

Minutes YMCA Europe Executive Committee meeting Thessaloniki, Greece February 28th – March 2nd, 2014

PARTICIPANTS:

Stepan Cerny Vice President
Mike Will Treasurer
Beate Turck Recording Secretary
Birgir Urbancic Asgeirsson Assessor
Martin Winter Assessor
Eva Magassy Assessor
Ion State Assessor
Juan Simoes Iglesias Secretary General (SG)
Eva Tschornova Office Manager
Michal Szymanczak Senior Executive Secretary

AGENDA

1. Devotions
2. Opening remarks and apologies
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Minutes - ExCom meeting 20-22 September 2013 (for adoption) - Draft General Assembly 2013 (for information)
5. Reports (for adoption):
 - 5.1. Christian Orientation Group + report COG meeting Munich, Germany
 - 5.2. European Sports Group
 - 5.3. European Jungschar and Scouting Group
 - 5.4. European Ten Sing Group
 - 5.5. Youth Policy Group
 - 5.6. Volunteers for Europe Group
 - 5.7. YMCA European Spectrum
 - 5.8. President's report and Global Issues
6. Reports from other meetings
 - 6.1. Nordic YMCA's meeting January 2014
 - 6.2. Unify conference February 2014
7. Report Secretary General (for adoption)
8. Movement Strengthening - Follow-up note on the note "The way forward" from September 2013 - Developments in specific countries - Approach towards our co-operating movements - Letter from Turkey - Letter from YMCA Greece - Closing FG Albania - Change in leadership FG Russia - Proposal about roles of YES and COG
9. Proposal for a Representation in Brussels
10. Proposal for Database YMCA hostels Europe
11. Application for membership new national movement Portugal
12. Communications Plan
13. Report of the working Group on the Review of the National Contribution System
14. Finances - Accounts 2013 - National Contribution; proposal 2015 - Budget 2015 - National Contributions debts - Friends of YMCA Europe Campaign
15. Follow-up festival 2013
16. Implementation Plan 2014
17. Agenda and programme General Assembly 2014
18. Training Centre Litomysl
19. Next meetings and events
20. Any other business - Update on YMCA Europe's Resource Team (YERT) - Agenda ExCom meeting 29th May 2014
21. Closing remarks

1. Devotions

Friday: Michal Szymanczak. Saturday: Ion State.

2. Opening remarks and apologies

Stepan Cerny opened the meeting. Apologies were received from Evert (Ed) Eggink, President, who had to go to hospital this week Tuesday and therefore is not able to participate in this meeting. Stepan will chair the meeting Friday and Saturday, Beate on Sunday.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted.

4. Minutes of Executive Committee meeting

- 20 - 22 September 2013 in Budapest, Hungary. CEC has not contacted us yet about a talk about our proposed new status. CEC announced that they take full 2014 for these consultations so it will come later. YWCA Europe has had a talk with CEC.

Decision: minutes were approved. The to-do-list was updated.

- Minutes of General Assembly 9 - 12 May 2013 in Manchester, England. **For information.**

5. Reports

5.1. Christian Orientation Group (COG) Report received. Eva Magassy reported. Last event was the UNIFY conference in Görlitz, Germany. Evaluation so far has been very good. Still the organization team is aware of the fact that not all denominations are represented equally.

5.2. European Sports Group (ESY) Report received. Ion reported.

5.3. European Jungschar and Scouting Group (ESG) No Report received. Ion will contact the group again.

5.4. European Ten Sing Group (ETS) Report received. Martin reported that the ETS conference planned to take place in February 2014 in the Ukraine has been postponed due to the political situation.

5.5. Youth Policy Group (YPG) Report received. Kie reported. YPG fields of work are policy development, organizing events/seminars/consultation, provide representative support. The group needs to stay in close communication with the ExCom. As Gerard Tosserams stepped back from his position as chairperson, a new chairperson has to be appointed.

Proposal: The YPG proposes Kie Cummings as new chairperson. **Decision:** unanimously agreed

5.6. Volunteers for Europe Group (VfE) Report received. Eva Magassy reported.

5.7. YMCA European Spectrum (YES network) Report received. Birgir reported. As the EU grant application for another YES seminar in connection with the YE General Assembly (GA) has been rejected by the Czech EU agency, there is a strong wish from the YES board to consider how to enable a meeting still. It must be possible to have a short YES meeting prior to the GA (Wednesday to Thursday) in Litomyšl. Juan reported that YE will be partner in a European Youth Event planned in Strasbourg from 9-11 May 2014 organized by the European Youth Forum (EYF) in Strasbourg. YE can participate with approximately 25 persons. Marius Pop is already in contact with Tinna Rós Steinsdóttir from the YES board. Participants will be recruited via the YES Network.

5.8. President's report and World Alliance of YMCA. Written report received. Stepan referred to Ed's report.

Decision: All reports have been adopted.

6. Report from other meetings

6.1. Nordic YMCA's meeting Report received. Birgir reported. Stepan thanked Birgir for attending the meeting on behalf of the ExCom.

6.2. Unify conference 2014 Report received. Eva Magassy reported. About 100 participants from approximate 20 countries from Europe and worldwide took part.

6.3. YMCA Europe Festival 2013 – evaluation. Juan reported. In November 2013 the Festival steering group (SG) met for a weekend in Edinburgh for final evaluation. The ExCom officers were invited to take part partly. A clear governance structure for such big event within YE is essential to deliver successful results. Juan presented the major results from the evaluation. **Proposal:** The Executive Committee proposes that the festival Steering Group should provide a final report about the festival including results from the online evaluation to the General Assembly in Litomyšl. **Decision:** unanimously agreed

7. Report Secretary General. Report received. Juan reported. Main activities have been: - evaluation of the YE festival 2013 - further efforts on youth empowerment - focus on special working platforms within YE (2nd NGS forum, COG meeting, YES board meeting, 3rd fundraising conference). Juan reported about the Staff situation.

Proposal: Stepan Cerny proposes the adoption of the paper presented by the Secretary General and the proposed travel schedule. **Decision:** unanimously decided

8. Movement Strengthening (MS) Juan and Michal reported focusing on paper presented. The overview of MS activities has been noted.

Juan gave a short overview over several member movements “with challenges”.

New YMCAs in Europe: *YMCA in Slovenia* -Michal reported that there is again a group of young people who is really interested in founding officially a YMCA *YMCA in Cyprus* - A group from Cyprus is interested in some YMCA events.

Letter from Turkey. YE received an E-Mail from our cooperating movement Yücel Kültür Vakfı in Turkey (Dec. 16th 2013). **Proposal:** The Executive Committee accepts the decision of it cooperating member “Yücel Kültür Vakfı” to leave the YMCA Europe structure as co-operating movement. The SG will send a respectful letter to the board of “Yücel Kültür Vakfı”. **Decision:** unanimously agreed

Approach towards YMCA Europe’s co-operating movements. YE’s cooperating movements should become full members after a reasonable period of time. At the moment cooperating movements are: Albania, Austria, Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, Nagorno-Karabakh. The ExCom states that only those movements should become full member that fulfil the constitutional requirements, including a democratic and sustainable structure and will be able to pay its membership fee. They need to be fully engaged with the various commitments. The staff is asked to develop a plan for the most promising movements.

Letter from YMCA Greece regarding YMCA Macedonia. **Proposal:** The Executive Committee proposes to distinguish between official and formal Communications where formal name will be used, and our daily regular communication where we will use the short name. SG will respond to YMCA Greece and will inform YMCA Macedonia. **Decision:** unanimously agreed

Closing Field Group (FG) Albania **Proposal:** On proposal of Michal Szymanczak the Executive Committee closes the FG Albania. **Decision:** unanimously decided

Change in leadership Field Group (FG) Russia. The FG decided in November 2013 to continue working as YE FG. Terry Ratcliffe (England) resigned as chairperson. Cornel Burgdorf (Germany) is proposed as new chairperson. **Proposal:** The Executive Committee for now keeps the FG Russia. The formal approval of the new FG chairperson is postponed until a response from YMCA Germany has been received. **Decision:** unanimously decided

Proposal about roles of YES and COG. Juan presented a draft proposal “Christian Orientation and Youth Participation Core groups”. **Proposal:** Considering the mentioned realities, it is proposed that YE Executive Committee discusses the viability and opportunity of raising the profile of both the “Christian Orientation” and the “Youth Participation” elements of our Guiding Principles and Strategic Plan making them clearly visible within YE structure. **Decision:** unanimously decided

Follow-up note on the note “The way forward” from September 2013 Michal presented the draft conceptual paper “Movement Strengthening: General Action Plan 2014-2015” . **Proposal:** The Executive Committee adopts the presented draft paper. Juan, Michal, Stepan, Beate will continue working on the issue. Executive Committee members will receive results and shall respond until end of March. Final draft shall be included in the GA working documents. **Decision:** unanimously approved.

9. Proposal for a Representation in Brussels Juan referred to the draft papers from May 2013 and the 2nd draft in September 2013 in the ExCom and the discussions during the NGS Forum in November 2013. He now presented the 2nd draft “YE Brussels office”, an Organizational Development Plan for further discussion. **Proposal:** The Executive Committee expresses its gratitude to the work done by Sebastian Vogt (Germany) and the SG. As next steps more concrete scenarios with regard to aims and objectives as well as financial plans for such for presence of YE in Brussels need to be developed and worked out. A summarizing report shall be presented by the SG at the GA. The Executive Committee wants to continue working on this with the SG. **Decision:** unanimously approved

10. Proposal for Database YMCA hostels Europe. Birgir and Martin presented their draft paper “YMCA hostel/hotel online database” **Proposal:** The Executive Committee asks Martin and Birgir to continue creating the proposed database on available accommodations in YMCAs in Europe. **Decision:** unanimously approved.

11. Application for membership new national movement Portugal Stepan expressed with pleasure that a new national YMCA structure in Portugal could be founded after some difficult years and that they are

now back in the YE family. Juan presented the application letter from Portugal about renewing its membership as “YMCA Port”. The old national association of “YMCA Portugal” still exists, but is no longer in function; it has been excluded from YE membership. The existing debts remain with the old association. **Proposal:** The Executive Committee accepts the application of YMCA Port to become full member of YMCA Europe. The application and constitution have been verified. The SG will inform YMCA Port about rights and obligations as full member. The formal presentation will take place during the next General Assembly. **Decision:** unanimously approved.

12. Communications Plan. Juan reported. Stepan informed that in the future the Communication Plan will be covered in the SG’s report.

13. Report of the Working Group on the Review of the National Contribution System. Mike reported. The results were circulated prior to this meeting to the ExCom members. The ExCom thanked Mike for this excellent work, as well as the entire process until today. The draft paper was discussed. **Proposal:** The Executive Committee decides to send the GA 2014 working documents to all National Movements electronically, including the report about the Review of the National Contribution System. **Decision:** unanimously approved.

14. Finances Mike Will presented the financial reports. Special thank you to our staff ! Accounts 2013. **Proposal:** It is recommended that the Executive Committee of YMCA Europe allocate in the end of financial year 2013 the surplus to different funds and reserves. **Decision:** unanimously agreed. National Movement Debts: Mike presented an overview over National Movement debts. The Executive Committee notes the up-to-date position in relation to National Movement Debts as indicated and reviews the status of each debtor national movement by making decision to endorse status-quo or resolve to make a new decision.

Proposal: The Executive Committee revoke membership of YMCA Bulgaria **Decision:** approved.

Proposal: The Executive Committee postpones the decision about revoking **membership** of YMCA Italy and YMCA Latvia until our meeting of 29th May 2013. The SG is following up at present. **Decision:** unanimously agreed.

Proposal: The Executive Committee postpone the decision about revoking **voting rights** of YMCA Moldova, YMCA Switzerland, YMCA Wales until our meeting of 29th May 2013. **Decision:** unanimously agreed.

National Movement Contribution 2015. Mike shared the actual payment situation of National Movement contributions. **Proposal:** The Executive Committee freeze national movement contributions for 2015 at currently agreed level. **Decision:** unanimously agreed.

Budget 2015 Due to the current situation in the finance area of YE the budget for 2015 is still in development. The proposal will be forwarded to the ExCom in time before the next ExCom meeting in May.

New impulses for the Friends of YMCA Europe Campaign. Martin, Birgir and Mike presented a draft conceptual working paper. **Proposal:** YE starts the new campaign called “Friends of YMCA Europe”.

Decision: unanimously agreed.

15. Follow-up festival 2013 Juan presented slides from the official evaluation compiled by Vardan Hambardzumyan. The online evaluation was done by about 500 participants and volunteers. Outdoor Tech received highest scores, Tower Stage lowest scores. Juan summarized: We saw a safe festival, a clear YMCA focused festival, a financially sustainable festival. We have mixed feelings about the programme and creative elements of the festival. **Proposal:** SG will work out some draft conceptual ideas from all evaluations and feedbacks received. A look at NM events might be helpful, as well as to ask NM about their wishes for future YE events. Additionally our own working platforms should be asked for their ideas. Results shall be discussed again at the September 2014 ExCom meeting.

Decision: unanimously agreed.

16. Implementation Plan 2014 Juan presented the draft of Implementation Plan 2014. Still some improvements possible. In general it is a good exercise within YE, both for staff and ExCom. Further contributions from the ExCom are welcome.

17. Agenda and programme General Assembly (GA) 2014. Juan reported. The preparatory group Ed, Juan, Eva, Michal, Stepan, Marloes (from COG), Andre (from YES) worked out the GA agenda and time

schedule. Theme will be "Roots and Leaves III – Inclusive christianity". There will be two key note speeches: Marloes Meijer (Netherlands), chair of COG and Ulrika Strindberg (Sweden), pastor and leader of biggest Swedish YMCA center. Different elements and operational issues were discussed.

18. Training Centre Litomysl. Stepan reported. YE has six seats in the Managing Board of the Training Centre. Juan has to be re-appointed. The mandate of the other five representatives from YE still going on.
Proposal: The Executive Committee appoints again Juan Simoes Iglesias **Decision:** approved.

19. Next meetings and events

Executive Committee meeting 2014. The dates remain 19 - 21 September 2014 in Prague.
YMCA Europe General Assembly 2015: 14-17 May 2015 and YES seminar 11-17 May 2015. Juan reported.
Catch the Vision Seminar in Belarus Michal presented the first programme draft for the Catch the vision seminar from October 13 to 18, 2014 in Belarus.

20. Any other business

Update on YMCA Europe's Resource Team (YERT). Juan reported shortly

21. Closing remarks Stepan Cerny closed the meeting. The ExCom thanked Stepan for very good leadership in this meeting.