

EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT SWITZERLAND

Annual report 2011

Looking back at an eventful 15 year anniversary





Annual report 2011: Looking back at an eventful 15 year anniversary

Dear members of EYP Switzerland

This past year has indeed been eventful in many regards, and with these lines, it is my pleasure to look back at the last 12 months of EYP Switzerland. Before, let me thank all of our members for your commitment and enthusiasm for our organisation. The people really are the one factor that makes our organisation as inspiring, fun and professional.

General Assembly 2011

Last February, the newly elected board was offered an opportunity to feel the cold face of reality after the General Assembly at the Dolder Sports in Zürich, where it once more became clear why our organisation clearly neither is nor should be a sports organisation – however, the laughs had were numerous and accounted for a cosy and entertaining end of the association's year.

The 2011 board

The board for last year was composed of a well-balanced group of older and newer alumni of EYP Switzerland. We can look back on five meetings in person and numerous exchanges via e-mail and Skype. The board of 2011 in its entirety:



Board Presidency – Ueli Staeger

National Coordination – Céline Pfisterer

Board Vice Presidency, Support National Coordination – Sophie Debrunner Hall

Communication – Konrad Staeger

Fundraising – Delia Berner

National Events – Karoline Otte

National Conferences – Dominic Degen

Finances & Membership – Filip Winzap



International Communication Training

2011 saw a new type of event organised by us: Thanks to generous funding through the EYP/Schwarzkopf Foundation and the Mercator Foundation, Karoline Otte, Mohamed Atiek and Ueli Staeger organised an International Communication Training with some 15 participants from all corners from Europe. The trainers Jari Marjelund, President of EYP Finland, and Kathy Hartmann-Campbell, mother of an alumna of ours and a professional communication trainer, led participants on a journey of culture, communication and the self.



Debating event & trainings

The advantage of small-scale events offering Swiss alumni and new groups of participants an opportunity to get involved were also at the heart of a try-out of a debating event, where a dozen EYPers discussed the international intervention in Libya. It's quite possible that 2012 will see even more debating events like this. Additionally, we organised two one-day trainings for our alumni: Jonas Dreger, a highly experienced EYPer who made his passion for Europe his career choice, hosted a seminar on European institutions and the functioning of the European Union. A second workshop hosted by our board member Konrad Staeger introduced our new alumni from the 2011 National Selection Conference to EYP International.



In the spirit of this training on EYP International, the boards of EYP Switzerland and EYP Finland also published a *First Steps* guidebook for new alumni, aiming to facilitate new alumni's start of their career as officials in EYP. The guidebook is available at www.eyp.ch/First_Steps_-_Guide_for_new_EYP_Alumni.pdf.

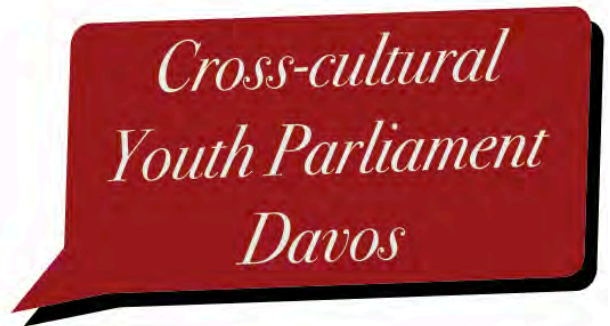
As has become a tradition, the board also organised two IS Preparation days for delegations travelling to International Sessions. Other delegates joined the delegations going to the Zagreb and Istanbul ISs.





Cross-Cultural Youth Parliament

Upon invitation from the Schweizerische Alpine Mittelschule in Davos (SAMD), the board planned and hosted a one-day General Assembly in the Grosse Stube of the municipality of Davos. The parliamentary simulation was organised in the course of an exchange programme between the SAMD and Victoria Junior College in Singapore. Applying EYP methodology to students from across the globe proved to work out remarkably well, and students engaged in passionate debate about global youth issues.



Christmas dinner & Barbecue party

As every year, the social aspect of meeting like-minded EYPers from all across Switzerland was not neglected. Older and newer members met in the Bernese countryside to enjoy a warm summer night. Once again, non-political skills such as chopping wood came in handy.

At the traditional Christmas Dinner some 30 members and EYP friends from abroad enjoyed traditional fondue after a round of drinks, a look back and the announcement of the organising team of Aarau 2012, the next National Selection Conference in August 2012.



15 year anniversary party

The National Selection Conference in Locarno and Bellinzona offered the perfect occasion to celebrate our organisations' 15th anniversary with a beach party, a huge cake and in the middle of an EYP session – where else. While the occasion certainly merited to be celebrated accordingly, and the session participants and guests entirely lived up to this responsibility, older generations of EYP Switzerland mostly had to pass. One of the founding members of EYP Switzerland suggests why so few made it to Ticino: "They've either got other plans (about 10%), they're running for parliament (about 25%) or they are expecting a baby (the whole rest)". In short, we look forward to a multi-generation 25 years anniversary of EYP Switzerland.





EYP Switzerland National Selection Conferences Association

To further solidify the legal framework of our operations, the board and the 2010 auditors Philipp Marzohl and Daniel Decurtins founded a separate association for upcoming National Selection Conferences. This will ensure the strict financial and legal separation between our main events and its steadily increasing budget. This association's board is re-elected annually; the Head Organisers are exchanged on a yearly basis, the other board members are board members of EYP Switzerland.

National Selection Conference Ticino 2011

As 2011 was the year of EYP Switzerland's 15th National (Selection) Conference, this called for an unforgettable and special edition of our largest yearly event. Our alumni Philip Aiolfi and Felix Kurer, both from Basel, proposed an ambitious and innovative bid for this session that the board happily supported. With their large organisers' team and in coordination with the board, they introduced several successful novelties:



Firstly, the session lasted from Wednesday to Sunday, which cut GA in two days and gave more time to prepare for GA. Secondly, for the first time, the accommodation was not the traditional bunker, but a youth hostel, which was enjoyable on many levels. Thirdly, this session also was the first large EYP event in Italian-speaking Switzerland. And finally, it is a pleasure to see the two Head Organisers' continued committed to organising EYP events – they successfully started the preparations for the International Session in summer 2013 in Zurich.

Youth in Action

The European Union's "Youth in Action" programme is well known as funding source for other National Committees around Europe. To our pleasure, the Swiss government decided to participate in this programme that fosters youth exchange and informal learning. EYP Switzerland not only successfully applied for a substan-



Education and Culture DG

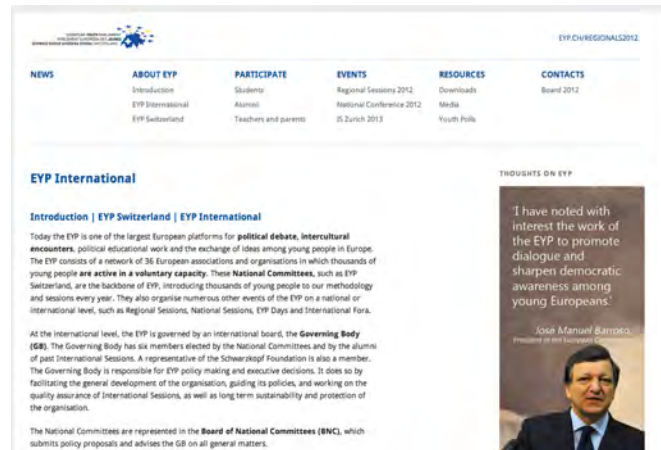
'Youth in Action' Programme



tial grant for the Ticino 2011 National Selection Conference, but also, the board President Ueli Staeger is one of two youth representatives on the programme's advisory council. This allowed us to suggest an emergency fund that supports projects suffering from strongly varying exchange rates of the Euro. At the time of writing of the report, the application for funding through this emergency fund was still pending.

Website and communication

With the support of Czech EYP alumnus Jonáš Jančařík, the board introduced a new, clear and user-friendly website. Also, the sign-up procedure was completely automatized online for both teachers' and the board's convenience. Finally, our board member in charge of communication Konrad Staeger told numerous youth organisations in Switzerland about our project, notably the regular European Youth Polls administered by the EYP International office in Berlin.



Regional Sessions

After the success of Ticino 2011 and the steady increase in school participation over the last few years, 2011 finally brought what we'd been hoping for for a long time: Regional Sessions. Though taking place in 2012, the Regional Sessions were conceived and launched in the second half of 2011. The one-day sessions in Geneva, Basel, Bern and St. Gallen are in their final planning stages and we are happy to have speakers as prominent as Pierre Maudet, Mayor of Geneva and Richard Jones, Ambassador of the European Union to Switzerland and Lichtenstein. Many thanks in advance to our dedicated Head Organisers (below) and their teams.



Mohamed Atiek - Geneva
Victor Gutgesell & Philip Dyson - Basel
Shuting Ling - Bern
Cecilia Mihaljek - St. Gallen





IS Zurich 2013

In November 2011, we received fantastic news: Switzerland will host the 73rd International Session of the EYP. The project is a challenge and also honour for us, and the project coordinators Felix Kurer and Philip Aiolfi already started assembling a team of organisers that had its kick off weekend this February. At the moment, the appropriate legal framework is being set up. As this already the third International Session of the EYP in Switzerland, the organisers and the board wished to include the considerable knowledge from the two past sessions in Bern (2000) and Basel (2005). The organising team receives counselling from the 'Senior Alumni Advisory Board' which consists of Daniel Decurtins, Philipp Marzohl, Men Keller and Michel Hochstrasser.

Living up to our vision for 2011: „towards a versatile and connected EYP Switzerland“

When looking back at this last year, we will conclude with reiterating the vision for 2011 from last year's General Assembly. Having a vision is key for successful board work: it allows assessing small-scale decisions and larger future orientations by one principle.

The 2011 board believes to generally have worked significantly in the direction of a *“versatile and connected EYP Switzerland”* as was established as a general goal a year ago. Especially our Regional Sessions are proof of a desire to offer more flexible opportunities to new students and schools just as much as to recent alumni in the role of officials.

Connectivity was a goal that was strived for with the prudence necessary to ensure a sound balance between effort and gain. As the 2011 vision stated, *“networking with other youth organisations in Switzerland”* is one of the main activities in this field. Especially the participation in a networking day of Youth in Action and our President's involvement in the advisory council of Youth in Action Switzerland created contacts not only for networking with other youth organisations, but also for fundraising.

A second priority was to *“increase quantity of national events: trainings, socialising”*. The 2011 board decided to focus on events focused on 'official' EYP priorities and organised two trainings in fall and a Chairs Training taking place the same weekend as the General Assembly 2012.

The goal of *“further promotion of Swiss EYPers going abroad”* was sought after during the second half of the year, and three major efforts in this direction should be noted: Firstly, Konrad Staeger hosted a training on going abroad in EYP, Sophie Debrunner Hall and Ueli Staeger published the First Steps guide in collaboration with Jari Marjelund from EYP Finland, and the board also decided to add *“alumni support”* to the National Coordinator's tasks as of February 2012. In the future, this board member



will happily answer questions of Swiss alumni on their international EYPing, but he or she will also actively suggest sessions to members to facilitate them starting out as officials.

As discussed above, thanks to the professional and enthusiastic collaboration of the organising team of the National Selection Session Ticino 2011, the goal of *“increas[ing] quality and length of the NSC”* was successfully achieved. This was not only due to the new sign-up procedure that requires all delegations to submit a short resolutions and thus familiarises them with the format even before the session starts, but also due to the preparation time for General Assembly and the generally longer programme. The longer programme was appreciated by all participant groups and will become a standard for future National Selection Conferences, including Aarau 2012.

As the end of February 2012 will see the first ever Regional Session of EYP Switzerland, the goal of *“establishing a conceptual framework for regional sessions”* was achieved thanks to the sound coordination of the project by Sophie Debrunner Hall and Dominic Degen.

Two goals that were not prioritised last year were the organisation of a *“forum in autumn [2011]”* and the *“further promotion of EYP on regional/local level”*. The latter will become a priority for 2012. Both priorities were not sought after mainly in an effort to fully succeed with our other projects in 2011. Furthermore, given the International Session 2013, a Swiss forum probably will not be a priority before the end of 2013.

Taking from the analysis of the board’s work in 2011, the next board wishes to focus slightly more on solidifying the innovations introduced in 2011 in order to render them as professional and inspiring as possible. In addition to the board’s strategy for the year, the 2012 board will also integrate the wider EYP Switzerland community in the definition of a long-term strategy and vision at an event in summer 2012.





Thank you to our members

The board wishes to express his sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to EYP Switzerland's activities this past year, be it very visibly at our sessions or in the background that is just as necessary, such as our auditors Kathrin Munz and Patrick Geiger. We are also very thankful to our older alumni that contribute to the International Session Zurich 2013.

Naturally, the biggest show of appreciation of what our organisation is the ever-increasing number of Swiss alumni active as officials at sessions abroad. Similarly, it is truly exciting to see so many of our alumni commit to organising teams of Regional Sessions, National Selection Conferences and the IS. Of course, doing so first is a personal challenge, but thanks to the enthusiasm of excellent people, our organisation only will grow in terms of size, professionalism and impact.

Leaving board members

Finally, the board of 2011 regrets having to say goodbye to its board members Céline Pfisterer and Karoline Otte. Their work and contribution to a productive and amicable climate on the board will be missed. We wish Céline all the best with start of 'real life' and hope to visit one of Karoline's new party label's events soon.

The board of EYP Switzerland in 2011:

Céline Pfisterer
Sophie Debrunner Hall
Konrad Staeger
Delia Berner
Karoline Otte
Dominic Degen
Filip Winzap
Ueli Staeger

Zurich, 18th of February 2012

