



COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH

Peter Matjašič
President
European Youth Forum
Rue Joseph II straat, 120
1000 Brussels
Belgium

Strasbourg, 24 September 2014

Dear Peter Matjašič,

Re: Request for support to National Youth Council of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”

On behalf of the Advisory Council (AC) on Youth of the Council of Europe, I am writing to you to express our concern with the lack of participation structures in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” for young people and more particularly youth organisations.

Following a call for support we received from a youth council not recognised in the country, and given the fact that the European Youth Forum (YFJ) is an essential partner on European Youth, it is our duty to respond to this request for help and call on you for urgent action in this matter.

As the European Youth Forum plays an active role in advocating stronger youth civil society, the AC calls upon your support in recognising, strengthening and empowering the National Youth Council (NYC) of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”. Both the European Youth Forum and the Advisory Council believe that young people should co-decide all policies affecting them, especially through National Youth Councils, which are a channel to voice young people’s concerns and rights and a platform for better, more participatory and accurate youth policies.

It is important to recognise the vital significance of having youth-led structures at national level, as they represent young people in decision-making processes, in order to make sure that youth policies truly reflect the needs and aspirations of young people. National Youth Councils constitute not only representative platforms, but also a space for self-emancipation, skills’ development, youth empowerment and space for youth participation and active citizenship.

... / ...

As a voice of European youth, we consider that it is crucial to address the government of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” in order to work towards the recognition of Национален младински совет на Македонија – National Youth Council of that country. This is in line with YFJ’s Strategic Priorities 2013-18, which state that the European Youth Forum should strive in its work in order for “*National Youth Councils to be recognised as legitimate representatives of young people at the national level and be composed of organised youth*”.

We believe that both the Advisory Council and the European Youth Forum should be in the lead to empower youth and youth organisations, enabling them to participate actively in the development of policies that directly affect them.

Therefore we encourage the European Youth Forum to contact the government of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and ask it to officially recognise the National Youth Council Национален младински совет на Македонија as a legitimate and independent representative of all young people at national level.

We thank you in advance for your support and cooperation in achieving a stronger and more successful youth participation and civic engagement in Europe.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paulo Pinheiro', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paulo Pinheiro

Chair of the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe