

# Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe aisbl



COUNCIL OF EUROPE      CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

DATE: Brussels, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010

RE: Invitation to Training course

## “Democracy for All!”

A training course for youth leaders fostering inter-generational dialogue

18<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> April 2010  
Tallinn, Estonia

**PLEASE READ THE COMPLETE INVITATION LETTER CAREFULLY!**

Dear Friends,

Greetings on behalf of the Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe (EYCE)!

We would like to invite you **to nominate candidates** for the upcoming training course “**Democracy for All!**” to be held in Tallinn, Estonia.



### 1. INTRODUCTION

The **main aim** of the training course will be to train young Christians to actively participate in responsible and democratic decision making process and equipping them with tools in lobbying, advocacy and campaigning. This training course should also provide young people with practical skills and information to contribute with ideas for concrete activities regarding the issue on a local, regional and national level.

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## Profile of participants:

The target group for this event are young people (18 to 30 years of age) and youth leaders from various backgrounds, who have interest and minimum experience in youth participation and engaging into democratic processes. They should be willing to commit themselves to an open and respectful dialogue. They should also be able to actively contribute to the programme of the training course and have the capacity to act as multipliers on issues of youth participation in their respective countries. We aim at a good age, gender, denominational and regional balance.

## Arrivals and Departures:

*Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> April* is the day of arrival

AND

*Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> April* is the day of departure.

As the training course will be held in Tallinn, Estonia, participants are expected to come to either Tallinn Airport, Tallinn seaport or Tallinn Main bus 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 Office.

If needed for university or workplace, participants can be provided with a letter confirming the participation in the training course.



## **2. BACKGROUND OF THE SEMINAR**

Today, when there are numerous changes and major decisions needed in many societies, there is also a need to question, who are those who make the decisions and shape the changes. Is there a certain group in the society, with whom the power concentrates? What are the differences in values and needs for this group? Are there possibilities to make a change in those decision making processes? Is there a possibility to bring in the values, which would bring more justice, responsibility and equality to decision making on behalf of others?

Nowadays so often used word "crisis" from its Greek root is strongly connected to „decision“ – so crisis needs decisions, but at the same time it creates the space for those decisions. Those decisions in their impact will have the biggest effect on the generations who are now not able to affect these decisions, because they are too young or not even born or too old and not taken into account any more. In this respect, it is clear that responsible decision taking is a social responsibility to be taken up by everybody in order to ensure fairness, equality and justice. As young Christians, the members of EYCE can take this opportunity and fill this space for decision making, by active participation and filling it with values.

With this training course EYCE wants to tackle this complex system of inter-generational responsibility in democratic societies.



### 3. THEMES of the SEMINAR

In order to achieve the above stated aim, the following thematic objectives have been identified:

- to reach overview on importance of active participation;
- to analyse the difference of generational needs with regards to active participation to all levels of democratic societies;
- to identify common and different sets of values affecting decision making process;
- to develop ideas how young people can contribute to fostering responsible decision making and inter-generational solidarity;
- to empower young Christians to make a difference and be inclusive in their work with generational imbalances;
- to provide participants with concrete tools and methods for active participation in inter-generational dialogue;
- to develop projects that are easy to implement and would increase generational equality and social responsibility.



### 4. METHODS

The activities will be aimed at combining theoretical input with practical experiences. In a context of a multi-national composition we will address the issues of active participation of young Christians in the society, and respectful dialogue between generations. Sufficient time will be allocated to get actively engaged in a dialogue that will lead to better understanding of processes in democratic societies and a growth in respect.

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 work in small discussion groups, as well as training in developing concrete programmes to be implemented at home. Also learning from each other's experience will be an important part of the training course, where the participants will have the possibility to share their different experiences and knowledge.

The multi-national composition of the group will be experienced in various ways, e.g. European cultural night and an international banquet.



## 5. TIMETABLE

Please find a draft timetable attached to this invitation.



## 6. MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE (IPC)

The following persons are in the International Planning Committee of the training course, please do not hesitate to contact them in case of any further information needed:

Kristīne Jansone	general.secretary@eyce.org	EYCE Office, Latvia
Vera Kockler	vera.kockler@ejhn.de	Germany
Alina Marinescu	alina.marinescu@eyce.org	EYCE volunteer, Romania
Karolis Skausmenis	karolisskausmenis@gmail.com	Lithuania
Laura Testa	lauramariaeugenia@yahoo.it	Italy



## 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, 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.

### **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 traveled 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.



## **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 Estonia. 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 Estonia 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 advice 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 SEMINAR**

We will be accommodated at:

### **Theological Institut**

Address Pühavaimu 6,  
Tallinn, Estonia

More information about the venue will be available for participants later on or can be found under:  
<http://www.eelk.ee/ui>



## 10. CONTACT Estonia (for Visa inquiries)

Some of the participants may need a visa to enter Estonia. Please check immediately with the Estonian embassy or consulate in your country whether you need a visa to enter Estonia. Please note that participants needing visa have to apply for the training course as soon as possible in order to avoid any troubles in getting a visa. If needed, an official "Letter of invitation" issued by an organisation registered in Estonia 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 Estonia. 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 Estonia. 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 training course.



## 12. DEADLINE FOR APPLYING/ SELECTION CRITERIA

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

**1st March 2010 12:00 C.E.T.**



We kindly ask that the enclosed application is filled in using a computer or typewriter and returned to the EYCE Office via email or fax. (The form will be available also on the EYCE website at [www.eyce.org](http://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 35 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 10<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> of March**.

### 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.

Since the planned event will bring together young people from different denominational backgrounds, 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 warm greetings,

Kristīne Jansone  
EYCE General Secretary

Enclosed: Application Form including Motivation Questionnaire - Draft timetable