and educational tools on skills development in the field of youth and volunteering projects to be introduced. Focus group activities showed that there was a high level of satisfaction with regard to the partnership building aspects and introducing organisations to develop partnerships which would otherwise not be achievable²⁷⁷.

SALTO Education & Training TCA

Data from the survey, Interviews, and literature review showed that the platforms (such as the events databases and online platforms) which SALTO E&T TCA hosts are very valuable²⁷⁸, as no other organisation is compiling and managing this information that NAs and other stakeholders perceive a need for²⁷⁹. Several NA stakeholders who provided written contributions independently singled out SALTO E&T as unique because "they provide the platform for the whole NA cooperation"²⁸⁰, easing NA workload as everything is gathered in one place²⁸¹. Other interviewees echoed that NAs use the platform developed by the SALTO E&T to help with planning and organisation, helping NAs stay informed about the latest TCA offers²⁸².

3.4 Lessons learned

This section outlines the main lessons learnt on the work of the SALTO network, with a focus on enabling and hindering factors, to be taken into account for further reflection on the future of the SALTOs.

- ▶ The 2018 reorganisation of the SALTOs, while not radically changing the overall objectives and mandate of the network, provided an opportunity to further define areas of work and mandate of the concerned Resource Centres, compared to the previous generation of SALTOs. This resulted in increased expertise, specialisation, and capacity to respond to needs, further highlighting how a more tailored approach to the structure and functioning of the SALTO network improves its effectiveness, relevance and added value.
- ▶ SALTOs carry out crucial work that provides a valuable and positive contribution to the effective implementation of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes. Their work is considered necessary and useful, with the network playing a crucial role as an overarching, neutral structure, both to ensure the success of EU programmes, and to promote EU values. However, this assessment shows that the lack of a systematic approach to data collection hinders the extent to which the SALTOs can prove the effectiveness, relevance and added value of the SALTOs. While SALTOs tend to carry out ad hoc assessments and evaluations of individual activities, efforts to gather broader data on outreach (e.g. of their website and social media platform), participation (e.g. to their events, trainings, seminars),

²⁷⁴ Ibid, p.45

²⁷⁵ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p.19

²⁷⁶ <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/european-training-calendar/training/mosaic-in-euromed-call-for-south-mediterranean-organisations.8308/>

²⁷⁷ Service Civique Evaluation (2021), p.34

²⁷⁸ Annex 4 – Final Summary of the Research Consultations, p.29

²⁷⁹ Annex 3 – Final Literature Review, p. 59

²⁸⁰ Interview with NA stakeholder, 2022.

²⁸¹ Ibid

²⁸² Written Contribution from TCA officer, 2022

and outputs (e.g. number and types of publications) seem to be systematic or follow a common approach. This leads to gaps in information and comparable data.

- ▶ SALTOs implement a broad range of activities and develop a broad variety of outputs, adopting often innovative approaches, which positively contribute to increasing the effectiveness and relevance of their work, allowing them to cater for the needs of their target audience. While this variety of outputs represents a strength of the network, this study has highlighted that the great variety of resources can at times be overwhelming for beneficiaries of the SALTOs who, either for lack of knowledge of the programmes, or limited capacity, may encounter difficulties in navigating resources.
- ▶ While each SALTO has its own area of action, cooperation has proved to be an enabling factor, resulting in positive outcomes for both individual SALTOs and the network as a whole. Further strengthening this cooperation is crucial to both increase the impact of the work of the SALTOs on overarching priorities (e.g. inclusion and participation, as well as upcoming thematic focuses on digital and green topics), but also to ensure the broader outreach of the programmes, as well as of the impact of individual SALTOs, beyond Europe.
- ▶ Due to the specificity of its mandate, and the long history of support to the Erasmus+, and now European Solidarity Corps programme, the SALTO network possesses a level of expertise and knowledge that cannot be provided by any other structure. With the Erasmus+ expanding, the European Solidarity Corps now providing humanitarian aid, the NEOs being tasked to work on youth, and the capacity of the SALTOs being already overstretched, support for the network to adapt to these changes must be prioritised.



04

Final Recommendations

4.0 Final Recommendations

This section presents the final recommendations from the analysis of the data collected under this assignment. The recommendations have been divided into network-wide and SALTO specific recommendations, based on the assessment criteria for this assignment.

4.1 Effectiveness

4.1.1 Network-wide recommendations

1. Review the communication channels used by the SALTO network and identify areas in which communication to stakeholders can be streamlined through further collaboration between SALTOs and an improved dissemination strategy. The SALTO network has produced a wide variety of resources for its target groups over the years, but this offer is not always presented in a clear and useful way for all stakeholders interested in the work of the SALTOs. Improving the web presence of the SALTO network, namely through a better categorisation and accessibility of their website, should be considered. Furthermore, a more streamlined usage of newsletters and social media channels could considerably improve the visibility and outreach of SALTOs work among their target groups.²⁸³
2. Develop additional outreach and impact indicators across SALTOs, in order to gather and present disaggregated data in their reporting to the European Commission. These indicators would complement the data presented in the annual reports submitted to the European Commission. The additional information would bridge the data gaps that limit the understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the current approach of the SALTO network and prevent the identification of potential areas for improvement. These additional indicators would allow better evaluation of the impact of the SALTOs, and eventually result in the implementation of more tailored approaches to their work as well as an increase in the participation of specific target groups to the programmes.²⁸⁴
3. Improve the outreach and effectiveness of SALTO materials by increasing the number of languages in which they are translated. The study reveals that, while there are some clear efforts towards ensuring that some SALTO materials are translated into several EU languages, there is no evidence of specific efforts to systemically translate resources across the network. While translations in all EU languages would not be economically feasible, a more targeted use of resources is recommended, in order to reach out to more beneficiaries as well as young people with fewer opportunities and participants from countries not associated with the programmes. This is particularly important for Regional SALTOs as resources on the programmes on non-EU languages (such as Arabic or Serbian) are not commonplace and hinder the effectiveness of the programmes in these regions.²⁸⁵

4.1.2 SALTO-specific recommendations

4. SALTO I&D is recommended to assess whether there is a need to re-focus their activities and trainings in order to increase the involvement of young people with fewer opportunities into the EU youth programmes. While SALTO I&D activities have been found to be very effective in supporting a strong inclusion dimension in EU youth projects, for example by providing training to youth workers to ensure projects are as inclusive as possible, almost no data was found on the effectiveness of SALTO I&D work in improving participation rates of young people with fewer opportunities in the programmes. To this end, the SALTO is recommended to identify steps to further increase its direct impact on this matter.²⁸⁶

²⁸³ Please see Section 3.1.2, p. 27.

²⁸⁴ Section 1.2.3 p.13.

²⁸⁵ Section 3.1.2, p. 27.

²⁸⁶ Section 3.1.3, p. 28

5. SALTO EuroMed is recommended to carry out an internal assessment of how its work is affecting the participation of young people from the region in the EU youth programmes. The study shows that there is limited data available on how effective SALTO EuroMed activities and trainings are in the region they are supporting. An assessment for this SALTO is then recommended to help identify areas in which SALTO EuroMed' offer could be further improved and streamlined.²⁸⁷
6. For SALTO SEE, an internal assessment by this SALTO of the role and resources available to selected Contact Points in the region is recommended. Although the study shows that SALTO SEE is effective in achieving its objectives in the region, some direct beneficiaries have found the support of selected Contact Points in the region to be insufficient, namely due to lack of resources and capacity to fully support potential programme beneficiaries active in the region. An internal assessment of the Contact Centres effectiveness and capacity needs is then recommended to help identify areas in which SALTO SEE offer could be further improved and streamlined.²⁸⁸
7. For SALTO E&T TCA, increasing the visibility of its work, namely via a dedicated communication campaign and an updated website, for Education & Training stakeholders other than National Agencies is recommended. Although the study reveals that SALTO E&T TCA is effective in achieving its objectives, the work of this SALTO is not sufficiently visible among education and training organisations, VET and higher education stakeholders as well as other SALTOs. While this is explained by the fact that this Resource Centre operates with a very specific mandate and target group (e.g TCA officers in National Agencies), the study recommends that SALTO E&T TCA start exploring avenues for its work to be better known outside of this restricted group. These could include an improved website (e.g. linking up to the SALTO-youth website, and ensuring the websites of the other Resource Centres also make a reference to SALTO E&T TCA to foster cross-pollination), and a dedicated communication campaign, targeting other SALTOs and stakeholders beyond National Agencies, particularly in view of the creation of the new SALTOs under Education & Training in 2022.²⁸⁹
8. For SALTO P&I, SALTO T&C, SALTO ESC RC and SALTO EECA, no specific recommendations under this assessment criteria were identified by the Research Team.

4.2 Relevance

4.2.1 Network-wide recommendations

9. SALTOs to conduct regular assessments of training activities and materials produced by the SALTOs to ensure continued relevance to the needs of all target groups. While the study shows that the SALTO resource centres have been successfully adapting their offer to the needs of their target groups, there are still areas and topics that would benefit from further tailoring, particularly for young people with fewer opportunities and people with disabilities taking part in the programme. The study also finds that further cooperation with grassroots organisations, with experience working with these groups, in the co-creation of trainings and materials could improve the relevance and accessibility of SALTO activities without putting an additional burden on SALTO staff.²⁹⁰
10. Improve internal cooperation between the regional and thematic SALTOs during the design and implementation of materials and activities. As the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes increase their outreach to beneficiaries beyond the EU, it is important that the training and material offer developed by the thematic SALTOs are also relevant for participants from third countries that are associated and not associated to the programme. A closer cooperation between these two parts of the network would ensure that existing materials could be revised to check if they reflect the needs of stakeholders in these countries and provide opportunities for thematic SALTOs to design new materials and activities in cooperation with the regional Resource Centres.²⁹¹
11. Increase the cooperation between the SALTO Resource Centres and the National Erasmus Offices in countries not associated to the programme. There is currently very limited cooperation between the National Erasmus Offices and

²⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 32.

²⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 33

²⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 34.

²⁹⁰ Section 3.2.2, p. 37.

²⁹¹ Section 3.2.2, p. 37.

the SALTO Resource Centres on both the area of Youth and Education & Training. Further cooperation between the National Erasmus Offices and the SALTO Resource Centres would allow NEOs to acquire knowledge of and contacts in the youth sector and to ease the transition towards this area of work. Increased cooperation between NEOs and regional SALTOs in particular, would allow the latter to benefit from NEOs' extensive network of contacts at the local and national level. This cooperation could also have a potentially positive impact on the participation of people from countries not associated to the programme and improve the relevance of SALTO materials and activities for stakeholders from these countries. Cooperation between the NEOs and the SALTO ESC RC would be particularly beneficial, for the successful implementation of the new Humanitarian Aid strand.²⁹²

4.2.2 SALTO-specific recommendations

12. For SALTO T&C, a strategic cooperation with SALTO E&T regarding its work on the validation and recognition of youth work, as well as the professional development of youth workers is recommended. While the study reveals that SALTO T&C produces relevant publications, tools and trainings to support the validation and recognition of youth work, as well as the professional development of youth workers which are widely used in the youth field, their usage among stakeholders from Education & Training sector is still not widespread. A stronger partnership with SALTO E&T TCA could help SALTO T&C better understand the needs of stakeholders active in the Education & Training sector and better adapt its offer to this group, thus contributing to the wider recognition of youth work and youth workers across EU Member States²⁹³.
13. For SALTO EECA, an assessment of how the current geopolitical situation in Ukraine affects the relevance of its work in the region is recommended. As a result of the Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine on 24 February 2022, the situation in the region has been severely destabilised. The study shows that this has a considerable impact on the work that SALTO EECA is doing in the region and that a revision of its priorities should be considered, particularly regarding the continuous participation of persons from the region in EU youth programmes, the support provided to persons fleeing the war in Ukraine and the involvement of youth organisations and youth workers in peacebuilding and reconciliation activities.²⁹⁴
14. For SALTO E&T TCA, an internal assessment of the relevance of its work for the overall Education & Training sector is recommended. While the study shows that the SALTO Education & Training TCA is quite relevant for its direct beneficiaries (e.g., the National Agencies and the European Commission), its relevance for the other stakeholders operating in the Education & Training is not as clear (e.g. education and training organisations, VET and higher education stakeholders). As one of the key added values of the SALTOs seem to be their ability to provide a space for different stakeholders to build partnerships and synergies within the sector, further understanding of how SALTO Education & Training TCA is contributing to overall EU goals in the Education & Training field could be an element for further reflection.²⁹⁵
15. For SALTO I&D, SALTO P&I, SALTO ESC, SALTO T&C, SALTO EuroMed and SALTO SEE no specific recommendations under this assessment criteria were identified by the research team

4.3 EU added value

4.3.1 Network-wide recommendations

16. Maintain and further strengthen the existing structure of the SALTO network as a core pillar of the implementation of EU youth programmes. The SALTO Resource Centres play a unique role which is recognised by all stakeholders operating in the youth sector. The SALTOs are widely recognised as a pillar in the implementation of EU youth programmes, as

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Section 3.2.3, p. 40.

²⁹⁴ Section 3.2.3, p. 41.

²⁹⁵ Section 3.2.3, p. 42.

they provide unique support that is not available through other structures at the national or EU-level. No major changes to the structure of the network seem to be required at this stage.²⁹⁶

17. Ensure the SALTOs continue to benefit from the support of EU funding programmes. The study shows that the SALTOs are operating at capacity and that they are able to effectively achieve the objectives set in their mandates and to provide relevant trainings, tools and publications for their different target groups. SALTOs manage their resources well, and deliver high quality outputs that are seen as needed and useful.²⁹⁷
18. Further explore the potential of the SALTO network to strengthen national level youth policy, particularly in regions and countries where this is less developed. The study indicates that the SALTO network is a respected EU brand, and that it has the potential to support efforts to put EU youth policy priorities in the agenda of national governments, such as the recognition of youth work, recognition of volunteering or youth participation in decision making processes, among others. As part of National Agencies, the SALTOs already streamline EU youth policy priorities in their respective host countries. However, this role could be expanded in the future to further support the implementation of EU policies such as the EU Youth Strategy or the European Youth Work Agenda, and could be particularly impactful in regions where youth policy and youth work are not as developed.²⁹⁸

4.3.2 SALTO-specific recommendations

The research team did not identify any specific recommendations for any of the individual SALTOs under this assessment criterion.

²⁹⁶ Section 3.3.1, p. 43.

²⁹⁷ Section 3.3.1, p. 45.

²⁹⁸ Section 3.3.2, p. 46.



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Ecorys Europe EEIG
Rue Belliard 12
1040 Brussels
Belgium

T: +32 2 743 89 49

E: europe@ecorys.com

ecorys.com