

November 2002

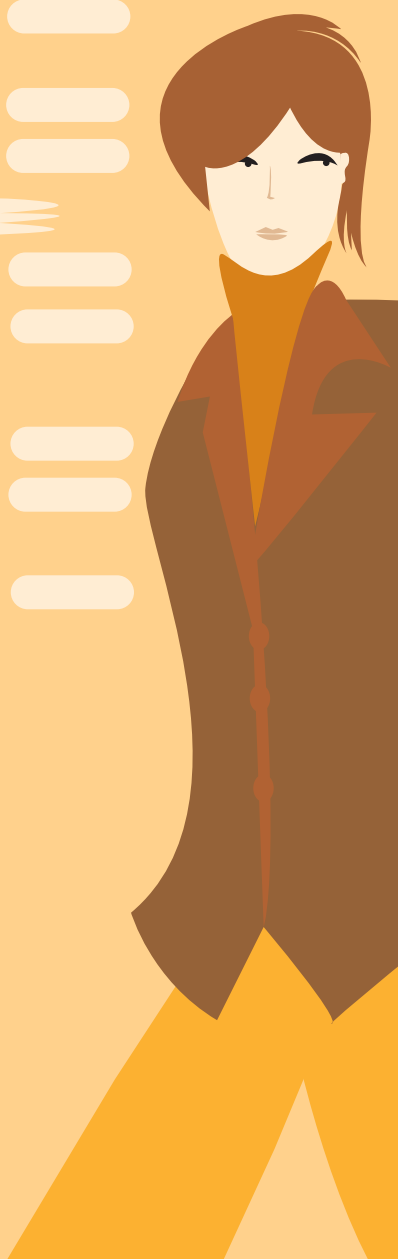
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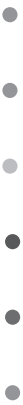
# "Our European Youth Centre!"



"Our European Youth Centre" is an intercultural exercise wherein participants act and behave according to a certain given role.



PARTNERSHIP  
COUNCIL OF EUROPE & EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
TRAINING-YOUTH



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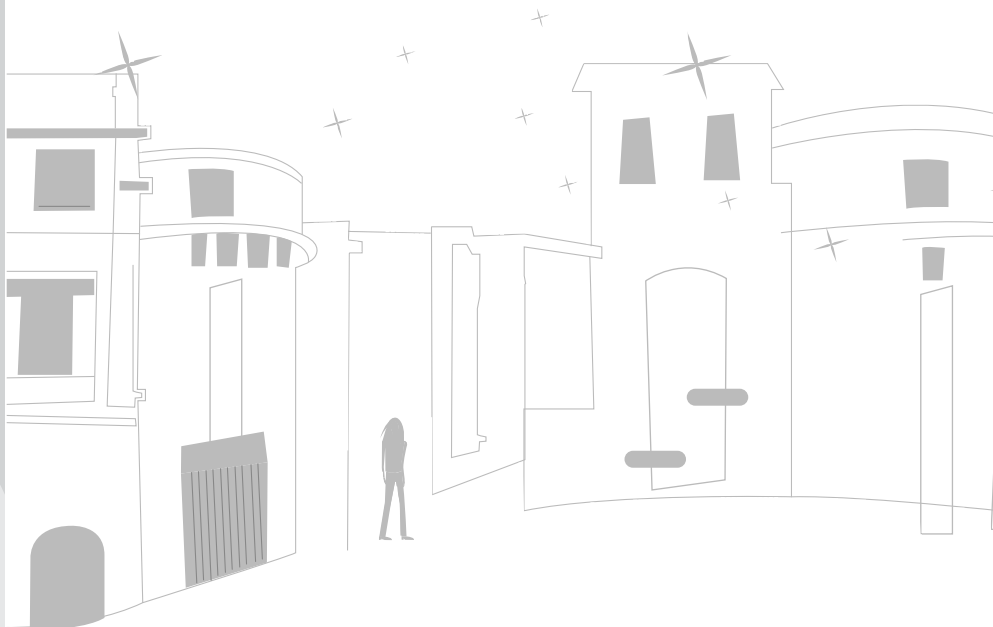
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## CREDITS

"Our European Youth Centre" is an intercultural exercise product of the Training Course "Organising International Youth Activities", run at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg June/July 2001, where it was created and tested for the first time. The team was composed by Yael Ohana, H el ene Barkovic, Karina Schupina, Arjen Bos and Miguel Angel Garc ia L opez. Mr. Garc ia L opez formulated the text based on the discussions and guidelines of the team.

# WELCOME TO OUR EUROPEAN YOUTH CENTRE !

"Our European Youth Centre" is an intercultural exercise wherein participants act and behave according to a certain given role (see role sheets pages 6-8). These roles are not artificially defined, they have some parallels with the reality of young people in Europe.

In this way, "*Our European Youth Centre*" **combines experiential learning** [learning from the real experiences lived by participants during a training or the context of a training] **and learning through simulation** [learning from the experiences lived by participants in a simulated context related to participants' reality]. This intermediate way of intercultural learning allows participants to explore a variety of issues very present in international youth work and not so frequently tackled in other exercises:

- concepts of training, international youth activities
- socio-economical background in youth work
- team work
- Europe
- intercultural learning and cultural diversity
- decision-making processes
- majority - minority

Because of the multiple applications of "Our European Youth Centre", facilitators should focus on a limited number of these issues when using it.

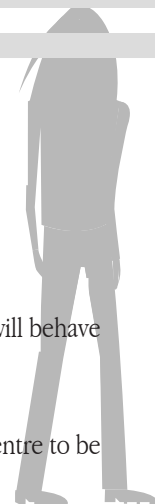
We recommend using "Our European Youth Centre" in the middle of seminars, meetings, training courses, etc., when participants should be relatively comfortable with one another. This would also allow for participants and team to explore further issues during the time remaining.

"Our European Youth Centre" can be run for a group of 25-35 participants. It takes approximately 3 hours and no special material is required.

## Help please!

Whatever your reactions to reading and using "Our European Youth Centre", please use the feedback form at the end to send in your suggestions and comments for improvements and changes.

# "OUR EUROPEAN YOUTH CENTRE": STEP-BY-STEP



## I.- Introduction, distribution of role-cards and composition of the groups (15 min)

- Description of the task to the whole group: Design an European Youth Centre in small groups in which each participant will behave according to a given role.
- Each participant receives a role-card describing his/her background and his/her general ideas about the European Youth Centre to be designed. (See roles sheets pages 6-8).
- Participants take 5 minutes of silence to read, understand and come into their roles.

**Important !** The role card leaves a certain room for each participant to understand and develop his/her own role. For this reason and in order to have a certain "ambiguity" in the small groups discussions, it is important to keep the roles secret until the phase IV of the exercise.

- Participants (for example 25 ) are divided in small groups (5 groups of 5). Each small group should design an "European Youth Centre".

**Important !** The composition of the groups and the distribution of roles is not at random; the facilitators should make sure that all the different roles are present in each group.

## II.- Design of the European Youth Centre in small groups (1 h)

**Task :** Design your European Youth Centre

**Characteristics :** The European Youth Centre should be a residential centre where young people from all around Europe will run different kind of International Youth Activities: seminars, week-end training, exchanges...

The design of the Centre should be based on the idea of what "International Youth Activities" are, what is necessary to run them, what is most important... (See presentation sheet page 9.)

**Decisions** should be taken by consensus.

**Presentation :** Each group has to fill, photocopy and distribute the following presentation sheet. Apart from it, each group will have 5 minutes to present, in the way they prefer, their design.

## III.- Presentation of the European Youth Centres (30 min)

- Each group presents its design of a European Youth Centre in 5 minutes.

**Important!** Warm participants to be very attentive to the different presentations, to take notes, because afterwards they will vote and decide upon the different projects.

## IV.- Roles groups - Final decision (30 min)

- In plenary, immediately after the presentations, the different roles are presented and participants with the same role meet together.

**Task** of these role groups: to decide and vote upon the different designs according to their specific needs and interests.

► At this moment, it is possible to have conversations-negotiations among the different groups to get enough votes for the own design to be accepted.

**Voting rules**

The different role groups receive a different number of votes:

- Role group A** - Marginalised young people 10
- Role Group B** - Engaged young people 25
- Role Group C** - Apathetic young workers 20
- Role Group D** - Ambitious Western students 30
- Role Group E** - Sceptical Eastern European young farmers 15



In the voting, each role group can give all the votes to a certain design or distribute them among different ones.

Only the design/s with more than 50 votes will be accepted.

Voting					
	Design 1	Design 2	Design 3	Design 4	Design 5
Role Group A					
Role Group B					
Role Group C					
Role Group D					
Role Group E					
Total					

**VI.- Debriefing (60 min)**

This exercise usually does not provoke strong emotions on participants but, if necessary, before starting the debriefing, facilitators should provide some space for de-roling and relaxation.

The debriefing is an essential part of the exercise in order to consolidate and capture the learning process. It should be done with the whole group together going again through the whole exercise, remembering what happened and reflecting on what it means for us.

The debrief process and questions should proceed according to the flow of the exercise, and from more concrete things to more abstract ideas.

For the different parts of the exercise we suggest some possible questions / issues to discuss. The debriefing can be used to focus on the specific area of interest of the Facilitators, whilst not denying any other issues that participants might bring up.



### Small groups phase

- Did you feel comfortable in your role? Why?
- Was it easy/difficult to design together an European Youth Centre? Why?
- Without exactly knowing their background, could you understand the others? Why or why not?
- What cultural specific behaviour did you notice? How does this behaviour relate to the 'real world'?
- Are you happy with the result? Why? Does it correspond with your idea of youth work?
- Working together at European level, is it so?
- ...

### Roles groups and final decision phase

- During the presentation, how did you perceive the other designs (first in your design group and then in your role group)? Did your perception change?
- Does the different number of votes reflect reality? Can we do anything about it?
- Were there any negotiation-coalition-agreements between groups? Why?
- How did the different groups make the vote? Apart from the preferences, were there any other reasons for it?
- Were there any projects accepted? Is it / are they the best? Does this design meet everybody's expectations? Is there anybody excluded?
- ...

### Some general considerations - final questions for debriefing

In other intercultural exercises, participants act according to strong roles and before meeting other cultures/roles there is a long phase of practice development and self-affirmation.

In "Our European Youth Centre" the roles are neither so fixed nor so determinant and the process goes the other way around; after a short individual preparation, participants confront "the others" to build something together and then they judge and decide upon it back in their cultural/role group.

For that reason, the last step of the debriefing could explore the eventual parallels between the overall logic of the exercise and the European Youth Activities / youth work on European level.

- Do you find any similarity between the exercise and the International Youth Activities / the youth work on European level?
- How important is the socio-economical background and to know it while working with young people on European level?
- Is it easier/more difficult to compromise with others when we are not so strongly prepared or conditioned by our own group/community?
- How transferable to the local groups are the compromises-decisions taken at European level?
- ...

**Be attentive !** One of the possible outcomes of the exercise is that participants project in the design of their European Youth Centre the positive and negative aspects of the place where the seminar or activity is taking place. Without denying this, it is important that the exercise does not become a kind of indirect evaluation of the organisational arrangements of your activity, deluding the richness of its multiple outcomes.



# ROLES SHEET (1)



## Role Card A - Marginalised young person

### Socio-Economical Background

You are a young person belonging to a marginalised group. It can be an ethnical, sexual, cultural, religion... minority or a marginalised group due to a drug addiction, economical situation, sickness, handicap...

### Attitude towards Europe - The EYC

The future European Youth Centre should respond to your specific needs of your minority group and not just to the general ones of young people in Europe.

### Tips for your role

To come into your role think about a marginalised group (may be one you know better), identify yourself with their interest, their way of living and thinking... Do not overplay your role. Rather than expressing yourself through external appearance, spectacular sentences, gestures or symbols, the most important is to bring into the discussion, into the new European Youth Centre your ideas, interest and expectations.

## Role Card B.- Engaged young person

### Socio-Economical Background

You are an engaged young person in an organisation; students organisation, or political, or cultural..., .

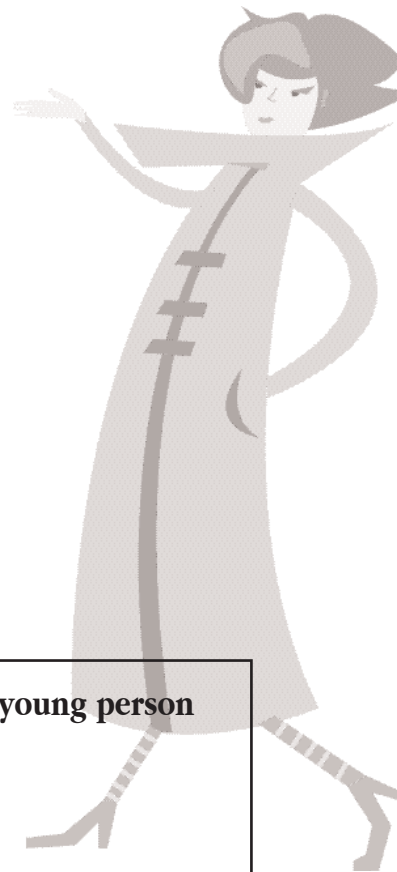
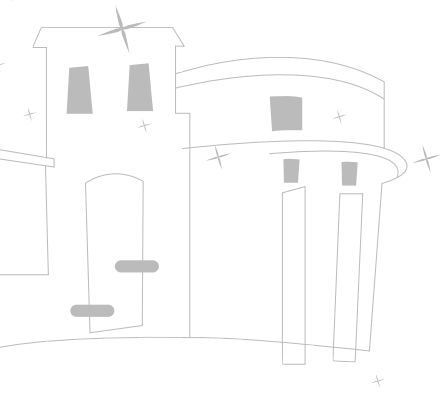
### Attitude towards Europe - The EYC

You are very interested in the building of Europe and the future European Youth Centre can be a great opportunity. You are very concerned about Democracy, Human Rights, Youth Participation and Social Justice. You would like to promote these but at the same time you are aware that we cannot have "everything" in the Centre, we cannot satisfy everybody's interest.

### Tips for your role

Do not overplay your role. Rather than expressing yourself through external appearance, spectacular sentences, gestures or symbols, the most important is to bring into the discussion, into the new European Youth Centre your ideas, interest and expectations.

# ROLES SHEET (2)



## Role Card C.- Apathetic young worker

### Socio-Economical Background

You are an "apathetic" young person. Your childhood was not easy, you were not good enough at school and you have a hard and boring job. In your free time, you like to meet friends, watch tv and have fun.

### Attitude towards Europe - The EYC

Personally, you have ideas and ideals (Youth Participation, Democracy, Human Rights...) but you mistrust politicians and European institutions: "they spend a lot of money for nothing" "most of young people don't care about all this". You are not absolutely against building a Youth Centre but you will try not to spend a lot of resources and to keep it as close as possible to the "normal" young people; anyway, most of them will never come to the Centre.

### Tips for your role

Do not overplay your role. Rather than expressing yourself through external appearance, spectacular sentences, gestures or symbols, the most important is to bring into the discussion, into the new European Youth Centre your ideas, interest and expectations.

## Role Card B.- Engaged young person

### Socio-Economical Background

Socio-Economical Background  
You belong to the middle class of a Western European country. You study at university, you speak two foreign languages. You have good perspectives for a future job.

### Attitude towards Europe - The EYC

You like to participate in European Activities (exchanges, visits...) but basically for your own interest, to improve your capacities and no so much to "change" the situation or building a fairer Europe. The European Youth Centre could be something good but you want to do it in a practical way, not discussing too much about politics... It would be good to have a Good Centre, with quality, with good facilities; computers, internet, single rooms, sauna, newspapers, library, disco...

### Tips for your role

Do not overplay your role. Rather than expressing yourself through external appearance, spectacular sentences, gestures or symbols, the most important is to bring into the discussion, into the new European Youth Centre your ideas, interest and expectations.



# ROLES SHEET (3)

## Role Card E.- Sceptical Eastern European young farmer

### Socio-Economical Background

You come from a rural area from Eastern Europe. You left studies after secondary school to help your family in the farm.

### Attitude towards Europe - The EYC

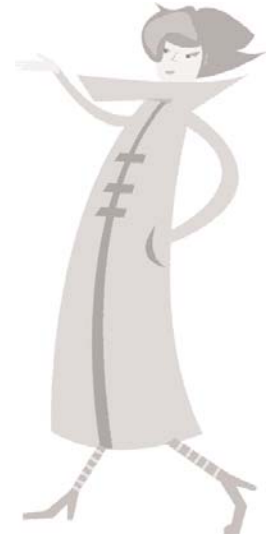
In principle you are open to Europe but you think that in the name of Europe a lot of stupid things are done; an example is the reform of the agriculture in the candidates countries that you are suffering. You like the idea of having a Centre for young people to meet but you will like to use it to work seriously and discuss about the European Integration Process and the effects on young people. Concerning the Centre you do not expect a lot of facilities (the Centre is to work and not to have fun!), you like simple way of living, outdoor activities and contact with nature.

### Tips for your role

Do not overplay your role. More than through external appearance, spectacular sentence, gestures or symbols... the most important is to bring into the discussion, into the new European Youth Centre your ideas, interest and expectations.



# PRESENTATION SHEET



## Our European Youth Centre - Group number

Name:

Slogan (philosophy):

Location:

### Characteristics according to priorities

	Priorities of Youth Activities	Rooms/Spaces
1.- (most important)		
2.-		
3.-		
4.-		
5.-		
(Example)	Formal meetings	Plenary rooms

Other characteristics of the Centre:

Facilities and services:

### Design

# "OUR EUROPEAN YOUTH CENTRE" FEEDBACK FORM

We hope you have had an interesting time with the exercise. As this is the first time that "Our European Youth Centre" has been published we would welcome your feedback and your suggestions. Thank you for completing this questionnaire, your comments will be considered with all our attention.

*Where did you get your copy of "Our European Youth Centre" ?*

*What attracted your attention to it ?*

*How easy was it to understand the description of it ?*

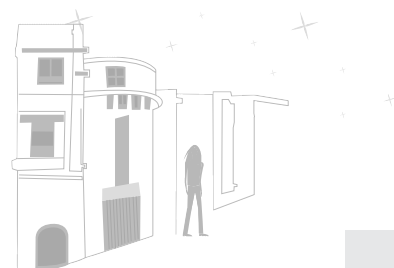
*In what context or situation did you use it ?*

*What general recommendations do you have for improving it ?*

*Further comments and suggestions :*

Name :

Your address :



**Please return this questionnaire to:**  
**Yael Ohana, Educational Advisor, European Youth Centre, 30 rue Pierre de Coubertin,**  
**F-67000 Strasbourg**

# Coyote Supplement



## Coyote Supplements

Coyote supplements present new educational methods, especially for international or multicultural training situations. They were created for or during European training events and then further developed, written down and edited for a larger public.

