# European Youth Making Policy and the Europeanization of Youth: an analysis of the implementation of the Youth Program in Greece.

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**Abstract.** Hundreds of millions of euros are spent every year to support policies that promote cosmopolitanism across the European Union. Through these policies, young Europeans come in contact with one another in an effort to create bonds. The YOUTH Program is an instrument of EU Institutions and was initiated in 1988 under the title "Youth for Europe". The importance of the European Youth Policy is even greater now in the aftermath Europe's eighth enlargement. This article indicates the desire to investigate the significant importance of the *European Youth Policy* in relation to the *Europeanization* of Youth. Can European youth Policy become one of the main vehicles in promoting the Europeanization of people and the creation of a European demos? This article explores the implementation of the YOUTH Program in Greece and investigates the importance of the *European Youth Policy* in relation to the *Europeanization* of Youth at a moment of change.

## Introduction

The European Union, more than ever before, is suffering of identity crisis. It is obvious, that questions like: *who are the Europeans, what do they have in common, where are they going and what links the EU States,* are crossing through citizen's minds. Trying to combine all these questions, I will paraphrase Massimo's D'Azeglio famous proverb that "having made Italy, we need to make the Italians", in having made Europe we need to make the Europeans (Bellamy, 2006, p.1).

All different all equal was the slogan of the Council of Europe's campaign against racism and xenophobia. Have you ever thought what the reaction of the Spanish crusaders was when they traveled to discover new territories and they came across natives from America? As Lauritzen wrote, the "situation is not much different when 25 young people around Europe get together for some days somewhere in Europe with its wars truck areas, anarchic regions, enormous differences in living standard and life prospects" (1999, p.223). This is what the YOUTH program is doing. It brings young EU citizens closer.

In all levels of the Greek historical evolution the youth has been the critical factor that has pushed innovation forward. For example, the 17th of November of 1973, while Greece was under dictatorship, it was the students that first started the revolution to reinstate democracy. Furthermore, as the European Union, still seeks to find its place in the world and in peoples' minds, it is necessary for "political socialisation to go beyond the requirements of a national curriculum" (Lauritzen, 1999, p.228). Youth can play an important role for this to be achieved.

The YOUTH Program was created by the European Parliament after a proposal prepared by the Commission (Europa Youth Program, 2006) aiming at the socialization and Europeanization of young Europeans. As it was mentioned in the General Assembly for the European Youth, under the Spanish Presidency, non-formal education such as the YOUTH Program can be the cornerstone of the "acquisition of new skills and competences in the area of understanding cultural diversity and the sense of belonging to Europe" (Institututo de la Juventud, 2002, p.34).

This paper aims to explore the YOUTH Program and its implementation in Greece in relation to the process of Europeanization, by investigating:

a) *Whether the use of the YOUTH Program promotes and supports the Europeanization of Youth and the establishment of basic common values among young Europeans.*

b) *Whether the YOUTH Program serves the European Union's needs for a closer European convergence.*

c) *And last but not least, this article tests the YOUTH Program's contribution in creating a Common European Identity.*

The analysis of the survey's outcomes will be presented in the third part of this paper by testing post-participation feelings as well as the participants' future developments in relation to the European Union. Alexis de Tocqueville characteristically wrote that, "feelings and ideas are renewed, the heart enlarged, and understanding developed" through active participation in organizations (cited by Marc Morje Howard & Leah Gilbert, 2008, p.12).

**The YOUTH Program**

In 1988, the European Union initiated the program "Youth for Europe"; in the beginning the main target was to bring the youth of the EU Member States in constant interaction (Europa Youth Program, 2006). Since then, the Program was renovated and continued to constitute one of the most important Youth Policies of the European Union. The importance of the European Policy concerning the Youth is even greater now in the aftermath of the EU enlargement; nowadays 75 million young people live in the European Union (Europa Youth Program 2006). The YOUTH Program's (Youth in Action) budget for the period 2007 to 2013 was risen to 915 million euros instead of 126 million ECUs that was, for the period 1995-1999 (Youth for Europe, 2006). The new YOUTH Program, that is named Youth in Action, has started its activity in the year 2007, is "open to young people aged 13 to 30 in the Member States and in third countries and its highly decentralized" (Youth Program Europa, 2006).

The Commission strongly supports the role and importance of the YOUTH Program; the role of the YOUTH Program in strengthening young people's sense of belonging to Europe is highly acknowledged and this is the main reason that forced the Commission to further extend it (Europa Youth Program, 2006). The Youth in Action Program "intends to implement at least 35000 youth exchange projects by 2013 and 10000 projects per year", while in Greece more than 300 programs are being approved every year (Youth Program in Greece, 2006). Every year it provides an opportunity to more than 4000 young people from Greece, to live, learn and interact with young people

across Europe. It is significantly important to mention that the YOUTH Program apart from being available to young citizens from EU Member States is also available to young people from the EFTA States, Turkey, the accession countries and the countries of the Western Balkans (Europa Youth Program, 2006). In this way, the European Union promotes exporting Europeanization of people and promotion of the European culture among various countries, not exclusively its Members States.

The YOUTH Program is structured in 5 Actions that can be implemented both separately and in combination. If some of the Actions are combined, the Program can become more effective, because it enriches people's interaction. Participants that, have already participated in one of the programs, have shown great interest in re-participating. For example a young girl, that took part in this survey, had firstly participated in a youth exchange in 2004 that drove her in participating in two more YOUTH Programs in 2005. Or, moreover, another young person that participated in a YOUTH Program in 1999 was encouraged to participate in three more programs in 2001 and 2002. As it will be presented through the case study, the young participants have succeeded in transforming both themselves and contributed in the transformation of their place of residence. This article will progressively show in which level people's participation to the YOUTH Program promotes basic elements of European Integration.


**Literature review** – *Theory of Europeanization*

Many definitions have been attempted to describe Europeanization; as Vink and Graziano wrote, "the story of Europeanization has only just started" (p.4). Some of the most profound definitions are listed above. Radaelli characteristically wrote that Europeanization "refers to the process of (a) construction, (b) diffusion, and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU decisions and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourses, identities, political structures and public policies" (2003, p.30). Cini, identified five different definitions of Europeanization as: "(a) the territorial expansion, (b) the process of European-level institutionalization, (c) the export of European Institutions to the wider world, (d) "the strengthening of the European integration *project* or the *European Construction* as a political ambition" and finally, (e) "the domestic impact of European-level institutions" (2005, p.333). Ioakimidis, pointed that Europeanization is seen as "the process that is transforming the political systems of the EU member states and beyond" (2002, p.1). Europeanization, as the "development of new norms regarding citizenship and membership at the European level"(Checkel, p.80).

Europeanization, according to Olsen (2002, p.922) "is not a unique process and a *suis generis* phenomenon". In this work it is related to the "process of structural change" and the "variously affected actors, institutions, ideas and interests (Featherstone & Radaelli, 2003, p.3). The element that connects all these different approaches is the European Union. Radaelli and Pasquier tend to support that "debates on definitions are particularly important in the genetic stage of a new field of inquiry" (Vink and Graziano, p. 6).

Bulner underlined that "Europeanization as such is not a theory, but rather a phenomenon that needs to be explained" (cited by Vink & Graziano, p.12). Börzel and Risse have created an interesting two-angle framework in their effort to approach the field of Europeanization as domestic impact (2003, p.63-69). The first part approached the domestic impact of Europeanization as a "process of redistribution of resources", while the second, as a process of socialization and learning". Olsen added that "different responses and patterns of adaptation and institutional robustness" should be expected in a political environment such as the European one (2002, p.934).

**Basic frameworks**

Domestic impact is one of the basic factors that the European Union should take under consideration throughout its effort to change. Knill and Lehmkuhl added that "the framing of domestic beliefs and expectations" (2002, p.258) are elements that could push forward Europeanization. Chrysochoou (2001, p.39) mentioned that the Theory of European Integration should be addressed as an order of interconnected principles and ideas. Herein lays the necessity of Europeanization to show the importance of the principle "United in Diversity" in the creation of a European Demos and the interaction of the international and domestic spheres (Chrysochoou, 2001, p. 188).

Pentland in 1973, wrote that "European integration will require a transformation of the way the average European thinks and acts" (Robyn, p.242). Today, more than ever before, it is vital to conceive *Europeanization as the creation of we-ness in a European public space where citizens will identify themselves as Europeans, apart from their primary nationality*.

The impact of Europeanization on domestic change may vary significantly. Some Member States are more open to new challenges while others remain attached to their past. Börzel and Risse (2003, p.69) defined three types of domestic change: absorption, accommodation and transformation. The first type describes Member States where the domestic change is low, the second describes Members States where the domestic change is modest, and the final one describes those places in which the domestic change is high. It is obvious that in "political settings like the European Union, different responses and patterns of adaptation and institutional robustness can in particular be expected" (Olsen, 2002, p.934). This occurs, firstly because "Institution building and policy-making are unevenly developed across institutional spheres and policy areas" and secondly because "differentiated responses are likely because the west European political order is characterized by long, strong and varied institutional histories" (Olsen, 2002, p.934).

*European Demos*

It is of significant importance for Europe, a European public sphere to be established (Olsen, 2002, p.940). Internal borders and barriers will eventually be removed and at the same time, external borders will be strengthened as soon as the "shared feeling of belonging" is being developed.

While Lavdas and Chrysochoou (2004, p.20) questioned *who is governed* in the European Union*, Jacques* Santer wisely stated that:

> "People still do not feel that Europe is active in their daily lives dealing with problems of unemployment. Therefore, the first operation we must undertake is to develop a whole strategy for combating the scourge of unemployment. That is of great priority if we are to reconcile the citizen, the man in the street, with our Europe" (cited by Dell'Olio, p.2005, p.79).

If the European Union does not succeed in answering this basic question, then a viable European democratic community cannot be achieved. "Many people, one demos" instead of "many demos, one people" is the epitome of what Lavdas and Chrysochoou supported concerning the importance of the creation of a defined European demos (Lavdas & Chrysochoou, 2004, p.23).

Hoskyns and Newman (2000, p.9) argued that "there is a potential demos in the EU but it needs to be given consciousness and the means to make its voice effective in existing and new institutions". Europeanization is one of the pathways that can lead in strengthening what is called "Europe". According to Fernandez, Europe is seen as a "highly divergent cultural space (Kulturaum) where young peoples' situation must be set in the wider, more fluid social and cultural context" (2005, p.59). It is argued that the YOUTH Program is one of the tools that set young people's socialization in a broad context and can push Europeanization forward.

Europeanization and the YOUTH Program

During the last decade, there have been quite significant developments "in promoting more coherent youth policies at the European level" (Sellberg & Orr 2004, p.4). Both the European Union and the Council of Europe have been very keen on Youth Issues. *The New Impetus for European Youth (2001)* was the result of Viviane's Readings (Commissioner-Designate for Education and Culture) *effort* to plan a White Paper on Youth and Youth Policy in Europe. Because of the White Paper (2001), the open method of coordination was launched for the first time in the Youth field and it identified four areas of action: participation, information, voluntary service among young people and a greater understanding of youth (Sellberg & Orr, 2004, p.6). The open method of coordination "shows a genuine commitment to the consultation and involvement of civil society; both in the form of individuals and civil society organizations" (Sellberg & Orr, 2004, p.9). As a result of the four-action plan, the YOUTH Program aims at promoting transnational bonding, the formation of a European identity and a European demos, change in the domestic institutions and change in the lives of young people in their regions.

The White Paper in Youth gave further support to the cornerstone of youth action: the YOUTH Program. The YOUTH Program and its implementation through various actors such as NGO's, transnational youth Networks, Youth Councils and others, aims to promote the Europeanization and socialization of youth. We could argue that this effort aims to move forward Kant's principle of cosmopolitan law that states, "the fact that people

of the world coexist and cope regularly is relative with the main principle of the creation of the state" (Lavdas & Chrysochoou, 2005, p.285). The YOUTH Program has the necessary credentials to promote this principle because it brings people together and creates bonds.

Article 128, paragraph 1 of the Treaty of Maastricht (1992) states that, "the Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Members States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore" (du Bois-Reymond & Hubner-Funk, 1999, p6). Lauritzen posits that if "we cannot leave identity behind us on our road towards tolerance of ambiguity, we could use this term as expressing the sum of a person's life experience" that is "a mixture of genetic, environmental and educational factors" (1999, p.223). The YOUTH Program makes an effort to contribute to a young person's sum of experiences by supplying them with new characteristics and habits.

Conventional constructivism (i.e. Checkel and Risse) is closely related to the building of identities and culture norms that can push Europeanization forward. This article's case study is based in the analysis of the EU policy related to cultural exchange. These results can be used as qualitative characteristics that can bring EU to its citizens. Additionally, this article's reverberation would be the epitome of Lavdas and Chrysochoou's, "many people, one demos, instead of many demos, one people". In this effort to create a politically defined European demos, the *potential* members are necessary for identifying the common entity as members of a "new, multilevel European *res publica*" (Lavdas & Chrysochoou, 2004, p.22). This is not related to any institutional reform; on the contrary, it is related to the way that European citizens think of themselves in relation to their country, and more importantly, with a new political entity, a *res publica composita* (Lavdas & Chrysochoou, 2004, p.23). According to Chrysochoou, the European Union needs to encourage its citizens to participate actively in the integration process as well as in the construction of a European public sphere (2005, p.67). Moreover, he pointed to the necessity of people to actively participate in a new, multilevel and international *civitas* that will signify Europeanization's effectiveness in promoting Europe's common culture (Chrysochoou, 2004, p.144). The Europeanization of the youth may become the significant instrument for this to happen.

Although the creation of a United States of Europe was never the "endpoint of the integration process", a "quasi-federal trajectory would indeed signify the beginning of the end of the nation-state as the dominant unit for political organization" (Vink, 2002, p.15). It is posited here that in order for this to happen, more efficient European Youth Policies need to be established, aiming at further Europeanization and socialization of young people; this will eventually lead to a more coherent European Union.

## Data, analysis and results - *Case Study*

Kant's law of cosmopolitanism was the first theory that inspired this research. Lavdas and Chrysochoou through their article at 2004, as well as Featherstone and Radaelli (2003), underlined the way to conceptualize and link the theoretical concepts with the present case-study. Moreover, having in mind Lavdas article on the Europeanization of Greece, and the fact that the

Greek phenomenon was lucking of analysis, activated me towards this research.

Young people from all over Greece were interviewed. Males and females took part in this research by the same percentage; the single prerequisite for interviewers was, to have participated to the YOUTH Program. This research contains both qualitative and quantitative methods. All 140 participants were interviewed and surveyed in a two months period. Standardized open-ended questionnaires were the main source of collecting data. The main aim in analyzing the questionnaires was to reveal the young participants' feelings after their participation in the YOUTH Program. The after-participation feelings underline the effects of the YOUTH Program concerning the Europeanization of Youth in Greece.

Transnational bonding

The first question of the survey set, concerned participants' feelings related to transnational bonding. One hundred and eight of the ex-participants recognized (Q.1) that their participation in the YOUTH Program contributed to the creation, or enhancement, of their feelings of transnational bonding with young people from various EU countries; on the contrary, twenty-two of them did not realize any difference in their behavior. Seventy-seven percent of the participants recognized the importance of the YOUTH Program concerning transnational bonding and cooperation. Sixty percent of the young participants consider the institution and protection of Human Rights as the most important feature that brings EU citizens closer. Democracy, with forty-eight percent is the second most important element that bonds European Union's citizens. On the contrary, as it can be seen on the second question, Religion is the least important element in the process of transnational bonding. In this way, the Greek participants of the YOUTH Program highlighted that the European Union is or must become an entity beyond religious and other prejudices. According to these results, it can be stated that the ex-participants have created or enhanced their feelings towards their European orientation, in the cultivation of a European sentience and a better understanding of the diversity, of the common European culture and shared heritage, as well as the common basic values. Lauritzen argued that intercultural learning "puts participants through the painful exercise of learning about themselves by discovering the making of their own identity (de-construction, de-learning)," and eventually, this promotes transnational bonding (1999, p.228). It seems that the YOUTH Program follows exactly the same path. Moreover, it facilitates the integration of young people into the European Community by encouraging a "spirit of initiative" that can be directly linked with the establishment of common basic priorities (Official Journal of the European Communities May 24 2006: 214/7-10,).

The second question, apart from trying to prove if transnational bonding is one of the effects of the YOUTH Program, highlights the basic values that the EU represents. Values such as: education, democracy and human rights. The cultivation of common values contributes to the formation of a European identity as well as a European demos. As Chrysochoou argued, the European demos is a "community of citizens linked to each other by strong democratic bonds and pressing to acquire a measure of effective

control through formal or informal means over government" (2000, p.109). It is the prerequisite for the long-lasting but prominent effort of transforming national citizens into trans-national ones. It is of significant importance that through this survey's answers and interviews, it can be extracted that the YOUTH Program gives young people the opportunity to share and establish basic "European" values, such as democracy and human rights, which all participants have in common. Moreover, several participants pointed out that their experience through participating in the YOUTH Program, specifically in projects with non EU citizens participating, as well, helped them realize and become more aware of the basic values that EU countries share in common. One of them characteristically stated, "the YOUTH Program is a unique experience that helps you to see the world not just as a Greek but as a member of a bigger family (EU) that share common values and beliefs for certain things". Another one stated that, "you realize the importance of being a European Union citizen when you participate in a project outside the borders of this continent," because then, "you feel not only as a citizen of your country, but as a European, as well".

In the first part of this research, it is observable that the Youth Program supports the claim that it promotes the Europeanization of Youth. A series of answers given during this research demonstrate that the YOUTH Program contributes to the European youth's orientation in Greece as well as the establishment of new common values and priorities that can be incorporated to a new European Identity.

Common characteristics

Chrysochoou wrote (2000, p.109) that European demos is a "community of citizens linked to each other by strong democratic bonds and pressing to acquire a measure of effective control through formal or informal means over government". As can be seen in the third question, 105 of 140 young participants stated that after their participation to the Program, they feel that now, they have fewer things dividing them from the citizens of other EU countries, than what they believed before their involvement in the Program. It is the Youth Sector where the participants feel more attached with the citizens of other European countries. This justifies the YOUTH Program's first successful step: to bring the youth together and in interaction. This policy could adjust the necessary background for forthcoming cooperation and society building because youth is the future of Europe; the Europeanization of today's youth will progressively result in the creation of a common European awareness. Consequently, the European Youth Policy could be related with a Policy plan that invests in the future of the European Union: the creation of a European demos, the creation of Europeans. Olsen (2002, p.202) highlighted the importance of establishing a European public sphere. As an outcome, it can be said that the YOUTH Program facilitates the integration of young people into the European Community and encourages "their spirit of initiative" (Official Journal of the European Communities, 2006, 214/7-10). Additionally, it is more than obvious that the proper use of the YOUTH Program contributes to the European orientation of the Youth and in the development of a European awareness. The Greek implementation is evidence of this.

There in after, the young correspondents feel that culture and politics, in fifty-six and seventeen per cent respectively, are two of the main common European characteristics. The YOUTH Program can play an important role in the Europeanization of Youth. It creates bonds among the younger generation, it helps them understand their common culture, the common political targets and as a result, it helps them feel part of a broader group with the same targets and goals. However, the fact that politics (17%) are much lower in young people minds than culture (56%), should create some skepticism in Brussels. This demonstrates that the European Union necessitates stronger and more inspiratory common political planning to inspire young citizens.

The significant issue provided by this data is the fact that common culture seem to be among the most important parts of the European legacy. Common culture's importance lies both in the promotion of a better understanding of people's diversity, shared heritage, and the common basic values, and it is clear that the European Union needs a closer European Convergence. The development and promotion of a common culture, set the basis for transnational bonding and the formation of a common European identity. A young participant mentioned that "through the informal education that the YOUTH Program offers, I developed a priceless understanding and acceptance of the differentiation and uniqueness of fellow EU citizens". It is the common culture that has been highlighted and promoted through the YOUTH Program that becomes the necessary vehicle in promoting the Europeanization of young people.

The Greek outcome

Lavdas highlighted EU's impact in the creation of a collective act (1997, p.47). The collective action was a prerequisite for us being capable of analyzing the YOUTH Program's impact on the Europeanization of youth. The fifth question refers to the extent that the YOUTH Program helps young participants to realize the benefit of the Greek participation in the European Union. There are only seventeen of the surveyed participants (less than 14%, question 5) claimed that the Program did not help them in understanding the positive outcome of their country's participation in the European Union. On the contrary, 123 participants believe that their participation to the YOUTH Program helped them realize European Union's contribution to Greece. As can be seen in the fifth figure, domestic change is the most obvious EU contribution to Greece.

It is the constant interaction with young citizens from other EU countries, and the discussions in working groups during the implementation of the Program that helped participants to accept the changes that EU set on Greece. Question 7 shows that fifty-two percent of the surveyed participants have regularly used the Youth Information Centers services; this is one of the changes that occurred in Greek local societies because of the Youth Program. It is Action 3 of the YOUTH Program that offers young people the opportunity to initiate and act on behalf of their region's benefit. This action offers active young participants the means (e.g. money, information etc.) to originate and establish a new project in their region. For example, there was a Local Youth Council from northern Greece that took advantage of the Program and

created a Local Tourist Guide. This is only one of the numerous examples of a project that the YOUTH Program helped make into a reality. Changes in young people's lives and change or formation of new domestic institutions are the effects of Greece's participation in the European Union. It can be claimed that the YOUTH Program helps youth to "acquire knowledge, skills and competencies" (Official Journal of the European Communities, 2006, 214/7-10,) that will be priceless for deeper integration and contributes to the recognition of a Europe based on values of solidarity and support, particularly in conflict areas (Official Journal of the European Communities,2006, 214/7-10).

An outcome of significant importance for this study is that thirty-eight percent of the participants link the Greek developments in the social policy area with its participation to the EU; moreover, thirty-seven percent relate the protection of human rights with Greek participation in the European Union. Both of them are considered to have strengthened and improved because of EU participation. As a young participant characteristically mentioned, "the Greek participation to the EU accelerate the process for the implementation of important policies". Or, as another participant stated that, "it was the YOUTH Program that helped the youth, in a European level, to evolve and express themselves through their participation in the Youth Policies and their successful cooperation".

In this part of the analysis, it became clear that the YOUTH Program contributes to the recognition of a Europe based on values such as solidarity and support. Moreover, it turns out that the YOUTH Program promotes domestic change and change in the lives of young people that have participated to the YOUTH Program. The proportion of ex-participants that have positive feelings towards the effectiveness of the YOUTH Program shows the positive contribution of the YOUTH Program to the Europeanization of Youth. As Börzel and Risse wrote, "the more European norms, ideas, structures of meaning, or practices resonate with those at the domestic level, the more likely it is that they will be incorporated into existing domestic institutions and the less likely bit is that the European norms will lead to domestic change" (Olsen, 1996, p.67). The importance becomes is even higher considering the fact that the most of the participants are citizens of conflict areas (Youth Program's Guide, 2006).

The creation of a Common European Identity

This can be defined, as the creation of common European characteristics and the creation of feelings of belonging in a bigger community, Europe. A necessary prerequisite for this to happen is to create a Common European Identity. Ignatief (2000) cited by Lavdas and Chrysochoou (2004, p.143) mentioned that, "we should conceptualize the complex nature of Europe as a community with common perception of the meaning, size and scope of freedom". The eighth question that was set to the studied participants involved a significant and clear question: *Does the* YOUTH *Program contributes to the construction of a Common European Identity?*

The answers presented that 108 of the 140 surveyed participants considering that their involvement to the YOUTH Program contributes to the creation of a common European identity, while only 23 of the 140 believe the

opposite. This issue delivers a clear message regarding the role of the Program. In the next question (the ninth question), participants stated that mutual respect is the most essential element promoted through the YOUTH Program. Mutual respect (62%) in combination with the common European awareness (51%), are significant elements for Kant's Cosmopolitan law. The strength of the program is related to the power to create mutual feelings among the participants. It is truly fascinating to read each program's evaluation form and realize what kind of feelings has been created in a short period of time. The constant interactions as well as both the working and discussion groups have a significant impact on young people's feelings. It is these elements that promote a better understanding of the diversity of the common European culture and shared heritage, as well as the common basic values; it serves the European Union's needs for further European integration.

      Moreover, the creation of a common culture (49%) and a European demos (45%) are two of the primary elements that are promotedthrough the participation in the YOUTH Program. Olsen (2005, p.345) strongly supported that the creation of a European demos would "contribute to common understandings of what legitimate political organization and governance is". Both the creation of a demos and the changes to domestic institutions of governance and politics will contribute to the evolution of the European Union. An ex-volunteer commented, "the elements that are constructed through the Program, contribute to shaping people's way of thinking. This acts multiplicationaly in the whole of the Society, both in a local and European level". Even more, a youth worker characteristically mentioned that, "it is the daily interaction and communication of young participants that set the basis for transnational bonding and the formation of a common European identity". Last question's outcome supports the claim that the YOUTH Program contributes to the European orientation of the youth, by helping young people to accept the changes of their country more easily than they did before their participation. In the twelfth question, seventy-five per cent of the surveyed participants stated that the YOUTH Program contributes to the European orientation of the youth by giving young participants the cognitive background to accept the changes that occur in their country due to EU membership.

Common Values

      It is Featherstone who characteristically wrote that Europeanization can be seen as "increasing Transnationalism: that is the diffusion of cultural norms, ideas, identities, and patterns of behavior on a cross-national basis within Europe" (2003, p.7). The tenth and eleventh questions provided the chance to participants, not only to respond with a yes or no, but also to show the level of their transformation.

      The outcomes of the tenth question reported that the participation in the YOUTH Program helps young participants to feel closer to the European Union. There are fifty-three of the surveyed participants who sufficiently agree, twenty-three who strongly agree and twenty-three who merely agree that they feel closer to the European Union after their involvement to the YOUTH Program. Consequently, ninety-nine of the participants recognize the influence and contribution of the YOUTH Program in developing their feeling of belonging to Europe. Moreover, issues like human rights, freedom,

democracy, participation, European integration and mutual respect (Question 11) are promoted through the Program and enrich participants' knowledge. Consequently, more than seventy percent of the participants feel more European after their participation to the YOUTH Program than they did before. In the eleventh question, participants highlighted the Program's ability to promote democracy, freedom and human rights among other things. As Checkel (Olsen, 2005, p.346) mentioned in his article, the European values and policy paradigms must be incorporated at the domestic level to help reshape people's identities. Here exactly lays the YOUTH Program's strength to incorporate them into young Europeans daily lives.

Chrysochoou (2004, p.144) pointed out that the European "res publica" will be the cornerstone of the protection of "democracy of reflection" in the context of a new, multilevel and international "civitas" that signifies the progress of the common culture of Europe. The YOUTH Program, due to the abovementioned question outcomes, sets the necessary elements in promoting the ideal of the European Union to all young participants. This is demonstrated by the very high percentage of people's acceptance of key European values. It is significantly important to mention that the YOUTH Program offers young people an opportunity to realize the assets of their country's Europeanization. It was Chrysochoou (2005, p.97) who mentioned that even twenty-five centuries after the establishment of the Roman *respublica*, the same characteristics constitute *the raison d'etre* of *res publica* that the European Union is seeking. He pointed out the necessity for people to actively participate in a new, multilevel and international *civitas* that will signify Europeanization's effectiveness to promote Europe's common culture (Chrysochoou, 2004, p.144). As can be seen through the survey's results, the YOUTH Program's strong point lies in the fact that three out of four participants believe in the strength of the YOUTH Program to establish and promote basic values and beliefs among them. This provides basics for achieving transnational bonding and the construction of an active European society; the necessary elements for the Europeanization of youth, society's and eventually all people.

## Conclusions

The analysis came up with certain outcomes that support the alleged claim that the YOUTH Program promotes the Europeanization of youth in Greece. It was the outcomes of both the interviews and questionnaires that demonstrated that the European Integration project can be promoted through the YOUTH Program. It became clear that the Program contributes in feeling safer next to people who were strangers before participating to the YOUTH Program. This is one of the basic elements of Kant's Law of Cosmopolitanism. Moreover, as shown through question 9, elements like common European awareness, mutual respect, human rights and common culture are promoted through the YOUTH Program and contribute to the creation of young people's way of thinking. These elements promote transnational bonding, the formation of a European identity with specific origins, and the formation of a European demos. As Chrysochoou wrote (2001, p.321), the creation of a European demos and a European identity are basic elements for the Europeanization of people. Lavdas, Chrysochoou, Warleigh, Kaldor, Bellamy,

Castiglione and Schmitter among others, have extensively analyzed and shed light on this issue.

European demos is a "community of citizens linked to each other by strong democratic bonds and pressing to acquire a measure of effective control through formal or informal means over government" (Chrysochoou 2000, p.109).  Or, as Habermas (1998) wrote, "the notion of a demos refers to a form of civic membership in a political community organized around a specific set of common political ideals and principles" (cited by Fatovic, 2005, p.2). In addition, Bellamy and Castiglione described demos as "the creation of a political form that will provide people with power and will encourage the open dialogue between EU citizens" (2004, p.171). As was highlighted through this research, open dialogue is only one of the issues empowered by the YOUTH Program.

Moreover, Actions such as the Future Capital (part of Action 3) help young participants to develop local projects in their regions.  The YOUTH Program encourages participants to hand out the knowledge that they gain from their participation to the YOUTH Program to their regions. For example, an ex-EVS volunteer exercised the knowledge of both the Spanish language and the Gallego language she learned during her voluntary service, by teaching in small groups of students under the Future Capital action.

The shift that seemingly occurs in young people's lives is diffused in the majority of the people and, in a percentage that exceeds sixty percent, has widely contributed in giving a European orientation to their lives. The European identity formation and the European Demos formation are necessary for these changes to occur. Moreover, as shown through question 5, it turned out that the YOUTH Program promotes changes in the domestic scene and obviously in young people's lives in their regions.

Any question I tried to analyze and shed light on, came up with the same outcome: participation to the YOUTH Program contributes in the Europeanization of the young Greeks. I suggest that there is a strong link between young people's shifts towards the European Union and the participation in one or more YOUTH Programs. Consequently, we should reconsider the European Youth Policies importance towards the deepening of the European Union, especially, if we aim in European Union's long run, towards Europeanization through *the Europeanization of people*.

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**Appendix:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Q.1 Do you believe your participation in the Youth Program contributed to your Transnational bonding with the youth participants of the other countries? And did the Program help you to see that there are common characteristics between you and them?<br><br>Q.2 If yes, which of the below suit you better? :<br>i.    Democracy<br>ii.   Human Rights<br>iii.  Education<br>iv.  Religion<br>v.   Economy<br>vi.  Other | Yes  108<br><br>No    27<br><br><br><br>Democracy        68<br>Human Rights    84<br>Education         30<br>Religion          16<br>Economy        21<br>Other           22 |
| Q.3 After your participation to the Youth program, do you believe that the things which you though that separated you from people from other EU countries are less than those you considered before your participation?<br><br>Q.4 If yes, which of the following:<br>i.    Youth<br>ii.   Culture<br>iii.  Politics<br>iv.  Religion<br>v.  Economy<br>vi. Other | Yes 115<br><br>No  22<br><br><br>Youth          105<br>Culture         79<br>Politics         30<br>Religion        14<br>Economy      19<br>Other         13 |
| Q.5 Do you believe that the conversations and projects you developed, during the Youth Program that you participated, (with the young participants from the other countries), helped you to understand the positive outcome of Greece's participation in the EU? | NO                           17<br><br>Yes, the following:<br>Domestic Progress        79<br>Change in the Dem. Institutions  39<br>Improvement in the Social Policy 55<br>Human rights            54<br>Economic ascent        43<br>Other                10 |
| Q.6 Do you know if there is a Youth Information Centre in your town? | Yes  105<br><br>No  30 |
| Q.7 If yes, have you ever used its services? | Yes  73<br><br>No  45 |
| Q.8 Do you believe that the Youth program contributes in the construction of a *common European identity*? | Yes  108 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Q.9 If yes, which of the following do you think are constructing through the Youth Program?<br>   Common European awareness<br>   Mutual respect<br>   Human Rights<br>   Common Culture<br>   European demos | No  24<br><br>Common European awareness   72<br>Mutual respect   86<br>Human Rights   54<br>Common Culture   70<br> European demos   65 |
| Q.10 Do you believe that the participation in the Youth Program helps the young participants to realize that EU is much closer than they believed before their participation in the Program? | Disagree   15<br>Weakly agree   7<br>Relatively Agree   11<br>Agree   23<br>Sufficiently agree   54<br>Strongly agree   23 |
| Q.11 Did your participation in the Youth Program helped you to enrich your knowledge about issues like :<br><br>Human Rights, Freedom, Democracy, Participation, European Integration, Mutual Respect? | Disagree   13<br>Weakly agree   6<br>Relatively Agree   14<br>Agree   26<br>Sufficiently agree   52<br>Strongly agree   22 |
| Q.12 Do you believe that the Youth Program contributes in helping young people to accept their country's changes more easily than before their participation? | Yes  109<br><br>No  25 |