



# European Youth Capital and its link to the EU Youth Policy

# About Youth in Action Programme

Youth in Action is a programme the European Union has set up for young people. It aims to inspire a sense of active European citizenship, solidarity and tolerance among young Europeans and to involve them in shaping the Union's future. It promotes mobility within and beyond the EU's borders, non-formal learning and intercultural dialogue, and encourages the employability and inclusion of all young people, regardless of their educational, social and cultural backgrounds: Youth in Action is a programme for everyone!

**The Youth in Action Programme aims to achieve the following general objectives:**

- promote young people's active citizenship in general, and their European citizenship in particular;
- develop solidarity and promote tolerance among young people, in particular in order to foster social cohesion in the European Union;
- foster mutual understanding between young people in different countries;
- contribute to developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field;
- promote European cooperation in the youth field.

**The Programme is structured around 5 Actions:**

- Action 1 - Youth for Europe: encourages young people's active citizenship, participation and creativity through youth exchanges, youth initiatives and youth democracy projects.
- Action 2 - European Voluntary Service: helps young people to develop their sense of solidarity by participating, either individually or in group, in non-profit, unpaid voluntary activities abroad.
- Action 3 - Youth in the World: promotes partnerships and exchanges among young people and youth organisations across the world.
- Action 4 - Youth Support Systems: includes various measures to support youth workers and youth organisations and improve the quality of their activities.
- Action 5 - Support for European Co-operation in the Youth Field: supports youth policy co-operation at the European level, in particular by facilitating dialogue between young people and policy makers.

**The permanent priorities of the Youth in Action programme are:**

- European citizenship
- Participation of young people
- Cultural diversity
- Inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities

**More information:**

<http://ec.europa.eu/youth/>

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Youth in Action Programme





# European Youth Capital

and its link to the EU Youth Policy

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## Table of Contents

Introduction	6
About the Seminar	8
Where are We Coming From	10
History of the European Youth Capital – the idea behind it	11
Vision of the European Youth Capital – The European Dimension	12
Past, Present and Future European Youth Capitals	14
Rotterdam European Youth Capital 2009 – ‘Your World’	14
Turin European Youth Capital 2010 – ‘Y-our Time’	16
Antwerp European Youth Capital 2011 – ‘AEYC2011’	17
Braga 2012 European Youth Capital – ‘EYC Braga’	18
Maribor European Youth Capital 2013 – ‘EYC Maribor 2013’	19
Thessaloniki European Youth Capital 2014 – ‘Time’	20
Cluj-Napoca European Youth Capital 2015 – ‘Youth@Cluj 2015’	21
European Youth Capital Policy Tool Kit	22
What is the Policy Tool Kit?	22
I. European Union	23
II. Council of Europe	23
III. United Nations	23
European Youth Capital under the Microscope	24
I. How to become a European Youth Capital	24
II. Ensuring youth participation	25
III. Involvement of the youth organizations	26
IV. Attracting public support	26
V. Structured dialogue between young people and decision makers	27
VI. Cooperation between the EYC, the European Youth Forum and member organizations	27
VII. Strong link between EU Youth Policy and EYC	28
VIII. What happens after?	29
Appendix 1: Programme of the Seminar	30
Appendix 2: List of Participants	31

## Foreword

### By the European Youth Forum

This brochure is a very much needed as well as very useful and interesting source of information for young people and cities who wish to learn more about the European Youth Capital (EYC), especially for those who one day wish to bring the title to their city! The European Youth Forum is an independent, democratic, youth-led platform, representing over 100 youth platforms from across Europe. We award the title 'European Youth Capital' each year, on the decision of a high-level jury. Each year we also monitor and give assistance to the current and up-coming Capitals, this year (2013) being Maribor (Slovenia), and 2014 being Thessaloniki (Greece).

The European Youth Forum welcomes the initiative of the National Agencies of the Youth in Action Programme from Slovenia and the Netherlands in cooperation with the National Agency from Belgium (FL), Italy, Portugal, Greece, Romania and the office of 'EYC Maribor 2013' for organising the seminar on the 'European Youth Capital and its links to the EU Youth Policy' which took place from March 5th to 7th 2013 in the city of Maribor, Slovenia. The seminar formed the basis for this brochure. The seminar itself was built on the close bilateral cooperation and common coordination meetings between the European Youth Forum and EYC 2009 Rotterdam (Netherlands), EYC 2010 Turin (Italy), EYC 2011 Antwerp (Belgium), EYC 2012 Braga (Portugal), EYC 2013 Maribor (Slovenia), EYC 2014 Thessaloniki (Greece) and EYC 2015 Cluj Napoca (Romania).

The seminar gave an opportunity for all the European Youth Capitals to share their experiences and exchange good practice on the implementation of European Youth Policies at the local level. The European Youth Forum very much appreciated this possibility to meet, in order that it could review the many achievements of the European Youth Capital initiative so far and look forward to its future development.

The European Youth Forum especially welcomed the strong focus on analysing the concrete links between youth policies from the local to the European level and the occasion to present and discuss the European Youth Forum's 'European Youth Capital Policy Tool Kit'. The Tool Kit provides European cities with a clear overview of European youth policies and related key documents from the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations.

As a process that is only 4 years old, the European Youth Capital initiative is constantly growing through the feedback received from all the actors involved and affected. The European Youth Forum is looking forward to continuing and deepening the dialogue and cooperation with municipalities and youth organisations connected to the European Youth Capital initiative. It also encourages institutions on the European level to engage with this unique process in order to further connect European and local youth policies.





## About the seminar

8

What is European Youth Capital (EYC)? The most obvious answer would be: 'An opportunity.' It is an opportunity for an awarded European city, for a period of one year, to present a diverse programme showing how the city is linked to the young people who inhabit it. It is an opportunity to show how the young people are associated with its culture, social, political, economic life and development. EYC is a title granted by the European Youth Forum (Forum), it encourages the implementation of new ideas and innovative projects related to the active participation of young people in society. It also attempts to present a role model for the further development of youth policies in other European municipalities. EYC is a commitment to create a more unified and collaborative environment. ■

However, it is a big challenge to take advantage of all the opportunities given by the award; it takes a lot of effort, team work and cooperation on the local, national and international level. Collaboration between all the actors is important, that is why the seminar 'European Youth Capital and its Link to EU Youth Policy' gathered organizers, partners and participants from former, present and future EYCs. 18 participants of the seminar came from Slovenia, Belgium, Portugal, Italy, Netherlands, Greece and Romania. They were representatives from National Youth Councils, youth organizations, and organizing structures of the EYC and the Forum. The participants all stayed in Hotel Habakuk, situated beneath the wooded Pohorje plateau in Maribor, Slovenia from 5th to 7th March 2013. This seminar was the first of its kind where all the EYCs, representatives of National Youth Councils, and NGOs could meet and share their ideas, practices and gain experience from one other.

The main aim of the seminar was to review the achievements of the EYC initiative so far and to develop recommendations for the future, especially with regard to the broader impact of EYC on European youth policy. The participants exchanged best practices in terms of youth related developments during the EYCs.

Participants had a chance to:

- define the idea behind EYC and define the links between EYC and EU youth policy
- explore the benefits of EYC



- put each EYC in the framework of EU youth policy
- review the achievements and impact of each EYC
- analyse various aspects of EYC organization and management and identify good practices
- define how EYC can contribute to EU youth policy development without duplicating existing developments, find potential synergies and discuss sustainability questions
- review activities of the EYCs after their 'EYC year' and create follow-up guidelines for the dissemination and exploitation of results

The following are a selection of comments and reflections by the participants:

“Keep supporting European Youth Capital teams. We need your openness and knowledge. Thank you for this wonderful experience.”

“During the seminar I understood that co-creating with others and sharing what you have is a key to success.”

“Let's do it again!”

“The importance of linking European Youth Capital to youth policies and working with other European Youth Capitals is always followed by a positive result.”

And finally a reflection by one of the trainers, Tadej Beočanin:

“The ‘European Youth Capital and its link to the EU Youth Policy’ seminar offered a unique opportunity for representatives of European Youth Capitals to share their experiences, ideas, programme elements, objectives and challenges that they have and are facing. Various participants claimed that this seminar was very much needed, because it was the first seminar where all the European Youth Capitals could meet and share their ideas, practices and gain experience from each other. In addition, the seminar focused on broadening the impact of the European Youth Capital on European youth policy and produced a variety of results that can and will be implemented on the EU level. The seminar was a success and participants were grateful for having a chance to participate in it. In future, such seminars should definitely carry on.”

# Where are We Coming From

By the European Youth Forum

10

## History of the European Youth Capital

– the idea behind it

It was at the Council of Members of the European Youth Forum in November 2007, Brussels (Belgium), that the European Youth Capital concept was adopted. Both the 'Declaration of Rotterdam' and the 'Conclusions of the Working Groups' of the 2007 EU Youth Week, had called for a European Youth Capital. The 'Resolution on an Annual European Youth Capital' was accepted and the Forum officially launched the EYC process. Youth organisations and young people from across Europe established the title 'European Youth Capital'. They declared that the title should be awarded to a European city for the period of one year, during which time that city would be given the chance to showcase, through a multi-faceted programme, its youth-related cultural, social, political and economic life and development.

The first EYC was Rotterdam (the Netherlands), in 2009. On the basis of the 'Resolution', the Forum developed a transparent and fair competition open to all European municipalities, with selection by an expert jury. It awarded the EYC 2010 title to Turin (Italy), EYC 2011 to Antwerp (Belgium), EYC 2012 to Braga (Portugal), EYC 2013 to Maribor (Slovenia), EYC 2014 to Thessaloniki (Greece), and EYC 2015 to Cluj Napoca (Romania). The Forum has already launched the selection procedure for the EYC 2016, giving municipalities from across Europe the chance to submit their proposals.



## Why did youth organisations from across Europe launch this process?

Youth leaders from across Europe considered there was a need for more attention to be given to European youth policy at the local level and for more direct contact between European institutions and local decision-makers. The youth leaders considered that EYC could:

- Strengthen the relationship between the European institutions and the local level and thus attention for common European objectives regarding youth policy
- Foster attention for youth participation at the local level as well as the European level
- Strengthen European citizenship, complementary to local, national and other levels of citizenship ■

Today the Forum awards the EYC title as well as promoting and coordinating the entire EYC awarding process by facilitating the work of the awarding jury. The Forum, as the representative youth platform at the European level, lends its credibility to the title as an organisation that is represented in nearly all member states of the European Union. The Forum has about 100 member organisations that are all platforms themselves; either National Youth Councils or local branches of International Non-Governmental Organisations. Aiming to empower young people to participate actively in the shaping of Europe and the societies in which they live, the Forum works as a representative body to promote the interests of all European young people. It holds its representative role at the institutions of the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations, as well as with its partners in the youth field.

EYC is still a young project, but it is developing and growing fast. The Forum's current mandate as awarder of the title is the following:

- Creation, facilitation and promotion of the call for applications in cooperation with partners
- Including external experts in the content and programme assessment and analysis of the candidatures
- Involving young people through a youth focus group which develops

■ "0942-07: Resolution on an annual European Youth Capital", adopted by the Council of Members 9 – 10 November 2007, Brussels (Belgium)



recommendations for the candidate

- Assembling a jury of diverse representatives of civil society organisations, institutional partners, media, research and young people who are uniquely qualified to assess the applications
- Announcing the winning city at an announcement ceremony
- Development of cooperation structures with the EYCs
- Monitoring and Evaluation missions before and during the period of the title

In order to ease the work of applicant cities and create one access point for information, the Forum created a website guiding the reader through the selection procedure and concept. It gives background information and cross-links the visitor with the past, present and future EYCs – [www.europeanyouthcapital.org](http://www.europeanyouthcapital.org)

The European Youth Forum sincerely hopes that this is just the beginning of a great success story of youth participation and implementation of European values in local life.

## Vision of the European Youth Capital – The European Dimension

**The EYC is a young project that is growing steadily.**

EYC is an honour given to only one city per year and the involvement of the Forum gives the title credibility and legitimacy. The title itself makes a statement to the world that the municipality in question is of Europe's most progressive in creating a unified body of citizens who are involved in bettering the world they live in, a connotation that lasts well beyond the given year. ■

The Forum is committed to continuing and improving this process and will work with all the stakeholders involved to achieve this. The Forum is convinced that such a project aimed at empowering young people within society will lead to a better future. Someone well served by their community in their youth is more inclined to serve their community in return. Studies also show the importance of being socialised in a culture of democratic

participation from an early age. ■ The Forum is convinced that inclusion of an active well-informed population that becomes involved in democratic decision-making processes in their early years, is crucial in order to face the challenges of today's Europe, both from the local to the European level.

The Forum makes a deliberate attempt to invite a wide variety of actors and institutions to sit on the EYC jury and to judge all aspects of the EYCs goals. This includes (but is not limited to), the implementation and understanding of youth policy, media exposure of the EYC title, the overall benefit to the city at hand and how much it will benefit local young people as well as European young people as a whole.

The European Dimension is crucial to the project – it should not be forgotten that municipalities in Europe are subject to youth policies as outlined by the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations. EYC applicant cities as well as existing EYCs are encouraged to consider these policies, they are also encouraged to consider the implementation mechanisms and the findings when implementing their programme activities and planning sustainable youth policies for their municipality.

With a view to fostering the implementation of European youth policies and more generally to give more visibility to European youth policy at a local level, the Forum wishes to establish a stronger link between the EYC title and relevant institutional policies. These could include; 'European Framework of Cooperation in the Youth Field', 'The Future of the Council of Europe Youth Policy: Agenda 2020', and the 'Revised Charter in Participation of Young People in Local and Regional life'.

The municipalities selected as EYCs provide best practice examples on how to transfer European youth policies at local level. They provide demonstrations of the principles of subsidiarity by implementing European values and guidelines in the local context through cooperating with young people and youth organizations. Furthermore young people participating in the EYC programme experience the complementary nature of European and local citizenship.

The Forum encourages all institutions at European level to take this unique opportunity to communicate 'Europe' at the local level and increase the visibility of their work and projects with the EYC.

For the above mentioned reasons the Forum would like to deepen and strengthen the structure of its cooperation with the relevant institutions on this topic. The initial interest that has been shown by the Council of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe has been welcomed. Further the Forum encourages closer cooperation between European stakeholders represented in the jury and the EYCs in the implementation of the project, it is hoped that this will become an integral part of European life.

# Past, Present and Future European Youth Capitals



14



## Rotterdam European Youth Capital 2009 – ‘Your World’

Rotterdam, Netherland was the first European Youth Capital in 2009, it used the title ‘Your World’. Rotterdam focused their year on participation, talent and connecting young people to a positive tone. ■ ‘Your World’ aimed to encourage young people between the ages of 12 and 27 to get involved in the vast number of activities that were developed. There were three targets areas of the yearlong project: creating effects that will last long into the years after ‘Your World’; improving the public and media image of young people; and helping young people to reach their true potential. ■ In order to encourage young people to participate, the key concept for the EYC was ‘FOR’, ‘BY’ and ‘WITH’ young people. ■ The young people of Rotterdam therefore chose six topics they wanted ‘Your World’ to focus on: (1) arts, culture and lifestyle, (2) jobs and enterprise, (3) housing and living environment, (4) apprenticeships and education, (5) identity and meeting of minds and (6) sports. ■

### Main Activities:

Together with various parties in the city, which included young people, youth organizations, schools, institutions for art and culture, businesses, and municipal institutions, ‘Your World’ created a programme of more than 500 activities.

- <http://europeanyouthcapital.org/>
- <http://www.cloggiecentral.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Rotterdams-Year-of-Youth.pdf>
- Post, H. 2010. Your Evaluation: Evaluation youth year 2009. Available at: [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=OCCgQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Furbact.eu%2Ffileadmin%2FProjects%2FMy\\_Generation%2Fdocuments\\_media%2FEnglish\\_jaarrapportage\\_Your\\_World.doc&ei=f63KUfevGcr34Q SakoCoCA&usg=AFQjCNG29sex5lcs2fN4cfmhjaO3phmW1w&sig2=B1yIt4RFYfu27u3DEBXsag&bvm=bv.48340889,d.bGE](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=OCCgQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Furbact.eu%2Ffileadmin%2FProjects%2FMy_Generation%2Fdocuments_media%2FEnglish_jaarrapportage_Your_World.doc&ei=f63KUfevGcr34Q SakoCoCA&usg=AFQjCNG29sex5lcs2fN4cfmhjaO3phmW1w&sig2=B1yIt4RFYfu27u3DEBXsag&bvm=bv.48340889,d.bGE)
- <http://www.eeyp-rotterdam.org/reyc.pdf>



### Some Examples:

- Dynamic Duos – a project which had the aim to connect young people and adults by linking them together based on their common interests but also on differences so they could learn from each other
- Your World Proof Metre – a tool for policy-makers, project leaders and young people to durably improve and strengthen youth participation within organizations and their local government
- Youth Projects Subsidy Scheme – to improve youth participation by providing subsidies of up to €2,500 for young people to implement their ideas for new projects
- City Games – these took place in areas where street sports were popular and young people had the opportunity to show them to a larger public
- B&W Next – this provided young people with the opportunity to be coupled to the Rotterdam Mayor and Aldermen in an advising function ■

### Statement:

*“2009 has taught us that many young people have great potential. We must dare to put our faith in them. Together we can empower this city!”*

Rik Grashoff  
Councillor for Participation, Culture and the  
Environment, Responsible for Youth Capital 2009



Torino  
2010  
European  
Youth  
Capital

## Turin European Youth Capital 2010 – ‘Yourtime 2010’

Turin, Italy was selected as the second EYC. Turin has always had a European vision and so wanted to focus new youth policies on autonomy paths for young people. Being awarded the EYC 2010 title was a great opportunity to revive local youth policies at the European level and links with European partners. Using the title ‘Yourtime 2010’ the organising structure wanted to give young people the opportunity to live a special year and to use it in order to build together new policies and projects. It was ‘their time to shine’. For the organising structure of ‘Yourtime 2010’, the focus was not on organising a year with activities for young people, it was about organising projects which allowed young people to be involved and heard. ‘Yourtime 2010’ was an open-source project with high accessibility and the capacity to be integrated, changed and improved over its entire duration. ■

### Main Activities:

The programme was developed in cooperation with young people as well as youth organisations. In total they realized nearly 100 projects. There were many brand new initiatives as well as links made to existing events. In the case of existing events, these were given a new boost or were influenced by the ‘Yourtime 2010’ concept.

### Some Examples:

- Your Voice – a project in which the city gave young people the chance to be heard and participate actively. Debates resulted in a conclusive document which was presented to the authorities
- Your Talent – gave creative young people the opportunity to show their talent
- Torino Street Style – a street sport event over a weekend filled with extreme sports in the city
- Your Choice – projects which gave young adults the opportunity to investigate different services, special funds and helpdesks offering them support in making choices
- Your Action – young people were taking action through their own projects or working together with their organisation. For example: A ‘City Guide’ written by students
- Your Space – discovering the available spaces in the city and using them in different and alternative ways; for example, the Torino Dance Hall, which was a rehearsal space for different flash mobs that were held in different parts of the city ■

### Statement:

*“The young people who animated this journey brought to light the wealth of talent, creativity, and vital force of a generation.”*

Giorgia Meloni  
Minister for Youth Affairs

- ‘Yourtime’. 2011. Torino 2010 European Youth Capital.
- ‘Yourtime’. 2011. Torino 2010 European Youth Capital.



# Antwerp European Youth Capital 2011

## – ‘AEYC2011’

Antwerp, Belgium was the third EYC. AEYC2011 wanted to turn the spotlight on how much space there is for young people in the city. In addition, the EYCs ambition was to inject a lot of extra physical and mental space for young people (6-26 years) into the city, and to give youth policy an international dimension. ■ From the first phase of the application and throughout the project, AEYC2011 involved local youth councils, students and individual young people. One of the aims was to involve a variety of city departments and all the Antwerp population in order that they would gain more interest in young people. AEYC2011 created a new dimension; different city departments worked together and involved young people in setting up their projects. AEYC2011 was a horizontal objective in the city's youth strategy; the year had a facilitating objective.

### Main Activities:

Various events were organized and reached a diverse crowd in terms of ethnicity, age and interests. The programme was based on eleven themes and divided into five parts: existing events with a new AEYC2011 dimension; new events; projects developed by young people; projects of the city departments; and Antwerp as host capital of existing events.

### Some Examples:

- The Musiclabyrinth – this took place in ‘Het Steen’ which is the oldest building in the city of Antwerp, for AEYC2011 it was transformed into a children's paradise
- Antwerp Street Kicks – a festival with extreme sports
- Thursday Evenings in Museums – on these evenings various museums in Antwerp could be visited by young people for free
- European Photography Project – this was an exchange between young people of Antwerp and Prague concerning photography
- A European Exchange – this was a project to encourage young people to participate in an ecological construction project
- Kraak het Cultuurhuis – young people had complete freedom to show their talent in different cultural centres ■



17



### Statement:

*“Antwerp can look back on a successful year with a diverse programme that drew more than 1 million visitors.” ■*

- <http://europeanyouthcapital.org/>
- Sara Berteles. 2013. Braga 2012 empowers European Youth Capital. Report
- [www.aeyc2011.com](http://www.aeyc2011.com)



## Braga European Youth Capital 2012

### – ‘EYC Braga’

Winning the title of EYC 2012 provided Braga, Portugal with an opportunity to communicate internally and externally the historical development, culture, and attractiveness of the city. This happened in a variety of forms, through taking advantage of the visibility and efforts to mobilize resources, to improve the support structures for young people, create opportunities for the future, and promote practical improvements in the quality of life.

■ EYC Braga focussed on themes like: youth employment; entrepreneurship; creativity and innovation; non-formal education; promoting active participation; volunteering and structured dialogue; fostering new social practices and ways of understanding and building society. ■ As a result many of these themes became a focus for the city in the longer term.

#### Main Activities:

The composition of the programme was based on three main goals. The first was the integral development of young people, investing in their skills and giving them more tools to address the labour market. The second was youth reflection on the future of cities, on their quality of life and social inclusion. The third corresponded to the European and international dimension of the event.

#### Some Examples:

- Follow Youth (official programme) – to promote and implement new ideas and innovative projects. Example: Erasmian European Youth Parliament, members of youth parliaments from different countries gathered to discuss topics like employment, quality of life, the environment, and youth policies
- Youth Empowerment (educational programme) – this gave EYC Braga a European dimension; good practices of the European Commission and European youth policies were used. The promotion of non-formal education was a crucial goal
- [EM] Caixote – this programme stimulated artistic values and cultural tourism in the historic centre of Braga by promoting young designers, projects and organizations. Example: [EM] Caixote Tu tens valor was a series of activities in the city centre to promote and recognise all professions, especially the professions that are often valued less
- Youth Entertainment (alternative programme) – various activities in different fields like sports, music, entrepreneurship, patrimony, arts, theatre, etc. ■

#### Statement:

*EYC is an opportunity /.../ to improve the support structures for young people and create opportunities for the future, promoting improvements in the quality of life. ■*

- <http://europeanyouthcapital.org/>
- Sara Berteles. 2013. Braga 2012 empowers European Youth Capital. Report
- Sara Berteles. 2013. Braga 2012 empowers European Youth Capital. Report
- [www.bragacej2012.com](http://www.bragacej2012.com)



# Maribor European Youth Capital 2013

## – ‘EYC Maribor 2013’

The city of Maribor, Slovenia is the current EYC. Maribor is promoting an innovative bottom-up approach in which young people are involved in every step of the planning of activities and policies. The project brings many positive features; one of the most important is the improvement in the daily lives of young people, not only during but also after the EYC year. The programme of EYC Maribor 2013 is primarily intended for young people between the ages of 15 and 29 and focuses on topical issues for young people. In 2012 the public tender for co-financing new programmes in the youth sector for EYC Maribor 2013 was published, a total of 52 new programmes were selected. Beside the primary part of the programme, there is a secondary part with numerous activities, conferences, festivals, seminars and other events.

### Main Activities:

- Primary programme – the 11 thematic areas with the 52 programmes are designed to increase employability, encourage volunteerism, intercultural cooperation, and active participation of young people. The focus is on non-formal education, structured dialogue, mobility, ecology, housing issues, cultural development, and intergenerational cooperation. As youth organizations, institutions, societies and associations are in constant contact with young people they will execute the programmes within EYC Maribor 2013 and also offer solutions
- Second part of the programme consists of various activities for young people. For example:
  - The opening of the Cultural Information Centre (CIC), of EYC Maribor 2013. This is a centre for young people where all information on youth organizations, youth actions, programmes and projects of EYC Maribor 2013 are gathered. Various workshops, seminars and activities are going on in ‘CIC’ made by youth for youth. It is also a place for young creative artists to exhibit their work
  - Dr. Janos Tisovszky, the Director of the United Nations Information Service in Vienna, held a lecture about UN Youth Opportunities
  - Ezi ek – traditional meeting of ex-generations of students from post-war times will be in the year within the frame of EYC Maribor 2013: older generations ceremonially handing over the torch of youth to the next generation of young people



19



### Statement:

*“Maribor is a city of opportunities for youngsters and the EYC is award of all youth workers in Maribor who dedicated their life to youth. Youth is the present and the future.”*

MSc Sara Sorger, EYC  
Maribor 2013

- <http://europeanyouthcapital.org/>
- Sara Berteles. 2013. Braga 2012 empowers European Youth Capital. Report
- [www.aeyc2011.com](http://www.aeyc2011.com)



european  
youth capital

## Thessaloniki European Youth Capital 2014

### – ‘Time’

Thessaloniki, Greece will be the European Youth Capital in 2014. The title that has been chosen for the city is ‘Time’. The concept of ‘Time’ is to present the history of the city and its role in South-Eastern Europe, as well as its future perspectives, development, and transition towards its social revival. The city's 2014 programme will comprise of a wide range of actions carried out on the basis of four pillars: creation; participation; special social groups; and new social movements. In this way the city intends to define the actions, interventions and context within which it will take initiatives as a municipality. It will take this approach so that both the city and its youth will be fully prepared in 2014 to host actions on a European as well as international level. ■ The stress is on youth participation in actions, projects and initiatives proposed by young people with the involvement of the youth NGO sector of the city. It is envisaged that this will take place in all phases and parts of the implementation of the programme.

### Main Activities:

800 volunteers, NGOs, universities, public bodies, etc., were the driving force behind the preparation of ‘Time’. It is this collaboration that has resulted in 11 themes:

1. Culture in the City
2. Experimenting in the Future
3. Here we are!
4. Colourful City
5. NGO Table
6. Urban Sports Stories
7. Urban Green Stories
8. World Stories
9. Social City
10. Volunteers’ City
11. Connecting Youth
12. 12th Theme

Thessaloniki has a lot of foreign young people staying and passing through, as a result and based on their proposals, a 12th theme is being added – as yet untitled. In this theme all international inhabitants of the city will be able to make proposals.

### Statement:

*“We dream of a year of creation and collaboration with the city’s and Europe’s youth.” ■*

■ <http://www.thessaloniki2014.eu/>

■ <http://www.thessaloniki2014.eu/>



# Cluj-Napoca European Youth Capital 2015

## – ‘Youth@Cluj-Napoca 2015’

Youth@Cluj-Napoca, Romania 2015 is a project aiming to mobilize Cluj young people’s existing resources in order to improve the medium-term socio-economic development of the Municipality of Cluj. It will foster communication between the municipality and youth organizations, as well as mobilize volunteers from the student community who have a vision for the city and the necessary creativity to turn that vision into practical realities. The devotion to youth-related projects and policies that are sustainable is proven by the type of projects proposed by the youth organizations of the city. These projects cover areas regarding the active participation of young people in society, open space for youth culture, space for informal learning and intergenerational dialogue, innovative approach to youth employment, multiculturalism, and international youth cooperation.

One of the two priorities of Youth@Cluj-Napoca 2015 is called ‘Share European’; this has the role to strengthen the quality of projects implemented. It is an important priority and includes projects with a European dimension, and has the goal to host major congresses and conferences in the city. It promotes the idea of giving young people all the tools and information they need to build and create sustainable strategies for development.

### Some Examples:

- Congresses, conferences, and youth meetings in Cluj-Napoca – in 2015 it will become the centre of European level conferences and congresses, which will also debate the role of sharing culture, work, heritage, space, vision, power and joy in a European way
- Permanent projects – these are actions of groups which will be implemented throughout the whole year and beyond
- Other projects – these projects have a defined period of implementation
- Other youth actions and projects proposed in detailed preparation – 2015 is still far away, further projects can be added to this portfolio by any youth NGO which wants to have a share in Youth@Cluj-Napoca 2015



21



### Statement:

*“Only with a common European vision and the joint effort of the different generations can we become stronger than the crisis, faster to accommodate to change and turn the EU into a smart, sustainable and inclusive society.”*

Participants of the seminar

# European Youth Capital Policy Tool Kit



The purpose of youth policy is to create conditions for learning, to create opportunity and experience which ensure and enable young people to develop the competences to be actors of democracy and to integrate into society – in particular playing an active part in both civil society and the labour market. ■ A public youth policy should reflect the challenges and obstacles young people face in their transition from childhood to adulthood. It should be based on the political objectives and guidelines adopted by a local city council, national government or intergovernmental organisation. ■ Youth policy should cover a broad range of policy areas, it needs to be integrated and cross-sector based and aimed at young people.

One of the aims of the EYC is to strengthen the relationship between the local level and the European institutions – where the attention is given to youth participation on both local and European levels. Creating the link between local and European youth policies is as an essential element for the EYC project. The Forum has prepared a tool kit to support the applicant cities in such an important policy coordination exercise. ■

## What is the Policy Tool Kit?

The Policy Tool Kit provides a clear overview of European youth policies and related key documents. Municipalities in Europe are subject to youth policies as outlined by the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations. The Forum offers summaries, contextual information and downloads of the key youth policy documents of these institutions. Applicant cities, as well as existing EYCs, are encouraged to consider these policies, the implementation mechanisms and the findings, as outlined in the documents, when implementing their programme activities and planning sustainable youth policies for their municipality. ■

The following are some key examples of European level youth policies:

- <http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/glossary.html#Y>
- Siurala, Lasse. 2010. A European framework for youth policy. Available at: [http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/documents/EKCYP/Youth\\_Policy/docs/YP\\_strategies/Policy/COE\\_european\\_framework\\_4YP\\_EN.pdf](http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/documents/EKCYP/Youth_Policy/docs/YP_strategies/Policy/COE_european_framework_4YP_EN.pdf)
- <http://europeanyouthcapital.org/>
- <http://europeanyouthcapital.org/>



### I. European Union

**The renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field;** adopted by the Council of the European Union in November 2009. This brings a renewed open method of coordination in the youth field for the period 2010 – 2018. The Resolution identifies a number of key domains in the youth field, including socioeconomic dimensions (employment, entrepreneurship, social inclusion, education), cultural dimensions (creativity, globalization), and political dimensions (participation).

### II. Council of Europe

**The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: AGENDA 2020;** this was adopted at the 8th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth in October 2008. Agenda 2020 is aimed at strengthening youth-centred activities within the Council of Europe and at fostering partnership with the European Commission in this field. It is centred on issues falling within the following domains:

- Human rights and democracy
- Living together in diverse society
- The social inclusion of young people

**Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life;** this was adopted by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe. It is one of the most relevant documents on the European level for EYCs as it specifically refers to youth policies on the local level. It tackles a number of relevant topics on how to conduct policies towards young people in a number of areas as well as how to further the civic participation of young people.

The Charter is divided into three parts dealing with:

- how to conduct policies towards young people in a number of different areas
- how to further the civic participation of young people
- how to provide institutional conditions for young people

### III. United Nations

**World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond;** this was adopted by the United Nations in 1995. It provides a policy framework and practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation and well-being of young people in 10 priority areas. It contains proposals for action that aim at fostering conditions and mechanism to improve livelihood among young people.

For more information on all these areas see: <http://europeanyouthcapital.org/>

# European Youth Capital under the Microscope



The purpose of the seminar ‘European Youth Capital and its Link to EU Youth Policy’ was to review the achievements of the EYC initiative. The short presentation of past, present and already selected future EYCs has been presented in the previous pages, the following pages provide some proposed recommendations and strategies that were developed by the participants of the seminar.

## I. How to become a European Youth Capital

Every year the Forum welcomes individuals and or organisations who would like to nominate a municipality for the title of EYC. However, the necessary documents must be submitted by the local authority. EYC 2014 and 2015 are already selected and the call for EYC 2016 is now closed. Municipalities will be able to apply again when the call for EYC 2017 will be open. The cities that are awarded the title receive it because they have distinguished themselves as going above and beyond in the area of youth empowerment. They are selected for having presented an ambitious plan of action for encouraging youth involvement and empowerment within their city, by showing that they will give young people the space and the necessary support to participate in decision-making processes.

The first phase of the selection procedure by the Forum is to shortlist on the basis of the concept note – the concept note must accompany the overall application. It is also necessary to send a support statement from the city (written proof that the town or city in question is interested in running for the EYC title), and a statement of support by an independent local or regional youth structure.

Each city's proposal is judged through the online documentation. In the first phase of the selection procedure the jury narrows the selection to the top five candidate cities (short-listed candidates). The jury then provides feedback to all applicants as to how they might improve their proposal for either the next year or, for the short listed five, the next part of the selection phase. In the last phase of selection the jury deliberates on the five shortlisted cities and the winner is chosen. Once selected, both the elected EYC and the Forum sign a Memorandum of Understanding. This memorandum details the terms of use of the EYC title as well as visibility, reporting and other joint elements.

## II. Ensuring youth participation

A participant from one of the EYCs gave a nice description of the EYC project as, “a journey to the future motivated by the present and learning from the past, while the city is involving and opening spaces for young people.” Throughout the EYC process it is stressed how important it is to have participation of young people in all phases of the project: before, during and after. EYC is a project that creates opportunities for young people and it should be organized by, with and for them. Young people are the social group that benefits the most from the EYC. Creativity, opportunities in many areas, levels, themes and engagements are advantages that young people should have the possibility to grab. Participation is an easy word to use, but how to really attract young people to get involved?

There is no right answer to this question, but attendees from the EYC organizing structures have presented some strategies. In the process of building a project young people should be involved in the preparation. Common identity building is important, also gaining the trust of young people. Some EYCs made an online vote for the topics of their programme, announcing open public calls for working groups and actively looking for volunteers (or even using an existing volunteer database). What all participants agreed on is that it is hard to reach all young people, therefore it is important to activate different communities of young people (visits on primary schools, high schools, faculties, NGOs, etc....).

Before and during the project a good information plan is of high importance. To inform the public about the EYC programme is crucial, the best and most efficient approach is to use the means that are popular among young people. Those that work best are interactive, attractive and simple, they can include; a website, Facebook, Twitter, etc. Some EYCs had/have info points, an info bus, official EYC magazines, youth cards, guidebooks, newsletters, prizes, contests, etc. While the project is happening the working groups created in the preparatory phase need to continue and a volunteer committee should be involved in the management structure. Also young people need to be able to contribute with ideas and projects at all phases. Listening to them and talking with them is important. One way to extend participation is to include the people that will be influenced by the decisions being made. Let young people decide what they want.

Last but not least, EYC is an opportunity to promote and include young people with less opportunity, not only including them in the programme and events, but also in decision making. It is important to have all social aspects.

### Example:

Thessaloniki in candidate phase: The organizers asked young people what they wanted and involved them in that way. They used Facebook and invited young people to come to the city hall where they discussed different issues. Through this approach the young people were able to believe that the EYC is their responsibility; they are expecting the EYC organizers to call them again.

### III. Involvement of the youth organizations

Local youth organizations will also benefit from the EYC. Better visibility and media publicity are the most apparent and obvious forms of benefit. It is also an opportunity for local NGOs who work with young people to receive and share information on local, national and European levels. Networking and growth of membership and resources are also key benefits for many youth organisations that get involved. As a result of involvement many organizations prepare new programmes and projects and gain knowledge on how to apply to EU funding programmes. Youth organizations can be a good link for their city to the European level as many of them are already involved with bigger European organizations.

26

#### Example:

EYC Maribor 2013 published public tenders for the co-financing of new programmes in the youth sector and 52 programmes were selected. As a result new projects have been prepared for the primary part of the programme; youth organizations were included as well as financed.

Participants of the seminar suggested that it is helpful to first make an analysis of the youth organizations on local/national level. Youth organizations are in constant contact with young people and therefore more aware of this social group, their issues and problems. They provide young people a forum to effectively deal with an issue that is especially important to them. From this a selection of topics can be made in order to get a diverse programme. It is important for the organisations to be linked with the content of the project.

If organizations get financial support from their Municipality, the guidelines for its use within the EYC must be well defined as well as the expected outcomes. Even without financial support motivation and suggestions can still be offered. Networking among youth organizations, NGOs and non-organized youth is important, as well as providing a basis for creating thematic operational platforms. EYC can also give the possibility to co-create and establish partnerships.

### IV. Attracting public support

#### Example:

'Pocket Cluj' is a project that consists of the re-activation/rehabilitation of several 'urban pockets' in the peripheral-central part of Cluj-Napoca. It defines an 'urban pocket' as a tiny park, an abandoned gas station, or other space which is not being used to its full potential.

To make a visible impact in the city, an imprint on the populace is needed. Again to succeed it is important to let people co-create the programme which has to be visible, transparent and simple to get involved with. Including young people and local community through highly visible projects at community and school events is required. Involving educational institutions and the media (especially social media), is always recommended.

With gaining the EYC title different channels open up through which the city can attract people, especially on the European level. Because of all the positive effects that public support brings, it is useful to have a good media and communications plan. Some EYCs said that much positive youth reporting had been done during the awarded year. Regular, large scale events with celebrities attract public and media support, especially if events are free or low cost. Ecological actions, community projects and competitions for young people generally have a high turnout. Big sports events on the streets, stadiums, halls or parks always leave a mark.

## V. Structured dialogue between young people and decision makers

Structured dialogue means that governments and administrations, including EU institutions, discuss chosen themes with young people, in order to obtain results which are useful for policy-making. It should address all young people, including those with fewer opportunities or not formally organised. Developing a structured dialogue with young people, as a substantial working relationship between authorities and young people is important at all levels. ■ Participants of the seminar suggested first to identify needs and topics that are of great importance to young people and create a debating platform. Ensuring feedback and involvement of young people in implementation and follow-up is advised. Topics, politicians and language have to be youth-friendly in order to reach more young people. Identifying relevant stakeholders and the most efficient channels to reach and include young people is significant.

Youth organizations have a vital role to play in the structured dialogue as they speak on behalf of a great number of young people. Local and national youth councils should not be excluded. A concrete suggestion from the participants of the seminar is to invite politicians and young people to sit together, to talk and listen to one another. This may require the coaching and preparing of both the young people and the politicians before the actual meeting since in most cases neither group has very much to do with the other in regular interaction.

On the European level the main partner of the EU institutions is the Forum. It plays an important role as the main umbrella organization representing young people in Europe. The Forum is involved in the preparation and organization of European youth events, and it represents young people in the so-called 'Informal Fora' between Presidencies, European Commission, European Parliament and young people. The National agencies of the Youth in Action Programme are also important factors, as they manage the funds available for implementing structured dialogue projects in the Member States. ■

## VI. Cooperation between the EYC, the European Youth Forum and member organizations

Participants of the seminar agreed that the EYC needs efficient working structures with clear rules, a common vision and visibility of the work undertaken. Cooperation between different actors on European, national and local levels gives better results in every EYC. The Forum holds regular meetings (monitoring), with the organizing structures of the EYC and invites EYCs as observers or participants to Forum events.

EYC is an opportunity for networking and building partnerships with local, national and

### Example:

The Erasmian European Youth Parliament is an initiative from the first European Youth Capital, Rotterdam, and is now organized in all the European Youth Capitals. During this meeting, members of the youth parliaments of different countries are gathered and debate about youth related issues.

- [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/focus/structured-dialogue\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/focus/structured-dialogue_en.htm)
- [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/focus/structured-dialogue\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/focus/structured-dialogue_en.htm)

international organizations. National youth councils play an important role as they are a representative body made up of youth organizations and young people. Those umbrella organizations usually promote and represent the youth organizations at home and abroad, implement activities in the youth field and, besides other tasks, help to create an environment that facilitates young people growing up.

Organizations are constantly looking for partners in order to apply together to European programmes, for better realization of the international strategies and goals at various levels. Constant capacity building and exchanging of good practices brings sustainability and better results.

### Example:

My Generation at Work (MG@Work), is a project that is implemented under the auspices of the European URBACT programme whose projects promote sustainable urban development. The MG@Work project will take place from May 2012 to April 2015 in 12 partner cities, and 5 international conferences will be held. The lead partner is the city of Rotterdam (The Netherlands). The main objective of the MG@Work project is to promote and increase young people's employability in the changing labour market. The focus is on the development of entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, approaches and views in connection with businesses, educational institutions, employment agencies and local authorities.

## VII. Strong link between EU Youth Policy and EYC

One of the aims of the EYC is strengthening the relationship between the local level and European institutions. Creating links between local and European youth policies is essential for the EYC project. The Forum prepared the 'Policy Tool Kit' to provide European cities with a clear overview of European youth policies. What participants of the seminar suggested is to link the goals of the EYC project to the goals of European youth policy and adapt the application to accentuate European values. In the phase of preparation it is important to be acquainted with youth policy recommendations, identify the goal of the project and keep in mind European youth policies.

Focus on structured dialogue and active involvement of the decision makers and youth councils in dissemination is key to the building of good results. It is necessary to ensure that decision makers include young people and their ideas in the decision making processes. Participants of the seminar also suggested preparing documentation with relevant content on youth policies (position papers), in order to build a local platform and ensure influence on it. Utilising the strong network of past, present and future EYCs, youth organizations, councils and the Forum is important in order to achieve better results.

### Example:

Euro-polis is a project that was developed by EYC Braga in cooperation with the EYC Maribor 2013 and eight European partners (from Italy, Slovenia, Greece, Latvia, Poland, Spain and Lithuania). Each partner organized a seminar on youth related issues: European citizenship, unemployment, creativity and entrepreneurship. The closing seminar, where the final document was written and handed over to European decision makers, was held in Braga.

## VIII. What happens after?

Do EYC activities sink into oblivion once the year is over? Does EYC leave a mark on the city? What are the activities after EYC and how to ensure sustainability? Those questions are relevant to every EYC organizing structure. During the seminar some suggestions and propositions were brainstormed.

Not all events and activities can continue, however past EYCs reported that some projects are still running, some were renovated and some diminished. Yet, establishing a well prepared platform, strong networks and strong partnerships is important for projects launched during the year of EYC in order that they have a chance to continue. That is why planning is of key importance. Long term strategies of up to 4 or 5 years can be prepared so activities have a stronger chance of continuing after the EYC year is finished. Similarly programmes with good results can be extended. Educational/professional trainings for youth organizations on how to successfully apply for EU funding also have a sustainable note and ensure finances for local youth organizations to implement programmes. Investing in youth infrastructure has sustainable impact. It is not necessary to build completely new structures, as already mentioned, some EYCs used abandoned places/spaces/buildings and renovate them.

There are many promoters that can use the results of the EYC. Universities, the municipality, National Agencies, National Youth Councils, NGOs, youth organizations and young people can all benefit and take advantage of the EYC title in the future. Also tourist offices and local businesses can exploit the title.

Someone once said: "You may not get everything you want in the future, but you may get a lot if you are determined and well-prepared." Let that saying be a good principle for positive results and bright future for all young people.

# Appendix 1

## Programme of the Seminar

30

	March 4th	March 5th	March 6th	March 7th
9.30	Arrivals	Opening of the seminar	EYC under microscope I (public support, alliances, working structures, involvement of young people and youth organizations)	Follow-up activities of the EYC
11.00		Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break
11.30		Concept of European youth capital (EYC)	EYC under microscope II (international cooperation, structured dialogue, activities)	Evaluation and closing of the seminar
13.00		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
15.00		Analysis of EYCs' cases and their links to EU youth policy	Defining quality criteria for EYC	Departures
16.30		Coffee break	Coffee break	
17.00		Informal getting to know each other	Results, achievements and impacts of EYCs	
19.00		Dinner	Dinner	Dinner

## Appendix 2

# List of Participants

Country	First name	Last name	Organization
<b>Participants</b>			
Belgium	Toby	Fishler	Vlaamse Jeugdraad
Greece	Peri	Kourakli	EYC Thessaloniki 2014
Greece	Babis	Papaioannou	EYC Thessaloniki 2014
Italy	Michele	Covalan	Municipality of Turin
Italy	Lorenzo	Berto	Jef Turin
Italy	Walter	Riccarelli	Municipality of Turin
Portugal	Elisabete	Faria	EYC Braga 2012
Portugal	João Nuno	Faria	Conselho Nacional de Juventude
Slovenia	Sara	Karba	National youth council of Slovenia
Slovenia	Kaja	Dekleva	National youth council of Slovenia
Slovenia	Štefan	Simončič	Scientific and research Association for Art, Cultural-Educational programmes and Technology EPEKA
Slovenia	Sara	Sorger	EYC Maribor 2013
Slovenia	Mitja	Špes	EYC Maribor 2013
Romania	Hanna	Ugorn	PONT Group
Romania	Diana	Apan	Municipality of Cluj-Napoca
Romania	Codruta	Fernea	Romania Youth Council
Romania	Glenda	Nagy	PONT Group
Romania	Vlad	Pop	Consortium of Student Organizations from Cluj
<b>Guest speaker</b>			
	Magdalena	Kurz	European Youth Forum
<b>Trainers</b>			
Slovenia	Tadej	Beočanin	
Lithuania	Marius	Ulozas	
<b>Institute Movit</b>			
Slovenia	Mojca	Kambič	





Institute MOVIT hosts:



### **YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME**

Youth in Action is the EU Programme for young people aged 15-28 (in some cases 13-30). It aims to inspire a sense of active citizenship, solidarity and tolerance among young Europeans and to involve them in shaping the Union's future. It promotes mobility within and beyond the EU borders, non-formal learning and intercultural dialogue, and encourages the inclusion of all young people, regardless of their educational, social and cultural background. The Programme supports a large variety of activities for young people and youth workers through five actions.



### **EURODESK**

Eurodesk is a permanent support structure for European youth work as part of the Youth in Action Programme. It operates as a European information network dedicated to providing European information for young people and to those, working with young people. Eurodesk offers daily fresh information on European opportunities for young people and information on European youth policy. If you need support at searching European information for young people or international partners for Youth in Action projects, you can always contact Eurodesk.



### **SALTO-YOUTH SEE RESOURCE CENTRE**

The SALTO-YOUTH South East Europe Resource Centre was set up in 2003 to promote the participation of young people and other actors in the field of youth and non-formal education from South East Europe in the Youth in Action Programme. It acts as a support service for the network of Youth in Action National Agencies in the field of co-operation with SEE, as well as youth organizations, youth leaders, youth workers and other actors in the field who are interested in developing co-operation between Programme countries and Neighbouring Partner Countries in SEE.



### **EUROPE FOR CITIZENS PROGRAMME CONTACT POINT**

The Europe for Citizens Programme supports international projects, bringing together people from local communities across Europe to share and exchange experiences, opinions and values, to learn from history and to build for the future, fostering action, debate and reflection related to European citizenship and democracy, and encouraging interaction between citizens and civil society organisations in Europe.



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