A FOREWORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT & SECRETARY GENERAL, JOHANNA NYMAN & ALLAN PÄLL

2015 was a big year: for Europe and for its young people. It was a tumultuous year in many ways, but with some glimpses of light. Some steps forward were taken in Paris in the fight against climate change at COP21. The United Nations agreed a set of goals (Sustainable Development Goals), which aim over the next 15 years to create a fairer, better world for us all under Agenda 2030. The United Nations Security Council also recognised the vital role of young people in building peace. These global steps are important for young people and the European Youth Forum has been there fighting for the youth voice to be heard.

This year, however, wars and conflict in our neighborhood reached a boiling point, leading to increased migration into Europe, seeming to catch many leaders by surprise. Furthermore, terror attacks in European cities shook us all, putting questions about security and fighting extremism on the top of the agenda. It has also raised concerns about the exposure of young people to extremism and how to prevent that. A debate that has lately taken a rather ugly turn, where young people are seen as a potential threat, not as the potential resource we are. Young people are part of the solution and not the problem! Unfortunately, too often young people are being stigmatised and further marginalised rather than brought together, in order to build a better society.

When young people are vulnerable and in a difficult situation, such as young refugees fleeing from a country at war, it is more important than ever that their voices are heard and that their rights are protected. We adopted a resolution “Protection and Integration of Young Refugees in Europe” at our Council of Members and we will to push for action in this area. It is unacceptable that Europe shuts all these people fleeing horrors and difficulties out from our societies.

Whilst some of the events of 2015 were not anticipated, others – such as the precarious situation of youth employment - continued to be a key focus for the Youth Forum. Our work in
The right of young people to have their voices heard has been at the core of our work this year. We launched our new campaign, YouthUp, as a follow-up to our work empowering young people and connecting them to decision makers through the League of Young Voters. We hope that through YouthUp we can raise the voices of young people and truly “youth up” politics in order to create a system which is more participative and in which young people are at the heart of taking decisions which affect their daily lives.

We launched a research publication showing that young people are indeed very active politically, but not necessarily within the current systems, which means that our democracy needs to be updated. Young people have the interest and the knowledge, but need to be included into the democratic processes. Political participation was also the theme of the previous cycle of the Structured Dialogue with young people and the Council took on board 12 recommendations coming from the process of consultation with young people and decision makers.

Youth rights have remained one of the driving concepts of the Youth Forum and in 2015 we launched an updated version of “the International Law of Youth Rights”. With this book and our continuing work to have a “rights-based approach” to youth policies we aim to tackle the ongoing violations of young people’s rights in all areas of life. We shall continue to work on the recommendation on youth rights taking shape in the Council of Europe and focus of legal ways to claim and protect the rights of young people through the European Social Charter.

Helping youth organisations to grow stronger, as well as pushing for the recognition of their work continue to be at the core of what we do. Indeed 2015 was an important year for youth work in Europe. The 2nd Youth Work Convention was a key moment for advocating in this area. We also continued to lobby for better implementation of Erasmus+ as well as to help
Looking forward, we feel confident that the achievements of 2015 put us in a strong position to further raise the voice of youth in 2016. We are convinced that we have a lot of work to be done and that the European Youth Forum can be a part of shaping a Europe that is better for young people but also better as a whole. 2016 is also a milestone year for the European Youth Forum, marking our 20th anniversary, something we will celebrate by pushing even harder for youth rights and making sure we have an impact on society.
Our Impact

Youth Participation

Study: young people and democratic life in Europe

The Youth Forum's ongoing research into youth participation led to our ground breaking new study “Young People and Democratic Life in Europe”. The second edition, which followed a first study published in the run-up to the European Elections in 2014, looks in-depth at the changing relationship of young people and democratic life in Europe from a broader perspective. Looking in particular at 6 countries (Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Poland, Spain and the UK), the Forum analysed the influences on youth participation from systemic and individual perspectives, look at the barriers as well as solutions to creating a more youth-inclusive politics - whether citizenship education, more opportunities for participatory policy-making, or more inclusive and accessible elections. The report was launched at an event in the European Parliament in September, co-hosted by a cross-party group of MEPs, and continues to be shared with key stakeholders.
The League of Young Voters continues through #youthUP - a new open-source campaign on youth participation. The main objective of the campaign is to organise a pan-European brainstorm to find the best ideas on how to create a politics that is more youth-inclusive. To launch the campaign, we organised 3 initial workshops in Tallinn, Madrid and Paris, with over 60 participants, and uploaded the ideas co-created in the workshops on our new website: www.youthup.eu. We also consolidated a facilitation methodology based on non-formal methods that will be replicated in YouthUP workshops throughout 2016.

We continued advocating for lowering the voting age to 16 in all elections. Through our outreach to MEPs, we succeeded in ensuring that vote at 16 was kept as a strong recommendation to member states in a joint report from MEPs Jo Leinen (S&D) and Danuta Hübner (EPP) on reforming EU electoral law. 323 MEPs voted against an amendment to withdraw the recommendation against 276 MEPs in favour, showing strong European Parliament support for the idea of vote at 16. The member-led Vote at 16 network also met for the first time, and agreed to organise joint advocacy actions in 2016.
2015 was an important year for youth work in Europe. The 2nd Youth Work Convention, a flagship initiative of the Belgian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe, brought together 400 policymakers, researchers and practitioners to debate the challenges facing youth work at local, national and European level. The European Youth Forum was strongly represented with well over 30 of our member organisations attending. The Forum were also part of the Steering Group as well as the Editing Team responsible for the final declaration of the Convention. The Convention was an excellent opportunity to advocate for our vision on youth work as developed in our Youth Work Policy Paper and the recognition of the role of youth organisations as key actors in delivering youth work. Due to our joint advocacy efforts many of the key claims of our Youth Work Policy Paper were reflected in the final declaration.
In 2015 the Youth Forum developed and launched a new Member Organisation Capacity Development Project, in which six of our members started a new, innovative and more comprehensive process-based approach to our capacity development, capitalising on the experiences developed so far and aiming at genuine change within our members organisations. This project aims to be a step-by-step process cycle of assessment – design – implementation – evaluation - adjustment. Throughout the process and between the different phases the member organisation is coached step-by-step, with the help of a dedicated member of the Pool of Trainers or staff member from the Youth Forum.

In youth work everyone has a story to tell. And in 2015 we gave our members the space to tell their own story through the digital storytelling workshop held in April. Eleven active young people from our member organisations came together to express their thoughts and feelings about their personal experiences in youth organisations. The entire process triggered a deep reflection of why they are engaged in youth organisations, how they contribute to the organisation and what they get out of it: including a sense of belonging, getting to know others and the world. The stories were screened at the European Youth Work Convention and in other European policy-related events as a way to raise awareness on the value and impact of youth work. During 2015 we also created another tool to share our understanding of what youth work is: the video “Youth Work Matters!” All these tools pave the way for a campaign on youth work we are planning for 2016.

Once again, the Youth Forum supported as core partners this year’s edition of the University of Youth and Development led by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe. Under the theme “Youth.org as actors for
With a 40% increase in Erasmus+, it is important to continue to ensure youth-organisation friendly structures, specifically on the implementation of the youth chapter. This was done mainly by advocating towards the European Commission to overcome the shortcomings identified in the Report on the Implementation of the Erasmus+ 2015. The Youth Forum informed our member organisations on the possibilities offered by EU Programmes to fund their activities and projects, and we trained our members on how to develop fundraising strategies for non-institutional donors. An increasing number of international non-governmental youth organisations are receiving the operating grant to support the operational costs of the organisation and National Working Groups are receiving a grant to support their activities at the national level linked to the Structured Dialogue. As 2016 is a crucial year for funding for youth organisations, the Youth Forum has started coordinating with the members in 2015 to prepare effective advocacy work in 2016. This set of activities has lead to an increased financial sustainability of youth organisations in Europe.
The Youth Forum continued monitoring the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, developing a position with six key demands, and an interactive online infographic showing the state of play in 10 European countries. This was made possible by active participation from Youth Forum member organisations in a task force meeting in April and through an online questionnaire.

The Youth Forum launched the job creation network with 40 member organisations at a high-level event in June, joint with ETUC, to look at quality jobs, with attendance from members of the European Parliament, the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the European Commission. Through our work on quality jobs, we have strengthened our partnership with various organisations including the ILO with whom we have started the process of signing a partnership agreement.

First International Interns Day
The Youth Forum co-hosted the first ever International Interns Day with Interns Go Pro bringing together around 100 young people for the event in Brussels, as well as thousands of young people across the world in different events organised on the same day. Twenty more MEPs signed the European Quality Charter on Internships and Apprenticeships, as well as global employers General Electric and the Adecco group.

Report and resolution on social inclusion

The Youth Forum launched work on social inclusion with a meeting held at the OECD in Paris, with 15 member organisations and expert input on how European welfare states are ensuring the social inclusion of young people. The meeting was the basis for developing a resolution on social inclusion as well as an extensive research report on this topic to be published in May 2016. We created an editorial board of 12 European social NGOs to contribute to this research report.

Validation of non-formal education

On education, we launched an active education network and organised several informal meetings to discuss priorities and coordinated action. We organised a policy debate on validation of non-formal education in cooperation with EUCIS-LLL and continued actively contributing to the European Commission's working group on the European Qualifications Framework.
The Youth Forum mobility network, with 30 member organisations, actively lobbied member states and the European Parliament on Visa issues affecting young people. We co-ordinated and organised a lobby mission of 10 youth civil society organisations to the German Ministry of home affairs to give input on the Visa directive. Ongoing advocacy efforts towards the European Parliament and Members States in the trilogue with the Council led to agreement of new rules for some interns and volunteers, such as uniform conditions to enter Europe and increased protection once there. The Youth Forum also spoke at the public hearing organised by the Civil Liberties committee of the European Parliament on the Visa code (90 days or less) revision, and coordinated lobby efforts with the Mobility Network towards the Report of the Parliament on this legislation (ongoing).

Our work with institutions

An Inter-Committee Meeting of the Culture and Education Committee of the European Parliament took place with a focus on youth, where national and European Members of Parliament, as well as the Youth Forum itself discussed
youth and education policies. It is an example of an increasing interest in youth policies across all institutions and the recognition of the Youth Forum as the main interlocutor and a reliable partner.

The 4th cycle of the Structured Dialogue on youth empowerment for political participation leading to the Riga recommendations were finalised in Luxembourg and completed with an implementation toolbox. For the first time national Ministers on Youth discussed the topic of the Structured Dialogue and gave feedback in a high-level policy debate. Ultimately, these recommendations were, to a very large extent, included in the Council Resolutions on youth empowerment for political participation – a major step forward for the Structured Dialogue with Young People and the basis for successful implementation at national level.

The European Youth Forum has contributed throughout the year to better youth policy-making at the Council of Europe, particularly on youth work, citizenship and human rights education and youth participation at the local level. The cooperation with the Youth Department was intensified and contributed to the election of a new Advisory Council on Youth and the transition from one Advisory Council to the other. Another key achievement was the approval by the Joint Council of the Recommendation of Young People’s Access to Rights – a cornerstone for the Council of Europe’s work on Youth Rights.
In September 2015, the United Nations approved the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a comprehensive global agenda including a set of goals and targets integrating economic, social and environmental development to be achieved globally by 2030. The Youth Forum advocated for an Agenda that was rights-based, youth-inclusive, participatory, universal, and based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination. We also continued to push for the integration of quality education, quality jobs, governance and participation within the goals and targets. Through our role as one of the Organising Partners of the UN Major Group for Children and Youth, the Youth Forum focused on ensuring youth participation within the negotiation process for the Agenda and on building the capacity of young people participating in that process. Since the adoption of the Agenda the Youth Forum has begun to cooperate with other civil society partners to advocate for its implementation at European level. We are also continuing to follow the process at UN level and considering how youth organisations can hold institutions and governments accountable for implementing this important Agenda.

The European Youth Capital title continued to grow during 2015. In Cluj-Napoca, European Youth Capital 2015, over 1 million participants took part in more than 3,500 activities during the year. From participatory budgeting schemes to blood donation drives that featured in the Guardian, to the huge 'Untold' music festival and the 'Cluj Multicultural' inclusion projects, Cluj-Napoca really showcased the youthful side of its city and the active place for young people in society. The competition for EYC 2018 opened at the turn of the year, and the Youth Forum received a record-breaking twenty applications in February. After intense deliberation among the independent jury, twenty cities were whittled down to five excellent finalists, and Cascais, in Portugal, was officially announced as EYC 2018 at the Youth Forum’s Council of Members in Madrid in November.
A rights-based approach to youth policy

In October 2015, we released our "Shadow Report on Youth Policy - a youth perspective" in order to complement the EU Youth Report 2015 published by the European Commission and shed light on young people's views. The report is based on a large consultation carried amongst the Youth Forum's membership and reveals young people's opinions both on the EU cooperation framework and on national youth policy development. It calls for a more cross-sectoral and coordinated policies, with a strong rights focus.

Launch of International Law of Youth Rights

Ahead of Human Rights Day, the Second Revised Edition of The International Law of Youth Rights was launched on 7 December at the UN in Geneva. The event was co-sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Italy to Geneva and the
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), with attendance from representatives of Permanent Missions, international institutions, civil society and Youth Forum member organisations. The editors presented the book and took part in a lively and fruitful panel discussion with a representative from OHCHR and the International Labour Organization, providing a range of recommendations to promote youth rights at the UN Human Rights Council and beyond. Following the launch, a training session for member organisations on the Universal Periodic Review procedure of the Human Rights Council took place, facilitated by the NGO UPR Info and the Expert Group on Youth Rights.

On Human Rights Day (10 December) the Youth Forum launched the full research report on Multiple Discrimination and Young People in Europe. The report explores young people’s understanding and experience of multiple discrimination on different grounds and across various sectors, as well as perceptions of discrimination faced by their peers, proposing a series of recommendations and next steps in tackling multiple discrimination.

The Youth Forum continued advocating for the proposed EU Equal Treatment Directive (Anti-Discrimination Directive) in cooperation with key civil society partners. Efforts focused predominately on Member States blocking the Directive, with a joint statement and myth-busters document disseminated by the Equality for All coalition of NGOs ahead of a EU Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council meeting. The Youth Forum also participated in an event organised by the German Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency in Berlin, subsequently supporting a joint appeal to the German federal government calling for a consistent level of protection against discrimination in Europe. Joint advocacy efforts will continue during 2016 particularly given the importance placed on the Directive by President Juncker in his mission letter to Commissioner Věra Jourová.
In order to integrate the rights-based approach (RBA) in the work of the Youth Forum and its member organisations, a series of training sessions on the approach have taken place throughout 2015. Following a “training of trainers” for the Pool of Trainers in July, the Board and Secretariat also received training. CNJ (the National Youth Council of Portugal) was the first member organisation to receive training on the RBA, with more members to follow in 2016.

Our Resources

2015 was the beginning of a cycle in terms of the management of the Youth Forum as the Board was starting its mandate, and a bi-annual Work Plan for 2015-16 was starting.

It was also a year of consolidation in terms of the financial management and implementation of multiple projects with different grant providers and report systems, diversification of funding and external donors. These changes led to an increase in capacity and the implementation of different tools to better monitoring of the execution of the budget, maximising the use of resources and consolidating the financial sustainability of the Forum.

As required by the EU financial regulations, and the agreement, there was no surplus from the funds allocated to the DG EAC operating grant agreement.

The Youth Forum strives for correctness and clarity in its accounts, which is essential for both the members and for the Forum’s partner institutions; this is why the auditing procedures in place are so significant, both the internal audit and the consultancy role of the Financial Control Commission, as well as the external auditors, Ernst & Young (appointed by the Ex-General Assembly in Thessaloniki, Greece).

INCOME
### Income

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<th>Source</th>
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<td>Council of Europe - European Youth Foundation</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<td>Membership fees</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>League of Young Voters</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<td>Other Incomes &amp; Partnerships</td>
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<td>EP - European Youth Event 2016</td>
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### Expenditure

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<td>Governance</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Amount</td>
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<td>Operational Costs</td>
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<td>League of Young Voters</td>
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<td>Other Cost Previous years</td>
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<td>EP - European Youth Event 2016</td>
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<td>127.615</td>
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**TOTAL EXPENDITURE** | 3,041,858

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**Our People**

**Board**

- **Johanna NYMAN**
  - President

- **Luis ALVARADO MARTINEZ**
  - Vice-President

- **Joan CONCA DOMENECH**
  - Vice-President

- **Marcio BARCELOS**
  - Board Member

- **Lora LYUBENNOVA**
  - Board Member

- **Tinkara OBLAK**
  - Board Member

- **Doru CUROŞU**
  - Board Member

- **Stefano FELICIAN BECCARI**
  - Board Member
POLICY AND ADVOCACY DEPARTMENT

Josephine
PETERSON

Claire
SALZMAN

Cara
Mc CLAIN

Alix
MASSON

David
GARRAHY

Jo
DEMAN

John
LISNEY

Laura
LOPEZ - BECH

Giorgio
ZECCA

Marianna
GEORGALLIS

Alfonso
ALIBERTI

Clémentine
MOYART

Stephanie
BEECROFT

Jan
WILKER

Conor
O’NEILL
ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCE DEPARTMENT
Our Members
Full Members

National Youth Councils (NYCs)

Suomen Nuorisoyleistyö Allianssi (Finland); Belarusian Union of Youth and Children's Public Associations – BUYCPA RADA (Belarus); British Youth Council - BYC (Great Britain); Conférence Générale de la Jeunesse Luxembourgeoise - CGIL (Luxembourg); Consejo de la Juventud de España - CJE (Spain); Comité pour les Relations Nationales et Internationales des Associations de Jeunesse et d’Education Populaire - CNAJEP (France); Conselho Nacional de Juventude - CNJ (Portugal); Consell Nacional de la Joventut de Catalunya - CNJC (Spain-Catalonia); Consiliul National Al Tineretului Din Moldova – CNTM (Moldova); Czech Council of Children and Youth - CRDM (Czech Republic); Conseil de la Jeunesse - CJ (Belgium, French-speaking Community); National Youth Council of Switzerland - SAJV/CSAJ (Switzerland); Consiliul Tineretului Din Romania – CTR (Romania); Cyprus Youth Council – CYC (Cyprus); Deutsches Nationalkomitee für Internationale Jugendarbeit - DNK (Germany); Dansk Ungdoms Fællesråd - DUF (Denmark); Eesti Noorteühenduste Liit - ENL (Estonia);
International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations (INGYOs)

**ACTIVE** - Sobriety, Friendship and Peace; Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe - AEgee Europe; Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations - ALLIANCE; International ADT Fourth World Movement - ADT-Quart Monde; Democrat Youth Community of Europe - DEMYEC; European Bureau of Conscientious Objection - EBCO/BECC; European Confederation of Youth Clubs - ECYC; European Democrat Students - EDS; European Educational Exchanges - Youth for Understanding - EEE-YFU; European Federation for Intercultural Learning - EFIL; The National Unions of Students in Europe - ESIB; Erasmus Students Network – ESN; European Trade Union Confederation - ETUC Youth; EU Federation of Youth Hostel Associations - EUFED; European Union of Jewish Students - EUJS/UEJ; Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe - EYCE; International Federation of Catholic Parochial Youth Movements - FIMCAP; Federation of the Young European Greens - FYEG; International Federation of Liberal Youth - IFLRY; International Falcon Movement - Socialist Educational International - IFM/SEI; International Federation of Medical Students’ Association – IFMSA; International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth and Student Organisation - IGLYO; International Union of Socialist Youth - IUSY; International Young Naturefriends - IYNF; International Young Catholic Students - International Movement of Catholic Students - JECI-MIEC; Young European Federals - JEF, European Liberal Youth - LYMEC; International Movement of Catholic Agricultural and Rural Youth - MJARCU-Europe; Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions - OBESSU; Rural Youth Europe – RYEurope; Service Civil International - SCI; World Organisation of Young Esperantists - TEJO; World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts - WAGGGS; World Organisation of the Scout Movement [European office] - WOSM; Youth and Environment Europe - YEE; Youth of European Nationalities - YEN; Youth of the European People’s Party - YEPP; Young European Socialists - YES; Youth for Exchange and Understanding - YEU; European Alliance of Young Men’s Christian Associations - YMCA; Young Women’s Christian Association - YWCA.

**Candidate Members**

National Youth Councils
Serbian Youth Umbrella Organisation – KOMS (Serbia); National Youth Council of Macedonia FYROM - NCYM FYROM; Polish Council of Youth Organisations - PROM (Poland); Rat der Deutschsprachigen Jugend - RDJ (Belgium, German-speaking Community)

International Non Governmental Youth Organisations
Freedom, Legality and Rights in Europe - FLARE; Youth Express Network – Y-E-N.

**Members of the pool of trainers**

Musa AKGUL - Estel BUCH MUNDÔ - Ivana DAVIDOVSKA - Maya DONEVA - Ilaria ESPOSITO - Ksenia FEDOROVA - Tea JARC - Natalie JIVKOVA - Ida KREUTZMAN - Stefan MANEVSKI - Dusan MILOJEVIC - Joana PINTO - Eliza POPPER - Milosh RISTOVSKI - Jana URB

**Networking**

Job Creation Network - Mobility Network - Climate Change Network - Education Network - Quality Assurance Thematic Network - Youth Work Recognition Network - Funding Network - Vote®16 Campaigners Network - Migration and Human Rights Network - Sustainable Development - Network - Secretaries-General (SGs) network - Finance Network
Board of European Students of Technology – BEST; European Council of Young Farmers – CEJA; European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions – CESI-Youth; Children’s International Summer Villages - CISV; Don Bosco Youth Net; European Free Alliance Youth – EFAY; European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation Youth Committee – ENSGO Youth; European Union of the Deaf Youth – EUDY; European Youth Press – EYP; International Federation of Training Centres for the Promotion of Progressive Education – FICEMEA; International Coordination of Young Christian Workers – ICYCW/ICIJOC; International Debate Education Association - Netherlands - IDEA-NL; International Federation of Hard of Hearing Young People - IFHOHYP; Jeunesses Musicales International - JMI; Pax Christi International - Pax Christi; Red Cross Youth – RCY

Social Movement Expert Group - Youth policy Working Group - Youth Rights Expert Group - Partnership Committee