



Cofinanciado por
la Unión Europea



PRACTICAL HANDBOOK

**DEFINING AND
REGISTERING YOUTH
ASSOCIATIONS**



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Authors: Melania Aguilar Loureda (ASECOP), Stephen Moore (ASIDE) & Fátima Ramos Giráldez (SE).

Editor: Melania Aguilar Loureda (ASECOP).



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What is a youth association?

A youth association is a type of organization with a focus upon providing activities and socialization for minors.

Questions to ask before you set an youth association

If you are thinking of starting a youth group there are some questions you should ask yourself first:

- What type of group do I want to set up?
- Are there young people in my area who will be interested in joining the group?
- Are there adults in my area who will be willing to volunteer in the group?
- Is there a suitable premises where the group could meet in my local area?
- Would there be able to raise enough money to cover things like insurance, equipment, expenses, etc.?
- Are there local youth services near you that could give support, guidance and training?

Starting a youth group at your school

If you are looking to start a club or youth group, a good place to start is at your school. Speak to your guidance counsellor about your ideas and what you are hoping to achieve.

It is important that you have the idea for the group clearly planned so will be able to show your counsellor why there is a need for this group in your school. You may also need money to get to be able to get your group up and running, so also come with ideas about how you could fundraise money for the group. The more planned out you have the idea and the more determined you are to put it into action will stand to you.

Starting a youth group in your community

Setting up your own independent group is a lengthy process, but can be very rewarding. If you are determined to set up your own group, there are several steps you need to follow. You should start by asking yourself a couple of questions - for example, are there enough potential members? Are there enough volunteers to help run the group or are there any other clubs of this kind in the surrounding areas.

Club structure

You need to decide on a legal structure for the club. The simplest type is an unassociated corporation. You do not need to register an unincorporated association and it costs nothing to set one up. This does mean that all costs (for renting a premises etc.) and contracts are your responsibility.

If your club is a non-profit organisation, you do not need to worry about taxes.

However, insurance is mandatory to have, which is easier and cheaper to get when you are affiliated.

Club name

You need to think of a name for your club in case any formal documents are needed. Make sure no other club has the same name.

Club constitution

The club constitution is a written document which states the rules and structures which the club will follow. It outlines what the club will do, and rules for membership, meetings and committees. It will be needed if you are applying anywhere for funding.

Club officials

A club needs three official members (minimum) to run the club. You must have:

- Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer

These are elected jobs and they make up the committee of the club. You can also have other members so the committee laid out in your constitution, for example, a Fundraising Officer is common to have in a non-profit organisation. The rest of the club members may be made up of volunteers to help with different jobs.

AGM (Annual General Meeting)

An AGM is held every year to vote on who will be on the committee. All members get a say in how the club is run at this meeting.

Committee meetings

The club committee is fully responsible for how the club is managed on a daily basis. If you want a club to run smoothly, it is a good idea to have a committee formed early and have roles clearly laid out for the different members of the committee. By doing so, everyone knows their jobs and the work load is spread evenly.

Data protection

Under this General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), when you begin talking personal details of people for memberships or for Garda Vetting, you need to make sure you are storing member's information safely and securely. GDPR explains that you must have a person's permission and store their information safely with their full knowledge of the process for storage, and what their information will be used for. Members are under no obligation to give you any information which they do not feel comfortable giving you.

Child protection regulation

If you are going to be working with children or young people, you must go through, and be cleared through Garda Vetting. Garda Vetting is a service provided by the Gardaí to show that you have no previous criminal offences, and once you are cleared you are free to work with any children and young people. Garda Vetting needs to be obtained by anyone working with children and young people, including volunteers.

Child Protection Policies such as the Children's First National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children are dedicated to protecting children from harm and abuse. It is a guideline on what organisations should do if they suspect a child is being neglected or abused, and the authorities which this should be reported to. It also lays out protocols for the authorities to follow. When working with children, it is highly advised.

Benefits

Among the many benefits of creating an association are the following:

- **Collaboration and support:** Associations bring together people with common interests, goals or concerns. By joining together, members can collaborate, support each other and work together to achieve their goals.
- **Collective impact:** By joining forces, associations have greater power to bring about significant and positive changes in society. They can influence policy, raise awareness and mobilise resources more effectively than they can individually.
- **Shared resources:** provide access to resources that are effectively affordable on their own, such as funding, knowledge, infrastructure or contacts.
- **Representation:** they act as a collective voice to represent their interests to governments, institutions or other organisations.
- **Personal growth:** being part of an association can provide opportunities for personal development, learning and growth. It helps to acquire new skills, knowledge and experience.
- **Networking and connections:** Associations often provide a platform for networking and building relationships with people with similar interests. This can be beneficial on both a personal and professional level.
- **Sense of belonging:** today gives us a sense of belonging to the community today which is comforting and motivating.
- **Problem solving:** common problems are addressed more effectively by bringing together people with experience and expertise on a specific topic.
- **Advocacy:** today we work together to advocate for important causes such as social justice, health, education, environment and others.

- **Multiplier effect:** Partnerships achieve a multiplier effect in the achievement of objectives and projects.

Risks

While creating a partnership has several benefits, it also entails certain risks and challenges that should be considered before establishing a partnership:

- **Legal responsibilities:** By having legal structures and regulations, these must be complied with otherwise founders and members can be held legally liable for actions not properly managed.
- **Internal conflicts:** differences of opinion and conflicts may arise among the members of the association that affect the unity and effective functioning of the group.
- **Workload:** Running an association requires a certain amount of time and effort. Mainly founders and board members have more or less an additional workload to take into account.
- **Funding:** Obtaining and managing the financial resources to run the association can be a challenge. Lack of funding or problems in financial management can jeopardise the viability of the partnership.
- **Changes in membership:** the entry and exit of key members can affect the stability and direction of the association.
- **Reporting and documentation requirements:** Attention is required to submit regular reporting and documentation to regulatory authorities as failure to comply with these requirements may result in penalties or legal problems.
- **Sustained commitment:** it can be a challenge to maintain members' active participation and commitment as some lose interest and are willing to take on ongoing responsibilities.
- **Changes in legislation:** Laws and regulations governing associations may change over time, which could affect the way the association operates.
- **Sustainability:** It can be a challenge to maintain the vision and activities over time if you rely on donations, grants or other external resources.
- **Public perception:** The association's statements may affect public reputation and generate resistance from other groups or individuals.

To reduce these risks, today we must carefully plan the creation of the association, establish clear rules and a solid legal framework, and promote effective communication and a culture of conflict resolution. Home with a committed group of members and good leaders will also overcome many of these challenges.

Partnership and European Values

A partnership is an organisation formed by a group of people with a common goal. The value of partnership believes in the idea of joining forces and resources in order to achieve things that would be difficult to achieve individually. Although there are different types of partnerships, they all share the idea of collaboration and teamwork.

To encourage participation and growth of your association it is important to create a sense of community within it. This can be achieved by organising social events, regular meetings or even creating online groups where members can interact and share ideas. This will strengthen ties and motivate members to actively participate.

The youth association we are going to create can incorporate a variety of European values that promote integration, diversity and participation. Some of these could be:

- **Tolerance and diversity:** the European Union values cultural and ethnic diversity as essential for the effective integration of all communities.
- **Equality:** today the partnership can promote equal opportunities in all aspects of life.
- **Solidarity:** through the association, a space for collaboration and mutual support is created between young immigrants and the local community.

- **Civic participation:** this is a key European value and partnership can be a good vehicle for encouraging participation in the civic and political life of the host country.
- **Education and learning:** the good functioning of the association promotes educational values and fosters learning skills among the young members.
- **Human rights:** Europe has a long tradition of defending human rights. With the partnership we can ensure that the rights of young migrants are respected and protected.
- **Cultural exchange:** an association made up of young migrants seeking to integrate in their city is a clear example of this value.
- **Social inclusion:** the partnership can work to combat prejudice and exclusion and promote the inclusion of young people in society.
- **Environmental responsibility:** this is an increasingly important value in Europe that we must take into account.
- **Multilingualism:** this should be an important value as we live in a multiracial and multilingual society.

Erasmus +

European programmes such as Erasmus+ finance and promote a multitude of proposals that foster spaces for the social inclusion of migrants in their host cities.

This interest stems from the conviction in the importance of promoting diverse and egalitarian societies in which any of its members have access to personal and professional development.

As mentioned before, the economic sustainability of our association is vital and this is where Erasmus+ projects can help to carry out activities and projects that are aligned with the values of the European Union.

That is why we encourage youth associations to learn and inform themselves in detail about the whole process.

The main steps to be followed by the applicant organisation are the following four steps:

- Register on the funding and call for tenders portal and receive a CIP participant identification code. In the case of Actions managed by National Agencies, register on the following website <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-esc> for Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps and receive an organisation code.
- Check that the Programme criteria for the action or field in which the project is to be carried out are met.
- Review financial conditions.
- Fill in the application form and send it to us.

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ASIDE



**SOCIAL
ENTERPRISES**

