

SALTO-YOUTH
TRAINING AND COOPERATION
RESOURCE CENTRE



Erasmus+



General Report

of training courses held within the period of

November 2015- May 2016

Appetiser in Croatia, 24th-28th of November 2015

Appetiser in Sweden, 26th-30th of January 2016

Appetiser in Bulgaria, 10th – 14th of May 2016

by the pool of trainers:

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Participating countries	Final number of participants
BELGIUM-FL	2
BULGARIA	3
CROATIA	5
CYPRUS	2
CZECH REPUBLIC	2
DENMARK	3
ESTONIA	2
FRANCE	1
GERMANY	2
HUNGARY	2
ICELAND	1
ITALY	2
LITHUANIA	3
NORWAY	2
POLAND	2
ROMANIA	7
SLOVAKIA	2
SLOVENIA	1
SPAIN	1
SWEDEN	2
SWITZERLAND	2
THE NETHERLANDS	1
TURKEY	6
UNITED KINGDOM	5
Total	61

Total number of received questionnaires	61
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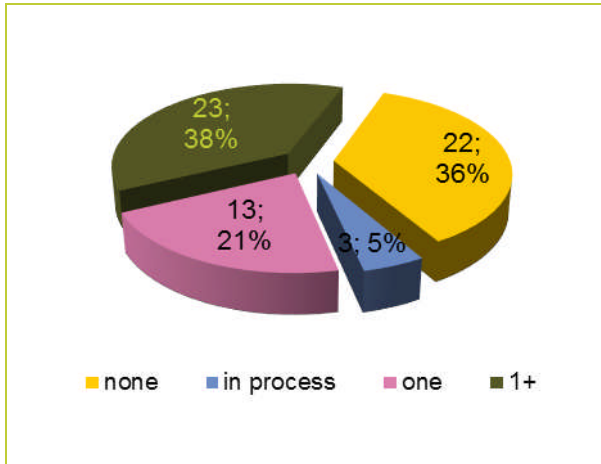
Looking at the number of actual participants in the Appetiser training courses (please see *Annex 1*), there were an average of 20 participants in each training course. In general, we can say that Appetiser training course has not reached the level of participants that it can accommodate in each training course (expected turnout up to 30). Compared to the last cycle (see Appetiser General Report (AGR) 2014-2015,), where the average was 27 participants, the decrease is significant.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES: ARE THEY MET?

YES	61	NO	0
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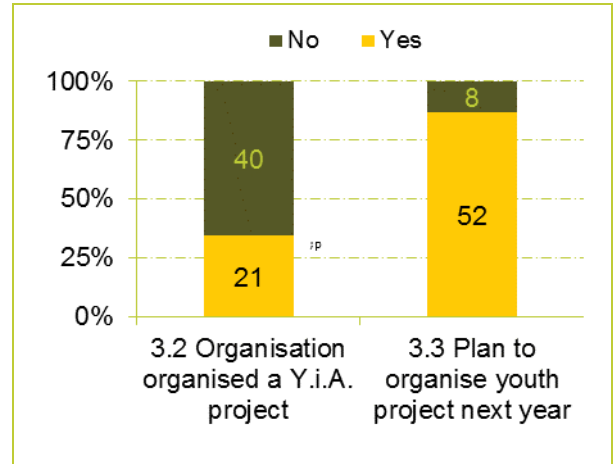
3. TARGET GROUP

3.1 Experience in international youth activities



3.2 Organization organized an Erasmus + : Youth in Action project before

3.3 Plan to organized an Erasmus + : Youth in Action project next year



General conclusions about participants selection and preparation

Participants were absolutely convinced that aims and objectives of Appetiser have been met.

The main target group of Appetiser is participants with no prior experience in international youth work. However, only 36% (57 % in AGR 14/15) of them fulfilled this criterion. 38% (43 % in AGR 14/15) had *one or more experiences* already. The remaining 26% with experience being *in process* or *having 1 experience* can fall under the main target group of Appetiser (considering also, that some of the responders were referring to *being a participant in a youth exchange* or *being an EVS volunteer*).

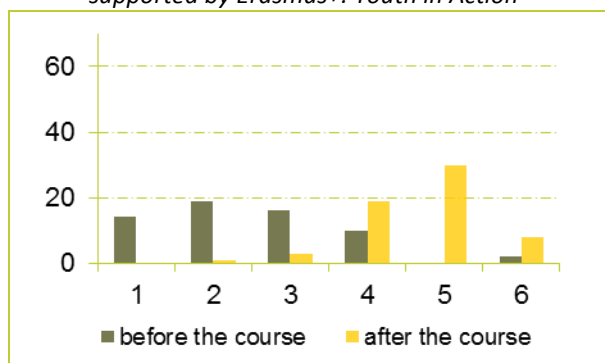
34,4% (34,3% in AGR 14/15) of the organizations represented, had already organized a Youth in Action project; this parameter remained stable and in consideration of the years just before the inauguration of the new Programme (where, presumably more experienced organizations were represented in need of getting more information about it), the decrease is significant and as a result, the represented organizations fit better to the anticipated profile for Appetiser.

It is very encouraging and promising that 86,66% of the respondents plan to organize an Erasmus + Youth in Action project next year¹; 89% was the result in the AGR 14/15, which is identical. This result is also backed up by the fact that, as seen above, overall, participants were quite experienced in Erasmus+: Youth in Action projects (comparing to what is expected for Appetiser training courses).

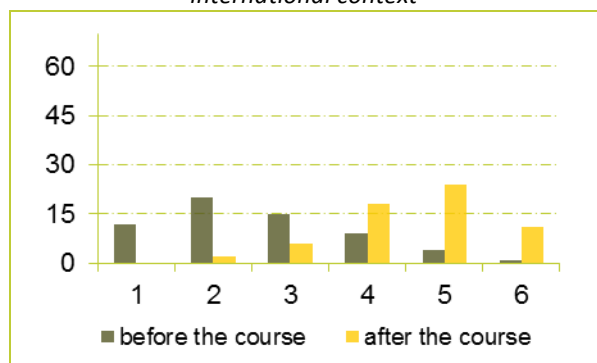
¹ This is the *next year* of the reported "Appetiser", not of this report.

4. GROUP LEARNING PROCESSES AND RESULTS

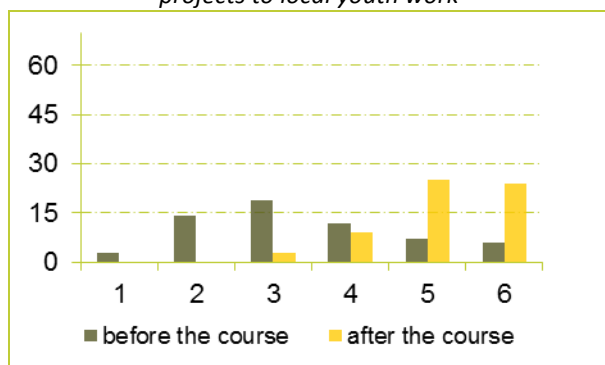
4.1 Understanding of the international youth projects supported by Erasmus+: Youth in Action



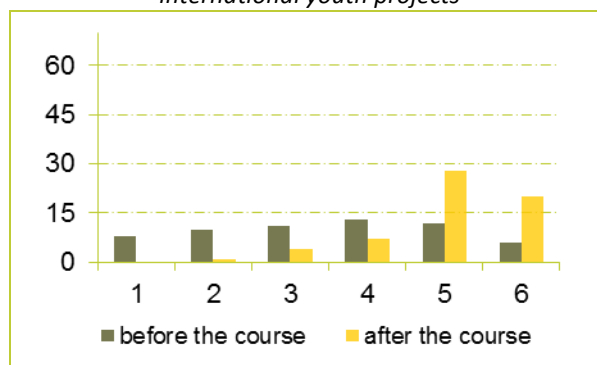
4.2 Confidence to present local youth activities in an international context



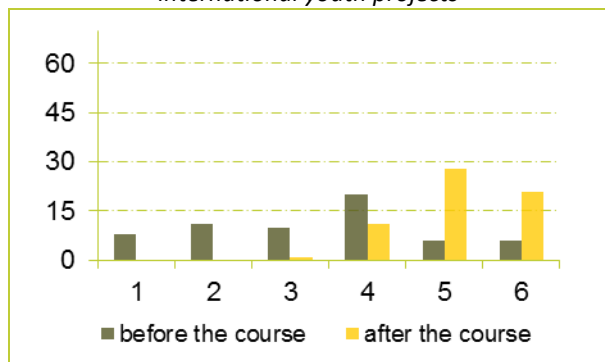
4.3 Awareness of benefits of international youth projects to local youth work



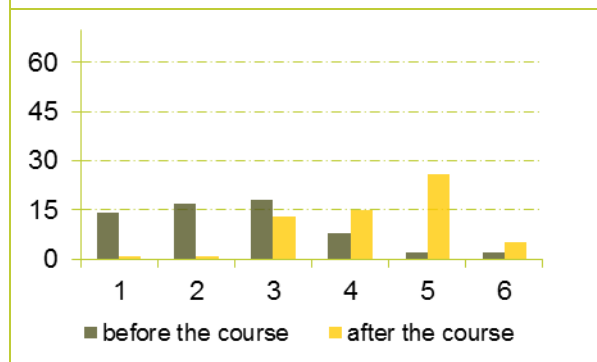
4.4 Understanding of intercultural learning in international youth projects



4.5 Understanding of non-formal learning in international youth projects



4.6 Awareness of quality elements in design and implementation of an Erasmus +: Youth in Action project



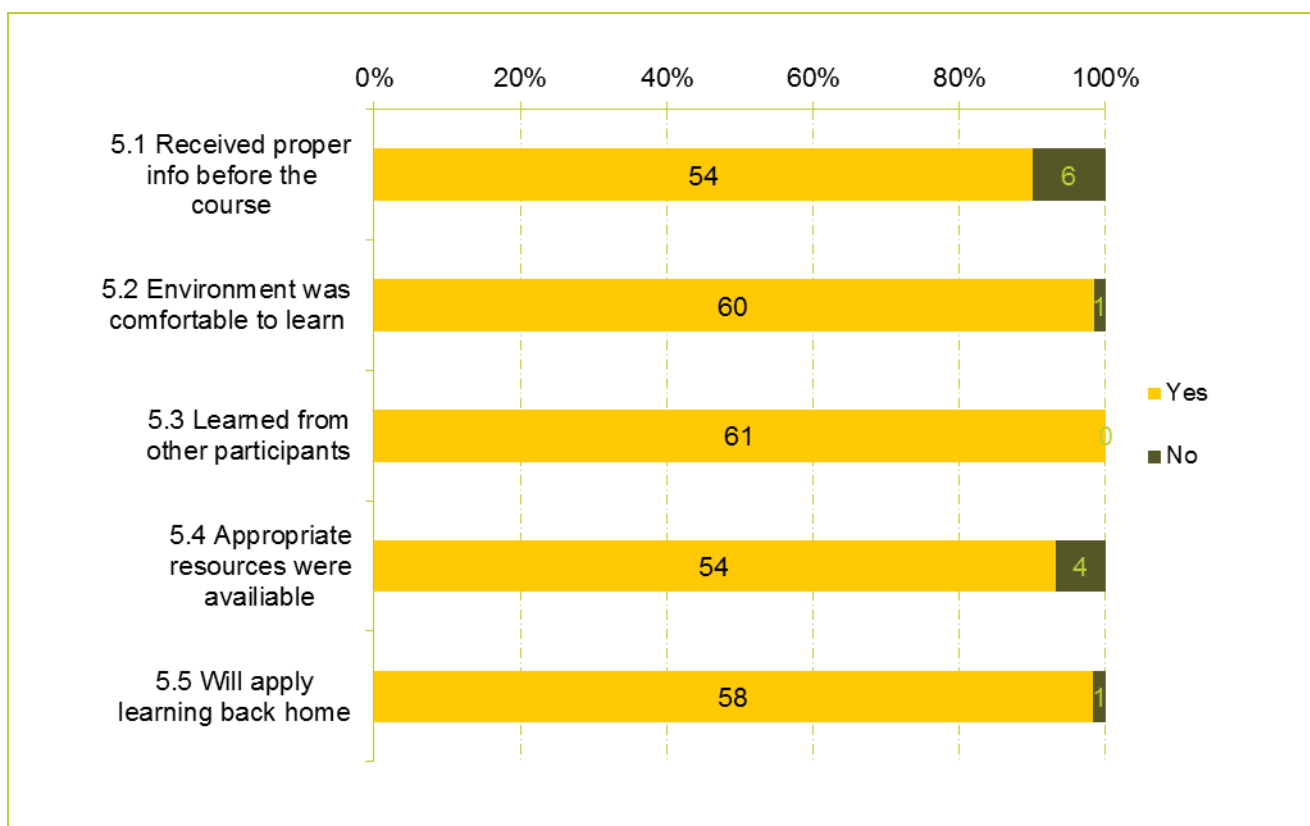
General conclusions about participants learning process and results

All of the above graphs clearly demonstrate that there has been a remarkable increase of *knowledge* and *skills* in every researched item. More specifically:

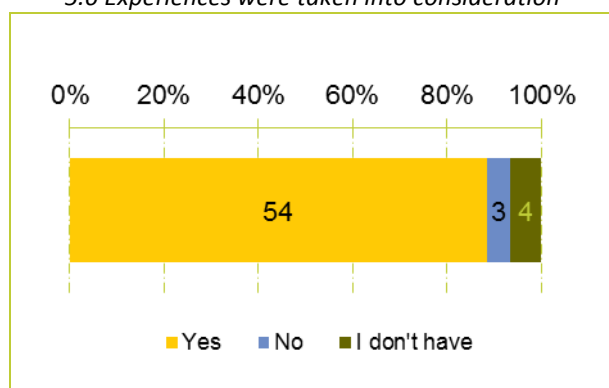
- Graph 4.1 shows that participants now have a solid grasp on international youth projects supported by the Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme. The sessions “Sharing of experience” and above all, “Good practices” have admittedly played a key role in this achievement.
- Graph 4.2 shows that Appetiser has empowered participants to feel proud and confident to present their local activities in an international context; again, the “Sharing of experience” session but also, the “Organizations’ bazaar” have supported the goal.

- c) Graph 4.3 presents the – very encouraging – responses to an underlining question in Appetiser: *will international youth work make a difference in participants’ local reality?* Participants are evidently aware now that the practice of international youth work can enhance their local youth work service delivery and its benefits can have a great impact in young people’s lives.
- d) Graph 4.4 tells us that participants now have a good breadth of understanding on *intercultural learning in international youth projects*. The theory and practice of intercultural learning is based upon several inputs by disciplines such as sociology, psychology and pedagogy; it is also something mainly constituted by 2 concepts increasingly complex and *in flux*, that is *culture* and *learning*. Therefore, “understanding” of it takes, possibly, much more than a 3-days international training course. Admittedly, though, there is a lot of effort being put by the trainers’ team both to explore the concept intellectually and to experience its suggested methodologies and approaches, specifically within youth projects.
- e) Same as right above, Graph 4.5 informs us that *non-formal learning principles and practice* are now well understood by the participants. The remarks, the considerations and the conclusions made for *intercultural learning* are also valid here.
- f) Graph 4.6 shows a not to be underestimated result in terms of *Awareness of quality elements in design and implementation of an Erasmus+ Youth in Action project*; Appetiser does not go into depths with regards to quality elements of projects but participants have a good deal of opportunities to come across experiences (be it from the trainers themselves or the invited organizations during the “Good practices” session) which demonstrate quality elements in action.

5. QUALITY OF THE COURSE ORGANISATION



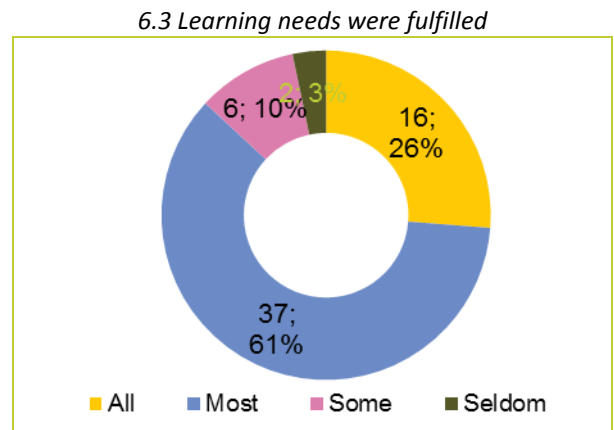
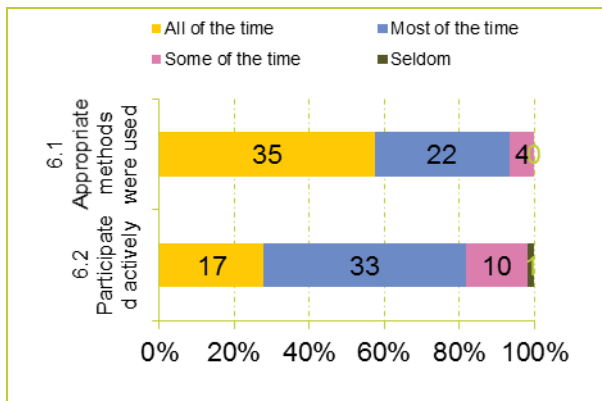
5.6 Experiences were taken into consideration

**General conclusions about quality of the course organization**

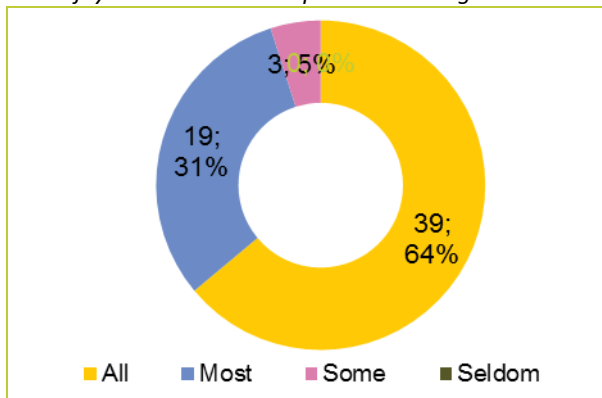
It is evident from the above graphs that SALTO TC RC, the hosting and sending National Agencies and the trainers' team, have made a significant effort to deliver "Appetiser" in good quality. In a nutshell:

- Only a 10% of participants, (2,8 % in AGR 14/15) have not received *proper information before the course* (graph 5.1); we can safely assume that those participants who responded so, were either last-minute replacements or simply facing technical and/or other difficulties that surpass the capability of the information providers (sending/hosting National Agencies) to solve them. It is also important to mention that for every Appetiser in the current cycle, there was a person appointed by the hosting NA, acting as an event coordinator and serious amount of time was dedicated to provide the participants with information and help with their preparation before the trainings.
- The *environment has been comfortable to learn* something that also enabled significant *learning from other participants* (see graphs 5.2 & 5.3). The achievement is so high that it can be safely concluded that despite the physical space chosen for the seminar venue (Appetiser has taken place anywhere between the spectrum of fully-serviced hotels to self-managed youth centres), the concentrated effort by everyone involved is solid, coordinated and systematised that any spatial limits and restrictions (eg. room capacity, remoteness, social spaces etc) are effectively overcome. All of the participants think they have learnt from other participants; this also shows that there was a well-established group dynamic within different groups of participants in all Appetiser training courses and the methods chosen gave the opportunity to learn from each other.
- All (54) but very few respondents (4) believe that *appropriate resources were available to use and take with them* (see graph 5.4); something that will also assist them in *applying the learning back home* (see graph 5.5). The trainers' team has created (and continuously updates and improves) an Appetiser-specific resource file that is sent to the participants after the seminar (in many cases, we have been able to send the resource file at the end of each working day; a practice that we want to improve in the future). We have testimonies (be it through the Facebook groups that are now a standard, participant-initiated practice or through personal emails to the trainers) that this file, when properly explored, has almost the effect of a "eureka" moment. It, also, greatly helps to put the learnt into practice, as participants can explore different methods and the theories that back them up.
- 88,5% (89 % in the AGR 14/15) of the participants believe that their experiences were considered during the course, reflecting this way a major component of Appetiser's methodology, which sees them as "experts" of their own reality whose experiences can have a significant impact to the work lives of their peers. Only 3 participants out of 61 responded that their experience has not been considered. This number, although with small statistical significance, might be connected to the presence of *more experienced* participants as we have seen in the Graph 3.1 above. This figure is in absolute balance with the finding in the AGR 14/15.

6. METHODS AND INDIVIDUAL LEARNING



6.4 Enjoyed intercultural experience during the seminar



General conclusions about methods and individual learning

There is a lot of learning, evidently, taking place in “Appetiser”. Although its duration is short and explored themes need to be compacted, opportunities for learning are diverse and well supported. That’s why 93,4% (see graph 6.1) - a very small decrease compared to AGR 14/15 - of the respondents consider that *appropriate methods were used all or most of the time* something which helped them to *participate actively* (82% all or most of the time, see graph 6.2 – 9% decrease compared to AGR 14/15). Looking at the graphs, there is only one participant that replied “seldom” in any of these two questions. The 16% of the participants that chose “*some of the time participating actively*” have been usually stating *lack of experience* as the reason for their low-level active participation.

With *methods being appropriate* and *participants being active*, *learning needs were fulfilled* (see graph 6.3). 87 % (same as in AGR 14/15) of the respondents have *ticked all or most* of their learning goals at the end of the seminar. 3 of the participants mentioned their learning needs were not fulfilled; this is, probably, because of the comparatively high rate of *experienced participants* (see Graph 3.1). The 10 % (13% in the AGR 14/15) of participants that have mentioned *some* of their learning needs were fulfilled, in general, they would expect more information about the specific actions, more details and several times also, more hands-on, practical tips on application writing, something that is not foreseen as an objective for Appetiser.

Lastly, Appetiser aspires to be the first international and also intercultural experience for its participants. The *intercultural experience during the training* has been greatly enjoyed by 95 % of them (same as in AGR 14/15).

7. METHODOLOGY

The standard methodology developed throughout the last 12 years, has been applied during the implementation of the referred Appetiser training courses. Participants were invited to be actively involved and contributing, share responsibility and have well-reflected experiences. The trainers' team is constantly trying to get to the right balance between the dipoles of *action-reflection* and *theory-practice*. Concluding from all of the above findings, this has been the case and the *vast majority of the participants have enjoyed the learning journey*.

8. TEAM

In a nutshell, the members report smooth communication in the team, although more effort should be made for the contact to be maintained in periods of *inertia* (that is, between 2 courses, usually end of spring and beginning of autumn).

Cooperation between the team members, NA representatives and expert-guests has also been smooth, although the intensity of contact has varied from time to time. In some cases, NA representative(s) stay together with the team in the venue assisting both in administrative and educational issues while other times they are present in those moments that their educational input is necessary (eg. Erasmus+: Youth in Action session). Expert-guests were rightly selected by the hosting NAs and their input and contribution has always been a highlight.

9. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The following can be considered as issues to further explore towards future developments of the "Appetiser" training courses:

- 1) All parties involved in the implementation of "Appetiser" training courses should make an additional effort to bring in participants with no international experience; still if participants with international youth work experience keep coming in, the trainers have developed capacities and approaches to better respond to their needs without compromising outcomes for the less experienced ones. As agreed in the *annual trainer's pool meeting*², the team will work on the rephrasing of the texts used for communications with the public to better highlight the anticipated participants' profile.
- 2) Regarding methods used in "Appetiser", although the degree of satisfaction is only slightly smaller than in the *AGR 14/15*, trainers may consider modifying some parts of the programme, ensuring this way more possibilities for participation and contributions from the learners' side. This is also a way to keep the programme "fresh" and positively challenging also for them (the trainers). It was agreed in the *meeting* mentioned above that particular focus should be placed on further improving the session on *Non-formal learning* and the overall Youthpass process.
- 3) Average number of participants per course could be much higher and suggestively, all engaged stakeholders could initiate a dialogue on how this can be improved.
- 4) It has become evident to trainers that quite a few of the participants – of the "experienced" ones – have specific needs with regards to better understanding of one or the other sub-action of the Programme. It may be helpful to ask participants specifically about their E+: Youth in Action experience / sub-actions experience, during their registration, something that – at the time of finalizing this report – the trainers' team has already done, in the documents concerned.

² Vienna, Austria, 1 – 2 December 2016

Annex 1

1) Appetiser in Croatia, 24th-28th November 2015

Participating countries	Final number of participants
Bulgaria	1
Croatia	3
Cyprus	2
Denmark	2
Germany	1
Hungary	2
Italy	1
Lithuania	1
Poland	1
Romania	3
Slovakia	1
Slovenia	1
Turkey	3
TOTAL	22

2) Appetiser in Sweden, 26th-30th January 2016

Participating countries	Final number of participants
Belgium-FL	2
Czech Republic	2
Estonia	2
Germany	1
Lithuania	2
Netherlands	1
Poland	1
Romania	3
Spain	1
Sweden	2
Switzerland	1
Turkey	1
United Kingdom	2
Total number	21

3) Appetiser in Bulgaria, 10th – 14th May 2016

Participating countries	Final number of participants
Bulgaria	2
Croatia	2
Denmark	1
France	1
Iceland	1
Italy	1
Norway	2
Romania	1
Slovakia	1
Switzerland	1
Turkey	2
United Kingdom	3
Total number	18