

MANUAL  
FOR  
NATIONAL  
CORRESPONDENTS  
OF  
ECUMENICAL YOUTH  
COUNCIL  
IN EUROPE



## **Preface**

"Commit your way to the Lord;  
trust in him, and he will act."  
(Psalm 37:5)

### **Dear National Correspondent,**

We would like to congratulate you for being elected or designated as National Correspondent on behalf of your Member Organisation for this responsible job within EYCE. We would like to thank you for your implication and future work and we're looking forward to a fruitful and long collaboration. This manual is meant to introduce you to EYCE's aims, structures and events and to provide you with all necessary information which should facilitate your work. Please don't hesitate to contact EYCE or any other National Correspondent whenever you feel it's needed, and let us stay in touch!

Isn't TRUST the main issue in life? In all life's situations, when we learn and work, when we love, when we get to know people, we need to confide in people, to put our trust into them, knowing that there is no guarantee for not being deceived. It is similar with faith. In all life's situations we're as well called to put our trust in God and to believe that he will help us.

What does this have to do with EYCE, which you want to get to know through this manual, or on which you want to deepen your knowledge. With EYCE it is about this cause we care for: namely, speaking and acting on behalf of young Christians in Europe and by this serving our common Lord. In order to achieve this we need to trust people as well; we need to trust that young people are able to achieve something in this world, we need to trust the people we work with, and finally we need to trust each other so that our commitment and communication will succeed.

We hope that your commitment brings you a lot of fulfilment and happiness.  
We wish you God's blessings and help in everything you do!

On behalf of EYCE,

All the former National Correspondents and  
Executive Committee.

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### **1. List of abbreviations used in the manual**

In order to use this manual more easily, we would like to provide you with some essential abbreviations, used here and in the daily life of EYCE.

CEC= Conference of European Churches

ExCo= EYCE's Executive Committee  
EYCE= Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe  
EYC= European Youth Centres – in Budapest (B), Hungary or Strasbourg (S), France  
EYF= European Youth Foundation  
EU= European Union  
FBO= faith based organisations, partners of EYCE in interreligious work  
GM=General Meeting  
GS= General Secretary  
IA= Internal Auditor  
IPC= International Planning Committee  
MO= Member Organisation  
NC=National Correspondent  
SC= Steering committee  
WCC= World Council of Churches  
WSCF-E= World Student Christian Federation Europe Region  
YiA= EU “Youth in Action” Programme

## **2. What is EYCE?**

The Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe (EYCE) is a fellowship of national ecumenical youth councils, denominational youth councils or bodies and those representing Church youth in Europe, which accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to serve Him and to serve humankind for the glory of the one God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

EYCE works in a continent shaped by many social and political systems as well as different traditions. It assumes that these conditions may result in tensions and problems; its task is to resolve these differences, create better understanding and build community between young people in the name of Jesus Christ.

It is this understanding and the fullness of its international ecumenical experience that EYCE actively contributes to building unity in Europe where people encounter others in mutual respect. Its aim is a Europe where the interests of young people are upheld and where the involvement of the young generation is valued.

(EYCE Constitution)

## **3. Just a little bit of history repeating... How EYCE came into being**

After the Second World War, when a large part of Europe was covered in rubble and ruins, ecumenical relations were among the first to be (re-)established between the different countries involved in the war and its consequences. Reconciliation was the buzzword for the efforts undertaken by churches and committed individuals all over the continent. Particular emphasis was put on the role of education and youth work in order to reestablish peaceful relationships between former enemies for a new generation to come. Already in the 1950'ies, however, the confrontation between different social and economical systems in the Eastern and Western political blocks had grown into a new form of conflict: the Cold War had begun, forcing many churches to take sides with either of the two systems. Most of the activities sponsored by international ecumenical networks formed in 1948 (World Council of Churches) and 1959 (Conference of European Churches) were based on the idea of practical cooperation in ecumenical services like international workcamps for the reconstruction and repair of social and educational institutions. Many such initiatives were organized under the roof of the Ecumenical Youth Service with a European office of its own. It was in the late 1960'ies that the political interest of the

younger generation grew stronger and stronger. This movement that led to the so-called students' revolutions in many European cities also moved the ecumenical youth work in Europe. During the 1968 Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Uppsala (Sweden) students and youth delegates were for the first time in the history of the institutional ecumenism showing a visible impact on the procedure of an official meeting of that size. The result of this more political approach was the idea of creating a council where youth movements from the different church traditions in all parts of Europe could meet regularly and discuss the mission of Christian youth work towards the many social problems and political challenges in a continent split by ideological struggles as well as by economical discrepancies. It was in the same year 1968 that Christian youth leaders from the West, the East, the South and the North of Europe convened to form the Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe. The Ecumenical Youth Service continued to function for a few years as a separate structure before formally joining EYCE in the mid-seventies. A common secretariat established in 1969 was set up according to the needs of the persons elected as the General Secretary for their periods of office. Therefore the office moved whenever a new General Secretary was elected, which later led to whole package deals presented to the General Meetings including the nomination of a candidate together with an offer to support his or her office structure by the hosting organization. With this extreme flexibility, EYCE was able to operate as one of the very few international youth movements that had members with equal rights in NATO-countries as well as from the Warsaw Treaty. It served as a bridge for many people and many issues both between nations and between traditions. At the same time, EYCE was also an important link between the Churches and the world of secular youth movements outside the religious spheres. After a journey through half of Europe from France to East and West Germany, to Hungary and Northern Ireland and up to Finland a permanent office was established in Brussels (Belgium) only in 1999, after 30 years of running a council literally "on the move". The constitutions and rules of procedures that had been changed and adapted many times to fulfill the different legal requirements of so many different countries as well as the many changing convictions of youth work in more than three decades were forged into two new basic documents to allow for a more flexible and efficient handling of a youth organisation covering the gifts and needs of a large and very diverse world region from the Azores to the Kuril islands near the Japanese borders.

#### **4. Thematic work of EYCE**

The Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe was established and still works to provide a forum for young people, and those who work with them, from all Christian denominations; for those coming from all different social backgrounds; and for those who face and live with the homeless, unemployed, foreigners, refugees and other marginalised people, to come together, to build bridges and work together to face common social challenges. EYCE has always strived to work towards justice, peace, and the integrity of creation and those main directions have determined the thematic work of EYCE.

#### **Ecumenical formation**

The ecumenical formation of young people has always been among the highest priorities of the work of EYCE. It is important for this work to not only build the community between young people coming from different social, ethnic, and denominational backgrounds, thus enhancing unity and understanding, but also to strengthen the participation of young people and to enable participants to actively engage in ecumenical dialogue and decision making processes at all levels. Furthermore, apart from this work it is also necessary to ensure that the long term perspective of the organisations lasts longer than one generation of young people. Therefore, it is crucial to enable and empower young people in order to be able to take part in further developments and decision making processes with regards to promoting justice and peace. Increasing the knowledge and developing the skills of the members from EYCE's networks is one of the work priorities in order to secure further involvement of young people in youth organisations.

### Ecology

The environment is one of the most, if not THE most, challenging concern for contemporary society. It is clear that climate change is affecting the entire planet – recent heavy rains in the Philippines are directly connected to mild winters in Baltic states and higher frequencies of tornadoes in the Pacific. However, is the connection only present in this manifestation through the climate change? How is an ecologically responsible way of thinking and living linked to wealth and poverty? To migration? How does the lack of natural resources caused by climate change trigger military conflicts and violence?

It is the responsibility of each individual, including young people, who will be the main players in a future Europe and shape the world of tomorrow, to work against the negative and irreversible effects of climate change and raise awareness on environmental issues. Therefore it is important to promote intercultural and ecumenical dialogue about the social, political, economic, cultural and theological dimensions of the climate crisis. Often institutions in society (religious and secular) and individuals dismiss the urgency of their responsibility – leaving it for “later” or for “others”. In Christianity, human beings are given dominion of the earth – but this dominion requires responsibility and ethical living and does not give a license for the exploitation of the earth. Instead – this responsibility requires protection and care.

### Economic justice

In February 2005 Nelson Mandela called upon the world leaders to make poverty history. He mentioned that poverty can be seen as a prison and that it is time to set the imprisoned free. This moving speech and the "Make Poverty History" campaign inspired EYCE and its Steering Committee on Economic Justice to conduct a training course on economic justice and social inclusion of youth with fewer opportunities. The training course "Make Poverty History! - Promoting Economic Justice and Social Inclusion" took place in May 2006 in Bankya, Bulgaria and focused on equipping youth leaders with skills needed in order to promote economic justice in particular for unemployed youth and to work for social and economic inclusion of ethnic or cultural minorities.

During the 37th EYCE General Meeting, which took place in May 2009 in Kekava, Latvia, EYCE member organizations raised concerns that today, almost five years after the Make Poverty History campaign many European Countries, and in particular Eastern European countries, are experiencing an economic downturn, including growing unemployment and an increasing number of people living below the line of poverty. In addition, the gap between the socio-economic classes is increasing. An alarming number of young people is affected by these circumstances, mainly those coming from disadvantaged social or economic background, and many times from cultural or ethnic minority background, being practically illiterate, unmotivated and with quite few future perspectives. In many cases it is the youth organizations, which are in a position to approach these young people and bring a change to their situation. Therefore, EYCE has dedicated itself to work on these issues with the MOs and to raise awareness among young people of the potential of youth organisations in this field.

### Interreligious work

EYCE discovered in the course of its work that, if members of different cultures and religions meet, there is always potential for a conflict. This is, because culture and religion are strong elements of personal identity and conviction. It is not easy to see the two as distinct from one another. When religious experiences and reflections are translated into another language and culture, special attention must be paid to the peculiarities and cultural differences of language (etymologies, connotations of words, etc.) and patterns of behaviour. Not paying attention to them might lead to a serious conflict. Therefore, youth organisations need to stress working with the great diversity of faith experiences and the various cultural influences upon them, so that they do not cause us to be fearful or separated from one another, but could experience the richness of diversity instead.

Fundamentalism in its various forms is becoming an increasing threat to reconciliation and the peaceful coexistence of various religious and ethnic groups, as well as to the formation of a holistic and unifying concept of Europe and European identity. Instead of engaging into a constructive dialogue, the fundamentalist attitudes of various religious communities lead to hatred and violations of human rights. Traditions are crucial to any society, as they support the development of identity in individuals and groups. When different groups encounter these traditions and values, they are questioned and often even changed. This can create a deep fear and lead to undamentalism that follows doctrines blindly, because they are beyond what can be discussed and explained or are often explained unwillingly. EYCE is strongly committed to the interreligious work because of its conviction that the younger generations have the bigger potential to help their communities to deal non-violently with the encounters of different sets of values.

### Human Rights

EYCE has been committed to strengthening human rights in Europe, since its founding, however in the past few years a special focus has been brought to this work. The protection of human rights is a global issue and has many aspects, on which EYCE is focusing its work through the work on other themes.

Some of the current debates, concerning Human Rights, are related to Religious Freedom. They have been brought forward by the debate on the hijab (head-scarf) in France, Belgium and Germany, or the general suspicion towards fellow Muslim citizens.

Also, in many European contexts, and especially in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the issues connected with economic justice are scarcely put in relation with Human Rights advocacy and reflection – thus not identifying economic justice as a basic Human Right.

Furthermore, the work on ecological justice can often be viewed in terms of human rights as the themes of ecological justice are interconnected with social justice, equality, poverty, education and inclusion of all people.

In addition, EYCE is also working within other thematic areas, such as peace building and conflict resolution, migration and youth politics.

## **5. What is the EYCE Structure?**

*MO=Member Organisation; NC=National Correspondent; GM=General Meeting; ExCo= EYCE's Executive Committee; GS= General Secretary*

First of all, EYCE is more than the office in Brussels. The Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe is a strong network of young Christians promoting the unity of Christianity throughout all of Europe. EYCE is all about **young Christian people** with the same aim and common purposes in an interdenominational Christian context. 'Young people' in the European context are usually defined as people between the age of 18 and 30/35 years. You can imagine EYCE like a big European wide (Europe meant here as a geographical and cultural region) umbrella for all the young people, the respective organisations and the activities which take place under its auspices.

These young people are organised in organisations formally called **Member Organisation** of one of the European states. The following bodies can become a MO of EYCE: national ecumenical youth councils, other national Christian youth associations from states where ecumenical youth councils do not exist, as well as European and international Christian youth associations.

Normally there should be one MO per state, but this can vary due to past decisions and non-existent ecumenical bodies in several countries and nowadays due to international movements.

The link between each MO and EYCE is secured by the person called **National Correspondent**. Taking into consideration your role as a National Correspondent it is good to know the structure of EYCE and what constitutes it. Thus, the following documents should be known: the 'Constitution' and the 'Rules of Procedure' (*for full documents see Annex 1*). The Constitution describes EYCE as an organisation with all its constituting bodies and what they are supposed to do, while the Rules of Procedure organise the working methods during the General Meetings and of the ExCo.

*Example of the Article from the Constitution regarding the NC:*

(4) Every Member Organisation shall nominate a person responsible for transmitting information between EYCE and the respective member; this person shall be known as the National Correspondent. (Constitution Art. 3)

Every second year the MO's meet for a big 'family meeting' – the **General Meeting**. There are normally two delegates per MO, who have full voting rights (if the MO has paid the membership fee), one of them is usually the NC. The GM decides upon the future work and shape of EYCE. The decisions can be made, if the quorum is achieved – half of the MO's are present at the GM.

The GM has the following competences: accepting or expelling members; electing the Executive Committee and Internal Auditors, discussing and receiving the reports presented by EYCE's working bodies, approving the budget and fees for the next two years, establishing working groups and deciding on EYCE's thematic work.

While the GM is something like the legislative power of EYCE the **Executive Committee** could be counted as its executive power. The ExCo is a board of seven volunteers, elected by the GM for four years, who are responsible for the work of the Council and to implement the mandates of the GM. The ExCo takes all political decisions needed for the daily work of EYCE, in accordance with the mandates of the GM.

In order to connect the Member Organisations and the ExCo more thoroughly in between the General Meetings, there are several **Steering Committees** within EYCE's network. In general, the Steering Committees are meant to guide EYCE by providing information, guidelines, recommendations and policies on how to take action in a particular thematic field of work. Usually they work via E-Mail and the groups are moderated by a responsible ExCo member. The Steering Committees are set up by the ExCo.

The Management of the office, the external representation of EYCE, preparation and implementation of decisions taken by the ExCo, keeping communication with MO's and co-ordination of the activities within EYCE is the job of the only person who has an income within EYCE, namely the **General Secretary**. The GS can be employed up to six years and he or she is the one you will have most contact with within EYCE.

## **6. Decision making processes within EYCE**

*GM=General Meeting; ExCo= EYCE's Executive Committee; IPC= International Planning Committee*

The decisions regarding finances, programme and elections are being made by the General Meeting (GM) that meets every two years. However, in between these two years the Executive Committee is carrying out the decisions of the General Meeting. The Executive Committee meets three times per year to make decisions regarding the daily work of the Council in the areas of administration, staff, programme (IPC's, events) etc.

The GM is usually making decisions in order to steer the direction of the Council, but there are far more decisions also evolving from the decisions of the GM that the ExCo is making.

## **7. EYCE partners and membership of EYCE in other bodies. How can the MO's benefit from this?**

In its work, EYCE is cooperating with partner organisations on the European and global level. The areas of cooperation include common advocacy work and jointly organised seminars and trainings. This work results in various outcomes - common statements on the themes addressed through this cooperation, further cooperation, representations in various meetings of partners, as well as the further thematic work together.

For the EYCE Member Organisations this work is important from two perspectives: firstly, through the contributions of young people of EYCE's network, EYCE can bring the voice of young people around Europe into the arena of discussions. Furthermore, these discussions and work on various themes can contribute greatly from all the expertise of young people.

Secondly, through the participation and contribution to the work of the partners and cooperation the EYCE Member Organisations can receive the information on the latest developments on the relevant themes, as well as the role of young people in these processes.

**CEC** – EYCE is an associated member organisation of the Conference of European Churches. The cooperation with CEC takes largely place in the work with the Church and Society Commission (CSC) of CEC, but EYCE is also contributing to the theological work of CEC.

**WCC** – EYCE is a regional partner of the World Council of Churches. We are participating in the youth network and the World Youth Programme of WCC. Through this work EYCE is in contact with ecumenical youth from other regions of the world.

**YFJ** – EYCE is a member of the European Youth Forum (YFJ), which is an umbrella organisation for national and international youth organisations from all over Europe. It works closely together with the EU, the Council of Europe and the United Nations. The main aim of the work of YFJ is to lobby for the rights of young people and their full inclusion and participation in society. Much of EYCE's lobby work is happening through YFJ with its nearly 100 member organisations.

**FBO** – EYCE cooperates often, not only in its Interreligious work, with other faith based youth organisations, especially in the organisation of events and advocacy work for young people from different religious communities. The organisations EYCE cooperates with most are:

**EUJS** – European Union of Jewish Students: EUJS is as EYCE a European umbrella organisation for national Jewish student organisations.

**FEMYSO** – Forum of European Muslim Youth and Students Organisations: FEMYSO is also a European umbrella organisation, which represents national Muslim youth and students movements.

**WSCF-E** – World Student Christian Federation Europe Region: WSCF-E is as EYCE an international ecumenical organisation working with students from all over Europe.

## **8. The role of NC and various responsibilities**

The most important role of the NC is **to be the link between the young people in your organisation and EYCE**. The experience of other NC's shows that the main aspects of your engagement, as well as the tips to facilitate your work are:

- to distribute the information coming from EYCE - calls for IPC, calls for participants, publications etc.
- to promote the work of EYCE and the added value of the participation and engagement in EYCE for your MO
- to look for suitable candidates for various activities of EYCE (IPC, events, representations)
- to prepare the candidates for the events by explaining and translating the information available, answering their questions, encouraging the participation and helping with the application process
- to follow-up with the participant after the events by encouraging them to write a short report, giving the presentation or workshop for other young people in your organisation
- to create a network and database in your organisation and country of the people potentially and formerly active within EYCE. Possibly to organise a meeting to offer the possibility to people to share the personal EYCE experience.
- to explore various channels and ways of communication in order to expand your network
- to create a support system for yourself, e.g. people formerly active in EYCE, former NC, EYCE GS, which will facilitate your work
- to participate in the NC's meeting and GM of EYCE in order to share your experiences and concerns with other NC's and to shape the work of EYCE in line with the work and needs of your organisation.
- to consider writing articles for the EYCE website or in the thematic magazines or simply by reporting the news to your MO as well as EYCE office

## **9. EYCE's events**

### **What do I do with the many incoming mails from EYCE?**

It is your duty as a NC to make upcoming **events and activities** known to the members of your organisation. Often, the number and frequency of participants from a nation or organisation show how active their NC is. Of course, there are also NC's very active on a national level, but if you want to show your commitment to EYCE then you do it best by **sending participants** to the various events organised by the ExCo and wanted by the GM. Please keep in mind that all the activities of EYCE are directed and meant mainly for the participants of your MO, so that your young people get to know Christians from other countries and achieve different skills which should enable them to deal with the problems confronting Europe.

#### Various types of events

Often e-mails in your inbox will be invitations for a variety of events: IPC, CCT, seminars, trainings, study sessions, as well as possibilities to represent EYCE in various meetings.

The following explanations might help you to distribute the information better and select the appropriate candidates.

First of all, every activity will have a certain thematic focus, which will already make the task easier.

#### *The International Planning Committee or IPC*

The IPC is in charge for the practical implementation of the EYCE events - seminars, training courses and study sessions. It will prepare the initial design and programme of the event, choose methodology and identify concrete guest speakers and trainers. The IPC will also work directly with the participants in the event by using a variety of methods e.g. simulation games, group discussions and creative presentations to reach objectives of the event. Usually the IPC is supported by the EYCE office staff and an ExCo member.

The candidates for the IPC should have some experience either in the theme of the event or in organising an event.

#### Seminar

An EYCE seminar usually will be an event, where the young people in EYCE's networks would gather to discuss and share the experiences on a certain theme. The focus of the seminar would be on exploring the theme and possibly developing a common standpoint in addressing the theme on various contexts. There will be rather few training elements in a seminar.

#### Training course

An EYCE training course usually will be an event, where the young people in EYCE's networks would receive thematic knowledge and the practical training on a certain theme. One of the main ideas for training courses is to give EYCE's MO's practical skills and concrete methods to address the theme in the local context.

#### Study session

Study sessions are usually held in cooperation with EYCB or EYCS. The specific aspect of the study sessions is, that the expertise and contribution of the participants is an essential to the success of the event. There might be also some training elements in a study session.

#### Representations

Occasionally EYCE needs the support of the MO's in representing EYCE in a meeting with CEC, WCC, YFJ and other. Here a very specific knowledge and expertise in the given theme will be needed, as well as good knowledge of EYCE.

#### Distributing information

The GS will send you emails on a regular basis, this is the most common communication channel within EYCE. Some of the mails are purely informational as the circular letter etc.

Your task would be to disseminate the information as widely as possible. Maybe there are structures and communication channels within your organisation which already prescribe you how to act to pass the information most successfully.

If none of these exists, it will be helpful to create for yourself a **database** with names and contacts of young people, which you know that they would be interested in EYCE's activities or who can act as a multiplier in spreading the information and outcomes of the events.

Your task will be to send these people the invitation with the application form attached. To facilitate the understanding of the concrete theme and encourage the participation, you are advised to translate the introductory paragraphs into your own language.

#### Selecting and nominating the candidates

To make your task easier, the desirable profile of the participants will be included in every call for participants. Taking into account the criteria of the event, as well as your knowledge of the concrete persons, you should choose the most suitable candidates to nominate further.

The applicants should be motivated, interested in the topic and in meeting new people as well as being ready to implicate themselves on an European wide level. Important criteria for selection should be a sufficient English knowledge of the candidates. However, they should not be discouraged - there are rare native English speakers in EYCE events, and you can even encourage your young people, that by participating they will improve their language skills.

Your MO should consider participation in an EYCE event as an opportunity of rewarding young people's active engagement on the local level.

Before sending the applications to the EYCE office, you should add your endorsement. The better you

know the applicants the easier you might recommend them for further implication within EYCE, for example you might inspire them to be engaged in a working group, for instance within an IPC.

#### Who and when does the final selection of the participants?

Depending on the type of event, either ExCo or IPC will choose the most appropriate candidates from all the applications submitted. The gender, regional and denominational balance will be usually taken into account. Therefore, it might happen that not all of your applicants will be chosen.

Usually within a **week after the application deadline** the participants will be selected and informed by the EYCE office. A copy of the letter of acceptance or rejection, as well as the full list of participants will be sent to the relevant NC's.

The applicants should be encouraged to contact the EYCE office if no information is received as mistakes can happen as well.

Further contact and information regarding the event from there on is the responsibility of and in the hands of the GS. But it is good if you request a written or oral **feedback** from your participants after the event took place, so that you know for the future what to improve and how to proceed best.

Eventually you will also receive the official event report from the GS.

#### Participants coming from your country, but not from your organisation

Sometimes EYCE's activities don't reach your own people, but catch the interest of young people outside your organisation. In these cases the GS will contact you and send you their contacts. You can contact them and get to know them, and this can give you an opportunity to extend your network. Also, when there are two different MO's in one country, both NC's will receive the information of which participants have been chosen for the event.

However, in the selection process the priority will be always given to the MO's candidates.

#### Hosting Committee

If an EYCE event should take place in your country, you will be contacted by the EYCE office for practical support on the local level. The most important tasks of the Hosting Committee would be to help the GS and IPC with the following: arranging the accommodation and food; issuing invitations on time to participants who need a visa; arranging local transport, visits and excursions; organising the local culture evening and other.

When the planning for the event will be initiated, the GS will contact the respective NC with concrete proposals and needs.

## **10. Preparation for the GM's**

*MO=Member Organisation; NC=National Correspondent; GM=General Meeting; ExCo= EYCE's Executive Committee; GS= General Secretary*

### **The most 'busy' time of your employment**

Every second year, the so-called 'family meeting', namely GM, is taking place, each time in another country. As a NC you can also invite the GM to your country. The **presence of your MO** and/or of yourself at these GM's is very important, because by your implication you shape and decide on the future of EYCE.

What do you have to expect? First of all, there will be a lot of **Email correspondence** during the time prior to the GM. Make sure, that your MO chooses in time **two delegates** for the GM (one of them is usually the NC) and prepare yourselves for the GM. This is important so that your MO can have the full voting rights during the GM and that there shouldn't be spend much time on explaining the

procedures in GM. **A proper preparation for the GM – by reading and studying all the information material send by the GS – is essential for the smooth and good development of the GM.** Also check that the **membership fee** of your MO is paid, so that you can have the voting rights right from the beginning and there doesn't arise irritation during the GM.

The two delegates should read or re-read the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure. This will help you to quickly find your place during the GM and you'll be able to follow all the instructions given in the beginning. Also read the reports send by ExCo, Treasurer, Internal Auditors and other.

Booking and **preparation for the travel** can be taken care of in communication with the office. There will also be taken in consideration things like the country you come from and the subsidy fee granted.

At the GM you will present a **report** of the past activities of your MO. This will be distributed to all MO's present, that's why it is best to have it typed on the computer and printed. All the documents and further papers needed can also be printed and copied at the GM, if you have your data on a stick.

The delegates should be prepared to join a thematic **working group** during the GM, thus contributing to shaping EYCE's programme.

During GM's various elections will take place. EYCE is always looking for suitable **candidates** for these positions. Maybe you know someone from your organisation who could be suitable for the concrete tasks and is willing to candidate. Usually elections take place for the following posts: ExCo that is, chairperson, vice-chairperson, treasurer and other four members. There are also elections taking place for Internal Auditors and their deputies. Internal Auditors usually meet once per year in order to check EYCE's accounts and prepare the organisation for the external audit.

Prepare your candidates in time and help them to complete and send their application form to the office on time. All the **deadlines will be usually explained in the invitation** for the GM.

During the GM you will experience a lot of working time with full concentration needed, so it is good that your delegates have good English knowledge, but there will be also time for praying and fun time in between. In order for a good achievement during the GM it is beneficial if both delegates can work with each other and with other people, they should be engaged within their own MO, so as to represent it best, and willing to implicate in working groups or further work during the GM or within EYCE. As for you as NC the GM is an advantage, because you'll have the chance to meet the NC's of other countries and exchange experience with other MO's or even make plans together for future cooperation.

## **11. Financial questions**

The issues related to the finances are important in terms of both – member organisations and the participants in the events. How does EYCE get funded? Where does the money my organsiation pays annually go to? Why do I need to pay the participation fee and how much do I get reimbursed? These are the questions that are being asked rather frequently.

### Budget

EYCE is trying to run a balanced budget, so that the income and expenditure are even, or if the situation allows – adding to the savings account.

EYCE's budget is directly linked to the activity of the organisation – the more events and more participation there are, more projects we apply for and possibly get granted.

Income side of the budget of EYCE is usually secured by 5 different categories of income: activity funding (about 65% of budget), administrative grants of EU and Council of Europe, which is foreseen for administrative functioning of the organization (15%), church donors (10%) and membership fees/ participation fees (5%). On the expenditure side the main expenses are categorized as: programme costs (45%), administrative costs (45%), ExCo and representations (5%), and publications, including website (5%).

### Membership fees

Membership fees are an important tool for the work of EYCE, as it not only enriches the budget of EYCE, but secures the ownership of EYCE by its member organisations. Paid membership fee gives the rights to the MO to travel and participation fee subsidies according to EYCE policies, rights to be elected and to vote in the GM

There are fixed membership fees determined for each of the MO's, however the list is occasionally reviewed, depending on the economic situation. (See Annex 2)

The membership fees are usually paid in spring. Your organization or you will receive the invoice in April/May every year.

#### Travel costs and reimbursements

**to reimburse** means: *to repay or compensate someone for money already spent.*

The wise management of travel costs is essential for successful budgeting of EYCE. The participants for the events are asked to contact the office with regards to their travel costs as soon as they get accepted to participate in the event. They will need a prior agreement from the EYCE office on the costs of your travel, as the office staff is more experienced in travel arrangements and can help to find a less costly solution. Prices for tickets vary drastically depending on the time of booking. Therefore, tickets must be booked very soon. You as NC should monitor this process to ensure that these conditions are met.

Depending on the country participants come from, he/she will get reimbursed according to EYCE travel subsidy guidelines below.

Band One: *90% subsidy entitlement for the following countries:* Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russia, and Slovak Republic.

Band Two: *50% subsidy entitlement for the following countries:* Belgium, Iceland, Italy, Northern Ireland/ Eire, Portugal and Spain.

Band Three: *Other countries.* These might be the participants, who do not come from EYCE's MO. In this case individual agreement with the Treasurer or GS is applied.

Members such as Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland pay full travel costs.

#### Less costly vs. most ecological manner of travelling

Usually the participants are asked to arrange their travels in the most ecological manner. However, this often contradicts with the ecological responsibility we all have.

The participants and NC's should carefully investigate the cheapest possible ecological travel manner as it will be prioritized, unless the participant is travelling to a *study session*.

#### Participation fees

Participation fees to the events are the contribution of the MOs to the costs of the activity. Usually participation fee for an EYCE event varies from **150 EUR – 200 EUR**, depending on the event. It is important to explain to the potential participants, that for the participation fees the same reimbursement system applies as for travel costs, therefore the actual participation fee might be lower. For study sessions at EYCE's events there is always a fixed participation fee of **50 EUR**.

## 12. EYCE publications and their distribution

Each year EYCE is preparing and distributing several publications – event reports, thematic publications and awareness raising materials. These publications are produced by and for the young people in EYCE's networks. It is thus essential that these publications are distributed as efficiently as possible. NCs are a great help and support in this. However, some guidelines might be useful.

#### 1) Event reports.

Usually event reports are produced for the young people, who have participated in the events. However, the reports also serve as promotional materials for EYCE's events and themes we are working on, as well as a source of ideas and methods for the young people on the respective issues on local levels and within the MOs. Since few recent events, EYCE has been dedicating more effort to make the reports more practical and appealing.

NC's usually do not get a hard copy of the seminar report, nevertheless a PDF file is being send out and a hard copy can be requested from the office on demand.

#### 2) Thematic publications

Thematic publications are usually linked to certain thematic priorities of EYCE, e.g. a campaign. During the years 2008 – 2010 the magazine 'Fundamental Issues' has been published in the framework of EYCE's Campaign to Overcome Fundamentalism. These publications have been produced on a regular basis – 3-4 times per year.

These publications are usually being sent to the NC's in several copies to be distributed within the MO and among young people on the local level. It is essential that you notify the EYCE office of the most appropriate amount of publications that you want to receive, so it is enough for your network, and on the other hand no materials go to waste.

If you have difficulty of distributing the materials in your organisation, you might as well try your church, university etc.

#### 3) Awareness raising materials

These materials are essential for promoting the work EYCE is doing. It is essential to distribute these materials as widely as possible. Usually the EYCE office would send out a package of materials once a year. If your organisation needs more of these materials or if there is a bigger event, meeting or representation you are organising/attending and want to promote EYCE, you should contact the office at latest two weeks before, so that the materials can be posted.

#### **Post!!!**

You should be aware that most likely the materials will arrive as small parcels according to postal standards, therefore you will receive an invitation to pick up the parcel from your local post office!

### **13. Handover to next NC**

*MO=Member Organisation; NC=National Correspondent; GM=General Meeting; ExCo= EYCE's Executive Committee; GS= General Secretary*

There is no defined term for being a National Correspondent. It depends on a decision within the particular MO.

However, the environment of youth organizations is the most dynamic environment imaginable. Unless having a very stable framework and structure, the work of youth organisations is largely depending on personal contacts and successful change of generations of activists.

For EYCE being a large structure, still consisting of many smaller independent bodies, it is essential to secure successful transitions between generations in order to be able to preserve the outcomes of the work, which is being done and ensure consistency.

National Correspondents are the direct link between EYCE and concrete young people on the grassroots level. Therefore, you are the key element in this transition process.

To achieve a better handover to your potential successor, there are a few recommendations on how to proceed:

- Always notify the EYCE Office about this change. Ask the new NC to contact the Office with a short introduction. This will involve the office in handover process, establish direct contact and secure the change of contact details in the Office database.
- Try to ensure that the upcoming NC takes part in at least one EYCE event to have the better understanding of application process, the travel arrangements system, general nature of the events, especially the prayers and intercultural evenings, as well as reimbursement procedures.
- Contact the EYCE office to send the materials about EYCE, if you do not have any at your disposal to hand them to the new NC.
- Provide the new NC with all the materials about EYCE at your disposal, including this manual. Hand over to him or her your own data base of contacts and networking. Allow some time to the NC to get acquainted with the materials.
- Dedicate time for a personal meeting with the new NC to explain EYCE verbally and answer the questions. Make sure to use this manual.
- Make sure that you give your current contact details to the new NC and inform that you remain at his/her disposal for any clarifications and support.
- If there is an overlap between NC's try to participate together in a GM or NC's meeting.
- Make the change of NC visible also on EYCE's website within the NC's section.
- Encourage and support your MO in organising national networking groups of former NC's/ participants in order to support the new NC and help with the handover, as well as to promote EYCE among young people by using personal encounters with people, who have experienced EYCE.