



Staying Connected While Practicing Social Distancing

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Members





Board and Staff discussing at Organisational Retreat in July

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EDITORIAL

Participants in the Europe3E hybrid training in November

Flexibility has been the guiding principle of YES Forum this year, to find new ways to keep all our projects running and to make sure young people and their needs stayed at the heart of our work. 2020 has been the year of adaptation in the face of unexpected and disrupting situations. Challenges resulting from the outbreak of Covid-19 have called for new and innovative solutions, especially in the field of youth work.

Consequently and with a combination of online and hybrid meetings, we have strengthened the links with our members and partners and encouraged young people we work with and for to make their voices heard in „Europe through Young Eyes: Exchange, Explore, Exhibit” project.

This is the reason why our 2020 Annual Report cover picture was chosen with a well-defined purpose, as it summarizes the ideas YES Forum wants to put forward. It was taken by a young participant in our ongoing “Europe through Young Eyes: Exchange, Explore, Exhibit” project, symbolizing her idea of what Europe is and should be in the future. Undoubtedly, young people are the ones building bridges between the different actors of the youth field: might they be youth workers, policy makers or other stakeholders. We believe that youth participation is the key component to ensure quality and provide promising results in our projects.

Additionally, the increased synergy within our network materialised in successes and new visions for the future. For instance, exchanges with our members have led to discussions and reflections on the future of the network and how to support a better quality youth work in Europe through the renewal of YES Forum’s global strategy, which aims to be finalised in 2021.

That quality of work YES Forum’s members and partners have put into projects has been recognized and rewarded in 2020. The “Europe through Young Eyes” project mentioned above was nominated for the SALTO Participation and Information Awards organized by the SALTO-YOUTH network, as an inspiring project on the topic of participation promoting critical thinking and the empowerment of young people. In addition, YES Forum was invited by the German

National Agency to present the concluded project “YourEP” at the Treffpunkt event of December 2020, as a good practice in the field of youth.

As many surveys across Europe have shown, the pandemic and lockdown has had a disproportionate impact on young people’s mental health and wellbeing, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised in society. Thus also in 2021, YES Forum will continue to work towards quality in youth work and innovative projects around Europe, building on the strong links tied with its different partners over the years and looking forward to exciting new collaborations for positive outcomes!



**Mirco Trielli, Ronald de Haan,
Maria Petersson, Alexander Hauser, Lilika Trikalinou**
| YES Forum Board Members

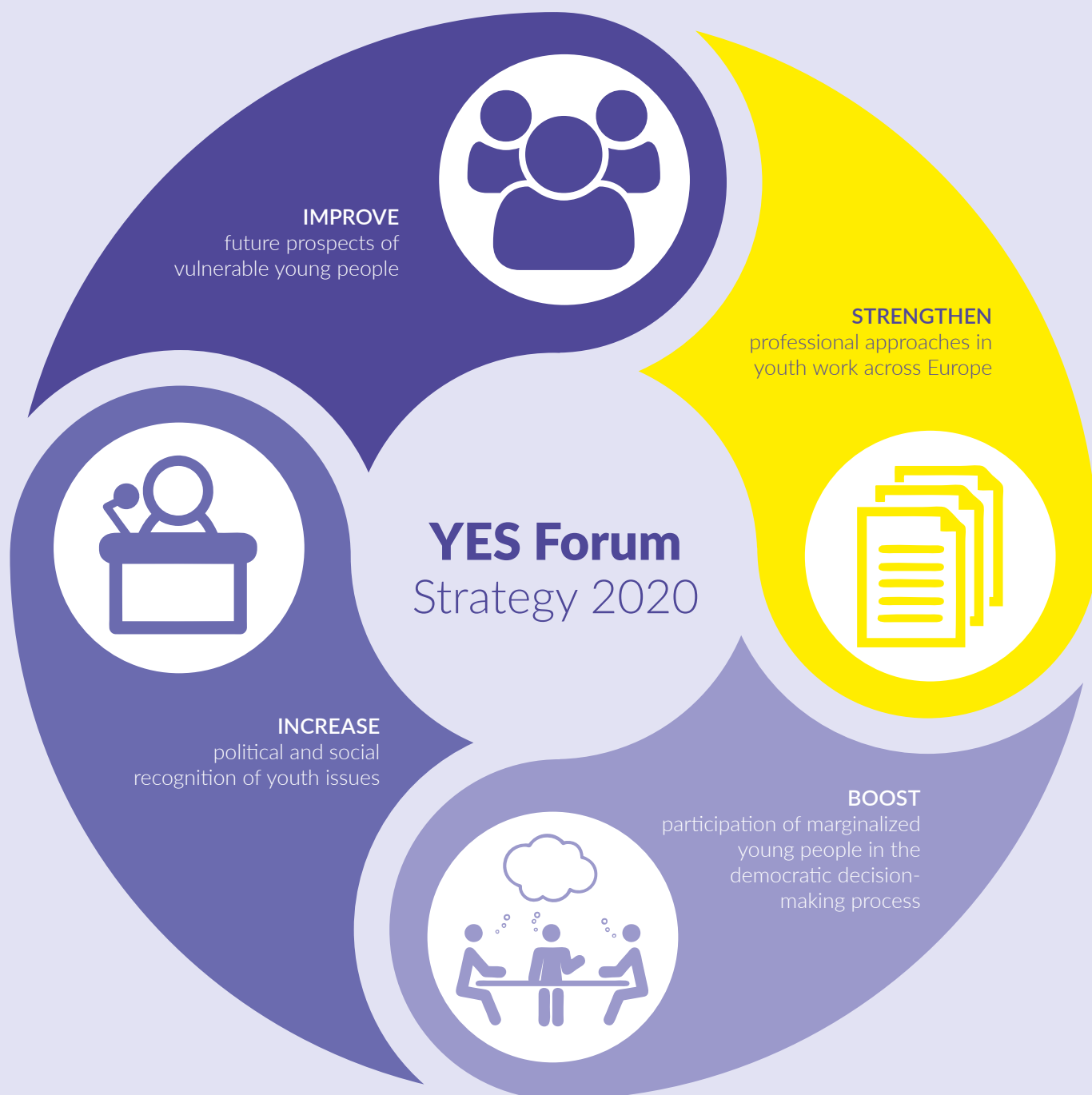


Annett Wiedermann | Director of the YES Forum





Partners at the Project Planning Meeting in September, Vienna





1. Improve future prospects of vulnerable young people

Coordinator or Co-Leader in 12 Erasmus+ projects for young people and practitioners, including:

- Our life. Our voice. Young people and poverty (2015-2017)
- YourEP (2017-2018)
- Towards more Gender-Sensitivity in Youth Work, with BAG EJSa (2018-2020)
- Europe Through Young Eyes: Exchange, Explore, Exhibit (2019-2021)
- The Employable Youth: It Works! (2019-2022)
- YES Forum's Network Structural Support

Partner in 6 additional projects for young people and practitioners, including:

- PROMISE – Youth Inclusion and Social Engagement (H2020) (2016-2019)
- DIVE – Diversity in Pan-European Networks (2017-2019)
- SAAM – Supporting Alliance for African Mobility (2020-2023)



2. Strengthen professional approaches in youth work across Europe

- 18 members events (including 5 General Assemblies, 3 Policy Events, 4 PPM)
- 64 partner meetings and planning visits related to projects (Preparatory meetings, Partner exchanges on how to implement the projects)
- 35 newsletter issues, 11 "Special Newsletters", Weekly update of our Website and Social media



3. Boost participation of marginalized young people in the democratic decision-making process

10 Erasmus+ projects specifically aimed at boosting participation of marginalized young people, including:

- Our life. Our voice. Young people and poverty (2015-2017)
- PROMISE – Youth Inclusion and Social Engagement (H2020) (2016-2019)
- YourEP (2017-2018)
- SIEM - Social Inclusion and Engagement in Mobility (2019-2021)
- Europe Through Young Eyes: Exchange, Explore, Exhibit (2019-2021)



4. Increasing political and social recognition of youth issues

Contribution to 29 events related to Youth policy, including:

- European Youth Event (2016, 2018, 2020)
- Youth Parliament (2018)
- "Have your say in what the EP should do for youth", European Parliament (2019)
- European Youth Work Convention (2020)

Organisation of Events related to Youth Policies, including:

- "Why so serious? EU politics can be fun!", Policy Event, Brussels (2018)
- PROMISE Final conference, Manchester (2019)



Sustainable
Principles



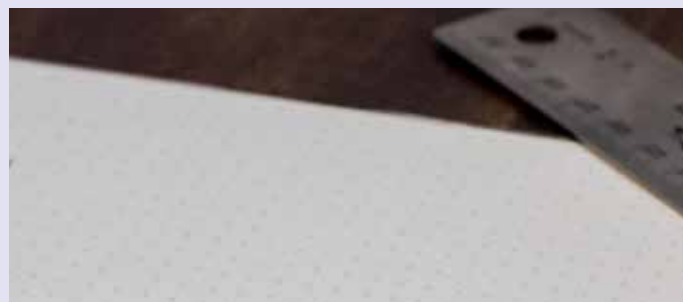
At the beginning of the year, the YES Forum Secretariat started to reflect on how to update the YES Forum strategy. In the previous strategy, for 2015-2020, we presented the strategic objectives, which provided direction for all our activities, and a framework to define our annual priorities, enabling us to be more effective in complementing EU initiatives.

Together with the YES Forum Board and members, we reviewed the work that was carried out in the previous five years and reflected on the essence we want to keep. We decided to revise the foundational documents (i.e., the existing strategic objectives, along with the Vision, Mission, and Values) to include more empowering wording: we know we have challenges – and they are many -, but together we can overcome them. We wanted to text to be easily accessible for our target group: the young people!

The process of updating the strategy was completely participatory. In July, the YES Forum Secretariat met with the members of the Board to review it. During the YES Forum 2020 General Assembly in October, as we discussed themes such as “Being European”, “Promoting Participation in Society” and “The Future of the Job Market”, the YES Forum members voiced what these topics mean to their organisations and how the Secretariat and the network could support them.

Thus, with the New Strategy, we are presenting the YES Forum's Sustainable Principles which have always been at the foundation of our work. We identified six core values that are at the basis of the YES Forum and represent who we are: participation, flexibility, support, transparency, solidarity, and knowledge.

We count on more participation of the members so that the final version of our Strategy can be presented in 2021!



How Youth Work is seriously affected by COVID 19 and how to survive nevertheless

1. RAY COR

The researchbased analyses of European youth programmes started two researches (literaturebased and surveybased) concerning Corona and its impact on the European youth work. Following percentages relate to 938 valid responses.

The RAYCOR survey shows that over 70% of the surveyed youth workers got affected majorly in their work by the pandemic. Especially the work spaces, work methods, work timing and work tools are touched and around 70% of work has been interrupted. More than half of the surveyed young people stated that the crisis has significantly limited their access to youth activities. Therefore, solutions need to be developed - there are no limits to creativity and ingenuity. Most frequently used methods are online group activities and practical advice to continue work and to adjust it to the current situation.

2. YES Forum

Secretariat

Obviously, the YES Forum and its members did not remain untouched. After three months working only from home, the YES Forum Secretariat resumed work at the office in June. A new protocol was developed, taking all security and hygi-

Training on distance was a great opportunity. We develop new strategies and approach with youngsters.

Youth worker from Italy

ene measures seriously to protect the team. While working from home, communication with team and members in our projects was reorganised. Events and project activities called for creative solutions. Furthermore two key applications were submitted in that time. In addition, the YES Forum Secretariat launched a survey for the members to explore how they adapted to stay in contact with the young people and to continue to provide vital services. Over summer, when lockdown measures were eased, we made use of this small window of opportunity and organized two hybrid events. That meant a small group of people travelled and met on site, while the other participants were involved online. That's why the Transnational Partner Meeting of Europe through young Eyes - Exchange, Explore, Exhibit (Europe3E) and YES Forums Project Planning Meeting could take place in Austria.

Best Practice

We experimented with new formats and developed solutions for the core of our work by keeping connected with the members in numerous calls and virtual meetings. We are proud of all the hybrid meetings which did take part on site and online. The Transnational Partner Meeting in Vienna was the first meeting trying out this new format having the

We remain flexible in our approach.

Youth worker from the UK

benefits from online conference, that partners from all over Europe could join as well as benefits from face-to-face with dialogues in the coffee breaks and social contact. Given the strict security regulations in October, the General Assembly was a full online event. Important interactive sessions were guaranteed by tools like online bulletin boards and group work in separate rooms. The Europe3E training was a success though the participants were separated in small national groups. Yet, the practical testing of the photovoice method could not get completely transferred into an on-line setting. Therefore, the units were split in synchronic on-line input and every participating organisation implemented group activities with their youngsters on site.

Nevertheless, the hybrid format allowed the participants to compare, share and discuss experiences, photo results as well as views about the European Union.

I will keep working remotely, yet only to a certain extent because this solution has its limitations, in particular physical.

Youth worker from France

Members

According to the YES Forum, one of the main challenges was to keep in contact with the young people, especially the most vulnerable ones, during the hard lockdown in most of the EU countries in Spring. When lockdown measures were eased the member organisations were busy with catching up, re-organising educational work into new formats. In many cases, our members struggled with a lack of decent IT infrastructure and services. Finally, all of them experienced a massive change from direct work with young people to online work. On-site work has been possible only under extremely strict rules, e.g., smaller groups while respecting

Our work is more digital. But for international projects it's important to gain experience abroad.

Youth worker from Germany

distance. And indeed, nearly the whole year 2020 was impacted by cancelling or postponing on-site events.

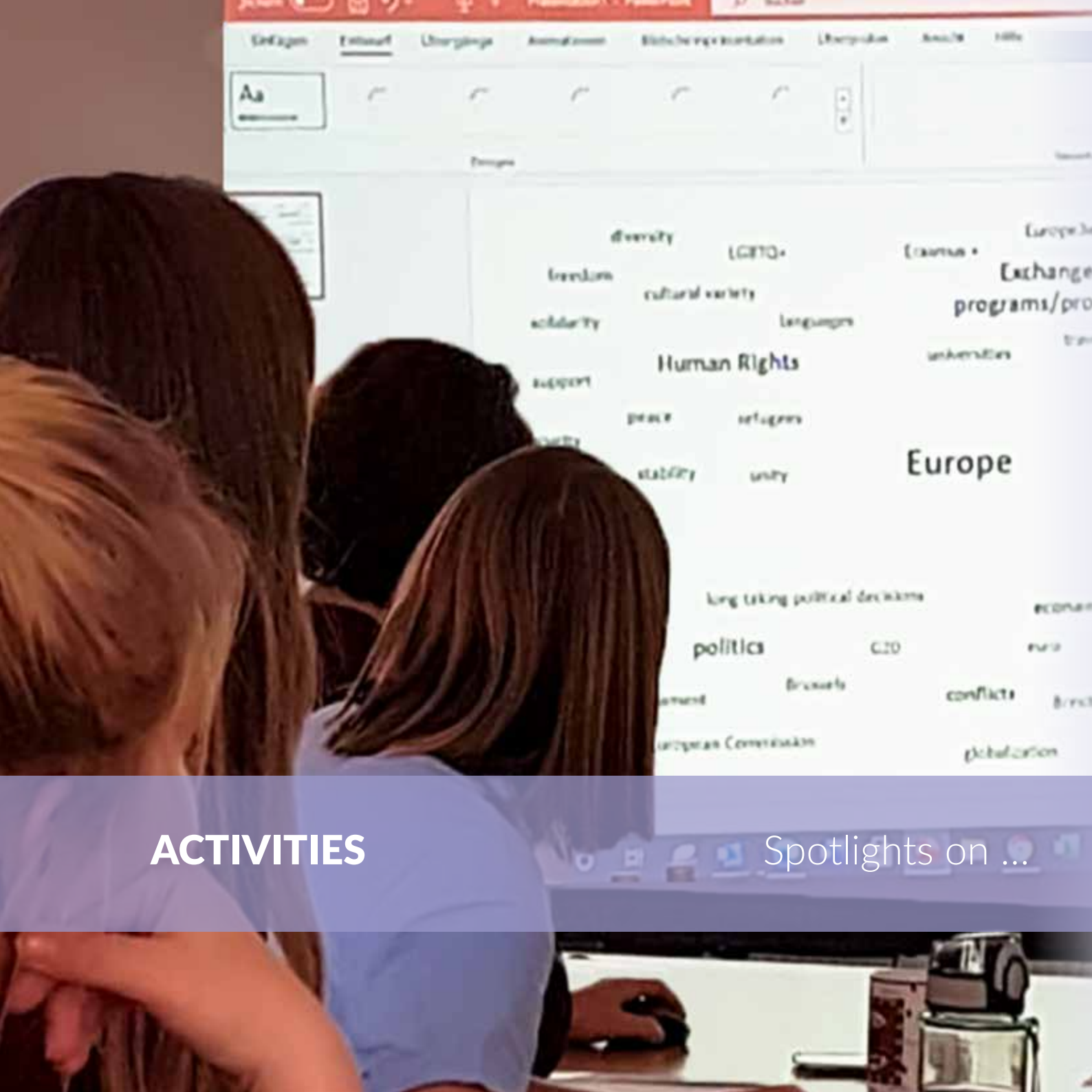
Hence, European projects lost their priority for more than 80% of the surveyed members. However at the same time organisations remained creative in finding solutions, such as testing certain concepts for alternative activities for future usage. Finally, live meetings on site, real exchanges and international contact are even much more valued.

Bibliography

RESEARCH PROJECT ON THE IMPACT OF THE CORONA PANDEMIC ON YOUTH WORK IN EUROPE (RAY-COR) INITIAL SURVEY FINDINGS // DATA SNAPSHOT 1 TABLE EDITION | V4| 14 AUGUST 2020

The staff's creativity, they made it work!

Youth worker from Finland



ACTIVITIES

Spotlights on ...

Spotlights on ... Europe Through Young Eyes: Exchange, Explore, Exhibit

The „Europe through young Eyes: Exchange, Explore, Exhibit (Europe3E)” project is designed as a follow-up project of the highly successful „YourEP” and “Our Life. Our Voice. Young people and poverty” projects. It focuses on a more personal level to engage those young people who we could not reach in these projects.

The objectives of the „Europe3E” project are to reach meaningful Active Citizenship, to raise Political Awareness, and to deepen Social Inclusion among youth, through peer and photovoice research, and culminate in a political simulation with and for young people.

This year, we achieved the preparation and training of the participants. The partner organisations recruited youngsters and staff members to support them, to take part in the transnational hybrid training on the topics of Europe, EU politics creative research and photography.

The next steps will include the finalisation of the photovoice research and the collation of material to produce a guide on how to facilitate inclusive political simulations. Finally, a photo exhibition will be organised, as well as discussions about policy recommendations, to spread them in the youth sector to policy makers and beyond through networks of partners.

A great and entertaining experience through which the participants were given the chance to gain important knowledge about the photovoice method and exchange ideas and points of view about politics and Europe. They were surprised to see how many aspects and approaches there can be when thinking of the word „Europe” as some of them approached it as a continent and some of them as a union of states.

Youth worker from Greece

ACTIVITIES – Timeline



30 January:
It works! -
Kick Off Meeting
in Athens



11–13 March:
Europe4all Conference
in Cologne



30 June:
It works! -
Management
Meeting



1 March:
Policy Paper on Inclusive Youth
and Education Programmes
from 2021



19 May:
Gender –
Management
Meeting



15–16 July:
Organisational Retreat
in Düsseldorf



2 February:
SAAM –
Kick Off Meeting
in Brussels



4 March:
Inclusive Youth and
Education Programmes



1 June:
Redecorating -
Improving the work environment
of the Secretariat



9–15 March:
Gender -Family, Education, Work and
Wellbeing, Perspectives and Realities
from Young People – Seminar in Berlin



2 September:
Europe3E -
Management
Meeting



Own events



YES Forum as Partner/Participant



September – November:
SIEM - Study Visits



2 – 6 November:
Europe3E – What is EU?
Peer-Research: The EU and me –
Seminar for young people



16 December:
It works! -
Management
Meeting



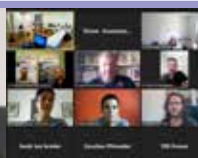
3 September:
YES Forum -
Project Planning Meeting
in Vienna



9 November:
Participation
in Multiplier Event
of BAG EJSA



17 December:
Christmas Get Together



20 October:
YES Forum -
General Assembly



7 October:
DiscoverEU stakeholder meeting
on "YOUTH DISCOVER GREEN
EUROPE"



7 – 10 December:
Participation
in 3rd European Youth Work
Convention



30 November – 1 December:
Participation in Treffpunkt 2020



ACTIVITIES – Project Overview

Gender Sensitive Approaches

From 2018 to 2020, YES Forum worked in partnership with BAG EJSA on the new project „Gender“ in order to create and foster gender-sensitive approaches in youth work across Europe. Furthermore, we want to make an important contribution to gender equality, professionalisation of youth and social work in Europe.

„Gender“ targets social practitioners working with young people and youngsters. The project focuses on changing the professionals' mentalities by promoting gender-sensitive work with young people and explore their attitudes towards gender issues. In doing so, „Gender“ will help to reflect on the challenges of traditional gender-specific roles and related responsibilities in youth work.

On 9-13 March, young participants added a creative touch to the „Gender Project“ through a seminar in Berlin and learned about the wide world of gender and exchanged about their own experiences, challenges, wishes, hopes, concerns and questions on the topic.

<https://www.yes-forum.eu/projects/detail/project/towards-more-gender-sensitivity-in-youth-work-2018-2020/action/show/ctrl/Project>

SIEM

Social Inclusion is a priority in the next Erasmus + programme, but very little hard data is available. It is important to gather more evidence across Europe, and link this evidence to recommendations for universities to increase their outward mobility.

The YES Forum will cooperate with the Erasmus Student Network and partner universities for the Social Inclusion and Engagement in Mobility (SIEM) project which started in November 2019.

The general objective of this project is to increase the opportunities and chances in life for young students from disadvantaged backgrounds by increasing their participation in the Erasmus+ Mobility programme.

This is achieved upscaling the research on participation in student mobility, student-lead and participatory processes to create a toolkit with guidelines and a workshop manual to increase social engagement between international students and students and young people with fewer opportunities in order to increase the social impact of the Erasmus+ programme.

<https://siem-project.eu>



World we live in

World I dream

Shame

Oppression

ACTIVITIES – Project Overview

SAAM

For 40 months, the YES Forum is part of the pilot project SAAM (Supporting Alliance for African Mobility). It is a project led by the Spanish VET training centre SanViator and coordinated by the Spanish Mobility Organization, Asociación Mundus. SAAM supports the mobility of VET teachers and students across a range of disciplines.

This alliance targets the development of new curricula, methodologies, technologies and management. The emphasis of the project is enhancement of learning mobilities between Africa and Europe using training job-shadowing and knowledge acquisition on internationalization, transparency tools and educational pathways. Over 40 months, 70 European teachers, 135 African teachers and more than 300 students will move between both continents.

<https://saam.global>

ItWorks!

Unemployment has been a steady concern and a challenge across Europe for the past years. Even more so as a large number of people, especially young and from migrant background, can't find a way to enter the job market. The cycle of social exclusion can be broken through employment for EU and non-EU residents especially socially excluded youth, NEETs.

The “The Employable Youth: It Works!” project is designed with a clear focus on Vocational Training and the need for on the job training. This project aims at the creation of tools for employability and soft skills to support the youth along with a number of job placements for youngsters. Additionally, it aims at enhancing the knowledge of the professionals (youth workers, educators, coaches and trainers) who work with NEETs through capacity building and training in order to be able to facilitate job placements for the young people.

In 2020, the first three Intellectual Outputs got edited and first results will be provided in 2021. Thus far, tools and soft skills were developed and will next be reviewed by focus groups.

<https://www.yes-forum.eu/index.php?id=592>



Future professionals gain experience and practice purpose

YES Forum gives students the opportunity to gain real experience in the daily business of a European network. Supporting European projects on different topics with young people and professionals in youth work and engaging with fresh ideas is a main goal of an internship with YES Forum.

Despite the difficult circumstances, YES Forum invited 2 young undergraduate students to do a mandatory training to learn and explore the connection between theory and practice. Even in these days both sides - interns and organisations - benefit from each other.

In the following there are two authentic voices.



Anastasia Wittmann:

As a political science student I was able to gain an outsider's perspective in the world of youth and social work. Due to my studies I put my focus more on the strategic and political aspect of the sector. Many times I was surprised by the interconnected nature of the work. Operating on the European level has shown me, how much effort is being placed in each project and how important the European Union actually is. Not only are we able to travel with almost no border checks, but cooperation can also stretch beyond borders.

This centres around the epitome of the European idea - working together for a common objective. This goal can take up many different shapes, in the case of the YES Forum we are working on transnational youth exchanges in the area or non-formal learning.

The current healthcare crisis however, has put a sudden hold onto the very core of the Network's work - the face to face interaction with the partners. Furthermore, current research shows that the youth work sector has been shaken to its core with all the participants deeply affected. COVID 19 exposed the systematic fragility of the sector in a new and telling way. Despite the difficult circumstances my internship gave me many interesting insights.

During my time at the Forum I was able to take part in meetings, panels and trainings, which were mostly held online to navigate the projects through the pandemic the best way possible. I saw first hand how important open communication is and what impact shared ideals have.

I was trained to understand the interplay of the many different interests involved and to take all perspectives into account, while trying to come up with various concepts and strategies. All in all it was a valuable experience, which helped me further solidify my expressed interest in working on an European level while also gaining new insights into the interdependence of border crossing work of any kind.



Jannika Appel:

In times of COVID pandemics, when it is even hard to find any place for an internship, I really appreciated the confirmation of YES Forum, the organisation of my choice. I got to put my university knowledge into practice and gain new experiences in the international field.

As a future social worker my political view before focused on social challenges in Germany and even at university most subjects focus on national issues. But as the slogan of the German EU council presidency 2020 promoted "Together. Make Europe strong again", the European social work can only be successful when every national issue is put in the European context. Only then we are strong, only then can social work be powerful regardless of the national differences.

As Chancellor Angela Merkel emphasized during the EU Council Presidency, Europe depends on the prospects of its citizens and on their personal connection to the European idea.

In order to improve these perspectives, especially for the youth as our future in Europe, European youth work is so important. In the previous paragraph, Angela Merkel speaks

of "taking a close look at the future" in view of the corona crisis and climate change. The future of young people, however, has many other concerns that will affect the future of the European Union and should therefore also influence the present.

To stand up for these concerns of the young people and to pass them on was one of my motives for starting my internship semester in this field. But also to experience what the European idea means in everyday crisis life became part of my internship semester.

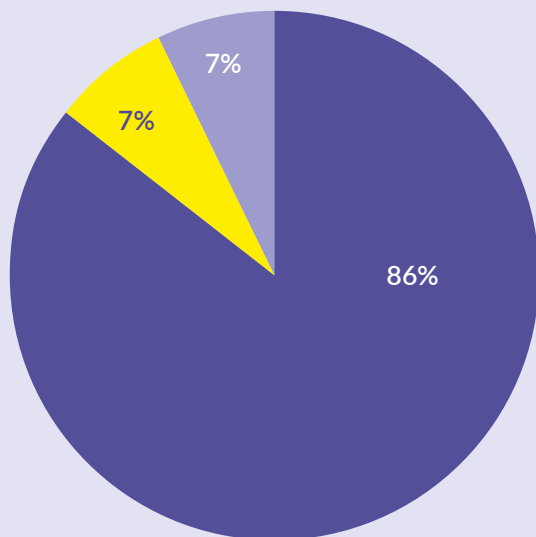
Working through theoretical explanatory models, recognizing theoretical explanations in practical problems in European social work and evaluating them from the point of view of plausibility and relevance is such an important matter, but could only get experienced in the practical field.

To promote individual qualification competence, within a general spectrum, with a view to application-oriented action in the home country and abroad, to learn researchers access to everyday practice in the profession and to develop a circular theory practice understanding, to learn a goal oriented conceptual approach based on project work - this is what a practical semester in the best case can show. This is what I learned from my internship at YES Forum.



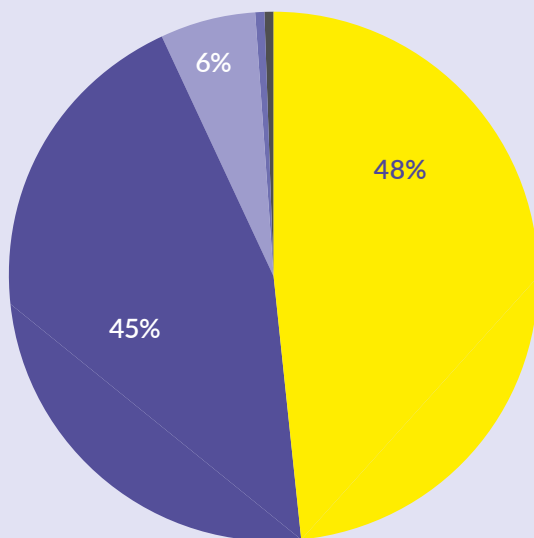
FACTS AND FIGURES – BUDGET 2020

YES Forum creates impact through its effective and efficient use of resources.



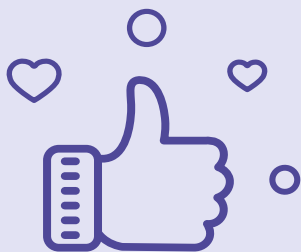
Income

■	Grants 256.251 EUR
■	Membership fees 22.000 EUR
■	Services, conference fees, etc 20.828 EUR



Expenses

■	Project expenses 145.369 EUR
■	Staff 134.189 EUR
■	Operating expenses 17.327 EUR
■	Experts 1.900 EUR
■	Meetings & travel 1.051 EUR



1.359

facebook likes



976

followers of the newsletter



10.346

newsletters sent



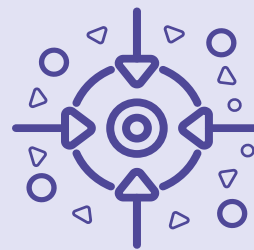
18.250

website visits



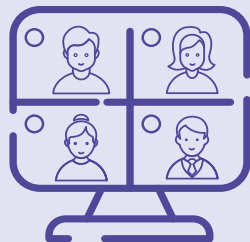
1

new member



3

members events



14

transnational
meetings hosted



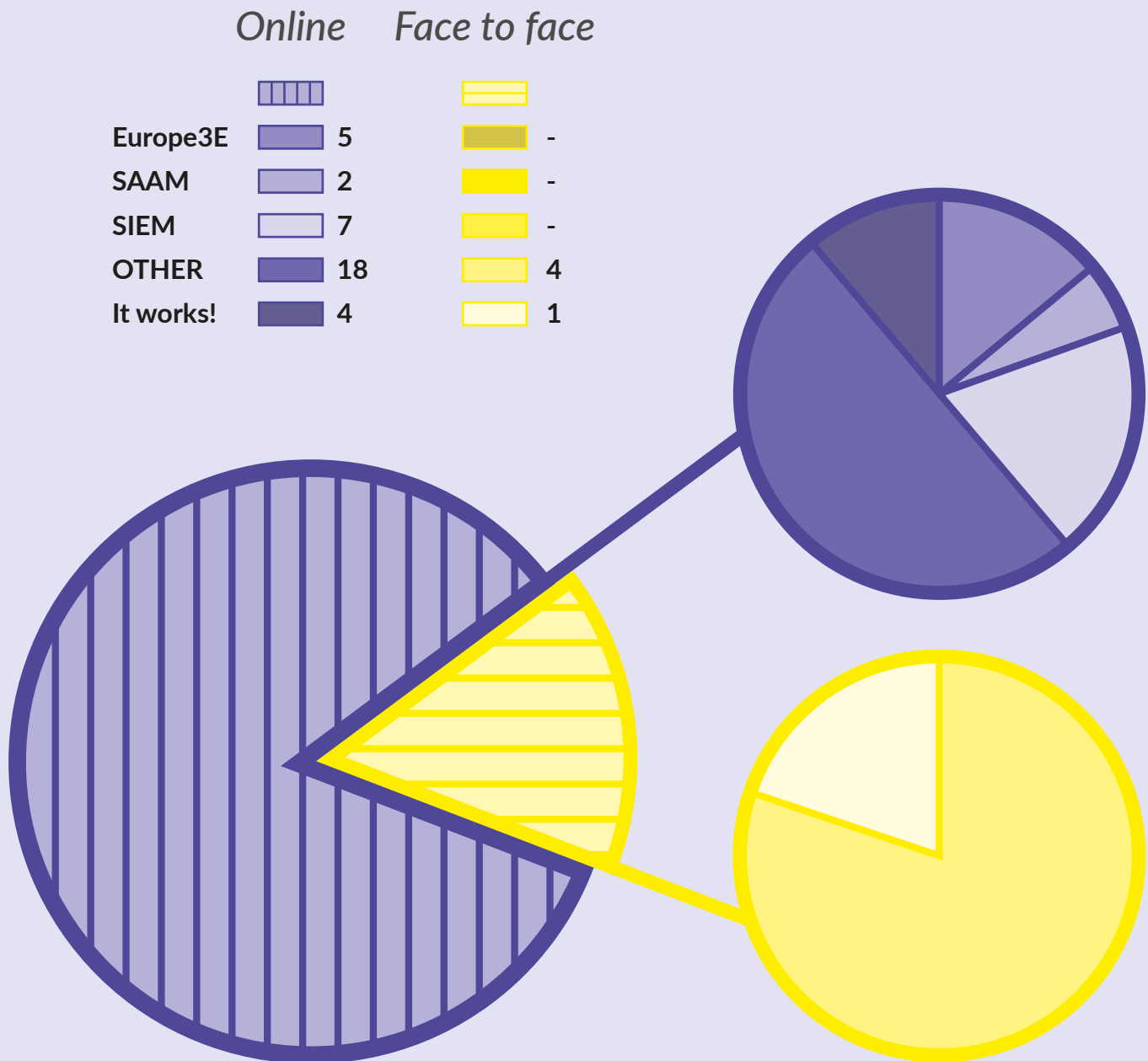
5

hours average
meeting duration



31

average meeting
participants





STRUCTURE

YES Forum is a membership driven organisation, with multiple ways of engaging within the network

The YES Forum, founded as EEIG, is a membership driven organisation. Aims are achieved through our democratic structure with full participation of members. Elected by the members, the Board of Directors represents and protects the members' interests in the network, and supervises the budget and activities. The appointed Managing Director is responsible for running the business of the EEIG and internal organisation. To manage the activities and to support effective internal and external communication, the YES Forum is supported by the Secretariat in Stuttgart, where experienced staff works together with young people in training as apprentices and EVS-volunteers in a dynamic environment.

Board

Ronald de Haan,
Jongerenwerk Barkema en de Haan, Netherlands
Alexander Hauser,
BAG KJS, Germany
Maria Peterson,
Municipality of Skellefteå, Sweden
Mirco Trielli,
Zefiro, Italy
Lilika Trikalinou,
IEKEP, Greece

YES Forum Secretariat

Annett Wiedermann,
Director and Project Manager
Diana Neugebauer,
Finance and Administration Officer
Orane Jouanneau,
Project Officer
Thais Dutra Fernández,
Project Officer
Anastasia Wittmann,
Intern / Project Assistant (Sept – Dec)
Jannika Appel,
Intern / Project Assistant (since Sept)







Welcome to our newest full member: ÖJAB (Austrian Young Workers Movement)

"With the YES Forum we achieve

- partners on the EU level who have the same idea on topics of youth,
- international networks on an European but also on a national level,
- partners, especially new partners, for European and EU projects,
- and of course new and very good friends."

Sebastian Frank, Senior Project Manager

Do you want to become a member?

Then please check here! <https://goo.gl/kUOGKs>



Stiftung Evangelische Jugendhilfe
St. Johannis Bernburg



**YES Forum EWIV –
Youth and European Social Work Forum**



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February 2021

YES Forum Membership in Networks:

- Social Platform
- European Anti Bullying Network



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