



## **Final Report**

### **YEPP Seminar** **Information Society and Globalisation**

14-15 May 2004  
Turku, Finland

#### **Abstract**

YEPP organised in cooperation with The Youth League of the Coalition Party (Kokoomuksen Nuorten Liitto, KNL) an international seminar under theme *Information Society as a Tool for Handling Globalisation*. The seminar took place on May 14-15 2004 in Turku, Finland. The conference, along with its accommodation, was arranged in Scandic Hotel Marina Palace.

#### **Theme**

The YEPP seminar in Turku debated the use of information society as a tool to cope with and master globalisation. The topic introduced the influence of EU's eEurope project in our societies, the implementation of social innovations in different countries and the industrial world practises of understanding the problems of the Third World. In addition to this, some Finnish industrial and political instances were offered a chance to present their views in the context of corporate social responsibility and its challenges. The idea of e-voting was briefly reflected as an application of direct and representative democracy during a panel debate among young MEP candidates.

#### **Participants**

88 young people participated at the conference. Two young Finns also participated from the youth organisation Frisinnad Ungdom of the Åland Islands, an autonomous province of Finland. See participants list enclosed.

#### **Working methods**

Seminar methodology included panel debates and participatory discussions in small groups in addition to more traditional lecture inputs. The programme was sparked with an outdoor activity at the Turku market square which facilitated a smooth introduction to local life for the international guests. The culmination point of the happening was the celebration of EU enlargement and promotion of voting in the June EU elections especially among young people. The market square rally was organised in co-operation with KNL's regional and local factions.

At the end of the two-day conference, the YEPP Council Meeting was held. A political organ of YEPP, Council Meeting e.g. approves the outcome and drafted resolutions of the

seminar as the official positions of the association. The finale of seminar was on Saturday, May 15, in a small mansion in the City of Kaarina. Traditional Finnish Evening allowed participants to get to know archipelago culture, the importance of the Baltic Sea in Finnish society in the past and present, together with an orientation to traditional sauna bathing. Furthermore, the evening offered participants a possibility for individual and group reflection of the seminar contents.

## **Seminar outcome**

On Friday, several issues were thoroughly debated. The day was started by an introduction to the Position Papers on Globalisation and ITC that were drafted by KNL. The latter was commented by Mr. Arto **Satonen**, MP. After the presentation of the drafts, the working groups on both topics convened to work on adjustments and amendments to the documents.

After lunch, an input was given by Mr. Juho **Savo**, Executive Director of the Regional Council of Southwest Finland. He focused on the regional development around the City of Turku and emphasised the use of ITC as a stepstone for regional prosperity. He was then followed by Mrs. Eva-Riitta **Siitonen**, Lord Mayor of Helsinki. In her speech the urban development and town-twinning between European cities were stressed along with the global challenges to urban growth points.

The working groups then continued their work only be interrupted by a panel debate among young MEP candidates. The debate was held between Mr. Daniel **Bautista**, YEPP President from Spain, Mr. Andreas **Boisen**, a candidate from Denmark and Finnish candidates Mr. Ville **Auvinen** from Young Christian Democrats and Ms. Piia-Noora **Kauppi**, MEP, Ms. Riikka **Kervinen** and Mr. Heikki **Autto** from KNL. The role of young candidates and MEPs was discussed together with the different ways to promote youth voting turnout.

At the street event we received input from many Finnish MEP candidates and caught the attention of pass-byers. Approximately 200 balloons and 400 KNL campaign postcards were handed out at the event in addition to individual campaigning material of the young candidates.

The evening was finalised after dinner by a celebration of the EU enlargement at the local night club Prima. YEPP handed EU flags to each delegation from the previously acceded states.

On Saturday, YEPP Council Meeting convened to carry some organisational and political cases. On the agenda point membership issues, a new member organisation Pro Patria Union of Estonia was welcomed.

Both position papers prepared by the participants were adopted as official stands for YEPP. In addition, the Council Meeting adopted three resolutions. Two of the resolutions were proposed by KNL, first of them urging EU to take more serious actions to secure the environmental heritage of the Baltic Sea, and the second making a pro nuclear power

statement. The third resolution focused on the issue of Libya and wanted to enable YEPP Board to act towards co-operation in the Mediterranean region. All three resolutions were adopted.

### **Media coverage**

One of the aims of the seminar was to raise awareness among Finnish youth about European political structures and youth activity on a European level. Media was contacted in order to spread information about the seminar and its contents to the public. KNL used the street rally in Turku as a place to launch its postcard and website based EU electoral campaign. The conference and the campaign were both recognised by the national media (Ilta-Sanomat, the biggest tabloid newspaper on 14 May 2004 and later Helsingin Sanomat, the largest national newspaper on 2 June 2004) and in regional media (Turun Sanomat 15 May 2004).

*Brussels, May 2004*