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The Bratislava Letter

Unleashing the potential of Europe's youth

Dear leaders,

On 16th September 2016, you and 26 other Heads of State and Government from the European Union Member States will meet in Bratislava for an informal Summit to discuss the future of Europe.

This Summit takes place at a crucial moment, when Europe is at a crossroads. In the wake of the vote by the British people to leave the European Union, it is now high time to face the truth. The European project, supported by a vast majority of young people, is the only viable and sustainable path for European countries' prosperity; but the European project has a future only if it is a European project by and for its citizens.

This is why EU Leaders must listen to and see the needs and interests of the citizens who will build the future of Europe: the young people. If young people are forgotten in Bratislava, Europe will be heading in the wrong direction.

At this crossroads, young people from all over Europe are ready to make their voice heard and be taken into account. We are convinced that Europe can take a step forward only if people are included in discussions among European leaders and in the follow-up.

Young people want to be part of Europe, but large barriers still exist. The European Union and its Member States can be a champion of young people.

In Bratislava, we call on you to take decisions that will lead to a hopeful horizon for young Europeans. Therefore, we call on the European Union and its Member States to:

- Invest in quality job creation
- Ensure youth participation in decision-making
- Give the European Union the means to ensure that young people can fulfil their potential

We believe youth organisations are the best interlocutors to find common ground on these questions. In the annexed document, we present more in depth our proposals for a change that will benefit to young Europeans.

Sitting at the Leaders' table, you have the opportunity to voice the interests of young people and young Europeans count on you. However, direct dialogue, leading to action, between leaders and young people is key. We therefore call on you to include citizens, and especially young people in your debates.

Do not allow young people to become a "lost generation". Build a united Europe that will benefit all its citizens, including young people.

We hope our call will be heard and we are ready to work with you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Johanna Nyman".

Johanna Nyman
President of the European Youth Forum