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Brussels, 1st November 2016

To: Mr Ján Richter, Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic

Subject: the Youth Employment initiative in the revision of the MFF

Dear Minister,

The undersigned, Members of the European Parliament, co-chairs and vice-chair of the Youth Intergroup of the European Parliament, and representatives of the ETUC and the European Youth Forum;

Strongly urge the Presidency of the Council of the European Union to ensure adequate funding for the Youth Employment Initiative in the revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework.

Data recently published by the European Commission has unequivocally shown the positive results that the Youth Guarantee and the Youth Employment Initiative are delivering in EU regions with higher youth unemployment rates and most hit by the economic crisis. The Report of the European Commission states that 14 million young people have registered to Youth Guarantee programmes and 9 million have taken up an offer of employment, education, or training. Unemployment rates are slowly but steadily decreasing, and the YEI and YG are helping the school-to-work transition, by supporting young people and NEETs in accessing the labour market. It is clear that implementing the Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative programmes is leading towards a modernisation of public employment services, strengthening partnerships between local, regional and national authorities as well as businesses and civil society.

Nevertheless, youth unemployment still remains unacceptably high. We believe that slashing EU funding for policies that the EU itself has put forward, and that are clearly beginning to have a positive impact on young people's autonomy and inclusion, during what is a critical time for this generation, would be a grave mistake. For this reason, in its resolution of 26 October 2016 on the MFF Revision, the European Parliament called for a continuation of the Youth Employment Initiative at the same level of appropriations annually as in 2014 and 2015. The European Youth Forum, the platform representing over 100 youth organisations, has loudly echoed this demand.

Also, it should be taken into consideration that according to the International Labour Organization, an effective long-term response to youth unemployment in Europe would require an investment of €21bn a year. If that seems unaffordable, just compare the cost of not acting, estimated by Eurofound as a loss to European society of € 153bn in a single year, or 1.2% of EU GDP.

We trust the Slovak Presidency of the European Union will take these crucial voices into account when finalising the negotiations between Council and Parliament on the MFF revision and will commit to maintaining the fight against youth unemployment as a priority of the European Union.

Yours Sincerely,

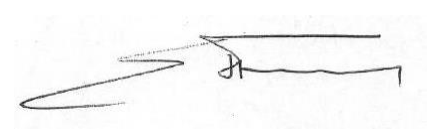
MEP Brando Benifei
Co-chair Youth Intergroup



MEP Terry Reintke
Co-chair Youth Intergroup



MEP Eva Paunova
Co-chair Youth Intergroup



MEP Eider Gardiazabal
Vice-chair Youth Intergroup



Allan Pall
Secretary General of the European
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Thiébaut Weber,
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