

Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility through the Youth Card

51st meeting of the Board of Co-ordination

Monday, 8 April 2024
17.45 – 20.00
and
Friday 24 May 2024 on-line
10.30-11.30

REPORT

1. Welcome and opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened by the secretariat in view of the forthcoming elections of the Chair and Vice-Chair for 2024. The list of participants appears in Appendix I.

2. Adoption of the agenda

[AP/Carte-J\(2024\)OJ51](#), annotated agenda

The Board of Co-ordination adopted the agenda of the current meeting as it appears in document AP/Carte-J(2024)OJ51.

3. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair for 2024

In 2023 the position of the Chair was held by a non-governmental representative of the Board of Co-ordination and the position of the Vice-Chair – by the governmental one.

Thus, according to the Committee of Ministers' Resolution ResAP(2003)1 instituting the Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility through the Youth Card, in 2024 roles had to be exchanged and were elected unanimously:

- Liliya Elenkova, CDEJ, Bulgaria, as the Chair and
- Miguel Perestrello, President of EYCA, as the Vice-Chair.

4. Adoption of the report of the 50th meeting of the Board of Co-ordination

[AP/Carte-J\(2023\)PV50](#)

The Board of Co-ordination adopted the report of its 50th meeting as it appears in document AP/Carte-J(2023)PV50.

5. Tour de table on national developments in the field of youth mobility and youth card schemes [Link to the table](#)

The Board of Co-ordination proceeded with an up-date on recent developments in the implementation of youth mobility policies and/or European Youth Card scheme on national level (see Appendix II), in addition to the updates provided for the table of recent developments in a written form (see the link) available also on the restricted website.

6. Expansion perspectives of the Partial Agreement – oral exchange

The EYCA Director updated the Board on the on-going negotiations with states showing interest in the Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility. As regards Italy, who was massively developing the youth card at the national level, discussions were held with the Head of Department responsible for youth affairs and the idea was to announce the intention of Italy to rejoin the Partial Agreement at the EYCA Conference/General Assembly in June 2024 in Lecce, Italy.

The CDEJ member in respect of Türkiye had been recently confirmed in a Director's position which would facilitate the talks for the accession. Kazakh representatives showed interest in the Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility in the overall framework of enhancement of co-operation with the Council of Europe and in particular due to Kazakhstan's being a Party to the European Cultural Convention (ECC); the Board agreed that it would be forward-looking to invite Kazakhstan's representatives to one of the activities already in 2024.

The EYCA Director and EYCA President met Injuve's (Spain) new Director to restart dialogue. Albania was on the list of states interested in the Partial Agreement for several years. North Macedonian CDEJ representative was involved in the call with the Minister responsible for youth affairs of Albania.

7. Final update on the implementation of the programme of activities 2023

Report of the seminar "[Youth as promoters of sustainability: the EYC as a tool to reinforce sustainable mobility](#)", Vitoria – Gasteiz, Spain: [AP/Carte-J \(2023\)9](#)

Partial Agreement's Progress Review report 2023 [AP/Carte-J \(2024\)1](#)

Annual Report of Activities 2023 [AP/Carte-J \(2024\)2](#)

The Board was updated on the implementation of the Partial Agreement's programme of activities 2023 since the Board's last meeting in October 2023, particularly on the outcomes of the seminar «Youth as promoters of sustainability: the EYC as a tool to reinforce sustainable mobility», Vitoria – Gasteiz, Spain, 29 November-01 December 2023. It was felt this seminar was one of the most interesting and its conclusions needed to be taken further in the Partial Agreement's future work.

As regards the "Walk the Talk" seminar (Luxembourg and its region, 4-7 July 2023), the Bulgarian representative who took part in it found the event very interesting and interactive, it would be a good practice to replicate it (many good conclusions came out as a result) and thus reinforce youth perspective in the work of the Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes.

It was recalled that the reports and presentations of these events were available on-line on the public web page of the Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility.

8. Work programme 2024

[AP/Carte-J\(2024\)3](#) and revised

The EYCA Director and Jugoslav Radovic, EYCA Montenegro, presented a concept note and a draft programme of the forthcoming Partial Agreement's seminar on «Youth infrastructure

essentials: the rôle of the European Youth card in advancing ecosystems for youth empowerment» in Podgorica, Montenegro, on 29-31 May 2024. The Call for applications had been issued. It was suggested to mention the good example of the Council of Europe Quality Label for youth centres during the seminar.

As regards the proposal of a seminar in Moldova, a number of concerns were voiced, including the fact that the staff situation in the Moldovan Agency for Youth was unstable and that there was no certainty that the event could be maintained. In these circumstances it was agreed to look for an alternative to be discussed on-line on 24 May 2024.

As regards the event in Andorra, Monica Sala, representative of EYCA Andorra, mentioned that she was waiting for the reply of the Andorran authorities concerning possible financial support.

In the exchange of views that followed it was mentioned that, where possible, it would be good to promote the Council of Europe's Quality Label centres, start co-operation with other Council of Europe Partial Agreements (Sport, Eurimages, Pompidou, European Pharmacopoeia) particularly relevant in the follow-up to the Reykjavik Declaration (youth perspective).

There was a point of view that there should be a consistency in themes explored in previous events and that they should continue to feature in the work programme. On the other hand, if the same themes continued to be in the programme, new co-operation with other Partial Agreements could not be developed, as that would bring new themes on the agenda. Also, the Partial Agreement's events were co-organised with EYCA member organisations and Partial Agreement member States, they expected that their own (national) priorities and interests would be reflected in the joint events. It should also be recalled that the priorities of the Partial Agreement were to fall in line with the priorities adopted by the Joint Council on Youth (CMJ). Thus, a balance needed to be struck between continuation, new themes and priorities of co-organisers.

During the on-line part of the meeting, the revised work programme was discussed. It included a proposal for a Walk the Talk seminar in Hungary which would replace the seminar in Moldova. The Hungarian partners would like to hold the seminar in Budapest to explore the possibilities of the youth card in promoting the Hungarian Cultural Routes along the lines of the seminar in Luxembourg. Six Cultural Routes passed through Budapest offering possibilities to organise the walking part of the event inside and outside the city.

The dates proposed were 23-24 September 2024. The seminar would be linked to the Cultural Routes Forum in Vysegrad, Hungary (25-27 September 2024). The topic of this year's Forum was "Transmission and innovation: Fostering youth participation along the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe".

The CDEJ Hungarian representative mentioned the interest of her Ministry to be involved in the event, particularly in the framework of the forthcoming Hungarian Presidency of the EU – with Rural Youth being one of its priorities. Hungary was part of both Partial Agreements (Youth Mobility and Cultural Routes), like Luxembourg, and that created an excellent basis for further co-operation, both between the two Partial Agreements and on the national level, namely between the Hungarian Educational Authority, the Ministry of Culture and the Open-Air Museum of Hungary.

This event would be a possibility to showcase the survey on rural youth undertaken by EYCA which came up with ready-to-use tips and recommendations to enhance the well-being of rural young people, as well as the results of the Rural Youth Camp which EYCA organised this year for young card-holders from different countries through the involvement of EYCA's Youth Panel (see item 9).

It was also suggested to bring the participants to the European Youth Centre in Budapest (EYCB), as to familiarise them with the Council of Europe and its youth sector. Given that during the same dates the Centre was accommodating another big event foreseen well in advance, it was considered reasonable to accommodate the Walk the Talk participants in the hotel in the city centre but to ask for a meeting room for an opening/closing/working session in the EYCB according to its availabilities.

Regarding the seminar in Andorra (5-8 November 2024 including travel), EYCA Director confirmed that the government of Andorra was enthusiastic to host this international event in Andorra. EYCA Director, EYCA Andorra representative and Andorran CDEJ member attended a meeting with the Minister of Social Affairs, Housing and Youth, the Secretary of State for Youth and Sports and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Andorra on 13 May 2024 to discuss the level of support the Andorran government intended to give to the event, including its financial part. The high-level Andorran representatives would take part in the opening/closing of the event.

As a conclusion, it was agreed that the Secretariat would circulate a Call for expression of interest for hosting events for the Partial Agreement work programme 2025 and/or themes, subjects and ideas to be explored next year.

9. Recent and forthcoming developments in EYCA – oral report

The EYCA Director mentioned recent and forthcoming developments in EYCA, in particular:

- Youth Panel's Rural Youth Camp Project

The EYCA Rural Youth Camp (11-17 April 2024, Cazorla, Andalucia, Spain) received 740 applications and brought together 50 young people of 18-26 years old from rural areas across Europe. The main purpose of the event was to identify new ideas on how to build on rural opportunities and engage with young people. The challenges and opportunities identified by the participants were included in a roadmap to be presented to local authorities and organisations to improve the lives of young people from rural areas. All travel and participation costs were covered by EYCA.

- EYCA General Assembly and Conference

The next EYCA Conference and General Assembly will take place in Lecce, Italy, organised together with the Italian Government. Representatives of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe would be present during the Conference. Dates were 19-22 June 2024.

- Regional Meetings

EYCA Regional Meetings would take place between 17 May and 3 June 2024. The meetings would take place in such Partial Agreement's countries as Andorra, Austria, Cyprus. Also in Poland and Scotland, UK.

- More in 24 Campaign

EYCA's campaign ahead of the EU elections was still ongoing.

Changemakers: The campaign had brought together 50 changemakers (with several other volunteers) having joined the project mid-way. The engagement level of the changemakers varied from country to country, as was normal with such projects.

Coordinators: The EYCA members had been key in coordinating the local-level actions, which were sometimes of benefit to their own interests (such as institutional relations in Luxembourg and community engagement in Sardinia).

Trainings (online & in-person): two workshops took place online. One on media engagement in November 2023 and one on how to organise participatory debates in March 2024. And two training happened in person in Torinon (Italy) in July 2023 and in Vila do Conde (Portugal) in April 2024.

Awareness-raising events & dialogues with candidates: The changemakers were organising them over several months, with many taking place in this crucial period just before the elections. Many changemakers had coordinated with local authorities, nearby youth organisations and existing events to hold their actions.

By the end of the project, EYCA would have organised over 100 events, engaged with 6500 young voters (many first-time voters) and discussed with 100 candidates for the European Parliament.

Communications: The social media channels were getting some good engagement, with an average reach of 2000 accounts per post (20k+ accounts since the start of the campaign). The content was youthful, with a target audience of 18–24-year-olds; and gradually the content was giving visibility to EYCA's wider ecosystem (such as the Youth Panel) in view of keeping the account active after the project.

- **EYCA Strategy 2025-2030**

EYCA was in the process of establishing its Strategy 2025-2030. The strategic plan was based on the following structure:

Strategic Priorities - high-level, impact-focused and longer-term (5 years) priorities that guide EYCA's work.

Outcomes - ambitious statements that outline what EYCA aimed to achieve within a specific timeframe (one year) within each strategic priority.

Key results - specific, quantifiable metrics that measured progress towards each outcome. Detailed outcomes and key results could be found in the organisational work plan.

EYCA long-term vision – EYCA's ambition was to create a Europe where all young people were mobile, active and connected, and supported to travel, study, work, volunteer and participate *meaningfully* in their chosen communities.

10. Any other business

The secretariat provided a short update on the EPLM: the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth was finalising an update of the EPLM Handbook on quality in learning mobility; the EPLM secretariat had moved to the German National Agency from beginning of 2024 onwards; for all related information one should contact the new secretariat.

11. Date and place of the next meeting: 21 October 2024, Strasbourg, in the framework of the youth statutory bodies.

APPENDIX I

List of participants

Governmental representatives

AUSTRIA

Markus WOLF, Federal Chancellery Section VI - Family and Youth
Department 7 European and International Family and Youth Policy

BULGARIA

Liliya ELENKOVA, Advisor to the Minister of Youth and Sports
Ministry of Youth and Sports

CROATIA

Marina SMERNIĆ, Head of Independent Service for International Cooperation in the field of
Demography and Youth, Central State Office for Demography and Youth

CYPROS

Maria CHRISTODOULOU and Konstantinos HADJIZACHARIAS
Youth Board of Cyprus

HUNGARY

Enikő VARGA-VÉGVÁRI, Youth Policy Officer
Prime Minister's office, General Youth Department

NORTH MACEDONIA

Gjorgi TASEV, Advisor for Youth and Youth Policies to the Prime Minister

SERBIA

Ms Ivana ANTONIJEVIĆ, Assistant Minister
Sector for Youth, Ministry of Tourism and Youth

SLOVENIA

Mr Igor JESIH, Office for Youth
Ministry of Education, Science and Sport

EYCA representatives

Miguel Perestrello, EYCA Portugal, President of EYCA
Jugoslav Radovic, EYCA Montenegro
Monica Sala, EYCA Andorra
Jean Paul Romegas, EYCA France
Jiri Gurecki, EYCA Czech Republic
Jose Juan Timmermans, EYCA Youth Panel
Manel Sanchez, EYCA Office, Director

Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ)

Konstanze Schönfeld TEJO, World Esperanto Youth Organisation,
Leader in the Youth Mobility portfolio

Riikka Pasanen, European Educational Exchanges–Youth for Understanding (EEE-YFU), co-leader 1 in the Youth Mobility portfolio

Secretariat

Tobias Flessenkemper, Head of Youth Department

Clementina Barbaro, Head of Youth Policy Division

Natalja Turenne, Administrator, Youth Policy Division

APPENDIX II

Tour de table on national developments in the field of youth mobility and youth card schemes

Andorran EYCA representative mentioned that the youth card had become a very important tool for communication between the authorities (seven members of EYCA Andorra were regional governmental representatives) and young people (half of Andorran young population were card-holders), particularly on issues like health, inclusion, volunteering and mobility (through an agreement with the railway, notably for young people in difficulty). More was ambitioned to do on a national level. EYCA Andorra had set itself a goal of becoming an example internationally.

French EYCA representative mentioned that EYCA France was establishing closer links with public entities and had recently signed a co-branding agreement with one region in France and was negotiating with two more. One of the new dimensions of work could become rural youth as it was also a preoccupation for several French ministries. It was thinking of creating its own youth panel. Also, fruitful links were developed with many festivals in France in co-operation with the French Ministry of Culture.

Representative of **Hungary** mentioned that EYCA Youth Panel's recommendations on rural youth would be used for the forthcoming Hungarian EU Presidency.

Representative of **North Macedonia** shared that the situation was not very satisfactory and the authorities were trying to solve the problems. The main concerns were the update of discounts, lack of human resources, particularly reliable staff to restart the process which would be possible following elections of 8 May 2024.

Representative of **Austria** remarked that the situation with the youth card was stable in his country. The mid-term strategy was to include all young people of Austria in the youth card scheme.

EYCA Director added that EYCA card organisations in **Austria** and **Croatia** were very actively involved in communication with young people on the forthcoming European Parliament elections, the involvement of change-makers was very high as well as participation in various EYCA events.

Portuguese EYCA representative informed the Board that Movijovem changed its system and saw an increase in card-holders of 30%. It was currently working on a new long-term strategy to be approved by the end of the year, which would focus on further increase of membership, creation of the youth panel and going beyond Europe.

As regards **EYCA Serbia**, EYCA Director said that it was a long-standing successful EYCA member with an average of 60-70 thousand membership, and access to lots of events and discounts. Representative of Serbia said that since the current year youth mobility was no longer a focus of youth policy.

Montenegrin EYCA representative stressed that currently their organisation had over 300 partnerships and over 60 thousand card-holders since 1 January 2024. The card was present all

over the country and covered schools, universities, youth organisations like scouts and was co-branded with bank cards. The Ministry of Sports and Youth was very supportive. The intention was to co-operate with more institutions, notably with the European Employment Agency, as well as to become entirely digital and better integrate EYCA Young Ambassadors into decision-making; a new long-term strategy was under preparation.

Czech EYCA representative introduced his organisation which was an umbrella organisation working in non-formal education, but had established partnerships also with the universities. Currently it had 10 thousand card-holders and participated in the Structured Dialogue and UN volunteering projects.

Representative of **EYCA Youth Panel** said that the panel was very active in all EYCA activities and was particularly busy with its own initiative of a Rural Youth Camp on 11-17 April 2024 in the town of Cazorla, Andalusia, Spain. The purpose was to share knowledge on rural initiatives taking place in other regions, understand how to energise youth communities and create connections between the many young rural people in Europe. 1300 answers from all over Europe were received to the special survey and over 100 good practice initiatives one can readily implement back at home.

Representative of **Cyprus** pointed out that the Youth Board of Cyprus paid a lot of attention to the development of the youth card. The Board had a status of a public authority and could count on the support of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth. Good co-operation was established with the Ministry of transport. The card was free of charge and available digitally in two forms: as a normal card and a student card. It was promoted through social media, events/festivals and universities and used as an important communication and mobility tool (discounts on transport were significant). The Board was working to update the system of benefits in order to enlarge the number of discounts and promote more opportunities to young people, including employment in other EU countries, and make them use the card on a daily basis.

The NYCA of **Bulgaria** has been awarded a Quality Label for European solidarity corps and hosts volunteers from different countries. NYCA met some challenges with the volunteers from Germany, who were in the NEETs group, in respect of their health insurance. This problem was solved through registration in the Bulgarian system. This is an important issue to raise because this situation puts young people across Europe in unequal situation. This concerned other receiving organisations as well and there was a need to look into global solutions. The organisation was working on the maximising effect programme offer, particularly corresponding to the needs and aspirations of young people. Very interesting results of the research done in co-operation with the National Agency of Bulgaria would provide food for thought and action, particularly as regards the question «How do you see the future in 20 years?», and would be soon publicly available.