



INDEX

- ♦ EFIL General Assembly Moscow
- ♦ Getting ready: Final deadline for Summer Summit 2009
- ♦ EFIL training in Denmark: Improving re-entry orientations
- ♦ Europe meets Africa – a new exciting project
- ♦ Partner News
- ♦ A new, old face for the European Youth Forum!
- ♦ Brochure "Best of the Year 2008"
- ♦ European Partner of the Year 2009
- ♦ Internet Links
- ♦ Calendar

EFIL GENERAL ASSEMBLY MOSCOW

"Making mobility a rule rather than the exception" has been chosen as the theme of EFIL's General Assembly, taking place in Moscow 22-24 May 2009. Making learning mobility across borders an opportunity for all and a natural feature for young Europeans, is the main message in the report from the Commission-appointed High Level Expert Forum on Mobility, published in 2008. Being faced with the pressing challenge of how to best equip Europeans with the skills

and competences they need in their future in a competitive, globalised and knowledge-based Europe, everyone agrees that a period spent abroad is a valuable experience for the individuals involved, who benefit not only in terms of language knowledge, but also in intercultural know-how.



In Moscow, EFIL will look back at the achievements of the past two successful years. In a presentation of the Business Plan 2009-2010 the way forward will be elaborated on, with focus on EFIL's main activity areas: training and sharing, projects and programmes, networking and lobbying, new member development. In a panel debate, featuring several Russian dignitaries and specialists presenting views from different angles, focus will be on issues of mobility, including opportunities and obstacles, starting from the situation regarding intercultural education in Russia, while reviving the "Call for Action" from the Berlin Conference in October last year.

The General Assembly further aims at creating a common understanding of the challenges ahead in the ever changing environment in Europe at the backdrop of the current financial and economic global crisis. The meeting provides the right forum for EFIL Members to have a space in which to make their concerns understood and their ideas heard.

On Saturday 23 May, elections will take place for the EFIL Board of Directors.

GETTING READY: FINAL DEADLINE FOR SUMMER SUMMIT 2009

While we are in the process of confirming the participants from the first application round for our second Volunteer

Summer Summit, taking place near Istanbul in Turkey, we are eagerly waiting for more applications on the final deadline of 25 May. Applications are most welcome on our website <http://www.efilsummersummit.org/2009/appprocedure>. The late application fee will be 170 Euros for a double room, 220 Euros for a single room. Do keep on promoting the Volunteer Summer Summit among your friends and colleagues!

Meanwhile the trainers team has been selected, including Yves Gheysen (Belgium French), André Lopes Galvão (Portugal), Lucia Metzbauer (Austria), Jana Holla (Egypt), Vincent Willekens (Belgium Flemish), Gabi Mandy (Hungary), Csilla Fodor (Hungary), Max Reichel (Germany), Kai Böttner (Germany). Participants of the EPOT training taking place right before the Summer Summit, will complete the trainers team for the events in Turkey.

From the Turkish side, several sponsorship deals have come through, and we will have 20 highly motivated volunteers to help us out with all kinds of logistical issues such as translating websites or setting up workshop rooms. The organising team is now complete and will start working on the different workshops, leisure activities and everything else to make it four unforgettable days for everyone!



EFIL TRAINING IN DENMARK: IMPROVING RE-ENTRY ORIENTATIONS

From the 10th to the 16th of May the Seminar "The challenge of returning home – putting intercultural competences into practice after long-term educational exchanges" has taken place in Roskilde, Denmark.

At a beautiful venue in the harbour of a little Viking town, participants from 13 partner countries reflected during five working days on the issue of improving re-orientations. At the end of the week some very concrete and innovative ideas were created. The spirit of the seminar and the ideas born there, now need to find the necessary support in the national offices of the participants to be implemented in the larger AFS circles.

It's been a challenging but productive week, and EFIL would like to thank all the participants for their good spirit and our host AFS Denmark for all the logistical support. The report of the seminar will be available as soon as possible on the EFIL website.



EUROPE MEETS AFRICA – A NEW EXCITING PROJECT

Last year's "Worldoscope - Strength Through Diversity" project was much appreciated by all partners involved, and gave EFIL and AFS a lot of visibility and recognition through the media and the European Commission channels, as a highly valued and relevant project in the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008.

Following the success of Worldoscope, EFIL wants to propose another challenging and exciting project in the same line, but with a different geographical scope: Africa. The project will aim at strengthening Euro-African dialogue, exchange and cooperation in the field of youth. By putting our African network partners in the limelight, EFIL wants to contribute to the AFS network's Vision 2020 where emphasis on Africa has been included as one of the 7 strategic goals.

AFS Ghana, AFS South Africa and the new AFS contact in Kenya, OFIE Kenya (Organisation for Intercultural Education) will be our African project partners. European project participants need to be active and fairly experienced volunteers, capable of performing the tasks: (1) organisational and volunteer development of the local organisations in Africa through on the spot training, and (2) feasibility studies in Ghana, South Africa and Kenya, identifying opportunities and restrictions of developing youth organisations and setting up exchange programmes in African countries, to strengthen the Euro-African dialogue and increase the interest in youth exchanges between Europe and Africa.

Use this unique experience for your volunteer(s) to be involved in a Europe-African project, and gain

from a rich intercultural experience, build up additional intercultural competences and extended knowledge about the country visited, further develop his/her trainings skills, benefit from the sharing and learning in the closing seminar attended by all participants, and last but not least: return with extra motivation to continue his/her commitments on national and local level in your country!

PARTNER NEWS

In each edition of EFILife, we dedicate some space to partner news, including personnel changes as well as relevant events that have taken place over the past month.

As of 4 May, Anne Mees is no longer the National Director of **AFS Belgium Flanders**. At the same time, Steven Saeys, organisational development coordinator at BFL, has left the organisation. Anne will be remembered as a well respected partner in the AFS network, and a strong supporter of our trainings, projects and programmes. She was the face of AFS Belgium Flanders over the past ten years, and under her leadership AFS BFL played a much appreciated role in several EFIL coordinated activities, including the Worldoscope project and the 2008 Volunteer Summer Summit. We wish Anne the best of luck in her new endeavours.



EDS2009, Buenos Aires (photo: EFIL)

In AFS Germany Henni Weiser has been promoted to become the new Director of Strategic Cooperations. Among other achievements, Henni headed the 60th Anniversary Campaign of AFS Germany culminating in the Gala Night in Berlin on 18 October last year. Henni's predecessor in this position, Christina Metke, has decided to look for new professional challenges. Her contributions to AFS Germany over the past eight years, have been much appreciated.

During the weekend of 9-10 May AFS Germany's major national training event – Constanze – took place in Heidelberg. The main focus this year was "global challenges and the contribution of AFS". More than 60 workshops involving over 70 trainers were attended by 350 volunteers, staff and teachers.



Constanze training event (photo: AFS Germany)

That's it for this month. Do let us know what's happening in your offices!

A NEW, OLD FACE FOR THE EUROPEAN YOUTH FORUM!



The European Youth Forum (YFJ) held its Council of Members (CoMem) last week on 8-9 May in

Brussels, Belgium. EFIL was present at the CoMem through Ilyana Panteleeva.

The YFJ CoMem has the power to execute all acts necessary to fulfill the purpose of the European Youth Forum, whereas the GA is the highest decision-making body of the YFJ and meets at least once every 2 years and is always a good opportunity to meet like-minded partners and representatives of various youth NGOs and to exchange best practices on certain topics.

The present delegates of more than 90 member organisations elected Giuseppe Porcaro to be the new Secretary General for the next 2 years mandate.

Giuseppe's youth work background formally dates back to 1999 and his local university student association in Naples, where he was one of the founders of the Italian Youth Council (FNG). More recently he's been the Chairperson of the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe (2005-2007), and he also worked as the European Youth Forum's United Nations & Global Youth Issues Coordinator from 2007 till present. Well known to the Secretariat and the Bureau, he said he will "work to deliver, strengthen and consolidate the European Youth Forum's work by bringing the member organisations closer to the platform."

In general, the YFJ CoMem 2009 was dominated by a heated election on the selection of a new Secretary General and a discussion on the ownership of the YFJ by the members. Giuseppe Porcaro will be the key figure to ensure the smooth co-operation between the Bureau and the Secretariat and the communication process between Secretariat and member organisations.

Among other things, during the YFJ CoMem an Opinion Paper on Internships was adopted which calls for more quality internships and sees them increasingly as "mobility experiences which can be an excellent learning opportunity to acquire new and needed competencies such as intercultural skills."

The next CoMem is fixed for mid November 2009 and EFIL will be keeping you up to date of all relevant developments in the field of European youth work.

Check out the European Youth Forum's new website at www.youthforum.org and if you ever have any questions regarding the YFJ's working areas and youth policy at European level, don't hesitate to get in touch with Illyana Panteleeva and the EFIL Secretariat!

BROCHURE "BEST OF THE YEAR 2008"



From the Unit
"Culture
Policy and
Intercultural
Dialogue" of
the European
Commission

(Directorate General for Education and Culture), came the good news that EFIL will be included in their EYID Best of the Year brochure. The brochure will feature some pictures from EFIL activities, and mention some of our main project in the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue: Worldoscope, Intercultural Dialogue Day, the International Educational Conference in Berlin, and the Volunteer Summer Summit in Vigy.

EUROPEAN PARTNER OF THE YEAR 2009



The European Commission further accepted EFIL as a European Partner of the Year 2009, the European Year of Creativity and Innovation, allowing us to make use of the logos and name of the EYCI in advertising our activities, including this year's Volunteer Summer Summit in Turkey, and the Intercultural Dialogue Day on 24 September 2009.

INTERNET LINKS

http://efil.afs.org/efi_en/home

CALENDAR 2009

21 May	Heads of Office meeting, Moscow, Russia
22-24 May	EFIL's General Assembly, Moscow, Russia
19-20 June	EFIL Board meeting, Zürich, Switzerland
26 July-02 Aug	EPOT Training Course, Turkey
30 July-04 Aug	EFIL Volunteer Summer Summit on Innovation and Creativity in Youth Exchange, Istanbul, Turkey
13-14 Sep	Training Advisory Body Meeting in Budapest, Hungary

- 18-20 September EFIL Board meeting, Colle di Val d'Elsa, Italy
- 24 September Intercultural Dialogue Day 2009
- 22-26 Nov European Citizenship Trimester Programme-End of Stay Camp, Brussels, Belgium

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Many thanks to all those who have contributed to this issue of EFILife.

Please do not hesitate to share with us your comments and suggestions.
We welcome your contributions!

If you would like to subscribe to (or unsubscribe from) this Newsletter, please contact the EFIL Secretariat at: efilife@efil.be.

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