

EUROPEAN UNION OF YOGA

Union Européenne de Yoga

CONGRESS GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPANTS

Annual Congress · Zinal, Canton of Valais, Switzerland

Organised by the European Union of Yoga (EUY / UEY)

The Spirit of the Congress

The EUY Annual Congress in Zinal is a gathering rooted in the living tradition of Yoga — a tradition whose depth encompasses physical practice, philosophy, meditation, contemplation, and spiritual inquiry. It is a place of encounter between teachers and practitioners from across Europe and beyond, united by a shared dedication to Yoga in the fullness of its meaning.

The ethical foundation of this gathering is drawn from the tradition itself. Patañjali's Yoga Sūtras (I.33) propose four qualities as the ground of a clear and harmonious mind: *maitrī* (friendliness), *karuṇā* (compassion), *muditā* (appreciative joy), and *upekṣā* (equanimity). To these the tradition adds *ahimsā* (non-harm) and *satya* (truthfulness) — the first two of the Yamas, the ethical pillars of Yoga. Participants are warmly invited to embody these principles in their conduct toward one another, toward the local community of Zinal, and toward the natural environment throughout their stay.

The guidelines that follow are not a substitute for this spirit. They exist to support it — to ensure that every participant can take part in the Congress with safety, dignity, and joy.

Organisational Framework

The Congress is organised by the European Union of Yoga, an association registered in France under the Law of 1 July 1901. It takes place in Zinal, in the Canton of Valais, Switzerland. These guidelines have been established in accordance with the EUY's governance obligations as a French non-profit association and with the duty-of-care principles applicable to public events held in Switzerland.

By registering for and participating in the Congress, all participants acknowledge that they have read and understood these guidelines and commit to respecting them throughout their stay.

General Principles

The Congress is a professional and cultural gathering open to teachers and practitioners of Yoga. Participants are expected to contribute actively to an atmosphere of mutual respect, responsibility, and collegial exchange. The Congress takes place in a high mountain environment and brings together participants from many countries and traditions; personal awareness and a spirit of care for others are therefore essential at all times.

Conduct that compromises the safety, dignity, or wellbeing of others will not be tolerated and may lead to intervention by the organising team, up to and including exclusion from the Congress.

Personal Responsibility and Participation

Participation in the Congress is voluntary. Each participant is responsible for their own health, their physical condition and limitations, and their personal belongings throughout the event. Yoga involves

physical activity; a mountain environment involves natural risks. Participants are asked to be honest with themselves about their own capacities and to seek guidance from teachers or the organising team whenever in doubt.

The EUY and the organising team exercise reasonable care in the planning and conduct of the Congress, but cannot assume responsibility for accidents or incidents arising from a participant's personal negligence, failure to follow safety instructions, or failure to disclose relevant health information.

Participants who are minors must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian, who assumes full responsibility for their participation in all Congress activities.

Respectful Conduct

All participants are expected to treat one another, teachers, organisers, local residents, and venue staff with courtesy and respect. Harassment, intimidation, discrimination, aggressive behaviour, or unwanted physical contact are not acceptable in any form — whether during sessions, in shared spaces, or in social contexts connected to the Congress.

Respect for personal boundaries and for the dignity of every person present is not merely a rule: it is an expression of the tradition in which this Congress is grounded. Any participant who experiences inappropriate behaviour is encouraged to approach the designated contact persons of the organising team, who will treat such matters with discretion and care.

Conduct During Yoga Sessions

Congress sessions are spaces of shared practice and inquiry. Participants are asked to arrive punctually, to prepare appropriately, and to bring full attentiveness to each session.

During sessions, participants should follow the guidance of the teacher while remaining attentive to their own body. Forcing postures beyond one's genuine capacity serves neither the body nor the practice. Participants are strongly encouraged to inform teachers in advance of any injury, medical condition, or physical limitation that may affect their participation — teachers can then offer appropriate modifications.

Physical adjustments by a teacher may only take place with the explicit prior consent of the participant. Any participant may decline an adjustment at any time, without explanation. All practice at the Congress is to be conducted in the spirit of *ahimsā* — the principle of non-harm — toward oneself and toward others.

Between Sessions and in Shared Spaces

Between sessions and in all shared spaces — dining areas, corridors, rest spaces, outdoor areas — participants are asked to maintain the atmosphere of attentiveness and mutual consideration that characterises the Congress. Others may be resting, preparing for practice, or engaged in conversation; their space and quiet should be respected.

Congress activities are conducted in a spirit of clarity and presence. Participants are asked to refrain from the consumption of alcohol or any substance that impairs judgement or awareness during sessions and Congress activities. Smoking is permitted only in areas where it is allowed under local Swiss regulations and in a manner considerate of others.

Safety in the Mountain Environment

Zinal is situated in a high mountain valley of the Swiss Alps at an altitude of approximately 1,675 metres. The mountain environment is magnificent and demands respect. Weather conditions can change rapidly and without warning; temperatures may vary significantly between morning and afternoon, and between

sun and shade. Participants should come prepared with appropriate clothing for variable conditions, suitable footwear, water, and sun protection.

All outdoor activities — whether part of the official programme or undertaken individually — should be approached with awareness and good judgement. Participants who undertake walks, hikes, or excursions outside scheduled activities do so entirely at their own responsibility. The organising team cannot supervise or accept responsibility for individual activities outside the official Congress programme.

Participants are asked to remain attentive to weather alerts and to any safety instructions issued by the organising team. The organisers reserve the right to modify the schedule or relocate activities if conditions require it for the safety of participants.

The Sorebois and the Cable Car

Some Congress activities take place at Sorebois, accessible by cable car from Zinal. Participants must follow all instructions provided by cable car operators and respect posted safety regulations. Appropriate clothing and footwear are essential when travelling to, or moving around, high-altitude locations. At Sorebois the terrain, the wind, and the light differ significantly from the valley; participants should remain attentive and exercise appropriate caution.

As with all mountain activities, excursions or personal activities at Sorebois outside the organised programme are undertaken at the participant's own risk and responsibility.

Health and Medical Responsibility

Participants are responsible for ensuring that they are in sufficiently good health to engage in yoga practice and, where applicable, mountain activities. Those with existing medical conditions should consult their physician before travelling and bring any necessary medications. All participants are encouraged to carry a basic personal first-aid kit suitable for a mountain environment.

In case of accident or medical emergency, participants should contact the organising team immediately, or call the Swiss emergency services directly:

Emergency medical services (Switzerland): 144

Police: 117 · Fire: 118 · European emergency number: 112

The Village of Zinal and the Local Community

Participants are guests in the village of Zinal and in the Canton of Valais. The village is a living community, not a resort; its residents, their customs, and their daily life deserve full respect. Participants are expected to comply with all applicable local laws and regulations, to avoid excessive noise — particularly during evening and night hours — and to behave in a manner that honours the generosity of the community that receives the Congress each year.

When moving through the village during the evening or at night, participants should remain attentive to mountain conditions and to their personal safety. Those unfamiliar with the terrain should avoid isolated or poorly lit areas. The spirit of the Congress extends beyond its scheduled sessions: every interaction with the local community is an opportunity to represent the Yoga tradition and the EUY with dignity.

Protection of the Natural Environment

The alpine landscape around Zinal is an area of exceptional natural beauty and ecological sensitivity. Participants are expected to care for it accordingly: following marked paths, carrying out all litter, respecting wildlife and protected areas, and avoiding any action that disturbs the natural environment. The

Swiss federal and cantonal regulations governing the protection of alpine landscapes apply to all participants.

Care for the earth is not an external obligation — it is part of the ethical vision of Yoga itself, an expression of *ahimsā* extended to the living world.

Photography, Media, and Personal Data

Photography and video recording may take place during the Congress for the purposes of documentation and communication by the EUY. By registering for the Congress, participants give their consent to the use of such images and recordings in EUY publications and communications, including digital media.

Any participant who does not wish to appear in photographs or recordings should inform the organising team at registration. A special identifier — available at the Congress office — will be provided so that photographers and videographers can immediately recognise and respect this preference. All participants and photographers are asked to respect these requests without exception.

Participants who take personal photographs or video during the Congress are asked to respect the privacy of others and to obtain consent before sharing images of fellow participants on social media or other public platforms. The EUY, as a French association operating within the European Union, processes personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Participants may exercise their data rights by contacting the EUY through the official Congress contact address.

Authority of the Organisers

All participants are expected to comply with applicable Swiss federal and cantonal laws and with the local regulations of the municipality of Anniviers. The organising team reserves the right to intervene whenever behaviour endangers the safety of others, disrupts the Congress, or violates these guidelines. Where the situation requires it, a participant may be asked to withdraw from a session or, in serious cases, to leave the Congress. In cases of unlawful behaviour, the matter may be referred to the appropriate Swiss authorities.

The organising team is available throughout the Congress to assist, advise, and, where necessary, mediate. Participants are warmly encouraged to approach team members with any concern, however small, rather than allowing a difficulty to go unaddressed.

These guidelines reflect the EUY's conviction that a great Congress is not made by rules alone, but by the quality of presence each participant brings. We welcome you to Zinal in that spirit.

These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the EUY Charter of Ethical Teaching and Professional Conduct, which governs the specific responsibilities of teachers at the Congress.