



## **YEPP Resolution: In support of a directly elected President of the European Commission**

*Adopted at IX<sup>th</sup> YEPP Congress in Sofia, Bulgaria on the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2013*

### **Recognising:**

1. That the European Union is at a critical juncture; the current sovereign debt crisis in the Eurozone, the global recession, and unemployment have challenged current European institutions and have made decisions taken at European level more important than ever for the lives of over 500 million citizens of Europe;
2. That the success and future direction of the European project as a whole depends on the will of citizens within member states to regard themselves not just as citizens of their sovereign nations but as part of a wider united Europe. Furthermore, that a democratic deficit currently exists within the European Union which has made accountability and transparency difficult at the highest decision making level and in particular the European Commission;
3. That YEPP, as the largest youth political organisation in Europe, has a responsibility to ensure the future success of the European Union by working towards political reforms which will make the EU more accountable and relevant to the citizens of Europe and that as a diverse organisation spanning 39 countries, YEPP can recognise the need for greater integration and commonality. As approved in the Political Programme for 2013-2015, a directly elected President of the European Commission, equally accountable and responsible to all the citizens of Europe is a solution to this challenge.

### **Acknowledging:**

1. That the President of the European Commission, as the leader of the executive branch of the EU, is a hugely important political figure for the citizens of Europe and should have a direct responsibility to and a mandate from the people whom they represent. The role of the President in representing the EU abroad or as a figurehead and leader for the European Union is undermined as a result of both the position not being directly elected, and the representation being partly carried out by the President of the European Council, arguably at a time when direct leadership and confidence are most urgently needed within the European Union;
2. However, that the present situation does not provide sufficient accountability or transparency to citizens, given the consequences which actions taken and decisions made by the European Commission have for the European Union, particularly given the current crisis in the Eurozone;
3. That as a result, a democratic deficit exists between the institutions of the European Union and the huge responsibility and power that they have vested in them. The principle and value of democratic transparency, which is central to the entire function of the EU, is presently undermined and this creates difficulties for the European Union, such as the rise of Eurosceptic and populism movements in many member states. If further political, social and economic integration within Europe (developments which YEPP are committed to) are to occur, then this deficit must be resolved;
4. That the establishment of the direct election of the office of President of the European Commission would amount to a significant political reform within Europe, which would solve this apparent problem and reinvigorate the European Union. This proposal would also afford smaller states within the European Union a chance to have greater influence within Europe than they have currently in the European Parliament by putting candidates forward for election.

**YEPP calls on:**

1. The Member States to propose a change to the EU treaties which would make the provision for the direct election of the President of the European Commission by direct ballot of the citizens of Europe and would transfer the representation duties of the president of the European Council to the President of the European Commission;
2. The European People's Party (EPP) to work towards and lobby for such change to the EU treaties and political reform within the European Union to create greater accountability, transparency and responsibility for the European Union to its member states and citizens. This is particularly important given the difficult situation in the Eurozone and challenges facing Europe at the moment. In time of crisis, the need to empower European citizens and to strengthen the citizen engagement dimension is more important than ever; furthermore this proposal is one potential solution to meet some of the challenges head on and ensure the future stability and success, which comes with greater democracy of the European Union;
3. The membership of the EPP to reaffirm and acknowledge their commitment to strengthen European economic and social integration by creating greater commonalities and cooperation within the European Union and to uphold their principles, policies and ideas within Europe by striving and working for a stronger, more inclusive and democratic European Union.