



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**MEDIA CONTACTS:** Alexandre Beddock, communications coordinator at the European Youth Forum (e: alexandre.beddock@youthforum.org / tel: +32 2 793 75 38)

### **For the future of Europe, youth remains a priority.**

**The European Youth Forum welcomes the conclusions of yesterday's European Council meeting. Leaders met yesterday for the last time in 2016 and have agreed that more should be done for young people. Nevertheless, it is still work in progress to ensure fair opportunities for young people.**

European leaders reaffirmed their will to fight youth unemployment. The European Youth Forum welcomes the continuation of the Youth Guarantee and the increased support attributed to the Youth Employment Initiative. However, sustainable funding and coordinated implementation are essential to make it a preventative measure for youth employment and to ensure the creation of quality jobs, which Europe urgently needs.

The European Council also gave its support to the Commission's initiatives dedicated to youth, including on mobility, education and skills development. To achieve these goals, increased and sustainable investment in Erasmus+ is needed. The European Solidarity Corps should also have its own funding and not provoke cuts in existing initiatives. Each of these programmes should be developed in close cooperation with youth organisations and the volunteering sector, and be a part of a wider strategy to add value to volunteering in our society.

To move forward and ensure that youth is a priority for Europe, we call for the involvement of more young people in decision-making which is the only way to reconnect with young people and regain their trust in the European project. It is only by empowering youth and working together that we can build a united Europe that will benefit all its citizens. For the future of Europe, it is time to unleash the potential of young people.

**Johanna Nyman, President of the European Youth Forum, says:**

*"It is high time that our leaders acknowledge that youth is and remains a priority and not simply an extra agenda item. But this is not enough! Today, one in five young people is out of work. Extra funding for the Youth Employment Initiative is welcome but this is not enough! Much more is needed if we want a Europe where all its young people have access to quality jobs.*

*Yesterday, our leaders committed themselves to tackle the challenges faced by young people. This needs to move forward, allowing us, youth organisations and young people, to participate in the decisions that affect us. Creating policies with citizens is the only way to work together for real societal change and make Europe a better place for young people!"*

**– Ends –**

**Notes for editors**

## **About the European Youth Forum**

The European Youth Forum is the platform of youth organisations in Europe. Independent, democratic, youth-led, it represents over 100 National Youth Councils and international youth organisations from across the continent. The Forum works to empower young people to participate actively in society to improve their own lives, by representing and advocating their needs and interests and those of their organisations towards the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations. For more information, visit [www.youthforum.org](http://www.youthforum.org)