

EUROPEAN **YOUTH** PARLIAMENT
PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN DES **JEUNES**
ÉIRE IRELAND



What is EYP?



Schools Booklet



Intercultural Exchange
Youth Leadership
Political Debate



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European Youth Parliament

The European Youth Parliament (EYP) is a non-partisan and independent educational project tailored specifically to the needs of young European citizens. Each year EYP reaches out to over 20,000 young people in 41 countries and in doing so provides students with an opportunity to engage in intercultural dialogue, parliamentary debate, political educational work and discussion on a range of pressing issues.

All of the EYP's activities are facilitated by thousands of young people who are active in a voluntary capacity. Today the EYP is the largest European platform for non-formal political education of young people. EYP encourages independent thinking and socio-political initiative in young people and facilitates the learning of crucial social and professional skills.

All activities of EYP are under the patronage of Mr. Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, while the Comité d'Honneur includes Mr. Martin Schulz, Former President of the European Parliament and Mr. José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission.

European Youth Parliament Ireland

EYP Ireland, the Irish national branch of the EYP, was established in 1997 as a non-for-profit youth organisation which actively engages young Irish people in discussion of Europe and the European Union. Since our foundation, we have organised dozens of weekend-long conferences for secondary school students across Ireland.

On an annual basis the EYP Ireland organises 4 Regional Conferences and a National Conference, consisting of 3 and 4 days respectively. Over the next two years we will also expand to hold two international conferences; Cork 2014, the 1st International Forum of the European Youth Parliament Ireland and the 81st International Session of European Youth Parliament Dublin-Belfast 2016.

Our Session Officials, alumni and national governing body work on an entirely volunteer basis.

"I have noted with interest the work of the European Youth Parliament to promote dialogue and sharpen democratic awareness among young Europeans."

Jose Manuel Barroso | President of the European Commission



Elements of an EYP Session



EYP Ireland will hold five conferences over the coming year: 4 Regional Sessions and 1 National Session. All of our conferences are composed of three distinct stages: Teambuilding, Committee Work and General Assembly.

Teambuilding

This part of each session focuses on developing communication and group dynamics among the delegates in a committee, most of whom are meeting for the first time. Under the direction of an experienced and trained young chairperson, the delegates in each committee engage in a variety of indoor and outdoor activities.

Some are physical, while others demand creativity, communication and problem-solving skills. All of these games and tasks are aimed to be enjoyable for all and are designed to enable committees to overcome differences and develop principles and rules of cooperation needed for working in a team. Through the development of building trust amongst strangers the team discover similarities and differences amongst their peers on their journey of problem solving in order to create a strong team.



Committee Work

This is the main working part of our session, where each committee concerns themselves



with their assigned topic. The delegates brainstorm and debate their issue, eventually coming to compromises and forming a joint opinion and vision to deal with the problem put in front of them.

This is a chance for delegates to raise their own concerns and voice their opinions while they create a resolution, containing the aims, solutions and facts of the entire committee, which they will present to the other participants at General Assembly. Delegates will be encouraged to think critically and creatively in order to create individually distinct visions ideas and concepts.

General Assembly

This element of the session constitutes the highlight and conclusion of each session and aims to simulate the workings of the European Parliament. All committees gather, and following the procedures of the European Parliament, presents their resolution to the Assembly. Over the course of the day delegates have the ability to put forward convincing arguments, defend their own opinions and develop public speaking skills. Each resolution is attacked, defended and debated before being put to a vote. The resolutions that are passed by the Assembly are submitted to a number of significant local and national public figures.



Who can do EYP?



EYP Ireland events are open to **all fourth and fifth year students in the Republic of Ireland**, regardless of school or background. We are constantly looking for new ways to expand our activities and to reach higher numbers of young people.

Participating schools may send one delegation of 2-8 students to our Regional Conferences. However, it may be possible to send more or less students. Please contact the Head Organiser for the relevant session for more information.



While schools send students as delegation representing the school, students will be divided into committees and EYP Ireland expects all students to cooperate and work well together within their committees. It's important that students attempt to communicate effectively, co-operate with others, be open-minded and that they've researched their topic.

It should be noted that in the case of Déis Schools, the participation fee is waived.

In the lead up to our regional conferences, schools in the respective regions will be contacted with information regarding how to register delegates.



What to expect

Never attended an EYP conference before? No worries; here's what to expect.

Each conference takes place over a weekend and we stress that it is vital that delegates attend all three days. The weekend is split largely into three parts as explained on page four. While you attend the conference with other students from your school, you'll be split up and divided into separate Committees for the weekend. There are some further things to note.

Firstly, what do you wear? For Teambuilding on Friday it is recommended you wear comfortable, warm clothing. You'll spend the evening taking part in a series of games and activities so dress accordingly. For Committee Work, the dress code is smart casual - this generally means a shirt and tie for the boys and skirts/dresses for the girls. Often we tell people to dress as if they are going for a job interview - therefore no jeans or tracksuits please.

It is important to note that

Saturday morning is usually when Opening Ceremony is held. This is where the session will be officially opened by the President of the Session. Local Politicians or figures of note are often invited to Open Ceremony to speak, so it's imperative all delegates dress appropriately.

Saturday night is when the Session Disco is held. Often this is themed, with the venue and indeed the people decorated to dance the night away! Past themes included James Bond, Star Wars, Exploration, Harry Potter and even Superheroes. You will be informed of the disco theme prior to the session and we ask you to bring an outfit/costume to change into once Committee Work has ended.

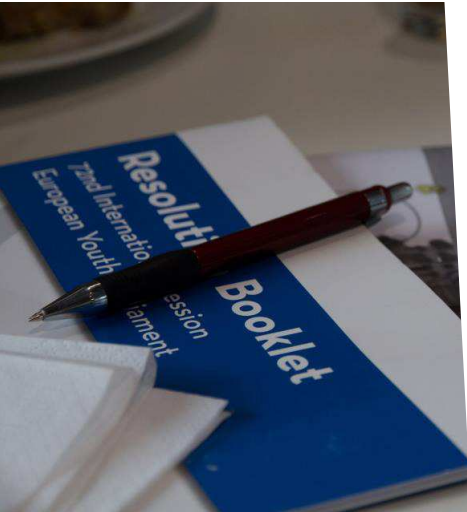
All of Sunday is given over to General Assembly (GA). Formal wear must be worn on Sunday (shirts, ties, skirts, etc). If you are unsure about what to wear, school uniforms (shirts, trousers, skirts, etc) are more than appropriate.

"The European Youth Parliament has been a forum for discussion and reflection for European youth for more than 20 years. They contribute to building tomorrow's Europe."

Herman Van Rompuy | President of the European Council



How to research



While at a Session, each Committee is assigned a topic to discuss. Delegates will be able to read the topics when registering and select their top three preferences. Committees will be allocated based on these preferences. Examples of topics can be found on our website.



Each topic presents a European problem that the committee must discuss and decide how to go about tackling the issues raised. Therefore researching the topic that you have is an important part of the weekend, otherwise what are you going to talk about? Use the internet and ask friends what they think about it. You don't have to become an expert in your topic, but it helps to have at least a moderate level of knowledge so that you can comfortably discuss it with your committee. When looking at the topic as a whole, you should be able to structure it as follows and structure your research accordingly:



1. What is your topic about?

What is the core of what you'll be discussing? Is it a specific problem, the conflict in Syria or Ukraine? Or is it more broad; tackling low voter turnouts in Europe? Perhaps write the topic out in your own words so you fully understand what exactly it is asking.

2. What is the current situation in this area?

Ask yourself why is this problem? Why is it relevant and being discussed?



For example, with a problem involving the healthcare system, you may look at what exactly the problem is and how it occurred; equally you may try to get a good idea of what is happening now across the EU. Remember you will be discussing how the problem affects ALL of Europe, not just Ireland.

3. What are the possible solutions to this problem?

Look at solutions that others might have proposed and ask why they haven't work or won't work. What might be the stumbling blocks to simple solutions? What action can the EU, according to its capacities, take?

4. Do you have any of your own solutions?

It's important to think about solutions that might not have been proposed or that you think might work. If you can do this, you may well be doing a better job than the politicians who have been working on these problems for months! Remember no idea is too small or too silly. We are EYP, we are supposed to think outside the box.

Remember that your research won't be the be-all-and-end-all of your committee's discussion; you can work together and pool your knowledge to reach a common solution.

When using the internet, be sure to check news websites, especially the BBC and The Guardian. Sometimes academic papers from Google Scholar can be quite helpful. Wikipedia can be a useful introductory source but should be used sparingly. The Economist is also an invaluable source. Equally European related websites such as EUactiv are constantly updated with relevant news from in and around the EU.

It usually helps to bring your research to the conference so that you can have it at the ready if you need some statistics or information that you want to consult. Print articles and webpages, highlight important information and put it in a folder!



Parents and Teachers



While the European Youth Parliament Ireland is aimed primarily at young Irish students, we think both teachers and parents will find our activities appealing – as much as from a school’s as from a parents’ perspective.



During sessions, students engage in both academic discussions and enriching social situations, thus broadening their experiences. The same applies to political knowledge and debating skills, which are fostered within EYP.

For all these reasons, many teachers value EYP as a unique opportunity for learning and self-development for young students. EYP wants to promote non-formal learning in the field of political education. Our work is volunteer-based only, and we greatly appreciate and value the support of second-level schools in Ireland.



Participating schools may send one delegation of 2 - 8 students to our Regional Conferences. However, it may be possible to send more or less students. Students must be in either Transition Year or Fifth Year.

Delegates should dress casually for Friday evening but are expected to be dressed formally for Saturday and Sunday. Delegates may wish to bring a change of clothes for Saturday evening's entertainment. School rules apply at all times. Any delegate found with alcohol or drugs in their possession will have them confiscated and will be sent home immediately.



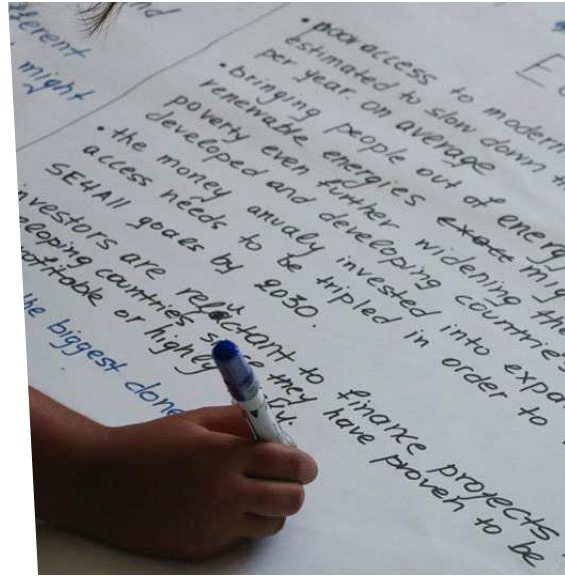
The participation fee for a Regional Conference is **€60.00 per student**. **This covers the costs** associated in the running of the conference. EYP is volunteer-run and is not interested in profiting financially from its conferences. It is very

important that the fees are paid in advance of conferences as fees accepted in-session will incur an administration fee of €10.00. We accept cash or cheques (made out to "EYP Ireland Ltd.") The participation fees for the National Selection Conference is €90.00 per student.

It should be noted that in the case of Déis Schools, the participation fee is waived.

It is extremely important that delegates and their parent(s)/guardian(s) have completed and submitted signed consent forms i.e. parental consent & media consent forms. These are available on our website at the section detailing the relevant session and will also be available for download on registration online. For legal reasons, students will not be able to attend the conference without these completed forms. The forms must be signed by the delegate, a parent/guardian and the teacher in charge of EYP participation in your school.

Any questions, queries or suggestions are always welcome and can be directed to either info@eyp.ie or a specific session head organiser, whose contact details can be found at the back of this booklet.



Rules



As previously mentioned, school rules apply at all times. Any delegate found with alcohol or drugs in their possession will have them confiscated and will be sent home immediately.



EYP Ireland takes the safety and security of all participants very seriously. Students are expected to follow the Session Rules and be respectful towards the session officials in charge, all of whom are participating on a volunteer basis.



EYP Ireland has a strict Child Protection Policy in place and any violations of this will be dealt with appropriately. It should be noted that in the case of residential sessions, male and female students, under no circumstances, will be sharing rooms. If any students are found to be in a room other than their assigned room, their parents/guardians and school will be contacted and they will be sent home immediately.



Each conference takes place over a weekend and we stress that it is vital that delegates attend all three days. Delegates may not leave any part of the session early unless they have been given permission by the Session Head Organiser, and then will have to be collected by a parent or guardian. Under no circumstances will students be allowed leave the session unaccompanied. We further stress this in relation to the Saturday night disco, while we recognise some students may not wish to partake, we can not allow delegates to leave early unaccompanied.

Frequently Asked Questions

What do the sessions entail?

An EYP Session is split into three core segments; Teambuilding, Committee Work and General Assembly where by a collection of students in a Committee come together to discuss a European topic and form a resolution. It's natural for first-time delegates to be unsure of what to expect, but they are guided through all processes and aspects of the Session by experienced EYPers.

Who supervises the overall session?

The session is run and supervised by EYP Ireland Alumni. The Session Officials are third-level students from Ireland and abroad who have participated at EYP sessions before. All session officials are responsible and experienced EYPers. Furthermore, a National Coordinator is present at all sessions and acts as the Child Protection Officer for the session. The main point of contact for parents will be the Session Head Organiser or the National Coordinator present at the session.

What should I bring?

Delegates are advised to bring pens, paper and their research as well as the appropriate clothing.

Who should parents contact during the session if they want to get in touch?

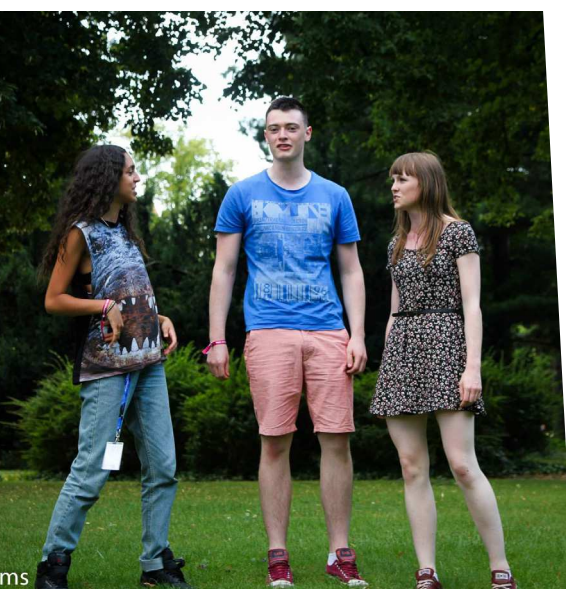
Parents, Guardians or Teachers should contact the session head organiser if they need to get in touch with a session official or delegate.

What are the qualities/skills required to be a good delegate?

An open-mind is the greatest skill one could have. However, there is no 'perfect delegate' and all students who participate in EYP bring their own experiences and skills to a session.

Can Delegates be in a room with their friends?

For residential sessions, room allocation is based on committees. Therefore you will be sharing a room with your fellow committee members rather than your school friends. It is important to note that girls and boys will not, under any circumstances, be sharing rooms.



FAQs

How much spending money do I need to bring?

The participation fee covers food and accommodation over the course of the session. However if students wish, they can bring a small amount of spending money for snacks or for travel costs to and from the session.

Do I wear school uniform or a formal shirt & tie in GA?

School uniforms are perfectly acceptable attire for G.A. There is no need to go out and purchase formal clothes for GA.

How do you sign up for EYP?

Your school will be emailed when the registration for your respective session is open. Alternatively you can check our website to see if registration for your session has opened. You simply fill out the google form giving your details, pay the participation fee and then you're signed up!

What time will the session end on the Sunday?

Usually General Assembly is followed by Closing Ceremony and the entire session is scheduled to end at around 6 to 7pm, depending on the specific timetable. However the session may run 30 to 60 mins later than this, so bear this in mind when planning transport to and from the session.

What's the Saturday Disco?

After the long day of Committee Work, all session participants get the chance to unwind and relax at the session disco which is usually held in the same venue as Committee Work. Often the disco is themed so don't forget to bring a costume or change of clothes!

Contact Details

General Inquiries:

info@eyp.ie

Secretary -

secretary@eyp.ie

Public Relations Officer -

public.relations@eyp.ie

Treasurer -

treasurer@eyp.ie

Delegate Officer -

delegate@eyp.ie

Alumni Officer -

alumni@eyp.ie

Munster HO (Head Organiser) -

munster.session@eyp.ie

Connaught/Ulster HO -

connaught.ulster@eyp.ie

Leinster HO -

leinster.session@eyp.ie

Dublin HO -

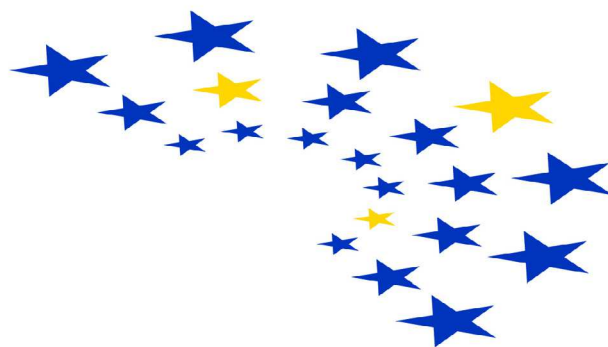
dublin.session@eyp.ie

Nationals HO -

nationals.session@eyp.ie

Note. Our Officers will change in April while our email addresses will remain the same, the individuals in each role may change. Check out our website for an updated list of contact details.





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Social Media

<http://www.facebook.com/EYPIreland> | Facebook

https://twitter.com/EYP_Ireland | Twitter



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Feel free to visit our website,
www.eyp.ie, for the latest updates
on our upcoming sessions.