

Press Information

European Youth Event (EYE) 2016

The second edition of the European Youth Event (EYE2016) takes place at the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 20-21 May. *"Together we can make a change"* is the motto of the event where 7,500 young Europeans (aged 16-30) will make their voices heard. The ideas discussed at the EYE will be presented to MEPs.

The EYE will focus on 5 main themes

- **War and Peace** - Perspectives for a peaceful planet
- **Apathy or Participation** - Agenda for a vibrant democracy
- **Exclusion or Access** - Crackdown on youth unemployment
- **Stagnation or Innovation** - Tomorrow's world of work
- **Collapse or Success** - New ways for a sustainable Europe.

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More information about the EYE2016 on <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/european-youth-event>.

European Youth Event (EYE) 2016 - What to expect

"Together we can make a change" is the motto of the second edition of the European Youth Event (EYE2016). Taking place at the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 20 and 21 May 2016, the EYE will be a unique opportunity for 7 500 young Europeans to make their voices heard. At a time when Europe is facing crises on many fronts, participants, all aged 16 to 30, will exchange ideas and perspectives on the EU's future and other youth-related issues. The ideas discussed at the EYE will be presented to MEPs.

More than 150 activities will take place, while more than 50 youth groups and organisations will help to organise about half of these activities, making it an event for young people by young people. The overall goal of the EYE is to open an ongoing dialogue with young people and to give them a platform to bring their sets of ideas for Europe to the attention of Members of the European Parliament and other political decision-makers. It aims to encourage a Europe-wide public discussion among young people about future hot topics and future issues in a wide range of policy areas. It wants them to engage in European debates on the long term, thereby strengthening a participatory European democracy.

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Ideas for a better Europe to 'make a difference in the future'

Vice-Presidents of the European Parliament Sylvie Guillaume (S&D, FR) and Mairead Mc Guinness (EPP, IRL) will open the EYE2016 with a debate with the participants in the chamber. Ulrike Lunacek (Greens, AT), Rainer Wieland and several other MEPs will participate in workshops, debates and discussions with young participants on ideas for a better Europe.

In a welcome letter to participants, EP President Martin Schulz wrote: 'Today, we are in urgent need for new ideas for Europe. The European Union faces bigger challenges than ever ... It is especially thanks to young and active people like you that I believe in the future of Europe ... With your contribution to a vibrant European democracy, you will make the difference in the future. This leaves me optimistic regarding the huge tasks in front of us.'

150 activities, including ‘ideas check’

The 150 activities available to participants consist of debates, talks, hearings, idea labs, digital games and workshops. The ‘ideas check’ is a new format where young people will bounce their ideas and proposals off to political decision-makers, who will have two minutes to reply.

EYE report: ideas from young people for inspiration of politicians

As a follow-up to the event, the participants will put together their main ideas and conclusions and present them to MEPs. EYE participants will have the opportunity to present the most concrete ideas from the EYE in special ‘youth hearings’ to a number of parliamentary committees and receive feedback from Members during the autumn.

YO!Fest - organised by the European Youth Forum

The European Youth Forum, the European Parliament’s main partner, will bring again its YO!Fest - Youth Opinion Festival - to Strasbourg during the EYE2016. The aim of the YO!Fest is to showcase the work of youth organisations and mobilise participants and partners for on issues concerning young people in Europe. The YO!Fest combines high-level political debates, interactive workshops, educational activities, simulation games, live music and artistic performances. As an example of innovative forms of youth participation in political life, the YO!Fest brings young people closer to political institutions and offers them a space of meeting and sharing where they can voice their opinions and debate with policymakers in order to find concrete solutions on important issues.

Facts & figures

- Second edition of the EYE with 150 workshops, political debates, idea checks, hearings and digital games, more than 200 speakers, during 2 days
- Seventh edition of the YO!Fest with over 50 political debates and workshops.
- In the YO!Village, set up outside the European Parliament, 6 thematic hubs - 130 political, educational and interactive activities
- 7 500 participants aged between 16 and 30, average age 21
- Participants from 39 countries, including all EU Member States but also other European countries such as Turkey, Ukraine, Georgia, Albania, Belarus and Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Nationalities at the EYE are numerous - there will be participants from New Zealand, India, Japan, South Korea, Brazil, Vietnam, Indonesia and South Africa
- Gender: 56 % female, 44 % male
- 350 volunteers, mostly coming from all parts of France and international students from Strasbourg and the neighbouring areas of Germany. Other volunteers come from further away, e.g. Spain, Romania, the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom.

Programme highlights: Top themes & workshops

Over 150 workshops will focus on five main themes. 1230 participants took part in an online survey and picked their favourite themes. Listed below is also the most popular workshop for every theme, chosen by 2750 participants in a Facebook survey.

1. **War and Peace:** Perspectives for a Peaceful Planet
2. **Collapse or Success:** New Ways for a Sustainable Europe
3. **Exclusion or Access:** Crackdown on Youth Unemployment
4. **Stagnation or Innovation:** Tomorrow's World of Work
5. **Apathy or Participation:** Agenda for a Vibrant Democracy

1. War and Peace: Perspectives for a Peaceful Planet

According to the EYE participants, the most pressing issue today is the refugee crisis - which will be a centrepiece of the EYE2016. This mirrors the fact that also in pan-European surveys immigration has leapt up the agenda and is now, with 47 %, firmly in second place (see the EP's Parlemeter for November 2015: this is a regular survey of public opinion in the Member States).

Top workshop

Migration: Across the Universe

Millions of refugees and migrants come to Europe in search of a safe haven and a better life. Should we keep them out or take them in? What should be the spirit and the major components of a new European migration and asylum policy? Legal aliens or new citizens: how can host societies improve the integration of new citizens? How is migration changing Europe?

Date and time: Saturday, 21 May 2016, 16.00-18.00

Venue: Hemicycle

2. Collapse or Success: New Ways for a Sustainable Europe

Sustainability is also high on the list of young people's concerns: this concept is not limited to protecting the environment, but extends to all aspects of our daily life. This is reflected in the EYE2016 agenda, with topics ranging from low-carbon economy, fair trade, animal welfare, the circular economy and measures to alleviate poverty and hunger to questioning the sustainability of life on earth from a space perspective.

Top workshop

Hunger games

Hunger, disease and extreme poverty in the world are not inevitable – the rules of the game are unfair. How can we empower people living in poverty to create their own sustainable solutions? Can we bring hunger down to zero within a generation? We will be looking at initiatives for better access to decent food, clean water and basic healthcare for all.

Date and time: Friday, 20 May 2016, 12.30-14.00

Venue: WIC 200

3. Exclusion or Access: Crackdown on Youth Unemployment

Reducing youth unemployment is one of the key themes at the EYE2016. More than 4.5 million young people (aged 15-24 years) are unemployed today in the EU. The youth unemployment rate in the EU is more than double the overall unemployment rate – 20 % compared with 9 % (source: Commission DG for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion). Much is being done at EU, national and local levels to create the conditions and attract the investment that are necessary to reduce youth unemployment - but are these initiatives the right ones, and what more can be done?

Top workshop

Don't wait for a dream job - create it

How about becoming your own boss and flying to ... wherever you want? How can you get your business off the ground? How can you go from a business idea to an income ... and make a living?

Empower yourself - share your dreams and your doubts, with successful entrepreneurs and high-level experts.

Date and time: Friday, 20 May 2016, 14.00-15.30

Venue: WIC 100

4. Stagnation or Innovation: Tomorrow's World of Work

Creativity, society and entrepreneurship - 'How can Europe create attractive jobs in a connected economy and society?' – form the main focus of the 'Stagnation or Innovation' theme. The main question is how employment in the 21st century and the job market have changed thanks to the digital era. Additional topics are how social and green jobs can tackle youth unemployment. We will also take a look across the Atlantic and explore what we can learn from Silicon Valley and what we can do better in Europe. Furthermore, we will explore innovative methodologies such as 'design thinking' and the 'sharing economy'.

Top workshop

USA/Europe, Big deal or no deal?

What does the biggest free trade deal in the world (TTIP) mean for employment and quality of life in Europe? Will this transatlantic 'marriage of elephants' work to the benefit of both?

Date and time: Saturday, 21 May 2016, 12:30-14:00

Venue: LOW N1.4

5. Apathy or Participation: Agenda for a Vibrant Democracy

Young people have developed different forms of political activism and participation, such as demonstrating, volunteering in associations and socialising, and expressing political opinions through digital and social media. However, turnout among young voters (aged 18 to 24) in the European elections of May 2014 was low (at 28 %), compared to that for people aged 55 and over (51 %). The same can be said for many national elections. A slew of alternative schemes have been launched to encourage young people to become engaged in politics, including smartphone apps, video-blogging and social media campaigns, all aimed at revolutionising how young people think about politics. We will explore all this in our 'Apathy or participation' theme.

Top workshop

Democracy: You can make a change

Do you have what it takes to run a country and make it a better place in the future? Discover the fun and social impact of the digital game 'Democracy 3'.

Date and time: Saturday, 21 May 2016, 12.00-13.30

Venue: LOW S3.7

Guest speakers

Along with key political issues, the programme will touch upon culture, science and societal change, and will feature key figures and innovative thinkers related to research, culture, business and social engagement. Below a list of some of the guest speakers:

- **Denis Mukwege**, Sakharov prize laureate of 2014, is a Congolese doctor, the founder of the Panzi hospital and a women's rights campaigner. He dedicates his life to rebuilding the pathological and psychosocial damage caused by sexual violence to Congolese women and girls who are victims of the Democratic Republic of Congo's ongoing war. Mr Mukwege has treated over 40 000 women. He is participating in the panel 'Human rights: Heroes of our time'.
- **Ensaf Haidar** is an award-winning Saudi Arabian human rights activist, known for her fight for the freedom of her husband Raif Badawi, who was found guilty in 2012 of 'insulting Islam' through electronic channels. Mr Badawi was chosen Sakharov Prize laureate in 2015. Ms Haidar has co-founded the Quebec-based Raif Badawi Foundation for Freedom, and is the author of the book 'Freedom for Raif Badawi, the Love of my Life'. She currently lives in Canada with her children, and continues to lead a fierce battle for the release of her husband, through publications, global interviews and debates. She is participating in the panel: 'Human rights: Heroes of our time'.
- **Samantha Cristoforetti** is a captain in the Italian Air force and a European Space Agency ESA astronaut. She has over 500 hours of experience in military flying and aeronautics, worldwide training, and a strong academic background, having received the Sword of Honour award for best academic achievement. Ms Cristoforetti worked and lived on the International Space Station for almost 200 days during her Futura mission. Her recent experiences include a mission in the Soyuz spacecraft from Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan in 2014. She is participating in the panel: 'Earth from above: my extraordinary 200 days in space'.
- **Marianne Thyssen**, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility. She was a Member of the European Parliament from 1991 to 2014. During this time she was also Head of the Belgian delegation of the EPP Group and First Vice-President of the same group. From 2008 to 2010, she was the leader of the Flemish Christian Democratic party (CD&V). She is participating in the panel: "Youth unemployment: Down to zero?".
- **Günther H. Oettinger**, European Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society since 1 November 2014. In 2010, Mr Oettinger was appointed European Commissioner for Energy, and from 1 July to 31 October 2014 he was Vice-President of the European Commission. From 2005 to 2010, he was Minister-President of the German state of Baden-Württemberg, where he had been a member of the state parliament (Landtag) since 1984. He was the leader of the CDU group in the Landtag from January 1991 to April 2005. A lawyer by training, Mr Oettinger has been actively involved in politics since he was a teenager. He is a member of both the Federal Executive Committee and the Steering Committee of the CDU party for Germany.
- **Enissa Amani** is the new discovery of the German political satire scene. The German-Persian comedian was born in Iran and fled with her family to Frankfurt in 1985. After graduating from high school, Ms Amani studied law, but gave up her legal studies after passing the intermediate examination, to follow in the footsteps of her father and study literature. In 2013 she started to perform stand-up comedy on 'open mic' nights, and appeared on the TV shows 'TV Total', 'NightWash', 'Satire Summit' and 'StandUpMigranten' just a short time later. She is participating in the political comedy 'Don't shoot ... I'm only the comedian!'

YO!Fest @ the EYE2016

The YO!Village will be built around six thematic hubs on the EYE themes:

- The 'War and Peace hub' will focus on the refugee crisis and education for peace-building, the impact of austerity on human rights, the recognition and protection of youth rights, and the ways to tackle discrimination and achieve equality.
- The 'Apathy or Participation hub' will promote the social value of youth organisations, explore existing ways of participating in decision-making at EU level, and share inspiring examples of active participation and how to 'youth up' the current political systems, therefore how politicians can better engage with young people.
- The 'Exclusion or Access hub' will address quality education, employment, volunteering, mobility and inclusion, some of the issues that are closest to young people.
- The 'Stagnation or Innovation hub' will explore the world of social entrepreneurship and cooperatives as an alternative, sustainable model for business to tackle the issue of youth unemployment.
- The 'Collapse or Success hub' will tackle global issues impacting our daily lives such as climate change and protection of the environment, social inclusion, and inclusive and sustainable economic policies.
- The 'Health and Wellbeing hub' will highlight the importance of young people's wellbeing by exploring a range of issues from basic life support to mental health, and the importance of sport.

The YO!Fest does not end when the sun goes down! Thousands of young people will take part in an open-air concert featuring 'Balkan Beat Box'. This politically committed band – praised by music critics as 'a global peacekeeping mission you can dance to' – will make participants groove to their Mediterranean-inflected electronica sound. 'Chico Trujillo', the new Chilean cumbia and ska band who campaign for a more sustainable future, will support the main act. Danny Kalima and Ginger H - winners of the Emerging Bands Contest run in partnership between the European Youth Forum and Jeunesses Musicales International (JMI) - will open the show, offering a unique opportunity for these young European bands to showcase their talent.

Partners of the EYE2016

The 11 official partners of the European Parliament contribute to the programme in many ways.

Our host **city of Strasbourg** will be organising, on the Friday evening, the event: "EYE in the city: Mix Art - Mix Europe" event, to welcome all participants. Some 15 well-known graffiti artists and musicians will make sure this will be one of the highlights of the EYE2016.

The **European Youth Forum** is organising the YO!Fest, creatively combining politics, culture, education and fun. This will notably help ensure that the EYE is not only an event for young people, but is also organised with young people.

ARTE is again the main media partner: its TV programme YOUROPE will be broadcast from the EYE, and it will provide moderators for panels.

The **European Youth Press (EYP)**, an umbrella organisation for young journalists in Europe, will organise, during the EYE2016, the European Youth Media Days with 120 young journalists.

The **European Commission** – specifically, its Directorate-General for Industry and Enterprise, Directorate-General for Employment, Directorate-General for Education and Culture and Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid – will contribute with a number of panel activities and workshops, for example in relation to the new Erasmus+ programme. There will be several workshops on how to bridge the skills gap and tackle unemployment, which is the number one problem for many young people.

The new partner, **the European Space Agency (ESA)**, will this year give the EYE a scientific and space dimension, organising several panels, notably with Samantha Cristoforetti, its best-known astronaut, who will give an account of her extraordinary 200 days in space.

Another partner, **Games for Change Europe**, is putting participants into different roles via digital games linked to the five EYE themes that have a social impact dimension. This partner is also organising a competition among young game developers for this year's most compelling games for and about changing the face of Europe.

The **Institut des Études Politiques (IEP) de Strasbourg** has mobilised its students to be volunteers to support the smooth flow of the EYE. It will also organise a debate as part of the EYE panels.

The **Council of Europe** is lending its expertise in the fields of human rights, democracy and cultural pluralism, and its Youth Centre is contributing with several workshops to the programme

The **Foundation of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen** is organising, together with the European Parliament, the 'European Charlemagne Youth Prize', which encourages the development of European consciousness among young people. It will contribute to the programme with a workshop related to the Twitter project @RealTime WW1.

The **European Federation of Professional Circus Schools (FEDEC)** is a European and international network for professional circus arts education and training, with 55 members. FEDEC circus schools will perform during the EYE and discuss their work with participants.

Follow the EYE wherever you are

The EYE will not be limited to those physically attending; young people across Europe will be able to participate online. Young Europeans can use the official event page on Facebook to discuss EYE-related topics. Participants can also keep up to speed with the hashtag **#EYE2016** and by downloading the EYE app by clicking on the links to the right.

Download the EYE2016 app

- iTunes: <https://itunes.apple.com/app/european-youth-event-2016/id1085980325?mt=8>
- Google Play: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.crowdcompass.appy2xK3CLURb>
- Desktop: <https://event.crowdcompass.com/eye2016>

More about EYE2016

- European Youth Event 2016: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/european-youth-event/en/home.html#>
- Programme: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/european-youth-event/en/programme.html>
- EYE2016 on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanYouthEvent/timeline>
- EYE2016 on Twitter: https://twitter.com/EP_YouthEvent
- EYE2016 on Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/ep_eye/
- Briefing on EYE topics: <http://epthinktank.eu/tag/eye2016/>
- Check out our audiovisual corner, which has a multitude of material that you can use for your reporting, such as logos, info materials, pictures and videos:
- <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/downloadcentre/en/annual-campaigns/european-youth-event-eye2016>
- 2014 edition of EYE: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/top-stories/20131004TST21501/European-Youth-Event>

Media accreditation, Interviews, Contacts

Media accreditation:

Annual press badges, either interinstitutional badges or EP badges are valid.

Journalists without such an access badge need to ask for accreditation via media.accreditation@ep.europa.eu with the following information:

- name of your media
- family name
- first name
- e-mail
- phone number
- date of birth
- nationality
- official ID number
- type of ID document
- a photo in the European identity card format, i.e. portrait, aspect ratio 3X4, jpeg format and +/- 100 KB.

Interviews:

- For interviews with **Ensaf Haidar**:
contact Eliana Dritsas (eliana.dritsas@ep.europarl.eu, +32 498 983 576)
- For interviews with **Denis Mukwege** or **Samantha Cristoforetti**:
contact Iris Walter (iris.walter@ep.europarl.eu, +32 498 981 433)

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