



DEAR PARTICIPANTS,

We are looking forward to meeting and working with you in the international training course, **EYEOPENER**, a course on how to tackle all the basic elements of organising an international Youth Exchange under the Youth in Action Programme. It will be a learning-by-doing experience for you, built on a simulation exercise. In this training course you might find (new) partners for future projects, but this is not the main objective of the training course. Learning by doing and sharing is the core focus!

ABOUT THE YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME

This introductory letter includes a brief explanation of the European Youth in Action Programme focusing on Youth Exchanges (Action 1.1 & 3.1). You can find more information about the Youth in Action Programme at http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/overview_en.htm or at the web site of your National Agency. Please bring this letter with you to the training course.

IN THIS LETTER YOU WILL FIND:

- Practical issues related to your preparation for this training course.
- A brief presentation of the European Youth in Action Programme with a focus on Youth Exchanges (Action 1.1 & 3.1).
- The day-by-day programme of the training course (the programme is flexible and may be modified).



BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF 'EYEOPENER' TRAINING COURSE

1. TARGET GROUP

The training course is designed for voluntary and professional youth workers working directly with young people and young people themselves, who are interested in setting up international exchange projects.

The course is mainly aimed at those who have no experience of organising an international Youth Exchange under the Youth in Action Programme. However it doesn't matter whether you are just interested in doing a Youth Exchange or are definitely planning to do one. If you represent an organisation or group with little experience of Youth Exchange, but you see that you could still benefit from the input of an **EYEOPENER** training course, you can still participate, remembering that the course is essentially designed for beginners.

2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of **EYEOPENER** is to offer an international learning experience to young people and practitioners active in the youth work field, enabling them to develop their competences in setting up quality Youth Exchange projects under the Youth in Action Programme.

The objectives of **EYEOPENER** are:

- ➔ to provide an informed introduction to the Youth in Action Programme, focusing on Youth Exchanges and their capacity to enhance active (European) citizenship, especially (though not exclusively) for newcomers to the programme;
- ➔ to offer an individual and group learning experience through a simulated process on setting up a Youth Exchange project;
- ➔ to develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to organise a Youth Exchange, based on non-formal learning practice, principles, and the quality standards of the Youth in Action Programme;
- ➔ to enable participants to reflect on their learning and to familiarise themselves with Youthpass – the strategy on the recognition of non-formal learning in the youth field, its technical tool to produce Youthpass Certificates, and its application in Youth Exchanges in particular and the Youth in Action Programme in general;
- ➔ to offer the opportunity to meet possible partner groups and to make contacts in other countries.

The main aim is to train people and a sub-goal is to offer the opportunity for participants to find partners. Other things, like getting to know other youth realities, are not an aim, but a (nice) side effect.

3. THE PROGRAMME

The **EYEOPENER** programme is built around a simulation game, which is interspersed with information sessions as well as activities to develop the group dynamics, and ends with an evaluation. On the last page you will find the programme of the course.

THE YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME

The European Commission, the European Parliament and the Member States of the European Union have agreed on establishing the Youth in Action Programme for the period from 2007 to 2013. Youth in Action is the EU programme in the field of youth, which provides young people with opportunities for non-formal and informal learning with a European dimension.

AIM

The Youth in Action Programme encourages the concept of Lifelong Learning and is aimed at inspiring a sense of European Citizenship among the youth of Europe and at involving them in constructing the future of the community.

OBJECTIVES

- to promote young people's active citizenship in general and their European citizenship in particular;
- to develop solidarity and promote tolerance among young people, in particular in order to foster social cohesion in the European Union;
- to foster mutual understanding between young people in different countries;
- to contribute to developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field;
- to promote European co-operation in the youth field.

ACTION 1 - 1.1 YOUTH EXCHANGES

1. WHY HAVE YOUTH EXCHANGES?

Youth Exchanges are intended to contribute to the personal development of the young participants. The exchanges are open to all European young people, regardless of their background, education, or socio-economic situation.

2. DEFINITION

A Youth Exchange brings together groups of young people from two or more countries, providing them with an opportunity to meet, discuss, and confront various themes, while learning about each other's countries and cultures. The main aim is to encourage and promote the personal and social education of young people, reinforcing their feeling of being European citizens.

3. TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

- Bilateral (one-to-one) exchanges; i.e. one sending & one host organisation;
- Trilateral exchanges (involving partners from THREE Programme countries);
- Multilateral exchanges (involving FOUR OR MORE Programme countries).

4. WHO ARE THE PARTNERS IN A YOUTH EXCHANGE?

Each Youth Exchange has a host group and one or a number of sending groups. The first step is to form a group, which will develop the project idea. The second step is to identify partners for the future exchange.

5. WHERE CAN THESE YOUTH EXCHANGES TAKE PLACE?

Youth Exchanges may take place in countries which are eligible to participate in the Youth in Action Programme – 27 Member States of the European Union, 3 members of the European Economic Area and 1 candidate country (to become a Member State of the European Union). In the 'Programme Guide' you will find a list of all the Programme countries. At least ONE of the groups involved in the Youth Exchange project must come from a European Union Member State.

6. WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Groups of young people between 13 and 25 years old who reside in a country eligible to participate in the European Youth in Action Programme, giving priority to young people from less privileged cultural, geographical, or socio-economic backgrounds, and young people with disabilities. The total number of participants eligible to take part in one Youth Exchange project is a minimum of 16 and a maximum of 60 (not including group leaders).

7. DURATION

The duration of the exchange activity itself is from 6 to 21 days, excluding travel days.

8. AN EXCHANGE IS NOT ABOUT...

- Business meetings of a youth organisation
- Holiday travel or tourist tour
- Language courses
- School exchanges (i.e. exchanges based on formal curricula)
- Study visits
- Performance tours
- Participation in a festival
- An activity which aims to make financial profit

9. HOW IS A YOUTH EXCHANGE PROJECT FINANCED?

The Youth in Action Programme grants are based on the principle of co-funding, with other public and/or private contributions (in cash, in kind, or both) and/or through fundraising activities undertaken by the young people. The total costs of a project cannot be covered by the Youth in Action Programme alone, which covers part of the costs. The grant is calculated on the basis of real costs for travel and fixed rates for all related costs. The exact amounts are detailed in the application forms.

You can get information about 'How is the grant calculated?', 'How to apply?', or 'When to apply?' from your National Agency or from the 'Programme Guide' of the Youth in Action Programme Web site of the European Commission: http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/overview_en.htm

10. YOUTHPASS

Every participant is individually entitled to receive a Youthpass Certificate, which confirms participation and validates the non-formal learning experience. Validating the learning experience of participants is important in itself and the document can be of benefit in terms of the educational or employment future of the participant. Through Youthpass the European Commission ensures the Youth Exchange activity is recognised as a non-formal learning experience.



ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION

Please bring information (printed information, leaflets, booklets, or any other relevant material) about the main activities of your organisation or group to share with other participants in the **EYEOPENER** training course. There is not enough time in the organised programme to make a full presentation about your organisation to other participants. However, you might be able to do so during the informal moments of the training course if any of the other participants would be interested in listening.

ABOUT INTERNATIONAL EVENING

On the second day of the **EYEOPENER** there will be an intercultural evening when you will have the opportunity to share something about your culture with others. We encourage you to bring “gastronomic” specialities from your region or country or samples of the food you like to eat (it may be possible to heat food, but not to cook it at the training centre), as well as drinks (non-alcoholic) for this evening.

Please bring maps, posters, photos, postcards or leaflets, anything to give a picture of where you come from.

As mentioned above, if you bring videos or computer presentations with you, you will only be able to show them during your free time.

Please bring music (ipods, CDs etc), modern or traditional, that you would like to play during the intercultural and other evenings. Bringing with you different games to be used during informal moments is not forbidden ... on contrary ... we are ourselves big fans of **board games**!!

There is no need to prepare a formal presentation for that evening, the team will organise an intercultural Quiz activity that evening.

ABOUT LEGAL ISSUES ...

A very specific characteristic of this training course is the fact that each participating organisation is represented by at least 1 adult leader and 1 young person (<18 years old). Therefore it is important to point out some challenging and interesting topics for you to discuss and debate **BEFORE** arriving on the training course, topics which are important when interacting with others, especially at an intercultural level.

Here is a list of topics which we believe are relevant to tackle with your group (you will probably identify others):

Sex and sexuality, faith and religion, drugs, language, music, fashion...

For example, as a starting point, did you know that the minimum legal age for consuming alcohol in Portugal, the host country, is 16?

During the training course, these topics will certainly come up, so please come prepared.

Looking forward to meeting you,

*The **EYEOPENER** trainers and Portuguese National Agency team*

GENERAL PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Portugal – Tuesday 17/07 till Sunday 22/07

17/07	18/07	19/07	20/07	21/07
Team arrives 1 day before	Intro to the TC ICL	Intro to the day SG 1: Partner finding	Intro to the day Project & program building	Intro to the day SG 6: Feedback on application forms
Arrival participants	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
	Participation of young people	SG 2: Prep for Partner meeting	SG 4: Partner meeting part 2	Partner groups meet and evaluate together Future perspectives
	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
	YiA Programme	SG 3: Partner meeting	SG 5: Application forms with common moments	LSD
	BREAK			BREAK
	Young people: learning and competence building	Cultural visit Free time		LSD
	Evaluation		Evaluation	Final evaluation
DINNER	DINNER	DINNER IN TOWN	DINNER	DINNER
Welcome evening: getting to know each other and the programme	International evening	Free evening (with optional activities)	Tool fair	Goodbye evening
Welcome drinks				

Please note that:

- This is a 'rough' overview of the programme, each session has more sub divisions. The programme will also be adapted according to the needs of the group (both young people and youth workers) during the training course.
- Energizers and short games are a constant factor in this TC, allowing a transferability of these elements to future projects.
- Some sessions are given separately: group youth workers / group young people.
- SG= Simulation Game (Exercise)