



European cooperation workshop “How to Establish a UN Youth Delegate Programme”

– UN Youth Delegate Programmes and Phases of Establishment –

UN Youth Delegate Programmes

What's a UN Youth Delegate?

UN Youth Delegates are young people, aged 18 to 25, who officially represent the interests of the youth of their country at the United Nations in New York. They are selected to accompany their government's diplomatic delegation to the United Nations for the duration of 1 to 3 weeks. Before their trip UN Youth Delegates meet with as many young people as possible to gather their views and opinions. In New York they represent the youth's positions, working alongside real diplomats from 193 countries, negotiating resolutions and holding a formal speech in front of a UN body. In the past years, countries have sent YDs to various different bodies: the UN General Assembly (usually in October) and/or the UN Commission for Social Development, the UN Commission on Sustainable Development and the UN Commission on the Status of Women (usually in spring).

How are they selected?

YDs are generally selected by a national selection committee, made up of representatives of the national youth council or large youth organizations, the UN Association of a country, the ministry of foreign affairs and the ministry responsible for youth. Good selection procedures are fair and transparent, they are open to every young person in the country, and the selection is based on the qualifications of the candidates (experience in youth organizations and youth work, interest in the UN, communication skills, English language skills etc.).

What makes them "representatives" of youth?

YDs are usually selected a couple of months before their trip to New York. During their preparation period they meet with young people all over their country in order to gather their views on the current issues on the UN agenda, such as Climate Change, HIV/Aids, Youth in Conflict, Youth Unemployment etc. Youth Delegates do not travel to New York to share their personal views - they represent the views of the youth of their country. During their preparation months YDs collect the views and opinions of young people at youth conferences, youth meetings, seminars, panel discussions, youth campaigns, exhibitions, political events etc. They visit schools, universities and youth organisations and usually cooperate closely with their national youth council.

What do UN Youth Delegates do in New York?

After their preparation period the YDs accompany their government's delegation to one of the above-mentioned UN bodies in New York, usually between one and three weeks. As part of the delegation they generally receive diplomats' passes to enter the UN building, where they are allowed to access even restricted areas. They attend the formal sessions of the chosen UN body and they are usually allowed to hold a speech, which is oftentimes transmitted to the world via UN webcast. They participate in formal and informal consultations with regular diplomats from all over the world. Many get the chance to meet the current UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon. The YDs cooperate with YDs from other countries in

writing or amending draft resolutions relevant to youth issues. Furthermore, they advise the diplomats of their Permanent Mission to the UN (ie. their embassy to the UN) on the youth point of view on many different policy issues. They meet with the Head of Mission (ambassador) in order to discuss with him/her the concerns of young people. Together with the YDs of other countries they write “youth newsletters” which they distribute to the diplomats of the 193 countries present. They make appointments with UN employees, NGO activists and diplomats of foreign countries. They organise so-called “side-events”, ie. meetings, where they invite diplomats and inform them about the situation of young people pertaining to a certain policy issue (eg. Climate Change). Oftentimes youth delegates are invited to receptions of the permanent missions, where they have the opportunity to speak to foreign diplomats about their concerns.

How do they follow up?

After returning from New York the youth delegates attend conferences and meetings so as to speak to young people in their country about their experiences and their successes. They meet civil servants, youth activists, NGOs, heads of youth organisations, parliamentarians, local politicians and many representatives of the press. Some hold press conferences where they talk about the current trends in youth policy at the United Nations. They write reports for Ministries, NGOs and youth organisations. They attend follow-up meetings with the youth delegates from other European countries. They participate in the selection procedure for the youth delegates of the following year. Once the new youth delegates have been selected, the former youth delegates hand over their position, ideally by conducting extensive trainings and seminars for the newcomers. Even after handing over, they continue to support the programme.

How can I establish a UN Youth Delegate Programme in my country?

Personally, you need three things: time to spend on volunteer work (about two years), energy and a team partner. Sharing the project with someone else just makes things so much easier. Professionally, you need to acquire two things: political will and money. You need to convince your government, in particular your ministry of foreign affairs and the ministry responsible for youth. They need to allow young people to accompany your country’s official diplomatic delegation to the UN in New York.

The best way to do this is to start a civil society initiative: find non-governmental organizations first, and convince them to support you. They can help you set up meetings with representatives of the ministries and convince them of the merits of a YD programme. In other countries, these organizations have been: the national youth council (please refer to www.youthforum.org >> About us >> Member organisations), large youth organizations and the national United Nations Association (please refer to <http://www.wfuna.org/worldwide-members>). At our workshop we will help you write a project proposal and practise how to convince both ministries, as well as civil society organizations to support you. Should you already be backed by one of these organizations, all for the better. When it comes to money, it is best to convince above-mentioned organizations to act as partners or patrons to the programme and fundraise together by writing grants to foundations and potential sponsors. At our workshop we will help you develop a budget and fill in your first fundraising application.

Can I be my country's first UN Youth Delegate?

In many countries the co-founders have also been the first YDs. If you and your team partner personally want to be the first youth delegates you need to include a "pilot year" in your project proposal and make this clear to all the possible partners right from the start. In that case, your project proposal needs to state that a transparent selection procedure will only be established in the year following the pilot year. The ministries and organizations may agree to this concept. The advantage is that you will be better equipped to set up a high-quality programme once you have been in New York yourself. Our personal recommendation is to go for a pilot year, if possible, as this may be more motivating on a personal level. The below table reflects this recommendation.

Establishing a YD Programme: Suggested Phases

Advocacy Phase	
Tasks	Manpower needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocate for the establishment of a UNYD programme at National Youth Council/ large youth organizations of your country, United Nations Association of your country, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry responsible for Youth (Ministry of Family Affairs, Ministry of Education?), National Parliament - Convince some or all of these institutions to act as official partners/patrons to the new UNYD programme - If you personally want to be the two Pilot Youth Delegates in the Pilot Year, you need to make this clear from the start. 	<p>2 people (the workshop participants)</p> <p>5 hours/week</p>

Pilot Year			
<p>Aim: The aim of the pilot year is for you to gather the necessary experience as a UNYD at the UN, in order to set up a high-quality, continuous UNYD Programme upon your return from New York, starting with a transparent selection procedure.</p>			
Tasks	Manpower needed		
<table border="1"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Preparation</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fundraising for New York (travel cost, food and accommodation cost for 1- 3 weeks) - Cooperate with YDs from other European countries (attend official European UNYD networking meetings) </td> </tr> </table>	Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fundraising for New York (travel cost, food and accommodation cost for 1- 3 weeks) - Cooperate with YDs from other European countries (attend official European UNYD networking meetings) 	<p>2 Pilot Youth Delegates (the workshop participants)</p>
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fundraising for New York (travel cost, food and accommodation cost for 1- 3 weeks) - Cooperate with YDs from other European countries (attend official European UNYD networking meetings) 		

New York	- Learning experience in view of the First Programme Year	10-15 hours/person/week
Follow-up	- Establish a <u>transparent</u> , nation-wide selection procedure for the First Programme Year, open to every young person aged 18 to 25 in your country - fundraising for First Programme Year	

First Programme Year (former and new YDs cooperate)

Aim: The first programme year (and all the following years) should be based on the principles of (1) transparent selection, (2) financial stability and continuity and (3) largest possible outreach to young people all over your country. This requires a useful workshare between former youth delegates and new youth delegates. Here is what we'd suggest:

Tasks of former YDs	Manpower former YDs (you)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperate with national partners/patrons in coordinating the selection procedure for the new YDs (including setting up a blog) - organize trainings for newly selected YDs - further fundraising together with new YDs 	10 hours/person/week
Tasks of new YDs	Manpower new YDs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - attend trainings organized by former YDs - fundraising together with former YDs - organize a national YD campaign (aim at receiving invitations to national youth conferences & events, seminars, symposia, schools, universities etc.) - media relations - keep the blog updated (reports on events, New York etc.) - cooperation with YDs from other European countries 	20 hours/person/week