

THE YEL SOCIETY
YOUNG EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP
JUNE 2013

—
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



The current economic and financial crisis has resulted in massive unemployment, social exclusion and increasing poverty. We believe that building an effective “European social safety net” is paramount in order to deal with social fragilities. We have concerns regarding the negative impact of economic downturns on our generation. Therefore, we encourage the **acquisition of employability skills**. In order to diversify education, special attention must be paid to Non Formal Education programmes. Moreover, internships have to be made more accessible to those from disadvantaged backgrounds. We are convinced that a further development of **university-private sector partnerships** is particularly crucial. Additionally, we highly recommend to devote more resources to encourage **labour mobility** between member states. Of particular importance for Europe’s youth are effective programmes building on apprenticeship opportunities that provide language training for labour mobility. This would further increase people’s ability to adjust to hard economic conditions. It is also of great importance to put further emphasis on **using reserves of the Cohesion Fund more efficiently**. Programmes administered by European Investment Bank involving the JESSICA and JEREMIE initiatives should encourage member states to reinvest those funds.

Moreover, we believe that **maintaining a sustainable environment is not just a need but a must**. By 2050 the population is expected to increase to over 9 billion people, while the world economy is expected to quadruple. As the demand for energy and natural resources will increase we need urgent actions. In order to reach a sustainable future, we strongly encourage policy makers to discuss and implement the following recommendations. **Pollution must be made more costly than greener alternatives**. In order to achieve that companies should measure their CO2 footprint and make the data available for the public. Moreover, we are convinced that every country should implement a long term **Action Plan for reusing and recycling its water resources**; however, action is needed today. Pollution also threatens the marine biodiversity. We recommend plastic bags to cost as much as it costs to degrade plastic in an environmentally friendly way. Last but not least, we highly emphasize the need for establishing a **Disaster Prevention Fund**, which focuses on preventive actions rather than post-disaster models in order to minimize natural disasters.

As young Europeans, we also deeply care about the **protection of our privacy by states**. Only a society, in which we can live and interact with each other without unnecessary interference, is a free society. On the European level this is reflected by the obligation to protect the privacy of personal data and individual communication. States are bound legally to Art. 17 ICCPR / Art. 8 ECHR. However, if there is a conflict with other rights, the right to privacy may be restricted. Though, this restriction must be proportionate to the aim pursued. The current debate about security services’ surveillance touches the very heart of the issue of conflicting rights. We therefore urge policy makers to **consider international human rights standards**. These standards must apply **especially in regard to security agencies’ surveillance of private communication** and storage of personal data on an international scale. **We need a clear legal basis and democratic legitimization** of such surveillances. Lastly, **we encourage a public debate** concerning the acceptable extent of such measures. We believe that it should be ultimately up to the members of the European society to determine the weight they wish to accord privacy rights.

The Special Advisers of the European Union to the Y8 and Y20 Summits 2013: Ana Luísa Correia, Adomas Malaiska, Barbara Kucsera, Simona Falanga, Ana Teresa Roios, Alexander Pirang