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intro

Youthforum taking up challenges for Young People in Europe

Word by Tine Radinja - President

It has been a challenging year for youth in Europe: with 6 million unemployed young people due to the financial crisis, these are not easy times.

Very symbolically, we started 2009 with an activity in the frame of the Czech Presidency of the EU to discuss with the decision-makers the need for an urgent action to address the risk of “losing a generation” and we finished the year celebrating a new **EU Strategy for Youth** where those challenges were taken up as priorities to be tackled. Meanwhile the planning phase of a transnational project on youth employment to be launched in the first half of 2010 was completed.

for the Rights of Young People in Europe equipped with a new work-plan and a new team in the Bureau, after the elections at the General Assembly in Rotterdam, 2008. The implementation of the objectives set there have been pursued in steady pace thanks to a committed team of volunteers in the bureau, supported by a unique pool of professionals in the Secretariat and the participation of Member Organisations in working groups and numerous other meetings.

Overall, the Platform continued to strive

The active participation of young people in

their societies this year had the tough challenge of boosting young people to take part in the elections for the European Parliament. Hence, we launched the New Youth Agenda in March and coordinated the 'Get-out-the-vote' campaign with many of our member organisations.

Moreover, the Youth Forum launched the initiative towards a **European Convention on the Rights of Young People** with in the Council of Europe, with our aim to increase the discussion on the rights-based approach towards young people. As adopted by the Work Plan, the Youth Forum has been working ever-since on the inclusion of migrants and launched a project on the matter.

Health and Sustainable Development were high on the European Youth Forum agenda in 2009, and a specific outcome of that were the successful Health Conference and the organisation and coordination of youth participation at the COP 15.

You will have the opportunity to discover in this Annual Report that, as has been the case every year, the advocacy work towards the institutions has been the focus of the European Youth Forum actions. We have been consolidating the cooperation with the different institutions, being a recognised partner in the youth field. Important work has been done in order to achieve the creation of an **Intergroup on Youth** at the European Parliament.

This year the European Youth Forum took the challenge of going towards a 2.0 communication. Being active and present in the

social media, the YFJ is as well trying to reach out to young people; make their voice clearly heard and share best practices with other member and youth organisations. But the European Youth Forum will not stop its work there, and new tools will come throughout 2010.

The current Bureau also set up a new contact system, to improve the communication and bring together the European Youth Forum and its Member Organisations. This is our crucial task, but in order to achieve a greater ownership of the Youth Forum and develop it as a place to network, share and achieve more together, some more steps still need to be taken before the end of our



*“ A place
to network, share
and achieve more
together ”*

mandate, so as to meet our goal of being a young, fit, flexible and inclusive platform.

We believe that with the strengths and knowledge of the active young people involved in our Platform the European Youth Forum will succeed in the implementation of the work plan 2009-2010, and more importantly will address the needs of young people in today's Europe and of those in their youth organisations.

Education

Education is indispensable in supporting young people's active participation in all spheres of society. Thus, in 2009 the European Youth Forum together with its Member Organisations dedicated considerable resources and time in the area of education, following ongoing processes and enhancing its position as a relevant stakeholder in the field.

Quality of Non-Formal Education

The quality of Non-Formal Education (NFE) is often difficult to grasp and difficult to define. But the YFJ, after ground-breaking work in 2008 with the Policy Paper on NFE, started in 2009 a pilot project on Quality Assurance. This project gathers 6 YFJ Member Organisations testing a European scheme which allows them to further develop the quality of their Non-Formal Education programmes and projects. Equally important, it gives them a framework through which parents, institutions, schools, etc. can become more aware of Non-Formal Education and the opportunities it creates for young people.

Non-Formal education and schools ?

The quality of Non-Formal Education (NFE) is often difficult to grasp and difficult to define. But the YFJ, after ground-breaking work in 2008 with the Policy Paper on NFE, started in 2009 a **pilot project on Quality Assurance**. This project gathers 6 YFJ Member Organisations testing a European scheme which allows them to further develop the quality of their Non-Formal Education programmes and projects. Equally important, it gives them a framework through which parents, institutions, schools, etc. can become more aware of Non-Formal Education and the opportunities it creates for young people.

Mobility

All young people should in 2020 have the possibility to be mobile learners', said Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, in 2009. Consequently, the European Commission launched a consultation process on the **learning mobility of young people**, on barriers that exist for young people and on how to overcome them. The YFJ, calling for more mobility possibilities for young people, held an extensive consultation process with its Member Organisations leading to a joint response, but also supporting Member Organisations with their own inputs. The YFJ's expertise was further recognised by the European Economic and Social Committee which appointed the YFJ as their expert on Learning Mobility. From a rights-perspective the YFJ also tackled key issues on freedom of movement and mobility in the framework of the advocacy work related to the 2010-2014 framework for EU policies in the fields of Justice, Freedom and Security (Stockholm Programme).

A new EU work plan on education

The European Union's work plan on Education (Education and Training 2010) is coming to its end, to be replaced with a plan for the next decade. In this regard the YFJ invested heavily in policy and advocacy work to develop a coherent proposal outlining young people's main needs in education and to present this to all decision makers.

The importance of youth involvement and the role of the YFJ was recognised by the Czech EU Presidency which co-organised a **Stakeholders Conference** with the YFJ in which representatives of youth organisations discussed directly with institutions, employers and other educational providers.

WG on Education

28-29 March, Brussels

12-13 September, Brussels

4-6 December, Kandersteg

Bureau members responsible:

Michal Kadera, Luca Scarpello

Secretariat support: **Maarten Coertjens**,
Policy Officer on Education

Anemone Birkebaek - DUF /

Hannes Wacker - EFIL /

Ketevan Chachava - ESIB /

Jelena Brankovic - ESN /

George Kipouros - ESYN /

Alenka Blazinsek - MSS /

Pieter-Jan Van der Velde - VJR /

Micha Poszvek - WOSM

Youth Work Development

The engagement of the Youth Forum in Youth Work Development is found in the active support of the establishment, consolidation and strengthening of youth structures in Europe, based on foundations and values of European youth work. Youth NGOs and especially YFJ Member Organisations (MOs) show the example of co-operation and networking, both in Europe and by reaching out to other regions of the world.

Youth Work Development in Europe

To contribute to the establishment and/or development of National Youth Councils in all EU countries and South East Europe, the Youth Forum has carried out during 2009 the following activities:

- **Networking Days in Serbia** organised with participants from youth organisations from Serbia as well as YFJ Member Organisations bringing their experience, with the aim of enhancing the networking of youth organisations in Serbia, in order to support the establishment of a National Youth Council;
- **Study visit to Turkey** to obtain a clear picture on the situation of youth organisations, youth work and youth policy development and to ascertain what the YFJ's next steps should be in supporting youth organisations in Turkey;

- **Preparations launched for events** in Montenegro, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Poland, planned to be carried out in 2010.

The EU Youth in action programme

In 2009, the Youth Forum concluded its evaluation and consultation process on the Youth in Action Programme (YiA) of the EU. The Members of the Youth Forum drew attention to the importance of the Youth in Action (YiA) programme and especially the administrative funding as a source of sustainability for youth work in Europe. These programmes aim at responding to the evolution and needs of young people on the European level and at involving them in shaping the Union's future. With these aims in

mind, the YiA programme and especially the administrative funding allow many Youth NGOs (YNGOs) to exist. Hence it is of up-most importance that the main characteristics of youth organisations are taken into account by the programme managers and evaluators. Year after year, the European Youth Forum has been liaising with the European Commission and working on how this programme can be improved to serve effectively and efficiently youth organisations and young people across Europe. With this vision in mind, the Youth Forum has started to contribute to the European Commission Mid-term evaluation as member of the evaluation Steering Group.

Global Youth Work Development

Young Europeans have a global responsibility. Being a large cohort of world population, youth must be put at the centre of the global political agenda: co-operation and solidarity mechanisms have been reinforced by the Youth Forum, with the aim of attaining this ambitious goal.

In 2009, the success of the first fully-funded **International Co-ordination Meeting of Youth Organisations** (ICMYO) led to new impetus in global co-operation thanks to the support of the Youth Directorate at the Council of Europe. The 10th Anniversary of the **University on Youth and Development** contributed to celebrate these achievements

and the work with our partners. Moreover the continued allocation of a part of the Youth Forum annual budget to development projects, through the **1% Solidarity Fund**, supported the capacity building of regional platforms across three continents.

Inter-Regional co-operation: Africa! But not only

Following work-plan priority, **Africa** was at the centre of the regional co-operation. A major success was the implementation of the partnership between the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe and the European Commission on the follow-up of the Africa-Europe Youth Summit. This co-operation led to capacity building and training activities in Africa and Europe, including the 1st African University on Youth and Development. The Youth Forum continued to be a major stakeholder in this partnership, bridging it with the involvement of Civil Society Organisations in the implementation of the Joint EU-Africa Strategy.

In other Regions, the **Euro-Arab** Youth process was consolidated together with the Council of Europe and League of Arab States and a strong involvement by Member Organisations. Moreover, a clear path towards the first EU-LAC Youth Summit resulted from the 11th **Euro-Latin American Youth Forum**. Relations with **Asia** included continuation of dialogue with the All China Youth Federation.

Membership services and tailored support

Being the Platform that aims to promote youth participation and youth rights in Europe, the Youth Forum contributes to build the capacity and sustainability of its Members through continuous support. In 2009, along side the traditional Information and Networking day on Funding, the **first Meeting of the Secretary-Generals** and Office Directors of Member Organisations was organised. The meeting successfully allowed an exchange of experiences and on the organisational challenges of Youth Organisations.

2009 was also the beginning of a new service - **the contact system** - to YFJ Member Organisations, for strengthening co-operation between MOs and the YFJ Bureau. This system was developed arising from the need to provide a better and more tailored support from the Platform towards its Members.

Moreover, a **visit to Georgia** was aimed at showing support for the youth sector in the country, building up relations between local and international organisations and launching new projects to strengthen the National Youth Council of Georgia.



WG on Youth Work Development

*27-29 March, Brussels /
28-29 November, Brussels*

Bureau members responsible:

Christoffer Grønstad, Agnija Jansone, Hamlet Ohanyan

Secretariat support: **Ante Martić**,
Youth Work Development Policy Officer

Javier Ortega Santos - CJE / **Jose Felipe Sousa** - CNJ / **Stefanie Mueller** - EEE-YFU / **Lloyd Russell Moyle** - IFM-SEI / **Guoda Luomanaitė** - LYMEC / **Anamarija Soco** - MMH / **Irina Pruidze** - NCYOG / **Aygen Bekte** - Y-E-N



Training

Training is an essential tool to build stronger youth organisations and deliver quality in programmes and activities. In 2009 the Pool of Trainers (PoT) was fully replenished with 40 trainers from different backgrounds, countries and Member Organisations. Moreover the project of a tool-kit to help Youth Organisations to create their own Pool of Trainers matured and elaboration started with the expertise provided by the PoT.

Pool of Trainers

Basak Zeynep Tuzun / AEGEE
Musa Akgul / AEGEE
Maria Nomikou / AEGEE
George Kalmpourtzis / Alliance
Gabriella Civico / CJE
Andreia Henriques / CNJ
Bruno Antonio / CNJ
Elena Diez-Villagrasa / CNJC
Marc Cases Martin / CNJC
Radu Cosmin Seuche / CTR/WOSM
Marilena Kyprianou / DEMYC
Astrid Weber / DNK
Carmen Fischer / ECOSY
Erik Breves / EEE-YFU
Pernille Christensen / EEE-YFU
Aygen Bekte / EEE-YFU
Eva Vítková / EFIL
Florin Feldmann / EFIL
Costas Chronopoulos / ESYN
Lea Sedlmayr / FIMCAP
Maram Anbar / ICYE
Daniel Rodriguez Muñoz / IFMSA
Karolina Tuomisto / IFMSA
Bruno Selun / IGLYO
Monika Novosadova / IYNF
Liga Grundsteine / JEF

Asa Gunven / JEF
Karina Ufert / LIJOT
Marius Ulozas / LIJOT
Matej Cepin / MSS
Simona Mursec / MSS
Ilona Kochoy / NCYOG
Ekaterina Sherer / NYCR
Daniela Gertrud Reiter / ÖJV
Eija Kauniskingas / RYEurope
Grazyna Pulawska / SCI
Dejan Acanski / SCI
Nina Arnus / WOSM
Lilit Simonyan / YEE
Marko Paunovic / YEU

Participation **and Youth Policy** **Mainstreaming**

Ensuring the participation of young people and youth organisations in decision-making processes from the local to the European level is core to the mission of the Youth Forum.

Internal capacity building on participation, involvement in processes on volunteering with like-minded NGOs, advocacy towards institutions on Youth Rights, and other processes marked the YFJ commitment throughout 2009. Especially committed to contributing to the assessment of the previous and shaping of the new framework of European co-operation in the youth field which took place in 2009, the YFJ elaborated its position and presented it to several EU institutions on different occasions, launched a Shadow report, co-organised a stakeholder consultation to the EU, organised Information and Networking days on the topic, attended related consultations and meetings, and co-operated in the development of the European Steering Committee that will implement the Structured Dialogue within the framework. Moreover, the Youth Forum consolidated the European Youth Capital initiative and Antwerp was nominated for the 2011 title.

Participation **and Youth Policy** **Mainstreaming**

The YFJ launched a project aiming to ensure and empower participation of Member Organisations in the decision-making processes at the local and regional level.

The first training for participation in decision-making processes took place in October, and gave an initial opportunity to discuss concept ideas or further develop existing projects as well as produced concrete follow up plans that already started being implemented.

Vote at 16

Lowering the voting age to 16 in all elections is one of the requests that the Youth Forum is proactively asking the Institutions. Lobbying planning started in 2009 by bringing together the experience of Member Organisations involved in related campaigns at National Level. To this end, the participants presented, during an expert meeting in October, the state of art on this topic in their respective countries.

Volunteering

The European Youth Forum continued throughout the year to lobby the European Union to have 2011 designated as European Year of Volunteering. This action was pursued together with an informal coalition of Civil Society Organisations (the EYV Alliance) and eventually resulted in November 2009 with a resolution of the Council of the European Union officially declaring 2011 “the European Year of Voluntary Activities Promoting Active Citizenship (2011)”.

The European Youth Forum has been particularly advocating for the relevance of volunteering in participatory organisations where volunteers not only undertake tasks and actions or carry out a volunteer service but also have the opportunity to play an active part in the decision-making processes. Young volunteers are making an enormous contribution to the well-being of others and to society as a whole in all kinds of voluntary activities; those active in participatory organisations are gaining additional skills and experience which enhance their capacity, now and in the future, to act as active and engaged citizens, which in turn will reinforce our democracies.

European Convention on the Rights of Young People

The European Youth Forum has devoted a substantial part of the year to the lobby for a European Convention on the Rights of Young People. Actions were planned engaging Member Organisations in a lobby group. This group played a facilitating role at the **Youth Event celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Council of Europe** that resulted in a declaration on the need for a Convention on the Rights of Young People adopted by the participants.

The main results at the institutional level were:

- The tabling of a Motion asking for a Convention upon the initiative of the YFJ, in the **Parliamentary Assembly** of the Council of Europe.
- The discussion of the concept of Youth Rights in the Statutory Bodies of the **Directorate of Youth and Sport**, thanks as well to the co-operation with the Advisory Council on Youth.

Youth Declaration Celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the Council of Europe Brdo pri Kranju, Slovenia, September 2009.

(...) "The Council of Europe has always been the avant-garde of global and regional institutions. To maintain this position, new ambitious projects, such as a Convention on the Rights of Young People, have to be realised. The role of the Council of Europe can be no other. The institution as such has a strong reputation that creates expectations among people in Europe. In order to continue enjoying this respect and to avoid political decline, new visionary instruments are needed." (...)

The declaration was handed over to the Slovenian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers.

20th Anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

In December the Youth Forum, in co-operation with the Permanent mission of Finland to the UN office in Geneva, organised a round table discussion on the rights of the child to be heard (art. 12 of the Convention) and on how to reduce the gap between what is perceived as child and youth participation. The meeting launched dialogue and ex-

change of views between Member Organisations with an interest on Child Policies and UN Members States, ILO and UNICEF. The Member States present at the meeting expressed their interest to work more closely with youth organisations in implementing the Convention.

Youth matters at the elections at the European Parliament

In 2009 the European Youth Forum worked intensively towards the European Elections focusing on two directions:

- Promoting among EP candidates a strong Youth Agenda for the mandate of the European Parliament & European Commission (2009-2014) with fifteen concrete proposals in the fields of education, civil society and citizenship, participation and youth policy mainstreaming, human rights, employment and social affairs.

- Promoting the **participation of young people** in the elections: To this end the YFJ

fostered its Member Organisations' involvement in the campaign, cooperated with the European Union institutions to improve their communication towards young people and took part in a public debate on EuroParlTV.

After the election, the YFJ monitored the results and identified potential youth-friendly partners among the newly elected MEPs.

Youth Mainstreaming: European Parliament intergroup on youth

Introduction

Implementing the Youth Agenda, the YFJ successfully worked towards the establishment of an Intergroup on youth at the European Parliament. From the start of the new legislature onwards, the **YFJ established contact with the new Members of the European Parliament** (MEPs) from four political groups (EPP, ALDE, SD and Greens-EFA) and obtained their support for the establishment of such an Intergroup. Agreeing on the working agenda put forward by the YFJ, these MEPs lobbied their own political groups internally, whose support was crucial for the Intergroup to finally be created on 10th December 2009.

Strong cooperation with the European Commission

The European Commission continued to be one of the privileged partners of the Youth Forum. In particular strong links with the Youth Unit of the DG Education and Culture. Cooperation with other Directorate Generals were pursued in the spirit of mainstreaming such as with DG SANCO, DG EMPL, DG DEV .

Getting Higher at the United Nations

2009 marked a historical moment for the recognition of Youth Organisations in the global arena. For the first time, thanks to coordinated and lengthy efforts from the side of Youth Organisations, an official consultation towards the Youth Resolution was discussed and adopted at the 64th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, and launched by the UN Focal Point on Youth, giving Regional Youth Platforms a coordinating role to gather the inputs in each continent. The European Youth Forum coordinated for the European input, allowing Member Organisations to participate in this process.

The final outcome of the Resolution was further improved thanks to the coordination between the European Youth Forum, INGYOs partners in ICMYO and the National Youth Delegates to the UN GA coming from National Youth Councils. The result has been a resolution that for the first time includes a clear recommendation towards Member States to support Independent National Youth Councils and proclaiming 2010-2011 as International Year on Youth and a World Ministerial Youth Conference to be held in Mexico in 2010.

Youth Mainstreaming: the example of the Council of Europe

While keeping a privileged cooperation with the Directorate of Youth and Sport, the Youth Forum became member of the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations, which is the fourth pillar in the institutional architecture of the Council of Europe (CoE). Moreover, the Youth Forum established contacts in 2009 with several other bodies of the CoE, such as the European Court of Human Rights, the Committee of Ministers, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Commissioner on Human Rights.

In the spirit of mainstreaming, the Youth Forum became increasingly involved in the CoE work on the Media and New Communication Services, and successfully prepared and executed a youth event related to the **1st Ministerial Conference on the Media and New Communication Services**, and coordinated the youth input to the Conference. The follow up to the conference included attaining observatory status in the **Steering Committee on the Media and New Communication Services** and the organisation of seminars on 'New ways of participation' and 'Better understanding and practical knowledge of web 2.0 tools for youth organisations'.

YOUTH FORUM CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS A NEW EU STRATEGY FOR YOUTH

In 2001 the launch of the White Paper on Youth marked an important moment for Youth Policies in Europe, starting the process of Open Method of Cooperation in the Youth Field. 2009 saw the preparations and the launch of a new EU Strategy for Youth (2010-2018). This was one of the major processes the European Youth Forum has been involved in this year aiming to achieve stronger co-operation in the Youth Field and to strengthen the involvement of the youth sector of Civil Society. The result is a Structured Dialogue that, in the frame of the new Lisbon Treaty Provisions, can be regarded as a reference in the debate around the Civic Dialogue and one of the steps towards the implementation of the art. 165 recognising the role of Young People in building a Democratic Europe.

CZECH EU PRESIDENCY

The Youth Forum has been drawing up the conclusions of the evaluation done in the previous year on the EU Inter-governmental cooperation in the youth field and started its advocacy in the elaboration of the new EU Youth Strategy. The Youth Forum had the chance to speak at the Youth Working Party, before the Czech Presidency Youth Event which took place in Prague in June.

The event focused fully on the Commission Communication on an EU Strategy for Youth and provided feedback on the Commission's proposal. The youth delegates prepared

conclusions of the youth event in five working groups on the following themes: Participation, Outreach and Information; Social Inclusion and Health; Volunteering and Education; Employability, Entrepreneurship and Developing Potential; Evidence-based Policy Making. The conclusions also highlighted the need for clearer objectives, details on tools for implementation and cross-sector cooperation, and the importance of youth organisations to reach the proposed EU Youth Strategy's objectives.

SWEDISH EU PRESIDENCY

The Swedish Presidency Youth "Event" held in September, took the new format of a joint conference of youth organisations and Member States and was one of the last occasions to provide input for the Council Resolution on the future European framework of co-operation in the youth field. The Youth Forum was present in the preparation phase, as well as giving expert input during the event. The conference consisted mainly of joint working groups, including representatives of the Member States, the European Commission and youth representatives from EU NYCs and INGYOs.

The European Youth Forum worked closely with the Swedish Presidency in ensuring that a new structured dialogue would ensure the participation of youth organisations at National and European level in the implementation of EU Strategy. Furthermore, the ground was laid to start the new consultation mechanism with the following trio presidencies (Spain, Belgium, Hungary).

PARTICIPATION AND YOUTH POLICY MAINSTREAMING

WG on Participation and Youth Policy Mainstreaming

4-5 April, Brussels

19-20 September, Malta

28-29 November, Brussels

Bureau members responsible:

**Johan Ekman, Marianne Muona,
Michal Kadera, Kadri Vanem**

Secretariat support: **Magdalena Kurz**,
Policy Officer on Youth Policy in Europe

Julia Hoffmann - AEGEE /

Fatim Diarra - Allianssi /

Silvia Puente Rodriguez - CNJC

Erik Van Braendgaard - DUF /

Dylan Seychell - KNZ-M /

Aleksandra Maldziski - OBESSU /

Kris Snick - VJR /

Loreta Senkute - WOSM

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Work Plan 2009-2010 designates participation and inclusion of young people with migrant backgrounds as the focus of the YFJ's work on Human Rights. Therefore, together with its Member Organisations, the Platform joined forces in 2009 to promote this ambitious goal.

Inclusion of young migrants and young people from migrant background

The YFJ kicked off its project aimed at increasing the capacity of its Members to further include young migrants and young people with migrant background in their work and structures.

A 6-month preparation phase focused on collecting expressions of interest from Member Organisations and further information on existing experience and good practices in the field of **representation of young migrants**. The first capacity building event tackling reaching out and communication strategies, was held in Quba, Azerbaijan in October.

Information and Networking Days on migration and youth were held in June in Brussels and gathered both YFJ Members currently working or interested in further work on migration, and other **youth networks representing young migrants**, providing valuable inputs and ideas on how to facilitate the establishment or consolidation of youth networks representing young migrants and young people with migrant background.

Advocating for a comprehensive EU anti-discrimination legislation

The process related to a new EU Directive covering age-based discrimination was another key area where the YFJ was actively involved in 2009.

The YFJ cooperated with other anti-discrimination networks and within the Social Platform in order to strongly voice the need for a comprehensive EU legislation covering discrimination on the grounds of age, religion or belief, sexual orientation and disability in key areas outside employment, such as education and health care.

Extensive advocacy work was undertaken towards the European Parliament, which gave an opinion on the Commission proposal putting forward many suggestions coming from the civil society including those related to multiple discrimination, differences of treatment on the grounds of age and education.

Durban Conference Review

The YFJ followed up its commitment in the field of combating racism and non-discrimination by attending and contributing to the Durban Conference Review, which took place in April 2009 in Geneva. The event aimed at reviewing the commitments undertaken by the international community on the occasion of the 2000 United Nations World

Conference against Racism (Durban Conference).

Advocacy work undertaken by the YFJ prior to the event focused on the youth-related paragraphs included in the 2000 Plan of Action, multiple discrimination and freedom of expression.

HUMAN RIGHTS

WG on Human Rights

22-23 May, Brussels

27-28 November, Brussels

Bureau members responsible:

Marianne Muona,
Ben Vanpeperstraete

Secretariat support: **Marco Perolini,**
Human Rights and Mobility Policy Officer

Nicolas Puvis - CNAJEP /

Alexia Tsouni - EBCO /

Lucy Nowotnick - IGLYO /

Signhild Samuelsen - LNU /

Paul Fallon- NYCI /

Mourad Mahidi - ÖJV /

Alice Barbieri - WAGGGS /

Sebastian Seehauser- YEN

Employment and Social Affairs

Economically speaking, and for the social situation in Europe, 2009 was a difficult year with a youth unemployment rate at 21% of the youth population and the effect of the economic crisis visibly causing problems in the cohesion of European societies. To ensure that quality employment and social inclusion remain priorities for decision makers, it was crucial for the European Youth Forum to spark this debate, highlighting that young people are among the most affected groups. The YFJ focused on highlighting the importance of youth employment, quality internships, and poverty eradication, among others, without forgetting to work also on the areas of health and sustainable development, in which youth have a say as important stakeholders.

Towards a post-Lisbon agenda

In order to ensure that young people are taken into consideration by the EU when developing the follow up to the Lisbon strategy, the Youth Forum was actively involved during the year in putting forward youth concerns, asking, among other things, that the post-Lisbon agenda puts in place **concrete tools to combat youth unemployment** and to foster inclusion. This was done through

the Youth Forum Position on the updated and renewed European Youth Pact, through lobby work towards decision-makers at the EU level, and, with support of NYCs at the national level, as well as through a meeting with the Social Partners, and through inputs given in the context of the Social Platform.

Youth employment project

The YFJ has made significant progress in producing good practice regarding the role of youth organisations in promoting the employment of young people. The YFJ, together with a consortium composed of seven Member Organisations, started the development of the **Youth Employment Action (YEA)**: a long-term, trans-national project aimed at developing best practice on how to create

entrance to the labour market and decent working conditions for young people. As first concrete outcomes, contacts with relevant stakeholders, internal coordination through a meeting and information sharing took place throughout the year. A dedicated website of the project was in development by the end of 2009.

Sustainable Development

The YFJ played a crucial role in the reinforcement of the international youth climate movement, with, among other things, the establishment of a youth constituency at the **COP15**, therefore strengthening the participation of youth in climate-related pro-

cesses. It also gained considerable visibility through capacity building activities aimed at both its European Member Organisations and young people from the Global South.

Health

With its major role in the launch of the EU youth health initiative, the Youth Forum proved that young people and youth organisations could make significant contribution to health promotion and that they therefore needed to be involved in health policies. At the same time, the YFJ further continued to build the capacities of its Member Organisations, for instance through the training on

mental health organised in June.

The main event in the health area in 2009 was the Health Conference that the YFJ organised together with the EU's Directorate General for Health and Consumers. For this process, and a continuation of youth participation in health issues, the YFJ is managing the Blog 'Be Healthy, Be Yourself



WG on Employment and Social Affairs

21-22 March, Brussels

26-27 September, Moldova

28-29 November, Bruges

Bureau members responsible:

Luca Scarpiello, Kadri Vanem, Ben Vanpeperstraete

Secretariat support: **Inês Alves**, Employment and Social Affairs Policy Officer,

Julie Teng, Health and Sustainable Development Policy Officer

Dragan Stojanovski - AEGEE /

Laura Simik - Allianssi /

Paula Guisande - CJE /

Igor Casapu - CNTM /

Nils Hindersmann - ECOSY /

Maria Sabina Andreuzzi - FNG /

Marc Gimenez Villahoz - FYEG /

Laura Cotley - WAGGGS



Organisational development and Communication

In 2009 the organisation worked towards becoming more fitted to the needs of the Members and towards the goal of promoting the Rights of Young People in Europe in the 21st Century. For these reasons two parallel and interconnected processes have been going on in the field of organisational development and communications: the continuation of Governance Reforms and the development of a Strategic Approach to Communications.

Towards a fitter European Youth Platform

Approaching its 15th Anniversary, the European Youth Forum conducted an extensive evaluation of its governance structures. The Membership updated the Vision and the Mission of the Platform and then discussed possible changes to the Statutory Bodies, so as to ensure that the internal democracy is fit to the current reality of the organisation

and that the platforms will be more efficient and professional while increasingly involving the Members in the work, and reach out to the grassroots while working with Institutional partners and other stakeholders. The process of governance reform will be completed in 2010.

A strategic approach to communications

The European Youth Forum does not exist in isolation, it is a representative platform, whose profile and standing directly correlates with that of its individual MOs and the millions of young people who are active in these organisations. The credibility of the YFJ and its profile is directly related to that of its Members and to the extent to which we do and are what we say we are and our ability to communicate that. This is the essence of the new strategic approach to Communications of the Forum that has been developed throughout the second part of 2009, with a strategic plan for the next three years (2010-2012).

public. This is equally true for YFJ Member Organisations, which are the best means of connecting between grassroots youth participation and institutional representation. By strategically communicating this connection it will benefit both the Organisations and the young people that the YFJ represent.

This is both a challenge and opportunity. An enhanced profile will make the Youth Forum a more credible and formidable player in the eyes of our stakeholders and the general

Publications

In 2009, the European Youth Forum combined online and offline communication. Together with the restyling of the website www.youthforum.org, the Youth Forum published two issues of the Youth Opinion ('Health and Young People' and 'Youth Working on Migration'). A European Youth Forum's "Shadow Report on the Evaluation of the current Framework of European Cooperation in the Youth Field" and an "Advocacy Tool-kit for Anti-Discrimination" were produced, together with leaflets and reports, to inform our members and partners about our activities. Our internal communication tool, the Courier was redesigned following the layout of the new website and is now accessible to everyone.

Social Media

Facebook and Twitter are not anymore a taboo for youth organisations in Europe and it was about time that the European Youth Forum hit on social media. The successful introduction of social media tools and a web 2.0 approach to our communication is in line with the idea of a more participative, transparent and youthful platform for youth organisations in Europe. Through a daily interaction with our members, we are looking sure that the European Youth Forum will be able to grow together with the new generation of digital natives.

Some numbers? (as of December 2009)

Facebook:

More than 1,800 fans

80% of the fans are aged 18-34

An average of 16 interactions a day

More than 300 fans from Turkey

Twitter:

More than 200 followers

More than 1000 hits for #YFJ

2.9 followers for every friend

FINANCES AND ADMINISTRATION

In terms of finances, in 2009 a central focus was put on budget execution over the year, which was below what was foreseen, mostly in relation to Priority Areas (€94.430 lower). One of the reasons for this lower expenditure was the fact that a new cycle was beginning, and during the first semester the focus was placed on evaluating the priorities set by the membership and planning the execution of the Work Plan; this duly resulted in less concrete activities during this period. It is also important to stress that during 2009 there were several changes within the European Youth Forum Secretariat, with nine new staff members starting their contracts during the year: this had an impact on the capacity to execute the activities planned for 2009.

The year also saw the start of the new Youth in Action Programme, which includes, within Action 4.2, the support to the European Youth Forum, settled at a maximum of €2.330.000 for 2009. A new budgetary structure was also introduced, facilitating a stronger connection between the Work Plan and the Budget.

In what concerns the execution of the agreement with DG EAC, there was an under-expenditure, meaning that the total amount applicable to the EU grant amounted to €2.728.605,15 with the final EU contribution calculated at €2.145.141,28. As re-

quired by the EU financial regulations, and the agreement, there was no surplus coming out of the funds allocated to the operating grant agreement.

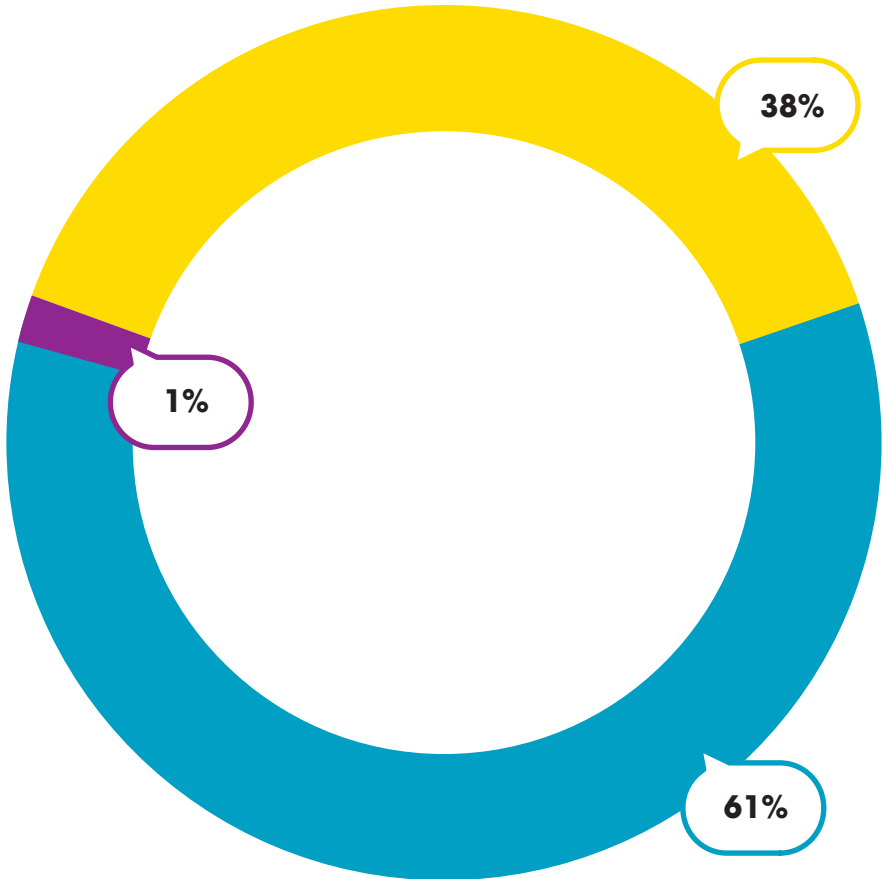
On the remainder of the YFJ budget, not linked to the operating grant agreement with DG EAC under the Youth in Action Program, there was a surplus of €56.494,17.

It is important to reiterate that the Youth Forum strives for correctness and clarity in its accounts, which is essential for both the members and the Forum's partner institutions; this is why the auditing procedures in place are so significant, as much the internal audit and the consultancy role of the Financial Control Commission, as the external auditors, Ernst & Young (appointed by the GA in Vilnius for 2007-2008).

Overall Execution /

The biggest portion of the budget refers to the running cost of the organisation 61% . The running costs are including operational and legal costs as well as employment costs. Programmes and activities are amounting to

38% of the overall execution. These costs are referring to "Priority Working Areas" and "Advocacy and General Work".

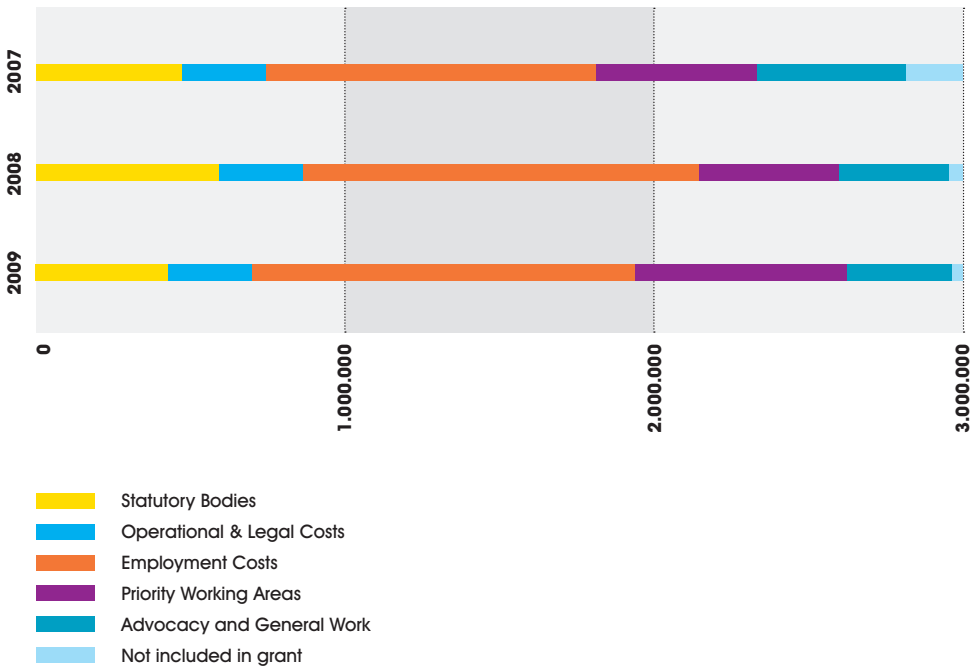


- Running Costs
- Prog. & Activ.
- Not included in Admin. Grants

Budget Execution /

Most of the budget (95%) is included within the framework of administrative grants, from the EU (Youth in Action) and the Council of Europe. The remainder refers mostly to costs not accepted within the framework of these agreements.

Besides this comparison on the overall budget, it is interesting to see how the total costs of the Youth Forum budget have been evolving over the last three years, referring to the amounts allocated within the aforementioned grants.

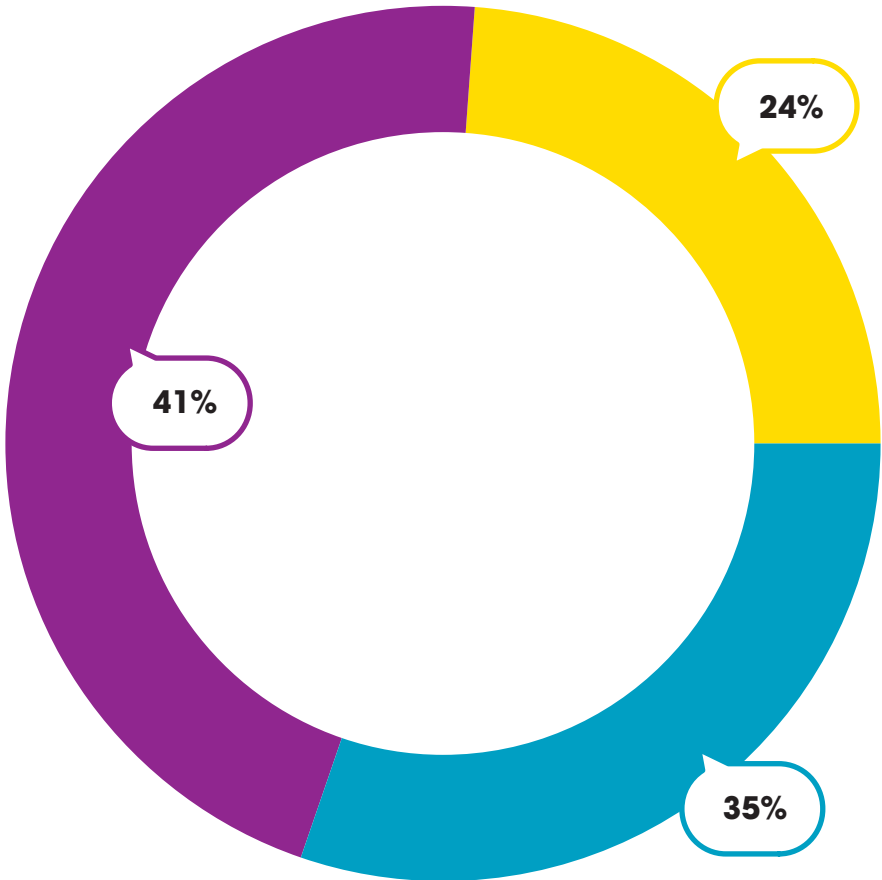


In terms of expenditure, the biggest portion of the Youth Forum budget is allocated to employment costs, representing 51.8% of the total costs. Mainly due to the personnel changes indicated above, there was a rise of €116.659 on these costs from 2008 to 2009.

Programmes and Activities /

The costs for Statutory meetings were €68.642 lower in 2009, due to the bi-annual Ordinary General Assembly that took place in 2008. With regards to funds allocated to the execution of activities and actions fore-

seen in the YFJ Work Plan, namely related to Priority Working Areas, there was an increase of 26% comparing to 2008. Advocacy and General Work related costs were lower than in 2008 (-9%).

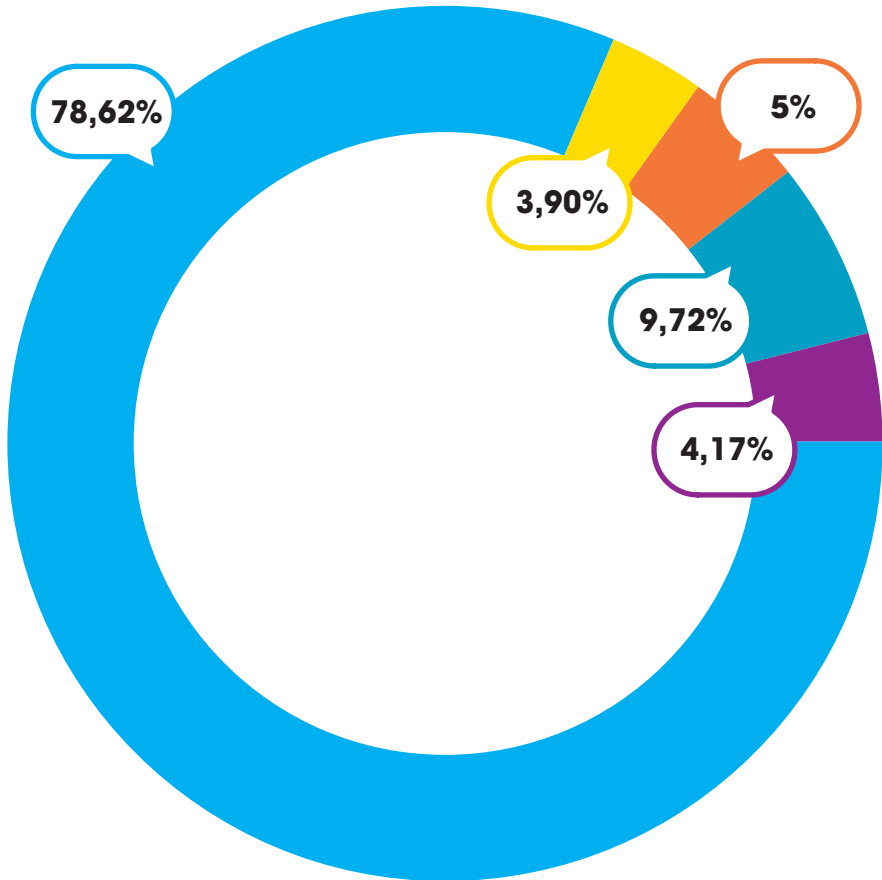


- D. Priority Working Areas
- A. Statuary Bodies
- E. Advocacy and General Work

Incomes /

This financial aspect is of greater importance given that almost 80% of the Youth Forum income stems from annual grants from international institutions. 78,6% of the total income in 2009 came from the

European Communities' Budget, through a grant from DG Education and Culture, while around 3,9% was from Council of Europe grants.



- DG EAC
- Partnerships
- Members Fees
- Volunteer Time
- CoE

EUROPEAN **YOUTH FORUM** **BUREAU**

Tine Radinja - President

Xenia Constantinou - Vice-President

Christoffer Grønstad - Vice President

Johan Ekman - Bureau Member

Agnija Jansone - Bureau Member

Michal Kadera - Bureau Member

Marianne Muona - Bureau Member

Hamlet Ohanyan - Bureau Member

Luca Scarpiello - Bureau Member

Kadri Vanem - Bureau Member

Ben Vanpeperstruete - Bureau Member

SECRETARIAT

SECRETARY GENERAL'S OFFICE

Secretary General

Diogo PINTO (until May)

Giuseppe PORCARO (from June)

Assistant to the Secretary General

Mark PERERA (until January)

Jessica PETER (from February)

Press and External Relations' Coordinator

Letizia GAMBINI

Communication Coordinator

Marta GOMEZ

Membership Services & Training Coordinator

Vera PASYNKOVA (until March)

Daniel NUJTEN (from May)

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ADVOCACY DEPARTMENT

Head of Department

Klavdija CERNILOGAR

Executive Policy Officer

Youth Mainstreaming Sustainable Development & Health

Julie TENG

EU relations Coordinator

Ewoud ROES (until August)

Antoine MERTZEISEN (from August)

CoE Relations Coordinator

Sara ULFHIELM

UN and Global Relations Coordinator

Giuseppe PORCARO (until June)

Vania FREITAS (from July)

Policy Officer Participation

Magdalena KURZ

Policy Officer Employment and Social Affairs

Inês ALVES

Policy Officer Human Rights

Marco PEROLINI

Policy Officer Youth Work Development

Ante MARTIC (until September)

Drazen PULJIC (from September)

Policy Officer Education

Maarten COERTJENS

Policy Assistant

James HIGGINS

Intern

Antoine MERTZEISEN (until July)

EU Presidency Project Officers

Jiri LET (Czech Republic)

Emma STARK (Sweden)

**ADMINISTRATIVE &
FINANCIAL DEPARTMENT**

Administrative & Financial Director

David WAHLI

Translator/ Team co-ordinator

Luc RUMMENS

Accountant

Agata PETCOV

Administrative Assistant

Marie-Aimée MUSANASE

Translator/ Assistant

Anne DEBRABANDERE

Secretary/Assistant

Nicole BURLET-PARENDEL

IT Coordinator/Webmaster

Rafael FONT (until March)

Estefania ASOREY (from February)



MEMBER ORGANISATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN YOUTH FORUM



Full members

National Youth Councils (NYCs)

Suomen Nuorisoyhteistyö Allianssi ry - **Allianssi** (Finland);
Belarusian Union of Youth and Children's Public Associations - **BUYCPA RADA** (Belarus); British Youth Council - **BYC** (Great Britain); Conférence Générale de la Jeunesse Luxembourgeoise - **CG-JL** (Luxembourg); Consejo de la Juventud de España - **CJE** (Spain); Comité pour les Relations Nationales et Internationales des Associations de Jeunesse et d'Education Populaire - **CNAJEP** (France); Conselho

International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations (INGYOs)

ACTIVE - Sobriety, Friendship and Peace; Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe - **AESEE Europe**; Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations - **AL-LIANCE**; International AID Fourth World Movement - **AID-Quart Monde**; Democrat Youth Community of Europe - **DEMVC**; European Bureau of Conscientious Objectors - **EBCO/BECC**; Young European Socialists -

Candidate members

NYCs

Consiliul Tineretului Din Romania - **CTR** (Romania);
Croatian Youth Network - **MMH** (Croatia);
Ukrainian Youth Forum - **UYF** (Ukraine).

INGYOs

Erasmus Students Network - **ESN** ;
Youth of European Nationalities - **YEN**

Nacional de Juventude - **CNJ** (Portugal); Conseil National de la Jeunesse de Catalunya - **CNJC** (Spain-Catalonia); Consiliul National Al Tineretului Din Moldova - **CNTM** (Moldova); Comité pour les Relations Internationales de Jeunesse - **CRIJ** (Belgium, French-speaking Community); National Youth Council of Switzerland - **SAJ/CSAJ** (Switzerland); Cyprus Youth Council - **CYC** (Cyprus); Deutsches Nationalkomitee für Internationale Jugendarbeit - **DNK** (Germany); Dansk Ungdoms Fællesråd - **DUF** (Denmark); Eesti Noorteliit ja Noortekeskus - **ENL** (Estonia); National Council of Hellas - **ESYN** (Greece); Forum Nazionale dei Giovani - **FNG** (Italy); Nemzetközi Ifjúsági Koordinációs Iroda - **GNIK** (Hungary); Nationale Jeugdraad - **JEUGDRAAD** (Netherlands); Kunsli Nazionalni Taz-Zghazagh - **KNZ-Malita** (Malta); Lietuvos Jaunimo Organizacija Taryba - **LJOT** (Lithuania); Latvijas Jaunatnes Padome - **LJP** (Latvia); Landsrådet for Norges barne- og ungdomsorganisasjoner - **LNJ** (Norway); Landsrådet för Sveriges ungdomsorganisationer - **LSU** (Sweden); Landsamband askulövsfélaga - **LÆF** (Iceland); Mladinski Svet Slovenije - **MSS** (Slovenia); National Assembly of Youth Organisations of the Republic of Azerbaijan - **NAVORA** (Azerbaijan); National Council of Youth Organisations of Georgia - **NCYOG** (Georgia); National Youth Council of Armenia - **NYCA** (Armenia); National Youth Council of Ireland - **NYCI** (Ireland); National Youth Council of Russia - **NYCR** (Russia); Österreichische Kinder- und Jugendvertretung - **ÖJV** (Austria); Rada Mládeže Slovenska - **RMS** (Slovakia); Vlaamse Jeugdraad - **VJR** (Belgium, Flemish-speaking Community).

ECOSY: European Confederation of Youth Clubs - **ECYC**; European Democrat Students - **EDS**; European Educational Exchanges - Youth for Understanding - **EEE-YFU**; European Federation for Intercultural Learning - **EFIL**; The National Union of Students in Europe - **ESIB**; European Trade Union Confederation - **ETUC Youth**; EU Federation of Youth Hostel Associations - **EUFD**; European Union of Jewish Students - **EUJS/UEEJ**; Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe - **EYCE**; International Federation of Catholic Parochial Youth Movements - **FIMCAP**; Federation of the Young European Greens - **FYEG**; International Cultural Youth Exchange in Europe - **ICYE**; International Federation of Liberal Youth - **IFLY**; International Falcom Movement - Socialist Educational International - **IFMSEI**; International Federation of Medical Students Association - **IFMSA**; International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth and Student Organisation - **IGLYO**; International Union of Socialist Youth - **IUSY**; International Young Naturreliënds - **INYF**; International Young Catholic Students - **IFYCS**; International Movement of Catholic Students - **JFCI-MIEC**; Young European Federalists - **JEF**; European Liberal Youth - **LYMEC**; International Movement of Catholic Agricultural and Rural Youth - **MJARC-Europe**; Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions - **OBESSU**; Rural Youth Europe - **RYEurope**; Service Civil International - **SCI**; World Organisation of Young Esperantists - **TEJO**; World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts - **WAGGGS**; World Organisation of the Scout Movement (European office) - **WOSM**; European Region of the World Student Christian Federation - **WSCF-Europe Region**; Youth Action for Peace - **YAP**; Youth for Development and Co-operation - **YDC**; Youth and Environment Europe - **YEE**; Youth of the European People's Party - **YEPP**; Youth for Exchange and Understanding - **YEU**; European Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations - **YMCA**; Young Women's Christian Association - **YWCA**.

Observer members

NYCS

Rat der Deutschsprachigen Jugend - **RDJ** (Belgium, German-speaking Community).

INGYOS

European Council of Young Farmers - **CEJA**; European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions - **CESI-Youth**; Don Bosco Youth Net; European Council of Conspirats Organisations - **ECCO**; European Free Alliance Youth - **EFAY**; European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation Youth Committee - **ENGSO** Youth; European Youth Press - **EYP**; International Federation of Training Centres for the Promotion of Progressive Education - **FICEMEA**; International Federation for Educational Exchanges of Children and Adolescents - **FIEEA**; International Coordination of Young Christian Workers - **ICYCW/CJOC**; Jeunes Musicales International - **JMI**; Pax Christi International - **Pax Christi**; Red Cross Youth - **RCY**; Youth Express Network - **YE-N**.

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european youth forum