

Advices



With a Little help from Our Friends ...

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When reading the history of American music you will be astonished by the fact that jazz – as an art form – started as a note of protest.

As a sharp contrast to this historic fact, you will discover that the philosophy behind the European Youth Music Festival is quite the opposite.

The EYMF, initiated by the EMU, was established from a vain wish of using the international language called MUSIC to make friendship across the borders, and to create peace, establish mutual understanding, and build bridges between young people from different cultures and different countries.

The road has been long and winding, but 8 European Youth Music Festivals have been arranged so far. The 9th i - in Hungary in 2007 – is in progress.

When visiting our web-sites you will find useful information, both general and specific, about some of these festivals, and we have supplied with information about the minimum requirements needed when organising a European “Youth Music Festival.”

In this article, however, we will try to give all you readers and potential arrangers some facts and good advice in how to arrange a successful European Youth Music Festival in the future.

The viewpoints in this, hopefully, informative essay are primarily based upon reports and evaluations from previous festivals.

FLEXIBILITY

Young people belonging to the target group for such a festival are, at least most of them, tolerant and flexible when visiting a foreign country as festival participants.

They don't mind tasting strange food as brown, Norwegian goat cheese or sheep-testicles from Iceland, and they don't cry if missing main tourist attractions like Versailles or the Museum of Modern Art.

When You read afterthoughts and comments from festival participants from all over Europe since Barcelona in 1998, you will find but a few remarks about cold chicken and only one (1), hot meal per day.

What might be really annoying, however, are the difficult and stressing moments when you discover that the things the arrangers promised never showed up:

Some good examples are:

- **Buses and vans that never turn up, or arriving far too late**
- **When the vibraphone you ordered turns out to be a marimba**
- **When the rockband from Estonia is given a stage without electric power**
- **When You want to practice in the music hall, and the doors are locked**
- **When the person behind the Festival Centre counter only speak Spanish and urdu...**

In short: Better not to promise more than you can keep

If You want to be remembered as a successful festival arranger, please make sure that following practical tasks are carried out as well as possible:

- **Transportation's**
- **Communication**
- **External and Internal Information**

The best way to achieve this is to have skilled leaders and associates, and enough volunteers equipped with the necessary remedies, (mobile phones, keys, tools, first aid kits, a.s.o.)

UNEXPECTED

The carefully planned festivals up to now also show that unexpected expense may occur. In Trondheim, Norsk Kulturskoleråd, lost up to € 125 000 in ticket income because there was snow and strong wind on June 4th in the middle of summer 2000. A huge outdoor closing concert, and a national TV-event had to be cancelled, but – at least – some of the festival participants had a good time....

N o b o d y could have foreseen that there should be snow in June – not even in cold Norway – but an indoor alternative would have been convenient, anyway.

Shit happens!

To get more money to cover such extra costs, than contributions from the participants and subsidies from different governments and partners are able to give, we can recommend the following:

- **Use of local and national sponsors**
- **Making up to date and trendy festival souvenirs, (T-shirts, caps, buttons, pins, a.o.).** Young people will prefer festival souvenirs to souvenir articles sold in tourist shops...!

When it comes to local sponsoring, you will, most likely, experience that some of the companies you may come in touch with will find it impossible to donate large sums of money. Some of them, however, will be able to provide the festival and participants with reduced ticket prices, free juice or mineral water, lower prices on printed matters, a.o.

This can be of great help when making a realistic festival budget.

REASONS FOR COMING TO THE EMUF

Another interesting thing a festival arranger should do - is to find out why young people from all over Europe would like to visit YOUR country and YOUR festival. What do they expect to find?

The answers given by evaluations following the festivals in Barcelona, Trondheim and Switzerland show that there are mainly four reasons for young people all over Europe to participate in such a cultural event:

- **To make friends with youth from other countries**
- **To play and sing together**
- **Listen to other countries music**
- **Party, and having a good time with people of your own age**

Experience show that accommodation does not matter much when a young musician will decide if he or she wants to be a participant at the next years European Youth Music Festival.

You can place European youngsters in youth hostels, private homes, festival villages or camps designed for the purpose. They will make no fuss about it.

The main cause for staying at home has turned out to be high travel costs.

If you, as an arranger of the next EYMF can manage to get price reductions from airlines, railway companies or shipping lines, you will, most likely, be able to arrange a festival with a high number of participants – if that's your wish.

FESTIVAL PROFILE

The European Youth Music Festivals in Spain (1998) and Norway (2000) each gathered more than 10 000 people into one city.

An event with a large number of concerts and other events, with all kinds of music making Barcelona and Trondheim seething with life.

In Switzerland 2002 the festival participants were scattered, and did not meet each other in the same city after the opening ceremony.

It might not be necessary to make huge and expensive opening and closing ceremonies like in the Olympic Summer or Winter Games, but from the arrangers - and the EMU's point of view - you might be well rewarded by putting some extra money and efforts into such huge events.

Especially if you consider attention from the printed press, radio and television to be an important benefit for your festival, your community, your country and the European music-

and cultural schools.

MANY GOOD REASONS

As a former arranger, we can give you many good reasons for wishing to make an EYMF in YOUR Country!

- Positive media focusing
- A nice opportunity to show the rest of the country what's happening in your city/region
- Giving a lot of people an opportunity to work with something that is meaningful for most of us
- Giving national and local companies (sponsors) a chance to expose themselves
- Building peace and multicultural understanding to future generations across the borders
- Knitting tight bonds between young people in most European countries
- Having an opportunity to promote your own country as an attractive destination for foreign tourists
- Giving your children the chance to meet youth from other countries and cultures, perform together with artists, establish friendship and new relations, etc.

**This piece of good advice from a former festival arranger will not be the answer to all your questions, but if you read our supplementary articles about European Youth Music Festivals in different countries, and the report about minimum requirements when organising a European Music School Festival, I am sure that the knowledge achieved should make any membership country of the EMU able to make the right decision - if the question of arranging the next EYMF should turn up.
The best of luck !!**