



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Youth in Action: Youth Organisations Demand a Strong Independent Programme for Youth in the post-2013 EU Budget

**Brussels, 23rd November 2011 // Today the European Commission presented its Communication “Erasmus for all: the EU Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport” that details its vision for the EU budget in the field of youth and education.**

The European Youth Forum strongly believes that Europe needs to make youth policy a financial as well as a political priority. Today, in times of crisis, as well as in the long-term, investing in youth will reinforce the values of European cooperation.

#### **An independent programme**

The European Youth Forum acknowledges the significant budget increase for future programmes, the focus on three key areas as well as the aim to be inclusive. The focus on formal education and vocational training however, put at risk the core values of youth work and the independence of youth policy, therefore the European Commission's proposal is unsatisfactory. The Youth Forum stands firmly behind its request of a renewed separate Youth in Action Programme.

*“Youth in Action is the only EU programme that provides support to youth work, non-formal education and youth organisations in Europe,”* affirms **Peter Matjašič, President of the European Youth Forum**. *“As such, Youth in Action ensures and represents a visible EU youth policy initiative and the continuation of diversity, quality and the unique character of youth work in the long-term”.*

#### **Focus on participation of young people**

In 2009, with the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, the EU gave itself the objective and competence to encourage the participation of young people in the democratic life in Europe. The European Youth Forum is concerned that this increased competence is not reflected in the Commission's proposal and that it misses a strong link between the article 165§4 TFEU and the focus of the EU budget efforts in the field of youth, training and education. The Commission's proposal is focused on the needs of the labour market and the aspect of active European citizenship and participation is not adequately addressed.

To achieve this, a strong new programme should encourage the participation of all young people in democratic life and recognise that youth-led, volunteer-based, democratic European youth organisations are an indispensable channel for supporting active citizenship and for developing young people's skills and competences, both for the needs of the labour market and for an active and inclusive European society, and as such need to be given specific support.

*“Co-management with young people and the organisations that represent them must be introduced and implemented,”* comments **Matjašič**. *“As their inclusion would ensure a more youth-friendly management and administration of the programme and better reflection of young people's needs.”*

## **Cut? No - invest in cost efficient youth!**

In times of financial austerity it is paramount to ensure that we invest in cost efficiency. The Youth in Action programme and its predecessors supported youth organisations to make a lasting change for young Europeans. The impact of Youth in Action on young people is bigger than in any other EU programme.

Currently, out of 100 euro paid in taxes by a European citizen, only 2.80 flow to the EU. Out of these 2.80 only 0.1% are used to provide funding to youth programmes. In average, the current 'Youth in Action' Programme just cost less than 28 cents per year to each European citizen. Investing in youth and in youth organisations is an extremely cost-efficient way to comprehensively reach the objectives of job creation and innovation, social inclusion and sustainable growth. For as little as 28 cents per year, 'Youth in Action' will have provided between 2007-2013 around 1,000,000 young Europeans with valuable Non-Formal Education experience and mobility possibilities that enhance their social, civic and political engagement as well as their sense of responsibility and improve their skills.

*"Youth in Action must not lose focus on those elements that make youth and their organisations unique and specific," concludes **Matjašič**. "Therefore, we demand it to be independent and to give sustainable support to European youth organisations, to non-formal education and to youth work," concluded **Matjašič**.*

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### **Notes to the editor:**

Campaign "Where are you going?"

*We are launching a campaign to ask the European Parliament and EU Member States for a strong and independent Youth in Action Programme for non-formal education, youth work and democratic youth organisations and an ambitious European Youth Employment Plan.*

[www.whereareyouthgoing.eu](http://www.whereareyouthgoing.eu)

See attached the European Youth Forum's:

- Position Paper on Youth in Action 2.0
- Youth Forum Urgent Resolution on the Future of the Youth in Action Programme