Think Global, Learn International, Act Local

Report of the Study Session held by
Cooperation and Development Network Eastern Europe

in co-operation with
European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe

European Youth Centre Budapest
23-27 January, 2017

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About the Organisers

CDN is a network of young Green non-governmental organisations and youth wings of Green political parties in Eastern Europe. CDN consists of 18 member organisations in Eastern Europe and 6 partner organisations in Central and Western Europe. Its political focus is Central and Eastern Europe and Caucasus whereas its activities are attended by participants from all parts of Europe and beyond. Moreover, CDN collaborates with Green and green-minded organisations and activists from all over Europe.

CDN has been working on consolidating the Green movement since 2002 and has aimed to make its events a learning experience both topic-wise as well as creative and innovative working methods relying on non-formal education and experimental learning.

0.   Executive   Summary

The Study Session "Think Global, Learn International, Act Local," organised by Cooperation and Development Network Eastern Europe (CDN), in cooperation with the European Youth Centre Budapest of the Council of Europe, took place on January 23-27, 2017. The programme included 5 full working days.

The Study Session gathered 31 participants coming from different youth organisations, some being international networks, some being members of international networks, and some being local-scale organisations. In total, 26 different organisations and 25 countries were represented.

The original idea for the Study Session was developed through years of experience of international learning and the changes that had been observed in Youth Work by CDN. During this time the international mobility of youth has changed its dynamics – if in the beginning of the 2000s youth exchanges were one of the few opportunities to meet different cultures, nowadays the globalised networks eased this experience for young people dramatically. While the possibilities for intercultural exchanges have increased, the role of youth exchanges has also been altered.

The programme of the Study Session included a combination of methods based on the principles of non-formal education focusing on the exchange of practices, evaluating Youth Work in the recent years, developing new partnerships and proposals for further progression of Youth Work. It was closely linked and intended to contribute to the work priorities of the Youth Department, with special regard to the development of competences and knowledge of young people to influence decisions in the democratic processes. The programme was prepared by the international **preparatory team** composed of five young people coming from the member organisations of CDN and Young Greens from different parts of Europe. It was developed to provide contented space for sharing among participants and encourage them to constructively assess international events in recent years, identify current needs, and develop further suggestions for increasing the quality, professionalism and efficacy of international projects and thus support young people on a local level in their daily activism.

The **content of the programme** was divided into three major thematic blocks:

(1) International institutions, top-down framework of Youth Work: focused on general framework graduating to local needs. Getting familiar with the European Youth Sector, its development, structure, and current priorities, as well as with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, their priorities and their ways of communication with local organisations.

(2) Non-Formal Education and the needs it fulfils – What needs triggered the NFE and informal education, where do we stand now? What are the aspects that affected the national or local organisations' work the most, what should be the priorities in the future?

(3) Personal and Organisational development through international events. – How did international events contribute to individual Youth Workers' personal development as well as to their respective

organisation? What fields of the organisations were boosted by international events? Organisational development looked more deeply into the stages of development an organisation goes through from a draft idea around a kitchen table to an international organisation operating in 47 countries.

Finally, we assessed the takeaways from international events which made changes in local organisations and communities possible.

This report illustrates the activity background, its aims and objectives, main programme elements, issues and tools used to evaluate the practices, as well as the main outcomes and recommendations developed during and right after the Study Session.

1. Introduction

1.1. Aims and Objectives
Aim:

To critically evaluate and advance the role of international Youth Work in the political maturing of activists and organisations on a local level.

Objectives:

1. To explore the level of coordination of political work of the youth on a European and national level nowadays. To compare directives of youth politics and draw clearer lines on a policy level. To present tendencies of institutions such as Youth Forum, Council of Europe, etc. in comparison to national youth councils and individual organisations. How do these institutions harvest learnings and doings from international events and how do the local activists harvest the work of international youth institutions?

2. To assess how results and ideas from international educational events are complementary on a local level; to analyse whether international events cover gaps in the formal system of education;

3. To evaluate the capacity building potential of international events for the development of national and local organisations and activists; to explore different phases of Youth Work on national level and influence of international work on organisational development on local level.

1.2. Participants
We aimed at having a diverse group of participants, and therefore we gathered people both with an extensive knowledge and background in non-formal education, and also people coming from local youth organisations, who have participated in international youth events before and brought benefits to their local organisations. The target group counted two main categories: (1) Youth Green organisations and youth wings of Green political parties from Eastern Europe – CDN member and partner organisations from Central and Western Europe; (2) Young people from organisations working with NFE methods, experienced in the field of Youth Work internationally or locally. Therefore, we identified five sub-categories of the target group:

- Young people with medium and high experience in the field of Youth Work and Non-Formal

Education;

- Members of youth organisations from Europe, who are involved in political work on the local level;
- Young people involved in international networks that deal with youth participation;
- NFE educators and facilitators as well as people incorporating NFE methods in their activism/work;
- Young people engaged in youth policy-making on national and international levels.

Bearing in mind the presumption that the topic is not frequently reflected upon and evaluated within the circles of Youth Workers, we anticipated that sharing the results of the reflection is even less common. Therefore, we aspired to enable the exchange between these two target groups. Participants with extensive experience in Youth Work were expected to bring their qualified perspective on the matter, while the Greens and CDN member/partner organisations were to add Green-value based experience. Moreover, the diverse categories of the target group were expected to contribute and enrich thematic blocks of the programme: starting from the European Institutions' and International Organisations' framework to local organisations and their needs.

In total, we received 397 applications, out of which the prep team had to select 35 participants, meeting the set criteria as well as ensuring equal balance between the target groups, geographical background and gender.

Organisational Background:

Number of participating organisations:	26
Number of Green organisations:	10
Number of International Networks:	12
Number of local organisations:	8
Number of national organisations:	6

Gender distribution:

Total number of participants:	31
Female:	17
Male:	13
Other:	1

Geographical Balance:

South Caucasus:	5

Western Balkans:	7
Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus:	5
Western, Southern and Northern Europe	14

In order to ensure proper preparation of the participants, the prep team launched a Moodle platform two months before the Study Session took place. By doing so, the prep team ensured the exchange of profile information and motivation, as well as performing pre-learning tasks by participants.

2. Overall topic and main issues discussed

Three main blocks of issues were discussed at the Study Session. The flow of the programme elements was following the logic of order of the main objectives. Hence, three main areas were overviewed and evaluated. This chapter provides a general overview of the topics explored. A detailed analysis of the sections as well as a discussion will follow in the subsequent chapters.

Political Youth Work (Top-down and Bottom-up Processes)

Society constantly undergoes different social and political challenges. A large focus on individualism at the expense of social solidarity, constant emphasis on the market and private profit rather than the common good, numerous and diverse social and political turbulences – this is a very broad but general context in which youth has to navigate its role. On top of this, different societal challenges are often a mixture of dynamic and complex processes that require immediate responses from different segments of society. Youth's needs are often determined by these challenges and responses to them are often stretched over time. How extensive is the role of youth in social change? How is this role strengthened by the institutions? The institutions are rather stable structures that provide different support mechanisms to youth in their struggles; yet, this stability, besides offering a steady support to Youth Work in general, comes along with rigidity to a certain extent: following and fulfilling their predetermined long-term programmes, institutions cannot react swiftly and flexibly to the current political happenings. In order for the institutions to function in accordance to youth needs, they need to constantly update and adjust their priorities based on the needs coming from below. How are these processes communicated, what stages does a decision go through until it becomes a reality, what is the timeline/lifespan of a decision, who is responsible for its implementation – these were some of the questions addressed within the first block of the Study Session.

The institutional side of the European Youth Sector is a multifaceted and complex structure working toward the inclusion of young people in the societal processes. The Study Session put emphasis on evaluating these structures as a tool for European youth cooperation. Participants got the chance to gain a deeper understanding of how youth strategies are made on an institutional level and how international bodies envision these strategies becoming a reality.

Youth Work and Non-Formal Education

A significant share of the support for young people relies on Non-Formal Educational practices and international events that, directly or indirectly, build young people's' capacities which they will eventually devote to local development.

Within the current debates about education, there is no comprehensive agreement regarding how formal educational institutions support the learning process of youth and how they fulfil the actual needs of young people. The concept of Non-Formal Education within policy debates is understood

as a category placed between informal learning and formal education, a learning process that takes place outside recognized educational institutions.[1] Non-Formal Education found its place on the agenda of international discourse for education policy in the late 1960s and besides getting information and knowledge, suggests "acknowledging the importance of education, learning, and training which takes place outside recognized educational institutions."[2] Since its development, one of the main pillars that has been associated with Non-Formal Education is *acknowledgement of the needs of disadvantaged groups.* Therefore, the education that has been "provided" is in the interests of the learners and, in the ideal case, the implementation is undertaken by the learners themselves. This guarantees the bottom-up character of Non-Formal Education and establishes a direct link with Youth Work, its development and working strategies.

The term <u>Youth Work</u> describes a wide range of activities. There is no set definition of Youth Work, however there are two most commonly associated features with it as the defining characteristics of Youth Work: **a focus on young people** and **personal development aspect**. While a large part of the general public likes to emphasize that youth is the future of our society, Youth Work organisations recognize the key role of youth as not only the future, but the present of society too. However, unfortunately, young people are not often seen as equal actors in most social, cultural, and economic spheres of life and are excluded from decision-making processes. Youth Work is directly linked to the needs and contexts of young people. Therefore, Youth Work organisations, their agendas and strategies are also constantly adapting to the changing needs of young people, which, on their end, are very much influenced by larger socio-economic factors.[3]

The Study Session offered a discussion about NFE in the wider concept of Youth Work and gave space to questioning the dichotomy of formal and Non-Formal Education, their complementary characters and further recommendations for maximising the results for the local organisations and Youth Workers.

Political Maturity

Capacity building potential of international events for the development of national and local organisations and activists is something that is present at and after the educational events but only rarely evaluated. Young people get inspiration, support, and various other benefits from international events that they take back to their organisations: the accumulated knowledge and practices are not secluded and isolated within the individual, but the gained knowledge, directly or indirectly, is used to further develop their organisational capacities. The impact of international work on organisational

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1 Approaches to Human Rights Education in Compass, Council of Europe, 2017:
http://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/approaches-to-human-rights-education-in-compass
2 Tight, M. (1996), The Re-Location of Higher Education. Higher Education Quarterly, 50: 119–137.
3 Youth work and non-formal learning in Europe's education landscape, European Commission, 2015
    http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/reports/youth-work-nonformal-learning_en.pdf

development cannot be denied, yet, everyday settings are not always convenient to measure the extent of this impact in.

Alongside the personal development aspect of Youth Work, the Study Session evaluated the organisational development aspect of NFE and Youth Work. NFE as a methodology, together with institutional support coming from the "top", affects organisational and personal growth of activists and Youth Workers in organisations. An organisation goes through several necessary steps towards becoming more efficient and competent.

Based on the "Ladder of participation," which is used by many NGOs to assess the participation level of young people in the decision making processes, the prep-team used a "ladder of political maturity" to analyse where on the ladder of organisational development our organisations are situated. The Political Maturity ladder was used in order to introduce different stages of organisational development to the participants of the Study Session, and eventually to mark fields of development that international work boosts.

3. Programme Overview

This chapter includes a general overview of the programme, in line with the previously outlined overall structure of the event. Since some of the session outcomes will be analysed in the 4th chapter, this is a space for a larger overview of the Study Session thematic blocks and inputs. Emphasis will be put on the content, and the sessions specifically related to the content. Introduction, Group building, and Expectations, as well as evening programmes and Evaluation sessions will be left out from the overview and will be included in the overall analysis of the programme elements.[4]

3.1. European Youth Sector – Development, Current Priorities

The session aimed at understanding European Decision making bodies: at directions and specific priorities international support measures set to support local actions/needs. This first content-based session introduced terms and frameworks of Youth Work with an emphasis on human rights approach. Starting from a general perspective, it graduated to the local experience level. Participants were to identify and relate themselves with the topic, and balance the level of knowledge and experience in the room regarding different European Institutions, strategies, and frameworks that concern Youth Work, human rights, etc. This provided a rather "top-down" overview of the dynamics of the Youth Sector.

Questions emphasized were:

- how are the strategies made and how do international bodies imagine they should become a reality?
- how does needs-based decision making look in practice on the level of international institutions?

In order to get the participants into the flow of the session, they were asked to pin local organisations, international structures they cooperate with (get funded from, are responsible for frameworks under which their national organisations work in) and add target groups they are devoted to on the imaginary map drawn on the floor. This provided the initial prompt for the participants to share previous experiences with European frameworks and familiarise more with each other's organisational background.

What is the role of the European Union, and what responsibilities do European states have towards youth policy? Andras Deri, a Hungarian youth researcher, offered a theoretical input on the main

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4 Detailed programme: See in the *Appendix #3*

European Frameworks of youth policy that foster participation, covered Erasmus programme and other EU strategies for youth.

EU member states have their own responsibilities toward youth policy; however, the EU overall youth strategy offers only a general framework for cooperation and only within the EU. At the moment, the strategy covers the years 2010-2018 and has two main objectives:

1. To provide more and equal opportunities for young people in education and the job market;

2. To encourage young people to actively participate in society.

Out of the eight main areas where EU supports initiatives, in line with the topic of the Study Session, more emphasis was given to the aspect of Participation.[5]

One of the mechanisms to ensure participation is a recently initiated Structured Dialogue: a process for discussions between young people and policy makers about different themes to make sure the opinions of young people are taken into account in defining the EU's youth policies.[6] Structured Dialogue serves as a platform for joint reflection on the priorities, implementation and follow-up of European cooperation in the youth field. Structured dialogue aims to make sure that the opinions of young people are taken into account in defining the European youth policy. It involves consultations with youth organisations in EU countries, as well as dialogue between youth representatives and policy makers at youth conferences. More pragmatically speaking, this is the opportunity for young people to deliver their perspectives and aspirations which are often times are not taken into consideration by the political establishment. The European Commission proudly highlights that up to 15,000 young people are involved in the national consultations in structured dialogue.

The Council of Europe's Youth Department's Co-management is another participation mechanism that is based on general principle to involve youth in decision making processes directly and engage them in dialogue with governmental representatives. Youth is seen as a resource and therefore as a partner in this process. It is supposed to balance out the power attributed to the authorities with the influence of youth representatives. However, interaction between the state and young stakeholders differs qualitatively in different countries and according to the level of trust between the two main partners: state and youth NGOs.

Most of the young people involved in Youth Work are familiar with the European Youth Forum, the platform of national youth councils and international non-governmental youth organisations in Europe that strives for youth rights in international institutions, such as the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations; And a funding programme of Erasmus +, that give opportunity to international Non-Formal Education activities to become a reality.

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5 More on these eight areas: http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy_en
6 European Youth Portal: http://europa.eu/youth/eu/article/115/13991_en

National Councils are national umbrella frameworks for local organisations. Kristof Papp and Zita Szalai, Hungarian National Youth Council Representatives, gave an overview of Youth Work and current challenges in Hungary. The reasons for establishing a National Youth Council in a country can be explained through different argumentations, mainly internal needs (on the part of youth organisations) and external actors. Youth organisations see a common interest in joining forces and advocating for a common goal, working together towards governments or international structures. However, it was mentioned, that sometimes the initiative might come from the government or international organisation, when a government is need of wider outreach to the youth.

3.2. Reciprocity of Needs and Priorities

The introduction of the top-down narrative of the umbrella framework was followed by the participants' feedback on the European Youth Sector priorities and strategies according to their previous experiences. The session aimed at exploring how European Strategies actually work on the local level, how local organisations respond to local needs, and ways to address these needs by international umbrella organisations dealing with youth. As the process of assessing, communicating, and addressing the needs is quite a complex one, three main direction of the session were identified:

- How local organisations see and use international seminars;
- How these organisations reflect on their own needs;
- To what extent the work of the Council of Europe supports these local needs.

These questions were split into narrower questions and answered by participants using the method of speed dating. Some of the questions discussed were the following:

1. Is the majority of your projects directed towards
    - Short term interventions;
    - Practical changes with mid-term effect;
    - Advocacy for sustainable system change.
2. How big of a role do funding deadlines play in the timeline planning of your organisation?
3. How much do the priorities of the funders direct your project aims?
4. How much impact do the funding rules have on your projects' methodology and activities?
5. How do you identify and select your beneficiaries and local needs?
6. How do you identify your own organisational needs?
7. Does your organisation/do you use publications of the Council of Europe?
8. How do you find allies, supporters?
9. Does your organisation cooperate with international youth organisations or with another INGO, in the case you come from one?
10. Do the international organisations' priorities correspond to the needs of young people in your

community?

11. How feasible do you think the international organisations' priorities are in the context of furthering your local young community's goals?

12. Do you or your organisation participate in the decision making process of the Youth Sector on a European level?

13. If you had a chance to be listened to, what would you like to tell the European Youth Sector stakeholders?

14. Are minority groups solely responsible for putting themselves on the agenda of the European youth institutions and policies?

15. Who are the main target groups of your projects?

After the presentations delivering the top-down narrative, this was a dynamic session for the participants to remind each other of their organisational profiles, get into each other's organisational realities, and potentially set the ground for future networking and partnerships. This served as a reflective exercise to question and justify how they decide on priorities e.g. –whether they are dictated by the priorities set by funders and the availability of funding, or by the urgency and acuteness of the issue of their working field. The following session provided a wrap-up of the inputs and exchanged experiences during the day with the emphasis on finding common ground between international and local organisations, communication channels between the institutions, local NGOs, and activists, and understanding the importance of "bottom-up feedback"/grassroots needs for European level strategies. The results of these sessions will be discussed in the Chapter 4.

3.3. Non-formal education session

With a guest speaker's input, the participants had the chance to get an overview of the defining mission of Youth Work and the professionalising of Youth Work.

The lecturer from Napor (Nacionalna asocijacija praktičara/ki omladinskog rada), gave an overview of the development of Youth Work in Serbia, including a general overview of the situation of youth, and youth policies spanning from institutions, actors and structures, to the context of youth policies and Youth Work.

Emphasis was put on Youth Work in relation to current concerns of young people including unemployment, economic difficulties, etc. This is what defines the mission of Youth Work. Throughout the years, the concept of Youth Work has formed as any kind of work targeted at vulnerable youth and is considered as either a voluntary activity or a side-work for many. Lack of tendencies for professionalization of the work further marginalises the concept in wider society. The political aspect of Youth Work was highlighted, and strategies and action plans in Youth Work and Non-Formal Education were also tackled in the presentation.

3.4. Finding Tactics that Matter

After having discussed the framework of international Youth Work (European stakeholders, their strategies and priorities and their implementation techniques on the local level), the discussions about Non-Formal Education and youth international activities were open: this explored the relations between the youth international activities we organize from the perspective of local, national, regional, or international organisations. The profile of the participants, with all of them belonging to different organisations and carrying different knowledge and expertise, offered a successful starting point for these discussions. Examples were provided of successful actions/projects on a local level, in which there was some influence coming from the international level.

Discussions pointed toward a strong relationship between the motivation of activists to engage in international cooperation and values they acquired that helped them on local level.

3.5 Personal and Organisational Development

Previous discussions on international work and its impact on local Youth Work opened doors to exploring organisational and personal development. Firstly, the political maturity ladder and its relevance to Youth Work was presented by Vesna Jusup.

Political maturity refers to different aspects of organisational development. It distinguishes four main phases of organisational development and outlines that not all organisations undergo or are supposed to undergo these phases. The first step of the ladder is the **spontaneous reaction phase,** in which organisations mainly consist of a group of enthusiasts without a single coherent line of activism; their campaigns are based on spontaneous reactions to certain political happenings and the change they bring about is not the most sustainable one: protests last until the cause is supported and temporary result is achieved, however, a major societal change is not guaranteed. Therefore, this phase is often accompanied by frustration and the feeling of powerlessness, which sometimes leads to more strategic thinking and the **mobilisation phase,** in which single-campaign based activism develops into the formation of different groups. Slowly a structure is being formed. This period evolves into the **organisational phase**, in which activities such as dividing organisational roles within the organisation, membership management, expansion to different geographical locations etc., occur. This process puts emphasis on the structural development of an organisation: organisational documents appear, scattered activism turns into a coherent line of political activism. The action is oriented to a rather long-term goal. Next is the **maturity phase,** a period when there is the luxury of time to sit and plan: there is not just reaction happening, but organisations can plan long-term coherent strategies and work in accordance with that. A mature organisation will not only manage its internal structure, but cooperate with stakeholders, work with target groups, and can choose the strategies of cooperation. In this manner, the organisation is able

to partake in politics, design policies, and bring about long-term and large-scale changes. It is important to note, however, that this ladder is not a linear development scheme of organisations and does not represent the universal stages of organisational development. Organisational development can differ on a case-to-case basis and might not fall in this classification of stages.

Later on, participants had a chance to re-evaluate the role of international events' contributions to organisational and personal development: to view international events as triggers of change. Participants got to reflect on how international events have shaped their local organisation, and their local community; and to what extent international events have contributed to the causes they work on; to what extent the needs of the organisations and communities have been addressed at these international events and how to maximise the results. The work toward maximising knowledge continued in daily working groups as well. This report includes an annex specifically related to maximising the results from international events for local and national organisations.

4. Main Outcomes of the Study Session

This chapter leaves space for the discussion of the issues outlined as a result of the evaluation of different segments of Youth Work: Proposals and recommendations for the institutional framework of the European Youth Sector (*European Youth Sector- benefits and proposals*); The Programme of the International Educational Events (*Prep team on sessions);* Outcomes of the International Educational Events and their impact on local work (*Inputs of result-based programming).*

4.1. European Youth Sector – benefits and proposals

Three main clusters were identified as a result of the Study Session with regards to the European Youth Sector:

(1) Direct benefits from the institutional side;

(2) Proposal to reform in order to reflect the local needs more;

(3) Proposals to enhance communication;

4.1.1. Direct benefits that the participants see from the institutional side of the European Youth Sector:

This part of the report focuses on the immediate benefits coming from the European Youth Sector. Most of these benefits are considered benefits because they contribute to a wider, more global and more societal prosperity. Although this listing might sound very obvious and self-evident, it is important to note how youth organisations perceive the institutional effort reflected on them.

- *Different possibilities for the people to participate in projects:*

Educational support is one of the most important, visible, and viable benefits for young people around Europe. This particularly positively affects young people with fewer opportunities in their societies. Limited access to higher educational institutions is no barrier to getting involved in the Non-Formal Education process and enjoying its other benefits. The range of young people associated with Council of Europe's activities is becoming wider; involving young people not necessarily affiliated with any youth organisations.

- *Mobility:*

By providing different possibilities, the European Youth Sector gives a boost to youth mobility in Europe. Every year dozens of thousands of young citizens travel to different countries, get acquainted with new cultures, gain first-hand experience with different customs. This further contributes to forming a supra-national identity and a wider sense of feeling European.

- *Source of innovation:*

By providing a framework for cooperation, the European Youth Sector allows young people and youth organisations to frequently seek and realise new initiatives reflected in their organisational activities.

- *Funding:*

It provides funding for international youth activities and therefore, directly supports these new initiatives. By doing so, it helps organisations raise awareness of certain causes by disseminating expertise, as well as supports their capacity building process.

- *Encouraging youth participation in political and institutional life in general:*

Most of the educational events give a motivational boost to their participants to engage either in the topical field of the project, within the general frame of the Youth Work, or further explore such opportunities. This specifically affects the participation in activities of various organisations. Different studies show that the number of young people involved in local organisations aiming to improve their area of living are still low (below 20% in Europe); however there has been a steady rise compared to the previous years.[7] Some participants noted that international events got them engaged in the European level campaigns, and thus supported diverse range of global initiatives.

- *Networking, finding partners*

Apart from raising awareness on a topic, the international events provide opportunities for networking and finding people mutually interested in the field, working on it in a different locality. Meeting them at such events creates the opportunity to join forces and solidify Youth Work by thinking globally and acting locally.[8]

- *Legal Frameworks*

The institutional aspect of the Youth Sector directly affects the legal frameworks and has leverage to provide legal structure on a wider European level that different countries abide by. Considering the democratic values and principles carried by the Council of Europe, for some organisations mainly coming from Eastern Europe, where political will on a state level is often not in line with the needs of young people, the Council of Europe provides one of the most progressive legislations as well as monitoring mechanisms, which makes the environment safer and takes the work of various youth organisations from a constantly defensive to a rather proactive level.

- *Gender Mainstreaming*

One of the direct benefits mentioned at the event was gender mainstreaming as means to achieve gender equality. The Council of Europe's contributions to the assessment of different implications for non-males of policy actions (programmes, legislation, etc.) was underlined as substantial for implementing gender-aware practices within small – national or local – organisations. Its importance was noted as central for developing gender empowerment measures and achieving equal involvement in decision making as well as equal access to services in wider society.

- *Democratic procedures on a local level*

Directly and indirectly, the Youth Sector supports the process of fostering democratisation at the local level. This is done mainly by inspiring youth organisations by promoting youth participation and acknowledging that democratization is a prerequisite for the effective and sustainable functioning of

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7 European Youth: Participation in Democratic Life, European Commission, 2013
        http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/reports/flash375_en.pdf
8 See more on networking techniques in the appendix #6

any organisation, community, or a society. Such processes are taken on board by young people and put in practice on different levels in different structures.

- *Trust in institutions*

By building general sense of belonging and creating the space for fighting for common principles, by providing concrete framework of values, goals, and objectives, the Youth Sector builds trust and represents a safety net when it comes to youth organisations' engagement in international events. Although the direct benefits are well-acknowledged, the understanding of complex structures as tools is missing on the part of youth organisations.

4.1.2. Proposals for reform in order to reflect local needs more:

- *More local need assessment studies with local cooperation*

Most of the youth organisations feel that there is not enough reciprocal cooperation between the higher level institutional bodies and the local organisations. Tailoring policies as well as priorities to local needs requires a more attentive and cooperative approach in order to carry out adequate and accurate needs assessments.

- *Community grants*

In relation to the previous points, the community grant is seen as a measure to address local issues more effectively. Community grants would be a flexible fund that is elastic enough to support the needs of the local communities by providing grants to local organisations. This process is seen by the organisations as one supported by the European institutional framework.

- *Informative events*

The lack of informative events was outlined as one of the key factors that must be reformed in order to gain better outreach. Informational sessions regarding the available support mechanisms do not always reach out to potential stakeholders and the target organisations. This leaves the prospective changemakers without access to necessary information. Moreover, such informative events tend to better explain the connections between the local and European level. Acknowledging this link is the first steps in making change happen.

- *Localised representation of the European institutions*

In order to reach out more on the local level, a localized representation of European Institutions was pointed out as a possible mechanism. Institutional framework should not be perceived as something disconnected and detached from local realities. Decentralisation of such institutions' representation would further foster local communications and guarantee reciprocity between "top-down" and "bottom-up" processes.

- *Identify and recognise different groups of young people, and adjust cooperation according to local capacities (diversify target groups)*

Tailoring cooperation according to the local needs comes in package with adjusting cooperation according to local capacities. Assessing local capacities becomes easier and more realistic if the institutions are decentralised (previous point). This will diversify target groups and, in the long-term,

will involve more young people.

- *Ease bureaucracy on a European level*

Bureaucratic obstacles on the higher level sometimes prevent local organisations from applying to certain projects or benefits. Easing these procedures would additionally spare human resources in organisations that often rely on voluntary commitment. Therefore, it might not only lead to more local impacts, but also more effective local impacts.

- *Invest more into coherence between programmes*

- *Provide coordination and communication for organisations working on the same priorities*

There are numbers of organisations working on similar issues and engaged in similar activities. Although the new era of the internet provides extensive opportunities for these organisations to find each other and coordinate their work, it is still not sufficient. The participants of the Study Session, additionally, see two-folded implications of this coordination process: first, it will massively support and stimulate organisations on different levels to join their forces in reaching same goals, and secondly, it will further keep international organisations and structures up-to-date regarding the needs and objectives of local and national work. The latter, on its own, will trigger efficient reciprocity between international institutions and local/national organisations.

- *Rethink the involvement for youth from unorganised background*

Most of the resources involved in international activities are directed toward young people coming from organisational backgrounds: ones who are already involved in some sort of community activity and in the process of bringing about differently-scaled societal change. However, different studies and practices suggest that a large amount of youth is not involved in any educational or voluntary activity.[5] A number of local organisations work on a community level in order to involve more youth in organisational work throughout Europe, yet a systematic approach to this was identified as inefficient. Moreover, the structured dialogue also tends to exclude the concerns of those young people who are not engaged in organisations, such as marginalised youth, or young people with disabilities, who are less likely to be 'active citizens'. Rethinking the importance of involvement and the strategies for overall youth involvement is necessary: engaging the local/national organisations in this strategy-planning process is a must.

- *Focus on outcomes rather than outputs*

Educational events strive for tangible outputs, measurable results – be it a publication, a toolkit, or a recommendation pack. Most organisations are familiar with classic distinction between output and outcome: output is a direct product of the learning process – a product that is created at the end of the process. An outcome, on the other hand, is an achievement -- a rather abstract level of performance – that occurred because of the learning process happened. Outcome is a long-term and more sustainable assessment for the success of the process. Most of the youth events – as cycle of projects – happen to be more concerned with the learning outputs, so is the institutional framework: success of the project is measured by the number of outputs produced. The quantity of outputs, however, might not be positively correlated with the quality of outcomes at all. Ensuring the

positive learning outcome, developing strategies of turning outputs to outcomes, thinking in a longer term perspective was outlined as one of the recommendations that Youth Sector could set as priority.

4.1.3. Proposals to enhance communication between international institutions and local organisations:

Two main areas were identified in which communication could be improved between the international institutions and local organisations: Communication channels and targeting.

- *Modernisation of communication channels to correspond more to the lifestyles of young people*

Online tools and social networking are often the first stop for young people. "They fulfil the need to connect and build up communities based on mutual support and solidarity – something that classic education systems, conceived for different purposes in a different age, can no longer do".[6] Taking this into consideration on the higher level and diversifying the communication channels might lead to better outreach and thus more inclusive processes; this will particularly affect young people who do not usually take part in youth activities.

- *More open consultative events (especially at universities)*

More consultative events are as important as their accessibility. Young people often have no means of finding out about different opportunities provided by international institutions.

4.2. Preparatory Team on Sessions

International educational activities are loaded with details and session elements that are present in every single event, such as: sessions about expectations, evaluation, intercultural evenings etc, as well as different processes behind the preparation and implementation such events. What learning purposes do they serve? What is their impact on personal and organisational development? The Study Session critically approached such parts of international events that are not focus on their topic. The discussions resulted in several clusters of recommendations. This subchapter lists recommendations to the preparatory teams of international youth events:

Preparation of the event:

The outcome of an educational event mostly relies on a sound and quality preparation of it. Preparation is a multi-layered process involving different sub-processes and activities. Every activity prior to the actual implementation phase of an event can be considered part of the preparation phase: starting at thinking up the project idea to putting together the final logistical details the evening before the event. At the Study Session, seven main elements were identified as pillars of the preparation process:

- *Programme:*

Creating a relevant programme is the backbone element of the preparation. The relevance is addressed through the aims and objectives set by the project. A well-prepared programme also means covering the issues in a way that allows the process to logically build up to desired outcomes; moreover, it provides a focus to the event leading to a productive process and effective realization.

- *Pre-learning stage:*

In order to ensure that the educational event does not happen only in one given section of time and is not treated as a "bubble" outside of the events of everyday reality, a pre-learning stage is recommended. The pre-learning stage will guarantee continuity of the learning process, as well as create the knowledge balance among the group prior to the event.

- *Participants:*

A successful programme of an educational event largely relies on the strategically selected target group. As the concept of youth is broad, and the needs and interests of youth are diverse, the strategic targeting guarantees the proper outreach and involvement of participants who either have prior knowledge and experience with the topic of the event, or have motivation to work on it in the future. Proper emphasis on the profile of participants was mentioned as one of the prerequisites for a fruitful event. Having mutual goals and interests further stimulates the group identity and the process of producing knowledge and developing common tools and mechanisms for future actions.

- *Selection process:*

The target audience might be successfully reached; the preparatory team might receive 500+ applications for a 5-day long activity with the limited space for 35 people. However, many preparatory team members have faced the pain of selecting the "right" participants out of this large pool of applicants. How does one guarantee the fairness of the selection process? Sometimes application forms are considered too limited, restricting the applicants from expressing themselves properly. Therefore, a diversity of techniques for selecting participants was recommended: adding a creative touch (e.g. a one minute video, essay, or other forms of creative expression) to the application form could potentially lead us to more fairly balanced participants.

- *Logistics:*

Technical preparations of the event: accommodation specifications, catering specifications, transportation, preparing all the necessary equipment and materials for the event; Envisioning all the possible scenarios and possible issues which may arise helps ensure smooth implementation and positively affects the content delivering process as well.

- *Fundraising:*

Funding an event is a major part of planning it. A proper fundraising takes a strategic approach to it and open communication with funders. Sometimes alongside program development it looks like a mundane task, but participants of the Study Session recommend drawing attention to co-funding events at a very early stage of preparations.

The Formal and Non-Formal dichotomy

Amongst the general public, learning is often equated with conventional educational themes such as classrooms, textbooks, or school buildings; on the other hand though, most Youth Workers believe that these are redundant categories in the learning process and put pedagogical missions and traditional learning practices under scrutiny. Only rarely is Non-Formal learning seen as complementary to formal learning by producing different outcomes and using different methods. Participants of the Study Session outlined the often-misleading dichotomy between formal and Non-Formal Education and, in line with this discussion, evaluated current practices of Non-Formal Education that international events offer.

- *Bringing Expertise to NFE*

It is no news that Youth Workers, generally, use the NFE methods to produce learning outcomes. NFE in Youth Work is treated as a democratic value itself: giving equal opportunity to every participant to gain, share, and develop knowledge and skills. Practicing these inclusive learning principles has turned us into experts on Non-Formal Education methods. However, an international event is recommended to balance out the topical expertise with the methodological expertise, as suggested by the participants of the Study Session. Maximising the knowledge requires overcoming the dialectics of the formalisation and Non-Formalisation processes: these can be twin processes within one certain event covering the topic of the event as "professionally" as possible throughout the diverse, inclusive methods of Non-Formal Education. One of the examples of this is participatory lectures that aim to involve participants in both vertical and horizontal process of educating. This should not be mistaken for the one-sided theoretical input given by an external lecturer or a trainer, in which the transfer of knowledge has one trajectory and suggests an explicit hierarchy in the process. **Topic-oriented experience** was mentioned as a desired element among the members of the preparatory team. It ensures the proper coverage of the topic, while the NFE methods complement the course of delivering the knowledge properly. However, bringing expertise to NFE should be done in carefully measured amounts: some studies even suggest that while a complementary perspective enriches the scope of learning, formalisation of Non-Formal learning might endanger its voluntary nature.[9]

- *Flexibility to needs*

The Non-Formal Education setting not only allows us to be flexible to individual needs and to build up and/or adjust the programme based on these individual needs, but it, by principle, includes everyone equally.

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9 Lasse Siurala, Filip Coussée, Leena Suurpää and Howard Williamson, The history of youth work in Europe, Volume 5 - Autonomy through dependency – Histories of co-operation, conflict and innovation in youth work, 2016

- *Meta-education*

Additionally, NFE methods successfully deconstruct the concept of knowledge, too. International events, which constantly engage young people in the reflection and evaluation processes, provide participants with awareness and understanding of the phenomenon of learning itself: the process of learning as opposed to crystallised knowledge, and learning as opposed to non-reflective obtainment of information.

Process orientation vs. result orientation

In social psychology the terms Results Orientation and Process Orientation are used to describe people's approach to communicating with others, completing tasks and competing. The process oriented approach puts emphasis on processes, systems, or procedures, rather than results or underlying causes. Although these terms are mostly used to describe the personality of individuals, they can be appropriated to different situations as well. In addition to the classical understanding, the Study Session attributed slightly different implications to these terms, underlining that getting tangible outputs and getting results quickly is mostly associated with a successful programme: achieving a set of measurable objectives is the only mechanism assessing the favourable outcome; however, an outcome-oriented programme might miss out the primary benefits of the process of the event and the additional qualities that the setting of the international event provides. Engaging in process-oriented thinking is understood as frequent reflection on the learning process and is recommended as one of the key values of the Non-Formal Education process and its capabilities to go beyond the reach of education and learning.

Moreover, in line with process orientation, the steps of the activity in which the learning process takes place has to be well thought-through. Sessions such as intercultural evenings, expectations and evaluation, team building etc. are recurrent in almost all educational activities. Serving certain "fixed" purposes, they are rarely looked back at. When is learning most productive? What determines the agenda of the educational events? How successful are the current practices? The participants of the Study Session offered an overview on group dynamics and the productivity process and concluded that the learning is most productive on the 3rd and 4th days of the event.

Last but not the least, in order to know what works, it is important to understand what does not work. Apart from sharing success stories and best practices, it is essential to share failures as well. "Failures Night" was mentioned as an example of transfer of uncomfortable situations; furthermore, this creates a human bond by humanising each participant and preventing them from treating each other as the success-role-models.

4.3. Inputs of result based programming - Outcomes and Local Impact

International youth events involve at least three different yet mutually connected profiles of young people and youth organisations:

1. young people belonging to international youth organisations
2. young people belonging to local/national organisations, which are member of international organisations
3. young people that belong to organisations not part of international networks

The Study Session explored the incentives for all three of these groups for participating in international events and evaluated their local impact. Here are some outlines of the results:

4.3.1. Incentives for locals to interact with internationals

(_not members of international organisations)_

Generally speaking, motivation for international work for local organisations is three-fold and this applies to organisations belonging to international networks or not:

Knowledge transfer – international events provide knowledge distribution in a manner that ensures its availability for future users. Local organisations, by acquiring the knowledge at international events, act as multipliers within their local contexts. Smaller and younger organisations face more struggles in paving their own path through the forest of inequality for themselves and for young people in general. International events provide knowledge about already existing mechanisms that prevent "inventing the wheel" and make their job slightly easier. International events ensure that knowledge does not only reside in certain organisations, but is processed so that relevancy to local contexts is considered. Transfer of action-oriented knowledge, experiences, and the exchange of best practices, often times brings about a _domino effect_ and thus provides a larger contribution to triggering social changes in the society.

Social Capital - Interacting with different organisations with similar profiles or goals diversifies working culture and maximizes the effects on the local level by exchanging practices and methodologies. Moreover, it adds up to the feeling of being "not alone" in the struggle, and gives more meaning to the fight for common good. International events were described as a _solidarity boost_ by members of local organisations that are not members of international organisations. In addition to solidarity, although firm networks might not be formed after interacting with different organisations, it gives a boost to informal networking and the informal learning process.

Support to structures – Smaller organisations benefit largely from getting introduced to working structures of well-established organisations, as they provide working models which can be transferred to different organisational contexts.

4.3.2. Local organisations who are members of international youth organisations -

(What do they get from membership in international organisations?)

This was addressed by asking different organisations present at the Study Session to list positive examples of what works for them being a part of such networks.

Capacity building and empowering is one of the most important benefits of membership in an international organisation. International network organisations orient their capacities to those of smaller organisations by providing trainings, seminars, chances to host different events and practice skills, etc. They represent a platform of support for local organisations. The international framework also either provides or directs the ways to obtain **financial aid**, which gives organisations different possibilities to diversify their resources and achieve better outreach. Apart from financial resources, local organisations often get **human resources** (e.g. trainers, educators) that have direct links to working with Non-Formal Education and mostly experience with the working topic of the organisation, too. By possessing a basic overview of the needs and offers of their member organisations, international networks can justly distribute their resources and thus creates a rather **balanced structure** between their member organisations. In addition, **visibility and media attention** is relatively easily gained when one is a part of an international network. This further helps with **recruitment and membership** and increases the number of supporters and hangarounds. The network provides structure and, in most cases, a **strategic approach** to working needs and goals; thus, local level is done in line with overarching strategy.

4.3.3. International youth organisations

(What they can propose to local, regional organisations)
Simultaneously, international organisations and networks got a chance to reflect and re-evaluate the benefits they are providing to their members. Most of the time, international organisations are well-established networks with well-established structures. Thus, they have much to offer.

Good working practices to regional organisations:

The smallest benefit to small organisations to gain is learning about good working practices:
through different activities, member organisations get the chance to acquire knowledge about organisational work and effective management of the work load. The transfer of this kind of knowledge can be either structured through a type of training, or very informal, through observation, etc.

Working Practices	Resources	Generally
Informal ways of learning how to work effectively	NFE methods - best suitable practices	Partnerships
Advocacy best practices	Financial support	Networking
Integration practices	Professional work with social media	Experience

Organisational management	Structural activities	Ideas
Support to structures	International educational events	Expertise
Clear structures		Solidarity (EU referendum - cross party alliances/human resources)
Democratic decision making processes		Technical assistance
		Passion

5. Follow-up

Daily working groups as well as the Open Space session provided more space for participants to take up Several Follow-up activities. The list includes:

1. Developing membership management strategies in organisations based on the capacity-building elements of international youth events. CDN is taking this strategy further on the level of organising the Webinar series on the membership management in the organisations that are part of the international network. Despite the webinar series being planned before, main elements of its build-up will find base on the outputs of the Study Session. The webinars aim at filling in the gaps and exploring the best practices for organisations to further develop a sustainable approach to (1) membership, (2) transfer of knowledge and (3) structures and documents. All modules are composed of online trainings, games, and follow-up activities in between each episode.

2. Disseminating the recommendations developed on a local level.

3. An online course for international prep teams aiming to further develop the recommendations pack and producing a prep team manual. The initiative came from participants who have participated in preparatory teams, had accumulated experiences and assessed them through the evaluation sessions during the Study Session.

4. A Facebook group that will be kept to uphold cooperation and exchange.

5. CDN will post recommendations and useful resources on the website and make the results accessible not only to participants of the Study Session, but everyone interested in the Youth Work and Non-Formal Education.

6. Evaluation

The evaluation of the Study Session was conducted by the prep team and the educational advisor, as well as the participants of the event. Participants evaluated the event during the last day of the programme, where we had a chance to, thematically as well as emotionally, close the event. During the closing session, participants reflected on the things they had learned, wanted to keep, would have preferred to be different, and questions that remained unanswered. Afterwards, they were given the evaluation forms to fill in.

The evaluation forms were later analysed by the prep team. The overall analysis shows that the participants in general were very satisfied with the Study Session. The methodology was appropriate for the evaluative nature of the event and the sessions followed the logical order of the programme. The prep team further triggered the learning process by facilitating most sessions. A session in which the participants were given space to moderate small group discussions was positively evaluated too: this further stimulated the mutual ownership of the project.

As for the pitfalls of the study session, it was mentioned that despite a balanced pool of participants, a larger representation of the Green values could have been achieved and would have been appreciated. Participants also expressed the wish to have been offered more diverse evaluation methods next to variations of the world cafe method.

The prep team was very satisfied with the preparation and implementation of the project: the programme corresponded to the aims and objectives that had been set. During the Study Session itself, the prep team made sure to invest enough to be adjusting to participants needs. This led to slight deviations to the pre-planned sessions; however, it ensured that the objectives of the Study Session, as well as the individual's needs of the participants, were met. Absence of reflection groups in the evening was outlined as a shortcoming of the programme: reflection groups help bonding as well as make the programme-adjustment process easier for the prep team.

Overall, the Study Session was evaluated as successful, with most objectives having been reached. The general conclusion was that the participants went home with something that will advance international Youth Work.

7. Concluding words

With this Study Session, we intended to improve the understanding of how international work can contribute to the political maturing of young activists and youth organisations on local level. We hope that the results discussed within this report and given in the annexes will further help international organisations become more relevant supporters of young people and organisations on local and national levels. Moreover, we hope this report will help activists involved in local work reflect more and recognise what they get from international work in order to maximise the impact even more, with special regard to available support by the Council of Europe.

CDN, as an international network, will certainly amplify its results based on the outputs of study session and continue further working on directly contributing to its member organisations' capacity.

Appendices

Appendix #1: List of Participants and Preparatory Team Members
Think Global, Learn International, Act Local! 23-27 January, Budapest

	Name	Country of residence	Organisation
1	Sona Parsyan	Armenia	CEIPES international centre for promotion of Education and development" Armenia
2	Farida Jabrayilzadeh	Azerbaijan	MIL Network and Y-PEER Azerbaijan
3	Anastasiya Dorofeeva	Belarus	Belarusian Young Greens
4	Dante-Gabryell Monson	Belgium	p2pfoundation
5	Viktoryia Voitava	Belarus	NGO "New Faces"
6	Željko Vukša-Fejzić	Bosnia and Herzegovina	European law students association , Youth municipality council
7	Tea Dorogi	Croatia	Zeleni prozor (Green window)
8	Mariam (Masha)Dzneladze	Czech Republic	CDN Cooperation and Development Network Eastern Europe
9	Kim Lindgaard Jorgensen	Denmark	CanopyLAB
10	Minna Manninen	Finland	Federation of Green Youth and Students
11	Marie Cucurella	France	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
12	Tornike Kusiani	Georgia	Georgian Young Greens
13	Gianmarco Sapone	Italy	ELSA (European Law Students' Assn.) SMCV
14	Arber Selmani	Kosovo*	ProPlus
15	Endrit Bytyqi	Kosovo*	Instituti i Prishtines per Studime Politike/ Prishtina Institute for Political Studies
16	Costas Georgiades	The Netherlands	Maastricht University, Municipality of Maastricht, Youth Peace Ambassador Network, Europe Calling!
17	Evelina Kvartunaite	The Netherlands	SOFA Ventures
18	Beata Szmuc Poland	Poland	International Projects Association INPRO
19	Filipa Lagoa	Portugal	Intercultura - AFS Portugal/ EFIL
20	Anastasia Baskina	Russia Federation	CDN (Migration WG); European Students' Forum/AEGEE
21	Svetlana Baranova	Russian Federation	Omsk is for the clean city
22	Branislav Trudić	Serbia	Educative Centre of Sombor
23	Katarina Pavlovic	Serbia	Cooperation and Development Network Eastern Europe
24	Ariadna Parlade Romero	Spain	JEF- Young European Federalists, CJE-Youth Spanish Council, Citizen's Awaking
25	Milan Nikolovski	"the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"	CDNEE
26	Semuhi Sinanoğlu	Turkey	The Co-Opinion Network

27	Vahid Aliyev	Turkey	Cooperation and Development Network Eastern Europe
28	Sofiia Yarmosh	Ukraine	Ukrainian Young Green
29	Tariq Khan	United Kingdom	Young Greens of England and Wales
30	Sam Murray	United Kingdom	Young Greens of England & Wales
Team members			
31	Petra Skuljevic	Croatia	Cooperation and Development Network Eastern Europe
32	Vesna Jusup	Belgium	European Greens
33	Gergely Csaszar	Hungary	Future Can Be Different - Hungarian Greens
34	Lera Sauchankava	Belarus	Belarusian Young Greens
35	Sophio Mchedlishvili	Georgia	N/A
36	László Milutinovits	Hungary	Educational advisor, Youth Department

* All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

Appendix #2   **Programme**

Think Global, Learn International, Act Local! 23-27 January, Budapest

Sunday, 22nd January
Arrival of Participants
19:00 Dinner
21:00 Welcoming and Getting to know each other

Monday, 23rd January
08:00 Breakfast
09:30 Morning Circle
10:00 Introduction session (Program, Aims, Technicalities)
11:30 Break
12:00 Presenting the Expectations
13:30 Lunch
15:00 Team Building
16:30 Break
17:00 Organisational Fair
18:30 Introduction to daily Working Groups
19:00 Dinner
21:00 Bingo Night

Tuesday, 24th January
08:00 Breakfast
09:30 Morning Circle
10:00 European Youth Sector – Development, Current Priorities
11:30 Break
12:00 The Youth Department of the Council of Europe and the No Hate Speech Campaign
13:30 Lunch
15:00 The Local Perspective
16:30 Break
17:00 International Organisations, Local Strategies
18:30 Working Group Session
19:00 Dinner
21:00 Intercultural Night

Wednesday, 25th January
08:00 Breakfast
09:30 Morning Circle
10:00 NFE – Development of International Youth Work
11:30 Break
12:00 Finding Tactics that Matter
13:30 Lunch
15:00 Free Afternoon
20:00 Dinner Outcomes

Thursday, 26th January
08:00 Breakfast
09:30 Morning Circle
10:00 Personal and Organisational Development
11:30 Break
12:00 The Political Maturity Ladder
13:30 Lunch
15:00 International Events as Triggers of Change

16:30 Break
17:00Working Group Session
19:30 Dinner
21:00 Storytelling Night

Friday, 27th January
08:00 Breakfast
09:30 Morning Circle
10:00 Reflection on Learning
11:30 Break
12:00 Follow up and dissemination
13:30 Lunch
15:00 Future Vision
16:30 Break
17:00 Evaluation Assembly
19:00 Dinner
20:00 Farewell Party

Saturday, 28th January
Departure of participants

Appendix #3   **Session Descriptions**

Session Descriptions

Sunday, 22nd January

Welcoming and getting to know each other

The preparatory team welcomes you to beautiful Budapest and to the European Youth Centre! We will introduce ourselves and aim to memorize each other's names in a playful manner. Afterwards you will be able to participate in a treasure hunt to get to know the venue as well as each other. We will keep the details a surprise. As you will be surely exhausted by this time, some refreshing drinks will await you in the lobby following the hunt.

Monday, 23rd January

Introduction Session

In the first session of the programme, you will get familiar with the project background, its aim and objectives, the detailed programme, and the organizers. The preparatory team will also provide all technical conditions, rules of the house and reimbursement procedure.

Presenting the expectations

In this session, we will share what expectations we have for the week and for the Study Session. You will be able to identify key contributions, fears and expectations, and will have the opportunity to discuss it with the whole group.

Team building

We will play a team-building game where we will develop our own group spirit and agree on the principles of how we want to work together during this week. Furthermore, you will get ideas on how to construct a friendly atmosphere in your local environment and your daily life.

Organisational Fair

You will be able to present your organisations and their backgrounds in a playful manner. We will ask you to emphasise whether your organisation is rather a political or civilian one, how international exchange helped to shape your local initiatives, and what are the target groups, achievements, influences and impacts of your organisation.

Introduction to the working groups

In this session the preparatory team will present you with the concept of the daily working groups and the follow-up process - what they mean and how will they work, what is their connection with the project aim and objectives, and what are the expected participant contributions.

Storytelling night

Storytelling is about sharing stories from different people, organisations, and realities following one motive at the core of each story. In a series of short expressions you will have a chance to hear how international exchanges inspired, supported, fostered change in local communities. Six speakers will present their stories in a dynamic, concise and involving manner in order to reach out to the rest of the group and to boost good energy for further discussion on international exchanges and their

impact.

Tuesday, 24th January

European Youth Sector – Development, current priorities

In this session you will be introduced to the terms and framework of Youth Work and its approach to human rights. It starts from the general perspective graduating to the local. It serves as an absorption session for you to start getting familiar with the topic and to be able to come to the personal experience level. It presents the framework of institutions, programmes and processes we all have been part of, using the opportunity to balance the level of knowledge and experience in the room.

The Youth Department of the Council of Europe

You will be introduced to the Youth Department of the Council of Europe and Youth Forum. What are their priorities and how do they interact with local organisations? Grass roots or top down? What impact does the Youth Forum have on the local level? Stay tuned, and find out with us.

The local perspective

In this session you will have the opportunity to discuss how your organisation has implemented the strategies and methods presented previously (if it has). Do they make sense in the local context? Can they be generally implemented? If not, what are the strategies and methods you use in their own work or community? These are the questions this discussion will aim to find answers to.

International organisations and the local strategies – shortcomings and improvements

In this session we are looking for your feedback! What needs can you identify that could be addressed by international organisations? Does that correspond to what was outlined previously? If not, how can it be bettered? Come up with proposals!

Working Group Session 1

This is the first working group session and your first opportunity to start shaping the change you wish to see! We are sure you all have plenty of experience with international exchanges, the Youth Sector and their impacts on the local level. Now is your chance to make that process better! Here, you will be given space to start working on some concrete proposals, guidelines, and advice that you would like to be taken into consideration in future youth strategies and exchanges.

Intercultural evening

During the evening we will ask you to present your own culture and background, whatever that might mean to you, and to afterwards reflect on what being intercultural exchange means for you and what is to be learnt or what can be learnt from and through it. You are asked to bring with you whatever you feel represents your culture the best, and you'd like to share with the others.

Wednesday, 25th January

NFE - Development of International Youth Work

You will get external input on the development of international Youth Work and of NFE - starting from what the needs were that triggered NFE and informal learning in general, to where we are standing now.

Finding tactics that matter

In this session we will ask you to recall on one of your most successful actions or events and to reflect on why it worked so well. What were the aspects that one should focus on in the future as well? What were the circumstances that made it as effective as it was? Once these are identified we will create a list of strategies and action that work.

Dinner in the city

After some free time in the afternoon we invite you for dinner in one of the more alternative places in Budapest. Why not get familiar with the local underground scene if you are in the city, after all? We encourage you to mingle and to keep an eye out for the hidden treasures of the city.

Thursday, 26th January

Personal and organisational development

Here we will focus on two things: How international events contributed to your personal development and to that of your organisation. What fields of your organisation was boosted by international events? How you yourself were improved by them? What are the important factors that such exchanges should always include and what can you and your organisation can gain from them? This is what we will be looking into.

The political maturity ladder

Have you ever thought about the stages of development an organisation goes through from a draft idea around a kitchen table in the suburbs to an international organisation operating in 47 countries? Well if you haven't this is the perfect opportunity to do so! What stage is your organisation in at the moment? What can your community do to progress? Let us share ideas and examples from our own organisations and let us find points where we could improve.

International events as the triggers of change

We are sure there were takeaways from international events that made you implement changes in your local community. Here, you will have a chance to share them! What are the needs of the communities that are not addressed during these exchanges and how can we change that? Have some ideas? Don't keep them to yourself, then! Let your creativity fly freely.

Working Group Session 2

Once again you will have some time to reflect on the issues discussed during the day. Feeling some inspiration to change the world of international youth exchanges for the better for generations to come? Team up with your fellow participants and create proposals to make these experiences for the ones following you so much better.

Evening session

Open evening as per your own arrangement.

Friday, 27th January

Working Group Session 3

Here you will be able to finalise your work from the previous two working group sessions. We are really looking forward for your creative and constructive contributions in order to make international

exchanges better and more in line with the needs of local communities.

Reflection on learning

During this session we will ask you to reflect on the whole week's programme, from both a personal and an organisational standpoint. What might be the needs of your organisation in the future? How can you apply what you have learnt? With what questions are you leaving?

Follow up & dissemination

Here you will have some space to present what you have been working on during the working group sessions, to discuss how to transfer the knowledge gained during this Study Session to other youth organisations and young activists, and how to disseminate them.

Future vision – where are we now and where are we going?

"Are we human, or are we dancers?" We invite you to a visionary journey – to a world where international youth exchanges reach all of their desired goals and bring prosperity to the local organisations. Once you imagined this wonderful dreamland, we ask you to correlate it to the cold reality: what are the resources at our disposal and what are the yellow brick roads to be taken to realise these visions? What are the steps we can realistically take to consolidate the Study Session experience? (Warning: meeting with Oz not included in the package).

EVA – evaluation assembly

We have reached the end of a beautiful journey. We smiled and we cried, we held hands, made friends, and had some thoughtful, in-depth discussions about international youth events. Now it is time to look back and contemplate what you have achieved. What have we learnt, and more importantly, how are we going to follow up on it? Remember the expectations you set during the very first session? Let's see if those have been met as well. As we say an emotional goodbye, we shall not forget to be motivated to take these conclusions further, and to work together to make international youth exchanges even better.

Farewell party

After we are spiritually and emotionally through the five stages of grief, let us enjoy the company of each other with the companionship of soothing music and flashy dance moves. Make that goodbye memorable!

ORGANISATIONAL CONCEPT FOR MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Team concept

The aim of the team concept is that the principles on which the organisation is based, the areas which are important for it, and the strategy it follows are reflected in the organisational structures. First of all, there are four key areas according to which it is recommended to form teams to manage the corresponding areas. The four teams and their responsibilities are detailed below. The team is coordinated by a team leader, who is responsible to the co-chairs, and is part of the board. The team's strategy is developed by the team leader, which they have to present to the general assembly. The team has permanent members, and these positions can be filled by active members, based on interests and knowledge/skills. The team leader bases their work on the team members, but has to be flexible, and can involve other members of the organisation in their work, especially if a project demands an extensive amount of human resources. The teams continuously cooperate, communicate and help each other.

In the concept, co-chairs, along with the board members, coordinate the work of the teams. Co-chairs pay attention to the realization of long term goals, and they take responsibility for the whole organisation's work.

The team concept tries to tackle two issues with which organisations often struggle with: recruitment of new members, and keeping old members engaged. It provides something concrete members can occupy themselves with, which they can feel successful in, while providing visibility for the organization and raising interest in it among the general public, hence supporting recruitment.

Communication team

The communication team is responsible for all of the organisation's external communication. They develop the communication strategy, and they are responsible for everything from creative work to its operative execution. The team evaluates the effectiveness of the communication strategy. Their projects can include purely communicational projects, as well as managing the communication of the other teams. Their projects range from long term communications of campaigns, actions, etc. to quick reactionary communication. The team's other important function is the effective implementation of recruitment based on communication.

This team is mostly advisable for members who are interested in or good at graphic design, creative work, writing statements and press releases, video editing and creation etc.

Community team

Members of the organisation can only be motivated and productive if they constantly feel part of a community, if they have friends within the organisation and if they feel good about themselves when they are among members. It is vital that they are constantly reminded that they are important

members of the community, who are contributing to the common aims. For this purpose, regular community events need to be organised, and members need to attend these: mutual sport events, meals, movie nights, paintball, drinking, theatre visits, camps, laser tag, escape games etc. The job of the community team is to come up with proposals for these events, organise and execute them, and to achieve high and motivated participation.

It is also vital for this team to be responsible for the psychological well-being of members. Overwork, exhaustion and frustration with the organisation can lead to unmotivated members. It is their job to make sure members are active and happy.

This team is advisable to social butterflies, constant party goers, extroverts with creative ideas, and for people who are good at handling others.

Internal education team

The responsibility of this team is to constantly update and educate members on professional issues related to their principles, and provide internal educational events and materials for them. It is important that the members' knowledge of financial, social, political, sustainability and technological issues is sufficient, adequate, detailed, up-to-date and constantly expanded, and their world view is well argued and opinionated. This can be achieved through discussions, debate clubs, invited external or internal speakers, movie nights, mass online courses, etc. The team's responsibilities include the expansion of the members' general knowledge, putting news in local context, sensitivatization, etc. The organisation's official statement or views are developed through these platforms. The team provides the effective execution of learning and of the sharing and multiplication of knowledge for the organisation.

This team is ideal for book worms, nerds, anyone with extensive knowledge on any given topic (you can put your degree to good use!), educators, trainers, professionals.

Institutional/structural team

Organisation to organisation communication and the relationships with other organisations are vital. A good relationship has many advantages: your organisation is visible, organisations can help each other and learn from each other, you can learn about funding options, access education, resources and invitations, and you can copy know-hows and best practices. This team's responsibilities are the establishment and upkeep of communication channels with other organisations, state institutions, NGOs, universities, international institutions, and companies, as well as keeping the structures of the organisation under constant supervision. The team develops a cooperation strategy with the organisations it communicates with, and keeps a database of their contacts.

Another important role of this team is organisational development: the constant monitoring of how the organisation functions and proposing reforms.

This team is perfect for people with a holistic approach and an organisational background- people who are interested in processes and process optimization.

On the importance of organising street activities

It is important that members don't feel responsibilities to the organisation as a burden, otherwise they might experience burnout. But it is equally important to be able to provide members with concrete tools or actions they can carry out, so they feel an attachment to the organisation and consider the outcomes, the concrete products, as their own baby/work/achievement. Street action of any manner is the perfect tool for this: skill threshold is low, so everyone can participate, yet all of the participants are occupied and feel the importance of the role they play at the action, while providing free marketing and visibility to the organisation. One might approach a bunch of people doing community service with congratulating words, and they might join the action. To make sure you keep them engaged, simply increase your "brand awareness" – wear organisational T-shirts, badges, have flags or banners with you to events. If people see what you do is beneficial for society and they are aware of the organisation, they will want to join. Choose an easily recognisable logo, which people associate with you.

Appendix #5:   **Membership Management in Youth Organisations**

developed by: Beata, Tea (Zeleni Prozor), Greg (Hungarian YG), Sona, Marie, Milan (MODOM), Asya (BelarusYG), Gianmarco, Endrit, Svetlana

Representatives of several NGOs, INGOs and youth wings of political parties exchanged practices of attracting and keeping members active in their organisations. As a group, we differentiated between getting new members and keeping them motivated and active. We emphasised the importance of creating and maintaining a body or nominating a person within the organisations responsible for membership management.

1. Attracting and recruiting new people

- *Campaigns*

When an organisation conducts a campaign, not only should it use the campaign to attract new members, but it needs as many people on board to help with spreading the campaign. In one of the youth wings of a political party, volunteers deal with new members that joined during the campaign; during a year the mobilisation is done by the leadership of the organisation.

- *Actions*

Whenever an organisation conducts online/street action, this is an opportunity to attract new people. What people emphasised as important, apart from having clear goals of the action which might be attractive for new people, is a visual identity- something that grabs one's attention (e.g the group which is involved in an action can have the organisation's T-shirts, so they are easily recognisable.)

- *Sharing agenda*

Many people will join the organisation simply because of its causes. Talk to people and clearly explain to them what you do.

- *Trainings, seminars*

Invite new people to your activities which your organisation's members will take part in. It's very easy for people to join an organisation when they know the people who are already there.

- *Video*

A short video and/or presentation on why people should join the organisation should be available in every organisation. In case you need a very short explanation on what the organisation is doing, or a means of presenting the mission and/or activities in a structured way, pull out the "video card".

- *Website or social media*

These are organisations' ID cards for the public. Maintain them accordingly. You can put a "JOIN US" button in a visible place on each social media page. Make sure your activities are represented by bright, positive images of people who look happy to volunteer/be members of the organisation.

- *Cafe Method:*

As a part of your promotion plan, you can invite young people from universities, volunteer groups etc. Prepare a bit of food, cookies, coffee, and tea, and create a home atmosphere where people can hold discussions. Additionally, you can invite former members or professionals on a topic about which you want to inform your guests, but don't forget the informal approach.

- *Headhunting:*

You should know your target group and the profile of your potential members. Observe and target individuals - people you want to see as members - contact them, visit them, but make sure not to be pushy - it can be counterproductive.

- *Personal story:*

Use your personal stories and emphasise why you joined the organisation, how your life changed, what you learnt, and why you appreciate the experience.

- *Cooperation with universities*

If you cannot do direct promotion at universities, try to announce events at universities, targeting people topically.

- *Call for new members*

One of the ways to invite new members is to open a call and spread it through youth networks in your country. You can structure the events differently, but one of proposals is to organise a training/introductory meeting to the new people (e.g. see Cafe method). Make sure there are enough activities where new members can take part according to their interest, otherwise they can leave easily.

2. How to keep people engaged

It is of utmost importance for organisations to "take care" of the membership. Sustainable membership management is based on active engagement of its members into the processes of the organisation. These are some ideas that can help with keeping members active and make them feel included:

- Actions that people can take a part in;
- Building up identity: Promotional material, shirts etc.;
- A sense of belonging;
- Giving young people what they want;
- Involve people in the activities;
- People need to understand how they can benefit from the organisation;
- Adjust activities to people's needs;
- Maintaining very personal contact;
- Keep the horizontal structure of the organisation;

- Careful selection of members - in terms of identifying with the organisations' values;
- Motivation: participation at international events;
- Give people a task and responsibilities;
- Engage, don't force!

3. Things that people responsible for members should bear in mind:

- Keep people involved and informed: everyone having equal (access to) information is one of the most democratic ways of involvement; moreover, it contributes to the sense of belonging and brings about more positive actions;
- Young people often lack trust; they fear being used: building trust not only towards the members, but also amongst the membership is important.
- Make sure people are interested in your topics;
- Be empathetic: understand the members' issues, concerns, look at the problems with their eyes. Being able to walk in somebody else's shoes will lead to frequent reflection on your actions and give insight to different solutions;
- Recognise ways to encourage them;
- Don't treat your members like your employees;
- Find people's role in the group;
- Keep in mind the personal approach: "do you want to get involved?"

Questions to always reflect: why do we need new members?

Why did *we* join and how did *we* get motivated to stay?

4. Organisational Structure:

Task allocation and coordination are best managed by organisational structures. Different organisations take up different structures, depending on its objectives. Structure not only provides the foundation for operating, but also determines the membership's involvement in different organisational processes and thus the organisation's actions. Having teams responsible in front of the board proves to be a successful practice in many organisations. Examples of the teams are the following:

1. Communication;
2. Social team - games and social activities
3. Weekly club - discussions, movies..
4. Terms - internal lectures

How to Maximise Impact from International Participation

Sam Murray
Young Greens of England & Wales

Contents

1. Introduction

As a former international officer for the Young Greens of England & Wales, I recognised the importance of engaging with our international community as a way to work on cross-border campaigns, and as a way to learn new approaches and skills from our young green family. On undertaking the role, I aimed to increase our international activity and find ways to introduce more extra-organisational cooperation. I have also worked with the International Committee of our mother party, the Green Party of England and Wales, to ensure a strong Young Greens presence in delegation to the European Green Party councils and congresses and to the Global Greens congress. Since these developments, it has been important to solidify this next step in our organisational development by working out how to connect these events with our local level activity.

Most of the experience informing this text is from participation in events run by the Federation of Young European Greens (FYEG) and The Cooperation Development Network for Eastern Europe (CDN). This document is in direct response to the Think Global, Learn International, Act Local Study Session run by CDN from the 23rd to the 27th of January, 2017 in Budapest.

Member Organisations (MO) will often want to see tangible impacts of their participation in events, hence why they send and often fund participation, but it can be difficult to translate an impact that reaches a local level. Due to funding restraints and restrictions, often only one person can attend and the question has to be asked- how can an MO make best use of that one person at the event and what will that MO get out of their delegate's attendance.

This guide aims to look systematically at a process to maximise impact delegates can have before, during and after an event in relation to their MO's aims and objectives identifying Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure impact. It also aims to address cynicism some MOs may have in sending delegates to events in terms of identifying how the financial impact of event can also be maximised.

2. Identifying International Opportunities

Article 5: International Affiliation

5.1 The Young Greens of England and Wales is a full member organisation of the Federation of Young European Greens (synonymous with FYEG).

5.2 The Young Greens of England and Wales are a member of the Global Young Greens by virtue of its membership of the Federation of Young European Greens.

Young Greens of England & Wales Constitution as of October 2016

In 2016, Young Greens of England and Wales (YGEW) adopted the above into our constitution. This was the first time we had recognised our international affiliations and membership. In 2017, as I write this document, YGEW are members of the Federation of Young European Greens (FYEG), contributing 1% of our budget per annum as a membership
fee. As a result of full membership, we are entitled to send participants to activities, to have 2 votes at the general assembly, and to propose changes to the political platform of the organization, as well as change the internal rules of procedure. We can also contribute members to strategic planning committees who help forge the activity plan for the coming year.

This membership of FYEG is the best place to start in exploring international opportunities. As YGEW, can input and vote on the annual priorities for FYEG, which can influence an alignment in programmes- so when migration is a priority for YGEW, for example, it can lobby for this to be a priority for FYEG activities. When activities have been decided for the year, they are advertised through open online calls and through a newsletter sent to MO designated contacts- in the case of YGEW this is usually the international officer.

Other than calls by FYEG, CDN, a sister organisation of FYEG, offers relevant programme training within an Eastern European context. These opportunities can provide a unique perspective on issues and perspectives on training. It is important, though, to recognise that CDN exists mainly for Eastern European groups, thus, it is more important not to simply seek every opportunity provided, but only the ones with most relevance.

There are also external opportunities available outside the FYEG/CDN sphere. In terms of green organisations, the Green European Foundation (GEF) often offers particular opportunities for training on topics such as media, as do the European Green Party and the Heinrich Boll Foundation. Outside Green organization, the European Council offers training opportunities, as do the Young Federalists. The EU, while we are still a member, offers events such as the European Youth Event and the Youth Opinion Festival, which we can send members to via sponsorship of our MEPs.

Through our involvement with the International Committee of the Green Party of England and Wales, we also have opportunities to work on projects supported by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy. In 2017, priorities for work lay in exploring projects with organisations and green parties in the Balkans and in East Africa.

3. Identifying which International Events to Attend

With the opportunities discovered, the next stage is to consider why participation is useful to MOs and identifying events to attend with direct advantages. The following key considerations need to be made:

● Does the topic of the Study Session/seminar meet with YGEW's annual priorities?
● Does the Study Session/seminar offer an opportunity to learn about capacity building skills?
● Does the Study Session/seminar offer training in a specific skill YGEW needs to develop?
● Is the Study Session/seminar offering training on a subject YGEW can contribute to with competence?
● Does the Study Session/seminar present an opportunity to influence change within FYEG/Other MOs, which can create a more progressive political environment?
● Will the context of the Study Session/seminar provide an opportunity to learn about a particular situation through first-hand experience, and can this be useful to inform projects?
● Does the Study Session/seminar offer a chance to learn about new approaches to skills/training/topic?
● Does the Study Session/seminar present the opportunity to meet with other Young Green organisations, learn about how they operate and have opportunities to plan for cooperative activity?

A yes to any of these questions provides a reason to attend an international event, as well as providing a basis for event application and a framework for delegates to follow.

One of the barriers to such an approach is the fact that currently FYEG does not inform MOs of whom, from their ranks, has been selected for event attendance. If executive committees don't know this, then the attendance of the individual cannot be maximised for the MO.

4. What to Consider When Applying

The YGEW EC may wish to send their international officer to international Study Sessions/seminars for a specific purpose as detailed above. At present, any individual from a member organisation can apply, which can be a positive thing, as one can send a diverse range of representatives and give particularly liberation groups skills. The creation of the international subcommittee has been another means for creating opportunities for wider representation and presence at events, but decisions need to be made that are beneficial for YGEW and that are financially viable. There is one more factor which needs to be considered when applying to events:

Finances - An important aspect is considering the financial impact of attending events. Most events require a participation fee of around €50, which covers food, travel and material expenses. If the

training would benefit the day to day operations of the international officer, they should be able to apply to the training budget for covering their participation fee, if the value is not discernible no funds should be used. There is nothing to stop members paying for their own attendance.

Dates - Does attendance at an event clash with YGEW priority events? Does it happen at the same time as an event we need attendance for? If the international officer is required to attend EC away days, residential, conference and convention, it would not be suitable for them to attend an international event at this time. Additionally, if a Study Session/seminar is on a relevant topic, we can use this opportunity to send someone to demonstrate that we are working on the topic internationally through social media content.

Participation - It is important to point out these Study Sessions/seminars have intensive workshop elements, so those expecting a holiday will be quite disappointed. There is often opportunity for social and free time, but if a delegate does not attend all the required session, it reflects badly on the MO. A requirement for a presentation or feedback form an event can ensure this is happening. There should also be a mechanism for withdrawal of financial support from YGEW if delegates cannot participate to the best of their ability.

5. Preparing for an International Event

The most important part of an event is the preparation before attending, to ensure there is a clear vision of what a delegate is to get out of an international event. Some workshops have preparatory work platforms- for example, CDN use moodle to post preparation tasks and resources and have deadlines for prep tasks to ensure participants examine and understand the event before attending.

The first thing to plan is what the main goals and objectives of attendance are. These could be:

- To learn new skills to bring back to EC/Regional/Local Parties
- To learn new approaches to work
- To learn, in more detail, about a topic to inform campaigning
- To learn how to build capacity
- To learn how neighbors campaign and train
- To learn what can be done across borders
- To build alliances to fight for common political goals
- To reform FYEG and ensure it is diverse and inclusive

Once these aims and objectives are identified, it is then useful to look at the programme presented to identify which session will meet which needs. To demonstrate this, look at the example programme from the CDN "Think Global, Learn international, Act Local" Study Session.

Cooperation and Development Network Eastern Europe

Arrival + Registration	Team building *There is no I in team*	The local perspective *Do these international bodies satisfy local needs?*	Free afternoon	International events as triggers of change	Future vision – where are we now and where are we going?
	Break			Break	
	Organisational fair *Where do we come from?*	International organisations, local strategies *Shortcomings & improvements*		Working Group Session	EVA – evaluation assembly *Written & verbal evaluation by participants*
	Introduction to daily WGs	Working Group Session			
19:00 – 20:00 Dinner	19:30 – 20:00 Dinner			19:30 – 20:00 Dinner	19:00 – 20:00 Dinner
21:00 Welcoming and GTKEO	21:00 Intercultural Evening	21:00 Meme Night	20:00 Dinner out	21:00 Storytelling night	20:00 Farewell party

The aim in attending this session for myself and Tariq was set out before as:

1. To learn how to create a strategy, such as this document, to maximise our international work impact on how YGEW operates
2. To learn about CDN as an organisation and the type of events it runs
3. To get a sense of the Eastern European Green context
4. To meet and network with Eastern European Organisations, particularly those outside the EU, to establish links for international work during EU elections when FYEG will have a focus on them

Looking at the programme above, we identified how each of these sessions can facilitate our aims. To demonstrate this, we will look at each object and list the sessions which match it.

Aim 1 - To learn how to create a strategy such as this document to maximise our international work impact on how YGEW operates

- The local perspective - do these international bodies satisfy local needs?
- International organisations, local strategies - shortcomings & improvements
- International events as triggers of change
- Future vision - where are we now and where are we going?

Aim 2 - To learn about CDN as an organisation and the type of events it runs

- Organisational fair - where do we come from?
- Team building
- Working group meetings
- Evaluation assembly

Aim 3 - To get a sense of the Eastern European Green Context

- Organisational fair - where do we come from?
- Intercultural evening
- Storytelling night
- Meme night
- Free afternoon
- Dinner out
- Team building

Aim 4 - 4.   To meet and network with Eastern European Organisations, particularly those outside the EU, to establish links for international work during EU elections when FYEG will have a focus on them

- Organisational fair - where do we come from?
- Intercultural evening
- Free afternoon
- Dinner Out

- Team Building
- Future vision - where are we now? And where are we going?

This realisation of the programme through our aims and objectives helps us focus our time at the Study Session and what approaches to take in regard to what we wanted out of them. It is important to note that we recognised how socials are beneficial to goals around networking and learning about other organisations. Indeed, on the socials at this event, we connected with members of green groups in Ukraine, Macedonia, Hungary, Serbia, Georgia and more. The programme was also modified during the session for open space and to set meetings. We utilised this time to meet our goals, by facilitating green group meetings to identify skills we had, as well as skills we needed in order to open the door for further projects. By planning our aims and objectives in advance, we were prepared to use this free time to our advantage.

It is also useful to plan contributions you may be asked to make. For example, Tariq and I worked as a team to create a presentation introducing our organization, where I devised the PowerPoint and he presented our organisation. We also identified our capacities to participate in events and considered when each of us could make useful contributions, ensuring parity in our partnership, so that one person was not dominating any dialogues.

Handy Hint - Another important point of preparation is finances. In terms of finances and expenses, it is always best to have documentation prepared before an event. FYEG has an online expenses system which can be filled out in advance of an event, and then tickets and passes can be taken as hard copies to the event, meaning reimbursement will be quicker!

6. When I Arrive

Aside from the formal signing in procedures, it can often be daunting to arrive at a new space with people you haven't met before. A really useful tip is to use Moodle or engage in Facebook groups that may be set up before an event, and explain that this will be your first time attending the event- try to socialise through social media.

The starting sessions often outlines the days ahead, and usually there is a session in which the participants can share hope and fears for the session ahead. With the preparation work, it is possible to clearly state the reasons for your attendance. This is important in letting the organisers know how you see your participation, and helps them adapt facilitation of the programme around these hopes. Raising fears is equally important- if other Study Sessions or seminars have had negative elements, it is important to take note of these to avoid the same mistakes being made and to acknowledge personal working style.

Team building and introductions are important to participate in, as not only are these spaces for first impressions but you can use these to identify who you may wish to talk to about their own work, in socials and between sessions. You might hear that somebody is from an organisation you haven't heard of, or has a background you are interested in, so you can learn a lot about the cohort you are experiencing the Study Session/seminar with.

With almost all Study Sessions/seminars, you will be required to introduce yourself. It is important to reflect on how you would like to present yourself and YGEW. You can even take the opportunity to say why you are at that particular session, and from the start encourage contact on certain topics in your introduction. It is useful to be proactive in realizing the vision you established for the Study Session/seminar in your preparation work.

If the programme does not contain elements to facilitate networking opportunities, ask the programme team to help make introductions and facilitate your free time, to ensure you can meet and network with people in line with your aims.

7. Using Open Space

Open space is based on a philosophy of allowing projects to gestate in a way to suit individual styles. It presents an open block of time to achieve as little or as much as somebody wants to, with a broad time limit that does not have to be used. For YGEW, it presents a direct opportunity to facilitate space to achieve our aims and goals of participation which have not been fulfilled by the programme.

At FYEG events, a good use of open space is to gather MOs to talk about certain project ideas of changes to FYEG structures. At a strategic planning meeting, an open space session can be used to meet groups with common aims for an inclusive and diverse FYEG. One example might be meeting with German, Norwegian and Swedish Young Greens to talk about implementing a 50%+ quota for women, trans and non-binary persons at the FYEG EC. It could also be a chance to meet with our neighbourhood organisations, such as Scottish and Northern Irish Young Greens, about joint campaigning. Despite our closeness, we rarely see our neighbours outside the FYEG context.

At other events, a good way to use open space is to meet other organisations who have similar goals- namely Young Greens groups and green focused NGOs. At the CDN "Think Global, Learn International, Act Local" seminar, we had two opportunities for open space, which we used as follows:

Session 1 - Green Group Meeting
For this session, delegates from green groups sat in a circle for an informal discussion about what

each other's organisations are campaigning about look at the major issues affecting us. We also examined how the organisations worked with umbrella organisations such as CDN, FYEG, EYF, ect.

Session 2 - How Can Green Groups Collaborate

For this session, we drew up a big table of skills that Green MOs and NGOs were strong at, and ones they felt they needed to improve upon. We put the name of the MO next to it, then drew lines connecting skills needed with skills each had, pointing out where potential projects could form. We also collected common problems to explore common problem solving opportunities.

8. Networking at Events

Networking is one of the most important tasks you can undertake at international events. The connections you make can help initiate skills sharing, international projects and can help during elections to bodies such as FYEG.

The best way to approach networking is to have a goal for each conversation you wish to have- plan out what you would like to find out from the person you will approach to initiate conversation. At the beginning of a networking conversations, it is useful to let the person you are talking to know what you want out of the conversation and to be upfront with your aims. It is often useful to plan a meeting with someone at an event during social time, or maybe have an initial conversation asking if you can talk to someone later about a particular subject. Often a session and someone's response to it might spark an idea that can be built over a conversation. It can be useful to find an appropriate time to invite the person to elaborate on their contribution during social time.

During networking meetings, acknowledge the time frame of the free sessions, so if you talk during a coffee break, enable time to have a bit of a break before initiating conversation. When you have conversations, it is useful to think over the points you wish to talk about or maybe jot down a few ideas. A change of environment can provide a fresh perspective, so maybe leave the common space and find another area, or join people outside if possible. One example is a network meeting we did with Scottish Young Greens at the general assembly, where we requested time to discuss our approaches to Brexit and collaborations around that in an informal setting. This has established a working relationship and we will hopefully be hosting a summit with them on the topic soon.

Post-event networking is also crucial to continuing conversations and making contact ahead of other events people may attend alongside you. Facebook and social media platforms are useful for this, and it is good to check in with other people once in a while to see how their organisations are developing.

9. Why is the Social Aspect Important?

The social aspect of events is where a lot of the networking and planning happens. Joint social experiences provide bonds that can not only provide friendships, but help you find people you can work with well on projects. Participating in these activities can also help you learn more about people and their approaches to topics and tasks. It is often interesting to learn people's personal connections to topics as well.

The social aspect of Study Sessions/seminars provides strong opportunities to foster a sense of community and to create positive collective experiences that you will remember for a long time. Making new friends in such groups also helps you find a network of people to meet across Europe and the globe.

One of the strengths of the revitalised YGEW international programme is our willingness to make connections at all opportunities. When our members are on holiday or in another country for work, we encourage them to meet local greens. I did this a lot during the EU referendum campaign. I would contact local green groups in countries I was visiting, go for a drink and talk about the situation we had and sought solidarity. One example is when I was in Malta for a conference- I reached out to contacts I had made through FYEG working groups and met up with ADZ for a drink to talk our shared history and future.

Me with ADZ in Valletta during the EU Referendum Campaign

10. Feedback

The feedback sessions at the end of events are important so that the organisation hosting can learn what successes and failures have happened during the course of the Study Session. It is also

important to reflect on what you have learnt and which of your planned aims and objectives you accomplished while attending events.

Feedback sessions can take many forms, but in person feedback is more likely to have an impact that on sheet. It is important to recognise successes when they happen, as much as to acknowledge the challenges you were faced with. It is useful to identify successes and failures as they happen in a session as well, to allow for amendments to the programme by the prep team.

It is useful to analyse how an event is run in relation to YGEW events as well, and find best practices to take back to the group. YGEW could take structures, openness to adaptation, and workshop ideas into our own events to utilise and learn from.

It would be useful to have attendees of Study Sessions/seminars to feedback on their level. Additionally, if they are not an EC member, provide the international officer with feedback, who can pass on any positives from the experience and can help shape future events according to the feedback.

11. Bringing it Home

The most important part of international training is how to disseminate it back within the young greens and incorporate what's learnt down to the local level. This, of course, depends on who has been the delegate at the Study Session/seminar, as an Executive Committee member will have to pass the information down to the local level as opposed to a local member who can bring their findings to a meeting.

There are different ways information learned at Study Sessions/seminars can be disseminated to groups:

- Report documents (such as these) placing strategies and approaches in a guide format
- Oral report to the executive committee, senate, regional groups on particular approaches
- Training events to transfer skills
- Webinars for skills sharing
- Guides to particular skills
- Presentation resources

These methods can allow transferrable distribution between levels of governance within Young Greens structures. They also create opportunities for training and skills to reinvigorate organisational approaches and to set priorities for the year.

Report Documents

These documents can spell out strategies. They must be clear responses to a topic of approach introduced at a Study Session/seminar. These can also be live documents and subject to updates as new experiences are had.

Oral Report

These can be given at executive committee or local group meetings where the attendees of the Study Sessions/seminars are given a short presentation on what happened during their attendance. They can point to how aims and objectives were fulfilled and what can happen next.

Training Events

If a particular skill has been learnt from Study Sessions/seminars, these can be presented to regional and local groups at training events. These could be individual events, although events as part of the programme for conference or convention or summer gatherings can be more effective in reaching more people.

Webinars

Similar to training events but held online to reach more people. Using conference calls and broadcast software, particular skills can be demonstrated through computers and allow interaction through social media if there is a Q&A element.

Skill Guides

These can be short pamphlet style documents disseminated through the YGEW website where skills are explained in an accessible way for anyone to find at any time to improve their own local level capacities.

Presentation Resources

Utilising PowerPoint simple guides to new strategies, approaches, and skills can be devised and distributed for local groups to access. These PowerPoints should be easy to follow and come with basic guidance notes, so that if a local group wants to do a session on it someone can present it to the best of their ability.

12. Diagram of Participation

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          ┌─────────────────┐
          │ Identify        │
          │ International   │
          │ Opportunity     │
          └─────────────────┘
                  │
                  ▼
          ┌─────────────────┐
          │ Apply after     │
          │ considerations  │
          │ are made        │
          └─────────────────┘
            │             │
            ▼             ▼
  ┌──────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────┐
  │ Prepare for the  │  │ Examine programme│
  │ session and      │  │ for how it meets │
  │ outline goals and│  │ aims             │
  │ objectives.      │  └──────────────────┘
  └──────────────────┘
     │          │            │
     ▼          ▼            ▼
┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────────┐
│ Introduce│ │ Use Open │ │ Find         │
│ yourself │ │ Space to │ │ opportunities│
│ and your │ │ achieve  │ │ to network   │
│ goals to │ │ aims     │ │ with         │
│ others   │ └──────────┘ │ individuals  │
└──────────┘      │       └──────────────┘
                  ▼
          ┌─────────────────┐
          │ Provide Feedback│
          └─────────────────┘
                  │
                  ▼
          ┌─────────────────┐
          │ Report Back to  │
          │ YGEW            │
          └─────────────────┘
```
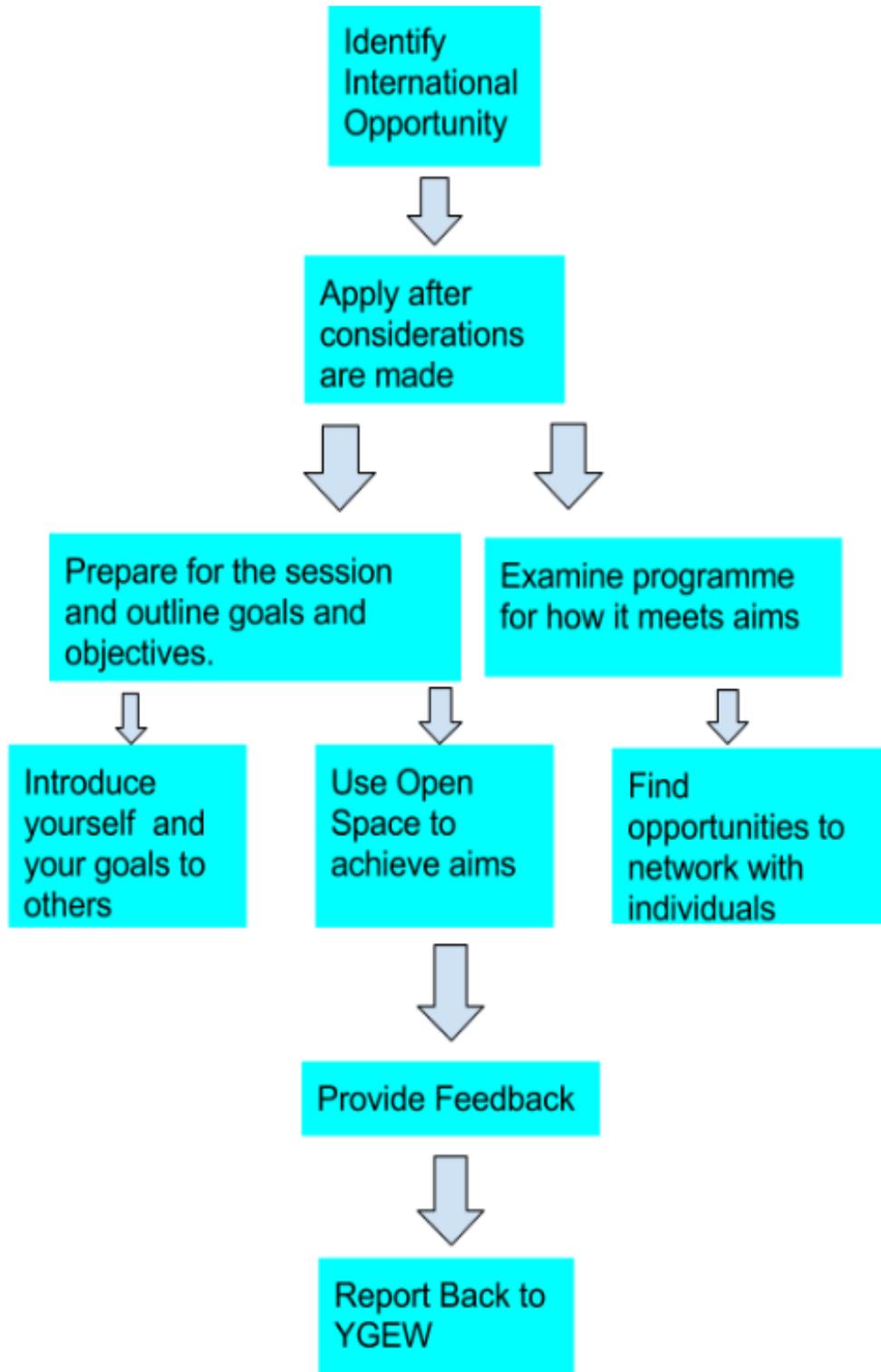
Advisory Council on Youth

It comprises 30 representatives of non-governmental youth organisations and networks. It provides opinions and input from the youth NGOs on all Youth Sector activities and ensures that young people are involved in the Council of Europe's other activities.

CDEJ

European Steering Committee for Youth brings together representatives of ministries or bodies responsible for youth matters from the 50 States Parties to the European Cultural Convention. The CDEJ fosters co-operation between governments in the Youth Sector and provides a framework for comparing national youth policies, exchanging best practices and drafting standard-setting texts.

CDN

Cooperation and Development Network Eastern Europe, founded in 2002 as a network of Young Greens in Eastern Europe (currently 18 member and 6 partner organizations) with aim to increase their political participation, visibility and influence in decision-making processes, provide support in organizational development, enable networking and cooperation and be relevant resource of information and education.

Council of Europe

The **Council of Europe** (French: *Conseil de l'Europe;* abb. CoE) is an international organization promoting co-operation between European countries in the areas of legal standards, human rights, democratic development, the rule of law and cultural co-operation; founded in 1949 and has 47 member states.

Council of Europe's Youth Department

Council of Europe's Youth Department is part of the Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation of the Council of Europe. The Department elaborates guidelines, programs and legal instruments for the development of coherent and effective youth policies at local, national and European levels. It provides funding and educational support for international youth activities aiming at the promotion of youth citizenship, youth mobility and the value of human rights, democracy, and cultural pluralism. It seeks to bring together and disseminate expertise and knowledge about the life situations, aspirations and ways of expression of young Europeans

European Commission

The **European Commission** is the executive body of the European Union that consists of 28 members of the Commission (one member per member state) responsible for proposing legislation,

implementing decisions, upholding the EU treaties and managing the day-to-day business of the EU. Commissioners swear an oath at the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg, pledging to respect the treaties and to be completely independent in carrying out their duties during their mandate.

European Youth Centre

European Youth Centres, Strasbourg (EYCS) and Budapest (EYCB), are permanent structures for the implementation of the Council of Europe's youth policy. They are international training and meeting centres with residential facilities, hosting most of the Youth Sector's activities. They provide a flexible and modern working environment for international activities, with meeting rooms equipped for simultaneous interpretation, information centres, audio-visual and computer facilities

European Youth Foundation (EYF)

European Youth Foundation (EYF) is a fund established in 1972 by the Council of Europe to provide financial and educational support for European youth activities. Only youth NGOs from Council of Europe member states as well as the European Cultural Convention Signatories: Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Holy See, can apply to the Foundation. It is a division in the Youth Department of the Council of Europe's Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation, Directorate General of Democracy.

Executive Committee

Executive Committee (abb. EC) is one of the statutory bodies in CDN. It consists of 5 international members chosen by the General Assembly (abb. GA) for a one year mandate. EC is responsible for implementation of CDN yearly Activity and Financial Plan, day to day decision making between GAs according to CDN's long term strategic goals and interests of our Member organizations.

FYEG

Federation of Young European Greens (abb. FYEG) is the European umbrella organisation for Young Green organisations from all over the continent. FYEG is currently composed of 42 member organisations with various backgrounds: local ecological groups, student unions, youth wings of Green parties and Green Youth NGOs. They are the independent, official youth wing of the European Green Party (EGP). FYEG and CDN are often refereed as sister organizations and their relation is defined by an agreement approved by General Assemblies of both organizations.

National training courses in human rights education (NTC HRE)

National training courses in human rights education (NTC HRE), provide the opportunity to train youth leaders, youth workers as also educators in schools and other public bodies in using Compass and its methodological approach. Participants are also introduced to the work on the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. The training

courses, unlike EYF projects, can be organised by (semi) governmental organisation such as youth centres, human rights monitoring bodies and those involved with education.

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

The **Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe** (abb. PACE) is one of the two statutory organs of the Council of Europe made up of 318 parliamentarians from the national parliaments of the Council of Europe's 47 member states, and generally meets four times a year for week-long plenary sessions in Strasbourg.

Pool of European Youth Researchers (PEYR)

Pool of European Youth Researchers (PEYR) is a unique initiative on the European level and it represents a contribution of both the Council of Europe and the European Commission to evidence based policy-making in the field of youth. consists of 25 researchers and experts from across Europe who possess a wide range of expertise in different policy areas connected to youth. PEYR members were selected on the basis of an open call in 2010. A new call for expressions of interest is now published.

Prep Team

Preparatory team (abb. PT) is a temporary working body in CDN, consisting of 5-7 people responsible for planning, preparation and implementation of the project program, methodology, choice and work with participants, follow-up and reporting after the event. They are international group of young people chosen by CDN Executive Committee based on an open call who all have different backgrounds, knowledge in the topic and skills wth which they contribute to the team.

Trainers Pool of the Youth Department

Trainers Pool of the Youth Department is a list of trainers and educational experts experienced in Non-Formal Education and intercultural learning applied to international youth activities. Trainers from the pool are contracted to support the educational staff of the Youth Department in the implementation of the youth programme of the Council of Europe and to contribute to the quality of its education and training activities.

Working Group

The Working Groups (abb. WGs) are one of statutory bodies in CDN. They are interested group of at least 3 members from different organizations coming from at least 3 different countries. WGs work on a specific topic or a goal that is in accordance with the CDN Political platform and its objectives. Every WG has its own aims, goals and activity plan for the following year, created by WG itself. CDN currently has 5 Working Groups: Alternative Urbanisation (Alt-Urb), Digital[X] (DX), Gender (GWG), Migration, and RUMB.

Youth partnership

Youth partnership is a partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe (EU-CoE) in the field of youth that provides an added value to the programmes of the two institutions and their institutional partners, fosters co-operation, complementarity and synergies and enhances the EU-CoE youth partnership's impact on youth related policies and activities in Europe and beyond. This partnership offers a number of publications such as Coyote, Perspectives on youth, Youth Knowledge Books or T-Kits.