

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 28th November 2011



Woodcraft Folk
Education for Social Change

**YOUTH IS
NOT WASTED
ON THE
YOUNG**

Save international youth work // The Woodcraft Folk joins international call for a strong European Action on Youth including an Independent Programme in the EU Budget

Last week the European Commission presented its Communication “Erasmus for all: the EU Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport” that details its vision for the EU budget in the field of youth and education.

The Woodcraft Folk, the Co-operative Children’s Charity is calling for international youth work to be protected in the new European Union budget.

Joining the call from the European Youth Forum (the umbrella body of youth organisations in Europe), the Woodcraft Folk strongly believes that Europe needs to make youth policy a financial as well as a political priority.

An independent programme

International youth work, such as exchanges, camps and publications are supported by the European Union, and while the commission proposes budget increase for Erasmus (mainly for formal University education) youth has been left out, leaving those not in formal education or employment less able to take part in European exchanges. The focus on formal education and vocational training, puts at risk the core values of youth work and the independence of youth policy, therefore the European Commission’s proposal is unsatisfactory. The Woodcraft Folk stands firmly behind the Youth Forum request of a renewed separate Youth in Action Programme.

*“Youth in Action is the only EU programme that provides support to youth work, non-formal education and youth organisations in Europe,” affirms **Lloyd Russell-Moyle, chairperson of the Woodcraft Folk and board member of the European Youth Forum.** “As such, Youth in Action is the only programme in Europe that reaches young people from all backgrounds increasing their confidence, skills and awareness in society. After a year of civil unrest, student protests and cuts it would be a disaster to cut the very programme that supports greater citizenship awareness in favour of a programme directed at those in formal education.”*

Focus on participation of young people

The Commission’s proposal is focused on the needs of the professional labour market and the aspect of active European citizenship and participation is not adequately addressed.

To achieve this, a strong new programme should encourage the participation of all young people in democratic life and recognise that youth-led, volunteer-based, democratic European youth organisations are an indispensable channel for supporting active citizenship and for developing young people’s skills and competences, both for the needs of the labour market and for an active and inclusive European society, and as such need to be given specific support.

//continues





Woodcraft Folk
Education for Social Change

**YOUTH IS
NOT WASTED
ON
THE YOUNG**

Cut? No - invest in cost efficient youth!

In times of financial austerity it is paramount to ensure that we invest in cost efficiency. The Youth in Action programme and its predecessors supported youth organisations to make a lasting change for young Europeans. The impact of Youth in Action on young people is bigger than in any other EU programme.

Currently, out of £100 paid in taxes by a European citizen, only £2.80 flow to the EU. Out of these £2.80 only 0.1% are used to provide funding to youth programmes. In average, the current 'Youth in Action' Programme just cost less than 28 pence per year to each European citizen. Investing in youth and in youth organisations is an extremely cost-efficient way to comprehensively reach the objectives of job creation and innovation, social inclusion and sustainable growth. For as little as 28 cents per year, 'Youth in Action' will have provided between 2007-2013 around 1,000,000 young Europeans with valuable Non-Formal Education experience and mobility possibilities that enhance their social, civic and political engagement as well as their sense of responsibility and improve their skills.

"Youth in Action must not lose focus on those elements that make youth and their organisations unique and specific," concludes Russell-Moyle. "Therefore, we demand it to be independent and to give sustainable support to European youth organisations, to non-formal education and to youth work,".

[ENDS]

For comment contact:

Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Chairperson).

chair@woodcraft.org.uk

01274 792228

www.woodcraft.org.uk

www.youthforum.org

Notes to the editor:

The Woodcraft folk along with the Scouts, Girl Guides, YMCA and other leading youth organisations is part of the British Youth Council and the European Youth Forum (the federation of youth organisations) and is joining the call to save international youth work which was launched on the 23rd November 2011.

The Campaign "Where are you going?"

We are launching a campaign to ask the European Parliament and EU Member States for a strong and independent Youth in Action Programme for non-formal education, youth work and democratic youth organisations and an ambitious European Youth Employment Plan. www.wherereyouthgoing.eu

The Woodcraft Folk is the UK Co-operatives children's charity. It operates groups throughout out the country for children from the age of 3 to 21 in the evenings and at weekends. With its sister organisations in IFM-SEI (www.ifm-sei.org) it takes children from cities across the UK to international camps in the summer exchanges with children from around the world, this work is supported by the EU's Youth in Action programme.

The Youth in Action programme is coordinated in the UK by the British Council providing match funding for exchanges and seminars for children and young people across Europe.

