

The background features a light gray map of Europe. Overlaid on the map are twelve yellow stars, arranged in a circular pattern similar to the European Union flag. Two stylized human figures are drawn over the map using thick, hand-painted lines. The figure on the left is yellow, and the figure on the right is orange. Both figures have their arms raised and are holding hands, symbolizing unity and youth.

# The European & youth Union

**OPPORTUNITIES AND WAYS TO GET INVOLVED**

## Who we are:



'YEAH – Young Europeans at Heart' is a European project funded by the European Commission programme 'Youth in Action'. The main objectives of the programme are to promote and encourage the active participation of young people and to enhance their knowledge about the role of the European Union, as well as the way in which it operates and the ideals it represents.

**The programme is run by the NGO Support Centre and the Cyprus Youth Clubs Organization.**



## What is the European Union?

**The European Union** is the political and economic union of 28 member states. It evolved from the European Economic Community (EEC), which was formed in 1958 by the Treaty of Rome. The aim of the EEC was to promote economic cooperation between six countries; Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

What began as a purely economic union has transformed into an organization spanning various policy areas, from telecommunications to environment.

Today, the Union is not only an economic partnership, but a unique formation of economic and political cooperation between 28 European countries (currently). This evolution was reflected in the change of name from the European Economic Community (EEC) to the European Union (EU).

The European Union has created a vast, single market within which people, goods, stocks and services can move freely and without prohibition. Crowning the endeavor to unify the European market was monetary union, and the creation of the single European currency: the euro.

## Equality and Human Rights

The main priority and aim of the European Union is to safeguard and promote the principles of equality and Human rights. Human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law and respect for human rights comprise the core values of the European Union.

These rights, along with the European Union's commitment to defend and promote them, are guaranteed by the 2009 Treaty of Lisbon and the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights. The EU's institutional bodies have a legal obligation to uphold these rights, as do its member states wherever they apply EU Law.

# A Historical Review

★ **1962** 30<sup>TH</sup> JULY

The EU 'Common Agricultural Policy' (CAP) is established, aiming to help farmers protect the environment, improve the living conditions of animals and to ensure the sustainability of rural communities.

★ **1951** 18<sup>TH</sup> APRIL

Belgium, West Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands sign the Treaty of Paris to establish the European Coal and Steel Community.

★ **1957** 25<sup>TH</sup> MARCH

With the Treaty of Rome, the European Economic Community (EEC), or the 'common market' is founded.

★ **1950** 9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH

Robert Schuman, the Foreign Minister of France, presents a plan for closer cooperation. The 9th is henceforth celebrated as 'Europe Day'.

★ **1973** 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY

Denmark, Ireland, and the UK become full members of the EEC.

★ **1979** 7<sup>TH</sup> - 10<sup>TH</sup> JUNE

The first direct elections for the European Parliament are held.

★ **1981** 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY

Greece joins the EEC as its 10<sup>th</sup> member.

★ **1986** 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY

Spain and Portugal accede to the EEC.

★ **1974** 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER

The European Regional Development Fund is established, with the aim of strengthening economic and social cohesion, offering financial assistance to underprivileged and marginalized areas.

★ **1968** 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY

All customs duties among the six EEC countries are eliminated.

★ **1999** 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY

The euro is adopted in eleven countries (and by Greece in 2001).

★ **2007** 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY

Two more eastern-European countries, Bulgaria and Romania, join the EU.

★ **1993** 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY

A single market comes into force with four freedoms including: the free movement of goods, services, persons and capital.

★ **2004** 1<sup>ST</sup> MAY

The number of EU members is increased to 25 with the accession of Cyprus, Malta, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and the Czech Republic.

★ **1995** 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY

Austria, Finland and Sweden join the EU.

★ **2013** 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY

Croatia is integrated into the European Union as a full member.

★ **1995** 26<sup>TH</sup> MARCH

The Schengen Agreement comes into force in seven countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Portugal. The Treaty guarantees the free movement of persons between these countries and removes internal borders, replacing them with a single external border. Within this area apply common rules and procedures regarding visas for short stays, asylum requests and border controls. At the same time, it enhances cooperation and coordination between police services and judicial authorities.

★ **2007** 13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER

The Treaty of Lisbon is signed, providing the Union with the legal framework and tools that it requires in order to deal with future challenges and fulfil the aspirations of citizens. The Treaty strengthens the role of the European Parliament ensuring equal footing with the Council, which represents Member States, for the majority of EU legislation. Furthermore, the President of the European Commission is henceforth elected by the European Parliament.

★ **1992** 7<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY

The Maastricht Treaty (formally, the Treaty on European Union) is signed. The Treaty introduces the concept of European citizenship, reinforces the powers of the European Parliament and launches the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU).

★ **2004** 29<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER

The Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe is signed, formally establishing the principles of liberty, democracy, respect and human rights. In addition, a reform of the European institutions is launched, in particular strengthening the role of Parliament.



## Education, Training and Participation

One of the European Union's main goals is to promote more equal opportunities for European youth and encourage and strengthen their participation through its programmes and policies.

### Erasmus +

#### What is Erasmus+ ?

Erasmus+ is the EU's new financial programme for education, training, youth and sport. The programme will provide 4 million people the opportunity to study, train, volunteer and work in another country from 2014-2020 and it is estimated that 15,000 Cypriot nationals will benefit from it. Between 2014 and 2020, 14.6 billion euro will be allocated for this project. The programme provides exchanges between students and other members of educational institutions, and cooperation among universities, promoting the creation of joint postgraduate programmes and strengthening youth volunteer programs and exchanges.

*More information about Erasmus+ can be found at:*

[http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index\\_el.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_el.htm)



## Trainings:

The trainings offered by the European Union are an amazing opportunity for all young people to gain knowledge and skills, while having the chance to meet people from other countries. These trainings deal with a variety of issues, from youth entrepreneurship and empowering employment, to crisis management and social inclusion. Normally adopting a non-formal educational approach, they put special emphasis on the exchange of experiences and views between participants. Registering for these programmes is simple and can be done online and the cost of participation is particularly low. Most of the trainings are free, while the cost of accommodation, food and the majority (usually 70%) of the travel expenses are covered by the European Union.

*More information about trainings, along with a full list of all opportunities available in the near future can be found at:*

[www.salto-youth.net/](http://www.salto-youth.net/)



"Participating in a training session in Bosnia was an incredible experience for me. As well as learning a great deal, it gave me the opportunity to get to know and to exchange views with some extremely interesting people in a friendly and pleasant environment"

*Savvas, NGO Support Centre, Cyprus*

## The European Voluntary Service

The European Voluntary Service offers young people aged 18 – 30 the opportunity to spend between two weeks and 12 months abroad, working voluntarily with various programmes, initiatives and organizations. Volunteers who participate in programmes offered by this service are provided with free accommodation, food, insurance and daily living expenses. Participants may be expected to contribute a small part (10%) of their travel cost.

### *Useful Links:*

[http://europa.eu/youth/EU/voluntary-activities/european-voluntary-service\\_en](http://europa.eu/youth/EU/voluntary-activities/european-voluntary-service_en)

<http://www.evyouth.org/>

<http://europeanvoluntaryservice.org/>



*"The EVS provides you with a unique opportunity to engage with different ways of thinking and behaving, and to meet other young people who are like you but come from different countries"*

*Eleni, YEU, Greece*



## Erasmus Mundus

The Erasmus Mundus programme is open to higher education institutions, students, researchers and university staff. The programme offers support to European Post-graduate programmes, simultaneously fostering partnerships between academic institutions, and encouraging the establishment of joint programmes at a pan-European level.

Most importantly, the programme offers scholarships and other forms of financial support to students who wish to undertake post-graduate studies. The support provided to students covers the participation fees, (the education fees) and offers those who are selected a monthly subsistence, as well as support with travel expenses.

*More information about the programme, the post-graduate degrees which offer scholarships and application procedures can be found at:*

[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus\\_mundus/index\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/index_en.php)



## Youth Exchanges

The youth exchange programmes provide groups of young people the opportunity to host other young people from different countries for a period of up to 21 days. During the exchange, the participants take part in a common programme of activities, which include topic-based workshops, discussions, excursions and social events. These programmes aim at the exchange of views and experiences between young people, enabling a deeper understanding of the cultural and social realities of each country. The exchanges provide a wonderful experience for all young people and are an opportunity for them to gain knowledge and skills through dialogue and discussion about everyday experiences. Throughout the duration of these exchanges, the European Union covers all accommodation and food costs, as well as the majority of the travel cost.

*More information about the youth exchanges can be found at:*

<https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/tool/what-is-a-youth-exchange-action-1-1.1306/>



"I think the European programmes are a fantastic experience for all young people. Having participated in many exchanges, I can say that more so than the sites, the beautiful cities and the various dishes that I tasted, it was the people I met who made a lasting impression on me. After every programme, I return to Cyprus full of inspiration and ready to try new things"

*Nicolina, Cyprus*

To learn more about the **Erasmus+** programmes or for any other European Union programmes and opportunities available to young people, contact the **Cyprus Youth Council** and the **Youth Board Cyprus**.

## Cyprus Youth Council



The Cyprus Youth Council (CYC) is a platform of youth representatives acting as a coordinating body for Non-Governmental Youth Organizations (NGYOs) in Cyprus. Through its work and the development of its programmes, the CYC promotes dialogue and cooperation between its member organizations, while at the same time offering a representative framework to develop initiatives, implement actions and find solutions to the problems that young people are facing.

*Contact details and useful links for the Youth Council:*

**Tel.:** 22878316

**Email:** [info@cyc.org.cy](mailto:info@cyc.org.cy)

**Website:** <http://www.cyc.org.cy/>

## Youth Board



The Youth Board of Cyprus is the official governmental body for administering and promoting activities related to youth. Since 1994, when it was established by the House of Representatives, the Youth Board has developed many initiatives, offering young people a plethora of opportunities to actively participate in social affairs, both in Cyprus and abroad. The Youth Board of Cyprus has been acknowledged as the National Service for the administration of youth activities as part of the new Erasmus+

programme, so for any queries or for more information about the programme, don't hesitate to get in touch (see contact details below). Similarly, Cyprus has a Eurodesk, whose role is to provide information about European policies and opportunities them in any way.

*Contact details and useful links for the Youth Board:*

**Tel.:** (+357) 22402600/-602.

**Email:** [info@youthboard.org.cy](mailto:info@youthboard.org.cy)

**Website:** [www.youthboard.org.cy](http://www.youthboard.org.cy)

### **Eurodesk**

**Tel.:** (+357) 22402613

**Email:** [eurodeskcy@eurodesk.eu](mailto:eurodeskcy@eurodesk.eu)

**Website:** <http://www.eurodesk.eu>



## ***Career Opportunities in the European Union***

---

Aside from the opportunities available to young people by the European Union to gain or develop skills, experience and knowledge, there are also career and work experience opportunities.

### ***Internships for Graduates and Students***

European institutions provide many internship opportunities to students and graduates, offering them the chance vary.

#### ***Indicative examples:***

##### ***For graduates:***

##### ***European Commission***

Who can apply: candidates who have obtained a degree (minimum BA) upon completion of at least three years of university study

Duration: 5 months

Where: In Brussels, Luxembourg, in the capital cities of member states, in Commission delegations in non-EU member countries

##### ***European Parliament***

Who can apply: people with a university degree

Duration: 5 months

Where: in Brussels, Strasbourg, Luxembourg as well as information offices in member states.

## For Students:

### **European Commission** (Joint Research Centre)

Undergraduate, post-graduate students and doctoral candidates

Who can apply: students who are working towards obtaining their undergraduate or postgraduate degree or PhD

Duration: 3-5 months

Where: Ispra (Italy), Karlsruhe (Germany), Ixelles/Elsene (Belgium), Petten (Netherlands) or Seville (Spain)

### **European Parliament**

For people with a secondary education diploma

Who can apply: those who have completed secondary education which provides access to higher education.

Priority will be given to young people who are obliged to undertake work experience as part of their studies

Duration: 1-4 months

*More about internships at the European Parliament:*

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/el/007cecd1cc/Traineeships.html>

### **Study Visits**

Who can apply: citizens who wish to study topics related to European unification

Duration: maximum 1 month

*More information about work experience opportunities in all bodies of the European Union can be found at:*

[http://europa.eu/about-eu/working-eu-institutions/traineeships/index\\_el.htm#graduates-tab](http://europa.eu/about-eu/working-eu-institutions/traineeships/index_el.htm#graduates-tab)



"An internship at the European Union gives you the chance to live at the heart of the EU, to follow daily procedures and decision making, to meet European Commissioners, MEP's, diplomats and politicians, and for your ideas and suggestions to be met with absolute respect and appreciation"

**Ioanna, intern at the European Commission,  
Cyprus**



## *Job opportunities at the European Union*

As well as the opportunities for work experience, you can also explore the possibility of applying for a job at the institutional bodies of the European Union. Based in the heart of Europe, you'll be in a dynamic and cosmopolitan environment which will offer you the opportunity for an exciting career. Working in the EU's institutions will give you the chance to use your analytical, organizational and communicational skills at a high level.

The institutional bodies of the European Union frequently employ final-year students, graduates with previous work experience, administrative staff and experienced professionals from a wide range of sectors, as well as translators and interpreters.

*For more information, visit:*

[www.eu-careers.eu/](http://www.eu-careers.eu/)





## ***Ways of participating in European Union policy making***

---

As a political and economic union of states whose priority is to uphold human rights and to promote democracy, the European Union attaches great significance in strengthening citizen participation. Thus, as it grows ever wider, the EU strives for transparency and democracy in all its institutions.

### **Structured dialogue and European Youth Conference**

Structured dialogue promotes discussion between young people and political officials in order for their views to be taken into consideration during the drafting of European policy for young people. These discussions are conducted through public consultations at a local level in all the countries of the European Union. The results of these consultations are then discussed at the European Youth Conference which takes place every six months in the context of each EU presidency. In the context of the European Youth Conference, the priorities for youth-related policy drafting are determined. These are then put forward to the European Commission for the formation of policies at a European level.

### **The European Citizen's Initiative**

The European Union aims to make active participation a reality and to create ways for citizens to have a say beyond voting and elections. A recent development that serves that exact purpose is the European Citizen's Initiative, which allows every EU citizen to claim the attention of the Parliament for any major issue of their choice.

The European Citizen's Initiative stipulates that if an issue or an aim represents applications from at least seven member states and has received more than one million signatures of support, it is put forward to the Parliament for discussion. The first initiative which had the opportunity to take its place in the European Parliament was titled "The Right to Water". It sought the establishment of the right of access to clean water and the recognition of water as a public good.

*For more information about the European Citizen's Initiative please see the following link:*

<http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/welcome>.



## *The European Parliament*

---

The European Parliament is the only European body which is elected democratically directly by EU citizens. This makes it the only institution which directly represents the priorities and needs of European citizens.

Each country is represented by a certain number of Members of European Parliament according to its population. (Cyprus elects 6 MEPs, for example). The MEPs serve as representatives of their own countries but also as members of European policy groups. These policy groups, also comprised of national parties of common political beliefs, represent and express different ideological beliefs, promoting different political programmes and proposals.

*More information about European political parties can be found at:*

<http://www.elections2014.eu/el/european-political-parties>

The role of the European Parliament is not limited to adopting legislation. It also supervises other institutions and their decisions, for example international agreements made by the Council or European Commission proceedings. In other words, the European Parliament, (the representatives which we as European citizens elect), manages the European Union's decisions and can influence its actions and policies. This is something it has done on a number of occasions.

Although in the past its capabilities were limited, since the Treaty of Lisbon was signed its responsibilities have increased. As the only institutional body of the EU which is elected directly by citizens, the European Parliament now boasts new tools to ensure the accountability of the EU to its citizens.

The Parliament, i.e. the elected representatives of European citizens, also has the last say on the European Union budget, and from the year 2014 will elect the president of the European Commission.

*More information about the European Parliament can be found at:*

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/>

## The importance of democratic participation

We've been told many times about our right to vote and the fact that it was won through years of struggle for the consolidation of democracy and human rights. These days, many of us feel that our vote has little power, that our options are limited and that our candidate representatives are consistently predictable and hugely ineffective.

But what happens when the majority of young people choose to abstain? The electoral procedures are controlled by, represent and are relevant to only a few. Young people cease to be informed, candidate politicians cease to be responsible for their policies on youth and the fear of dated perceptions being perpetuated becomes real. Thus, we solidify exactly that which with our attitude we try to prevent.

It's important for every single one of us, as citizens, to develop an active role in the formation of policies and the function of institutions at a local and European level. We mustn't forget that central to democracy is the participation of citizens and that our desires and opinions can only be communicated through our active participation.



## The NGO Support Centre:



The NGO Support Centre is a non-governmental, non-profit organization which was founded in 1999 with the aim of supporting and developing Civil Society in Cyprus. Through its programmes and activities the Centre promotes peace and reconciliation, inter-cultural dialogue and active citizenship. It also raises awareness about human rights and development education, particularly among youth. Simultaneously, it helps local NGOs to develop their potential, offering them advice and other services.

### Contact:

**Tel.:** (+357) 22875099

**Email:** [info@ngo-sc.org](mailto:info@ngo-sc.org)

**Website:** [www.ngo-sc.org/](http://www.ngo-sc.org/)

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/NgoSupportCentre>

## The Cyprus Youth Clubs Organization:



The Cyprus Youth Clubs Organization, (KOKEN) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization which acts as the central coordinating body for Youth Clubs. The aim of the organization is to support the work of the volunteers at the Youth Clubs, ensuring they are run smoothly and to help improve the quality of the activities and services provided to young people.

The Youth Clubs are voluntary community youth organizations which provide opportunities for networking, creative activity, information and entertainment, and are open to young people throughout all of Cyprus. There are roughly 100 Youth Clubs active in Cyprus today, with 6000 registered members.

**Tel.:** (+357) 22323260

**Email:** [come@cyprusyouth.org](mailto:come@cyprusyouth.org)

**Facebook:** [www.cyprusyouth.org](http://www.cyprusyouth.org)

## *Useful Links:*

[http://europa.eu/about-eu/eu-history/index\\_el.htm](http://europa.eu/about-eu/eu-history/index_el.htm)

[http://europa.eu/epso/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/epso/index_en.htm)

[http://europa.eu/index\\_el.htm](http://europa.eu/index_el.htm)

[http://europa.eu/index\\_el.htm](http://europa.eu/index_el.htm)

[http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index\\_el.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_el.htm)

[www.salto-youth.net/](http://www.salto-youth.net/)

[http://europa.eu/youth/EU/voluntary-activities/european-voluntary-service\\_en](http://europa.eu/youth/EU/voluntary-activities/european-voluntary-service_en)

<http://www.evyouth.org/>

<http://europeanvoluntaryservice.org/>

[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus\\_mundus/index\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/index_en.php)

<https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/tool/what-is-a-youth-exchange-action-1-1.1306/>

<http://www.cyc.org.cy/>

[www.youthboard.org.cy](http://www.youthboard.org.cy)

<http://www.eurodesk.eu>

[http://europa.eu/about-eu/working-eu-institutions/traineeships/index\\_el.htm](http://europa.eu/about-eu/working-eu-institutions/traineeships/index_el.htm)

[http://ec.europa.eu/stages/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/stages/index_en.htm)

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/007cecd1cc/Traineeships.html>

[http://europa.eu/about-eu/working-eu-institutions/traineeships/index\\_el.htm#graduates-tab](http://europa.eu/about-eu/working-eu-institutions/traineeships/index_el.htm#graduates-tab)

[www.eu-careers.eu/](http://www.eu-careers.eu/)

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/dialogue\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/dialogue_en.htm)

<http://www.elections2014.eu/el/european-political-parties>

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/>

<http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/welcome>



**YEAH - Young Europeans At Heart**

For more information: 22875099

**[www.yeahcy.eu](http://www.yeahcy.eu)**

Nicosia 2014

This pamphlet was funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views of the author only; the Commission is not responsible for any use of the information contained therein.



With the support of the European Commission  
programme 'Youth in Action'.

