

Welfare Policy

Aim of the policy

The European Youth Parliament (EYP) is committed to promoting a welcoming, safe and healthy environment for all its members, staff, participants and officials¹.

The present policy provides a framework for the safeguard of individuals wellbeing and safety, covering expected conduct, roles and responsibilities for preventing inappropriate behaviour, as well as the rightful reaction in such cases.

Policy applicability

The present policy is applicable to all events in EYP, both on a national and international level, as well as to the involvement of volunteers and staff throughout EYP activities. This includes, for example, regional, national and international sessions, members or alumni gatherings, trainings and governance meetings, as well as governance bodies' work and approach. In certain cases, a higher standard is applied to international sessions or events organised with the support of the International Office.

Key principles underlying the policy

- a. The EYP and every NC have a corporate duty and responsibility to care for and safeguard all those who take part in their activities;
- b. EYP should be a safe and welcoming environment for everyone;
- c. The wellbeing of every individual should be at the forefront;
- d. Any complaint will be dealt with seriously; there are to be no repercussions for complainants;
- e. Failure to act by those responsible to do so will draw consequences, as will the submission of vexatious complaints.

¹ 'Members of EYP' refers to any individual volunteering with EYP;

'Officials' includes anyone attending an event in an official capacity. This means all members of the Chairs team, the Organising team and the Media team, jury members, trainers as well as representatives from the Governing Body, the International Office and National Committee board members. The definition also includes anyone representing a structure of the NC or international governance (council members, regional boards etc.)

'Participants' includes everyone attending an EYP event, besides guests and officials. For sessions that means delegates and teachers; for training events, trainees.



Standard behaviour

1. In all EYP events and activities, all participants and officials are obliged to behave in a way that is consistent with EYP's aims², mission³ and values⁴, and in general, in a manner that does not negatively interfere with someone else's ability to benefit from and enjoy EYP, or that negatively reflects on the organisation.
2. Every member of, or participant in a EYP event, has a duty to ensure everyone is treated equally and respectfully. No participant or member should be excluded or discriminated against in the provision of resources or opportunities, on the age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental disabilities, religion, national or ethnic origin, family status, marital status, or any other status.
3. There is no place for bullying or harassment, in any form, in EYP⁵.
4. EYP activities should enable personal development and growth, allowing every participant to feel welcomed and safe, supported and accepted. All activities should be carried out in a respectful and dignified manner.
5. EYP has a zero tolerance for drug use. Alcohol consumption should be done in a responsible manner, abiding by the national laws applicable, and mindful of one's responsibility to act as a role model, as well as in a way that does not reflect negatively on the organisation. Peer pressure to engage in alcohol drinking should not be tolerated.

*Additionally, for international sessions or events organised with the support of the International Office, no alcoholic beverages that contain more than 15% alcohol by volume or are made of beverages that have more than 15% alcohol by volume can be consumed.

Duties and responsibilities

6. Every member of EYP or participant in a EYP event has a duty to ensure everyone is treated equally and respectfully. Everyone is integral in creating and ensuring a welcoming and safe environment for everybody.

National Committees (NCs) / National Organising Committees (NOCs)

7. NCs/NOCs should ensure members, participants and officials in their events are informed of the applicable policies, their responsibilities and relevant procedures.

² According to the EYP Charter, the EYP aims to: a. raise awareness of European issues and encourage active European citizenship, and to motivate students to get engaged in European politics; b. promote international understanding, intercultural dialogue and diversity of ideas and practices; c. contribute to the personal skills development of European youth; d. provide a forum in which young people of Europe can express and debate their own opinions, without reverting to role play (See EYP Charter).

³ The mission of EYP is to inspire and empower young Europeans to become open-minded, tolerant and active citizens (See EYP Charter).

⁴ The values of EYP are: a. independence; b. non-partisanship; c. democracy; d. inclusion; e. empowerment; f. contribution; g. cooperation; h. pluralism; i. intercultural understanding (See EYP Charter).

⁵ As defined by the Policy for a Safe and Dignified EYP.

8. For events, NOCs must have participants and officials sign a Code of Conduct commitment according to the templates approved by the GB and BNC⁶.

- (a) Codes of conduct for different roles and events are annexed to this policy and considered an integral part of it.
- (b) The “Network wide” Codes of Conduct establish minimum standards to be complied with in any and all events organised in EYP. NCs are free to add obligations to it, but cannot diminish them. The ‘International Session’ Codes of Conduct lay out the minimum standards for international sessions and other events organised with the support of the International Office.

9. NOCs are responsible to ensure event programs allow the possibility for at least 8 hours of sleep for participants and officials; offer sufficient and nutritious enough food (for all dietary requirements) for everyone, and avoid any situation (program element, venue, transfer etc) that could put the safety of individuals in danger.

10. NOCs must appoint an Event Safe person and a National Safe Person according to the dispositions of the Policy for a Safe and Dignified EYP.

*In case of international sessions or events organised with the support of the International Office, the Event Safe Person is appointed jointly by the International Office and NOC.

11. NCs/NOCs must ensure that the relevant contact information of the Event and National Safe Person is made easily available to all members, participants and officials. The IO is responsible to ensure the contacts of the International Safe person and Safe Core team are easily accessible.

Team leaders

12. Team leaders⁷ are responsible for ensuring the respect of all applicable policies within their teams. They are obliged to inform their team members of it, intervene when inappropriate behaviour occurs and report it to the competent person, when necessary (depending on the behaviour this could be a member of the session leadership, member of the NOC or Event Safe Person).

13. Team leaders must avoid any techniques, methods, activities or conducts that may be, or are likely to be perceived, as manipulative, abusive or dangerous.

14. In designing activities and programs, team leaders should always have the wellbeing (physical and emotional) of their team members’ in mind. Formal program elements should not be scheduled during the night or in such a manner that individuals would not be able to get sufficient amounts of sleep.

Officials

15. NC board members and event officials must act as role models and behave respectfully towards other members, participants and officials. This includes:

- a. Maintaining a positive and welcoming environment;

⁶ See Annex I: Network Wide Code of Conduct (participants); Annex II Network Wide Code of Conduct (Officials); Annex III: IS Code of Conduct for participants; Annex IV: IS Code of conduct for officials.

⁷ Such as chairpersons, the president, the head organiser(s), and the editors of an event, lead trainer or event leadership, as well as NC president/board members.



- b. Being aware of the influence they might exert on other members, officials and especially delegates, due to their position, experience or other;
- c. Not engaging in any conduct that is unfair or abusive towards others;
- d. Respecting personal differences (e.g. cultural, religious etc);
- e. Treating everyone equally, without discriminating in any way based on age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, family status, marital status, physical or mental disabilities or any other status;
- f. Providing an enabling environment for individuals personal, social, emotional, moral and intellectual development, as well as ensuring physical safety as far as reasonably practicable;
- g. Encouraging and respecting individuals' voices and views;
- h. Not engaging in any form of bullying or harassment⁸;
- i. Being mindful and cautious of the risk of peer pressure, pushing their team members beyond their own personal boundaries, both in terms of mental and physical health;
- j. Refraining from any sort of peer pressure or pressure for individuals to do anything outside of their comfort zone, beyond their consent (including pressure to 'overshare' personal information - deep feelings or traumatic experiences, drink alcohol or engage in any type of physical or sexual activities with another individual);
- k. Being aware and mindful of potential issues regarding the mental health of their team members;
- l. Ensuring that, if alcohol consumption is allowed and appropriate, it is consumed consensually and in a responsible manner;
- m. Taking a stance when any of the above behaviour is witnessed to discontinue it, as well as reporting it to the competent person when appropriate (event leadership, NC president, Event/National Safe Person).

16. No event official should ever administer medicine(s) to a non-official participant (i.e. delegate or teacher), even with the participant's permission.

Child⁹ Protection

17. All representatives of EYP, including teachers/chaperones and event officials should recognise their role in ensuring the welfare of children and their responsibilities if they suspect a case of child abuse¹⁰.

18. Adults, regardless of their role at an event or in the organisation, must avoid placing themselves in compromising or vulnerable positions when meeting with children (e.g. being alone with a child in any circumstance, which might be questioned by others). Furthermore, adults must report the circumstance of any situation which may be subject to misinterpretation to the Safe Person as soon as possible.

⁸ As defined by the Policy for a Safe and Dignified EYP.

⁹ A child is an individual under the age of 18 and an adult is an individual over the age of 18, regardless of their role in the event or organisation.

¹⁰ Abuse includes any action that intentionally harms or injures another person. Child abuse specifically can take the form of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect.

Crisis management

19. It is recommended that every NC establishes templates for risk assessment and crisis management for all their events'. This is mandatory for international sessions or events organised with the support of the International Office.

20. Every event should have a plan of action in case a participant requires urgent medical attention, in case of natural disasters, security or safety emergencies (including for example terrorist attacks, fire etc).

21. NCs have an obligation to abide by national authorities' advice in evaluating the feasibility and safety of events, in light of potential natural disasters or safety concerns. No events should be organised in case of impending crisis.

Reporting

22. The chain of reporting and procedure applicable in case of behaviour against this policy follows the applicable provisions from the Policy on Safeguarding Safety and Dignity in EYP.

23. Failure to abide by their responsibilities and obligations should be:

- a. For team leaders and officials - mentioned in their evaluations after the event;
- b. For NCs - complaints can be made to the Governing Body.
- c. Additional measures or sanctions can be taken according to the gravity of the behaviour in question according to the Potential Measures to be applied foreseen by the Policy for a Safe and Dignified EYP.

24. For international sessions or events organised with the support of the IO or GB, mention of the implementation of the present policy, as well as deviations from it, should be included in the report presented to the network afterwards.

25. The Safe Core Team and GB are competent to deal with complaints of individuals' behaviour following the procedure laid out in the Policy on Safeguarding Safety and Dignity in EYP. Allegations concerning the respect by NCs of policies or the Charter are the sole competence of the GB.