



Youth and European Social Work

*for young people - YouthMagazine
pour les jeunes - Magasin de la Jeunesse
für junge Leute - Jugendmagazin*

<http://www.yes-forum.org/YouthMagazine>

Activity Report



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0 Introduction: Youth and European Social Work

Y.E.S. FORUM (EEIG) is

- an organisation tackling social exclusion of young people and promoting active citizenship
- members from organisations and individuals in 12 European countries with the objective to extend to all member countries of the European Union and the candidate countries
- a network- exchanging ideas and experience- drawing together practice, research and policy
- uses modern ICT and multi media methods to involve, include both young people and organisations working with them

When, what, who and where?

- Y.E.S. FORUM was set up in 2001 with the support of EC programme B3-4101 as a preparatory measures to prevent and combat social exclusion) a partnership between organisations in France, Germany & Italy.
- The initial project developed the organisation Y.E.S. FORUM to provide not only a means of communication, but a lobbying organisation, which would use its experience and its networks to increase inclusion of young people.
- Y.E.S. FORUM was set up as a formal organisation at EC level in 2002. Founder members are from Italy and Germany, but there are members from 8 countries now, and a series of levels of involvement which members can chose to have.
- Y.E.S. FORUM members exchange regularly through www.yes-forum.org using internet chats, email and the whole range of services offered on the website. These are developing all the time. Partners involved in joint projects meet or exchange according to the requirements and needs of their joint enterprise. The formal Y.E.S. FORUM organisation meets to create a strategy, business plan and conduct business.

Strengths of Y.E.S. FORUM model:

- Addresses the lack of Europe wide networks with a focus on children, young people social exclusion and participation/inclusion
- Commitment to the inclusion of young people
- Use of ICT and multi media methods increases access and promotes inclusion
- Model is inclusive in terms of languages and cultures
- Range of types of membership encourages breadth of organisations and individuals to participate
- Y.E.S. FORUM provides a series of building blocks which can help members find partners, develop new initiatives and work together
- Potential to span practice, research, policy and change
- Ability to do action research

1 Objectives of the Project

During the past months young reporter teams from various European countries contributed to the YouthMagazine which were published and circulated through the yes-forum web-site. The project *Y.E.S. FORUM – for young people – YouthMagazine* followed our project *“Put yourself in my shoes! Young people explore their communities”* and was developed to further stimulate the participation of young people within the Y.E.S. FORUM network but also to create for youngsters opportunities to gain social and life skills. The anchor point of the YouthMagazine-Project was locally, in the young people’s own communities in combination with linking up groups from different European countries.

As presented in our project application the activities were based on the following purposes:

- **Engage young people in a meaningful exchange:** The Y.E.S. FORUM YouthMagazine provided the opportunity for young people to exchange information and news about day to day aspects of their lives as well as issues of interest to them. The network and communication structure of Y.E.S. FORUM allowed to share those information with peers from different countries.
- **Building skills for social inclusion:** The planned activities focused on building social and life skills of young people. Social and life skills have been developed by being part of a reporter team which was responsible for planning and writing their contributions. Technical skills have been acquired by working with different software tools to write and edit text and picture material for the magazine.
- **Promote participation:** It was up to the young reporters to set the agenda and to decide about what they are reporting and what sources they are using to do so.
- **Pilot character:** The project had pilot character. It is sought to use the experience gained in this project to establish a continuous YouthMagazine from and for young people within the Y.E.S. FORUM network.

2 Project implementation

2.1 Work progress and working methods

Well ahead of the start of the project and on a continuous base during the project, Y.E.S. FORUM members and other interested organisations, social workers and young people have been informed about aims and progresses of the project. The proposed activities received a widespread and overwhelming response from interested groups in 9 different European countries. Not all of the groups could participate regularly but contributed occasionally in discussions and with articles and reports about activities. All those contributions have been accepted, valued and given a platform for publication and circulation.

The core group of the project consisted of four direct project and social workers who co-ordinated the activities in Germany, England, Hungary and Italy, but also stimulated the European exchange and attention to the project. The Y.E.S. FORUM Community Manager oversaw and co-ordinated all activities and took also the responsibility for all web-publications. In addition a group of Y.E.S. FORUM members supported young reporter teams and participated in project related exchange processes. All were and are connected through the password-protected virtual platform yes-forum.org.

Within the reporter teams the group work approach was emphasised. The work in the group stimulated ideas and it was an important experience that the shared use of resources and individual skills of participants (spelling, multi-media) was beneficial to the whole group. Different groups experienced with different software tools and equipment for editing text and picture material and could use in general the facilities and infrastructure of the supporting organisations.

2.2 Groups and countries involved

Germany: The main activities in Germany were based in Fürstenwalde, a smaller town in Eastern Germany near Berlin. Sybille Gurack a free journalist coordinated the activities in Fürstenwalde and engaged with two groups from a local youth club and school. Other contributions came from Esslingen and Hannover.

Italy: The main activities in Italy were managed from Lucca. Mirco Trielli in charge of the local youth club 'Kaboom' struggled during the project activities with the municipality who withdrew its funding for the facilities of the youth club urging Mirco to re-locate himself and use Enaip's accommodations. Mirco and young people gave interesting accounts how difficult it is to preserve public funding for youth services and youth work.

England: Tony Dobson, educated in social work and community development and regarded as an expert in making use of multi media tools to promote participation of children and young people supported several reporter teams in Liverpool. The contributions focussed on participation and social inclusion of young people in a city which is regarded as one of the most deprived in England but at the same time witnessing an economic upspring and booming inner city development over the past five years. Tony's organisation also advocates for an involvement of young people in planing events leading up to Liverpool as the European Capital of Culture in 2008.

Hungary: Ildikó Kassai based in Budapest with a long standing experience in exchanges and voluntary services supported the two reporter teams from Hungary. Both groups were motivated through their participation in a youth exchange in one case and an international work-camp in the other case to contribute to the YouthMagazine.

In addition to the core groups groups from the following countries took also part in the activities: Slovakia, Rumania, Spain, Poland, France, UK, Italy, Hungary, Germany

contribution from Esslingen/Ass-crew - Breakdance, one of the four elements of hip hop culture

Zusammen mit MC'ing, DJ'ing und Graffiti ist Breakdance eines der vier Elemente der Hip Hop Kultur. Breakdance, Popping, Locking, Brooklyn Rocking...Streetdance. Breakdance hat eine gewaltige Geschichte, die in den 70ern begann und sich bis heute fortsetzte. Inspiriert durch Persönlichkeiten wie James Brown und Michael Jackson wurde der Tanzstil entwickelt und von einer neuen Generation von B-Boys und B-Girls angenommen. Viele der Moves haben Ähnlichkeit mit akrobatischen Kampfstilen, die in Kung-Fu und anderen Kampfsportarten, wie z.B. Brazilian Capoeira, vorkommen.



Der Name "Breakdance" kommt von der Musikart, die ihn hervorgebracht hat - Breakbeat, in dem der Beat auf die Unterbrechung fällt oder ganz aus dem Takt ist. Die Jugendlichen, die den Tanzstil zur Breakbeat Musik entwickelten, bekamen den Namen "b-boys" oder Break Boys. Streetdance wurde durch die Musik von Curtis Blow, Afrika Bambaataa, Run DMC, Grandmaster Melle Mel und vielen unzähligen anderen angeregt. Der Entwicklung des Breakdance wurde erstmals Leben in den geschäftigen Strassen New York Citys eingeflößt



Read more...

<http://www.yes-forum.org/YouthMagazine>

contribution from the younstars in June 2004: The European Flag

How did the European flag come into being? Who designed the flag?

Everything started during the second world war. There was a Jew from Belgium who promised to convert to Catholicism if he would survive the war. The war was over and he did as promised. In 1949 Lévi became the director of the cultural section of the Council of Europe the first European intergovernmental organisation. In 1955 people started to search for a motive for the flag of the Council of Europe. Many proposals and designs have been rejected since most of them used the cross which was not inclusive enough.

Then the best idea came from Lévi. He was inspired by a statue of the holy mother with a ring of stars over her head which was illuminated by the sun. All decision making bodies approved Lévi's proposal and from that point on the flag with the twelve stars was the symbol for "Europe".

But why 12 stars?

Most Europeans mis-interpret the twelve stars. It does not stand for the number of member countries (it would need to be fifteen by now anyway). No - number twelve is a traditional symbol for unity and perfection. It is also the number of months of a year and the number of hours you can see on a watch.

Therefore the number 'twelve' was chosen to symbolize solidarity and harmony among the European countries.



Young reporter teams from Cadiz/Spain (left), Newcastle/UK (right) and Budapest/Hungary (below)



The groups participated in an international workcamp in June 2004 and shared their impressions and diaries thereafter using the Y.E.S. FORUM YouthMagazine.

Contribution from Hungary:

Élménybeszámoló

Osnabrück, 2004. 05.26. – 06.04.

Borzasztóan szeretek utazni. Talán ezért is voltam olyan boldog, amikor kiderült, hogy elutazhatok Németországba tíz napra. Még sosem utaztam egyedül, ezért kicsit megrémültem és mivel még volt egy szabad hely, gondoltam gyorsan keresek magam mellé egy ismerőst. Vizsgaidőszak lévén nem volt könnyű dologom, de végül szerencsém volt. Egy évfolyamtársammal, Szilvivel indulhattam neki a nagy útnak. A magyar útitársak is teljesen ismeretlenek voltak, de azt hiszem, bátran állíthatom, hogy hamar megtaláltuk a közös hangot.

Az első előadáson kicsit megrémültünk, hiszen bármennyire is jól beszélünk angolul, németül az előadás szakszavait nem értettük, kicsit untuk magunkat. Félünk, ha ez így megy tíz napig, becsavarodunk. Szerencsére nem így lett.

Igazából nem is tudnám felsorolni az összes jó élményt, annyit volt. A legfontosabb talán, hogy ez volt életem egyik legjobb születésnapja. Hirtelen nem tudtam, hogy éjfélkor miért rohamoz meg az a nagy tömeg és csak kb. a harmadik ütemnél jöttem rá, hogy a „Happy Birthday”-t éneklük, mégpedig nekem. A második fantasztikus dolog a születésnapomon a magyar est volt. Azt hiszem mindenféle szerénység nélkül állíthatom, hogy isteni menüt sikerült összehoznunk. Bár meg kell jegyezmem nem ment egyszerűen. Ott kezdődött, hogy megették a húst, amit a gulyásba szántunk. Sikerült új adagot venni, aminek egy része végül a nyárson végezte. A Gundel palacsintába dió helyett mogyorót vettünk, tehát nem igazán akart összejönni ez a vacsi. Talán pont ezért lett olyan finom.

A másik dolog, amit kiemelnék: a társaság. Még soha nem találkoztam ennyi jó értelemben vett bolond emberrel. Bátran állíthatom, hogy némelyikükkel nem egyszeri volt a találkozás, hiszen azóta is tartjuk a kapcsolatot és már szervezzük a látogatást egymáshoz.

Az ellátás is elképesztő volt. Minden étkezésnél terülj-terülj asztalkám fogadott bennünket, és ahogy valami elfogyott pillanatokon belül ott volt az utánpótlás.

Amit soha nem fogok elfelejteni, az Bréma. Rettenetesen sajnálom, hogy ilyen kevés időnk jutott erre a gyönyörű városra. Itt említeném meg a talán egyetlen negatívumot. A brémai center kirándulást. Véleményem szerint kinőttünk már ebből a világból és hosszú órákat pazaroltunk itt el, ami Bréma rovására ment.

A legjobb dolog azonban, hogy olyan embereket ismerhettünk meg, akikkel soha nem találkoztunk volna. A vendégszerető németek, a hangos spanyolok és a bolond, foci őrült angolok. Ja, és nyelvgyakorlás szempontjából is nagyon hasznos volt a tíz nap.

Egy szó, mint száz. azt hiszem a többiek nevében is beszélek.



4 Conclusions and Learning outcomes

In evaluating the project activities and in comparing with the original design it has to be said that the participating groups have been much more widespread and diverse than originally thought. The coordinating team found it important to give priority to a large involvement of all interested groups in participating but without exercising pressure on the groups and insisting that the groups are participating regularly and on a continuous base in the activities. As a consequence the majority of the participating groups only contributed occasionally to the YouthMagazine or by reporting about certain activities (events in their community, participation in transnational youth exchanges and workcamps, etc.)

However the need to preserve a certain level of consistency was also seen and the project team was able to build a core group of workers and young people who have been involved throughout the duration of the project. In the end only the members of the core group received funding from the project budget. It was also found necessary to translate ongoing communications, basic information about the project and a selection of articles in English, French and German which was done by Carsten Mohr who has provided his translation service to the Network over the past 4 years.

In terms of project design the English support workers suggested to rename the project "YouthMagazine" instead of "Newsletter". It was found that "YouthMagazine" was more appropriate to describe the project's ambition to have young reporter teams explore certain themes instead of producing up-to-date news in news-ticker style which a Newsletter-title would suggest.

In a middle and long-term perspective the project phase had fulfilled its pilot character and helped to set up an infrastructure and support network to create a permanent Y.E.S. FORUM YouthMagazine. However (to mention difficulties as well) at the start of the project and also during the project's duration the level of motivation and communication needed by eMail and phone in order to find participants was astonishing and much more than originally expected.

Still, the project added an important element to the Network's approach of giving young people a voice and promoting their participation.

Stuttgart, September 2004