



Resolution on Easing access to visas for more Youth Mobility

GENERAL ASSEMBLY/
CLUJ-NAPOCA, ROMANIA, 20-22 NOVEMBER 2014

Today, more and more young people are mobile for purposes of employment, studying and volunteering, including mobility within Europe, to Europe and from Europe to the rest of the world. Mobility is a fundamental right of young people and one of the four important pillars of the single European market; which constitutes one of the core achievements of European integration so far. It is key to foster intercultural dialogue in our societies. Furthermore, genuine free movement can alleviate the burdens of the still ongoing financial crisis in Europe.

The recently launched Erasmus+ programme enhances mobility opportunities for each of these targets, but unfortunately there are still obstacles to mobility:

- Young people coming to the EU to study, volunteer, attend a traineeship face obstacles getting visas and residence permits. Despite some EU-wide visa and residence permit regulations currently in place, there are still eligible young people who are unjustly denied mobility to the EU. Updates are needed to European and national regulations.
- Young volunteers face obstacles to be mobile in Europe. Many countries have no volunteer status, meaning young people who are mobile to develop themselves can lose access to social security protections.
- Young people who come to the EU to participate in youth projects face obstacles getting visas. Despite the Visa Code, young youth workers from outside of Europe are still denied visas or asked to pay high costs to come to Europe.

Currently two pieces of EU legislation concerning visas and residence permits for young people from outside the EU are under revision. Now is the time to act! Let's raise our voice to remove existing barriers to mobility!

The revision of two European legislations creates an opportunity for the European Youth Forum and its members to make a difference. This is why the Mobility Working Group of the European Youth Forum has focused on advocacy towards the EU on the revision of

- The 'Regulation on the Union Code on Visas', also called 'Visa Code' (3 month Schengen visas)
- the 'Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, pupil exchange, remunerated and unremunerated training, voluntary service and au pairing', also called ' Visa directive' (from 3 months to one year visas, or more).

To advocate for positive changes to these two legislations, the European Youth Forum is doing the following:

- Freedom of Movement online platform. This website will be launched in December 2014. It will showcase stories of barriers to mobility.
- National Advocacy Toolkits

Facing Challenges with the Strength of the YFJ Membership

Despite important success in the YFJ's advocacy towards the European Commission and the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union has not yet come to an agreement regarding the proposed legislations. Some Member States are strongly opposing the legislations and others are supporting it only partly.

We therefore call on the European Youth Forum's members to **strongly advocate towards the governments of EU Member States** and support the Forum in the advocacy process towards the European institutions for:

- continuing negotiations on the 'Visa Code' and the 'Visa Directive' and concluding them by the end of 2015

We would also like to raise awareness to all members of the European Youth Forum that mobility is a transversal issue, touching upon volunteering, quality education, transition and employment, autonomy, inclusiveness, and youth rights, and it is therefore in the interests of everyone to advocate for the removal of any barrier to youth mobility.