

ANNUAL REPORT

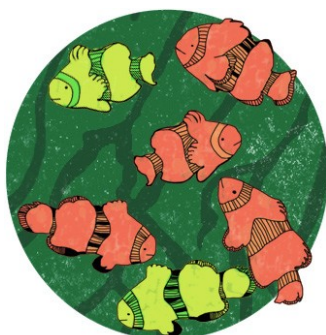
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European Youth for Action



Direct Action



Consensus



Group Processes



Strategy



Power Privilege and
Oppression

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2014

Introduction

The year 2014 has been an exiting one for the EYFA office. Running seven project within one year was also challenging. Nevertheless we managed it – thanks to a new office staff member and the enthusiastic help of a lot of volunteers. The good news is that, we are finally back to a four-person office staff and it feels great!

2014 has been all about social justice issues, with a special focus on refugee solidarity work. Looking back this was very much needed as the precarity experienced by refugees in Europe continues to increase in intensity. Within Europe's borders approximately one million people face daily life without papers. Most of them have no access to essential services or support. Even if their living is secured, they are deprived from political participation and a social life. Sometimes for years on end. The daily lives of the concerned people are a humanitarian and social catastrophe. In the middle of the richest region of the world. The struggle for human rights beyond borders and against racism is an ongoing one. One of our main goals for 2014 was to strengthen young peoples' initiatives and to encourage them to support spaces of self-empowerment and solidarity towards refugees in Europe.

The office carried out two international youth exchanges, in Novi Sad (Serbia) and Calais (France), one training on sustainable solidarity activism in Abella de la Conca (Spain) as well as a publication called "Calais, Calais". Furthermore, we also organized a international youth gathering for young people active in the housing movement about community organizing in Cordoba (Spain) and a couple of scattered workshops to attend to the needs of the EYFA Network. And last but not least, we hosted two volunteers in the office who became part of the collective for one year and helped with daily office work, visited projects in the EYFA Network and carried out an amazing project on Exclusion and Precarity.

Next year we will go East again and will organize several meetings within our work-plan "Inclusion, Alternatives, Action! - Young people building futures for environmental justice". We look forward to the three international gatherings (Ukraine, Poland and Spain) as well as two publications on Grassroots resources for Biodiversity and Climate Justice. We also will host again two young volunteers within the EVS project: "Sustainable Futures: Youth taking action in our neighborhood".

We are looking forward to a thrilling 2015!

1. What is EYFA?

1.1. The EYFA story

EYFA (European Youth For Action) developed from a tour that was initiated by a Swedish/German group in 1986 to save the old forests in Europe: then named European Youth Forest Action. From these beginnings, EYFA has developed into a network of individuals, grassroots organisations and collectives working to transform local and international communities in their approach to environmental and social, political and economic positions. EYFA provides a platform and practical support for new radical ideas to grow into their full potential.

EYFA focuses particularly on youth initiated activities and projects. EYFA projects are mainly for young people, giving them the opportunity to act and encouraging them to be active on local and international levels. A special focus is put on providing access for groups to take part in international grassroots movements. EYFA always puts effort into including youth from all corners of the continent, with different social, geographical and cultural backgrounds.

EYFA's organisational structure consists of a Europe-wide network of grassroots groups, an office, and an advisory board.

1.2. What does EYFA do?

EYFA provides a platform and practical support for new radical ideas to grow into their full potential. The international office located in Berlin coordinates EYFA's activities through administrative and communication functions and being the network's contact point for sharing local information.

EYFA support and encourages grassroots projects and initiatives in the following ways:

- *Organising exchanges, seminars, trainings, network gatherings, projects & actions.*
- *Promoting innovative ways of working in the field of social and environmental activism (ie: consensus decision-making, art and activism, free and open-source software, etc).*
- *Disseminating call outs and information on environmental and social justice issues.*
- *Giving advice, knowledge and support in activities such as assisting with fund-raising, application writing, planning and implementing projects and networking.*

1.3. Who does EYFA support?

Grassroots groups combating xenophobia, homo-, trans- and queerphobia, racism, fascism, sexism, ableism and all other forms of exploitation and injustice.

Grassroots groups promoting cultural diversity and the rights of women, LGBTIQ, indigenous, migrants and workers.

Grassroots groups combating environmental degradation, ecosystem destruction and animal exploitation and promoting biological diversity.

EYFA gives activists an international perspective, but it is very important to us that we keep our focus on the grassroots of social and ecological change. It is characteristic of EYFA that projects initiated by EYFA become independent sustainable long term projects.

1.4. EYFA's Vision

EYFA's main aim is to encourage young people's initiative and autonomy. EYFA strives for a world based on social, environmental and economic justice, in which people feel empowered to act and raise their voices on the issues that affect their lives. EYFA works to challenge the current dominant social and economic system while developing new ways of organising our communities based on environmental and social sustainability.

Towards this we have three core objectives (Capacity Building; Civic Engagement and Participatory Processes; East-West Cooperation) and two priority areas (Environmental Justice; Exclusion) to guide us.

1.4.1. EYFA's Objectives

EYFA has three core objectives at the centre of everything we do:

▣ **Capacity building:** *To help groups develop the skills and knowledge to gain access to funding, training and the tools to articulate, debate and enact their ideas.*

▣ **Civic engagement and participatory processes:** *To support grassroots groups to critically engage with already existing decision-making processes and politics, and also to develop egalitarian and participatory alternatives.*

▣ **East-West cooperation:** *To develop closer cooperation through joint initiatives and the sharing of ideas, histories and experiences amongst grassroots groups working in Eastern and Western Europe.*

1.4.2. EYFA's Priorities

Over the course of EYFA's existence the network has focused its energy on a wide variety of projects all across Europe. Out of these projects, patterns have emerged that point to some of EYFA's priorities. Developed by the network, office and Board, and re-evaluated each year at network strategy meetings, these priorities provide focus for EYFA's work. While we prioritise these two areas, we continue to offer support to groups whose work does not fall directly into one of these categories.

■ Environmental Justice

EYFA's environmental justice perspective is based on the understanding that most environmental problems are also a question of social and economic injustice. Socially sustainable and just communities go hand in hand with environmentally sound ways of living. EYFA's many climate justice, energy and environmental projects have aimed to draw the links between economic growth-obsession and the exploitation and destruction of our natural and human environment as well as excluding large populations from access to resources.

■ Exclusion

Social, cultural, institutional or individual beliefs and practices exist which privilege some human beings and exclude, by subordination and oppression others, based on attributes of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class or caste, among many other distinctions. EYFA believes that social and economic exclusion are tied into histories of patriarchy, colonialism and imperialism, as well as profit and power. These experiences have at times given rise to equally oppressive and excluding practices and policies. If we are to create a world free from hierarchy, exploitation and oppression that instead respects the autonomy and dignity of all human beings, the way these forces interact must be recognised and addressed. With our focus on supporting Eastern European groups, our current work includes many groups working to tackle issues of institutional exclusion, gender inequality, fascism, nationalism, racism and homophobia.

1.5 EYFA's Structure

1.5.1. Decision-making

Decisions are made during different meetings throughout the year. During these meetings the following is discussed: old and new projects, focus of the network, strategies and future cooperation plans. Though we do often make use of on-line meetings and decision making tools, face-to-face network meetings are still highly valued and take place alongside all EYFA events. EYFA board meetings are organized once a year at the EYFA office in Berlin. The board has better insight in the works of the office this way and with everything at hand it heightens practicality.

All organizational decisions are made through reaching consensus. The consensus is a decision-making process that fully utilizes the resources of a group, seeks the agreement of most participants, and resolves or mitigates the objections of the minority to achieve the most agreeable decision. Consensus is also used during all EYFA meetings, projects and events. EYFA functions on the belief that people in a group will relate to each other in a much more fair and productive way if everyone's contribution is considered and is equal to everyone else's. Consensus requires use of communication hand signals during meetings and decision making processes, and, sometimes, presence of trained facilitators and mediators.

1.5.2 EYFA's Office

EYFA has one international office, located in Berlin. The office coordinates EYFA's activities, including administrative and financial tasks, as well as the communication functions of the network. This includes producing the EYFA newsletter, acting as an information point for organisations in the network and as a communication liaison between local and international projects.

The office is organised collectively and non-hierarchically, meaning that all staff and volunteers are expected to take an equal role in day-to-day tasks and decision-making processes. From watering the plants to writing applications, tasks are shared and rotated amongst all of those in the office.

The office also acts as a 'training ground' for young people to develop various skills, such as project coordination, fund-raising and bookkeeping. EYFA does not require office staff to arrive already equipped with all the necessary knowledge and experience to carry out their tasks. Rather, the goal is to be a place where young people can work to develop skills in a supportive environment, learning-by-doing. It is normal for staff and volunteers to work in the office for 1-3 years, before moving on to share their new skills with other groups and projects.

1.5.3. EYFA Advisory Board

The 'Advisory Board' oversees the work of the office. The Board provides support and advice to the office – particularly in terms of strategy and finances.

Currently, there are three Board members, two of them used to be part of the office team. In both the office and the Board, effort is made to maintain balanced representation amongst the different corners of Europe.

1.5.3 EYFA Network

EYFA is a network that consists of individuals, collectives and organisations from all around Europe. There are no membership rules or fees required to join the EYFA network – EYFA is open to all current grassroots and alternative youth movements focusing on environmental, social justice and alternative economics and related issues.

The EYFA network is primarily used to share information, skills and resources. It connects groups working on similar topics around Europe, and groups wanting to share experiences or gain training from one another. The network acts as a way to connect local issues and struggles trans-nationally. In particular, the network works to connect groups in east and west Europe, building solidarity amongst different regions.

The EYFA Network has two permanent working groups, Network Strategy and East-West, which help the international office in Berlin identify the needs of groups in the network and decide where and on what issues upcoming gatherings should focus. This ensures that EYFA consistently works towards its aims of capacity building, participatory processes and East-West networking. For each EYFA project a temporary working group is also created to support the logistics and develop the content of the project. Sometimes these groups continue working together after the project's completion.

Typically, the network has one or two meetings each year where the priorities and strategy of the network are decided upon and projects and activities are developed. Between meetings, members can stay in touch via mailing lists and online meetings. Like all EYFA meetings, decisions are made on a consensus basis.

1.6. Partner Organizations & Network-members

- Re.Generation (Romania)
- Tripod (United Kingdom)
- Art Centre (Slovenia)
- Vredesaktie (Belgium)
- ASEED (Netherlands)
- EcoDharma (Spain)
- Vedegylet (Hungary)
- SPINA (Poland)
- Stop Xenophobia Youth Federation (Ukraine)
- Alternativna Kulturna Organizacija (Serbia)
- VOID Network (Greece)
- Food not Bombs (Russia)
- Klimakollektivet (Denmark)
- Memfarado (Austria)
- Zelena akcija Zagreb (Croatia)
- Rhythm of Resistance Istanbul (Turkey)
- Auto*Mat (Czech Republic)
- Institute for Democracy and Human Rights (Armenia)
- La Rhonce (France)
- GAIA (Portugal)
- Zali.LT (Lituania)
- Skills for Action (Germany)

2. European Voluntary Service

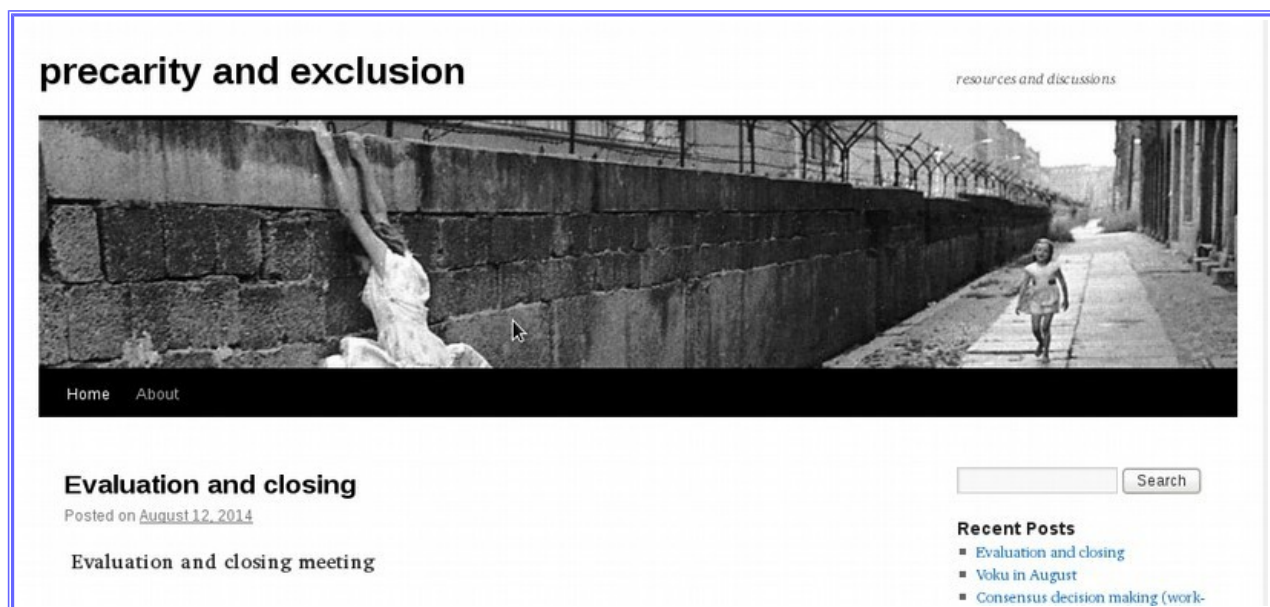
Sharing Skills and Resources to Fight Exclusion and Precarity



The EVS-Project "Sharing Skills and Resources to Fight Exclusion and Precarity" facilitated two volunteers from Spain and Slovenia to spend 12 months with EYFA in Berlin, Germany from 1. September 2013 to 31. August 2014. The project aimed to empower young people to challenge precarity and economic exclusion by connecting the dots between precarity and other forms of exclusion, like racism, gender privilege, homophobia and

Roma rights, as well as inspiring young people to build alternative social and economic projects.

In the frame of the EVS project, the volunteers ran a *Precarity and Exclusion Blog*. With this blog they invited local community members to activities like movie screenings, discussions and workshops that they organised: <http://precarityandexclusion.wordpress.com/>



3. Meetings

3.1 Migration Margins in Serbia: Youth self-organising for refugee support

16th to 21st April 2014 Novi Sad, Serbia



This youth exchange brought together young refugees and solidarity activists from Central/Eastern Europe to share experiences, develop inclusive group processes, exchange knowledge & skills, take symbolic community action and discuss further European - wide collaboration.

3.2. Empowering Renewal: Youth for Sustainable and Effective Activism

10th to 18th May 2014 Abella de la Conca, Spain



The activity was a 9-day training empowering personal and inter-personal skills to support a culture of sustainable and effective activism among refugee supporters. The activity was preceded by an exploratory tour that started in Berlin and ended in Abella, collecting experiences that later were used as input during the training

The course addressed tools to prevent conflict or identify ways to solve it. And last but not least, some of the participants were excited and looking forward to bringing some of the outcomes of this activity to the next one in Calais.

3.3. Activity Calais Migrant Solidarity: practical solidarity with refugees in the heart of border regimes

28th August till 3rd September 2014 Calais, France



This youth exchange took place to empower young activists to strengthen the application of relevant tools to the practice of claiming refugee rights with a focus on dealing with activist burnout, trauma support and long-term strategy.

Participants also took part in discussion sessions reflecting on three topics: long-term strategy, gender & solidarity activism and anti-burnout / trauma methods. Two further practical trainings took place. The last stage focused on creating a long-term impact by developing a strategy for engaging in migrant solidarity activism; devising concrete methods of dealing with burnout and trauma in Calais; making agreements on working groups to continue the work begun during the activity (trauma support team, legal advice for refugees team and a group developing booklets).

3.4. Taking our lives back: Community Organising against exclusion and precarity

20th to 27th October 2014 Córdoba, Spain



The youth meeting "Taking our lives back: Community Organising against exclusion and precarity" took place in Cordoba, Spain between the 20th and 27th October 2014 and brought together 22 young housing activists from different countries in Europe. The main theme of

the youth meeting was "Organising the Community – from exclusion and precarity towards alternative ways out of the crisis".

3.5. Advisory Council on Youth



Since March 2012 EYFA has been a member of the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe. The Advisory Council is made up of 30 representatives from youth NGOs and networks who work together with government representatives to co-manage the youth sector of the Council of Europe. This involves setting priorities for the youth sector and making recommendations for future budgets and programmes. These proposals are then adopted by the Committee of Ministers, the Council of Europe's decision-making body.

The second Mandate of EYFA within the Advisory Council of Youth has started. Alice Hamdi replaced the former Advisory Council member and attended the Joint Council meetings in 2014.

4. Network Actions & Initiatives

4.1. New Yorck im Bethanien



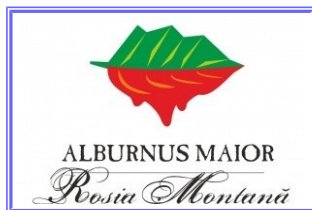
The EYFA office is based in the house project New Yorck im Bethanien, which organizes affordable meals in people's kitchens, free languages classes, benefits in solidarity with diverse social and ecological struggles and provides space for alternative initiatives.

4.2. Creative Action Training



The global fossil fuel industry and the global temperature increase accompanying it both pollute our bodies, our land, our atmosphere and even our democracies. Between the 9th and 13th September a creative action training for Eastern European Organizers happened in Budapest (Hungary). The aim of the Training was to share skills for creative social and political action for the COP 21 in Paris 2015.

4.3. Rosia Montana Activist Social Forum



The fight against cyanide based gold mining and corruption often touches upon other initiatives, campaigns and struggles around Europe. The RMForum united these energies, discussions and calls for action in a social gathering open to the wider public. With more than 30 workshops, three plenaries and speakers from 10 countries, the Rosia Montana Activist Social Forum is the biggest of its kind in Romania.

The Rosia Montana Activist Social Forum took place during FânFest, the hay festival of Roșia

Montană, and the biggest multi-art activist festival in Romania. 2014 marked the 3rd edition of the RMForum, which was scheduled from the 12 to the 16th of August. EYFA staff traveled to Romania and supported the Activist Forum by conducting skill-sharing workshops.

4.4. Regional feminist solidarity meeting for activists in Central Asia, Caucasus and Eastern Europe



This Regional Feminist Solidarity meeting emerged as an idea to bring feminist activists together to discuss and strategise around their security/well-being, solidarity efforts and movement-building. The Meeting happened between the 10-17 November 2014 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Here “feminist activist” means affiliating oneself with feminism(s) whether one’s

activist work and group is explicitly named feminist or not. As there are very few opportunities for us to support each other, reflect and discuss our needs/issues outside of professional skills-building, networking and collaborating primarily for our communities and our causes as community members, this meeting was an attempt to address our needs collectively as feminist activists and connecting with each other as feminist movement(s).

4.5 Translation and publication of Emma Goldman’s “Living my life” in Russian



The publishing cooperative Radical Theory & Practice from Moscow initiated a new project: translating Emma Goldman’s autobiography “Living My Life” into Russian and printing it for wider distribution. This will be the first ever, integral translation of the work into Russian. This work consists of 56 chapters in which Goldman describes her political and personal life: her childhood, her time in Russia and her reflections on the Russian Revolution, all the way up until 1927. The book was first

published in English in two parts in 1931 and 1934, and has been reissued several times since, and translated into many other languages, but never into Russian. This text is relevant not only as part of the body of libertarian and feminist works on theory and practice, but also

for historians, social scientists and feminists working in the post-soviet context. Such a translation will find an audience in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia and further amongst other Russian-language readers.

4.6 Mural "Berlin Not for Sale" in Berlin-Kreuzberg



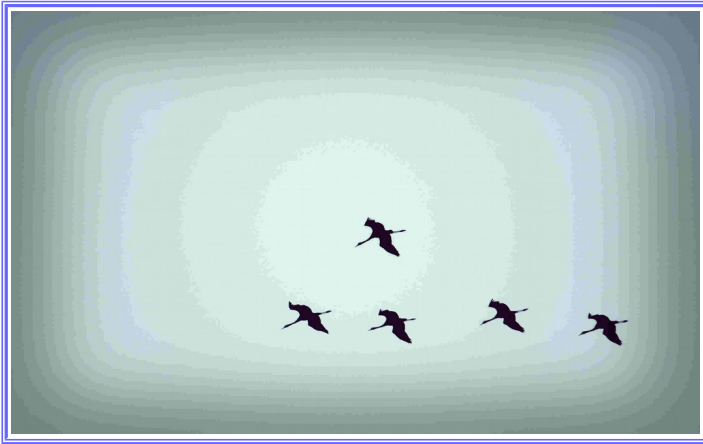
Valorisation, displacement and resistance. The mural "Berlin is not for Sale" shows the places of a contemporary conflict around city politics in Kreuzberg. The Mural was made on the front of a house close to Görlitzer Park in the summer of 2014. It was shaped by the collectives Pappsatt, Orangotango and Memfarado. The theme was developed together with the self-organized house project Manto 39.

4.7 Ecotopia Biketour 2014: Bottom Up! Sovereignty vs. Exploitation



In 2014, the Biketour went way down south, passing through two countries where the Biketour had never been before: Kosovo and Greece on its winding way from Sofia to Athens. En route we exchanged with collectives in social centres and squats and visited several places where people are trying to find ways of sustainable living in the countryside, often motivated by the economic crisis in the Southern Balkans.

4.8 Transformative Collaboration Training

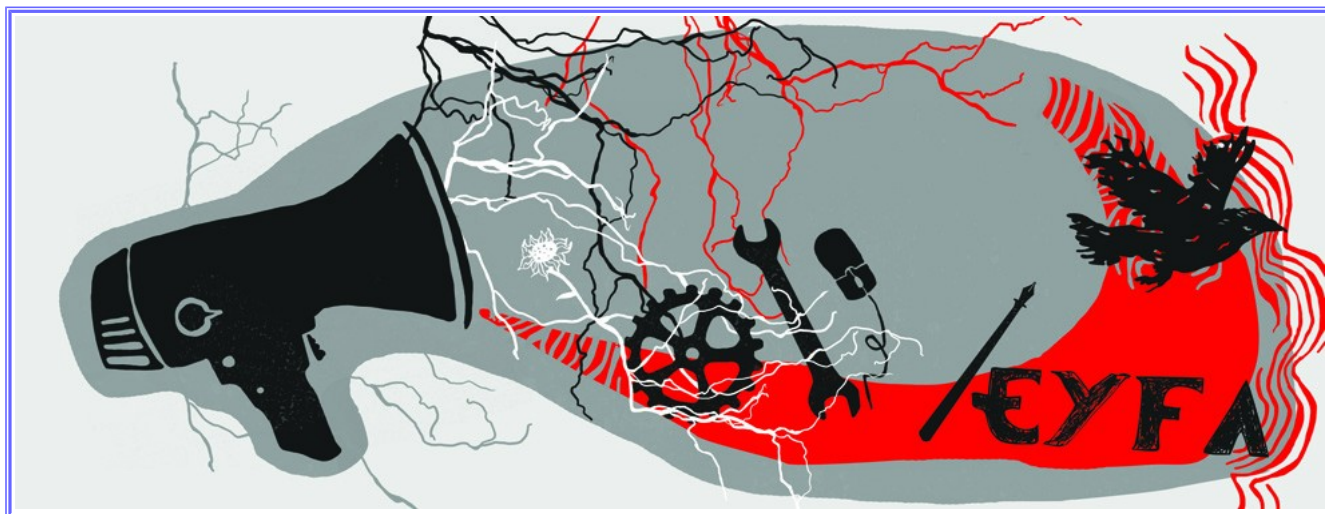


This training in from 8.- 16. November, aimed to augment the existing Sustaining Resistance course that our partners at Ecodharma periodically offer. It focused in closer detail on the interpersonal and group dimensions of effective activism and collaboration. Because working in groups is not always easy. It can feel frustrating, draining and unproductive. Meetings drag, personalities clash, power conflicts arise,

chaos reigns and all this gets in the way of achieving what the group or organization set out to do at the beginning. This training helped the participants to learn how to collaborate, communicate and make decisions effectively. It will help them to draw out the best in themselves and others, to stay in healthy relationship, build teams based on shared values – and get things done!

5. EYFA Media & Publications

5.1 Website



In the beginning of January, after a long period of planning, scheming and dreaming our new website was finally launched. We thank our former EYFA staff members for their effort and voluntary work they have put into the webpage. Without them we would have never made it!

5.2 Newsletter

Believe it or not, the EYFA newsletter is back! The EYFA office thought newsletters were an outdated media form, but after a year-long break, we received quite a bit of feedback from our network members who missed the spring newsletter especially, with its round-up of activists events, gatherings, camps and meetings happening around Europe in the summer.

From now on, we will publish again two newsletters each year. One in the spring that shares announced days of action for the summer; and one in the winter that shares a bit more content. This year's winter newsletter was inspired by our projects and gave a overview of anti-eviction and Migrant Solidarity movements across Europe.

5.3 Publications

5.3.1. "Calais, Calais"

The Book Calais, Calais is based on the impression and experience of Amy Non, an activist who stayed in Calais during the first half of 2014. Besides personal experiences, the book also provide facts about Calais and the rising right-wing movement/backlash, the European border regime, the country of origin of refugees and theoretical reflections on gender, privilege, racism, burn-out and trauma. As a personal field report, it is a complement to fact-based reports about Calais and provides a lively story about the personal situation that Migrants and Activists are experiencing in their daily lives in Calais. It offers the readers critical information, presented in a literary, and sometimes poetic, way.

Look for a **hand-made silk print cover version** of the book at info-events or in your nearby info-shop. Or please write us an email: [eyfa\[at\]eyfa.org](mailto:eyfa[at]eyfa.org).

5.3.2. Working with Conflict in our groups – now available in Spanish

This publication written by Seeds for Change and produced by EYFA in 2012 aims to develop an understanding of conflict and how to deal with it for people and groups working for social change. After using it within our international youth meeting in Cordoba, our partners found it so useful, that we made a effort to translate it into Spanish as a follow-up of the activity.

6. Thanks

We would like to thank the Council of Europe's Youth Foundation, the European Commission's Youth in Action Program, AStA Freie Universität Berlin, XminY, Lush foundation, Haella, Alert and our other private donors for their financial support!



7. Financial Overview

EYFA 2014 Financial Overview – Expenses			
Personnel Costs			
Employees (part-time)		17,163.79	
EVS Volunteers		9,689.00	
Consultants and Freelancers		1,614.79	
Volunteer allowance		300.00	
			28,467.58
Office costs			
Rental and Associated Costs		1,200.00	
Communication Costs (telephone, internet, mail)		379.38	
Copy and Print Costs		84.42	
Office Materials		222.61	
Food and Maintenance		=	
Postage and Transport		562.82	
			2,449.23
Projects			
27.WP2014	Act 1 Migration Margins in Serbia: Youth self-organising For refugee support	20,302.45	
	Act 2 Empowering Renewal: Youth for Sustainable and Effective Activism	22,739.98	
	Act. 3 Calais Migrant Solidarity: practical solidarity with refugees in the heart of border regimes	25,674.30	
	Act. 4 Documenting Borders: resources for the practice Of claiming refugee rights	5,635.00	
	Act.5 Workshops beyond Borders: youth training support	1,253.93	
27.1.1A.2014.PC30	Taking our lives back: Community Organising against exclusion and precarity	23,008.93	
			98,614.59
Other Costs			
Financial Costs (bank costs, chamber of commerce, interest)		417.58	
Other Costs (board meeting, staff travel)		967.18	
			1,384.76
Total costs EYFA 2014			EUR 130,916.16

EYFA 2014 Financial Overview – Income			
EACEA Grants			
EVS 2013-225		10,397.00	
TOTAL			10,397.00
European Youth Foundation Grants			
27.WP.2014	Workplan 2014	50,000.00	
27.1.1A.2014.PC30	Taking our lives back: Community Orgazising against Exclusion and precarity	15,000.00	
=	Structural grant	19,800.00	
TOTAL			84,800.00
Other income			
Participation fee & Fundraising: Act 1 Migration Margins in Serbia: Youth self-organising for refugee support		5,206.74	
Participation fee & Fundraising: Act 2 Empow ering Renew al: Youth for Sustainable and Effective Activism		7,132.44	
Participation fee & Fundraising: Act. 3 Calais Migrant Solidarity: Practical solidarity w ith refugees in the heart of border regimes		10,511.40	
Participation fee & Fundraising: Act. 4 Documenting Borders: Resources for the practice of claiming refugee rights		700.00	
Participation fee & Fundraising: Act.5 Workshops beyond Borders: Youth training support		381.26	
Participation fee & Fundraising:Taking our lives back: Community Organizing Against exclusion and precarity		7,798.93	
Credit interest		521.71	
Donation and Gifts		860.00	
TOTAL			33,112.48
Total Income EYFA 2014			EUR 128,309.48
Balance EYFA 2014			
Balance EYFA 2014			EUR -2,667.92