



Vision 20/20  
Ljubljana • Bohinjsko jezero



Her mit dem schönen Leben!  
Flensburg • Hamburg



Koha për NISMA të reja!  
Tirana



Up4Change, Down2Action  
Liverpool



Share the Light!  
St. Petersburg • Turku  
Petrozavodsk • Hamburg



Take 5 for Europe  
#createyoureurope



europajugendbüro.hamburg

**e.p.a. • european playwork association**



**Annual Report**  
**2021**

The year 2021 was still marked with the uncertainties and restrictions of the pandemic, but we could finally experience precious face-to-face encounters again. We continued our connection with the network online and offline through many Zoom calls, online events and meetings. While one of our youth exchanges and two of our seminars had to be postponed to the following year due to the pandemic, we were glad to finally be able to celebrate our International Youth Exchange in Slovenia and our seminar in Albania.

Looking at this annual report, it is yet again noticeable how young people have been amongst those whose lives were most affected during by pandemic; and how crucial local and international youth work are to counter the negative consequences and loss of opportunities for young people. Young people have experienced loneliness, isolation and resignation, and too often their voices were not heard in society. Following the often voluntary and very committed work of our partners in their communities has filled us with hope that young people will continue to be supported in places they feel like belonging.

We would especially like to thank our supporters (the Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg) who made it possible to further sustain, nourish and develop our network with a relatively large amount of freedom. Under these continued challenging conditions, many of our partners have experienced a weakening of their support systems and resources, as well as less opportunities for their youths. We continued to support our partners with access to intercultural encounters online and offline, resources and through creating the conditions for fruitful exchange and tackling challenges together as a network, sending a sign of Hope to cope.

We are grateful for those in-person encounters we were able to experience again and we hope that our partners will be able to continue recover from the damage the pandemic has caused in their communities.

e.p.a. Team  
Hamburg, June 2022

The e.p.a. network was substantially supported and funded by



Behörde für Arbeit,  
Soziales, Familie  
und Integration



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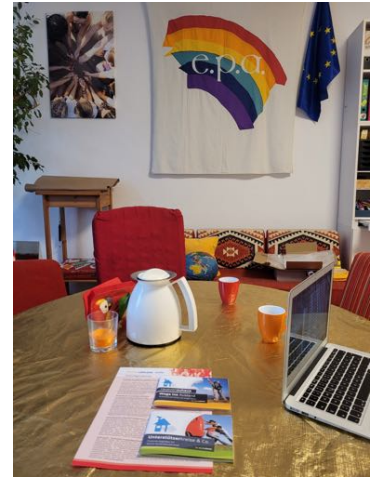
## Europa JUGEND Büro

For more than 30 years e.p.a. runs the Europa JUGEND Büro as a youth drop-in service in Hamburg, with open access to opportunities for European youth mobility and intercultural youth co-operation, creating local visibility for current European themes, youth initiatives, and funded voluntary services. All year through, we informed and advised young people on international mobility projects during consultation meetings in our office or online, as well as on fairs and through presentations at schools.



We encouraged committed youth workers and organisations to become involved in international youth work, informing them about European funding, training and intercultural methodology.

➤ [europajugendbuero.hamburg](http://europajugendbuero.hamburg)



## Eurodesk Networking



With the Europa JUGEND Büro, e.p.a is an active and long-term Eurodesk partner and multipliers centre. The e.p.a. staff is trained by Eurodesk in consulting young people on international mobility programmes. We take part in the annual network meeting with all other Eurodesk multipliers in Germany, as well as online meetings and trainings throughout the year that are offered to partners of the German and the European network.

➤ [eurodesk.eu](http://eurodesk.eu)





## Annual Eurodesk Meeting

One of the most important events of the year in the German Eurodesk network is the annual meeting in Bonn. In 2021, the meeting took place online again at the end of April. The German National Agency JUGEND for Europa presented key points and priorities of the EU programmes Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps, and individual Eurodesk partners presented successful practical examples from the network. Workshops addressed topics such as sustainability, returnee work and the use of social media in the network.



In addition, a two-day virtual autumn meeting with the Eurodesk network took place in November. Among other things, there was an exchange on mobility programme developments during the pandemic, a presentation of the social media package for partners, a discussion of the new website rausvonzuhause.de, and input on environmentally conscious travel.

## European Solidarity Corps



For some years, e.p.a. has been accredited as a coordinating, receiving and sending organisation for the European Solidarity Corps programme of the European Union. In 2021, we have sent two young people from Hamburg for one year ESC projects to Romania and Hungary. Moreover, we sent three volunteers on a short-term project in Greece.

Since 2019, e.p.a. has hosted one or two ESC volunteers at a time in our office in Hamburg for one year each. Volunteer and solidarity activities are good opportunities to include young people into the daily work of e.p.a. and its partner organisations, and increase youth participation within the network. The volunteers support the preparation of local and international youth activities, inform young people about international opportunities, take care of PR/dissemination activities, work on non-formal learning concepts etc.

Michael from Liverpool, who joined us as an ESC volunteer in September 2020, continued his voluntary service at e.p.a. until August 2021. In March 2021, Saif from Tunis started his ESC, and in November Jay from Petrozavodsk (Russia) joined. Our volunteers hosted



events and workshops during the European week in Hamburg, the European Youth Week, the Eurodesk Time to Move campaign, and on other occasions. They hosted youth groups in the garden and cooked meals for them, e.g. the Hamburg group for the youth exchange in Slovenia. For our youth seminar in Liverpool that had to be postponed to 2022, two of our volunteers were part of the project team to organise and facilitate the seminar.



As a coordinating organisation, e.pa. also supports our partners in Hamburg: Our partner Baui (Abenteuerspielplatz am Brunnenhof) started hosting their first ESC volunteer María from Granada in September. She supports the adventure playground in playing and taking care of over 50 children and youths, and accompanying them on excursions. With our partner AGfJ, we started the process of hosting for their first two volunteers in 2022.

## *European Week Hamburg*

For e.p.a. and especially the Europa JUGEND Büro, the European Week in Hamburg, taking place yearly during the month of May, is a great opportunity to open its doors even wider for young people and invite them to discover more about (European) youth mobility and European topics concerning their lives. Each year we come up with different events for the European Week and reach even more (young) people than we normally do.

We carried out different online and offline events together with our ESC volunteers and the EuroPeers, a network of former European volunteers. Keeping the Conference on the Future of Europe in mind and in cooperation with our local partners Infopoint Europa, we created a wish wall and a wish tree to talk with people in Hamburg about their thoughts, opinions and wishes regarding the future of Europe. During a street action, we talked to young people in a park about international mobility projects.



The EuroPeers also designed and hid Europe-related geocaches, so-called "Eurocaches" at various locations in Hamburg, for which the coordinates could be found on our website. This made it possible to reach hundreds of people in a short time, who were able to learn more about the ESC in a playful way and without personal contact. This allowed us to test concepts that worked even with the very restrictive Corona rules.

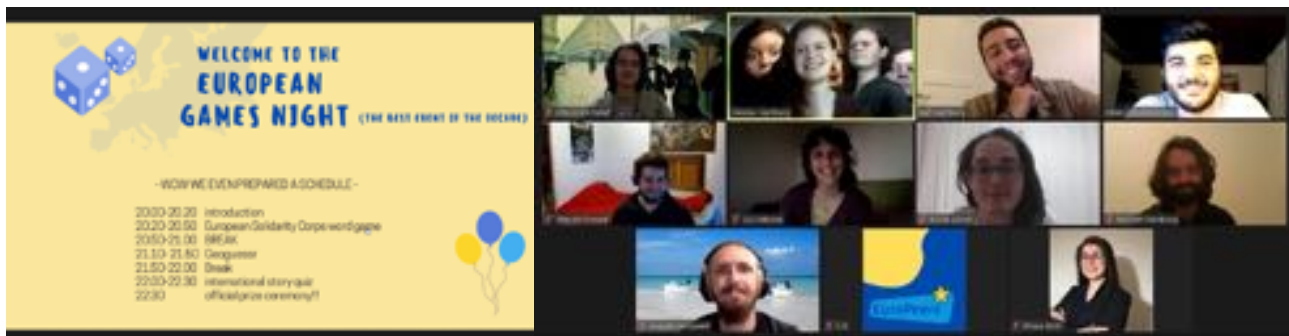
Since larger events in presence would not have been possible at the time, we also organised two online events. As an alternative to our open counseling day in our office on the topic of youth mobility, we offered a live chat for young people on our website. This type of counseling was more spontaneous, faster, and lower-threshold than an ordinary, more comprehensive counseling session with prior registration. Another digital event was a Q&A session on the European Solidarity Corps, supported by our volunteer Michael from Liverpool.

## *European Youth Week*

At the biennial European Youth Week at the end of May, we organised online activities for young people from all over Europe together with our volunteers and the EuroPeers: First, at the event 'Choices, chances, challenges', the volunteers shared their experiences of volunteering and combined this with an interactive presentation about their home cities.



At the European Games Night, we played Europe-related games with young people that also provided information about European mobility, followed by a prize ceremony.



As part of our Hope to Cope campaign launched in response to the pandemic, our partners shared insights, experiences and lessons learned from their communities to highlight their voices during this difficult time and to share hope and solidarity across the network. This evolved into the web radio show "Hope to Cope" together with our partners Eco Estillistas in Portugal. As part of the European Youth Week, we organised an episode of the radio show together with our partners in Accra, Ghana.

## ***Rainbow connected - statutory meetings***

An international youth NGO, e.p.a. organises four to six statutory meetings per year in which partners from the e.p.a. network come together to share thoughts related to our activities, e.g. about the development of the network. This year, five meetings were held digitally, and we were able to hold our Annual General Meeting in presence in October.

In these international network meetings, we offered space for exchange and joint reflection on the past and the present. To strengthen hope and anticipation for future projects, we also exchanged ideas for the future. Through the regular meetings, the partner network was maintained during the difficult pandemic period, which many partners and their young people suffered from.

Thus, in 2021, despite the more limited meetings in presence, an important task remained to maintain and strengthen the connections (some of them existing for years or even decades) through interactions and contact. We were also able to expand our network with a new partner from Belarus: Human Constanta, a human rights organisation that, among other things, supports refugees in and from Belarus.

## *Meeting on the Portuguese EU Presidency*

At the first e.p.a. Network meeting of the year in January, we talked with our partners about the Portuguese EU Presidency and how we can integrate it into our network activities. Our Portuguese partner Eco Estilistas presented a short video about their work with young people in Lisbon. With their web radio Zip, they operate a space for expression of young people in Europe and beyond. Therefore, we discussed activities with e.p.a. and Eco Estilistas, and how we can use the webradio for the European Week.

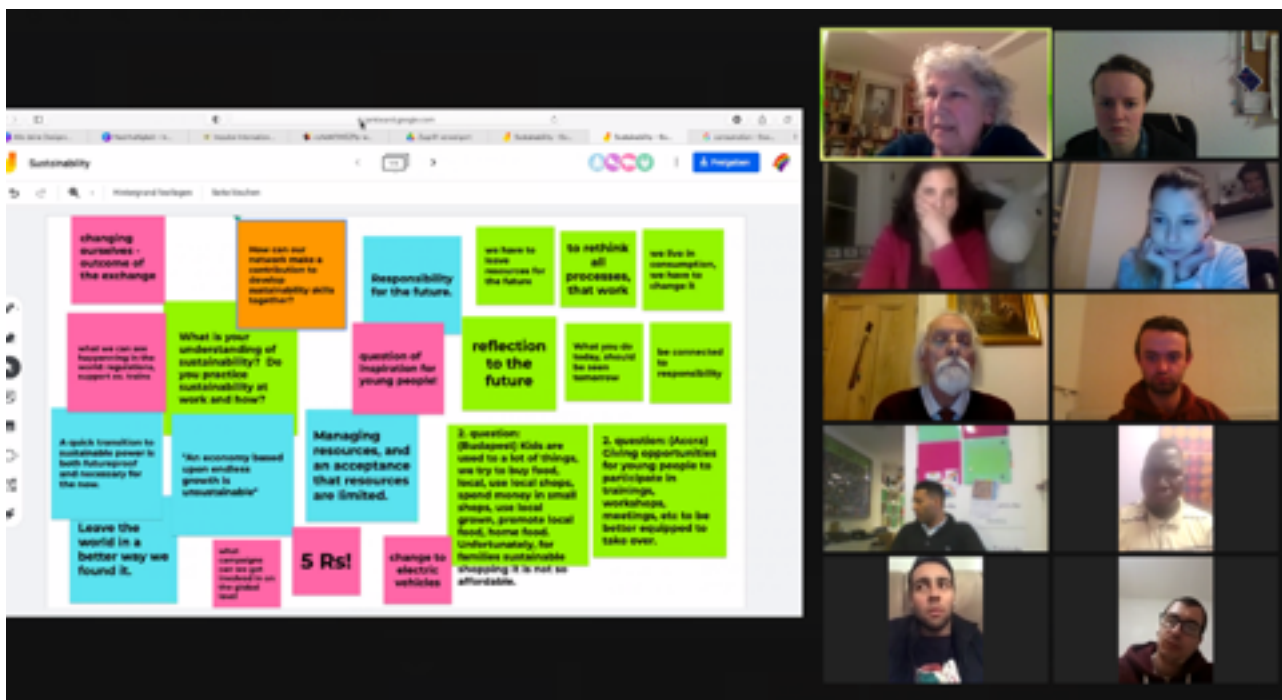
At the end of 2020, e.p.a. launched the Hope to Cope campaign to give one partner each week the opportunity to share insights about their community's situation through social media. A radio show was planned for 2021 at the network meeting with several episodes as part of this campaign, which was carried out by Eco Estilistas and e.p.a. during the year. Accompanying support was provided by the e.p.a. ESC volunteers.

## *New ways for sustainability in youth work*

In February, we brought partners from our network together to discuss ideas and thoughts on sustainability in youth work. First, we discussed the current situation with our partners - their work, the pandemic situation, and their hopes for their communities in 2021. Then we talked in small groups about our definitions of sustainability and how we practice it in the context of our work. We then had a brainstorming session about how our network can help develop skills in sustainability.

The goal of this network meeting was to capture new ideas for our Sustainability Guide, drafted during the pandemic, by sharing them together, in order to develop it further and present it as a tool to the network. Shining a light on our different perspectives was very helpful for this.





## *Meeting on the Sustainability guide*

In April, partners of our network met again to discuss sustainability. Based on our discussions at the last meeting, we further developed our sustainability guide, which we presented to the network members. For this purpose, the different perspectives from Finland to Ghana were very interesting and helpful to look at the discussion on sustainability from a global point of view.

The sustainability guide deals with how we can make our projects such as youth exchanges, but also our everyday work more ecologically sustainable. We addressed aspects such as waste reduction, lower electricity use and the idea of hybrid projects, which have become more common due to the pandemic.

## *Future development of the network*

This online meeting in June brought together participants from across Europe and beyond to discuss the future of the e.p.a. network: ideas, needs, hopes, fears, and wishes. We asked participants where we want to take the e.p.a. network, and what medium- to long-

term goals we set for ourselves. Which topics were expected and desired? Do the annual plan and projects continue to include the perspectives of disadvantaged youth?

In small groups, we discussed non-formal learning methods, international youth exchanges, seminars and voluntary services, and enriching network activities. We addressed both what participants liked in past projects and what ideas, visions, and hopes they see for the future.



## Topics and projects for the next three years

Based on the last statutory meeting, this time we gathered with even more partners to discuss together our topics, ideas and plans for the next three years. We asked our participants what projects they would like to organise in the next few years to get a better overview for long-term planning.



Fortunately, there were many wishes from our partners to organise and host youth exchanges and seminars. We did not give any guidelines, but kept the space open for new ideas and possibilities. For example, our partner H52 volunteered to organise a study session on "All different - All equal" at the European Youth Centre in Budapest. Our partners Eso-Estillas from Portugal and Ulita from Slovakia announced interest in a renewed tricontinental project, as we had done in the past. For the North-South youth exchange in 2022, our partners Almatihair from Spain expressed their wish to become the host, and the Bau in Hamburg would like to host the youth exchange in 2023.

## *e.p.a. Annual General Meeting*

Our Annual General Meeting took place in October, this time at the Baltic Sea. In addition to the usual reports and future outlooks, this annual meeting is particularly important to recognise the work done in many cases on a voluntary basis, which is a very important factor for the implementation of our diverse projects.

We combined our annual meeting with a preceding meeting in Hamburg with four partners from Portugal, Slovakia and the Netherlands. In this two-day meeting, we explored the proposal from the previous online network meeting to again organise a tricontinental project with Europe, Africa and Latin America. Climate change, affecting everyone around the world, came up as the overall theme. Together with our partners, we drew up an initial cost calculation, a list of possible sponsors, and considered which partners from the various continents could be considered for such a project. We fondly remembered our legendary tricontinental project from 2008 - 2011, in which we thematically dealt very intensively with the transatlantic triangular slave trade, among other topics.



At our AGM, participants of exchanges and the e.p.a. team, presented the projects that took place in 2021, and we gave an overview of our plans for 2022. As board members, Jessica Rohlf and Anabela Costa were again unanimously elected for the next two years. Our cash auditor confirmed in writing that he had conducted the cash audit properly and that this resulted in no objections.

The rest of the weekend was used for brainstorming for our rainbow podcast, sharing and playing together.



## Time to Move



Time to Move is a campaign and series of events that takes place every year in October across Europe. It was launched by the European Commission, is coordinated by Eurodesk in all countries and is implemented by Eurodesk partner organisations. The aim is to raise awareness of European mobility opportunities for young people.

After only being able to hold online events in 2020, we wanted to focus on face-to-face formats in 2021. At the Baltic youth exchange “Reeuropize” organised by the Landesjugendring Schleswig-Holstein, we conducted a Europe-related workshop. We included a guessing game about the EU and discussed European identity. Afterwards, our volunteer Saif reported about his ESC and answered many questions from the audience. We concluded with a rally on Altona's European history.



## International seminars in Liverpool and Berlin

Due to the pandemic, a planned multilateral seminar with 35 participants in Berlin and a seminar for young people in Liverpool had to be postponed until 2022. Fortunately, the funders EU and Council of Europe approved the renewed pandemic-related postponement very unbureaucratically.

## *International Youth Exchange in Slovenia "Vision 20/20 plus"*

The first e.p.a. International Youth Exchange after 2 years! Like so many international projects, our Erasmus+ funded International Youth Exchange "Vision 20/20 plus" in Slovenia had to be postponed. During the winter months, we managed well to stay in touch with 'online-meetings'.



In spring 2021, our hosts 'Slovenska Filantropija' courageously and supported by the Slovenian Ministry of Health decided to invite the youth groups from eight countries, first to a 'hybrid' preparatory meeting to discuss the programme and all the special conditions for entry and cooperation under Corona. On July 23, we were welcomed - tested, some already vaccinated - in Ljubljana after adventurous journeys from 7 countries. The first week we spent as a group in a 'bubble' in Prvine, in beautiful nature high in the mountains, inventing new games, taking deep breaths, and having intense conversations. The second week we were in Ljubljana.

Together 60 young people with 17 different mother tongues discovered 'difficult' topics like solidarity, foresight and dealing with borders in Europe and in our minds during brilliantly prepared workshops, presentations and non-formal playful methods. And they discovered what 'soustvaranje' - co-creation is capable of, inventing something together to create, they celebrated international understanding and friendships.





"The most beautiful and moving experience? The feeling that I belong and that I can trust everyone."

**Luca,  
Hamburg**

"The most moving for me was the stories and the sharings of young people, who had to run away from their countries because of the bad situation in their countries. Also that after the year of covid, I could be again with friends and have good time and feel really free again."

**Veve, Bratislava**

A highlight of the programme was the invitation of the Slovenian President to an outdoor reception. An unusual experience: President Bohut Pahor invited the young people to talk, listened attentively and was impressed by their active participation.

Actually, the whole exchange was a great gift! -After 2 years of practicing at a distance, the participants found it precious to be able to meet again in person.

## ***Seminar in Albania: Civic Education - Chances and Challenges for Youth Work in Disadvantaged Communities***

Our Erasmus+ funded seminar for youth workers, which had to be postponed last year, was hosted by our e.p.a. network partner Nisma-Arsis Tirana, Albania, from 18-25.09.21. Our accommodation was in a hotel in Durrës on the Mediterranean Sea, where the service team made every effort to create a suitable working environment for our seminar under pandemic conditions.

### **Koha për NISMA të reja!**

Civic Education -  
Chances and Challenges for Youth Work  
in Disadvantaged Communities



**International Seminar**

**Tirana • Durrës | Albania**  
**18th - 25th September 2021**



This project is funded by  
the European Union Erasmus+



35 mostly young youth workers from 16 countries came together to get to know realities in the different countries, to learn more about civic education in youth work and above all to learn from each other. The focus was on how participants can reach disadvantaged youth and develop sustainable relationships. Participants were encouraged to critically question their pedagogical practice, relate to the needs and desires of 'their' young people, and reflect on what support youth workers and their initiatives need for participatory, sustainable civic education.



Highlights of the seminar were a play action with children who had to flee Afghanistan with their families in August, and the professional exchange during the visits to children's, youth and district projects. We were impressed by the carefully thought-out and attentive socio-pedagogical work of our Albanian colleagues, especially the 'integration' efforts with which they support children whose families have been deported from EU countries.



With our proven e.p.a. methods, this seminar was able to encourage 35 young professionals to continue working for human and youth rights and a more equitable distribution of life chances, also in difficult neighbourhoods, despite all resistance. They returned to their work freshly convinced: *"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has"* (Margret Mead).



My biggest thanks for organising yet another unforgettable experience that energised my spirit and heart.

I will be going back with much needed energy to do my best within the community.

**Shazan, Amsterdam**

Every moment for me was the happiest moment. Maybe just the idea that e.p.a is the family I never knew that I need. Each and every moment with all of the amazing people was such a blessing for me.

**Hannaneh, Turku**

## *Share the Light!*



Our international project "Share the Light! Young people come together to exchange ideas and learn from each other" with partners from St. Petersburg and Petrozavodsk (Russia), Turku (Finland) and Hamburg included six online workshops for young people spread over the year. The workshops were planned together with our partners and partly moderated and conducted by them. In them, we covered topics such as sustainability, political engagement, diversity, intercultural similarities and differences. The workshops started with

an informal input on the topic and led to open discussions about the current situation in the young people's home cities and countries and their perspectives on political issues. The events reached young people from our partner organisations and beyond.

## *Hope to Cope*

In 2021, we continued our Hope to Cope campaign, which began in late 2020 in response to the pandemic, to provide insights into our partners' neighbourhoods to gather diverse voices during these difficult times. The idea behind this campaign was to spread hope and solidarity within our network. Once a week there was a post with a short interview with a representative from a partner organisation on our website.

The campaign on social media evolved into a web radio show with our partner Eco-Estilitas from Lisbon on their radio ZIP, where young people and partners in Europe and beyond shared in two episodes the challenges in their community, how they are coping with the pandemic and what they would advise other young people.



## *Event by the European Movement*

Each year in December, Hamburg's Senate Chancellery invites us to the meeting of the "European Movement", bringing together youth organisations, civil society, schools and state stakeholders with interest to spread European values together through actions, events and projects especially during the European Week. This platform is used by the Hamburg Senate Chancellery to pass on the main details concerning the next year's European Week, such as dates, motto, and for the organisation to meet and network. It is a great opportunity for inspiration, networking and finding cooperation partners. At the meeting, all the organisations and institutions presented their plans for the European Week 2022.



## Take 5 Youth conference

Take V is a network of youth organisations and the state youth authorities from Bremen, Lower Saxony, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein. Since 2010, we have been organising youth conferences to bring young people and politicians together. Participants have the opportunity to voice their opinion and thus help shape political processes.

As the partner from Hamburg, the Europa JUGEND Büro again participated in the preparation of the North German Youth Conference "Take 5", which was planned to take place in Scharbeutz in November with up to 100 participants from the 5 Northern federal states of Germany. There were several digital planning meetings. Among other things, we had planned a thematic workshop on climate change/sustainability and a stop motion creative workshop. Despite a much-discussed and quite elaborate hygiene concept, the conference had to be postponed again due to the rising infection numbers to Bad Segeberg in summer 2022.

In May, we presented Take V with our colleagues from Schleswig-Holstein at an event of the National Agency on youth participation projects with Erasmus+.

We are looking forward to continuing with the project and meeting the participants and politicians face-to-face to discuss the chosen topics.

➤ [europajugendbuero.hamburg/take\\_5](https://europajugendbuero.hamburg/take_5)



## *e.p.a. in brief*

e.p.a. is an international network of youth and community initiatives and associations with partner in over 40 countries: in Europe (including Middle-, Eastern and South Eastern Europe) in South America, CIS countries and Africa.

e.p.a. is an INGYO, registered and based as a “Freier Träger der Jugendhilfe” and charity (e.V.) in Hamburg – Germany.

e.p.a. aims to highlight, confront and challenge the problems of young people living in some of the most disadvantaged cities, areas and regions of Europe. e.p.a. endeavours to provide an opportunity for these young people to discover their potential, experience international friendship and fight against apathy, poverty and neglect.

e.p.a. achieves these aims through the activities of International Youth Exchanges, Study Visits, Training workshops, Seminars, Voluntary Service and International Meetings and in the publication of papers and activity sheets as well as advocacy of the local, regional and national governments of Europe and Europeans Organisations. e.p.a. has been involved in international Youth Exchanges for over 40 years and was one of the first to instigate the EU YOUTH programmes.

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The e.p.a. network was substantially supported and funded by



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