



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 ERASMUS+: Youth in Action Programme. It will be a learning-by-doing experience for you, built on a simulation game. Learning by doing and involving young people is the core focus! Please bring this letter with you to the training course.

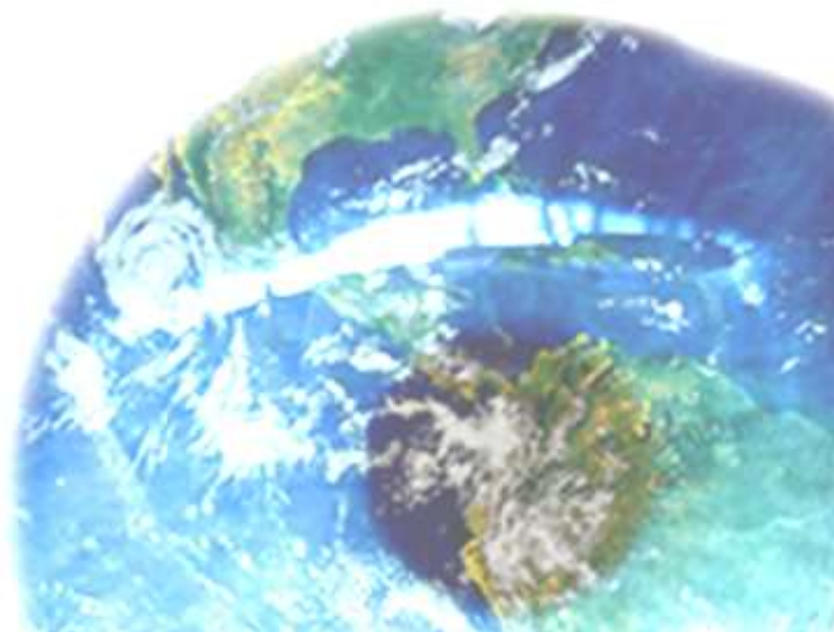
ABOUT THE ERASMUS+: YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME

This introductory letter includes a brief explanation of the ERASMUS+: Youth in Action Programme focusing on Youth Exchanges (Key Action 1). You can find more information about this programme at https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus_en or at the web site of your National Agency (advisable).

The good news is that in this training course you might find new partners for your future E+ projects!

IN THIS INFOPACK YOU WILL ALSO FIND:

- ➔ Practical issues related to your preparation for this training course.
- ➔ A brief presentation of Youth Exchanges.
- ➔ The day-by-day programme of the training course (the programme is flexible and may be modified).



BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF 'EYEOpener' TRAINING COURSE

TARGET GROUP

The training course is designed for voluntary and professional youth workers working directly with young people and the young people themselves. Both Youth Workers and Young People should be motivated to collaborate in setting up international youth exchange projects.

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

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 ERASMUS+: Youth in Action Programme.

The objectives of **EYEOpener** are:

- to provide an informed introduction to the ERASMUS+: 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.

Other things, like getting to know other youth realities, or to offer the opportunity for participants to find partners, are not an aim, but a (nice) side effect.

THE PROGRAMME

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

THE ERASMUS+: YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME

The European Union's **Erasmus+** programme is a funding scheme to **support activities in the fields of Education, Training, Youth and Sport**. The Programme is made up of three "Key Actions" and two additional actions. They are managed partly at the national level by National Agencies and partly at the European level by the EACEA. The European Commission is responsible for Erasmus+ policies and oversees the overall programme implementation.

AIM

The Erasmus+ Programme contributes to the achievement of:

- The objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, including the headline education target;
- The objectives of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020), including the corresponding benchmarks;
- The sustainable development of Partner Countries in the field of higher education;
- The overall objectives of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018);
- The objective of developing the European dimension in sport, in particular grassroots sport, in line with the EU work plan for sport;
- The promotion of European values in accordance with Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union.

KEY ACTION 1 - YOUTH EXCHANGES

1. WHY YOUTH EXCHANGES?

Youth Exchanges are intended to contribute to the personal development of the young participants. The exchanges are open to all young people (mainly residing in Europe), 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. The young people involved in the Youth Exchange, are an essential 'active' part from the very beginning till the very end of such a project.

3. TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

- Bilateral (one-to-one) exchanges; i.e. one sending & one host organisation;
- Trilateral exchanges (involving partners from THREE Programme/Partner countries);
- Multilateral exchanges (involving FOUR OR MORE Programme/Partner 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 but must involve at least 1 'Programme Country' (= 1 of the 28 Members States of the European Union or 5 non-EU member states defined in the Guide). In the 'Programme Guide' you will find a list of all the Programme and partner countries. To repeat, at least ONE of the groups involved in the Youth Exchange project must come from a Programme Country.

6. WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Groups of young people between 13 and 30 years old who reside in a country eligible to participate in the Erasmus+ programme, giving priority to young people with fewer opportunities in terms of 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 5 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 ERASMUS+: 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 Erasmus+ Programme alone, which covers part of the costs. The grant is calculated on the basis of an online distance calculator for travel and fixed rates for all related activity related costs. The exact amounts are detailed in the Programme Guide. 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/programmes/erasmus-plus/sites/erasmusplus/files/files/resources/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf

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. 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.

ABOUT THE “NIGHT OF OUR CULTURES”

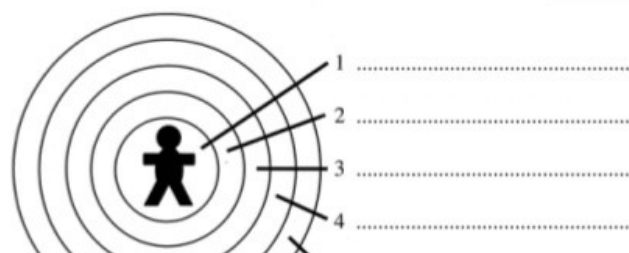
On the second day of the **EYE Opener** there will be an evening programme where you will have the opportunity to share something about your culture with others.

We suggest that all participants can go beyond the traditional “national culture” and think of their individual cultural identity. Think of the elements that compose your identity, the building-blocks of what makes you ‘you’, and try to show them to other participants during this evening.

Maybe some of you are into traditional music and others more into rock culture; someone might really like those folk dances from your country and someone else knows everything about... Hip-hop; maybe you feel you are really a typical person from “your country” or maybe you don’t fit so well into that box. Whatever you identify with, that’s what you should share.

So ask yourself, ‘what are the layers that compose my individual cultural identity?’ On this evening we want to go beyond the borders of national countries and celebrate all that human diversity. This is a great opportunity for your *home team*¹ to meet before the training and discuss what cultural identity actually means. We count on the youth workers/youth leaders to facilitate this preparation together with the young people. Here is a small example of how you can do that:

How many layers do YOU have



So, in conclusion: if you identify with a specific traditional type of music or food from your country, that’s great, bring it with you! But if in reality you identify more with punk culture than your grandma’s jam, bring something to do with punk culture instead! 😊

Oh, and two more details about this evening:

. There will not be time for individual presentations, so the evening will be organised like a market where everyone can set up a little table with the things they brought and everyone is then free to discover each other’s cultures at their own pace.

. To make sure this will be a fun- crazy night we have added a small theme to our dress code: “**RETRO**”. So, bring with you some Retro clothes. Whatever that means to you... time to talk to your grannies? 😊

¹Hometeam – Youth leader and young person/people from the same organisation/group attending the Eye Opener course

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 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...

Make sure you make agreements on the possible use of alcoholic beverages within each 'home team'.

For example, as a starting point, do you know the minimum legal age for consuming alcohol in the host country?

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

Looking forward to meeting you,

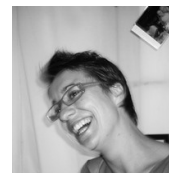
*The **EYE Opener** trainers and National Agency team*

ABOUT THE TRAINERS TEAM

Ana da Silva (Anita): <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toy/anita-silva.893/>

Gerald Dowden: <http://www.salto-youth.net/find-a-trainer/37.html>

JoClaeys: <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toy/jo-claeys.8/>



GENERAL PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Trainers' team arrives 1 day before Arrival participants	Entry to the Training Course	Intro to the day SG1: Project Idea	Intro to the day Project & programme building	Intro to the day SG7: Feedback on application forms
	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
	Intro to ICL	SG2: Partner-finding SG3: Prep for Partner-meeting	SG5: Partner-meeting Two	Partner groups meet and evaluate together Future perspectives
	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
	E+ YiA Youth Exchanges	SG4: Partner-meeting One	SG6: Application Writing	Info Market & Youth Activity
	BREAK		BREAK	BREAK
	Participation of young people	Cultural Visit / Free time	Self-assessment & Youthpass	Final evaluation
Self-assessment				
DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER
Welcome evening: getting to know each other and the programme Welcome drinks	Culto-Retro Evening	Dinner Out / Free time evening	Free evening with optional activities (board games)	Goodbye evening

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)