



ECUMENICAL YOUTH COUNCIL
IN EUROPE
Rue du Champ de Mars 5
B-1050 Brussels, Belgium

 www.eyce.org

DATE: **Brussels, 20.03.2007**
TO: **EYCE National Correspondents and Contacts**
RE: **Invitation to the EYCE Training Event 2007**

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"Transforming Conflict- Healing Memories"
20th - 27th May 2007, Feketic, Serbia

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PLEASE READ THE COMPLETE INVITATION LETTER CAREFULLY!

Dear Friends,

Greetings on behalf of the Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe (EYCE)!
We would like to invite you to nominate candidates to the upcoming EYCE Training event "Transforming Conflict – Healing Memories" to be held in Feketic (a small town just outside of Novi Sad), Serbia.



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1. INTRODUCTION

What are the roots of conflicts? How can we heal the bad memories related to conflicts? What is to be done with the new generation which feels affected by the effects of the past conflicts? How can we overcome our prejudices that sometimes are based no more on real facts? How can we live in peace and respect surrounded by various ethnics? Why do we have to talk about conflict transformation?

Europe is a continent where different nations and cultures meet. Europe is a continent where we are facing the diversity and the effort to unity. Along the European history there were a lot

of conflicts which stemmed from the contrast of diversity, e.g. Northern Ireland, Spain and Yugoslavia. Can be these problems solved without forcing one of the ethnic groups to give up their identity?

EYCE recognised the need to talk about this topic and decided to organise a training course for ecumenical youth leaders. EYCE wants to bring together young people from different countries all across Europe, who has faced with conflicts and affects of conflicts or would like to widen their knowledge about conflicts and transforming conflicts. We believe that the next generation can influence the future and can reach a peaceful and a respectful environment.

With the proposed training course EYCE would like to actively contribute to the European **all different** Youth Campaign for Diversity, Human Rights and Participation "All **all equal** Different - All Equal" as we strongly believe that participation and respect for diversity can only be fully achieved where wounds are healed and conflicts transformed into a viable concept of respect for diversity.

Profile of participants:

The target group for this event are young people (18 to 30 years of age) and ecumenical youth leaders from various backgrounds. They should be active in youth work and able to act as multipliers for the issue of Transforming Conflict in their respective home countries. In order to act as multipliers they should be interested in developing skills and tools as well as interested in working in the future in transforming conflicts. This training course is aimed at young people who do not have professional knowledge of the theme. However, participants should be interested in questions of transforming conflict and conflict management and ready to contribute actively to the content of the training course. EYCE is inviting participants from an academic and non academic background. Participants are expected to be open minded and willing to listen to others as well as able and ready to share their own experiences and backgrounds and to participate actively and fully in the programme.

Arrivals and Departures:

Sunday 20th May is the day of arrival
&
Sunday 27th May is the day of departure.

Participants are expected to come in Budapest or in Belgrade. Transport to the venue of the training course will be arranged. However, the travel will be arranged with those participants who have been selected. More detailed travel instructions will thus be available to the participants selected.

Please make sure to arrive/depart on these dates as the possibilities of arranging accommodation in case of early arrival and late departure will be extremely limited. **EYCE cannot arrange extra night's accommodation** unless this is absolutely necessary for reasons of travelling schedule and **approved in advance** by the Treasurer of EYCE.



2. BACKGROUND OF THE TRAINING COURSE

Living in peace is a Human Right – at least a Human Right of third generation, i.e. a so-called solidarity right. Yet many times the conflicts of recent years have not been truly resolved, leading to a situation where 'otherness' is still seen as a threat and not as inspiration for society. EYCE would like to use the term conflict transformation over conflict management. While we see that the management of a conflict can be a useful first step, eventually conflicts have to be transformed into something new – productive and constructive. Transformation is a difficult process and certainly not something that can be achieved in a one week training course, yet we are convinced that we can provide input and skills to the participants so that they will be better equipped on the long journey of conflict transformation in their respective cities, regions, countries and even organisations.

EYCE has chosen Serbia, because it is a country, which history was influenced by conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and after, Recently there has been established several youth organisations and NGOs that are working on reconciliation and building bridges between cultures, nations. They can stand as an example how can be overcome on conflicts, how people with diverse culture, religion, language etc. can live in peace and respect next to each other. Transforming conflict has had an important issue in this country, and many civil and governmental initiatives have aimed to work on it. In this training course EYCE is co-operating with the Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation (EHO) in Novi Sad, which has taken an active role in conflict transformation in the area. Its members come from five ethnic groups and four Christian denominations.



3. THEMES OF THE TRAINING COURSE

EYCE's training courses combine theoretical input and the development of practical skills of the participants. The International Planning Committee has identified the following aim and objectives for this training course – thus giving the participants a guide to what they can expect from the event.

Aim

The aim of the training course is to equip multipliers with tools to contribute to transforming conflict and promoting respect for all and participation of all in their respective context.

Objectives

- get an overview of conflicts in Europe through lectures and sharing experience;
- to understand the complexity of conflicts including their psychological aspects;

- to learn about ways to transform conflict;
- to get practical training in conflict transformation.

Programme elements will include:

- critical analysis of the roots and context of the conflict;
- analysis of the need for acting in conflict;
- introduction to different theories about conflict and conflict management;
- development of projects that are aimed at transforming conflict.



4. METHODS

The training course is based on an active role of all participants. It shall enable the participants to learn about the mentioned issue with heads, hands and hearts. The working methods used shall therefore vary from workshops where practical skills can be used and improved to lectures and small group discussions and to other creative means such as short dramas and role games. Learning by doing will be an essential part of this training.

One important aspect of EYCE activities is the social part of the event, which will help everyone in intercultural learning and celebrating our diversities. Moreover, we will have a Serbian Surprise evening and other interesting activities during the training course. EYCE is welcoming participants from various backgrounds and various levels of knowledge. Therefore attention will be paid that various methods will be used in order to ensure that every participant can gain the most out of the training course.



5. TIMETABLE

A draft timetable is attached to this mailing.



6. MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE (IPC)



The International Planning Committee for the training course is composed of the following people:

1. Marco Fornerone
2. Steve Pointon
3. Krisztina Rajos
4. Mariangela Fadda

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Italy
Northern Ireland
EYCE voluteer
EYCE Office

If you want to get in contact with the members of the IPC please do not hesitate to contact them.



7. PARTICIPATION FEE

The participation fee for the training course will be **140 € (Euros)** including accommodation, meals, programme and excursion. Please note that this amount can only be offered because of the subsidies received from the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe, and subsidises the total cost of accommodation, meals, programme & excursion.

Subsides for the participation fees are available in accordance with the reimbursement policies for travel subsidies mentioned under “8. Travel Subsidies”. Please search for your country there in order to identify if you are entitled to any subsidies.

Please note that the payment of a **cancellation fee** of 140 € (Euros) is expected from participants who cancel their participation in the event less than 2 weeks prior to commencement of the activity.



8. TRAVEL SUBSIDIES

Contributions:

Some participants of this training course are entitled to partial reimbursement of their travel expenses and participation fees. These expenses, however, are a heavy burden on EYCE's finances. Therefore, all participants are expected to contribute something to the travel costs and the participation fee of the training course they are attending. Please do also discover ways of finding subsidies yourself carefully – we have heard some very successful stories of individual fundraising at our past events. You may contact national aid agencies, your national EYCE member or your local congregation.

Least costly route:

Participants will be reimbursed on the basis of the shortest and least costly route between their place of residence and Budapest/Belgrade. If participants start their journey from a place further away than their residence to the training course venue or the return journey is to a place further away than their place of residence, the extra costs will not be covered by EYCE. We also strongly recommend looking around for cheap tickets, e.g. using students' discount tickets or Internet booking as well as low cost airlines flying to Budapest such as Wizzair, SkyEurope or EasyJet.

Train or Plane?

If the distance between the participants' residence and the training course is less than 800

Km, then the participant should travel by train second class. For distances greater than 800 Km the participant should travel by either train or plane (whichever is least expensive). If the participant has travelled in a more expensive manner they will only get subsidised to the extent of the allowed method of travel according to the above guidelines.

Participation:

The participants should be present for the whole training course. Those who participate for less than 90% of the total duration of the activity will not be reimbursed.

Entitlements:

The standard EYCE policy concerning entitlements for travel subsidies and participation fees apply for this event for ALL participants. They are as follows:

Band One: 90% subsidy entitlement for the following countries:

Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russia and Slovak Republic.

Band Two: 50% subsidy entitlement for the following countries:

Belgium, Iceland, Italy, Northern Ireland/ Eire, Malta, Portugal and Spain.

Band Three: Other countries:

You might come from a country not mentioned above. If you come from a country not mentioned but require assistance with travel and participation fee subsidies, then this should be noted in the Application Form, and the EYCE Treasurer should be contacted regarding the request (paul.welch@eyce.org).

Copy of tickets:

Travel expenses are only reimbursed upon the presentation of a copy of all travel documents and receipts. **Please prepare these copies beforehand.** There will NOT be opportunity to make copies in Feketic Centre. Participants travelling with e-tickets need to provide the boarding cards of their journey to Budapest or Belgrade (**please do not throw them away**). Document needed for reimbursement:

- travel ticket (e-ticket also);
- receipt of payment (copy of CC statement or copy of travel agency invoice or copy of bank transfer);
- original boarding passes.

If you can pay more than required:

It might also be the case that participants can afford to pay more than what is asked. We kindly ask these participants to pay what they can afford since this means that more funds are available to subsidise others... and this is what teamwork and solidarity is all about!

Authorisation:

The participants requesting financial assistance need to have the subsidy amount authorised in writing by the Treasurer of EYCE. The amounts indicated in the Application Form will be the starting point for agreements, but the binding reference point for reimbursement will be the amount authorised in writing by the Treasurer of EYCE. For selected participants EYCE will provide a subsidy request form together with the letter of acceptance.

Any participants, staying in Serbia either before or after the training course will need to be responsible for all their own costs, unless a prior agreement is arranged with the Treasurer due to travel schedules.

Enclosed is the application form where we ask you to indicate your need for a travel subsidy. No subsidies will be paid without prior agreement. Please also note that **health insurance is**

arranged by EYCE and will not therefore be reimbursed to participants opting for their own policy unless health insurance is required for the Visa application at the embassy. (Please be aware no travel insurance will be reimbursed by EYCE).

Please ensure bookings are made at the best fare but do not buy any tickets prior to confirmation of your participation, agreement with the Treasurer and visa acknowledgement (if applicable).



9. VENUE OF THE TRAINING COURSE

More information about the venue will be available for participants later on.



10. CONTACT Serbia (for visa enquiries)

Some of the participants will need a visa to enter Serbia. Please check immediately with the Serbian embassy or consulate in your country whether you need a visa to enter Serbia. Please note that participants needing VISA have to apply for the training course as soon as possible in order to avoid any troubles in getting a visa.

If needed, an official “Letter of invitation” issued by an organisation registered in Serbia will be sent to the selected participants as soon as they are selected. Please **do not go ahead** and apply for a visa prior to receiving the letter of acceptance to the training course. Please note that EYCE as an organisation registered in Belgium will under no circumstance be able to help participants obtaining a Visa for Serbia. Therefore, selected participants will be instructed carefully whom to address in order to obtain documents needed.

Please be very careful. Be sure that you ask exact details of the documents needed. Some of you might not need a visa but a proof that you will be insured and taken care of during your stay in Serbia. In any case please let us know as soon as possible, so we can ensure that all participants get the documents on time. More detailed information will be given in the letter of acceptance.



11. LANGUAGES

The language of the training course will be English. It will be essential for all the participants to understand and speak English in order to take full advantage out of the activity.



12. DEADLINE FOR APPLYING/ SELECTION CRITERIA

Please send all your application form to the EYCE Office (address above) as soon as possible. The absolutely latest deadline for receiving applications will be

15th of April 2007, 12:00 C.E.T.

We kindly ask that the enclosed application is filled in using a computer or typewriter and returned to the EYCE Office via email and / or fax.

Sending incomplete forms, filling them in unreadable handwriting or sending them too late might mean that applications are **not** processed. If you fear that the application will not reach the office in time, please give the EYCE Office a call or send a fax/email to notify the secretariat.

Up to 30 participants will be selected by the International Planning Committee to attend the event. This selection will try to ensure a geographical, denominational and gender balance.

In addition, sending the application forms early increases the chances of being selected, while sending them the very last minute might disadvantage your application. Therefore we are forced to select participants immediately after the deadline, thus ensuring a smooth implementation of the training course and reasonably priced tickets. Right after selecting participants, the selected participants will receive more detailed information about the training course programme. Also note that participants are only accepted if they have received a written confirmation from EYCE (email). Please keep in mind that selected participants will have to agree on travel costs with the EYCE Treasurer **within one week** after having received the letter of acceptance.



13. PREPERATORY DOCUMENTS

Please share this letter, the accompanying documents and the information included with the persons you will nominate to the event.

The selected participants will receive more detailed information after the selection and documents to prepare themselves for the training course.

EYCE is working on an entirely ecumenical basis and participants will come from many denominations. Therefore everyone should be ready to welcome and respect others. All participants will have to discuss together how to value the traditions and behaviour of the other. It may be that ideas and behaviours one person takes for granted are not easy to understand for someone else. Intercultural and ecumenical Dialogue is a challenge – and the entire Planning Team is looking forward to experiencing this challenge with many committed participants.

I am looking forward to hearing from you soon.

With my very best wishes and on behalf of International Planning Committee,

Mariangela Fadda
EYCE General Secretary

Enclosed:

- Application Form including Motivation Questionnaire
- Draft timetable