



# Live from Brussels - A YMCA Europe Brussels Newsletter

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INTERESTING TIMES

THIS MONTH

## The start of something new

by Ilenia Ventroni

While summer is a definitely quieter time in Brussels, autumn brings a whirl of activities. The institutions come back from the holidays with plenty of events and a new calendar for legal production and debate. We were preparing for this time during the summer, and we are now facing the new period with lots of energy.

### New advocacy work

Our work on advocacy will be starting full force with the selection of the Youth Policy Group. The call was launched in August, with a deadline on October 1<sup>st</sup>. You will find more information about the Youth Policy Group (YPG) at [page 2](#) of the previous newsletter. Please feel free to contact me for any question you might have on the Call and what is expected from the candidates. We have also met with other youth NGOs and the European Youth Forum to discuss the YFJ's Annual Work Plan, and to give our outlook on the matter. We have also made contact with Parliamentary Committees in the European Parliament, and we hope to cooperate soon

on common issues. In the months of September, we will also be present at the GCE Conference in Houston hosted by the Y, where we will present all activities with migrant and refugees. We will also be at the NGS in Portugal in October, hoping to see many of you there!

### Projects and Programmes

Deadlines are approaching! See [page 3](#) for more information on the available calls, paying special attention to the October deadline for the European Youth Foundation and the one for Erasmus+; it's a call for which you should apply to your National Agency: if you want to know how, please contact us at [ilenia@ymaceurope.com](mailto:ilenia@ymaceurope.com).



### Always on the spot

We always try to explain our work to as many important stakeholders as possible, and recently we did just that: we were at the German protestant youth AEJ Meeting in Brussels presenting the YMCA Europe advocacy initiatives. We shared the stage with Christophe from the Ecumenical Youth Council, who explained their very important work as well, and we were able to meet a few incredible YMCA social workers from many regions in Germany. It was very important opportunity to explain our course of action on advocacy and youth policy, and we got a lot of interesting and useful feedback!

## A very full Autumn, and exciting days ahead

by Ilenia Ventroni

A couple of very important events will be happening this autumn. First of all, we will be present at the kickoff meeting of a project in partnership with the Swiss Youth Council to ensure open and democratic elections in the European Youth Forum. This is in view of the November election which will take place at the General Assembly of the European Youth Forum, in Bulgaria, where we will be present as well, as usual. Being one of the biggest member organizations and youth organization within the Forum, our vote and our influence is quite important, and we are already working on giving the best possible input on this. In the meantime, we were present at the Face-to-Face Consultations of the European Youth Forum on their Annual Work Plan. The Plan is divided into 4 areas: Economic and Social Inclusion, Youth Rights, Strong Youth Organization and Sustainable

Development. We gave our input on these themes so close to our Strategy, and we are now participating to the open consultations online. We keep our process of monitoring the review of the Erasmus+ programme with the YFJ, and we will be following the tabling of amendments and votes very soon in the next month. We will keep you closely updated on that, and if you want more details on the specifics of that, do not hesitate to contact us.

We will also be present at the GCE Conference in Houston, Texas, hosted by the Y, dedicated to equity and inclusion of migrants and newcomers. There we will present our approach to the issue and we will try to build partnerships with the Y on that.

We will also be present at the next NGS, where we will report on our work so far and



the challenges ahead, and in particular on the YPG. There is a lot ahead of us for the next 3 months, and we are very excited to be leaving our mark on the Brussels scene, bringing your voice where it really matters.!

## The Youth Policy Group

by Ilenia Ventroni

The open call to select a new Youth Policy Group has been now up on our website for a while. The Youth Policy Group (YPG) is one of the most important actors in the development of our Advocacy. The most important tools for our advocacy will be the Policy Papers that the YPG will be called to develop as soon as it gets selected. There will be one Policy Paper for each area of our Strategy: migration, youth empowerment, youth unemployment and peace and justice. These papers will also receive the input from the Executive Committee and from a Network of Experts within YMCA, people with a particular expertise on those matters. Those Policy Papers will be our voice in Europe, our manifesto for what we believe in and for what we want to tell to decision makers. They will also be the basis for the work of our

Representatives in the European Youth Forum and the Council of Europe, and also the basis for any press statement we would need to make on policy issues that emerge daily and weekly.

As you can see, the YPG has an enormously important task. Please consider to send us the CV of anyone you see fit for these tasks, provided you can support them in such endeavor. The YPG will enable us to leave our mark and establish our presence on the Policy Stage, so that everyone will know what YMCA is and what we stand for. Do not hesitate to let us know your thoughts on this, your opinion matters very much to us. You have time until October 1<sup>st</sup> to send us the CVs you see relevant: do not hesitate to contact us if



you have any question. This is a historical moment for our movement: from now on, we really are a strong actor on the scene. Be part of this great endeavor, and participate strongly! Debate and richness of opinion are the wealth of a policy process, and we really want you to feel a part of this great new YMCA adventure. Follow the procedure you can find on the YPG call published on our website, or contact us at: [ilenia@ymcaeurope.com](mailto:ilenia@ymcaeurope.com).

Here you will be able to find all relevant calls for proposals open at the moment. If you have any question on them, **feel free to contact us** and we will help you out!

## Funding Opportunities

	What is it?	Deadline	Link
<i>Open call for Visegrad Fund's Small grants</i>	The International Visegrad Fund is an international organization, founded by the governments of the Visegrad Group (V4) countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, the Republic of Poland, and the Slovak Republic). Grant support is given to original projects in the areas of culture, science and research, youth exchanges, crossborder cooperation and tourism promotion.	December 1 2016	<a href="http://visegradfund.org/grants/standard-grants/">http://visegradfund.org/grants/standard-grants/</a>
<i>International Activity – Council of Europe</i>	International meeting of young people or youth leaders in Europe which contribute to the work of the youth sector of the Council of Europe in topic, methodology and with a clear European dimension.	October 1 <sup>st</sup> 2016	<a href="http://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/international-activity">http://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/international-activity</a>
<i>Key Action 1: Mobility of individuals</i>	Learning Mobility of Individuals in the field of Youth	October 4 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Please refer to you National Agency and to the Programme Guide ( <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en">http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en</a> ) at page 32, 75 and 89
<i>Key Action 2: Co-operation for innovation and the exchange of good practices</i>	Strategic Partnerships in the field of youth	October 4 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Please refer to you National Agency and to the Programme Guide ( <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en">http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en</a> ) at page 107
<i>Key Action 3: Support for policy reform</i>	Structured Dialogue with Youth	October 4 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Please refer to you National Agency and to the Programme Guide ( <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en">http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en</a> ) at page 185
<i>Pilot Activity- European Youth Foundation</i>	National level grassroots action aimed at solving a specific issue	Anytime	Check all the info at <a href="http://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/pilot-activity">http://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/pilot-activity</a>