

Minutes of YMCA Europe General Assembly 29. May - 1. June 2014

- Place: Litomyšl, Czech Republic
- Theme: Roots and Leaves III - Inclusive Christianity
- Participants: 105 participants *including 16 participants YMCA Europe Spectrum (YES)* from 28 Member Movements were present. From YMCA Europe 7 staff members were present. List of participants is attached to the minutes.
- Guests: YMCA Brasil Leopoldo Lima, Mauricio Vandorsee (also LACA)
YMCA of Canada Marilyn Kapitany, Helene Weir
YMCA of the USA Coleen Leung
Y's Men International Poul V. Thomsen, Flemming Stentoft
World Alliance of YMCA Ian Green
- Special guests Jan Nissen, former YE President
Peter Posner, former YE President
- Apologies: Terry Ratcliffe, former YE President
Johan Vilhelm Eltvik, former SG
Dölf Weder, former SG
Edgar Mifsud, Malta; Vasily Bykov, Russia; Lydia Gondasova, Slovakia
(candidates for executive committee elections)
- Devotions: The Devotions during the General Assembly were conducted by the Christian Orientation Group (COG) chaired by Marloes Meijer, assisted by delegates from Germany, Switzerland, Hungary and the Netherlands.

1 Opening

Evert (Ed) Eggink, President of YE and Chairperson of the General Assembly welcomed those present to the General Assembly. He shortly looked back at the past year and introduced the theme and programme of this General Assembly (GA).

Ed Eggink stated that the Assembly had been called according to §12 of the constitution. The Assembly was in quorum according to §14 of the Constitution. 28 out of 34 Member Movements were present in person.

Not present members were: Belarus, Belgium, Estonia, Latvia, Moldova, Wales
Not present cooperating movements were: Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, YMCA in Nagorno-Karabakh, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo

2 Introduction of Delegates, Guests, Staff and Apologies

Ed Eggink introduced all the Guests and Delegates in accordance with the list of participants and Staff. Apologies were as listed above.

Ed especially welcomed YMCA PORT as new member of YMCA Europe. This new national movement of Portugal replaced YMCA Portugal whose membership had been revoked.

Also the membership of YMCA Bulgaria has been revoked. There are two member movements present who have lost their voting rights: Italy and Switzerland. The Swiss delegation shared a statement about their position.

Ed reminded those who could not be present and mentioned Egon Slopianka, Germany, first secretary general of YE who passed away in October 2013. He also drew attention to volunteers who passed away, including two young volunteers from YMCA Ukraine who died during the demonstrations in Kiev and a volunteer from Belarus, symbolising all volunteers who have given their best for the YMCA. He also reminded Dale Vonderau, YMCA of the USA who has been of great support for the development of YMCA's in the eastern part of Europe who also passed away lately.

3 Presidents message

Ed Eggink reviewed his second year as president and working with the new executive committee and a very committed staff team under the leadership of Juan Simoes Iglesias. It continued to be challenging and encouraging year.

The title of the year's Message of the President was "YMCA and Politics". He drew attention to the role of YMCA in today's realities, societies and people's lives. Often YMCA finds itself somewhere between various positions, sometimes it is rather difficult not to take sides, especially from political points of view.

4 Introduction to the procedures

Ed Eggink gave a short introduction to the procedures of this assembly. Messages and announcements during the General Assembly will be presented by Seraina Hauser (Switzerland) and Sergios Kefalas (Greece).

5 Adoption of the Agenda

Decision: The proposed agenda was adopted.

6 Adoption of the General Assembly 2013 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the General Assembly from 09.-12-05.2013 in Manchester, England were approved as a true record of the meeting.

7 Greetings

The following delegates gave greetings to the General Assembly:

Helene Weir and Marilyn Kapitany, YMCA Canada
Colleen Leung, YMCA of the USA
Poul V. Thomsen and Flemming Stentoft, Y's Men International and Y's Men Europe
Leopoldo Lima and Mauricio Vandorsee, YMCA Brazil/LACA
Ian Green, World Alliance of YMCA, Geneva

8 Elections

8.1 Report of the Nomination Committee and Presentations of the Candidates

On behalf of the Nomination Committee Silvia Lazaridis (Germany) presented the report of the nomination committee. She invited the candidates to present themselves personally and explained the election procedures. The elections will take place by secret ballot. 26 member movements with voting rights were present.

8.2 Elections of the Executive Committee's members

26 member movements (with voting rights) were present. Valid votes: 26

Decision: The following candidates were elected into the Executive Committee:

Assessors elected for 2 years (2014-2016):

Kie Cummings, England	(21)
Birgir Urbancic Ásgeirsson	(20)
Diana Zarembiene, Lithuania	(17)
Christian Martin Winter, Germany	(15)
Dan Carpov, Romania	(10)

Not elected as assessors were:

Jamie Lockhart (Scotland)	(8)
Lýdia Gondášová (Slovakia)	(8)
Éva Magassy (Hungary)	(7)
Father Ievgenii Zhabkovskiy (Ukraine)	(6)
Sergios Kefalas (Greece)	(5)
Edgar Mifsud (Malta)	(3)
Vasily Bykov (Russia)	(2)

8.3 Elections of the Nomination Committee

Silvia Lazaridis reported. The nomination committee can consist of 3-5 persons. It will be elected for 2 years (2014-2016).

The Nomination Committee received the following nominations:

- Silvia Lazaridis, Germany (for re-election)
- Mario Saliba, Malta (for re-election)
- James Reilly, Scotland (new)

26 member movements (with voting rights) were present. Valid votes: 26

Decision: The following people were elected into the Nominations Committee for 2 years:

Mario Saliba, Malta	Elected (20)
James Reilly, Scotland	Elected (19)
Silvia Lazaridis, Germany	Elected (18)

Decision: Silvia Lazaridis was appointed by the General Assembly as Chairperson of the nomination committee.

The outgoing members of the Executive Committee (Ion State, Romania; Éva Magassy, Hungary) and of the Nomination Committee (Maria Verwoerd, Netherlands, Nico Marconi, Switzerland and Adrian Davies, England) were thanked for their contributions and involvement.

9 Review of the National Contributions System

The treasurer Mike Will presented the proposal.

The proposal is the result from comments of many National Movements and the members of the working group.

After the working group meeting earlier during this assembly in which many issues and questions were raised, Mike explained that as a result of the discussions recommendation no.11

has been added. Some questions and remarks from the plenary were discussed. It was proposed to discuss and decide about recommendation no.5 before going to recommendation no.4.

Recommendation 1

The 2014 General Assembly approves the recommendation to implement a National Movement Contribution System based on allocating each national movement to one of seven identified payment bands (a banding system).

Decision: unanimously approved

Recommendation 2

The 2014 General Assembly approves the recommended placement of each national movement to its allocated payment band (Table 6, Pg 24) for initiating negotiations with the YMCA Europe Secretariat on the level of national movement contribution.

Decision: approved (against: 1 / abstention: 0)

Recommendation 3

The 2014 General Assembly approves the recommendation of identified core costs for operating the YMCA Europe Secretariat (Table 7, Pg 24) that should be met by national movement contributions.

Decision: unanimously approved

Recommendation 5

The 2014 General Assembly approves the recommendation that the Executive Committee commit to reducing core costs of the Secretariat (Pg 10) to mitigate against increases to the overall contribution required to achieve Recommendation 4 from national movement contributions.

Decision: unanimously approved

Recommendation 4

The 2014 General Assembly approves the recommendation that 100% of the core costs for operating the YMCA Europe Secretariat (Pg 10) be met by national movement contributions.

Decision: unanimously approved

Recommendation 6

The 2014 General Assembly approves the recommendation that no individual national movement should be required to contribute in excess of 10% (Pg 13) of the core costs for operating the YMCA Europe Secretariat.

Decision: unanimously approved

Recommendation 7

The 2014 General Assembly approves the recommendation that the banding of national movements be negotiated quadrennially (every 4 years).

Decision: unanimously approved

Recommendation 8

The 2014 General Assembly approves the recommendation to apply the principles of a morally binding contract (Pg 23) to decisions agreed by General Assembly relating to the National Movement Contribution System.

Decision: unanimously approved

Recommendation 9

The 2014 General Assembly approves the recommendation to endorse the decision of the 2013 General Assembly to continue freezing national movement contributions at the 2012 level for the 2015 financial year.

Decision: unanimously approved

Recommendation 10

The 2014 General Assembly approves the recommendation to instruct the Secretariat and Executive Committee to undertake calculations for translating the principles of this paper into projected figures for the decision of the 2015 General Assembly and, assuming agreement, implementation in 2016.

Decision: unanimously approved

Recommendation 11

The 2014 General Assembly approves the recommendation to apply the following criteria to inform individual discussions with national movements regarding placement in banding system (Pg 21):

- size of movement
- consideration of joint YMCA/YWCA
- programme activity
- financial situation
- national economic factors
- professional “expert” judgement

Decision: unanimously approved

10 Secretary General’s Speech/YMCA Europe Report 2013 and Work Plan 2014

Juan Simoes Iglesias, Secretary General of YMCA Europe presented his speech “Our response, our responsibility”. A copy of the report is attached to these minutes.

What stories, events are touching our lives, our hearts? What are people interested in? What unites people? What is relevant? What are the realities we are living in today? Whom people trust? Why people loose trust in civic societies? As YMCA we are in the middle of all these. What is our response? What our responsibility? We do what we can, in an appropriate way. Near to God, near to the people.

Remarks from the plenary were shared.

The annual report 2013 of the Secretary General and the work plan (implementation plan) 2014 have been presented.

Decision: The report and work plan were received.

11 YMCA Europe “Love2live” Festival 2013

Juan Simoes reminded the 3rd YMCA Europe Festival 2013 in Prague.

Kerry Reilly, Scotland (chair of YE Festival steering group) presented the final evaluation of the festival: Participant profile, evaluation process, evaluation outcomes, learning.

“God gives us dreams a size too big... so that we can grow in them”.

In a side meeting during this GA delegates were invited to respond to the following questions: Should we have a future YMCA Europe event?

What you like any future event to look like (size, location, programme, etc.)?

Do you have one dream for that event?

The results from that will be considered in the next Executive Committee meeting in September 2014.

12 Movement Strengthening (MS)

Stepan Cerny and Michal Szymanczak presented the report about Movement Strengthening activities.

Highlights 2013-14:

- Field Group Ukraine meeting in Odessa
- Begleitung (Lithuania, Portugal and 20 other national movements)

- YMCA Europe programme focused event
- YMCA Europe festival
- YMCA Europe Executive Committee
- National General Secretaries Forum (NGS)
- Fundraising conference
- YERT (YMCA Europe Resource Team) visit in Lithuania

What is new?

- pan European perspective
- programme oriented focus
- involvement of all possible YE working platforms

Movement Strengthening road map 2014-15:

- new organisational chart of YMCA Europe with integral Movement Strengthening section
- focus groups policy paper
- new terms of reference for all kind of focus groups
- Movement Strengthening conferences each second year prior to the General Assembly

Until the end of 2014:

- Begleitung: Albania, Montenegro, Nagorno-Karabakh, Slovenia
- Field Groups meetings: Belarus, Kosovo, Ukraine
- YERT visits: Portugal, Slovakia
- NGS Forum in November
- Catch the vision seminar “Cultural roots of peaceful co-existence” (Voloshin, Belarus)

Actual challenges:

- Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia need our help
see more information at: www.ymcaeurope.com
- Situation in YMCA Ukraine

The reports of YMCA Europe Programme Groups included in the working documents were:

- European Sport YMCA (ESY)
- European Ten Sing (ETS)
- Christian Orientation Group (COG)
- Volunteers for Europe Group (VfE)
- Representation and Youth Policy Group (YPG)
- YMCA European Spectrum (YES)
- European Jungschar and Scout Group (ESG)

Decision: The reports were received.

13 World Alliance of YMCAs (WAY) and Global Co-operation

Ed Eggink reported from the Interest Group which took part during this General Assembly. Juan Simoes Iglesias reported from the Global Staff Team (GST) of the WAY. As secretary general of YMCA Europe he is part of this team, coordinated by the secretary general of WAY Johan Vilhelm Eltvik. Points of discussion have been: Implementation of the “New Way strategy” generally and to the respective programmes, change agents programme, “one-million-voices” campaign; global staff meeting in February in Kassel, Germany. A written report of Ed Eggink and Juan Simoes is included in the working documents.

Decision: The report was received.

14 Finances

14.1 Report 2013

Mike Will as treasurer of YMCA Europe presented the report.

Financial accounts to 31 December 2013

The accounts of 2013 were extraordinary because of YMCA Europe Festival 2013. The actual result for 2013 has been concluded with a surplus of 53,00 Euros.

Proposal 1:

To endorse the decision to allocate festival surpluses to:

- € 100.000 - Operational reserves
- € 100.000 - George Williams Endowment Fund
- € 6.000 - Del Credere

Decision: unanimously approved

Proposal 2:

To accept the financial accounts to 31 December 2013

Decision: unanimously approved

Peter Jeffery, England advised to consider the situation of financial reserves of YMCA Europe when thinking about another festival or event.

14.2 Auditors' Report and Discharge of Executive Committee Responsibility

The external Auditors' Report was presented by Ed Eggink.

Decision: The Auditors Report was unanimously approved.

Decision: The Discharge of the Executive Committee was unanimously approved.

14.3 Budget and National Contributions 2015

National Contributions 2015

The national contributions for 2015 were presented by the treasurer Mike Will. For 2015 the Executive Committee proposes that national contributions will be frozen. No increase is proposed compared to the national contribution of 2013. The treasurer responded to a question from the plenary.

Proposal:

To accept the national contributions for 2015

Decision: The proposed national contributions 2015 were approved.

Budget 2015

The budget for 2015 was explained by the treasurer Mike Will. The treasurer responded to various questions from the plenary.

Proposal:

To accept the proposed budget for 2015

Decision: The proposed budget for 2015 was unanimously approved.

15. YMCA European Spectrum (YES)

On behalf of the YES board and YES network Marisa Vögele (Germany), Maria Pronina (Russia), Jamie Lockhard (Scotland), Maja Nees (Denmark) and Casper Fink (Denmark) addressed the delegates of the General Assembly.

YES is a network of empowered young YMCA leaders aged 18-30, that works to:

- communicate opinions of the young leaders to YMCA Europe

- include young leaders into decision making within YMCA Europe
- give young people skills and networks they need to collaborate nationally and internationally

YES achievements within 2012-2014:

- organisation of four seminars
- several board meetings (face-to-face, via social media), various other meeting options

Positive outcomes:

- good cooperation with YE staff and ExCom
- good cooperation with the Change Agents
- two times approved grant applications
- First ever YES strategy
- website
- promotional materials, leaflet, presentations, YES handbook
- first consultation
- developing a new structure of collaboration with “micro-seminars” on website and other online platform
- YES bar “Calypso” at YE festival
- supporting young leaders
- around 200 young people took part in YES events
- 26 countries signed up for participation of YES project

Challenging outcomes:

- Structure didn't work, but good experience
- not complete board for a longer time
- at YE festival did not promote YES enough
- developments slower than expected
- grant application 2014 not approved, missed deadline for UNESCO program
- financial limits
- YES is still not in the minds of many people in the European movement

Future plans

- Increase the number of nations involved in our activities
- consultations (Jamie)
- mission vision ambition success
- change terms of reference (elections)
- prepare first timers before they join a YES activity
- keeping and improving the connection to YE decision making bodies
- connecting with other programme groups from YE
- YE strategy
- micro seminars (Casper and Maja)
- website
- financial resources

Detailed information can be found at: www.yes.ymcaeurope.com

A new YES board has been elected for the next two years:

Andre Kpodonu, Chair (England)
Tinna Rós Steinsdóttir, Vice-Chair (Iceland)
Maria Pronina (Russia)
Marisa Vögele (Germany)
Adela Lakatos (Romania)

Marisa encouraged delegates to sign the “stand 4youth” declaration of the World Challenge campaign of the World Alliance of YMCA, here. The YES group has produced a short film for the campaign which was presented.

16. Proposal from YWCA/YMCA Switzerland to amend the Constitution

Ed Eggink explained the voting procedure (Article 22 of the Constitution). Election procedures are not part of the constitution, but a By-Law. If the proposed change in the constitution will be accepted, the consequence will automatically be implemented in the election procedures.

Silvio Kraus, Switzerland, presented the proposal.
The proposal is to change the constitution as follows:

§ 21 Nomination Committee

A Nominations Committee, consisting of between three and five members, shall be elected by the General Assembly. Their term of office is two years. One of the members so elected shall be appointed the Chairperson by the Assembly.

All nominations have to be forwarded to the Chairperson of the Nominations Committee not later than sixteen weeks prior to the commencement date of the electing General Assembly.

~~The Nominations Committee shall submit to the General Assembly a proposal for the election of the President, the Vice President, the Treasurer, the Recording Secretary, the Assessors.~~

Following the proposed constitutional change the Election procedures shall be adjusted as follows:

Point 9

Not later than six weeks before the commencement date of the electing General Assembly a report from the NC will be sent to the EAY Members indicating the total list of nominations received.

A discussion followed the presentation.

Volker Kamin, Germany, supported the proposal and proposed furthermore that in future the Nomination Committee should not only look for candidates by criteria like sex, age, regional representation, but also searching more proactive for candidates for various Executive Committee positions referring also to talents and capacities of candidates and what is needed in Executive Committee to deliver results.

Caroline Rostrup, Norway, supported the proposal, though she strengthened the need for good job descriptions.

Karin Olsson, Sweden, supported the proposal and emphasizing the need to work on the job description for Nomination Committee.

Peter Jeffery, England, supported the proposal and recommends to the Nomination Committee to work even more strategic.

Silvia Lazaridis, Chair of Nomination Committee also supported the proposal.

Constitution §21

The proposal has been seconded. No further discussion followed.

The voting result was:

Voting members in total: 25 (= 100 %)

In favour: 21 (= 84 %)

Against: 1

Abstention: 3

Decision: As §22 of the Constitution states that any amendment to the Constitution requires a three quarters majority of the total votes (including abstentions) given, the proposed amendment of constitution was carried.

The approved document will be put on the YMCA Europe website. The election procedures will be adjusted according the approved change of Constitution and will also be published on the website.

17. General Assemblies 2015 and 2016

Jaako Koikkalainen and Otto Vainio in the name of YMCA Finland and YMCA Estonia officially invited YMCA Europe's General Assembly 2015 to Estonia and a day trip to Finland from (13.)14.-17.05.2015.

For 2016 invitations from National Movements are welcome.

18. Any Other Business

Theme of the GA 2014 "Roots and Leaves III - Inclusive Christianity"

Both key note speeches are attached to these minutes.

Key note speech "Inclusive Christianity"

Presented by Ulrika Strigberg, Sweden

Main topics of the speech were:

- Inclusive Christianity that include all of me and you.*
- Inclusive Christianity that include all of us and I will present The World Health Organization eight criteria for existential well-being.*
- I will finish with the verses from Romans 8:38 that give me real substance for the words "inclusive Christianity"*

Ulrika drew attention to inclusiveness and relevance. How we do and what should be do as Christians to be relevant to people, to be inclusively to people?

Table talks (session 1)

- 1. Best practices from sports and youth work (Silvia Lazaridis, Germany)*
- 2. Dialogue between Christianity and islam (Flemming Stentoft, Y's Men International)*
- 3. Handling different denominations in YMCA (Eliana Graf, Switzerland)*
- 4. Do you read me? Campaign (Tabea Kölbel, Germany)*
- 5. Discussion around key-note speech (Ulrica Stigberg, Sweden)*
- 6. Youth training synergies (Sergios Kefalas, Greece)*
- 7. Do we have to have Christian leaders in our YMCA? (Eva Magassy, Hungary)*
- 8. 500th anniversary Reformation - what is in planning? (Roland Werner, Germany)*

Key note speech "Inclusive Christianity - from YMCA prospective"

Presented by Marloes Meijer, The Netherlands

Marloes encouraged us to share our stories, from the bible, inspiring persons or your personal stories. When we share the stories that touch us personally, we share our Christian faith. It allows us to be involved anywhere, beyond political borders, beyond denominations, culture and church teachings.

We do not have to agree, but we have to respect each other, in the deepest possible way. YMCA can be an inclusive, Christian organization, where we all find a place to share and discuss and where we all are valued as people from God.

Table talks (session 2)

- 1. YMCA and churches*
- 2. Discussion about key-note speech (Marloes Meijer, Netherlands)*
- 3. 25 years after fall of the Berlin Wall - YE initiatives? (Tabea Kölbel, Germany)*
- 4. Tell your story (Maria Winter, Germany)*
- 5. YMCA (secular) governments*
- 6. Resolution for the World Council on dialogue process for inclusion (Sweden)*
- 7. YMCA Christian leadership?*
- 8. YMCA and muslim countries*

World Alliance of YMCA

Ian Green reported about actual work:

- Upcoming World Council 2014 in Estes Park with more than 1300 participants
- World challenge 4-6. June 2014 “stand4youth”
- New strategy of WAY is in development and shall be finish with the world council
- National General Secretaries meeting in February 2015 will be hosted by YMCA India
- One million voices” research initiative (200.000 young people shall be asked to special topics). So far 69 national movements have signed up to participate (19 from YMCA Europe)

YMCA International conference 2015, Calgary

Helene Weir, CEO YMCA Calgary invited to the next YMCA international conference in the fall (Sep/Oct) 2015 in Calgary, Canada. The conference is organised by the YMCA of the USA, YMCA Canada and YMCA Mexico.

Market Place of YMCA Europe:

European YMCA youth worker camp

4.-11.08.2014, in YMCA Camp Greenhill, Northern Ireland, organized by International planning group. **Contact:** YMCA Ireland, Chriszine Backhouse, chriszine@ymca-ireland.net / YMCA Germany, Günter Lücking, guenter@acht-stuecken.de

International YMCA Camp “InterCom 2014”

16.7. 11.8.2014 in Ivanova, Russia, organised by YMCA Ivanova and CVJM Hannover. **Contact:** Alexey Kostyakov alexei@ymca.ru

YMCA Sport seminar 2014

23.-26.10.2014 in Kolding, Denmark, organized by YMCA Europe programme group ESG (European Sport Group). **Contact:** Eje Grönquist gronquisteje@gmail.com

Report from 2nd YMCA Unify conference in January 2014 in Görlitz, Germany

Next conferences are planned for 26.-28.02.2016 in Hasliberg, Switzerland. **Contact:** Eva Magassy emagassy@ymcaeurope.com and Czaba Veres ymca@ike.ro

World Alliance’s Resource Group on the Environment (RGE)

Tabea Kölbel, Germany, invited YMCA Europe members to join the World Alliance’s Resource Group on the Environment (RGE) which already presented their work during the Prague Festival 2013. More information about the RGE is available online under <http://action.ymca.int/> (or write to teamRGE@ymca.int). Those attending the World Council Meeting in Estes Park this summer are invited to join a workshop with the RGE Team on Monday, 30 June PM.

Workshop of Coalition of YMCA universities

Tabea Kölbel also recommended a World Council workshop to be conducted by the Coalition of YMCA Universities, which will be also held in Estes Park on 30 June PM. For more information about the International YMCA University in Kassel, check out www.ymca-university.de.

European TEN SING (ETS) annual conference

Sebastian Vogt, chairperson of ETS group announced the next ETS conference in February or March 2015. They are looking for partners for Erasmus+ grant application. **Contact:** Sebastian Vogt basti.vogt@gmx.de

19 Thanks and Closing Remarks

Juan Simoes Iglesias and Ed Eggink made some closing remarks and thanked all delegates, volunteers and staff for their contributions, especially Eva Tschornova, intern Sebastian Vogt and all volunteers and staff being great hosts. Furthermore they thanked the planning team and Executive Committee, the key note speakers,

the table talk facilitators, the interest group leaders, the YES planning team and all YES seminar participants with all their enthusiasm and visions for the future, as well as the announcers: Seraina Hauser, Switzerland and Sergios Kefalas, Greece

Also thank you to the Christian Orientation Group for the thoughts of the day and the devotions; the staff and volunteers of the Training Center and the candidates for elections for their willingness to take responsibility for the work of YMCA Europe.

Juan asked every delegate to respond in the evaluation form.
The General Assembly was closed by Ed Eggink.

Litomyšl, Czech Republic
May 2014

Evert Eggink
(President)

Beate Turck
(Recording Secretary)

Appendices:

- 1) List of participants
- 2) Report SG “Our response; our responsibility”
- 3) Key note speeches of Ulrika Stridberg “Inclusive Christianity” and Marloes Meijer “Inclusive Christianity - from YMCA prospective”