

## Minutes of YMCA Europe General Assembly 16.-20. May 2012

- Place: Prague, Czech Republic
- Theme: Roots and Leaves
- Participants: 132 participants - 98 delegates General Assembly (GA) and 34 participants YMCA Europe Spectrum (YES) from 28 Member Movements and 1 Cooperating Movement were present. From YMCA Europe 8 staff members were present. List of participants is attached to the minutes.
- Guests:
- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| YMCA of Canada        | Robert Reid<br>Helene Weir   |
| European Youth Forum  | Falko Mohrs  |
| Y's Men International | Poul-Henrik Hove Jakobsen, Danish Y's Men<br>Poul V. Thomsen, Danish Y's Men |
| YE Training Center    | Jana Mackova   |
- Special guests: Terry Ratcliffe, former YE President  
Jan Nissen, former YE President  
Johan Vilhelm Eltvik, WAY Secretary-General
- Apologies: Egon Slopianka, former YE Secretary General  
Kaare Dag Mangersnes, executive committee  
Karin Hammer, executive committee  
Marina Michailidou, executive committee  
Susan Louhema, executive committee  
Mieke Barenburg, executive committee
- 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, Denmark, Ukraine and the Netherlands.

### 1 Opening

Peter Posner, England, President of YE and Chairperson of the General Assembly welcomed those present to the General Assembly (probably with highest attendance in terms of member countries ever). He gave a short introduction to this year's theme "Roots and leaves" and the prospective to discuss the three signature programmes in the next three General Assemblies. He gave a short overview over the General Assembly programme.

Peter Posner stated that the Assembly had been called according to the §12 of the constitution. He welcomed as new member YMCA Moldova. He also stated that, since 28 out of 36 Member Movements were present in person, the Assembly was in quorum according to §14 of the Constitution.

Delegates from one cooperating movement were present: YMCA in Kosovo

Not present members: Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Georgia, Lithuania, Portugal.  
Not present cooperating movements: Albania, Austria, Bosnia And Herzegovina, YMCA in Nagorno-Karabagh

## **2 Introduction of Delegates, Guests, Staff and Apologies**

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

## **3 Introduction to the Procedures**

Peter Posner gave a short introduction to the procedures of this assembly. Points raised were:

- formal/informal procedures
- there will be elections, keep the voting card ready
- there is a proposal for constitution amendments
- how to place proposals in the plenary
- working language: English
- wear your name badges
- be aware of times
- aim of market place (advertise YMCA events)
- every day speak with 5 people you did not know before
- read through the working documents
- the seminar of the YES group already started on Sunday and continues until Sunday

Eva Tschornova introduced the announcers for the assembly Marisa Vögele (Germany) and Hugo Bosch (The Netherlands).

## **4 Adoption of the Agenda**

**Decision:** The proposed agenda was adopted.

## **5 Adoption of the General Assembly 2011 Minutes**

**Decision:** The minutes of the GA 1.-5.06.2011 in Den Dolder, The Netherlands were approved as a true record of the meeting.

Peter Posner commented on agenda item 10.6.1 (budget and national contribution/proposal of YMCA/YWCA Sweden in GA-2011) and agenda item 9. (to shorten general assemblies generally/motion of YMCA England in GA-2011).

## **6 Greetings**

The following delegates gave greetings to the General Assembly:

Robert Reid, YMCA Canada  
 Helene Weir, YMCA Canada  
 Falko Mohrs, European Youth Forum, Brussels  
 Poul-Henrik Hove Jakobsen, Y's Men International  
 Johan V. Eltvik, World Alliance of YMCA, Geneva

## **7 Elections**

### **7.1 Report of the Nomination Committee**

On behalf of the Nomination Committee Nico Marconi (Switzerland) presented the candidates and explained the election procedures. The elections will take place by secret ballot.

### **7.2 Elections of the Executive Committee's members**

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

**Officers for 4 years:**

President	Evert Eggink, The Netherlands	(14)
Vice-President	Stepan Cerny, Czech Republic	(26)
Treasurer	Mike Will, Scotland	(26)
Recording secretary	Beate Turck, Germany	(24)

Olga Lukina, Belarus, was not elected as president (12). Eva Magassy, Hungary, was not elected as recording secretary (1).

**Assessors for 2 years:**

Martin Winter, Germany	(16)
Ion State, Romania	(17)
Eva Magassy, Hungary	(19)
Kie Cummings, England	(26)
Birgir Urbancic Asgeirsson, Iceland	(26)

Not elected as assessors were Aleksandar Kirkovski, Macedonia and Lucas de Graaf, The Netherlands.

### 7.3 Election of the Nomination Committee

Nico Marconi reported. The Nomination Committee received the following nominations:

Maria Verwoerd, The Netherlands, < 30 years  
 Adrian Davies, England, < 30 years  
 Silvia Lazaridis, Germany, < 30 years  
 Christopher Richards, Wales, < 30 years  
 Nico Marconi, Switzerland, 30-40 years  
 Mario Saliba, Malta, 30-40 years

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

Maria Verwoerd, The Netherlands	Elected (new)
Adrian Davies, England	Elected (new)
Silvia Lazaridis, Germany	Elected (new)
Mario Saliba, Malta	Elected (new)
Nico Marconi, Switzerland	Elected (re-elected)

**Decision:** Silvia Lazaridis was appointed as Chairperson of the nomination committee.

The outgoing members of the Executive Committee (Peter Posner, Kaare Dag Mangersnes, Karin Hammer, Marina Michailidou, Susan Louhema, Mieke Barenburg) and of the Nomination Committee (Sabine Drescher, Kristian Simonsen, Ilona Dielis, Armen Bezhanyan) were thanked for their contributions and involvement.

## 8 Secretary General's Speech

Juan Simoes Iglesias, secretary general of YMCA Europe presented his annual report entitled "Roots and Leaves". A copy of the report is attached to these minutes.

## 9 Reports and Decisions

### 9.1 Secretary General's Report 2011/12 and Work Plan 2012

**Decision:** The report was received.

### 9.2 Movement Strengthening

Peter Posner explained that the Executive Committee has taken the decision to change the expression "Movement Development" to "Movement Strengthening", because this reflects better the current situation of what YE is doing. The first "Movement Strengthening meeting" has taken place in March 2012 in Berlin.

For the first time all member movements of YE were asked to provide a country report for the working documents of the General Assembly. In previous years reports of Field- and Partner groups were presented. The reports of Programme groups and platforms were included as usual (ESG, ESY, ETS, COG, VfE, YES, YERT). A new Programme platform right now is being established, the European Youth Policy group (EYP).

**Decision:** The reports were received.

### 9.3 World Alliance of YMCAs (WAY) and Global Cooperation

Peter Posner explained in short the new format of reporting to show the involvement of YE in the WAY.

**Decision:** The report was received.

### 9.4 Finances

#### 9.4.1 Report 2011

Evert Eggink as treasurer of YE gave the report.

The actual result for 2011 has been concluded with a surplus of 157,= Euros.

#### 9.4.2 Auditors' Report and Discharge of Executive Committee Responsibility

The internal Auditors' Report, next to the report of the external auditors (decision of the GA in 2011) was explained by Peter Posner.

**Decision:** The (YMCA) Auditors Report was unanimously approved.

**Decision:** The General Assembly unanimously approved the accounts of 2011.

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

#### 9.4.3 Budget and National Contributions 2013

The budget and the national contributions for 2013 were explained by Evert Eggink. Following he responded to various questions from the plenary:

*Kirsten Lund Larsen, Denmark asked, why the increase of national contribution is just 2.5 % and not the indeed inflation rate?*

Treasurer responded that the increase is based on the comparison of inflation rates in the countries where of Staff live and whom we have to pay salaries. This is more or less structural. More important are individual agreements with national movements about their National Contribution.

*Claes Eliason, Sweden appreciated the Executive Committees decision to vote separately on national contribution and on the budget, but still Sweden sees the need to discuss/consider again the national contribution system itself.*

*Oliver Berger, Switzerland raised the question if maybe the core budget need to be reduced (see report page 120). For the Swiss YMCA/YWCA their national contributions to YE are no longer affordable. A yearly formula with regard to national contributions is needed.*

Treasurer responded that the WAY started a process to review their national contribution/fair share system, with the result not to change anything at this time. It seemed to be very complicated to develop a transparent and realistic “formula”. The national contribution indeed is not based on the number of individual YMCA members. Many national Movements count with “reached persons”. These numbers are under constant negotiation. But of course the new Executive Committee will start a new discussion about this issue. Maybe it could make sense to establish a small working group. Secretary General added the information, that the national contributions will be on the agenda for the next NGS meeting in Brussels this autumn.

*Norwegian delegate asked why in the 2013 budget no reserve funds are built. And why there is not included any fundraising line.*

Treasurer responded that at this point no statements on this can be given. It will very much depend on additional YE fundraising activities. Just a realistic balanced budget has been worked out. Peter Posner mentioned that YE is coming from very big deficit years, it will take YE some years to be able to restore reserves.

Sweden offered to work in such a working group about national contributions. Treasurer promised to come back on this issue after the next ExCom meeting after summer.

**Decision:** The proposed national contributions 2013 were approved.

Voting: 16 yes, 1 no, 4 abstentions

**Decision:** The proposed budget for 2013 was approved with one abstention.

## **10. YMCA Europe Festival 2013**

Pete Bürki, Switzerland, member of Festival Steering Group and creative director of YE festival presented the actual situation of planning and invited again YMCA national movements to participate in the Festival and to follow up all upcoming information on the website.

Evert Eggink explained the Festival budget which is included for the first time into the general YE budget. It has been built up on the actual figures of 2008 festival. He also encouraged all national movements to participate in the festival.

On behalf of the ETS Group Martin Winter presented some information about the involvement of Ten Sing in the festival.

Solomon Benjamin introduced the Leadership Training Programme at the YE festival 2013 and invited national movements to send participants (young leaders and senior executives) to the training which will take place during the mornings at the festival.

Ian Luck, YE Festival Manager presented some further programme parts of the festival. The registration for festival will start very soon. In the registration it will be possible also to register for the Leadership Training Programme, for various activities and performances and also the possibility to register as festival volunteers. It is planned to offer an App for the festival. The second Festival Forum for line managers and working groups will take place in September 2012. Two long term EVS volunteers will start working from September for the YE festival (Iceland and Belarus) in the office in Prague. National coordinators should be announced to SG now. There will be offered a special project from OutdoorTech, Switzerland.

## **11. YMCA European Spektrum (YES)**

The YES seminar presented results from their seminar.

A new YES board has been elected: Andre Kpodonu, Chair (England), Tinna Rós Steinsdóttir,

Vice-Chair (Iceland), Cheryl Robson, Minute secretary (Scotland), Maria Pronina (Russia), Marisa Vögele (Germany)

A new work plan for 2013-2015 was worked out and presented to the GA.  
(see attachment "Link it! Project")

## 12. Amendments to the Constitution

Peter Posner explained the proposed changes (see attachment) and explained the voting procedure.

### Constitution §1

The proposal has been seconded. No discussion followed.

The voting result was:

Voting members in total: 21 (= 100 %)

In favour: 21 (= 100 %)

Against: 0

Abstention: 0

**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.

### Constitution §13 e)

The proposal has been seconded. A discussion followed.

*Switzerland (Eliana Graf): Will it still be possible to have internal auditors (with YMCA background)? Would it be possible to include the opportunity to have additionally internal auditors in the YE constitution bylaws?*

Answer: Yes.

The voting result was:

Voting members in total: 22 (= 100 %)

In favour: 21 (= 96 %)

Against: 0

Abstention: 1

**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.

### Constitution §20

The proposal has been seconded. No discussion followed.

The voting result was:

Voting members in total: 23 (= 100 %)

In favour: 23 (= 100 %)

Against: 0

Abstention: 0

**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.

### Constitution §17, §18

The proposal has been seconded. No discussion followed.

The voting result was:

Voting members in total: 22 (= 100 %)

In favour: 22 (= 100 %)

Against: 0

Abstention: 0

**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.

#### Constitution §21

The proposal has been seconded. No discussion followed.

The voting result was:

Voting members in total: 23 (= 100 %)

In favour: 23 (= 100 %)

Against: 0

Abstention: 0

**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.

#### Constitution §24 By-laws

The proposal has been seconded. A longer discussion followed.

*Denmark (Kirsten Lund Larsen): To what extent the Executive Committee will/can decide on establishing by-laws? Would the GA become involved? Isn't it more the task of GA to establish by-laws?*

Jan Nissen as legal advisor of the Executive Committee gave explanations. By-laws are more like “terms of reference”. They are not laws, it is besides law.

The GA finally agreed with the proposal. The newly elected Executive Committee has the support and trust of the delegates. At the 2013 GA it will be carefully considered what has been done with regard to by-laws.

The voting result was:

Voting members in total: 23 (= 100 %)

In favour: 23(= 100 %)

Against: 0

Abstention: 0

**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.

### **13. New YMCA Europe Membership**

Peter Posner welcomed as new member of YMCA Europe: YMCA Moldova.

The membership certificate was signed by Alexei Chirtoca and Nicolae Pascaru from YMCA-Moldova and Peter Posner and Juan Simoes from YMCA Europe.

### **14 General Assemblies 2013**

The next General Assembly will take place from 9-12 May 2013 in the YE Training Centre in Litomysl, Czech Republic (it will be one day shorter!) in case that renovation work is finished.

### **15 Any Other Business**

#### Theme of the GA 2012 “Roots and Leaves”

Juan Simoes, Secretary General presented his speech “Roots and Leaves” to the delegates (see

attachment). His speech was followed by three key note speeches, all of them followed by various discussion groups.

Key note speech “Democracy” - presented by Doris Klingenhagen, AEJ Hannover, Germany  
 Key note speech “Justice” - presented by Peter Posner, YMCA England  
 Key note speech “Peace” - presented by Vardan Hambardzumyan, YMCA Europe  
 (all key note speeches and results of discussion groups see attachments)

#### Representation of YE in European Youth Forum

The Executive Committee has just appointed Heidi Silvén, Finland as representative of YE for the European Youth Forum for the next term 2012-2014.

#### Representation YE in World Alliance of YMCAs

Peter Posner informed the delegates.

Evert Eggink has been elected at the last WAY World Council in Hong Kong as a member of the WAY executive committee. Now as he became elected as new YE President he automatically takes over by constitution the post as President of YE in the executive committee of the WAY. That means that he has to give up his post as elected member. According to the constitution of the WAY the WAY should approach all individual member movements in Europe to nominate a substitute for this post. National movements in Europe are asked to discuss this already here at the GA and at home. YE itself is not eligible to propose someone as candidate. The final decision about the procedure to follow has to be taken by WAY.

From the delegates at the GA the following proposals came up: YMCA Ukraine proposed Peter Posner. YMCA Germany and YMCA Switzerland proposed Olga Lukina. If there should be more proposals, these should be forwarded to the WAY. Evert Eggink promised to inform the WAY about these signals from the member movements present at our GA, in his letter of resignation as elected member of the WAY Executive Committee.

#### Market place

- YMCA World Challenge, 13.10.2012, presented by Ken Montgomery, YMCA England
- ETS Festival 2011 in Ziegenhain, Germany and invitation to next ETS conference in March 2013, presented by Tobias Naegeli, Chair of ETS group
- YMCA/YWCA staff conference 1.-6.10.2012 in Stuttgart, Germany, presented by Csaba Veres and Eva Tschornova
- YES group - Link it project! Invitation to become partners in next youth democracy project (EU Youth in Action) and another seminar (European youth parliament? Youth foundation?), presented by Katka Hommel, YMCA Slovakia
- European Soccer championship “EURO 2012” - YMCA Ukraine offers help in finding accommodations (please contact YMCA national office) / International YMCA Camp, 7.-17.07.2012 Koblevo, Ukraine / National YMCA Camp “Carpathian Jamboree”, 2.-12.08.2012, presented by Viktor Serbulev, YMCA Ukraine
- YNoT - YMCA Network of Trainers, presented by Olga Lukina and Mischa Guskov
- Wonderful days Hjørring 2013 festival 6.-13.07.2013 for young people, presented by Bjarke Nees, YMCA/YWCA Denmark
- Seminar Y-media, 16.-24.06.2012, YMCA Hostel Banská Bystrica, Slovakia, presented by Dalibor Perasin, YMCA Slovakia
- Late night programme opportunities at YE festival 2013 - please contact Kie if interested in offering something, presented by Kie Cummings, YMCA England
- Facebook side of help Camp Leusden, presented by Robert Feith, YMCA Netherlands
- YMCA Unify conference 12.-15.01.2012 Kings Park Northampton, England (www.ymca-unify.co.uk) - a second conference is in planning, presented by Silvia Lazaridis, YMCA Germany
- European YMCA youth workers camp 2012 (16-27 years) - Invitation to take part presented by Silke Leitenberger, YMCA Germany
- BA study of YMCA university Kassel, Germany, presented by Solomon Benjamin, YMCA university Kassel, Germany
- 2014 Umea world YMCA festival, presented by YMCA/YWCA Sweden

Reminder: please put all events in the events calendar at [www.ymcaeurope.com](http://www.ymcaeurope.com)

Thank you - Peter Posner

Saturday evening Peter Posner as outgoing President and former treasurer was thanked especially. Over a period of 16 years Peter Posner was heavily involved in the work of YE (8 years as Treasurer and 8 years as President) and specially in the last 2 years he was strongly involved in the creation of the new YMCA Europe strategy and the appointment process of the new Secretary General.

**16 Thanks and Closing Remarks**

Juan Simoes Iglesias made some concluding remarks and asked every delegate to respond in the evaluation form.

Evert Eggink thanked all delegates, volunteers and staff for their contributions; especially he thanked the Czech YMCA and all volunteers and staff being great hosts. Furthermore, he thanked the GA planning team, the YES planning team and all YES seminar participants, the key note speakers, the workshop leaders, the excursion leaders, the market place presenters.

The General Assembly was finally closed by Evert Eggink.

Prague, Czech Republic  
May 2012

Evert Eggink  
(President)

Beate Turck  
(Recording Secretary)

**Appendices:**

- 1) List of participants
- 2) Report SG "Roots and Leaves"
- 3) List of key note speeches and workshops and results
- 4) YES "Link it! Project"
- 5) Proposed and carried out amendments of YE constitution