

Example of a  
**CertiLingua® project documentation**

**My involvement in the European Youth  
Parliament based on my experiences at the 9<sup>th</sup>  
National Session in Tartu, Estonia in  
October/November 2008**

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Prologue and my expectations of EYP

When first being informed about the German National Selection of the European Youth Parliament I was eager to participate. It arose my interest since I have always been interested in politics, foreign cultures and the European Union and I expected to further expand my political knowledge by getting involved. I knew that the EYP included debating and solving political problems and as I have always enjoyed political debates, this competition seemed well suited for me. However, I did not really grasp the purpose of this organization. I believed that the EYP basically was a big competition which was all about winning or loosing, that one could only participate once and that one had therefore only one chance of winning. Today, after being involved with EYP for more than a year, I know that my first notion of what the EYP is was false, that EYP is more than a competition and that it has changed my life ever since I participated in the National Session in Frankfurt in 2008.

## 1.2 What is the EYP?

The European Youth Parliament (EYP) was founded in 1990 and represents a non-partisan and independent educational forum for young people who are interested in politics and the European Union. Basically, the EYP is a simulation of the work of the European Union, designed to engage students in the process of political decision making. It includes working in Committees, drafting resolutions and finally debating these resolutions in a large General Assembly. Today the EYP is one of the largest platforms for young European citizens, consisting of a network of 32 European organizations. The international umbrella organization of the EYP is the “Heinz Schwarzkopf Foundation”.

Young delegates of the European Youth Parliament get the opportunity to get selected for regional, national or international sessions. In Germany National Selections are very competitive. In order to be selected, a group of students forms a delegation and drafts a resolution in English or French to a topic given by the EYP Germany. A Jury then evaluates the numerous resolutions and selects the twelve best delegations that are invited to the National Session, for which the delegations need to draft a second resolution. Next, at the National Session the delegates go through a process of teambuilding, work in different committees and debate political issues linked to the European Union. Each committee is chaired by two international chairpersons who help

to guide the committee members through the process of problem solving. Throughout the session the official languages are French and English. Finally, the twelve delegations debate, defend and attack their resolutions composed at home in a General Assembly. In the end the best Delegation is again selected by an international Jury and gets the opportunity to participate at an International Session.

## **2. Body**

### **2.1 My first EYP experiences**

As seven school friends and I decided to form an EYP delegation for our school, our main goal was to get selected for the National Assembly. We met almost every weekend in order to work on our resolution. Debating, brain-storming, problem-solving and finally phrasing introductory and operative clauses was in generally a lot of hard work, but simultaneously a lot of fun, as we grew closer as a team and increased our political knowledge. In the end, our work paid off and we were selected for the National Assembly in Frankfurt in 2008. Although our delegation didn't win this National Selection, I am very proud that, being among the six best delegations, we were selected to participate at a Latvian National Session in Ventspils, Latvia.

At this Latvian Session in August 2008 I realized that the EYP gave me the opportunity to not only increase my communicating, debating, and public speaking skills; I further had the chance to make new friends from a foreign country, experience the Latvian culture and see the European Union from the perspective of a different country. Hence, what I enjoyed most about this National Session was the teambuilding and the committee work, throughout which I was able to cooperate with Latvian – and international delegates from Estonia and Greece.

After the Latvian National Session, my Estonian Chair recommended me as an official for the Estonian National Session in Tartu, Estonia in October 2008.

### **2.2 My experience in Tartu, Estonia**

In the EYP delegates that proved to be suitable often are recommended to other EYP Session either to be a Delegate or an Official. Officials are either the volunteers that organize a session (Orgas), chair the Committees (Chairs) or work in the “Media Team” as journalists (Journos). As I got recommended for the 9<sup>th</sup> Estonian National

Session I was not only honoured, but also felt enthusiastic and excited. At the Latvian National Session I felt as if EYP had already become an important part of my life and I was determined to stay involved with it. In Tartu, Estonia I would experience the EYP from a whole different perspective as a member of the “Media Team”.

The main purpose of the Media Team is to entertain the delegates by creating newspapers that are both informative and entertaining and by making funny movies. The newspapers and movies further serve as a souvenir for the delegates after the session is over.

Since I had only participated as a delegate at EYP sessions so far, and therefore had no experience as a “Journo”, I felt quite nervous when preparing my journey to Estonia. However, it was not only that I didn’t know what to expect; I was further a little intimidated by the fact, that I had to organize my flight and journey to Tartu, Estonia all by myself and that the only person I knew in this foreign country was my former chairperson. In Frankfurt and Ventspils, Latvia I was always surrounded by my school friends from XXX; here, in Tartu, I would be all by myself. Nevertheless, the excitement I felt as I had the opportunity to be part of an EYP session prevailed. I was very curious to get to know the Estonian culture, the people and their mentality. As I arrived safe at Tallinn (Estonia) Airport I was picked up by my former chairperson’s friend. I spent the night at this girl’s apartment and was already surprised with the welcoming Estonian hospitality and the delicious Estonian dishes and pastries. The next morning I took the Bus to Tartu and already met several more EYP officials and delegates. It was a load off of my mind to meet so many nice and welcoming people so that the feeling of being alone soon began to fade away.

After all officials had arrived in Tartu we started Teambuilding. In the EYP Teambuilding usually serves as “Ice-Breaker”: With the help of interesting and amusing games, officials or delegates are given the opportunity to get to know each other, to lose their fear and to feel the “Team spirit” that is very beneficial for a fruitful teamwork.

During Teambuilding it always struck me that the Youth of European nations are not that different at all. Although we are all coming from different backgrounds and cultures, our interests and our behaviour are quite similar. Hence, it wasn’t hard for me to make friends and to get to know other members of the Media Team that I belonged to.

Our Media Team consisted of twelve Journos and two Editors. Most Journos were Estonian, however in addition to myself being international there was a boy from Great Britain and one from Norway. I very much enjoyed this international flair and there was a great team spirit in my team from the start, which was essential for good teamwork.

In order to produce a newspaper we usually started with brainstorming for ideas after which articles and tasks were assigned to each Journo. In addition to that, every Journo was assigned one committee which they then had to observe and write articles about. About three times a day we all attended group meetings, in which we discussed the status quo, changes that had to be made and new ideas for more articles. Observing the committees, gathering information, writing the articles and attending group meetings was challenging, a lot of work and sometimes rather stressful. As we had to publish two newspapers in only four days, we always had to adhere to the deadlines for our articles. Hence, we sometimes had to write articles during the night in order to turn them in the next morning. As a result I only got a maximum of three or four hours of sleep per night. However, the EYP always combines serious work with a lot of fun, which makes the whole experience very enjoyable and successful. In addition, our editor was motivating, encouraging and funny and as a result, I soon got used to the stress and started to love my work as a journo.

What I enjoyed most about my work as a journo was conducting interviews with the delegates of the Session as I am fond of asking people questions and listening to their stories and opinions. This also provided an opportunity for me to meet many young Estonian students as well. Further, I very much enjoyed the teamwork and the cooperation among the Journos. Often we wrote articles as a team of two people which was not only a lot of fun, but also very successful, as we could exchange ideas and opinions and were able to complement one another. Last but not least the free time activities were always a lot of fun. Whether observing a “Treasure Hunt” for the committees, singing at the concert night or dancing with my fellow organisers at one of the EYP parties: I was always having a great time!

### **3. Conclusion**

#### **3.1 Conclusion of my stay in Tartu, Estonia**

Although I was rather shy and nervous at the beginning, I made a lot of new friends throughout the six days of the session and finally I wished I could have stayed

for another week. I didn't only enjoy the EYP session, but also learned to appreciate the kindness and hospitality of the Estonian people and the Estonian mentality. Estonians are very open and down-to-earth people, who love being ironic and funny and who don't take themselves too seriously. Today, after six months I still keep in touch with my Estonian friends and I have some great memories of our time together.

All in all, my prejudices of Estonia, as it used to be a former state of the Soviet Union, were reduced too. I experienced it as a very wealthy and modern country with beautiful cities, a lot of culture and a good educational system. I was very grateful that the EYP had given me the possibility to experience this wonderful country and to get to know its rich culture and its friendly people. I am convinced that I will travel to Estonia again in the future in order to visit friends there and to visit Tallinn which is one of the most beautiful cities I have ever seen.

### 3.2 Evaluation of the EYP

In a nutshell, with my involvement in the EYP I was not only able to increase my communicating, debating, and writing skills in English but also made personal experiences that I will never forget. Particularly in Estonia, as I travelled there all by myself, I learned being open, outgoing and independent and thus I definitely gained more self confidence. At the EYP session I participated in I was further taught the importance of teamwork, respect and fruitful debates. However, what I am most proud of is that I made friends with people from other nations, that we were able to reduce prejudices and that we acknowledged differences in our cultures, but also discovered similarities. By having political debates with these young people, I perceived the European Union from a different perspective and I was able to learn more about the country's culture than school books could ever teach me. In my view, the EYP therefore accomplishes two important things: It ensures peace and understanding between the nations and it helps young people to identify with Europe. After being involved with the EYP I am hopeful for Europe. I am hopeful that European Parliamentary elections will one day have a higher voter turnout, I am hopeful that there are ways to engage young people into politics and I am hopeful that European nations will grow closer together. I am therefore very grateful that I became a member of the EYP and I hope to stay involved with it in the future.

## 4. Annex / Attachments

## 4.1 Motion for a resolution for the application for the National Session in Frankfurt, Germany 2008

Motion for a resolution:

**Following the growing rate of terrorist attacks across Europe:**

**How can the EU both fight and prevent international terrorism whilst respecting its citizens civil liberties and rights?**

The EYP delegation of the XXX, Germany

A. Observing the lack of an all-embracing and commonly accepted definition of the term terrorism leading to the emergence of an over-simplified and media-influenced idea reducing terrorism to Islamic extremism based on the religious motives of the jihad (according to a Europol study only one out of 498 terrorist attacks within the EU in 2006 had an islamistic background),

B. Welcoming the provision of financing for projects supporting awareness training, the dialogue with spiritual and political leaders and the establishment of fora for people demonstrating against terrorism (2007 Call for Proposal) since a lack of knowledge results in fear and prejudice amongst broader parts of society which in turn creates misunderstanding and hate (provoking counter-cultures),

C. Deeply disturbed by the fact that Freedom, Security and Justice, naturally in opposition in the controversial debate about surveillance and civil rights are incorporated under the responsibility of one group, meaning too much autonomy of decision being entrusted to one single faction,

D. Taking into account that each member state of the EU employs different means for terror prevention and interprets the relevance of civil liberties differently,

E. Deeply regretting a general tendency of measures for more internal safety to restrict each individual citizens civil liberties and rights,

F. Expecting that executive access to private communication (e.g. mail, E-mail, telephone etc.) affects the public while potential terrorists will be able to use different technologies in order to avoid the consequences of surveillance,

G. Having devoted attention to the current educational system in some EU member states which tend to divide distinct religious and cultural factions among students, provoking the emergence of counter-cultures,

H. Realising that immediate action in the situation of a terrorist attack remains a final option as long as it does not violate human rights as defined by the U.N.O., but should



not play a significant role in our preventive strategy against terrorism,

I. Aware of the problem that in certain situations measures, that are prohibited by the constitution of the affected member state, might be taken immediately without judicial consent, disturbing the balance of powers by giving too much influence to the executive branch,

J. Noting with deep concern that many successes with the existing security attempts (e.g. July 31st 2006 in Germany) might be based on information that was not obtained by methods acceptable under democratic values,

- 
1. Requests that the phenomenon of international terrorism be specified in categories distinguishing between different motives and targets in order to set up a solid basis for our discussion;
  2. Emphasizes that awareness training of radicalisation and the creation of more room for dialogue between pupils of different cultural and religious background, especially in schools, such as school projects encouraging inter-cultural dialogue need to be extended, also onto the international level;
  3. Condemns these human rights (freedom, security) being controlled by one authority which does not allow the process of balancing the two controversial aspects in an appropriate compromise, thus demanding the separation of freedom and security into different commissions;
  4. Strongly recommends a regulation on a European level defining measures that the member states are allowed to take in the prevention of terrorist attacks, so that the danger of extreme abuse of security measures is limited by the EU institutions;
  5. Demands a general compromise, which respects the constitutional civil rights, especially those granting personal liberties;
  6. Condemns such activities because once having given up civil rights our understanding of democracy based on genuine human rights is endangered;
  7. Demands the establishment of a mandatory ethical/philosophical education in which pupils of all religions have to participate in addition to optional religious classes;
  8. Encourages activities such as sports and music events, social entrepreneurship and projects among youth in order to intensify international relations as well as sustainable development aid to fight local poverty and discontent;
  9. Proposes the establishment of an independent but constitutional European judicial institution consisting of experts who are able to decide on measures of surveillance in

each specific case;

10. Generally condemns violations of human rights for the sake of security (e.g. torture) and does not accept the use of information obtained by such methods;

11. Further recommends sustainable development aid to fight local poverty and discontent for example in the form of resource management, technological support of basic supplies (e.g. electricity, water), improved access to education and information by establishing better equipped schools.

#### 4.2 Motion for a resolution for the National Session in Frankfurt, Germany 2008

##### RESOLUTION

##### **Security versus security: How to balance society's need for protection with the individuals right to data protection?**

The EYP delegation of the XXXX Germany

(Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs II)

A Observing a tendency to rapidly altering communication and information technologies and an increasing speed of information exchange facilitating the access to and abuse of data from both the private and the institutional sphere, concomitantly exacerbating appropriate legislations,

B Having considered the conflict of two fundamental constitutional rights: the right to privacy (cf. article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights), intended to preserve human dignity, and the right to information (cf. article 10), making it necessary to find a balance of these interdependent rights which cannot both be granted fully,

C Noting with regret that in the sector of public security direct intervention becomes improbable as a result of underrepresented security staff albeit the number of observation cameras is raised, which leads to bogus security and the need of ineffective and uncontrollable video storage,

D Deeply concerned about the transfer of personal data from one country to another in case the legislation of the recipient country deviates from that of the country where the information was originally collected, especially where data protection is not warranted (e.g. treaties of the EU and the USA allowing data transfer for the sake of terror prevention,

E Alarmed by the experiences made with political systems based upon surveillance of

the people and the suppression of civil liberties creating the basis for an autocratic state in which individual data is collected without the knowledge and the consent of their holders,

1. Notes the increasing importance of data protection and the need to consider the discrepancy between supervision to establish security on the one hand and the basic right to privacy on the other hand;
2. Declares accordingly that both human rights are to be respected, however recognizing that the right to privacy-which is mentioned above the right to information in the European Convention on Human Rights-is of greater value, which implies a general presumption of innocence rather than general suspicion, and demands that without judicial decree government institutions shall not be allowed to access personal information of citizens;
3. Recommends a mandatory placement of security guards and safety inspectors (at minimum one per each five cameras) instead of video storage so that only the more effective direct intervention becomes the major means of protection;
4. Condemns international agreements regulating data exchange if these enable a nation to override constitutional or legal principals and demands a common standard of data protection legislation amongst EU member states, which would further facilitate international police investigation;
5. Requests that consent and knowledge of the holders be a pre-condition for general collection of private data, that the collected data be used only for its initial purpose without being passed on for other uses and that data is deleted after having fulfilled its initial purpose (or after a limited period, e.g. 30 days) to prevent the creation of a police state.

#### 4.3 Motion for a Resolution by the Committee on International Trade, 6<sup>th</sup> Latvian National Session in Ventspils, Latvia

Motion for a Resolution by the Committee on International Trade:

**Skyrocketing food prices: what measures should the EU take to support the governments of those developing countries which are facing sharp and unsustainable increases in food prices?**

The European Youth Parliament,

A. Taking into account existing economic issues, like inflation, affect the value of the

countries' currencies,

B. Noting with regret that European Union (EU) protectionist policies evoke trade barriers that make it more difficult for developing economies to enter the EU market,

C. Deeply concerned that the increasing prices for fuel lead to an increase of food production and transportation costs,

D. Noting with deep concern that less developed economies rely on the support of the EU,

E. Observing that the rapid population growth leads to an increase in demand of food, causing prices to rise

F. Noting with deep concern that the consequences of climate change are a threat to a harvest,

G. Referring to statistics that during the last years the world faces a dramatic rise of food prices up to 75%,

H. Recognising the need for sustainable fuel resources to be developed,

1. Firmly believing that investments in developing countries will enhance living standards

2. Recommends to make the European market more flexible by

i) lowering export tariffs for developing economies

ii) lowering subsidies for domestic farmers;

3. Urges the EU to invest in new technologies to find alternatives to limited resources, such as oil and gas;

4. Expresses its hope for developing countries to become more independent by

i) expanding their own market

ii) improving their agriculture by sharing the experience and knowledge of the EU;

5. Encourages the EU to urge governments of developing economies to pay attention to the birth rate;

6. Further requests the EU to find measures to protect the harvest from natural disasters due to climate change;

7. Demands immediate response from the EU to address the situation,

8. Believes that bio fuels take away the land which is needed to produce food.

## 4.4 Pictures

Not published here