

European Youth Forum

FRAMEWORK FOR
THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOOLS FOR
GLOBAL YOUTH CO-OPERATION

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A THE AIM OF THIS DOCUMENT

The work of the European Youth Forum in the field of interdependence and solidarity shall be guided by the same aims of the mission of the organisation, "to empower young people to actively participate in the society in which they live."

While the European Youth Forum works for the interests of all young people in Europe, the Youth Forum is politically committed working, in co-operation with its partners in the youth field, for the interests of all young people in the world.

Likewise, as a platform the European Youth Forum is the representative body of its members towards the institutions and partners in the youth field inside and outside Europe.

A strategic aim for European Youth Forum is, as laid down in work plan for 2001 and 2002, to promote and strengthen solidarity between young people in Europe and other parts of the world.

Based on its mission, the strategic aims and the experience gained to date, this document shall set down a long-term strategy for the interdependency and solidarity work of the European Youth Forum. It aims to define the best tools to achieve a global co-ordination of the youth movement.

How to read this document - Introductory notes

In order to facilitate a democratic and transparent debate, this document has taken into account different degrees of information about the field of global co-operation and its complexity. The first part of the document gives a general background of the field, a general political framework and a general evaluation of the situation of the co-ordination among youth organisations at global level. Following the analysis described in the first two chapters is a political proposal, specifically a concept of global co-operation for the European Youth Forum.

This document is borne out of a need to better co-ordinate the work of the European Youth Forum in the field of interdependence and solidarity. The information presented here has been formulated by the Bureau member who has taken comments from members of the Interdependence and Solidarity working units and from those participating in the relevant working groups in the European Youth Forum's Executive Committees. This paper has been worked on since the beginning of 2000 and has been the subject of an extensive consultation process within the European Youth Forum.

B INTRODUCTION

Globalisation demands from civil society higher levels of co-ordination at global level. Youth organisations play a role in the development work and they make their voice heard on global issues. The voice of European young people must join with that of other young people from all over the world.

The problems of young people, like of the rest of the society, should be examined from a global and interdependent perspective. In spite of the differences, there also exist problems and reasons, which are the bases of a North-South youth reality. Therefore, within the existence of the North-South reality, there is a youth reality that should be understood separate from development policies.

According to the United Nations, in 1995, the world's youth population was estimated to be over one billion - some 18% of the entire global population. These percentages are unequal for each world region, about 83% of the world's youth live in the developing countries, with 60% living in Asia and 23% living in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. It is estimated that in 2025 will be 1.36 billion young people in the world (16% of the global population in 2025).

Not all the young people have the same opportunities in the world. Many do not have access to education, health, family protection, housing, and many other basic conditions.

SIX ARGUMENTS

There are six arguments to take the challenge of effectively addressing youth in development:

Political

To guarantee equal opportunities for all young people in the world means to fight against the negative effects of globalisation and to promote its positive aspects

Economical

By supporting young people we ensure that they will be able to participate as productive members of the society instead of becoming a burden for society.

Democratic

It is a imperative that young people are included in the decision-making process when they are likely to be affected by its decisions.

Strategic

For development to be successful it is important and strategically wise that young people are given a voice. Participation from youth in national building, conflict resolution and environmental protection should become normal in the long run.

Moral

In case of outright exploitation of young people there is an unquestionable necessity to act and protect.

Legal

The United Nations World Action Youth Programme and various conventions, namely the Convention on the Rights of the Child, are the main legislative platforms for action with and for young people.

C GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF YOUTH AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

1 Youth Policy on a global level

During the last few years, youth policy has been updated at global level. In December 1995, the World Youth Action Programme of UN for 2000 year and beyond was approved, according to Resolution 50/81 of the General Assembly of United Nations. This programme represents the first global and operative effort to implement youth policies in a number of fields.¹

This Programme is an important advance in order to establish global and common criteria in youth policies, permitting the execution of follow-up of determined targets, namely:

- The establishment of a national youth policy
- The establishment of a co-ordinating body at a state level of youth policies
- Establishment of a national action programme at an operative level

The existence of youth policies at the UN level as well as at the regional levels help to initiate and reinvigorate national youth policies² (depending on the unique national situation of each country). However, the true scope of these policies and their success or failure beyond the data provided by the member states is not known.

In Lisbon on 1998 the first World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth was held sponsored by United Nations. The final conference declaration recognised as the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies has 88 points of action.³

Lisbon Declaration, paragraph 20:

“Strengthening the role of youth organisations in the launching, implementation and evaluation of national development programmes and plans”.

¹ The World Youth Action Programme of UN for 2000 year and beyond is centred on 10 priority fields: Education, Employment, Hunger and Poverty, Health, Environment, Drug Abuse, Juvenile Delinquency, Pleasure activities, Young women and also the Full and effective participation of youth in decision-making process. Also it establishes for these priority fields, three levels of execution: national plan, regional co-operation plan and international co-operation plan.

² Of the 185 members of United Nations, 153 have launched their national youth policies, 167 have a youth policy coordination structure, 114 have established an operative action programme in the youth field, but only 95 have executed these actions simultaneously.

³ The Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies structured the 88 actions points under the following headings: Establishment of National Youth policies, Youth Participation, Development, Peace, Education, Employment, Health, Drug Abuse and International Co-ordination.

It is important also that youth issues are integrated in development policies⁴ that concern young people, particularly in social policies (Copenhagen process), women policies (Beijing process) and Human Rights policies (in particular the Convention on the Rights of the Child).

2 EU Development policy

Development policy is closely linked to the external relations of the European Union and to the underlying economic and political interests. This multiple dimension is not integrated in a global and coherent strategy.

In May 1999, the Council of Ministers responsible for Development Co-operation invited the European Commission to prepare a draft general policy statement on development aid. The aim of such a statement was A) to rationalise the existing framework and B) propose overall guidelines for the future.

The Commission established a co-ordinated working group on development, in which the DG Relex, Trade, ECHO and SCR participated. In February 2000, this working group presented a working document called : 'The European Community development policy'.

In the debate on this document, the Commission tried, in the framework of a global and coherent strategy, to reconcile the various elements of its development co-operation policy. The Commission believes that, having had too many objectives, instruments and strategies over the last decades led to a situation which now requires certain adjustments in the development policy of the EU.

- The fragmentation of the aid instruments is particularly worrying. Each programme has its own legal basis and its own criteria and procedures (available funds come from more or less 60 different budget lines, as well as from non-EDF funding sources).
- The EC aid has considerably increased over the last decade. It jumped from a total commitment of 4,2 billion Euro in 1988 to 8,6 billion Euro in 1998 (6,8 billion Euro for aid to developing countries and 1,8 billion Euro for other countries).

⁴ All UN policies that affect young people and youth work must be considered, but when we are thinking about which areas YFJ should give priority in the UN framework, we must take into account our capacities and resources. Furthermore, at this point in time we are able to follow-up properly the social and women UN agendas, because we have already taken previous steps in these areas (we have internal political documents adopted by EXCOM and GA, and we have implemented, often in partnership several activities; also we have been participated in conferences and working groups, for example).

In the same context, the Commission wants the Community to implement a series of adjustments in the "**Political Guidelines**", which should guarantee a better impact of its policy in the field of development.

- Give priority to the integration of economic, commercial and political aspects of the development co-operation policy.
- Promote the integration of the poorest countries in the world economy.
- Focus the development policy on the objective of reducing poverty.
- Reinforce synergy between emergency, rehabilitation and development.
- In the framework of a global strategy, there is a need to concentrate Community aid on a more limited number of areas and priority sectors.
- Clarify the distribution of tasks with bilateral development programmes of the member states.

The Commission wishes to make a selection among the **Sectors and Themes** on which the Community should concentrate, while taking better account of the comparative and added value of the Community.

- Trade and development
- Social integration
- Support to macro-economic policies
- Social sectors, in particular sectoral policies in the fields of education and health
- Transport
- Food security

In all of the above fields, the Commission wishes to implement the following **horizontal principles**:

- Impact on reducing poverty
- Institutional development and reinforcing potential
- Equality between men and women
- Environment

The Commission believes it is necessary to involve **Civil society** in its development policy, in the following areas:

- Information, consultation and dialogue when working out development policies and strategies
- Strengthen the potential of civil society
- Participation of civil society in the implementation of co-operation programmes
- Decentralised co-operation

As an observer member of the EU Liaison Committee of NGOs, the European Youth Forum has participated in the meetings of this Committee. The YFJ should continue to actively participate in this Committee in order to advocate for the inclusion of Youth and Youth concerns in the EU's development co-operation and education policies.

3 The North-South policy of The Council of Europe

In 1998 the Council of Europe conducted a North-South Campaign in close collaboration with the European Union. The " European Conference of Parliamentarians and Non-Governmental Organisations on North-South Interdependence and Solidarity "held in Madrid, 1-3 June 1988 recommended to the Council of Europe member States to extend their traditional concerns for human rights, democracy and social justice to the peoples of the third World.

In May 1990 the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity, better known as the "North-South Centre", opened its doors (in Lisbon) on the basis of a partial agreement signed by the States interested in the project.

The North-South Centre's function is:

- To improve education and information
- To strengthen co-operation and contacts between NGOs from the North and the South
- To develop working relations with the UN system
- To act as a focal point for the follow-up the North-South Campaign
- To provide a framework and give a European dimension to initiatives by member governments and other actors in the area of multilateral co-operation

In the pursuit of the aims, the North-South Centre has developed a number of programmes, grouped together under three main programmes (Public Information and Media Relations; Global Education and Youth and Dialogue for Global Partnership).

The North-South Centre, via its **Youth Programme** seeks to promote and enhance the role of young people in the interdependence and solidarity field. The annual North-South Training Course for youth organisations is an essential component of the Youth programme. The main aim of this course is to train multipliers in youth organisations in the North and the south and to help them develop and implement North-South programmes. The centre plans also to organise specialised seminars for each world's region. And to increase the profile of the Youth organisations in the Development education Programme of the N-S Centre.

North-South Training Course for Youth Organisations (NSTC):

Annually organised by N-S Centre with the help of the Spanish Government at the Euro/Latin-American Youth Centre (CEULAJ) in Mollina (Malaga).

The trainers are selected by each regional youth platform and the participants are all of them members of the youth organisations. Each edition (since 1994) there are around 40 participants (20 from Europe and 20 for the others world's regions).

In the year 2000, the NSTC is planned for October and it will take place in a new frame work called "Summer University, Youth and Development" with others Youth activities in order to increase the visibility of the Youth in the development field.

The Youth Programme is prepared and implemented by the **Youth Programme Committee (YPC)**⁵ which also serves as a co-ordination forum of the role and activities of youth organisations in the field of N-S Interdependence. The YPC is composed of representatives of the main Regional Youth Platforms, included YFJ.

⁵ Usually the YPC meeting is at the same time and place of the GCCC meeting.

D YOUTH ACTORS AND CO-OPERATION AND CO-ORDINATION

The Co-ordination and Co-operation among youth organisations at global, regional, sub-regional, national and local level is an essential part of the process to strengthen the capacity of young people to act as important social, educational, political and informational players in our communities.

The Co-ordination and co-operation models among youth organisations used before 1990 have been influenced for the extraordinary and faster changes had in our societies.

We can say in general terms that, the co-operation and co-ordination models among youth organisations are, all of them, in a transition process and period, where the new and old problems are living together, where the old models are coexisting with new coming models⁶.

Among the positive steps made after the end of the Cold War on the level of Co-ordination and Co-operation among youth organisations we should underline the importance of the 3rd session of the World Youth Forum of the UN System (1998), the First World Youth Festival (1998) and the annual North-South Training Course of the North-South Centre (since 1994).

1 International Non Governmental Youth Organisations (INGYOs)

International Non Governmental Youth Organisations (INGYOs) are, by definition, the real players in the organised youth reality, in its purest state, and the true basis of youth work.

During the last decade they have had to face a period of adaptation to the changing international situation. This effort of "self-renovation" is characterised by innovation, trying to find new solutions to challenges and make use of existing opportunities. New movements constantly appear, bringing life into the movements, forcing the "older" actors to rethink and renew their own concepts.

All of this has affected the joint work among INGYOs. The efforts made have been important and positives (their participation on the 2nd and 3rd session of the WYF of UN System, their contribution to the World Youth Festival, their solidarity campaign, for example with Eastern Timor, Western Sahara, Burma or Middle East, their international summer camps and schools, their international festivals, their

⁶ Various examples that illustrate that transition are (1) the difficulties that the IPC of the WYF UN System has been facing to clarify its own composition; (2) The last discussion held in the GCCC about the big differences between the WYFestival Panama and the 15 World Youth and Students Festival.

magazines, etc.) but not enough: the co-ordination among INGYOs at global level was and is sporadic.

Also at regional level the INGYOs have made positive steps to increase its co-ordination and co-operation: in Europe through the creation of the European Youth Forum with the fusion of the three platforms; In Latin America with the efforts made to consolidate the Latin-American Youth Forum; and in Africa with the efforts made to build the African Youth Network. But also, in other regions (Asia, Pacific, Mediterranean) the level of co-ordination is weak and the regional Youth Platforms in these regions are only NYCs co-ordination bodies.

It seems that inside of INGYOs there is not enough degree of discussion about the importance of strengthening the co-ordination with other INGYOs at global and regional level.

2 National Youth Councils

National Youth Councils (NYCs) have increased their presence and specific weight in world events and in the attempts of global co-ordination and have become real actors of the international youth scenario. As a sign of this we can take the points 4, 5 and 6 of the Braga Youth Action Plan regarding the NGO Co-operation at National Level, which call to strengthen the National Youth NGO Platforms and the necessity to have the consultative mechanisms between national youth NGO platforms and Governments.

However, there is a lot of models of National Youth NGO Platforms. As the Braga Youth Action Plan says our ideal is: "National Youth NGO Platforms, which represent the widest range of democratic youth organisations of each State (should) be established with the initiatives of the youth organisations themselves. The Platforms should respect each member organisations independence and operate based on the principles of solidarity and democracy".

About the co-ordination and co-operation, among NYCs there has many initiatives at different levels (e.g., global, regional, sub-regional), but without achieving a sufficient degree of co-ordination. However, the regional and sub-regional integration process in many parts of the world have encouraged the NYCs to be more co-ordinated. Perhaps the YFJ has achieved an important degree of co-ordination among NYCs, although when we are talking about interdependence and solidarity policy this degree of co-ordination among European NYCs is not enough nor is it totally coherent⁷.

⁷ The discussion about the membership of the International Planning Committee of the 4th session of the WYF of UN System has showed the difficulties to divide the tasks and the competence conflict of representation between the Regional Platform (YFJ) and NYCs. The same situation has happened with ESIB from the size of INGYOs.

At global level we may examine two experiences as a training examples: the last General Assembly of World Youth Assembly (WAY) and the representation of youth in the General Assembly of the United Nations.

In the case of WAY, which celebrated its 13th GA in February 2000, it has not got the desirable democratic, independence or representative degree in its working methods. Because of this the important European NYCs (which have historically have supported WAY) have left this platform. Also the YFJ Executive Committee held in Geneva on 26-28 November 1999 adopted a resolution giving up our idea of being members of WAY (adopted in the YFJ EXCOM held in Budapest on November 1997)⁸.

The second example is the Youth Delegates in the National delegations to the UN General Assembly. Until now only few countries have actually been sending Youth Delegates.

UN World Youth Action Programme for 2000 year and beyond:

"Strengthen the involvement of young people in international forums, for example by considering the inclusion of youth representatives in their national delegations to the UN General Assembly".

In the case of Europe are Denmark, Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands and Norway there has been an experience with the UN GA. Through some of these NYCs, YFJ has been able to attend the UN General Assembly. This experience has been positive but is limited yet. It is necessary to create an environment in order to facilitate that many countries send Youth Delegates to the UN General Assembly. At the same time it is also important to guarantee close contact between the Youth Delegates and NYCs and the co-ordination between this NYCs with the YFJ in case of Europe. Also it will be necessary to think about solidarity methods in order to guarantee a regional (other world's regions) balance among the Youth Delegates. Not only more participation and co-ordination by the YFJ is needed concerning the UN General Assembly, but also concerning the UNESCO General Assembly. Especially because there are major developments on the participation of youth representatives within the UNESCO system.

At the sub-regional level, non-formal co-operation among several national youth councils have been a very positive element in the 90's. Not only more or less steady European alliances have been created. We have also seen the formation of the Central American Network and the Co-ordination of the NYCs in Southern Africa (SADC).

⁸ See You the document Executive 0810-99 called: " Resolution of the YFJ Executive Committee regarding the 13th General Assembly of the WAY".

Other dialogues and co-ordination efforts among NYCs have taken place and are being consolidated, these are dialogues based on cultural, historical and language proximity, i.e the French Speaking Youth Forum, the Youth Forum of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries and the Commonwealth Youth Platform.

At the same time, the groups of young people organised at local and regional level are actively getting involved in the international work, which obliges NYCs to increase their proposal and space towards them.

The YFJ welcomes these initiatives and stress that all these initiatives must look for the compatibility, and not the exclusion, with other dialogues and co-ordinating spaces. The positive aspect of all these processes is that they are working with a important common criteria: to empower young people and their active participation, especially through youth organisations.

3 Regional Youth Platforms

The Regional Youth Platforms have taken on the role of co-ordination (very weak, but existing) that has enabled a certain political coherence in the different world youth events that have taken place, i.e. the Caparica World Youth Festival and the Braga World Youth Forum.

However, all the platforms are facing big challenges today. These concern matters such as "representativity", increase of participation, the internal democratic structure of the organisations, efficient information management and more transparent decision-making. These common challenges have their own expression in each region and with different priorities. The existence of several regional platforms in each region also shows the limitations of the process.

Global Co-ordination Co-operation Committee (GCCC)

Given the difficulties faced by youth organisations from all over the world to come together and discuss issues of importance faced by all, the Global Co-ordination Co-operation Committee has been promoted and funded by the European Youth Forum since 1997. The GCCC tries to:

- create a space to improve the communication among the platforms (information and agenda exchange)
- create a space for meeting and a continuous dialogue (once or twice a year)
- co-ordinate the platforms' participation and involvement in global youth work and global events, while respecting the independence of each of the platforms
- save resources and efficiently share the small resources we have

The GCCC brings together the most prominent regional youth actors in the world. These Platforms have some similarities but also they represent different political realities in their regions:

In Asia the YFJ is working with two platforms: the Asian Students Association and the Asian Youth Council. Both contribute to peace and understanding in the region through providing a platform for active youth participation. However, a lot of youth organisations in the region are not members of these platforms.

In Africa the YFJ is working also with two platforms: the Pan-African Youth Movement (MPJ) and the African Youth Network. The PYM is the historical Youth platform in the continent, and is the recognised actor with governments, particularly the Organisation of African Unity. MPJ brings together the National Youth Structures (governmental and non-governmental). The African Youth Network is a younger platform born in 1995 by the African INGYOs and National Youth NGO Platforms which have participated in the 2nd ACP-EU Youth Co-operation Assembly held in Stockholm on September 1995.

The Caribbean Federation of Youth (CFY) brings together National NGO Youth Platforms and is recognised by the regional institutions. Even though the resources are very limited.

The Latin American Youth Forum (FLAJ) brings together INGYOs and NYCs. FLAJ does not have a clear and strong partner to work with and therefore the resources are very limited. FLAJ has contacts with PARLATIONO and is recognised by the Ibero-American Youth Organisation (OIJ) and is working hard to extend its co-ordination role of the entire Latin American region, given priority to enlarge their presence in Brazil.

The Pacific Youth Council, represents youth communities on islands in the Pacific. PYC faces financial constraints combined with a geography that means travelling between each community is very expensive and therefore a constant challenge to the development of inter-regional youth co-operation.

Our Arab partners, the Arab Youth Union is a youth platform with some history and it is recognised as a main youth interlocutor by Arab Governments. The AYU brings together national youth organisations and was the main interlocutor from the youth Arab side during the Euro-Arab Dialogue, started in Malta on 1994.

The GCCC brought together very diverse regional youth platforms so that they may learn from each other. Until now the experience has been positive and all the platforms have recognised the value of the GCCC based on a partnership of equals. At the GCCC we have started a discussion in order to clarify better the role and the bases work in order to advance one step more along the road to closer co-operation.

E GLOBAL CO-OPERATION CONCEPT

Before starting to think about creating a World Youth co-ordination and representative Platform we (that is youth organisations) must be better co-ordinated and increase the level of co-operation among us. We should have as a long term goal, however, to establish a representative body for co-operation and co-ordination of Youth NGOs, including regional as well as international youth NGOs.

A theoretical global youth platform will need to guarantee the following principles:

- Independent
- Democratic
- Pluralist
- Gathering the non-governmental youth actors
- Achieving a degree of representation that allows having a valid dialogue with the global institutions
- Under exclusive responsibility of the youth organisations all over the world

However, as we have tried to show during all this document there are not the conditions now and in the near future to think seriously about such a platform.

Does this mean that we should do nothing? No. Just the opposite is true. We must work hard and as use as much as possible all the opportunities that we have.

The complexity of the field demands a global co-operation strategy which facilitates to us work in a long term vision with different partners at different levels and with different tools, in order that we can be coherent and politically efficient.

STEP BY STEP

1. Use better the potential that we have now as European Youth Organisations. This means a common strategy is required.
2. The common strategy required is one that can help us to clarify better the strengths and roles of both the YFJ and its MOs.
3. Further try to achieve a common division of tasks between the YFJ and its MOs.

GLOBAL COOPERATION TOOLS

In order to use better, and to be part of our strategy, the different tools that can increase the level of co-ordination and co-operation among youth organisations:

At the level of independent co-ordination:

Global Co-operation Co-ordination Committee

At a political and programmatic level:

World Youth Forum of United Nations System

At the increment of youth organisation participation level:

World Youth Festival

At level of training and facilitating the reflection process:

Youth Programme Committee of the North South Centre of the Council of Europe

At the level of support for concrete solidarity projects:

1% for Solidarity Youth Activities

At the level of the Youth Forum internally:

Working Group on Global Youth Co-operation

At the level of the United Nations:

Youth Representation at the UN (Ref. UN doc 0624-2Ke)

1) At level of independent co-ordination: Global Co-operation Co-ordination Committee

Based: (a) in the necessity to strengthen the co-ordination and co-operation among youth organisations at all the levels; (b) and convinced that the regional youth organisations can and should play a constructive role on it; (c) on a role that should be compatible with other process and not exclusive; (d) on and looking for a coherent policy with the member organisations with each platform.

The European Youth Forum and its member organisations want to stress to the other regional youth platforms the need to continue to work with the GCCC experience, as a periodic space of co-ordination and co-operation among regional youth platforms.

In the new period we must to work to create a more clear framework for the GCCC. This means clarifying the GCCC aims and internalising them within each platform. As YFJ we propose the following aims:

- To increase the communication among regional youth platforms (information and agenda exchange)
- To have a periodic and a continuous dialogue among all the regional youth platforms (once a year)
- To work together at global level in order to insure the development of the 30 points of the introductions of the Braga Youth Action Plan (as a political statement)
- Look for other common political positions, without putting the GCCC framework at risk and respecting the independence of each platform

For all the GCCC partners it should be clear that the GCCC is a co-ordination and a co-operation tool, but the GCCC is not a representative body (even though all the regional youth platforms together represent a big voice inside of the world youth family)

The Composition: The European composition of the GCCC must be re-discussed. Six European representatives in each meeting force the celebration of all meetings in Europe and this makes difficult for the rest of the platforms to feel equal part of the process.

The composition of the other regions member platforms must also be reviewed. The sub-regional criteria established for the Arabic world and for Latin America, have been differently valued by the respective platforms.

The priorities for the next period:

- To contribute, as a part of the IPC, to the success of the 4th session of the WYF of UN System
- To contribute, as a main actors jointly with the Panamanian Government, to the success of the 2nd World Youth Festival
- To give priority to the co-operation among member organisations of the regional platforms, reinforcing the training skills, technical support and looking for more resources and space for youth organisations in the development co-operation
- To increase the visibility of the GCCC and contribute to the increased visibility of the youth role in the human development (through the publication of a presentation leaflet and other initiatives, for example, an internet database about international youth co-operation).

2) At a political and programmatic level: World Youth Forum of United Nations System

The WYF of the UN is nowadays the most important space of world-wide dialogue between the youth movement and the (inter) governmental side and the UN Agencies dealing with youth issues. Though not yet an established structure, it could become one of the main global events about youth policy if the youth movement manages to keep a strong position in the preparatory and decision-making processes.

3) At the level of youth organisation participation: World Youth Festival

The World Youth Festival, in the renewed line established since 1998 in Portugal, has two main elements that are important for the global co-operation: first it is the only global event that is property of the continental platforms and where decision making is exclusively in the hands of the youth movement. Secondly it is an important opportunity to increase visibility of international youth work and pluralistic participation of young people.

4) At level of training and facilitating the reflection process: Youth Program Committee of the North South Centre of the Council of Europe

The participation of youth representatives in the program committee in the sense of a co-decision-making is firstly a concrete action of global co-operation and secondly allows adapting programs and courses to the agenda of global youth work. Furthermore the programmes and training courses of the North South Centre offer a frame of constant dialogue and training in this field that is absolutely necessary.

5) At the level of support for concrete solidarity projects: 1% for Solidarity Youth Activities

In the frame of global co-operation, concrete actions are necessary and useful, especially if they can be used for the improvement of the work itself, as for example the project that allowed access to electronic communication for all platforms that are partner in our co-operation.

6) At the level of the Youth Forum internally: Working Group on Global Youth Co-operation

The European Youth Forum needs an internal tool in its Interdependence and Solidarity area. Taking into account the experience gained since the last mandate when the I&S and UN Working Units worked separate in small groups, we now need to think for the next period in terms of an Working Group on Global Youth Co-operation. This Group will work on issues affecting all the political area and will divide the follow-up of the various dossiers by persons, giving increased responsibility to the member organisation participants and increasing the capacity of the European Youth

Forum to act through this internal mechanism. The second related point is to better clarify the mandate of the members of the Working Group on Global Youth Co-operation and give to them more representative missions, always under the political direction of the Bureau.

I&S Reports

As a tool for internal communication, the I&S reports on the working units⁹ and the report on the GCCC offer excellent potential to involve all member organisations in this working area. In addition the reports are also a good method with which to publish the results of the projects funded by the YFJ 1% solidarity budget.

F THE STRATEGICAL LINK BETWEEN GLOBAL CO-OPERATION AND REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

Finally, it is important to link this global co-operation policy with the regional co-operation that takes place between Europe and other regions of the world (Asia, Latin America, Mediterranean, Africa, Caribbean and Pacific). To increase our regional co-operation is an important part of the I&S work and will provide a solid base upon which to improve our global co-operation policy.

⁹ The YFJ General Assembly held in Salzburg in October 1998 gave the Bureau the mandate to establish democratic and efficient working methods. The Interdependence and Solidarity Bureau member proposed the creation of four working units (for further information see document I&S/135-99): Regional co-operation; Global co-operation; UN Youth Work; and Development Education. The first three working units would meet twice a year simultaneously and the fourth working unit would work via e-mail. There were three main aims for these Working Units: 1) to strengthen and support the development of the Youth Forum's Interdependence and Solidarity work; 2) to ensure a coherent approach and to facilitate the implementation of the work plan 1999-2000 (point 4.5.4); 3) and to provide MOs with space to contribute through their expertise and experience in this field.