European Youth Coordination Committee

Work Plan

2016-2018
1. Introducing the European Youth Network

Since more than 150 years the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (RCRC Movement) is an indispensable partner for people in need. With its presence in 190 countries worldwide with over 100 million volunteers and members, the RCRC Movement can reach the most vulnerable in ways and places many other organizations cannot.

Youth is one of the most important groups when it comes to the work of the RCRC Movement. On one hand, youth are often among the most vulnerable themselves, being affected by conflicts and unstable environments. They are facing situations which expose them to particular vulnerabilities. On the other hand, young volunteers and leaders play a crucial role within the RCRC Movement as they are responding to local needs in a local capacity. In many National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies youth members form the backbone of the volunteer base, without which the National Society would not be capable of assisting as many people as it currently does.

Therefore, youth should be able to take responsibility not only for service delivery within National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies, but also for governance; as they bring vital commitment, insight and flexibility to the organization. One example is the successful implementation of Strategy 2020, the common strategy for all National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies and IFRC Secretariat, which depends largely on the involvement of youth at different levels and in various positions. It recognizes that building-up and sustaining strong National Societies requires that they attract and retain more young people. It urges that young people be educated, enabled and empowered to be active in leading and participating in voluntary activities and in the governance, management, and services of National Societies.

To stimulate the exchange of experiences and ideas, to share a common view on various sorts of vulnerability, and to stimulate the wider involvement of youth within the Red Cross, it is important that cross-national structures can operate within the international structure of the organization. The IFRC Youth Policy, adopted by the 18th session of the General Assembly held on 23-25 November 2011 in Geneva states that “national, regional, and international networks established by young people themselves, are strongly promoted as an invaluable
contribution to sharing knowledge and innovation across the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. National Societies actively encourage and support youth representatives to participate in these networks aimed at promoting youth leadership and exchange of concrete ideas, innovations and activities”.

This is the context, in which the European Youth Network operates and why its existence is crucial. Based on the various differences between regions, the European Red Cross Red Crescent youth have established the Red Cross Red Crescent European Youth Network which shall be managed by a Steering Group between the biannual European Youth Cooperation Meetings of Red Cross and Crescent Societies (EYCM). This group shall be known as the European Youth Coordination Committee (EYCC). In adherence with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, of which the Red Cross Red Crescent youth in its various organizational structures is an integral component.

1.1. The network structure

The Red Cross Red Crescent European Youth Network brings together youth leaders and youth volunteers from all National Societies within the Europe Zone. It facilitates the sharing of good practices, exchange of experience and advocates on behalf of the National Societies within the organization and beyond. It is a platform that functions as a tool which everyone can benefit from through active participation. National Societies’ youth leaders are encouraged to actively disseminate information and promote engagement of their peers.

The existence of the European Youth Network is backed-up by member National Societies through the adoption of various decisions, policies and strategies underlining the importance of Regional Network to strengthen youth engagement and development in the region.

The Network has an impact throughout the organization through active participation from a diverse group of staff and volunteers. First and foremost, the National Societies benefit from the knowledge exchange and inspiration from their sister organizations to strengthen their organizations on an operation level – especially in their efforts to address the needs of the most vulnerable. Their youth leaders and youth volunteers are empowered to take an active lead in addressing these needs and to amplify youth’s voice within their National Societies. The Network impacts the International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies through the participation from young people in decision making processes such as the development of programs, policies and strategies. This doesn’t solely relate to decision making that impacts youth directly, but takes a broader approach as youth’s views and experience are relevant in various fields within the movement.

The Network liaises with the Youth Commission to amplify their voice within the International Federation by giving guidance to their work plan and identify priorities for the region.
The Network is coordinated by the European Youth Coordination Committee (EYCC) which represent the voice of youth during their two-year mandate. They facilitate discussions, sharing of experiences and the dissemination of relevant information among member National Societies. The EYCC their work is guided by the European Youth Network Terms of Reference, the outcomes of the biannual European Youth Coordination Meeting (EYCM) and regular online consultations with youth leaders from across the Europe Zone. The EYCC acts on behalf of the member National Societies and advocates for them within the wider movement. During the 20th European Youth Coordination Meeting in Lozen, Bulgaria they have identified Knowledge Management, Amplification & Advocacy and Community Building as the main purposes of the Network.

1.2. The vision

For the past years, there has been a great emphasis on strengthening the youth and youth leadership within the Movement. Both Strategy 2020 and the Florence Call for Action underlines the ambition of Europe Region NS to do better in the area of youth engagement and during the 2015 General Assembly the new Youth Pledge was introduced. The next two-year period will be of great significance, given that the processes of revising the Youth Policy and the Volunteering Policy will be started and the Constitutional Review process will be continued. It has been often noted that youth participation in those processes is crucial. Thereby, investing more in the work and efforts of the EYCC would mean that the IFRC and the NS of Europe Region are making sure that the voice of a million young volunteers is taken into consideration when shaping the present and the future of the movement.

We believe that empowered youth is a strategic resource for the sustainable development of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. During our mandate we aim to bridge the gap between senior management and youth in order to support and encourage young volunteers to be confident about:

- Their own importance for the RCRC Movement
- Their ability to deliver quality work
- The value of their own experiences
1.3. Introducing the European Youth Coordination Committee

The European Youth Coordination Committee (EYCC) has been elected by the member National Societies during the 22nd European Youth Cooperation Meeting (EYCM) held in Sutomore, Montenegro, in May 2016. For the years 2016 to 2018 the following representatives have been elected. In order to ensure a close relation and communication with every National Society within the Europe Region, every EYCC member is responsible for a number of National Societies and sub-regional networks, which can be found in Chapter Three.

Sabrina Konzok  
German Red Cross  
Chair

Hala Mohammed  
Swedish Red Cross  
Vice-Chair

Jasmin Niksic  
Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Guillermo Vazquez  
Spanish Red Cross

Mariya Hirstova  
Bulgarian Red Cross

Jelena Sofranac  
Montenegro Red Cross

Ani Mirakyan  
Armenian Red Cross
1.4. Note regarding the financial background of the Network

The European Youth Network led by the democratically elected EYCC works closely with the Youth Commission and operates as a coordinator and contact point within the Region. However, it is not part of the Constitutional Framework of the IFRC and therefore not automatically eligible for funding through the core budget. Therefore, its work relies highly on the willingness of National Societies as well as the IFRC Secretariat to support activities. Only by doing so the EYCC can ensure the delivery of qualitatively high benefits for youth on the local, regional or national level. The previous achievements of the EYCC, for example the creation of a Handbook on Migration, were created with little or no funding. An increased investment in the EYCC work plan is a cost effective investment in achieving the strategic ambitions for youth and volunteering set out by both National Societies and the IFRC in S2020 and Florence Call for Action. The EYCC hopes to work with all NS of Europe Region to involve even more young volunteers in activities and to pursue strategically the capacity building of youth leadership on a regional scale.

Based on that, the EYCC would like to invite all decision-makers within the RCRC Movement to get in touch with us and inform themselves further about our work and how to further empower youth. Please find the contact information at the end of the document.
2. The work plan 2016 - 2018

Three different areas of responsibility are guiding the work of the EYCC and are written in the Terms of Reference of the European Youth Network (Art.1):

- amplification and advocacy
- knowledge management
- community building

The first area aims at contributing to enhancing the impact of youth-led advocacy efforts conducted within National Societies as well as supporting NSs to empower youth to be actively and effectively involved in decision-making processes. Knowledge management is crucial in order to ensure, that good practices, experiences, and areas of improvements are shared among National Societies and can then be used to train young leaders at local, national and international level. By supporting the community building, the EYN contributes to further strengthen cooperation among National Societies and supports the development of European Youth Exchange.

Overall the work of the EYCC aligns with the processes and strategies of the IFRC, especially with the ones regarding the European Region. One example is the European Youth Cooperation Meeting (EYCM), which is usually held before the European Regional Conference. In that way the position of youth is directly linked to work of the National Societies and is voiced on an international level.

During the last EYCM the youth delegates from the National Societies within the European Region have decided upon the following five priorities for the upcoming two years. Each and every point will be explained in detail in the following chapters.

- **Migration**
  Ensuring the preparedness of, support for and empowerment of young volunteers in the area of migration.

- **Implementation of Youth Engagement Strategy**
  - Strengthening the youth structures within the National Societies by assessing their achievements and further developing initiatives providing Education, Empowerment and Enabling environments for young leaders, volunteers and beneficiaries in the region.

- **Strengthening sub-regional networks**
  - Supporting sub-regional networks with organisational development as well as through trainings in order to ensure an effective cooperation among the European Youth Network.

- **Youth and Governance**
  - Enabling youth leaders to actively attend and get involved in relevant decision-making events and processes.

- **Innovation and Volunteering**
  Contributing to a bright future of our volunteers by providing research and innovative approaches in the area of volunteer management.
2.1. The implementation of the Youth Engagement Strategy

The adoption of Y.E.S has been one of the many clear indicators that young people should be recognized for their capacity, competencies and the value they bring to the movement, and, therefore, be an integral part of all of its structures and decision-making processes. This topic doesn’t only affect youth; working on Y.E.S. implementation not only “on paper”, but in reality – at all levels and structures, and providing “youth-led, NSs owned” initiatives, will lead to the development and progress of the NSs themselves, benefiting the communities they work in. This is why the EYCC, following the decisions made by the EYN member NSs representatives during the EYCM 2016, is continuing its previous commitments to support the NSs in the implementation and assessment of Y.E.S. in their national contexts.

Overall aim
Strengthening the youth structures within the National Societies by assessing their achievements and further developing initiatives providing Education, Empowerment and Enabling environments for young leaders, volunteers and beneficiaries in the region.

Expected Results (ER):
1. National Societies are supported and encouraged to implement the Y.E.S.
2. Enable National Societies to develop their youth leadership concepts.

Activities ER1:
- Ensure European youth participation in the processes, initiated by the Youth Commission, for creating and piloting tools for assessment of Y.E.S. implementation.

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- Host or support the organization of online meeting and consultations about sharing knowledge and good practices on Y.E.S. implementation between European NSs volunteers and staff.

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- Updating information and popularization of the initiative “Pool of practitioners” on Y.E.S. and assisting NSs in using it.

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Activities ER 2:
- Adapt and further develop the “YouLead” initiative, providing channels for NSs to share good practices, training tools and materials on youth leadership.

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- Mapping of the NSs of the region, creating a thorough picture of existing youth structures, policies and integration in governance; as well as stage of Y.E.S. implementation.

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Contact person for the Implementation of the Y.E.S.:
Mariya Hristova, E-Mail: m.hristova@redcross.bg
2.2. Migration

In the context of the migration situation from 2015 onwards the issue has also increased in importance from the perspective of youth. The previous EYCC has already identified a high importance of and need to discuss the issue further and offer support to the members of the European Youth Network. For all three different groups of young people mentioned in the Youth Engagement Strategy of the IFRC, young volunteers, leaders and beneficiaries, the situation has been highly challenging. Young volunteers have faced extraordinary challenges when trying to meet the needs of transiting or arriving migrants. Young leaders had to deal with insecurities and tasks they were unfamiliar with. And most importantly around 50% of the beneficiaries were young people, among the most vulnerable groups requiring specific assistance.

As one of the first steps, the previous EYCC has created a “Handbook on Youth and Migration” (2015) containing best practice examples from various National Societies and information on several issues by IFRC experts. Furthermore, the EYCC has held a Balkan Youth Meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria, with support of the IFRC and the Bulgarian Red Cross. During the meeting issues such as psychological support for volunteers as well as the concept of rapid induction of new volunteers have been discussed. Now, the next step is to further discuss how the EYCC can support its members and the young volunteers on the ground working with migrants. The following gives a broad overview on the planned activities.

In general, the topic of migration has shown in the past EYCC mandate, that youth volunteers are facing challenges in two areas: in the short-term emergency response as well as in the long-term impact. Several issues such as psycho social support as well as inclusion and the creation of a peaceful society need to be discussed and tackled in the upcoming two years.

**Overall aim:**
Ensuring the preparedness of, support for and empowerment of young volunteers and leaders in the area of migration.

**Expected results (ER):**
1. Youth from all National Societies are empowered to voice their needs when it comes to trainings, support mechanisms or ideas within their home countries and at international level.
2. Trainings for young volunteers and leaders on prioritized topics are held and supported by the EYCC.
### Activities ER 1:

- Hold Youth and Migration Conference 2017.
- Adopt Youth Statement on Migration during the EYCM 2018.
- Present the Statement at the European Regional Conference 2018.
- Cooperate closely with CCM, ERO, and PERCO.

### Activities ER 2:

- Hold PSS training for youth leaders in a sub-regional network.
- Support humanitarian education and YABC initiatives in order to enable volunteers to work on social inclusion.
- Further develop Youth on Migration Handbook, specifically looking into social inclusion.

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**Contact person for Migration:**
Sabrina Konzok, E-Mail: sabrinakonzok@yahoo.com
Hala Mohammed, E-Mail: hala.mohammed@redcross.se
2.3. Innovation and Volunteering

Given the changing environment the RCRC Movement is operating in, the need to adapt to these changes is increasing. Especially in the context of volunteering most National Societies within the Europe Region are observing a shift towards flexible volunteering and changing needs of volunteers. The rapid influx of new volunteers during the migration situation, for example, has shown major challenges in terms of induction, retention and resource management of volunteers. Overall, a need for innovation in the area of volunteering has been identified. Particularly when it comes to young volunteers and youth leaders the described changes seem even more drastic and urgent. Therefore, the EYCC will cooperate with the IFRC experts on innovation and contribute to the processes.

Overall aim:
Contributing to a bright future of our volunteers by providing research and innovative approaches in the area of volunteer management.

Expected Results (ER):
1. Examples of and the need for innovative approaches in the area of volunteering are collected.
2. Members of the EYN are enabled to develop and implement innovative approaches to volunteering.

Activities ER1:
- Sharing best practices among NSs via webinars.
- Start a video competition for NSs to share videos highlighting innovative approaches to youth-led volunteer management.

Activities ER2:
- Set up youth-specific Randomized Coffee Trials (RCT) using the system of the RCT and with input from the innovation unit in Geneva (linked to other topics in the work plan).

Contact person for Innovation and Volunteering:
Ani Mirakyan, E-Mail: mirakyanani96@gmail.com
2.4. Strengthening of Sub-Regional Networks

Considering the number, different context, needs, challenges and strengths of National Societies across the Europe it is expected that those ones with similarities aim to connect and work closer.

Sub-regional networks usually bring together NS that speak the same language, those ones that are geographically closest or those dealing with the same issues. In that way, by discussing, sharing best practices, experience and challenges on the sub-regional level, NS can improve their work and it is more likely that they will gain something that is applicable for their context. Of course this is the good model of work which ensures NS to overcome problems of understanding all differences among NS and gives opportunities for cooperation in regional programs or activities. In the same time on the sub-regional level they can come up with good solutions for implementation of some global recommendations, strategies or programs that are not completely adopted for their context. Further, sub-regional networks have more power and influence, and may indicate specific circumstances that are not covered or considered enough on higher level. At the end, sub-regional networks are more visible and can help especially small NS to make their voices heard.

Unfortunately, there are not so many opportunities for sub-regional meetings. Main reason is funding of these events that usually depends of possibilities of some NS to host and financially support other participants. Some of these initiatives can also be supported by IFRC. Although the great value of this model of work is recognized and promoted at all levels it seems that there is a big need for improvement and support when it comes to the European Youth Network. This was the conclusion of the last EYCM in Montenegro 2016, when representatives from many NS have chosen this topic as priority.

Overall aim:
Enhanced cooperation among the European Youth Network through creation of supportive environment for further development and work of sub-regional networks

Expected results (ER):
1. Sub-regional youth networks are working and have adequate support from the EYCC.
2. Networking, knowledge-transfer and sharing of experiences among regional youth are increased.
Activities ER1:

- Creating overview of existing sub-regional networks and evaluate the potential for NSs to join a sub-regional network.
- Reaching out to sub-regional networks in order to evaluate their needs and plan steps for the upcoming years.

Activities ER2:

- Organize and support joint activities of different sub-regional networks (e.g. International Youth Day, International Volunteer Day).
- Support sub-regional youth meetings related to the thematic preferences of the network.
- Support and/or conduct trainings with member NSs of sub-regional networks on prioritized topics.

Contact person for Strengthening Sub-Regional Networks:
Jelena Sofranac, E-Mail: Jelena.sofranac@ckcg.co.me
Jasmin Niksic, E-Mail: jasmin.niksic@ckfbih.ba
2.5. Youth and Governance

The RCRC Movement is the biggest volunteer based humanitarian network in the world. Globally, around 50% of all volunteers are under 30 years old and thereby “youth”. In the Europe Region, these numbers are equally high. It is therefore logical, why youth needs to be a part of and actively involved in all governance processes at global, European, national, regional or local level.

**Overall aim:**
Support youth volunteers and leaders at all levels to play an active role in the decision-making processes at all levels and represent their voices at relevant events and meetings.

**Expected Results (ER):**
1. Increased advocacy on behalf of youth in relevant processes at international level.
2. The European Youth Network and its members are empowered to play and do play an active role in decision-making processes.

**Activities ER1:**
- Create and institutional memory regarding the actions taken and the decisions made by the EYCC.  
  - Knowledge management 
  - Community building 
  - Amplification & advocacy
  - X
  - X
  - X

- Enable EYN members to engage in the development of Strategy 2030.
- Support the Youth Commission during the Constitutional Review process during the GA 2017.

**Activities ER2:**
- Hold the EYCM 2018.
- Consult NSs regarding the review the Terms of References of the European Youth Network.
- Create a publication presenting the EYN and the variety and unity of its members.
- Prepare youth delegates for the GA in 2017, the EYCM 2018 and the European Regional Conference 2018.
- Ensuring and supporting youth representation and engagement during the European Regional Conference.

**Contact person for Youth and Governance:**
Guillermo Vazquez, E-Mail: g.vazquez@cruzroja.es
3. Contact and Focal Points

In case you have any questions please feel free to contact our Chair:

Sabrina Konzok  
Chair EYCC, German Red Cross  
E-Mail: sabrinakonzok@yahoo.com  
Skype: sabrina.konzok

The EYCC has divided themselves as focal point for the National Societies in the Europe Zone to ease the communication. Please note that everyone – both National Societies and EYCC – is free to contact whoever they want.

**NATIONAL SOCIETY**  
**FOCAL POINT**

Albanian Red Cross  
Jelena Sofranac

Andorran Red Cross  
Hala Mohammed

Armenian Red Cross Society  
Ani Mirakyan

Austrian Red Cross  
Sabrina Konzok

Red Crescent of Azerbaijan  
Sabrina Konzok

Belarus Red Cross  
Ani Mirakyan

Belgian Red Cross  
Hala Mohammed

Red Cross Society of Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Jasmin Niksic

British Red Cross  
Sabrina Konzok

Bulgarian Red Cross  
Jelena Sofranac

Croatian Red Cross  
Jasmin Niksic

Cyprus Red Cross  
Guillermo Vazquez

Czech Red Cross  
Maria Hristova

Danish Red Cross  
Hala Mohammed

Estonia Red Cross  
Maria Hristova

Finnish Red Cross  
Hala Mohammed

French Red Cross  
Hala Mohammed

Red Cross Society of Georgia  
Ani Mirakyan

German Red Cross  
Sabrina Konzok

Hellenic Red Cross  
Maria Hristova

Hungarian Red Cross  
Maria Hristova

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Hala Mohammed

Irish Red Cross Society  
Sabrina Konzok

Italian Red Cross  
Guillermo Vazquez

Kazakh Red Crescent  
Ani Mirakyan

Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan  
Ani Mirakyan

Latvian Red Cross  
Maria Hristova

Liechtenstein Red Cross  
Sabrina Konzok

Lithuanian Red Cross Society  
Maria Hristova

Luxembourg Red Cross  
Hala Mohammed

Red Cross of the F.Y.R. of Macedonia  
Jelena Sofranac

Malta Red Cross Society  
Guillermo Vazquez

Red Cross Society of the Republic of Moldova  
Ani Mirakyan

Red Cross of Monaco  
Hala Mohammed
Red Cross of Montenegro  
The Netherlands Red Cross  
Norwegian Red Cross  
Polish Red Cross  
Portuguese Red Cross  
Red Cross of the Republic of San Marino  
Romanian Red Cross  
Russian Red Cross Society  
Red Cross of Serbia  
Slovak Red Cross  
Slovenian Red Cross  
Spanish Red Cross  
Swedish Red Cross  
Swiss Red Cross  
Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan  
Turkish Red Crescent Society  
Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan  
Ukrainian Red Cross Society  
Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan

**SUB-REGIONAL NETWORKS**

Balkan Youth Network  
EURASIA Youth Network  
EURCYN Youth Network  
French-speaking Youth Network  
German-speaking Youth Network  
Mediterranean Youth Network  
Nordic Youth Network  
South-European Youth Network  
Western European Youth Network

**IFRC OFFICES AND BODIES**

Centre for the Cooperation in the Mediterranean  
Europe Zone Office  
EU Office  
Geneva Secretariat  
Youth Commission

**THEMATIC NETWORKS**

ENDOV  
ERNA  
PERCO  
Anti-Trafficking Network  
Migration Youth Network

**REGIONAL NETWORKS**

African Youth Network  
Americas Youth Network

**FOCAL POINT**

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Sabrina Konzok  
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