

COUNCIL OF EUROPE YOUTH DEPARTMENT BUDGET CUTS

by Political Party Youth Organisations (PPYOs) and the European Youth Forum

The Council of Europe is the international organisation that brings together 47 member States with the basic aim of upholding human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The Council of Europe, founded in 1949, is this year celebrating 70 years of proud existence.

The Council of Europe, like all international organisations, depends on members States to function. Unfortunately, the organisation is currently faced with an unprecedented budgetary crisis, following Russia's decision to suspend payments in 2017 and Turkey's decision to withdraw from being one of the six major donors and return to its original status as an ordinary contributor to the budget as well as the decision by the member states to enforce zero nominal growth on the organisation many years in a row.

In order to meet this loss, the Council of Europe must reduce about 13% of its annual budget and it is foreseen that the budget of the CoE Youth Department will be significantly affected. With this letter, the European Youth Forum and **all the major Political Party Youth Organisations active in Europe and beyond**, reaching out to **tens of millions of young people**, are joining our voices to **demand that the Council of Europe Youth Department and its instruments will not be disproportionately affected by any future budget cuts.**

Over the decades, the Youth Department of the Council of Europe has been helping young people to become responsible European citizens who advocate human rights, rule of law and participate fully in democratic life and processes. To better achieve this, thousands of young people and today's experts who act as multipliers, have been trained through the CoE Youth Department while a vast number of European NGOs and networks have been receiving financial and technical assistance to further advance democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Let us not forget, the unique and inspiring co-management system established within the Youth Department of the CoE, under which, young people and government representatives co-decide for all the issues concerning the youth in the context of the Council of Europe.

We are living in a time that the core values of the Council of Europe must be emphasised and strengthened further in the young generations in order to revitalise our democracies, increase social inclusion and promote democratic participation. The work of the CoE Youth Department in instilling those values in the hearts and minds of young people is crucial and it cannot be affected by any political implications happening in the Council of Europe.

The PPYOs call on the Council of Europe relevant bodies and member States to ensure that the youth sector is protected to continue its crucial work for the benefit of young people and to the benefit of Europe as a whole. Ensuring the above goes hand in hand with laying the foundations of a better Europe in which the values of the Council of Europe are reflected in the beliefs of the younger generation.

International and European Party Political Youth Organisations:

- EDS - European Democrat Students
- EFAY - European Free Alliance Youth
- FYEG – Federation of Young European Greens
- IFLRY - International Federation of Liberal Youth
- IUSY - International Union of Socialist Youth
- JEF – Young European Federalists
- LYMEC - European Liberal Youth
- YDE - Young Democrat for Europe
- YEPP - Youth of the European People's Party
- YES – Young European Socialists