



ECUMENICAL YOUTH COUNCIL IN EUROPE aisbl



DATE: **Brussels, the 20th of April, 2009**

TO: **EYCE National Correspondents and Contacts**

RE: **Invitation to the EYCE Training Course**

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**“Democracy and Migration -
Enhancing the participation of young people
from minority background”
Prague, Czech Republic
21st - 28th June 2009**

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PLEASE READ THE COMPLETE INVITATION LETTER CAREFULLY!

Dear Friends,

Greetings on behalf of the Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe (EYCE)!
We are very happy to send you today the invitation to the upcoming EYCE training course
“Democracy and Migration – Enhancing the participation of young people from minority
background” to be held at Prague, Czech Republic. Please share this invitation as widely as
possible in your network! We are looking forward to receiving the nominations of your
candidates for this event!



1. INTRODUCTION

““For you were called to freedom, brothers.” - Galatians 5:13 – is the motto of year 2009 for EYCE. It shows, that the Bible is encouraging us always to see the things through the eyes

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of the other, always to seek justice and equality. Not only because each of us might face similar situation, but mainly because Jesus is always showing us the example of focusing on weak, powerless and needy in order to raise and empower them.

What can young Christians do today to promote understanding, mutual help and mutual growth in the context of migration in Europe? What is democracy and civil participation?

Answering these questions and offering tools for addressing the issue of enhancing the participation of young people with migrant background in democratic structures will be the key objectives of this training course.

We therefore would like to welcome young people from all over Europe who are active in their church or organisation to take part in this training.

Profile of participants:

The target group for this event are young people (18 to 30 years of age) and youth leaders from various backgrounds. They should be active in youth work and able to act as multipliers for the issue of integration and youth participation in their respective home countries and religious communities. In order to act as multipliers they should be ready to commit themselves to implementing a small project in their home country that has the potential to increase participation and empowerment among people of different faiths and cultures, be in a position to do that and report back to EYCE.

This seminar is aimed at young people who do not have professional knowledge on the theme. However, the participants should be interested in questions of migration, democracy and social inclusion and ready to contribute actively to the content of the training course.

EYCE is inviting youth workers, students and other young people to be participants as we hope to gather people with different experiences to share. Participants are expected to be open minded and willing to listen to others as well as able and ready to share their own experiences and backgrounds and to participate actively and fully in the programme.

Arrivals and Departures:

Sunday the 21st of June is the day of arrival

Sunday the 28th of June is the day of departure.

As the seminar will be held in Prague, Czech Republic, participants are expected to come to either Prague Airport or Prague Main train station. More detailed travel instructions will be available to the participants selected.

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



2. BACKGROUND OF THE TRAINING COURSE

One of the most important work areas of EYCE is social inclusion and participation of young Christians in shaping today's Europe and taking up the voice of its members to call for justice and equality. Therefore today, when every nation in Europe is facing migration in one or the other way, this is the point to speak up and make a change. Which measures need to be taken to fully include youth from migrant and minority background into participatory structures? Which tools and structures are needed to enable active participation in democratic decision making processes? Which innovative tools can young people create that would support and sustain democratic participation of youth and in particular migrant youth? And, most importantly – what is the role of the Church, the Bible and members of EYCE as young Christians in these processes of supporting and empowering other young people?



3. THEMES OF THE SEMINAR

EYCE wants to tackle the questions above by organising a training course with the following main themes: theoretical overview on policies facilitating integration and democratic citizenship with respect for diversity, personal sharing of migrant youth on participation in democracy and understanding of democratic citizenship, participation of migrants in civic and political life, democratic citizenship: concepts for inclusion and active participation, democratic citizenship: practical training in promoting inclusion of minority youth in democratic decision making processes.

The main aims of this TC are to strengthen the participation of young people from minority background in democratic decision making and to strengthen democratic citizenship.

The objectives of the training course are:

- To analyse migration trends in Europe;
- To analyse the obstacles people with migrant background are facing with regards to their equal participation in society;
- To provide platform for discussion;
- To empower youth to actively promote participation and inclusion of minority youth in democratic decision making processes, in particularly through joint lobbying and advocacy projects;
- To train migrant and minority youth leaders to act as multipliers by developing projects on democratic citizenship;
- To equip these multipliers with tools to contribute to youth participation and democratic citizenship.

More information on the programme will be provided by the International Planning Committee and available for download from EYCE's website at www.eyce.org.



4. METHODS

A variety of methods will be used in order to achieve the aims and objectives. The methods will include lectures, role games, creative presentations and concrete training in small regional groups aimed at developing concrete and sustainable programmes to be implemented at home. Both Churches', Migration organisations' and Bible resources as well as methods and reflections encouraged by the EU and materials from the All Different All Equal campaign will be used widely.

There will be a space foreseen for prayers, reflections and sharing our faith and understanding as it is a cornerstone of Christianity to accept, welcome and empower those, who are in need of it.



5. TIMETABLE

A draft timetable will be available on the EYCE website www.eyce.org.



6. MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE (IPC)

The training course will be prepared and implemented by a team of volunteers from EYCE's networks, who met from the 3rd to the 5th of April in Prague in order to finalise the programme. The International Planning Committee for the training course is composed of the following people:

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|---------------------|--|---------------------|
| 1. Petra Schnabel | petra.schnabel@eyce.org | EYCE ExCo – Germany |
| 2. Olga Richterova | richterova.olga@gmail.com | Czech Republic |
| 3. Thomas Zeitler | zett@gmx.li | Germany |
| 4. Paola Condorelli | paola_condorelli@hotmail.it | Italy |
| 5. Alina Marinescu | | EYCE volunteer |
| 6. Kristine Jansone | general.secretary @ eyce.org | EYCE Office |

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



7. PARTICIPATION FEE

The participation fee for the training course will be **200 € (Euros)** including accommodation, meals, programme and excursion. Please note that this amount can only be offered because of the subsidies received from the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe, the Ecumenical Solidarity Fund and Diakonisches Werk which subsidises the total cost of accommodation, meals, programme and excursions.

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

Please note that the payment of a **cancellation fee** of 200 € (Euros) is expected from participants who cancel their participation in the event less than 2 weeks prior to commencement of the activity.



8. TRAVEL SUBSIDIES

Contributions:

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

Least costly route:

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

Train or Plane?

If the distance between the participants' residence and the training course is less than 800 km, then the participant should travel by train second class. For distances greater than 800

km the participant should travel by either train or plane (whichever is least expensive). If the participant has travelled in a more expensive manner they will only get subsidised to the extent of the allowed method of travel according to the above guidelines.

Participation:

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

Entitlements:

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

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

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

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

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

Band Three: Other countries:

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

Copy of tickets:

Travel expenses are only reimbursed upon the presentation of a copy of all travel documents and receipts. **Please prepare these copies beforehand.** Participants travelling with e-tickets need to provide the boarding cards of their journey TO Czech Republic. Please do not throw them away. Participants booking their tickets with credit cards are asked to bring along the bank statement proving the transaction.

If you can pay more than required:

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

Authorisation:

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

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

Enclosed is the application form where we ask you to indicate your need for a travel subsidy. No subsidies will be paid without prior agreement.

Please note that **health insurance is NOT arranged by EYCE.** We advise participants to

make sure that you have a European health insurance card or similar before travelling.

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



9. VENUE OF THE TRAINING COURSE

Toulcův Dvůr - Prague Environmental Education Centre,
http://www.toulcuvdvur.cz/eng_summary.asp.

Toulcův Dvůr is a unique venue: Baroque stables were turned into lecture rooms there, there is a small farm, an eco-garden, playgrounds, several „regular“ lecture rooms, an exhibition gallery and a [hostel](#). All that in the heart of a rather ugly urban area and close to the city centre (concrete blocks of flats overlook Toulcův Dvůr and make it look even more idyllic:-)).

How to get there?

From the airport: Buy a ticket (26 CZK), take bus No.119 to Metro A Dejvicka, the end stop. Take Metro A (green line) to „Skalka“. Take bus 177 to the „Toulcuv Dvur“ stop.

From the Main station or Holesovice station: Buy a ticket (26 CZK), take Metro C (red line) to “Muzeum”. Change for the green line (Metro A). Go to “Skalka”. Take bus 177 to the „Toulcuv Dvur“ stop.

You can also be able to find more information about travelling to and in Prague here - <http://www.prague.cz/aboutp.asp>



10. CONTACT Czech Republic (for visa enquiries)

Some of the participants may need a visa to enter Czech Republic. Please check immediately with the Czech embassy or consulate in your country whether you need a visa to enter the Czech Republic. Please note that participants needing visa have to apply for the seminar as soon as possible in order to avoid any troubles in getting a visa.

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

selected participants will be instructed carefully whom to address in order to obtain documents needed.

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



11. LANGUAGES

The language of the training course will be English. It will be essential for all the participants to understand and speak English in order to take full advantage out of the activity. Translation into one other language could maybe be organised if requested. If you wish translation please indicate this clearly in the application form.



12. DEADLINE FOR APPLYING/ SELECTION CRITERIA

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

11th of May 2009, 16:00 C.E.T.

We kindly ask that the enclosed application is filled in using a computer or typewriter and returned to the EYCE Office via email and / or fax. (The form will be available also on the EYCE website at www.eyce.org).

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

Up to 37 participants will be selected by the International Planning Committee to attend the event. This selection will try to ensure a geographical, denominational and gender balance.

In addition, sending the application forms early increases the chances of being selected, while sending them the very last minute might disadvantage your application. The deadline for applications is less than two months prior to the event. Therefore we are forced to select participants immediately after the deadline, thus ensuring a smooth implementation of the training course and reasonably priced tickets. Right after selecting participants, those

selected will receive more detailed information about the seminar programme. Also note that participants are only accepted if they have received a written confirmation from EYCE (email). Please keep in mind that selected participants will have to agree on travel costs with the EYCE Office **within one week** after having received the letter of acceptance. Therefore they are kindly requested to ensure **email access between the 11th and the 17th of May**.



13. PREPERATORY DOCUMENTS

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

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

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

I am looking forward to hearing from you soon.

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

Petra Schnabel
EYCE Executive Committee

Enclosed:

- Application Form including Motivation Questionnaire