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## Report Organizations applying for membership in YEE at the Annual Meeting 2012

This year there are **ten** organizations applying for membership in Youth and Environment Europe, **two** applying for full and **eight** for associate membership.

### ***Full membership:***

- EPER Center - Environmental Center for Protection, Education and Rehabilitation (Albania)
- Republican Center for Children and Youth GUTTA-CLUB (Moldova)

### ***Associate membership:***

- Young Biologists Association (Armenia)
- Azerbaijan Youth for Peace (Azerbaijan)
- Merkuri (Georgia)
- Mine Vaganti European Youth Group (Italy)
- AYA (Russia)
- LIBERTAS INTERNATIONAL (Spain)
- Institute of Ukrainian Studies (Ukraine)
- Ipso Jure (Ukraine)

### **1/ EPER Center (Environmental Center for Protection, Education and Rehabilitation)**

**Country:** Albania  
**Year of foundation:** 2009  
**Area of work:** national  
**Apply for:** full membership  
**Number of members:** 42  
**Age limit:** Members of the Board, Executive Director, administrative staff and volunteers belong to the group aged from 16 to 29. Important part of the center is a voluntary group which belongs to age group 16 - 25 years old. No age limit.

**Aim:** The main aim is to contribute to a cohesive society through environmental initiatives.

**Activities:** Capacity building; environmental education of children, youth and community civic groups; ecotourism development around priority areas; research, assessment, monitoring, development plans, surveys and other forms of this type, which are the subject of environmental field, locally, nationally and internationally; awareness campaigns, forums, debates; organizing exhibitions, films and documentary scripts, special publications; etc.

The organization has been involved in national and 6 international projects, youth participation related to the recycling business, active young healthy city, the youth volunteering in the field of environment, and related capacity building young people for environment awareness, lobbying, advocating for youth global and local environmental problems. At this moment they are realizing an international project within 3.1 of the program Youth in Action entitled 'Environmental watchdog'. They have participated in YEE Study Session in 2012.

**Opinion on membership:** According to the application form and the statutes, the EPER Center seems to focus on environmental activities and works with young people. Their main aims are connected with the environmental issues. As they fulfil the necessary criteria (youth organization, dealing with environmental topics), we recommend the General Assembly **to accept them as a full member.**

## **2/ Republican Center for Children and Youth GUTTA-CLUB**

**Country:** Moldova  
**Year of foundation:** 1996  
**Area of work:** national  
**Apply for:** full membership  
**Number of members:** 200  
**Age limit:** There is no age limit, although GUTTA-CLUB's main target are children and youth, it is also working with grown-ups, particularly teachers to achieve their environmental education objectives.

**Aim:** The main aim is the ecological education of children and young people, as well as developing active civil society, social protection of children and youth, development of the third sector, solution of issues on educational and cultural dissemination, ecological training of children and youth, formation of ecological vision, involvement of children and youth in tourism and scouting.

### **Activities:**

- Hands-on workshops, trainings, youth exchanges.
- Summer schools and summer camps.
- Environmental actions and campaigns.
- Communication and advocacy towards the authorities and decision-makers with the view to advance environmental education in schools, involve the state sector in environmental activities.
- Lectures in schools.
- Creative writing, photography and painting competitions.
- Publications of school textbooks, periodical environmental magazine for children and youth, energy efficiency guidelines, public information material for environmental education of children and youth and wider public.

**Opinion on membership:** The GUTTA-CLUB implements a lot of ecological activities and educational programmes for children but also works with teachers. As there is no age limit and the organisation is not strictly youth, we recommend the General Assembly **to accept them as an associate member.**

### **3/Young Biologists Association**

**Country:** Armenia  
**Year of foundation:** 2009  
**Area of work:** national  
**Apply for:** associate membership  
**Number of members:** 140  
**Age limit:** Under 35 years old - no age limit but many members are students.

**Aim:** Adoption of modern educational and research technologies, development and their application in the Republic of Armenia.

**Activities:** They organize periodical publications and programs for the purpose of publication research, various forums (Round tables, seminars, scientific conferences, etc.), e.g.:

- International Students Conference on Life Science
- “Darwin Now” Joint Program
- International Biodiversity Day: Photo Exhibition 2010 and 2011
- Earth Day 2010 Armenia Campaign
- Seminar on “How to Live Green and Stop Climate Change” and announcement of results of petition in support of Green Lifestyle in Armenia
- Earth Day 2010 Armenia: Tree Planting Day
- Discussion on Climate Change “The Time to Speak Up”
- “Live Green” Painting Competition
- Environmental Education Program: Fungal and Plants Biodiversity, Conservation and Ecotourism Development in Armenia
- Young Environmentalists Directory dedicated to the International Year of Forests 2011

**Opinion on membership:** Based on the documentation provided, the organization implements many different environmental activities targeted at young people hence responds to the criteria of YEE for associate member - *“shall be organization with substantial youth membership, self-governing, democratic, and involved in youth work and environmental work, which take a substantial interest in the objectives and activities of the Federation”*. We recommend the General Assembly **to accept them as an associate member.**

#### **4/ Azerbaijan Youth for Peace**

**Country:** Azerbaijan  
**Year of foundation:** 2008  
**Area of work:** national  
**Apply for:** associate membership  
**Number of members:** 60  
**Age limit:** 18-35 - there is no upper age limit

**Aims:**

- To develop leaders who are committed to peace, democracy and solidarity
- To be represented in international youth NGOs functioning in European level
- To implement exchange programs with different international and national youth organizations functioning in USA and European countries.
- To promote the better understanding of the diversity of the common cultures, supporting the fight against racism, discrimination and promoting equality at all levels of society
- To promote human rights, democracy, peace and solidarity in Azerbaijan
- To support the peaceful and nonviolent process of transformation of the conflicts in Azerbaijan

**Activities:** There is a strong emphasis on youth work mainly centred around peace building, anti racism, integration and international relations.

Main activities of the organization are: organizing seminars, conferences, discussions, work-camps, youth exchanges, forums on subjects: youth, ecology, voluntarism, peace, gender, human rights and media.

**Opinion on membership:** Their strong emphasis on youth work and international co-operation could be beneficial to the YEE network. However, as for their interest and involvement in environmental activities, it does not seem to be much present. In their application they say they have taken part in “Ecology” activities, but do not provide any other details. This is the only mention of work to do with the environment. Hence we recommend **not accepting them this year and postponing their acceptance till showing more ecological interest.**

#### **5/ Merkuri**

**Country:** Georgia  
**Year of foundation:** 2007  
**Area of work:** national  
**Apply for:** associate membership  
**Number of members:** 23  
**Age limit:** no age limit - the age of the current members varies between 16 and 45

### **Aims and activities:**

- To develop small business as well as women's business
- Education of women and care of public health
- To improve the conditions of large families
- Protection of women's rights
- Creation of psychological assistance service for women
- To help unprotected people

The organisation is mostly concerned with the rights of women and children but also express an interest in the general development of civil society.

**Opinion on membership:** While working with youth, it is mostly in the context of the family unit, they do not seem to offer any independent support for youth themselves, though they have taken part in some actions/programs, mainly *European Youth Parliament 2011*. In regards to environmental issues, nowhere in the statute of aims and activities does it mention an interest in environmental issues, though it is worth mentioning that they have taken part in the following activities recently which could be construed as an interest in the topic: *Ecological conference of students 2010, Actions against climate change 2010*.

The orientation of the organization is not quite corresponding to the requirements of YEE and we believe that we do not share enough common interests. Hence **we do not recommend accepting them as associate members.**

## **6/ Mine Vaganti European Youth Group**

**Country:** Italy  
**Year of foundation:** 2009 (informally), 2011 (formally)  
**Area of work:** local  
**Apply for:** associate membership  
**Number of members:** 10 active  
**Age limit:** Currently between 16-35, there is no age limit.

### **Aims and activities:**

- Personal development of members
- Acquiring new skills and abilities
- Promote social inclusion using sport, nature and art
- Create links with European youth associations
- Develop youth movement across Europe promoting informal education methods

**Activities:** The organisation is mainly interested in making use of the YiA program in Italy with specific interest within the region of Sardinia. Their main focus is on mobilising youth and preparing them for job through informal education in many areas such as sport, green skills and social issues such as discrimination, unemployment and racism. They also mention an interest in helping those with disabilities.

They implement many activities in the field of non-formal and in-formal education, informing and communication (youth exchanges, training course, study sessions); activities for youth: volunteering projects in local communities, sportive activities as an healthy lifestyle, sport as a tool for inclusion, eco projects of free expression for young people; popularization of the Youth In Action program, etc.

### **Opinion on membership:**

Although the environment is not their key focus, their past actions and activities show a strong commitment to both youth and the environment, for example they took part in the YEE Study Session in Strasbourg on European Environmental Law. They have also singlehandedly organised a youth exchange on Nature and Ecology. They have a proven track record as being capable and dependable collaborators and we recommend the General Assembly **to accept them as an associate member.**

### **7/ Regional non-governmental organisation for development of volunteering AYA**

<b>Country:</b>	Russia
<b>Year of foundation:</b>	2011
<b>Area of work:</b>	national
<b>Apply for:</b>	associate membership
<b>Number of members:</b>	cca 30
<b>Age limit:</b>	No age limit (currently the oldest member is 33)
<b>Aim:</b>	To facilitate the voluntarism development.

### **Activities:**

- Organizing voluntary expeditions for the intercultural exchange
- Informational, material, financial, technical, organizational and educating support of social initiatives of citizens and non-profit organizations
- Lecturing and educating activity
- Attracting the attention of the public to the volunteering and charity, to its own activity and activity of the supported organizations
- Publishing
- Carrying out charity events
- Participating in voluntary movement
- Organizing cultural leisure time and entertainment

Example of activities: Volunteer projects (2 weeks long) with international participants; local events (weekend) in Moscow - clean-ups, tree planting, volunteer help at different events, different workshops on recycling, e-volunteering/translating brochures, etc.

**Opinion on membership:** While their statutes do not mention anything about either youth or environmental issues specifically, their previous activities do seem to be VERY environmentally orientated having participated in Clean up, Tree planting, workshops on recycling and having helped YEE translate brochures in the past. They seem active and interested in the environment without specifically mentioning it in the Statutes. The coordinators who established the organisation come from EcoCenter Zapovedniks, another Russian YEE MO and with who YEE cooperated with closely on previous projects (e.g. YEE Forest Campaign 2011). Hence we recommend **accepting the organization as an associate member based on a proven track record of environmental activity but on the condition that they will provide a better and more detailed description of their environmental activities.**

## 8/ LIBERTAS INTERNATIONAL

**Country:** Spain  
**Year of foundation:** 2010  
**Area of work:** international  
**Apply for:** associate membership  
**Number of members:** 231  
**Age limit:** No age limit - but they give priority to young people between 12 and 35 years old.

**Aims:** To create social awareness among citizens of the world through campaigns, projects and activities; to promote mobility in Europe where young people can experience and develop some cultural dialogue with young people from other countries; defence and promotion of the Declaration of the Declaration of Human Rights of United Nations; defence and promotion of the Convention of rights of children of United Nations; defence and development of women in the world; to support rural areas, to create environmental awareness among citizens to fight against the climate change, to protect the natural resources of the Mother Earth; etc.

### **Activities:**

In Spain:

- work with young people with fewer opportunities, offer counselling in studies, scholarships, grants etc.
- work with high schools - every month session for debating and learning about the world,
- organizing environmental volunteer work camps in summer and sport outdoor activities in weekends with non-formal and informal education,
- the organization's specialist works on a project related to ecological agriculture with the help of volunteers.

In Moscow: hosting EVS organization, volunteers teach languages at school.

They plan to organize an EVS project in Spain at two national parks related to promotion of eco-tourism.

**Opinion on membership:** The organization is not focused only on environment and it even seems that they work more on other subjects such as social inclusion. At the same time they aim at working with young people and organize environmental work camps (although it is not clear what kind of work exactly they do there). They have no publications so far. Their aims include raising environmental awareness among other things. Overall the organisation seems to be not environmentally orientated. However, they work with young people and have some ecological projects. According to the YEE Statutes, the associate member *shall be organization with substantial youth membership, self-governing, democratic, and involved in youth work and environmental work, which take a substantial interest in the objectives and activities of the Federation*". For this reason, we recommend **accepting the organization as an associate member only if they can give better explanation of their environmental activities**. Otherwise we recommend **postponing their acceptance till showing more ecological interest**.

### **9/Institute of Ukrainian Studies**

**Country:** Ukraine  
**Year of foundation:** 2005  
**Area of work:** local  
**Apply for:** associate membership (for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time)  
**Number of members:** around 30  
**Age limit:** 15-30 years old - students, recent graduates, high school students. No age limit.

**Aim:** The main aim is to help young leaders by involving them into socially important activities. Other aims include distribution of information about Ukraine, attracting attention to the issues concerning Ukrainian society, organization of cultural and sport events, trainings, etc.

**Activities:** They organise projects aimed at increasing cooperation with local youth, ensuring active participation of young people in local life. They cooperate with the Department of the Youth, Family and Sports in organizing various youth activities including youth seminars, conferences, trainings, etc. Main projects:

- All-Ukrainian Charitable Marathon "Race for Children" - raising money for maternity hospitals
- Lvov Regional Session of the European Youth Parliament (2007-2009)
- International Youth Convention of the International network Youth for Exchange and Understanding
- International School of Ukrainian Studies (Youth in Action)
- Local projects (human rights, sustainable development, youth employment)



**Opinion on membership:** The Institute of Ukrainian Studies applies for associate membership for the third time already. The reason why the organisation was not accepted the previous two times is that there were not many activities related to environmental issues. After analyzing the application form and statutes again this year, there does not seem to be any change concerning the environmental activities. The organisation focuses on working with young people, but in social and active citizenship areas - mostly capacity building of youngsters in Ukrainian region of Lvov. Hence we believe that it is appropriate **to continue the collaboration without membership as it has already happened in the previous years.**

### 10/ Ipsso Jure

**Country:** Ukraine  
**Year of foundation:** 2011  
**Area of work:** local  
**Apply for:** associate membership  
**Number of members:** 47  
**Age limit:** Most of the current members are between 14 and 35.  
The minimum age is 14 and there is no maximum age.

**Aims:** To conduct scientific research and carry out the elucidative activity in the field of international law with the purpose of protection of rights and interests of citizens of Ukraine, foreigners, persons without citizenship at both national and international level; To conduct scientific research in the sphere of environmental law with the purpose of environmental protection; To promote cultural diversity and values of intercultural dialogue; etc.

**Activities:** Scientific research, lectures, seminars, consultations, other measures aimed at analyzing and elucidating existent problems in the field of international law, international cooperation, application of norms of international legislation to the norms of national legislation, protection of public rights and interests at international level, environmental protection, development of culture and promotion of cultural values. They run exhibitions, trainings, scientific seminars, projects, other public measures, in particular with the active engagement of citizens of Ukraine, foreigners, persons without citizenship, international and national youth organizations.

*Environmental activities:* Study of problems of international law and in this context they are engaged in problems of ecology as well. They organize conferences on the following topics (amongst others): international ecological law, global ecological problems and similarly problems of ecology in Ukraine.

**Opinion on membership:** Ipsso Jure applies for associate membership. They fulfil the basic criteria for becoming associate member - substantial youth

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membership, involved in youth work and environmental work. However they mention that the yearly budget of the organization is 300 EUR so it is difficult to imagine how all the projects are organised. For this reason, **the financial situation should be further examined during the procedure and we recommend accepting the organization as an associate member only if they can give a better explanation of functioning of their organisation and funding of their activities.**