



Since 1993, gathering selected young musicians from **Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Rep., Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey** and **Ukraine**

Artistic Direction

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Introduction

Created to deliver the paramount message of cultural cooperation and European integration, the **European Spirit of Youth Orchestra** is considered today an important instrument for the personal and musical growth of its really very young members. 25 years of uninterrupted activity, the **ESYO** project has proven its validity and perfectly reflects some of the guiding principles of the European idea: to bring together people from all the European Countries in common endeavours, to focus on the young and the talented, to offer an intellectually stimulating environment and to present the European spirit of cooperation to the wide public at its best – through its excellency, creativity, optimism, orientation towards the future and full appreciation of the musical heritage.

Presentation

European Spirit of Youth Orchestra is a unique experience offered to young musicians between the ages of 11 and 18 (for strings) and of 13 and 20 (for wind and brass players). The project offers the opportunity for **professional and personal development** of young people on intercultural level. Usually the orchestra first meets in the summer months when it starts rehearsing the program.

Through practicing, learning, interacting, playing **they become friends** and colleagues learning of the importance of team work and mutual support. In consequence they turn into one soul producing musical magic which is then transferred to the audience through their performance.

www.esyo.eu

The **orchestra offers** numerous challenges and opportunities for development, of which not all are musical. Young musicians selected come from different European countries bringing with them also their culture and way of life. In most young lives this is the first contact they will have with individuals from a different country since most of them are still at the level of primary or secondary education. This will more than likely be their first trip outside their country. Challenged with communicating, understanding and working together with their peers they are given the possibility to grow and develop in an exceptionally short time.

Gathering participants from different countries gives the orchestra immense European value intertwining different European cultures and realities thus creating the smallest European which can be seen as a representation of Europe we all strive for. The project therefore is not only striving towards music education and performance but it incorporates an intercultural European foundation, **promotes European integration** and interaction and offers a unique intercultural life experience for young musicians. Through auditions, the project reaches **over 5000 young musicians** on yearly basis, out of which the participants are then selected. Since its beginnings there were almost 3000 selected young musicians playing in the orchestra.

To help with the preparation of the orchestra a **team of exceptional professors and professional musicians** is brought together working with specific sections. Therefore, the selected young musicians get, not only, an experience of working as an orchestra, but, during this time, they receive an invaluable lessons and advice from experienced musicians, too. Moreover, this experience helps the young musicians, also in their individual musical development.

Communication is one of the biggest challenges and learning curves young people go through. Everybody working on the project comes from different countries students, professors, support staff and therefore being able to understand and be understood is as much of a daily task as learning the music. Young people develop language skills usually in more than one language and it offers them to also express themselves more creatively in order to be understood which sometimes ends in the most extraordinary ways of communication.

Activities

The project itself is, usually, constructed of at least two and, occasionally three, **concert tours** in a year. In the beginning of the year auditions are held in different countries or through on-line application. Then, the orchestra meets for the first time during summer holidays, on occasion of the Summer Concert Tour with intensive rehearsals, lasting usually 4 weeks. Following tours are taking place in autumn or winter and are shorter, as there is less rehearsal time required. Funds and time permitting the orchestra sometimes performs also a New Year tour which is usually about 10-15 days long.

Since there are **auditions** every single year, the orchestra changes its composition considerably each year. This is to offer different young musicians the opportunity to be a part of this magic and also because of its age limit where older participants cease to qualify. Approximately 20% of the orchestra is filled with participants from a previous year, the rest are new fresh faces and energies.

European value

In the past years the orchestra has proven its **European value** which has also been recognized on quite a few occasions:

- by receiving the financial support from **EU Culture Program** in 2005 and 2008
- performing a concert, on occasion of two **CEI Summit of Prime Ministers** and once, on occasion of **CEI Meeting of Foreign Ministers**
- by performing under the **patronage** of the **European Commission**,
- by performing under the **patronage** of **European Parliament** and other important national and regional (local) governmental authorities (2013 – 2017)

Faculty

Every year, about 80 selected talented young musicians are invited to form the ESYO, and trained, on occasion of the annual planned intensive rehearsing periods. The faculty TEAM, in charge of each ESYO section, is formed by professional musicians of indisputable international renown, principal members of prominent orchestras like the "Royal Concertgebouw" in Amsterdam, the "Festival Orchestra Budapest", the orchestra of the "Teatro La Scala di Milano", the "WDR Rundfunkorchester" in Cologne and many other. Among its objectives, the orchestra wishes also to support and promote the most promising international performing artists, by giving them the possibility of performing as soloists with the orchestra. After more than 24 years of activities, we are very proud to list some of our former orchestra members, playing today as members of several prestigious European and American orchestras.

Concert venues and performances

Among the most important **concerts performances** (since 1994) of the three above mentioned youth orchestras we can list the ones performed for the Heads of State and Government of the CEI Member states (Portorož, Slovenia, 2004 and Piestany, Slovakia, 2005), the concert in the Berlin's Konzerthaus am Gendarmenmarkt (2007), the Gala Concert "Hommage à Yehudi Menuhin" with the participation of the Italian violin-virtuoso Uto Ughi, in the Romanian Athenaeum in Bucharest (2009 - on occasion of the 10th anniversary of Lord Yehudi Menuhin's death), the opening concert of the "Mittelfest" in Cividale del Friuli (2005), the concert performed at the Politeama Rossetti for the "Società dei Concerti di Trieste", the one for the 250th anniversary of the Chamber of Commerce of Trieste, the "European Concert Against Drugs" organised by the Romanian Ministry of the Interior in Bucharest, the Final concert of the "Euro Mediterranean Festival" in Rome, as well as the performances in the Dvorak Hall of Prague's Rudolphinum, in the Teatro Comunale of Bologna, in the Teatro Massimo Bellini in Catania, in the Auditorium Cariplo in Milano, the Hall of the Slovenian Philharmonics in Ljubljana, in the Kolarac Hall in Belgrade, in the Synagogue of Novi Sad and the halls of the State Music Academies in Budapest, Minsk and Zagreb.

Since its creation ESYO project strives to promote, through its orchestra activities, the culture of peace, cooperation, of common understanding and solidarity, among young people, coming from or living in European regions, some of them*, with difficult social, economic and socio-political conditions, torn, in the recent past, also by internal conflicts (civil war), or natural calamities.

This is why, the ESYO is cooperating also with the promoters of "Orchestra della Pace" (Orchestra for Peace), the first Bosnia and Herzegovina national youth orchestra, including young musicians also from neighbouring countries (Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo) created in 2017, several years after the end of Yugoslav wars (1991-2001).

(*South-Balkans, East-European (not-EU) Countries, Lebanon, Marche region in Central-Italy harried by earthquakes)