



# EURO-NET

## The Youth European Network



EUROPE DIRECT BASILICATA centre  
promoted by the association EURO-NET  
and realised with the grant of E.U. in  
the framework of the namesake project

### ***Bimonthly newsletter:***

- *to spread European opportunities and initiatives,*
- *to disseminate the respect of human rights and the awareness about the development of Europe's cultural identity and diversity,*
- *to fight discrimination against minorities, xenophobia, intolerance and racism,*
- *to help, with youth activities, the democratic stability and social inclusion in Europe,*
- *develop active European citizenship and civil society by giving impetus to the training of youth leaders and youth workers working within a European dimension;*
- *to promote European youth activities, such as exchanges, seminars, conferences, debates and training courses,*
- *to encourage exchange of ideas, proposals, experiences and good practises at international level.*

**YEAR 13 - NUMBER 5**  
**OF 20<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2018**  
**ENGLISH NEWSLETTER**

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## 1. State of the Union 2018

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On 12 September 2018, on the occasion of his State of the Union Address, President Jean-Claude Juncker said: "We must protect our free and fair elections. This is why the Commission is today proposing new rules to better protect our democratic processes from manipulation by third countries or private interests."

To help make sure that next year's elections to the European Parliament are organised in a free,



fair and secure manner, President Jean-Claude **Juncker** announced in his State of the Union Address a set of concrete measures, including greater transparency in online political advertisements and the possibility to impose sanctions for the illegal use of personal data in order to deliberately influence the outcome of the European elections. The objective of Commission proposals is to address potential threats to elections and thereby strengthen the resilience of the Union's democratic systems. Recent cases have shown the risks for citizens to be targeted by mass online disinformation campaigns with the aim to discredit and delegitimise

elections. Peoples' personal data are also believed to have been illegally misused. In addition, attacks against electoral infrastructure and campaign information systems are hybrid threats that need to be addressed. Ahead of the European elections next year, it is therefore essential to bolster Europe's democratic resilience and make sure that the off-line rules created on transparency and to protect the electoral process from foreign interference also apply online. First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** said: *"Together with the rule of law and fundamental rights, democracy is part of 'who we are' and defines our Union. We must not be naive: there are those who want to disrupt European elections and their tools are sophisticated. And that is why we all must work together urgently to beef up our democratic resilience. Today's elections package is a strong contribution to that effort."* Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Věra **Jourová** added: *"We need to draw lessons from the recent elections and referenda. We want to minimise the risk in the upcoming elections, ranging from non-transparent political advertising to misuse of people's personal data, especially by foreign actors. I want Europeans to be able to make a free decision when casting their vote. To ensure this, the online anarchy of election rules must end."*

The set of measures presented by the European Commission consists of:

- **A Recommendation on election cooperation networks, online transparency, protection against cybersecurity incidents and fighting disinformation campaigns:** Member States are encouraged to set up a national election cooperation network of relevant authorities – such as electoral, cybersecurity, data protection and law enforcement authorities – and to appoint a contact point to participate in a European-level election cooperation network. This will enable authorities to quickly detect potential threats, exchange information and ensure a swift and well-coordinated response.
- **The Commission is also recommending greater transparency in online political advertisements and targeting.** European and national political parties, foundations and campaign organisations should make available information on their expenditure on online advertising campaigns, by disclosing which party or political support group is behind online political advertisements as well as by publishing information on targeting criteria used to disseminate information to citizens. Where these principles are not followed, Member States should apply national sanctions.
- **National authorities, political parties and media should also take measures to protect their network and information systems from cybersecurity threats,** based on guidance developed by national authorities within the Network and Information Systems (NIS) cooperation group, with the EU Cybersecurity Agency and the European Commission.
- **Guidance on the application of EU data protection law.** The guidance will help national authorities and European and national political parties to apply the data protection obligations under EU law in the electoral context. The EU's General Data Protection Regulation applies

since May 2018 and also covers all European and national political parties and other actors in the electoral context like data brokers and social media platforms. In light of the Cambridge Analytica case and more generally the growing impact of micro-targeting of voters based on their personal data, the Commission recalls the data protection obligations for all actors in the European elections.

- **A legislative amendment to tighten the rules on European political party funding.** The targeted change of the 2014 Regulation on party funding will make it possible to impose financial sanctions for breaching data protection rules in order to deliberately influence the outcome of the European elections. Sanctions would amount to 5% of the annual budget of the European political party or foundation concerned. The sanction will be enforced by the Authority for European political parties and European political foundations. In addition, those found to be in breach would not be able to apply for funding from the general budget of the European Union in the year in which the sanction is imposed.
- **A Regulation to pool resources and expertise in cybersecurity technology.** To keep up with the ever-evolving cyber threats, the Commission is proposing to create a Network of Cybersecurity Competence Centres to better target and coordinate available funding for cybersecurity cooperation, research and innovation. A new European Cybersecurity Competence Centre will manage cybersecurity-related financial support from the EU's budget and facilitate joint investment by the Union, Member States and industry to boost the EU's cybersecurity industry and make sure our defence systems are state-of-the-art.

The actions proposed complement other actions carried out by the Commission, such as the entry into application of the new EU data protection rules, the wide-ranging set of measures to build strong cybersecurity in the EU currently negotiated by the European Parliament and the Council, and the ongoing efforts to tackle disinformation online.

#### **Background**

The European elections of May 2019 will take place in a very different political and legal environment compared to 2014. All actors involved in the elections, in particular Member State authorities and political parties, have to assume special responsibility to protect the democratic process from foreign interference and illegal manipulation. The General Data Protection Regulation is directly applicable since 25 May

2018, giving the European Union the tools to address instances of unlawful use of personal data also in the electoral context. The Parliament and the Council have agreed on amending the Act governing the elections to the European Parliament, providing for enhanced transparency for the elections of the members of the European Parliament. The Regulation on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations, amended on 3 May 2018, increases the visibility, recognition, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of European political parties and European political foundations. The European Commission also issued a Recommendation in February 2018 which highlights key steps to further enhance the efficient conduct of the 2019 elections. Election periods have also proven to be a particularly strategic and sensitive target of hybrid threats. To this end the European Commission and the High Representative identified areas where additional steps need to be taken in June 2018 Joint Communication on increasing resilience and bolstering capabilities to address hybrid threats. To equip Europe with the right tools to deal with cyber-attacks, the European Commission proposed in September 2017 a wide-ranging set of measures to build strong cybersecurity in the EU. This included a proposal for strengthening the EU Agency for Cybersecurity as well as a new European certification scheme to ensure that products and services in the digital world are safe to use. The Commission has also put forward a European approach for tackling online disinformation in its Communication of 26 April 2018. This includes a self-regulatory Code of Practice for the online platforms and advertising industry as an essential step for ensuring a transparent, fair and trustworthy online campaign ahead of the European elections. The online platforms and advertising industry are expected to agree with media, academics and fact-checkers representatives on the Code of Practice on disinformation in the coming weeks and to start applying it.



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## 2. A new bioeconomy strategy for a sustainable Europe

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### **Commission puts forward an action plan to develop a sustainable and circular bioeconomy that serves Europe's society, environment and economy.**

As announced by President Juncker and First Vice-President Timmermans in their letter of intent accompanying President Juncker's 2018 State of the Union Address, the new bioeconomy strategy is part of the Commission's drive to boost jobs, growth and investment in the EU. It aims to improve and scale up the sustainable use of renewable resources to address global and local challenges such as climate change and sustainable development. In a world of finite biological resources and ecosystems, an innovation effort is needed to feed people, and provide them with clean water and energy. The bioeconomy can turn algae into fuel, recycle plastic, convert waste into new furniture or clothing or transform industrial by-products into bio-based fertilisers. It has the potential to generate 1 million new green jobs by 2030. Delivering a sustainable circular bioeconomy requires a concerted effort by public authorities and industry. To drive this collective effort, and based on three key objectives, the Commission will launch 14 concrete measures in 2019, including:



#### **Scaling up and strengthening the bio-based sectors**

To unleash the potential of the bioeconomy to modernise the European economy and industries for long-term, sustainable prosperity, the Commission will: establish a €100 million Circular Bioeconomy Thematic Investment Platform to bring bio-based innovations closer to the market and de-risk private investments in sustainable solutions; facilitate the development of new sustainable bio-refineries across Europe.

#### **Rapidly deploying bioeconomies across Europe**

Member States and regions, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, have a large underused biomass and waste potential. To address this, the Commission will:

- develop a strategic deployment agenda for sustainable food and farming systems, forestry and bio-based products;
- set up an EU Bioeconomy Policy Support Facility for EU countries under Horizon 2020 to develop national and regional bioeconomy agendas;
- launch pilot actions for the development of bioeconomies in rural, coastal and urban areas, for example on waste management or carbon farming.

#### **Protecting the ecosystem and understanding the ecological limitations of the bioeconomy**

Our ecosystem is faced with severe threats and challenges, such as a growing population, climate change and land degradation. In order to tackle these challenges, the Commission will:

- implement an EU-wide monitoring system to track progress towards a sustainable and circular bioeconomy;
- enhance our knowledge base and understanding of specific bioeconomy areas by gathering data and ensuring better access to it through the Knowledge Centre for the Bioeconomy;
- provide guidance and promote good practices on how to operate in the bioeconomy within safe ecological limits.

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## 3. Consumer Markets Scoreboard

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### **The European Commission published the 2018 Consumer Markets Scoreboard that monitors how EU consumers rate the performance of 40 goods and services sectors.**

While the overall trust in markets has followed a positive trend since 2010, the report reveals that only 53% of consumers trust that businesses in the services sectors comply with consumer rules. For goods, the figure is slightly higher at 59%. Consumer trust in services and goods' markets has not improved compared to the 2016 scoreboard. Telecoms, financial services and utilities (water, gas, electricity, and postal services) remain particularly problematic areas for consumers in most EU Member States. On a positive note, the report concludes that the East-



West gap in consumer trust is slowly closing.



Also, services such as personal care services (hairdressers, spas), holiday accommodation and packaged holidays benefit from a high trust from consumers. "Consumer trust is growing, but there are still too many consumers that have bad experiences in certain markets, for instance when buying real estate or a second-hand car," said Věra Jourová, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality. "In April 2018, we presented a "New Deal for Consumers" to strengthen enforcement of consumer rights and give consumers new means to defend their rights. The possibility to launch a collective action should give consumers more trust that they can defend their rights and push businesses to better respect the rules."

#### Key findings of the 2018 Consumer Markets Scoreboard

- **Compared to 2016, there has been little improvement, although the trend has remained positive since 2010.** Mortgages, water supply, gas and electricity services have improved most over the past two years, but they remain among the least trusted markets, with the exception of gas services.
- **Markets in Western Europe continue to perform better for consumers, while on average the biggest improvements this year in performance are reported in Eastern Europe again.** This suggests that the East-West gap in how markets work for consumers is slowly closing. The Commission's and the Member States' ongoing activities on the issue of the dual food quality should be able to further improve the situation in this respect.
- **Internet provision and mobile telephone services are still the most problematic for consumers,** with 20.3% and 17.5% having faced problems in these sectors respectively in the past year. Other areas mentioned by at least 10% of consumers include: TV subscription, fixed telephony, sales of ICT and electronic goods, train and urban transports, second hand cars, real estate, postal services, new cars, car rental and car repair services.
- **Financial services are the sector where consumers suffer the highest detriment (financial loss or waste of time) in case of problems.** At least 35% of consumers having faced problems in home insurance, mortgages, loans and credit, electricity and water supply report severe detriment as a result. Other areas where consumers facing problems report high levels of detriment are airlines, investment products, and car insurance.
- **Real estate and second hand cars are the least trusted sectors by consumers.** Only 38% of consumers trust that real estate service providers comply with consumer protection rules and 36% of consumers do so for the second hand car sector.

#### Commission actions to improve consumer protection and trust

Improving consumer protection has been high on the Juncker Commission's agenda. The Commission proposed in April 2018 a New Deal for Consumers, which will empower qualified entities to launch representative actions on behalf of consumers and introduce stronger sanctioning powers for Member States' consumer authorities. It will also extend consumers' protection when they are online and clarify how EU law to clarify that dual quality practices misleading consumers are prohibited. Under the EU Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) Regulation, the Commission together with consumer authorities have launched several enforcement actions to make sure businesses fully respect EU consumer rules. A recent example of such an action includes the improvement of Airbnb's terms and conditions.

#### Background

The Consumer Scoreboards provide an overview of how the Single Market works for EU consumers. Published since 2008, they aim to ensure better monitoring of consumer outcomes and provide evidence to inform policy. There are two types of scoreboards, published in alternate years and based on representative EU-wide surveys:

- The **Consumer Markets Scoreboard** tracks the performance of over 40 consumer markets based on key indicators such as trusting that sellers comply with consumer protection rules, comparability of offers, the choice of retailers/suppliers, the extent to which markets live up to consumer expectations, and the degree to which problems encountered in the market cause detriment. Other indicators, such as switching and prices, are also monitored and analysed.
- The **Consumer Conditions Scoreboard** monitors national conditions for consumers in three areas: knowledge and trust, compliance and enforcement and complaints and dispute resolution. It also examines progress in the integration of the EU retail market (2017 Consumer Conditions Scoreboard).

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## 4. A Europe that Protects: EC calls for decisive action on security priorities

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**The European Commission is reporting on the progress made towards an effective and genuine Security Union, calling on the European Parliament and the Council to finalise their work on priority security initiatives as a matter of urgency.**

To maintain the positive momentum set by the EU Leaders at the informal meeting in Salzburg report outlines the security initiatives that will be decisive for the completion of the Security Union before the upcoming European Parliament elections in May 2019. Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos said: *"The security of our citizens is and should remain a priority for the EU every single day. Strengthening our external borders, improving information exchange and making all our data systems interoperable and protecting our citizens online as well as on the ground - there is no time to waste. It's time for those promises to be turned into reality, paving the way towards an effective and genuine Security Union."* Commissioner for the Security Union Julian King said: *"From chemical weapons being*

*used on our streets to state-sponsored cyberattacks, Europe is under threat like never before, and Europeans are looking to us to act. Now is the time to ramp up our efforts to finish our work on the Security Union. On terrorism, cyber and cyber-enabled threats, where the online and the real world collide, and on tackling organised crime we are stronger when we act together. Time is short: the EU institutions and our Member States*



*need to take responsibility for driving delivery and implementation of this vital work."* Over the past 3 years, the Commission has taken decisive action to tighten security rules within the EU and at its external borders. In his 2018 State of the Union Address, President Juncker announced further measures to protect Europeans – online and offline. However, attempted terror attacks, the use of chemical weapons on the streets of a Member State and most recently, the disrupted cyber-attack on the headquarters of an international organisation underline that more than ever, Europe remains a target – and it shows the ever greater importance of enhancing our collective security and resilience.

### **Accelerating work on priority security files**

While a number of legislative proposals made by the Commission have now been approved, there are still many important files that need to be finalised as a matter of urgency before the European Parliament elections in May 2019. The Commission therefore calls for acceleration of this work and a swift adoption of the outstanding files, in particular, those identified in the Joint Declaration and the new measures proposed by President Juncker in his 2018 State of the Union Address:

- **Protecting Europeans online:** a wide-ranging set of measures to raise EU cyber resilience and increase cyber security capabilities was presented in September 2017 and followed up last month by proposals specifically aimed at protecting the security of our elections. Given the recent hostile cyber operations it is imperative that all legislative proposals are finalised as a matter of priority. In addition, to make sure that internet platforms are not misused to disseminate terrorist content online, the proposed new rules, in particular the obligation to remove terrorist content within one hour, should be agreed by the European Parliament and the Council before the May 2019 elections.
- **Interoperability of EU information systems:** allowing EU information systems for security, migration and border management to work together in a smarter and more efficient way is a core element of the Commission's efforts to close information security gaps. Presented in December 2017, the proposal on interoperability of EU information systems should be agreed by the European Parliament and the Council before the European Parliament elections of 2019. Similarly, the upgrades of different EU information systems, such as the European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS), Eurodac and the Visa Information System (VIS) should be swiftly finalised.
- **Fighting cross-border crime:** to help police and judicial authorities to track down leads online and across borders, the Commission proposals on electronic evidence should be agreed before the May 2019 elections. The Commission also invites the European Council

together with the European Parliament to extend the competence of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) to include the investigation of cross-border terrorist offences.

- **Strengthening EU borders:** The EU's internal security depends on how we manage our external borders, and this is why the proposals to reinforce the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, the EU rules on return and the European Union Agency for Asylum, taken together, will provide for the necessary tools to better ensure the effective management of the external borders.

To support Member States' efforts to increase security within the EU, the Commission has earmarked €70 million under the Internal Security Fund (ISF) for 2018-2019 for targeted security funding, including: countering radicalisation (€5 million); fighting CBRN threats, restricting access to "home-made" explosives, and protecting public spaces and critical infrastructure (€9.5 million); and supporting implementation of existing rules such as EU Passenger Name Records (€1.5 million). This comes in addition to €100 million made available under the Urban Innovative Actions, including for the protection of public spaces.

#### **Background**

Security has been a political priority since the beginning of the Juncker Commission's mandate – from President Juncker's Political Guidelines of July 2014 to the latest State of the Union Address on 12 September 2018. On 14 December 2017, the presidents of the European Parliament, the rotating Presidency of the Council and the European Commission signed a Joint Declaration on



the EU's legislative priorities for 2018-2019, which underlined the central importance of better protecting the security of citizens by placing it at the heart of the Union's legislative work. Priority was given to initiatives designed to ensure that Member States' authorities know who is crossing the common EU external

border, to establishing interoperable EU information systems for security, border and migration management, and to reinforcing the instruments in the fight against terrorism and against money laundering. The European Agenda on Security guides the Commission's work in this area, setting out the main actions to ensure an effective EU response to terrorism and security threats, including countering radicalisation, boosting cybersecurity, cutting terrorist financing as well as improving information exchange. Since the adoption of the Agenda, significant progress has been made in its implementation, paving the way towards an effective and genuine Security Union. This progress is reflected in the Commission's reports published on a regular basis.

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## **5. European Court of Auditors signs off EU accounts for 11<sup>th</sup> time in a row**

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**The European Court of Auditors gave the EU annual accounts a clean bill of health for the 11<sup>th</sup> year in a row, finding them true and fair.**

Commissioner Günther H. Oettinger, in charge of budget and human resources, said: *"I welcome the Court's findings; the report proves that we spend our money well. The EU budget is small - but it makes a big difference for millions of Europeans. It is a unique tool to protect, empower and defend our citizens in a fast-changing world where many of the most pressing issues go beyond the borders of a single country. This is also why the European Commission is working hard to make sure that the EU budget is focused on creating a real added value. Of course, to continue delivering results for citizens across the EU after 2020, we need the support of the European Parliament and the Council for a timely adoption of the next long-term budget."* The Commission's aim as a manager of the EU budget is to ensure that, once a programme is closed and all controls are carried out, the level of error remains below 2% – the level considered by the Court as material. This has been achieved in 2017, as the error rate reached an all-time low level. The





Commission estimates that, after corrections and recoveries, the remaining level of error for the 2017 expenditure will be below 1%.

#### **Ongoing cooperation with Member States**

Member States manage around 75% of EU spending, and the Commission is working closely with them to ensure money is spent effectively and efficiently. The Commission has taken a series of steps to support Member States to programme funds under shared management as early as possible in the programming period, to timely complete projects and submit the invoices for reimbursement. The goal is to prevent errors from occurring – by making Member States detect, report and correct any irregularities early, so that they do not risk losing funds to which they would be entitled. The updated Financial Regulation foresees even more intense cooperation between the European Commission and national authorities, which should lead to an even more effective spending and better controls.

#### **Simpler rules to increase the effectiveness of EU funding**

Simpler rules reduce errors and lead to greater added value for the EU citizens. Access to EU funding under the current long-term budget for 2014-2020 is already easier compared to the past. In the spring of 2018, the European Commission, the Parliament and the Council agreed on a new set of financial rules – the Financial Regulation, which reduce red tape even further. The Commission's work does not stop there. Simplification is at the heart of the Commission's proposal for the next long-term budget of the EU. The Commission is now working intensively together with the European Parliament and the Council to have an agreement in principle before the European elections in 2019 in order to allow for the new programmes, from Erasmus to research funding or supporting our regions, to start on time.

#### **Focus on the added value of EU spending**

Generating an added value out of every euro spent has been of key importance to the Commission in the recent years. Already in 2015, the Commission outlined a series of actions in four priority areas to further maximise the added value of EU spending. The focus on EU added value is at the heart of the Commission's proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027. It seeks to set clearer objectives and focus more on performance. The goal is to make it easier to monitor and measure results – and to make changes when necessary. This is expected to further improve the way the EU budget is spent.

#### **Recovering EU Funds spent incorrectly**

The Commission is monitoring the implementation of the EU budget on the ground. If Member States or final beneficiaries are found to spend EU money incorrectly, the Commission takes recovery measures. In 2017, the Commission clawed back €2.8 billion, equal to 2.1% of the payments to the EU budget. As a consequence, the amount actually being at risk would be below the 2% threshold once corrections and recoveries have been taken into account.



#### **Qualified opinion on the 2017 payments**

The Court has given, for a second year in a row, a qualified opinion on the 2017 payments – only one notch below the clean opinion. The report thus shows further improvements in terms of compliance and performance, and confirms that the

Commission is on the right path. While a clean opinion means that the figures are true and fair, a qualified opinion comes to say that there are only minor issues still to be fixed.

#### **Background**

The publication of the Annual Report by the European Court of Auditors kicks off the annual 'discharge procedure' of the EU budget. To prepare the ground for the process, in June 2018 the Commission adopted its Annual Management and Performance Report on the implementation of the 2017 EU budget. This report confirms that the EU budget in 2017 has helped achieve the political priorities of the European Union, has created added value for the EU citizens, and was spent in line with EU rules. The estimated level of error is not a measure of fraud, inefficiency or waste. It is simply an estimate of the money already paid from the EU budget despite non-compliance with certain rules.



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## 6. Protecting workers against cancer-causing chemicals

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The European Parliament and the Council came to an agreement on the Commission's second proposal to broaden the list of recognised cancer-causing chemicals in the workplace. With this agreement, 8 additional cancer-causing chemicals will be covered by the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive, including diesel exhaust. Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne Thyssen, welcomed the agreement with the following statement:

*"Today we took another important step in protecting European workers from work-related cancer. The European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council, reached an agreement on legislation covering a further eight cancer-causing chemicals, including diesel exhaust. This will ensure better protection for more than 20 million workers in Europe. Workers in the chemical, metal and car industry, professional drivers, construction workers and workers in the dock and warehouse sector, in particular, will benefit. At the same time, it will make our internal market simpler and fairer, with particular attention to help small and micro-enterprises comply with health and safety rules. I extend my thanks to all parties who made this result possible, and would like to acknowledge in particular the efforts made by the Austrian Presidency and its predecessors on behalf of the Council, as well as rapporteur Claude Rolin and the shadow rapporteurs on behalf of the European Parliament. I hope this agreement will be confirmed quickly, so we can make a real difference on the ground and prevent more than 100,000 cancer deaths over the next 50 years."*



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### Next steps

The agreement will be submitted to the Council's Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper) for approval. Once the Member States' Permanent Representatives confirm the agreement, it will be subject to a vote by the plenary of the European Parliament.

### Background

Fighting work-related cancer and creating a healthier and safer workplace is a priority for this Commission and a core principle of our European Pillar of Social Rights. Evidence shows that this focus is justified: with 52% of all work-related deaths, cancer remains the biggest silent killer in the workplace. While the majority of Member States have national exposure limits for many cancer-causing chemicals, some Member States are less stringent. This means that workers are not equally protected across the Single Market and that there is no level playing field for businesses. As scientific knowledge about cancer-causing chemicals is constantly evolving, the



Commission supports a continuous process of updating the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive (Directive 2004/37/EC). The Juncker Commission has taken decisive action to update the legislation on the protection of workers against cancer-causing chemicals. The Commission launched its first proposal in May 2016, which has already been adopted as a Directive by the co-legislators at the end of 2017. The provisional agreement marks one of the final steps in the negotiation

stage of the second proposal from January 2017. In April 2018, the Commission submitted a third proposal to strengthen the protection of workers against cancer-causing chemicals. 22 cancer-causing chemicals are now covered by the Directive, of which 21 have been added since the start of this Commission mandate. These initiatives are part of the Commission's broader effort to improve health and safety standards at the workplace throughout Europe. In this context, the Commission has started an in-depth review and update of the existing legislation in January 2017.

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## 7. ECOFIN: progress are achieved about EU VAT system

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The European Commission has welcomed the progress made by Member States on much-needed improvements to how Value Added Tax (VAT) works in the EU.



The meeting of EU finance ministers in Luxembourg saw agreements on a number of files in this field, all of which should help in the day-to-day running of an EU VAT system which is in urgent need of further far-reaching reform. *"New figures released by the Commission just weeks ago show that Member States are still losing €150 billion in VAT each year. Today's agreements are another step towards addressing that problem and changing VAT rules for the better. Now is the time to seize the momentum and agree on solutions for the more fundamental problems facing the system today."* said Pierre **Moscovici**, Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation

and Customs following the agreements. The measures agreed include:

- New rules **to improve the day-to-day functioning of the current VAT system** until the overall VAT reform strategy has been implemented. These so-called 'quick fixes' should reduce compliance costs and increase legal certainty for businesses. Once the European Parliament has published its report on this file, the new rules should be enforceable by 2020.
- A new measure **to allow Member States to align the VAT rates they set for e-publications, currently taxed at the standard rate in most Member States, with the more favourable regime currently in force for traditional printed publications.** The decision is the final step to ensure that the unequal treatment of the two products - paper versus digital - becomes a thing of the past. This agreement bodes well for upcoming discussions on the Commission's latest proposal to ensure that Member States have more flexibility to set VAT rates as they see fit.
- Formal adoption of **new rules to exchange more information and boost cooperation on criminal VAT fraud between national tax authorities and law enforcement authorities.** VAT information and intelligence on organised gangs involved in the most serious cases of VAT fraud will now be shared systematically with EU enforcement bodies. Improved investigative coordination between Member States themselves and with EU bodies will ensure that fast-moving criminal activity is tracked and tackled more quickly and more effectively.

Separately, ministers formally adopted **reinforced rules to control illicit cash flows in and out of the EU, a key measure in the fight against the financing of terrorism.** The formal adoption will tighten cash controls on people entering or leaving the EU with €10,000 or more in cash, enable authorities to act on amounts lower than the declaration threshold of €10,000 where there are suspicions of criminal activity and extend customs controls to cash sent in postal parcels or freight shipments, to prepaid cards and to precious commodities such as gold. The legislation will now be published in the Official Journal of the European Union and will enter into force 20 days later\*.

### Background

The common Value Added Tax (VAT) system plays an important role in Europe's Single Market. VAT is a major and growing source of revenue in the EU, raising over €1 trillion in 2015, which corresponds to 7% of EU GDP. One of the EU's own resources is also based on VAT. Recent studies have indicated that around €150 billion in VAT revenues goes missing every year due to problems with VAT collection and VAT fraud. The measures agreed follow up on the VAT Action Plan towards a single EU VAT area presented in April 2016 and the Commission's proposals for a deep reform of the EU VAT system presented in October 2017. Member States should now move forward and agree as soon as possible on the much broader reform to cut down on VAT fraud in the EU's system, as proposed last year by the Commission. The reboot would improve and modernise the system for governments and businesses alike, making the system more robust and simpler to use for companies. At the same time, the Commission has this year also proposed new reforms to enable Member States to set VAT rates as they see fit.

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## 8. Joint Communiqué between the EU and the United Nations

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The European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN) share a strong commitment to support partner countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development. The 2030 Agenda is the transformative plan of action for people, planet, prosperity and peace to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development globally. The EU and the UN play a complementary role within the global development architecture. We are natural and longstanding partners in development cooperation, including at country and regional levels, where the benefits of our collaborative actions and respective



comparative advantages are clearly felt. The ongoing UN reforms particularly that of the UN Development System, provide an opportunity to reaffirm and build on the EU-UN partnership in development. Within the EU, the new European Consensus on Development frames the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in partnership with all partners. Partnership is essential for delivering on the 2030 Agenda and achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions (social, economic and environmental). With the 2030 Agenda as our joint blueprint for action, we reaffirm the added value in us working together towards the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda in partner countries. Our joint efforts will continue to be targeted towards eradicating poverty, reducing risks and vulnerabilities, building resilience and addressing inequalities to ensure that no one is left behind. We support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (Paris Agreement), the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction (Sendai Framework) and other international commitments.

### ***Guiding Principles***

The renewed partnership between the EU and the UN in development aims to foster closer collaboration on common policy approaches and create a more strategic framework for cooperation for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in partner countries. We intend to strengthen coordination between EU and UN actors, and work more closely in partnership with all other relevant actors to promote the implementation of agendas that promote inclusive and peaceful societies, resilience and sustainable development. We aim to advance on strengthening the means of implementation and revitalising the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development as a key priority of our collaboration in advancing the 2030 Agenda. We also aim to advance development effectiveness, in line with the Busan Declaration and the Nairobi Outcome Document. In the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, we envisage to promote open, inclusive, participatory and transparent processes, recognising the important roles of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), including youth-led networks, and of foundations, academia, International Financial Institutions (IFIs), the private sector and other relevant partners as active actors in development. We intend to continue to promote gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment and support partners harness the demographic dividend of the youth population as overarching priorities. We fully respect the principles of country ownership, demand-driven partnership and dialogue, recognising that national governments have the primary responsibility for implementing the 2030 Agenda. We should also jointly contribute to raising awareness and ownership of the 2030 Agenda. We reaffirm the importance of multilateralism and strong strategic partnerships as the cornerstone for an inclusive, resilient, sustainable, and secure and peaceful future for everyone. In this context, we recall in particular the importance of the partnership between the African Union, the European Union and the United Nations.

### ***Overall Objectives***

Through this partnership, we intend to encourage and support partner countries in integrating the 2030 Agenda into their national strategies and priorities. We intend to jointly promote development strategies that factor in the 2030 Agenda, supporting integrated policies, actions and approaches in partner countries. We envisage aligning our work and financing with country priorities through better planning, regular and inclusive follow-up and review of the

implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This could include greater focus in building capacity in partner countries for data collection and analysis and integrated policy advice to support economic transformation and diversification in partner countries. We intend to enhance joint policy dialogue and consultation with partner countries to identify opportunities for collaboration and possible areas of support including synergies between EU programming (including joint programming) and the UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs). Where possible, this should be done through existing platforms rather than creating new layers, and by making use of the Joint Fund for the 2030 Agenda to the extent possible. We should also, where appropriate, promote coordination between the UN Resident Coordinators, UN Country Teams and EU Delegations to strengthen synergies and development impact. We envisage exchanges of views about supporting local authorities, communities and CSOs in their role in SDG implementation, as well as on mobilising the private sector.

### ***Strategic Focus and Intent***

The renewed partnership concerns, in particular, five focus areas:

- **Promoting gender equality, including plans of action for women's and girls'empowerment at country level.** We intend to build upon the experience of the Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls, which is an example of innovative EU-UN partnership and supporting the UN's commitment to "delivering as one" in all areas. We intend to promote girls' and women's empowerment, as well as the abandonment of all forms of harmful practices and discrimination against women and girls in a range of areas, such as quality education and training, health, including sexual and reproductive health, better nutritional outcomes, access to productive resources, services and information, and political and economic participation.
- **Fostering inclusive sustainable growth, strategic investment (both public and private) and decent work** to promote conditions for improving the quality of employment and increasing decent employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, especially for youth, building on the recent experience with the European External Investment Plan and ongoing efforts of the UN development system. This includes facilitating access to networks, knowledge and skills towards inclusive sustainable economic activity. Emphasis on building resilience and sustainability should be prioritised through support to governments to promote agricultural transformation, to undertake integrated rural development initiatives supported by electrification, and to ensure sustainable development solutions, in a context-specific and tailored approach, including by addressing risks, vulnerabilities, and root causes of crises. We envisage fostering innovation, quality education and training in view of matching skills with labour market needs, improving business environment and investment climate, and triggering and supporting private sector investments in domestic economies of partner countries towards sustainable development pathways, with a focus on decent job creation, value addition, critical physical infrastructure, structural transformation and human capital development.
- **Promoting climate action and implementation through development cooperation,** through joint efforts to advocate and operationalise collaborations and commitments towards a low-carbon and circular economy, disaster risk reduction, resilience, and gender-responsive transformation and adaptation, within the context of the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework, in particular, by supporting national level implementation. We intend to work with partner countries, governments, financial institutions, private investors, IFIs, think-tanks and other partners to support transformational climate action. This partnership should contribute to disaster risk reduction and resilience by supporting climate-smart agriculture, accelerating access to renewable energy, reducing water scarcity, promoting nature-based solutions, the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, and developing capacity to prevent and manage natural disasters and climate change vulnerability.
- **Strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus and its linkage to sustaining peace,** through continued use of joint assessments, conflict analyses and conflict-sensitive programming and implementation, reinforced collaboration and conflict-sensitive joint action in 'fragile and conflict-affected settings', improved early warning mechanisms followed by early action, with a view to help partner countries and their people to prevent, resolve and recover from crises and to reduce human suffering and displacement whilst maintaining different roles, mandates and respecting humanitarian principles. EU-UN joint efforts should address the root causes of conflict and economic and social stability, through institutional strengthening, reducing risks of disasters, stabilisation and support to peacebuilding efforts. They will also seek to advance inclusion of human rights, gender equality and empowerment.



- **Enhancing cooperation on the migration-development nexus**, aiming towards the achievement of the migration-related targets of the 2030 Agenda and the commitments taken in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, notably to promote safe, orderly and regular migration. Reinforced and joint efforts by the EU and the UN will contribute to the concrete implementation of the objectives of the two Global Compacts on Migrants and on Refugees at global, regional, national and local level, once these are adopted.

#### **Implementation and Follow-Up**

This partnership will vary depending on the specific context, evolution of development situations and the range of national and international partners involved. A flexible and tailored approach will remain the hallmark of an effective response. We recognise the importance of adequate funding for EU-UN collaboration within the limits of approved financing decisions. We also recognize the diversified nature of financing resources and needs in countries, and intend to pursue our analysis and collaboration in bringing in timely, predictable, sustained, appropriate, and efficient financing instruments. We reaffirm the importance of Addis Ababa Action Agenda. This partnership will continue to provide the framework for a strategic collaboration, recognizing the critical importance of aligning and leveraging financial resources and jointly building, prioritizing and financing innovative, effective operational responses by all stakeholders within the limits of approved financing decisions. We intend to emphasise efforts towards catalysing innovative financing, leveraging of domestic financing, and private-public partnerships and dialogue with the private sector aiming for private investments in partner countries. This is a living and flexible partnership that, where and when appropriate, will be adapted to changing circumstances. The leadership of the UN and the EU will meet annually to assess and adapt it where necessary. The technical teams of both organisations will continue to meet regularly to ensure effective implementation of cooperation under this partnership, including by enhancing coordination between the teams at the global, regional and country levels.

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## **9. EU and UN join forces to end femicide under the Spotlight Initiative**

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**The European Union and the United Nations are announcing a €50 million financial contribution to end femicide in Latin America.**



Femicide claims the lives of 12 women in Latin America every day. With the €50 million investment, the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative will fund new and innovative programmes in Argentina, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico, to help women and girls live lives free from violence and to eradicate femicide in Latin America. *"Ending violence against women and girls is on top of our agenda. With the Spotlight initiative, we have a global coalition around this objective and are*

*mobilising all efforts and actions in education, awareness raising, prevention and delivering justice,"* said High Representative Vice-President Federica **Mogherini**. *"We want to make sure that women and girls never have to live in fear again, in Latin America, in Europe and around the world."* *"Addressing the issue of femicide comprehensively from each of these different angles is essential to successful and lasting results,"* said UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. **Mohammed**. *"No woman should die because she is a woman."* *"Killing a woman for being a woman is the most outrageous crime one can conceive,"* said European Commissioner for International Development and Cooperation Neven **Mimica**. *"We will work with governments and other partners to tackle the root causes of femicide, which are often rooted in patriarchal attitudes, misogyny, sexism and objectification of women."* *"Gender-based violence affects every single country, and women and girls everywhere,"* said UN Women Executive Director, Phumzile **Mlambo-Ngcuka**. *"With the Spotlight Initiative, the EU and the UN are working to galvanize broad collaboration with focused intent, across UN agencies, civil society partners and governments, so as to end violence against women and girls once and for all."* The new programmes will address legislative and policy gaps, strengthen institutions, promote gender-equitable attitudes, and provide quality services for survivors and reparations for victims of

violence and their families. The Spotlight Initiative will work closely with civil society, UN agencies and governments of the five programme countries to provide comprehensive, high-quality interventions that can save women and girls' lives. A special focus will be put on reaching women and girls that are most at risk of violence and whom traditional programmes do not reach, leaving no one behind. Latin America is home to 14 of the 25 countries with the highest rates of femicide in the world. In 2016, 254 women and girls were killed in Argentina, 349 in El Salvador, 211 in Guatemala, 466 in Honduras and 2,813 in Mexico.

### **Background**

The Spotlight Initiative is a global, multiyear partnership between European Union and United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. Launched with a seed funding commitment of €500 million from the European Union, the initiative represents an unprecedented global effort to invest in gender equality and women's empowerment as a precondition and driver for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, governments across the world committed to address all inequalities and forms of discrimination. The 2030 Agenda commits "to leave no one behind" - a commitment that no goal will be considered as achieved unless it is met for all segments of society, for everyone, everywhere, including those furthest behind. This unfortunately also includes millions of women and girls who still suffer in silence every day from different forms of violence and abuse.

### **Violence against women and girls**

Violence against women and girls is one of the most pervasive consequences of inequality. It is rooted in unequal gender and power relations and is a widespread form of discrimination, manifesting in multiple forms across both public and private spheres. Women and girls are disproportionately subjected to violence, including femicide, sexual violence, intimate partner violence, trafficking, and harmful practices. Violence against women and girls is a violation of human rights that occurs at alarming levels across all countries and generations. For women and girls who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, the risks to experience violence are even greater, while responses and support systems are often not available, acceptable, accessible or of quality standards. For example, women and girls in certain stages of life (adolescents and older ages) may be overlooked in statistics and in designing laws, policies and programmes. Migrants and refugees and internally displaced persons may lack formal recognition by the State. Indigenous women and those from ethnic, racial and sexual minorities often face some of the highest levels of discrimination across social, political and economic dimensions. Women and girls with disabilities, those living in rural areas, among others, similarly face overlapping inequalities and situations of multiple disadvantage, explaining how and why certain groups are systematically left behind.

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## **10. Education and training: Member States made further progress**

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### **The 2018 edition of the European Commission's Education and Training Monitor finds that Member States have made further progress towards the EU's targets set for 2020.**

The European Commission supports Member States in ensuring that their education systems deliver. The Monitor, the EU's flagship annual publication on education and training, is an important part of this work. Citizenship education is the main focus of this year's report, reflecting the role of education in fostering engagement, inclusion and an understanding of citizens' rights. Using a range of examples, the Monitor finds that Member States are working to ensure that young people learn how our democracies and institutions work and about the values the European Union is built on. The latest edition of the Monitor also shows that Member States have made further progress towards the targets for reforming and modernising education systems the EU set itself for 2020 – reaching or getting very close to some of them. Tibor Navracsics, EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, said: *"I am pleased to see that Member States are working hard to meet their agreed targets for education set for 2020 and to enable young people to become engaged members of our communities – the latter is particularly*



*encouraging as we approach next year's European Parliament elections. I am proud that, together, we have given fresh impetus to this goal: earlier this year, Member States adopted a Recommendation I had put forward on promoting our shared values, inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching."* The 2018 edition of the Education and Training Monitor shows that, once again, Member States have made progress towards their headline targets. However, differences between and within countries remain, showing that more reforms are needed. This is particularly the case for basic skills, where a bigger effort is required to ensure that young people learn to read, write and do maths properly – a precondition for them becoming active, responsible citizens. The share of pupils dropping out of school without a diploma fell to 10.6% in 2017, very close to the objective of less than 10% by 2020. This, nevertheless, still means that more than one in ten pupils face difficult prospects for further education or for a solid entry into the labour market, including due to fewer opportunities available for adult learning. The percentage of those completing tertiary education rose to 39.9%, almost reaching the goal of 40% agreed on for 2020. And 95.5% of children aged four years or older participated in early childhood education and care, slightly more than the target of at least 95%. The Monitor also looks at how much Member States spend on education which is an important investment in economic and social development. In 2016, public funding for education rose by 0.5% in real terms compared to the previous year. However, many Member States are still investing less in education than they did before the economic crisis, and thirteen Member States actually spent less on it.

### **Background**

The Commission's Education and Training Monitor 2018 is the seventh edition of this annual report that shows how the EU's education and training systems are evolving by bringing together a wide array of evidence. It measures the EU's progress on six Education and Training 2020 targets. The analysis of education challenges and trends recorded in the Monitor helps to inform the treatment of education issues in the annual European Semester process. Furthermore, it will help to identify where EU funding for education, training and skills should be targeted in the EU's next long-term budget. The Monitor analyses the main challenges for European education systems and presents policies that can make them more responsive to societal and labour market needs. The report comprises a cross-country comparison, 28 in-depth country reports, and a dedicated webpage with additional data and information. Education is high on the EU's political agenda. The Commission is working full speed with Member States towards building a European Education Area by 2025, which is about enhancing learning, cooperation and excellence. It is also about opening up opportunities for all, strengthening values and enabling young people to develop a European identity. The reforms encouraged by the Education and Training Monitor have a key role in this. Along with the European Education Area, the Erasmus+ programme, the European Structural and Investment Funds, including the Youth Employment Initiative, the European Solidarity Corps as well as Horizon 2020, and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology help stimulate investment and support policy priorities in education. To underpin the strengthened ambition in this area, the Commission has proposed to significantly boost funding for young people and learning in the EU's next long-term budget.

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## **11. EU: free tickets available for 18-year-olds to discover Europe**

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**Following the success of the first round of DiscoverEU, the European Commission will launch a second competition for free tickets on 29 November 2018.**



All 18-year-olds in the EU will then have until 11 December 2018 to apply for a free ticket, giving them the opportunity to travel around Europe between 15 April and 31 October 2019. The first round of DiscoverEU brought together thousands of young people building a true community across Europe. Participants, who never met before, linked up on social media formed groups to travel from city to city or stayed at each other's places. Commissioner Tibor **Navracsics**, responsible for

Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, said: *"This summer, around 15,000 18-year-olds were able to travel across the EU. They experienced first-hand what it feels like to be European. They got the opportunity to discover Europe's diversity and cultural richness as well as to meet people from all over the EU. We have heard so many fantastic stories from those who took part, and I am*

*delighted that we are able to offer this experience to more young people next year!" Who can apply and how?*

- Applicants must be 18 years old on 31 December 2018 and be prepared to travel between 15 April and 31 October 2019 for a maximum period of 30 days.
- Those interested in taking part need to apply via the [European Youth Portal](#).
- An evaluation committee will assess the applications and select the recipients.
- Applicants will be notified about the selection results mid-January 2019.

Successful applicants will be able to travel individually or in a group of up to five people. As a general rule they will be travelling by rail. However, to ensure wide access across the continent, participants can also use alternative transport modes, such as buses or ferries, or, exceptionally, planes. This will ensure that young people living in remote areas or on islands part of the EU will also have a chance to take part. The launch of the second round of DiscoverEU was announced by Commissioner **Navracsics** at a stakeholder meeting, in front of representatives working in the youth, education, transport and tourism sectors, and young people who took part in the initiative this summer. The meeting is part of on-going work to make the DiscoverEU experience even more effective and accessible in the future. Organisations such as the European Anti-Poverty Network were also invited to discuss ways in which social inclusion can be improved in future rounds of DiscoverEU.

#### **Next steps**

Based on the overwhelming interest in DiscoverEU and the experience it offers young people across the EU, the European Commission has proposed €700 million for the initiative under the future Erasmus programme in the EU's next long-term budget after 2020. If the European Parliament and the Council agree to the proposal, an additional 1.5 million 18 year olds will be able to travel between 2021 and 2027.

#### **Background**

DiscoverEU was launched June, with a budget of €12 million in 2018. So far it has given more than 15,000 young people the opportunity to travel around Europe. This year – the European Year of Cultural Heritage – those travelling have also had the chance to participate in the many events taking place in celebration of Europe's cultural heritage. During the first round which from 9 July to 30 September 2018, some 15,000 young people were awarded travel passes based on a fixed quota per country. Once selected they could travel, either alone or in a group of maximum 5 people, for up to 30 days to at least one EU Member State.

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## **12. European Charlemagne Youth Prize 2019**

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**Since 2008, the European Parliament together with the “Foundation of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen” have each year been inviting young people from all EU Member States to submit projects run by and for youth showing an active participation in the development of Europe.**

Young people aged between 16 and 30 from any EU Member States can submit projects for the European Charlemagne Youth Prize. Projects can be submitted individually or, preferably, in groups. They should promote European and international understanding; foster the development of a shared sense of European identity and integration; and provide role models for young people living in Europe and offer practical examples of Europeans living together as one community. Previous winners have been awarded for projects such as youth exchanges, events in the fields of sports, arts or culture or may take the form of online projects with a European dimension. Have a look [here](#) to read about previous winners' projects. The prize for the best project is €7500, the second €5000 and the third €2500. As part of the prize, the three European laureates are invited to visit the European Parliament in Brussels or Strasbourg.



One representative of each of the 28 national winners is invited to Aachen for several days to attend several events, including the Youth Prize Award Ceremony, which always takes place two days before Ascension Day, the day on which the prestigious International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen is awarded. The prizes for the best three projects will be presented by the President of the European Parliament and representatives



of the Foundation of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen. Your project will also receive lots of coverage through the European Parliament's and the Foundation's media channels. ... and last but not least, your stay in Aachen will be a unique chance to meet and network with other dynamic young people from all over Europe, a platform to share your vision about Europe in front of European leaders and for many it will be the beginning of some long-lasting friendships with like-minded young people from all over Europe! The application deadline is **28 January 2019**. For more information see the following [link](#).

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### 13. UNESCO/Japan Young Researchers' Fellowship Programme

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UNESCO designed the project "UNESCO/Keizo Obuchi Research Fellowships Programme" (UNESCO/Japan Young Researchers' Fellowship Programme) in the framework of the Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Capacity-Building of Human Resources which was established in November 2000 by the Government of Japan to enable UNESCO to give impetus to research in four areas under UNESCO's Priority Programme Areas. The Government of Japan offers 10



fellowships, to be awarded to deserving candidates from developing countries, special attention will be given to those who may wish pursue their research studies in Japan, to women, candidates from LDCs, Africa and SIDS countries who are eager to undertake research on one or more of the topics listed below. The aim of the fellowships is to support innovative and imaginative post-graduate research in four areas of development of particular interest to UNESCO. **Objectives of the programme**

The UNESCO/Keizo Obuchi Research Fellowships Programme (UNESCO/Japan Young Researchers' Fellowship Programme) funded under the Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the capacity-building

of Human Resources will aim, in particular, to impact on capacity-building and research activities in the following areas: Environment (with particular attention on disaster risk reduction (DRR); Intercultural Dialogue; Information and Communication Technologies; and Peaceful conflict resolution. No other research topics will be considered. **Eligibility**

Applicants, a maximum of TWO from each applying National Commission, must meet the following general criteria:

1. Candidates under this Programme must be post-graduate researchers, already holding either an M.A. or M.Sc. degree (or equivalent) and wishing to pursue research work abroad (preferably in their own region) with a view to enhancing knowledge in one of the four specific fields mentioned in paragraph D.1 below. Thus, those who are in the process of completing their Master's degree must have completed it PRIOR to taking up their Fellowship.
2. Candidates must be persons of high intellectual promise who may be expected to make significant contributions to their country on return.
3. Candidates must be no more than 40 years of age. Thus, applicants born before 1 January 1978 will not be considered under the Programme.
4. The selected Fellow must carry out the research under the auspices of an academic supervisor in a host institution. Confirmation of acceptance from the academic supervisor is imperative.
5. Priority attention will be given to: Women candidatures; Candidates from least developed countries (LDCs) and SIDS; African researchers; those who may wish pursue their research studies in Japan.
6. Candidates must be proficient in reading and writing the language of instruction in the proposed country of study/research.

All applications must be submitted with the required documentation on the UNESCO Fellowship Application Form. Each Member State may nominate a maximum of two (2) candidates. It is the National Commission's responsibility to select the two candidates whose applications it wishes to submit to UNESCO. The application(s) should reach the Section of Participation Programme and Fellowships, UNESCO, 7, Place de Fontenoy 75352 Paris 07 SP before **30 November 2018** mid-night and an advance copy may be sent by email: [s.bantchev@unesco.org](mailto:s.bantchev@unesco.org) and [l.zasfriz@unesco.org](mailto:l.zasfriz@unesco.org). For more information see the following [link](#).

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## 14. Your Europe, Your Say! 2019

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The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is launching its tenth “**Your Europe, Your Say**” event, which will take place in **Brussels on 21-22 March 2019**. As part of the “[Your Europe, Your Say](#)” (YEYS) event, 33 schools (from the 28 EU Member States and the five EU candidate countries) will be invited to Brussels to participate in a debate on a topical issue that concerns young people. The title of the upcoming event is “**YEYS turns 10: Vote for the future!**” with a view to the European Parliament elections in 2019. Any secondary-level school, in one of the 28 Member States or one of the five candidate countries, can apply for the 2019 YEYS event. The deadline for [applications](#) is 18 November 2018. We would kindly ask you to help us increase the outreach of this extraordinary youth event by informing schools in your country or region about it. We would be grateful if you could publish the below article on your website, your newsletters, or any other suitable information medium. You could also add a link to the [event website](#) on your own webpage. In order to promote this event, [a communication kit is downloadable](#) from our website. Never think you’re too young to share your opinion on the future of Europe. Join Your Europe, Your Say! (YEYS), the most exciting field trip ever to Brussels, where you can share your ideas with students from all over Europe! The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) invites you to Brussels on 21-22 March 2019 to join a real-life debate on the theme #YEYSturns10: Vote for the future! It is a special edition dedicated to the 2019 European Parliament elections and celebrating 10 years of YEYS. To take part, ask your school to register via the [online registration form before 18 November 2018](#). After registration has closed, one school from each Member State and from the five EU candidate countries will be selected by drawing lots to take part in YEYS. The selected schools will then send three students in their penultimate year, along with one teacher, to represent them. If you are among the lucky students, you will need to be able to express yourself fairly well in English. The EESC will cover all participation costs, including travel and accommodation expenses. For a little inspiration, check out the video of last year’s edition of [YEYS](#). More information about #YEYS2019 can be found [here](#). **Registration deadline: 18 November 2018. [Click here to register!](#)**



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## 15. PERFORMACTION training course: excellent results!

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On September 16, the EURO-NET association realized in Potenza during the "Perform Action performing arts for education and training" project (approved in UK as part of the Erasmus Plus program KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education as Action No. 2017 -1-UK01-KA204-036779) an art training course based on non-formal education and a typically holistic approach. The course, which was attended by about 40 people, was held by the trainer Raffaele Messina who led the participants to express themselves with the body through specific exercises and individual workouts but also in couples or groups. The course aimed to enhance, pursue and make evident non-formal learning methods that allow those who use them to reinvent themselves not only as a person, but also as a group, learning with art to live together despite their respective differences and attitudes. The course was preceded by an in-depth presentation of the "PerformAction" project prepared by the expert Antonino Imbesi, who illustrated to the participants the partnership that is implementing this initiative, the objectives of the European project and all the activities already realized and those still to be carried out. At the end of the day the performer Raffaele Messina delighted the participants with a short show in which also the students participated. The next project activity will be the final meeting in Leipzig, where 2 members of the staff from the Italian association are going to participate.



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## 16. More Than Word: third meeting in Poland

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From 18 to 20 September, was realized the third meeting of the EU project "More Than Words - Integrating Creativity in Inter-cultural Training" approved under the Erasmus Plus program KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education (Action No. 2017- 1- UK01-KA204-036613). The project is directed to improve intercultural communication and training skills of educators, social workers and all people engaged as professionals or artists in supporting migrants and other minorities tackling problems of integration and communication. The project partners are: Border Crossings Company Limited (United Kingdom); Comparative Research Network e.V. (Germany); EURO-NET (Italy); Integralt Kifejezes-es Tancterapias Egyesulet (Hungary); Association del Egyptiens au Luxembourg (Luxembourg); Stowarzyszenie "Dia Ziemi" (Poland); Network African Rural and Urban Development e.V. (Germany).



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## 17. "EU-ACT" project approved in Italy

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The project "Europe City Teller - cultural mediation and storytelling for tourism, between theatre, multimedia and storytelling (EU-ACT) is a project approved by the Italian National Agency Erasmus Plus INDIRE in the framework of the Erasmus Plus program KA2 Strategic Partnerships for adult education. The EU-ACT project intends to integrate itself into the transnational cultural tourism strategy promoted by the European Commission, which aims to carry out a series of activities to promote transnational tourism skills and products and to respond to social concerns,



to problems of territorial cohesion and of protection/enhancement of natural and cultural heritages. Specifically, the main objective of EU-ACT is to transfer to operators, educators and mediators, new knowledge and skills in the field of cultural mediation and theatrical and digital storytelling, with the aim of co-creating new cultural tourism products. EU-ACT intends to accompany the realization of these products,

through international experiences, promoted by a strategic partnership, made up of organizations expert in the fields of theatre, design and digital programming, methodologies of storytelling applied to cultural heritage, coming from Italy, Poland, Hungary, Germany and the UK. The partnership intends to develop and share good practices gained by the organizations, to create a collective work methodology. The project will have a total duration of 27 months, and includes: training activities; various project meetings, related to the realization of three intellectual products that will be presented later in the multiplier events that each partner will organize in its respective city and which will be addressed to an audience of citizens and tourists European/non-European.

The partnership is composed by: EURO-NET (Italy) project coordinator; CRN (Germany); Euro-Idea (Poland); IKTE (Hungary) and Interacting (UK) The project involves the creation of the following 3 intellectual products: live interpretation of theatrical visits with "live-actors" that in historical clothes will tell the main historical-artistic venue of the European cities involved; an online platform with an in-depth analysis of the contents produced by the project (to encouraging the experience both before and after the events);



an APP in augmented reality for mobile devices, connected to a paper/game guide. The project plans to implement new training methodologies; increase the knowledge of the European cultural heritage; give access to the European cultural heritage through the web; increase accessibility to European cultural heritage through digital technologies; transfer educational methodologies.



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## 18. InnovatiVET: excellent results from the meeting in Potenza

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In the period 2-5 November the second meeting of the "InnovatiVET" project (approved in the framework of the Erasmus Plus KA2 VET program as action n. 2017-1-DK01-KA202-034250 - ID n.KA202-2017-006) took place in in Potenza (Italy), attended by all the partners of the initiative. The purpose of the second meeting was to: present the results of the intellectual output 1; present the research developed for the organization of the outputs 2, 3 and 4; define the subsequent project steps. The project wants to introduce new models of innovation in VET system: it would like to explore innovation in this indicated sector in Europe and create several guidelines (interactive, practical and easy-to-use tips) about the ways to introduce a revolution for a VET really job-oriented. The project partners are: Erhvervsakademi Sydvest (Denmark); EURO-NET (Italy); TURUN YLIOPISTO (Finland); MEDNARODNI CENTER ZA PRENOS ZNANJA DOO (Slovenia); FAB LAB LIMITED (United Kingdom).



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## 19. Successfully completed the training of the SME project

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In the period 25-29 September 2018 the training course provided for the project "Skills for Migrants Entrepreneurs" (SME) took place in Tiriolo, Italy. The course, that is part of a project approved under the Erasmus Plus KA2 VET as action n.2017-1-SE01-KA202-034586, was hosted by the second Italian partner of the project, the CORISS cooperative (the first Italian partner is the association EURO-NET, that sent to the meeting 2 members of its current staff, the doctors Rocchina Sanchrico and Francesco Romeo). EU has realized that the integration of immigrants plays a crucial role: Human Capital is a very important key of the innovative performance of regions and countries and the Research has demonstrated that human capital coming from the migration behaviour of skilled individuals is a significant source of innovation in host countries. The project wants to realize tools to support the integration and the birth of new companies created by skilled migrants through Guides, training on line and reports. The training course in Italy examined the factors that complicate the integration of refugees. During the three days of training, the participants visited some Italian organizations that play an active role in the integration of refugees and migrants. Furthermore, it was possible to discuss how this issue is managed and addressed in other European countries.



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## 20. SPAHCO: October 26<sup>th</sup> the Multiplier Event

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The Multiplier Event of the project "STRONGER PARENTS - HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES" (SPAHCO) will take place on 26 October in Ital. SPAHCO is a project to aimed at developing innovative ICT tools and methodologies for adults' educators to reach parents, providing them parenting skills, making them aware of the importance of carrying out healthier lifestyles and offering them activities and tools to achieve these objectives. This phase of dissemination and exploitation serves to make the project and its results known, to promote the impact on individuals, institutions, communities and to facilitate the transfer of products and their use by a wider audience. More information on the Multiplier Event will be available in the next newsletter.





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## 21. "Experiential Pedagogy Of The Oppressed For Adults": training course

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Starting from 15 October, the first training course in the "Experiential Pedagogy Of The Oppressed For Adults" project (approved by the Erasmus Plus National Agency in Turkey as part of the Erasmus Plus program KA2 Strategic Partnerships for the education of adults - action No. 2017-1-TR01-KA204-046126) is attended by 4 people from our organization. During the course, organized in Istanbul, working methods are learned to work with migrants and refugees. The training course will end on October 21. The project aims to develop the capacities of refugees; helping their social integration, developing their skills, empowering them in conflict management, improving their living conditions, literacy, access to public services, IT and

language skills, fostering intercultural learning and physical-social development. More information on the initiative will be provided in our next newsletter.

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## 22. StereoSciFi: the catalogue is now ready!

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The partners of the StereoSciFi project, of which the EURO-NET association is an Italian partner, have worked hard in the recent months and the catalogue foreseen in one of the project's intellectual products is now almost ready. Now the project partners, which we remember was financed in Portugal by the Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnership for School Education program, must finalize the catalogue in all the partnership languages and then disseminate it as much as possible at the local/national/international level. More information on the initiative will be provided in our next newsletter.

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## 23. FAT: Youth exchange in France

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Initially planned in France, in Villefranche de Rouergue (South-West of France), from 16th to 25th August the youth exchange «FAT»: Food. Art. Track (approved in the Erasmus Plus program) will be carried out from 22nd to 31st October. The exchange will be attended by young people from the following European countries: Fondatsia Uchene Za promyana- Bulgaria; EURO-NET - Italy; CUBIC - Austria; The Vibria Intercultural - Spain; MEDIA COMMUN

OCCITANIE - France. Our association will send 4 young people (between 18 and 25 years) and a leader without age limit. More information on our next newsletter.

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## 24. Peace Lens: first meeting in Luxembourg

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In the period 1- 4 November, the first meeting of the "Peace Lens" project, an initiative approved by the Erasmus Plus National Agency of Luxembourg under the Erasmus Plus KA2 Youth program, will take place in Luxembourg. The partnership is composed by: Lisel asbl (Luxembourg), project coordinator; EURO-NET (Italy); Intercultural Youth Dialogue Association IYDA e.V. (Germany); Crossing Borders (Denmark). The "Peace Lens" project aims to provide youth workers with a powerful tool to strengthen their profiles and integrate innovative methods in their daily work with young people. Therefore, the

youth animators through the game developed during the project will not only improve their teaching skills by responding to the needs of young people, but will also succeed in amalgamating and working with heterogeneous groups.

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## 25. Rise and Rise Strong Female: first meeting in Romania

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From 31/10/2018 till 03/11/2018 will be realized in Braila (Romania) the first meeting of the project " Rise and Rise Strong Female -development, inclusion and improvement the quality of life of women (RISE" ) approved by the UK Erasmus Plus National Agency in the Erasmus Plus Program KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education - Good Practice Exchange. The partnership is composed by Hanta Associates Limited (UK), project coordinator; EURO-NET (Italy); SC PSIHOFORWORLD (Romania); Ballibag Köyü Yardimlasma ve Dayanisma Dernegi (Turkey); Organization for Promotion of European Issues (Cyprus); Namoi (Russia). The project aims to develop basic and civic skills through an intergenerational exchange between voluntary senior women trainers for adults and young NEET women and / or migrant backgrounds. This intergenerational learning approach will help young unemployed women to value their skills as well as develop basic skills and knowledge on active citizenship and rights with the support of senior women. Furthermore, young women will help senior women to have a better access to modern technologies.



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## 26. Life styles, deviance, prevention... Kick off meeting a Kosice

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The kick off meeting of the project "Life Styles, Deviance and Prevention: Non-Formal Education and Interdisciplinary Resources for Vulnerable Youth", an initiative approved by the Slovak National Erasmus Plus Agency under the Erasmus program, will take place in Kosice, Slovakia in the period 04-

06 November 2018 and it will be attended by dr. Luca Caggiano, one of the member of our staff. Plus KA2 Youth. More information on the initiative, in which EURO-NET is one of the partners, will be provided in our next newsletter.

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## 27. E + Round Trip: kick-off meeting in Vienna

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The kick off meeting of the "E+ Round Trips Online Preparation for Young People", an initiative approved by the Romanian National Erasmus Plus under the Erasmus Plus KA2 Youth program, will take place in Vienna, Austria, in the period 28-30 October. The partnership is composed by: S.C. PREDICT CSD CONSULTING S.R.L. (Romania), project coordinator; EURO-NET (Italy); DACORUM COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE LTD (UK); ASOCIATIA MILLENNIUM CENTER ARAD (Romania); GROBES SCHIFF (Austria). The project wants to create a more modern, dynamic, committed and professional environment for young people.

The main objectives are to create an online pre-departure course tested by 150 young people and created for future European volunteers; to improve the preparation of 150 young people for potential future youth exchanges; to increase the valorisation skills of 150 people - participants in the online form and potential participants in experiences abroad.

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## 28. First newsletter of the ISDL project

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The project "INTEGRATION BY SOCIAL AND DIGITAL LEARNING", approved under the Erasmus Plus program KA2 adult education, is a 2-year project aimed at the exchange and transfer of examples of good practice with practical details about its possible use and effective implementation. The OER outputs are going to be used by educators of adult migrants and unemployed. In these days the first newsletter has been created as part of the project. At the link below you can see and download the first project newsletter:

<https://www.isdlearning.eu/the-1st-newsletter-of-the-project-isdl/>

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## 29. JSTE to Potenza of the ISDL project

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The JSTE foreseen in the project "INTEGRATION BY SOCIAL AND DIGITAL LEARNING" will take place in Potenza in the period 6-10 November 2018. This is a project approved under the Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnership Program for Adult Education and dedicated to exchange and transfer good practice examples in the specific sector. The OER outputs are going to be used by educators of adult migrants and unemployed people. The selected topics of the training course are: active Citizenship and Community Building; Cultural Awareness; Open Government; Urban Sharing Lifestyles; Social Communication Methodology; Digital Literacy; Digital Education. The project partners are: Euro-Idea Fundacja Społeczno-Kulturalna (Poland); EURO-NET (Italy); KIRSEHIR IL MILLI EGITIM MUDURLUGU (Turkey); Asociatia Institutul pentru Parteneriat Social Bucovina (Romania); Knuepferwerk e.V. (Germany); Fundacja Biuro Inicjatyw Społecznych (Poland).



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## 30. SURVIVE: fourth meeting in Portugal

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In Arcos de Valdevez a wonderful village located in the Alto Minho area in Portugal was realized the fourth meeting of the "SURVIVE" project coordinated by the Italian company GODESK SRL. The meeting served to take stock of the intermediate report presented to the Erasmus Plus National Agency INAPP and to organize the next training course to be held in the charming Portuguese town in the period 11-15 November. This is a project developed under the Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnership for VET program approved by the National Agency Erasmus Plus INAPP. The partnership is made up of organizations from Italy (two Italian partners), Bulgaria, Portugal, Poland, Spain and Greece. Its goal is to investigate the techniques and methodologies that in a period of crisis allow companies to overcome difficulties and survive them, using the moment of crisis to increase their markets and turnover. Follow the project on [www.surviving.eu](http://www.surviving.eu).



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## 31. MADE IN EU: third meeting in Greece realized

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From 13/09/2018 till 16/09/2018, in Athens (Greece), took place the third meeting of the "Made in EU" project of which GODESK SRL and INFORMAMENTIS EUROPA are Italian partners. This is a project approved under the Erasmus Plus program KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education - exchange of good practices. During the meeting all the partners discussed the products already developed and the next steps of the activities for the second year. More information on the meeting will be provided on our next newsletter. Follow the project on the [Facebook page](#).



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## 32. ENTER: the first meeting was held in Porto

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From 27/09/2018 till 30/09/2018, was held in Porto (Portugal) the kick-off meeting of the project "ENTER - from problems to achievements in learning and development" (acronym ENTER), action n. n.2018-1-PT02-KA205-005148, of which the Italian association Youth Europe Service is the Italian partner: The project is developed in the framework of the Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Youth program. At the meeting participated 2 members of the staff of the Italian organisation who will work on this new European initiative. More details on the initiative will be provided in our next newsletter.



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### 33. YDMS Project: first meeting in Italy

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In the days 20 and 21/10/2018 takes place in Potenza the first meeting of the project "Youth Drama, Media & Storytelling for developing cultural heritage and tourism" (acronym YDMS), of which the association Youth Europe Service of Potenza is the Italian partner. The project approved in Denmark by the competent National Agency under the Erasmus Plus program KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Youth - Action n.2018-2-DK01-KA205-047148 - ID: KA205-2018-007 intends to develop dramatized live routes and video narrations on the web in the cities of Potenza (Italy), Copenhagen (Denmark), Leipzig (Germany) and Alicante (Spain). More information on the meeting and the project and its actions will be available starting from our next newsletter.



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### 34. Migrant in Fashion: first meeting in Berlin

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In the days 13 and 14 October the first meeting of the MIGRANT IN FASHION project took place in Berlin. The project aims to develop the entrepreneurial skills of migrant women in an innovative way in the fashion sector. The project of which one of the Italian partners is also the company GODESK SRL (coworking centre and innovation space of Potenza) confirms the great capacity for initiative and action of the aforementioned company in the start-up sector and in innovation. The initiatives will bring the staff of GODESK to experiment new actions and methods of innovative training at transnational level in the fashion sector.



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### 35. Sustainability through Cross Border Circular Economy: first meeting

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From 16/10/2018 till 18/10/2018 was held in Berlin, in Germany, the first meeting of the "Sustainability through Cross Border Circular Economy" project (acronym SCRCE). Partner of the project (approved in the Erasmus Plus program KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education as action n. 2018-1-DE02-KA204-005230) is the Italian company GODESK SRL, which in recent years has developed an important coworking centre and innovation space in Potenza, becoming the flagship of regional innovative companies. More information on the project will be available on our next newsletter.



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### 37. EDACate: first meeting in Bonn

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The first meeting of the "European Dialogue for Active Citizenship" project will take place in Bonn, Germany in the period 30/10/2018-01/11/2018. During the meeting of EDACate project (approved under the Erasmus Plus program KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education as action n. 2018-1-DE02-KA204-005181) will be defined the role of the partners, the agenda of the work and the timetable and the activities to be carried out during the project implementation, in order to achieve the desired result in the design phase. More information on the project, in which the Italian partner is the association Youth Europe Service, will be available on our next newsletter.





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### 38. LWRMI: first meeting in Potenza

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On next 7 and 8 November, the association Youth Europe Service will host the kick-off meeting of the project "Let's Work for a Real Migrants Inclusion" (acronym LWRMI), approved within the



Erasmus Plus program KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education as action n. 2018-1-IT02-KA204-047938 by the Italian National Agency INDIRE. The project is focused on the exchange of good practices between 7 organizations from 5 different countries and it is directed to try to find solutions to the problem of refugees and migrants. The project partnership is made up of 3 Italian organizations, the association Youth Europe Service (coordinator of the project), the CO.RI.S.S. (a cooperative active in the inclusion of migrants) and Basilicata Press (a communication company), and 4 foreign organisations, Kirsehir milli egitim mudurlugu (Turkey), Dacorum council for voluntary service ltd (UK), Narodno chitalishte badeshte sega 2006 (Bulgaria) and Aristotelio panepistimio thessalonikis (Greece). During the project will be held 3 transnational meetings, 3

training events for the staff of the involved partners, multicultural festivals and language courses for foreigners in all partner countries, numerous radio broadcasts (to be developed in Italy by Vito Verrasto of Basilicata Press), a videospot on the issue of migrants, 6 newsletters, promotional leaflets, an eBook of good practices as well as interviews, surveys and questionnaires. It is already possible to follow the project activities on the official Facebook project page at the following internet link: <https://www.facebook.com/Lets-work-for-a-real-migrants-inclusion-304869633653912>. More information on the kick-off meeting will be available on our next newsletter.

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### 39. Concluded the JSTE in Utrecht in the Netherlands for the IV4J project

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The training courses foreseen in the project "Innovation in VET for Jobs and Employment" (acronym IV4J) took place in Utrecht, in the Netherlands in the period 7-13 October 2018 and attended by Dr Franco Peppino and Dr. Bertani Palma for the EURO-NET association and Dr. Sanchirico Rocchina and Dr. Romeo Francesco for the company GODESK SRL. IV4J is a project that aims to introduce a strong innovation in the system of vocational education and training thanks to alternative and



successful methodologies and strategies for the learning environment, in order to create a new system aimed at work-oriented learning. The course was addressed to various issues relevant for the project and each of the participants gave an own contribution in order to increase skills and abilities in the field of VET.