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YEPP Resolution:

Support of the volunteering in the EU

Adopted by the YEPP Council in Kyiv on September 10, 2011

Recognizing that:

- May 2010 Eurobarometer study revealed that 30% of Europeans are involved in a voluntary activity;
- Voluntary service strengthens social cohesion;
- Voluntary service helps young people to develop competences and skills and to make contact, which they can use in their professional lives;
- International voluntary service in the EU can help increasing the European identity and strengthening the European integration;
- International voluntary service outside of the EU helps understanding cultural differences and promoting tolerance between peoples, and may contribute to economic development of poorer nations;
- Voluntary political involvement is decreasing on EU countries, which may endanger democracy in the long run;
- Supporting voluntary service can be a cost-efficient alternative for public authorities to provide social care in times of reduction of public expenses;
- Volunteer work lacks formal recognition
- Voluntary work might be an effective tool to make the labour market more flexible and to facilitate the entrance of young labour force

Acknowledging that:

- The EU has designated 2011 as the "European Year of Volunteering" and the European Commission is carrying out several awareness-raising initiatives;
- Through the European Voluntary Service, the Commission is helping young people to participate in volunteering activities;
- However, disadvantaged youngsters are often unable to participate to the European Voluntary Service and a very important part of society (asylum seekers, job applicants, unemployed people, etc...) may not be allowed in some countries to get involved in voluntary services;
- YEPP has stated in its political programme that 'voluntary commitment of youth in social, political, cultural or sport organisations can be a tool against their social exclusion, and an opportunity to develop personal and professional skills. Voluntary youth action should be therefore encouraged by the EU and its member states'.
- In some European countries volunteer work has not yet played a major role in society

YEPP calls on:

- The Member States to develop, in accordance with their traditions, volunteer-friendly policies, including the insurance aspects;
- The Member States to support volunteer organisations and help them improve the quality of their service;
- The Member States to facilitate international volunteering programs through their visa policies;
- The European Union and its Member States to (further) promote voluntary actions, including voluntary political involvement;
- The European Union to allocate appropriate funding to the European Voluntary Service in order to facilitate its access to disadvantaged youngsters;