The newsletter from the joint project between European Youth Forum and the National Youth Council of Ireland, on the Irish Presidency 2013.
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Cead Mile Failte roimh gach duine go hEirinn!! A hundred thousand welcomes to Ireland!

Introduction

Over the first six months of 2013, Ireland will hold the Presidency of the Council of the European Union and will take an active role in the planning and chairing of Council meetings at every level. It is a very exciting time for Ireland who celebrates 40 years of European Union membership. Ireland is the first Team Presidency country for the next 18 months that also includes Lithuania and Greece. The National Youth Council of Ireland together with the European Youth Forum would like to take this opportunity to wish all three countries the very best with their increased roles and responsibilities from January 2013 through to end of June 2014 where their overall focus will be on further restoring economic stability across Europe and building strong foundations for lasting economic growth and sustainable jobs. We look forward in particular to continuing the important work of progressing key issues relevant to the young people of Europe.

This newsletter (the first for the Irish Presidency) will provide a summary of key youth and youth-related developments, events and activities that occur during the Irish EU Presidency including introducing the Irish Presidency Programme for January until end of June 2013 and, the Trio Presidency Programme that will be in operation for the next 18 months until end of June 2014.

What is The Council of the European Union?

- Ireland assumed the Presidency of the Council of the European Union on the 1st of January 2013 for six months taking over the reins from Cyprus;
- The Council of the EU is the European Union’s key decision-making body, where each European Member State is represented by one Minister;
- Council meetings take place around key subjects where, for example, Youth Ministers participate in Education, Youth, Culture and Sports Council meetings to discuss youth matters;
- Ireland takes charge of the planning and chairing of Council meetings at every level and moves the work of the Council forward ensuring cooperation among Member States.
Trio Presidency Programme

The detail of the Trio Presidency Programme was released on December 11th 2012 and can be viewed here:  http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st17/st17426.en12.pdf

Key aspects of strategic importance for the Trio Programme are listed below.

- Ensuring the **financial stability** of the euro area and of the EU as a whole remains a central concern for the coming period.
- The EU’s future **budgetary and policy framework for 2014 to 2020** is the basis for the work of the Union in the coming years across all policies. Agreement on the **Multiannual Financial Framework** will be a key priority, to ensure a timely and smooth start for all relevant multi-annual programmes. Throughout the process, the headline targets of the **Europe 2020 strategy** will be kept in mind and will guide the Council.
- Boosting **employment** and **social inclusion** are necessary preconditions for sustainable growth.
- Tackling the major problem of **youth unemployment** represents a key priority. The approach will be multifaceted including the proposed **Youth Guarantee**, and in line with the overarching role of education in equipping all citizens with the skills they need in the labour market.
- Efforts to tackle the social consequences of the crisis and to fight poverty and social exclusion in line with the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy will be stepped up.
- The **Digital Single Market** and the implementation of the EU’s Digital Agenda offer huge potential for the jobs and growth agenda, fostering cross border commerce and the development of new IT industries.
- **Research** and **Development** and **Innovation** are essential and the Council aims to conclude negotiations on the EU’s Horizon 2020 programme and will also work to advance the completion of the European Research Area.
- The three Presidencies will contribute to the creation of necessary conditions to facilitate development of the **new European wide energy infrastructure**.
- The Council will continue its work on the further development of the green economy in Europe; in this context, it will prioritise the conclusion of the 7th Environment Action Programme.
- The management of borders and migratory flows will be addressed alongside measures strengthening the freedom of movement within the Union and initiatives easing access to justice for citizens and businesses.
- The Presidencies will promote increased awareness about the added value of the European Union, to increase democratic accountability and involve citizens more closely in 2013 as part of the European Year of Citizens.
Irish Presidency – Stability, Jobs and Growth

Ireland celebrates forty years in the European Union in 2013. This will be Ireland’s seventh Presidency. Since Ireland joined in 1973, the Union has moved from nine to twenty-seven Member States; ten new Member States joined the Union during Ireland’s last Presidency in 2004. The institutions have evolved and so has the Presidency of the Council. Ireland will work hard to reflect the best of previous Presidencies - an honest broker, open and transparent, striving for efficiency and with a firm focus on results. The Irish Presidency has identified the three following aims as its priorities:

1. Securing stability
The economic and financial crisis revealed the weaknesses in Europe’s economic and monetary architecture. The Irish Presidency will deal with the immediate, shorter-term issues but also work towards the establishment of more durable foundations for stability. These foundations are those set out by successive European Councils, in particular Banking Union, the European Semester process and the next phase of reforms to Economic and Monetary Union as set out by the December 2012 European Council.

2. Investing in sustainable jobs and growth
The Irish Presidency will devote itself to agreement on proposals that make a real difference to citizens and to job-creators. The next phase of Europe’s recovery must involve a Single Market of the future – including a Digital Single Market – and must place a spotlight on the next generation by tackling youth unemployment.
Agreement on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 (MFF) should be reached as soon as possible. The Irish Presidency will work intensively on the inter-institutional agreement of various instruments which will allow funding to be rolled out promptly to stimulate jobs and growth. These instruments are expected to boost the EU’s research and innovation capabilities, promote cohesion and boost smart investment in our natural resources on land and sea.

3. Europe and the world
Ireland, as Presidency, will provide active support for the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European External Action Service in the task of strengthening the EU’s external policy effectiveness and coherence, and responding to major foreign policy and security challenges. It aims at enhancing the EU’s contribution to the pursuit of peace, democracy and prosperity.

The Irish Presidency Programme was launched on January 9th 2013. What follows is a brief summary of the Programme where there is a direct youth focus. The detailed report can be found at:

General Priorities for the Irish Presidency

Multiannual Financial Framework

The Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) is intended to provide the framework for the annual EU Budget process (2014-2020). The EU Budget helps provide the EU funding to re-launch growth, investment and employment as well as making Europe more competitive. Securing agreement on the MFF which sets out proposals for the EU’s future financing from 2014-2020 is therefore essential to underpin Europe’s economic recovery, future growth and social cohesion.

In line with its main objective of promoting stability, jobs and growth, the Presidency will work to ensure that the EU’s financing programmes support:

- Sustainable growth
- Europe’s innovation capacity
- The development of key infrastructure
- The promotion of employment and social inclusion

Once Council agreement is secured on the overall MFF, the Presidency will seek the consent of the European Parliament. The Presidency will lead negotiations within Council and with the European Parliament on each of the legislative measures which will allow the agreed budget to be deployed to where it can make a difference.

The European Youth Forum will continue to pressure Europe’s leaders to invest in youth
as a long-term solution out of the crisis. It will also continue to advocate for a strong “youth” programme within the MFF, with an improved Erasmus for All.

Erasmus for All

Erasmus for All is the programme which brings together current EU schemes for education, training, youth and sport. Reaching agreement with Parliament on the Erasmus for All Regulation will be a key task on the education and training agenda for the Irish Presidency. Agreement on the Erasmus for All proposal will facilitate the continuation of student mobility across the European Union.

On the 27th November 2012, the members of the European Parliament’s Culture and Education (CULT) Committee convened to vote on amendments of the initial European Commission’s proposal about the next generation of exchange programmes. In doing so, the committee strongly endorsed the report put forward by rapporteur Doris Pack. This implies some visible changes, like a new name - YES Europe - which stands for ‘Youth Education Sports’, instead of ‘Erasmus for All’. A final vote in plenary is expected at the beginning of 2013, after which negotiations between the institutions will commence.

In opposition to the initial European Commission proposal on the ‘Erasmus for All’ programme, Members of the European Parliament have demonstrated in their call for ‘YES Europe’, their support to maintain strong sub-programme budget lines for well known brands as Erasmus, Comenius, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig and Youth in Action. With a strong youth chapter, ‘YES Europe’ aims to facilitate the recognition of non-formal education and informal learning. Although the final budget depends on the decision on the Multi-Annual Financial Framework for 2014-2020, the CULT Committee wishes to dedicate a total of €18 billion to the total programme with minimum thresholds to each sub-programme.
**Employment and Social Affairs**

For Ireland as Presidency, the next phase of Europe's recovery must place a spotlight on the next generation by tackling youth unemployment.

The Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) cover a broad range of policy areas vital to stability, jobs and growth. Ireland as Presidency intends to strengthen social cohesion through its focus on a number of key issues. In doing so, the Presidency aims at closely reflecting the Europe 2020 Strategy and contributing to the European Semester process.

A key issue for the Irish Presidency is tackling the causes of youth unemployment, including through education, training and up-skilling. Europe must provide opportunities for young people to avoid the creation of a ‘lost generation’. The Presidency will work to advance the proposals to turn the tide on youth joblessness, notably when discussing the youth employment package put forward by the European Commission on 5 December 2012.

*The issue of youth unemployment will be the main focus at the Informal Ministerial meeting of Employment and Social Affairs Ministers in Dublin in February 2013.*

Also, during the European Year of Citizens, the Irish Presidency will work to protect the rights of workers and to remove obstacles that obstruct or deter citizens from living and working where they wish.
What is Europe 2020?

Europe 2020 is the European Union’s ten-year growth strategy. The European Union have set 5 key targets to be reached by 2020:

1. Employment - 75% of the 20-64 year-olds to be employed;
2. Research & Development - 3% of the EU’s GDP to be invested in R&D;
3. Climate change / energy - greenhouse gas emissions 20% (or even 30%, if the conditions are right) lower than 1990; 20% of energy from renewable; 20% increase in energy efficiency;
4. Education - Reducing school drop-out rates below 10%; at least 40% of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education;
5. Poverty / social exclusion - at least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

For more information, go to:

Youth Guarantee

The Youth Employment Package includes a “Youth Guarantee” aimed at ensuring that young people who are not working or studying receive an offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship, or a traineeship. The Irish Presidency aims to make significant progress on the Youth Guarantee with a view to adopting a Council Recommendation at the February EPSCO Council meeting. The issue of youth unemployment will be the main focus at the Informal Ministerial meeting of Employment and Social Affairs Ministers in Dublin in February 2013.

The Youth Guarantee is defined as ‘a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship, or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.’ The European Youth Forum perceives the creation of a Youth Guarantee as an important step for investing in young people which can reduce the huge costs that youth unemployment has for both individuals and Europe.
**Latest News**  The European Parliament on January 16th 2013 passed a resolution calling on EU employment ministers to agree in February 2013 to a Council recommendation that all member states introduce Youth Guarantee schemes across Europe. The Resolution said that Youth Guarantee schemes should be eligible for EU funding, in particular from the European Social Fund, which should therefore be allocated at least 25% of EU structural funds. The Parliament also calls on the Commission to help those member states that are in dire financial straits to introduce the schemes. For more information see:


Eurofound have published a report on the 'Effectiveness of policy measures to increase the employment participation of young people'. This study finds that Member States have implemented a set of diverse measures to combat youth unemployment. Although efforts to tackle youth unemployment have been somewhat sporadic with a lack of coordination throughout Europe in terms of investment and the monitoring of outcomes, the study did show that when properly implemented, youth specific policies can have positive impacts on the employability of young people and, as a result, their level of social inclusion and participation in society. Please find the executive summary and the full report below:


**Tobacco**

Ireland was one of the first countries in the world to protect individual worker health rights by banning smoking in the workplace. Such bans are now commonplace across Europe and have saved lives and will reduce pressures on healthcare systems over the long-term. But more needs to be done to protect citizens, particularly children and young people, from

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1 In a recent Eurofound study, the societal costs of NEETs, youth not in employment, education or training, is estimated at €153 billion.
the consequences of smoking and nicotine addiction, and to tackle the longer-term costs of smoking to Europe’s health-care systems and its economy.

The Irish Presidency will commence negotiations on a new Tobacco Products Directive which will update the current legislation. The proposal will seek to regulate tobacco products in a way that reflects their specific characteristics and the negative consequences of their consumption. Ireland will aim to make substantial progress on this proposal.

**Equality**

The Presidency will continue work on the proposed Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation. Equality between women and men is a fundamental and core value of the EU, but there is also a strong economic case for advancing gender equality.

Ireland will hold a conference in Dublin during the Irish Presidency on the theme of “Women’s Economic Engagement and the Europe 2020 Agenda”, linking the employment target of 75% for women and men to be achieved in most Member States.

The Irish Presidency will also take forward work on the proposed Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges.

Council Conclusions on “Women as decision-makers in the media” are envisaged for the EPSCO Council meeting in June 2013. These Conclusions will link with ongoing work at EU level both for women in decision-making roles, and on the implementation of the UN Beijing Platform for Action.
Youth Field

In the Youth Field, the Irish Presidency will mainly work on Structured Dialogue and Youth Work.

Youth Work

Youth work is ‘a broad term covering a large scope of activities of a social, cultural, educational or political nature both by, with and for young people’. Youth work provides young people with the opportunity to acquire experiences, develop competencies and it increases social, communal and individual capital.

The Irish Presidency will focus particularly on the contribution of quality youth work to enhancing the social inclusion of all young people, their development and well-being and on maximising the potential of youth policy in achieving the goals of Europe 2020, in particular in addressing the youth employment challenge. It aims to highlight the following elements:

- Contribution of quality youth work to young people’s development, wellbeing and social inclusion of young people;
- Maximising the potential of youth policy to addressing the goals of Europe 2020;
- Exchange of good practices and sharing of knowledge in these areas.

Structured Dialogue & EU Youth Conference, Dublin, March 2013

The third cycle of structured dialogue with young people will begin on 1 January 2013, the start date of the new Team Presidency Ireland-Lithuania-Greece and the focus will be on social inclusion.

The Irish Presidency will host a major EU Youth Conference in Dublin in March which will be the culmination of an EU-Wide structured dialogue process with young people focusing on social inclusion and the contribution of quality youth work to the development and well-being of all young people. Social inclusion is the overarching theme and for the purpose of the conference social inclusion is defined as a process which ensures that those at risk of social exclusion gain the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live. It ensures that they have a greater participation in decision-making that affects their lives and access to fundamental rights. Young people are of special interest for social inclusion, as they are one of the groups at risk of exclusion and also because they shape the society of today and tomorrow. Therefore, it is crucial that social inclusion policies also aim at ensuring that all young people are included in society.
Currently, National Working Groups in the 27 EU Member States undertake consultations with young people, youth organisations and policy makers aimed at producing recommendations to key issues relating to youth work and social inclusion of young people in their individual countries and across Europe. A number of key questions have been sent to the National Working Groups to guide their discussions and these are available at:


The National Youth Council of Ireland has a leading role in organising, promoting and holding the national consultations and works closely with the Irish EU Presidency, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, the European Youth Forum and the European Commission in organising the EU Youth Conference which will take place from 10-13 March 2013. More information on the National Youth Council of Ireland can be found at: http://www.youth.ie For more information about the Structured Dialogue, please visit the Structured Dialogue page on the website of the European Youth Forum.


Venue for EU Youth Conference in March 2013 is Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Dublin
The Royal Hospital Kilmainham is the finest 17th century building in Ireland. It was founded in 1684 by James Butler, Duke of Ormonde and Viceroy to Charles II, as a home for retired soldiers. It continued in that role for almost 250 years. The building’s style is based on Les Invalides in Paris. The building and its grounds were restored by the government in 1984 and opened as the Irish Museum of Modern Art in 1991.
Education

The importance of education and training for economic recovery is recognised in the Europe 2020 Strategy. Education and training - key drivers in promoting social cohesion and reducing poverty - have a central contribution to make to tackling the current jobs crisis, especially among younger Europeans. The Irish Presidency will ensure that the Council supports initiatives that underpin the development of a knowledge-based and innovation led economy. The Irish Presidency will prioritise reducing unemployment across the EU by extending access to education and ensuring the quality of education and training. Emphasis will also be placed on integrating the education agenda further into the European Semester process to support jobs and growth. The principles of quality and equity will underpin the Irish Presidency approach to education and training.

Rethinking Education

The Commission communication on Rethinking Education, released on 20th November 2012 informed consideration of wider education reforms. The adoption of Council Conclusions responding to both the Communication and the 2012 Annual Growth Survey will be proposed for the February 2013 Education Council.

Higher Education

The Irish Presidency will place a focus on providing support for the important role that
teacher educators play in education systems. Higher Education will also be a priority, with an emphasis on participation by under-represented groups, the regional engagement role of Higher Education Institutions, and the EU University Multiranking Project.

**European Qualifications Framework**

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) aims to bring a common European reference to the national qualifications of different countries to enable individuals and employers to better understand and compare academic levels in different education and training systems. It is important that education and training leading to qualifications that are referenced to the EQF are supported by robust quality assurance arrangements. A conference on the theme of quality assurance in qualification frameworks will be organised during the Irish Presidency.

**Other areas**

**European Year of Citizens 2013**

As 2013 will be the EU Year of the Citizen, the Irish Presidency will work to ensure that citizens across Europe are aware of their rights and opportunities and the Irish Presidency will encourage enhanced civic participation by everyone including young people.

**Europe for Citizens Programme 2014-2020**

The programme has been created to bring Europe closer to its citizens and encourage them to participate more fully in the future development of the European Union. The programme consists of two strands, one focusing on remembrance and the other on civic participation. The initiative will support projects run by civil society, local authorities, NGOs, think-tanks, trade unions and universities at the local and regional level. The Citizens for Europe Programme is specifically designed to promote participative democracy and will therefore be a priority for the Irish Presidency during the European Year of Citizens.

**Environment**

While considerable advances have been made in protecting Europe’s environment, formidable challenges remain. The pressures on resources - particularly raw materials, water, air, and biodiversity continue to increase. The Irish Presidency’s main focus will be the 7th Environment Action Programme, as well as a range of legislation aimed at protecting Europe’s natural resources and environment for future generations. The Presidency will also promote measures to support sustainable and green growth across the entire policy and legislative agenda.
Development and Humanitarian Policy

The Presidency, willing work with the High Representative, the European Commission and Member States to make progress in three related areas:

- Addressing the linkages between hunger, nutrition and the impact of climate change on the poorest countries in the world, and seeking solutions. This issue will also be the subject of a high-level international conference during the Presidency in Dublin in April 2013;
- Improving the links between work on humanitarian relief, recovery and longer-term development;
- Working with partners to reach agreement on an EU position for the 2013 UN Special Event on the Millennium Development Goals and the future shape of development policy after 2015.

Justice and Home Affairs

Justice for Growth: strengthening trust in the Single Market

Increased internet usage, social media, globalisation of data transfers and other technological advances have made life easier for millions, but also increase the collection, use, and processing of personal data globally. The Lisbon Treaty contains a new legal base for EU data protection rules and the Charter of Fundamental Rights also enshrines protection of personal data as a fundamental right. As part of its focus on the Digital Agenda, the Irish Presidency will work to reach agreement in the Council on key aspects of the Data Protection package. This is aimed at ensuring that citizens have more control over their personal data. Progress made by the Presidency in this area will strengthen confidence in the digital economy and support the growth of the Digital Single Market.

Asylum and Migration

The Irish Presidency intends finalising agreement with the European Parliament on the outstanding elements of the common European Asylum System. In relation to legal migration, the Presidency will work closely with the Parliament to secure agreement on the Seasonal Workers Directive and the Intra-Corporate Transfers Directive. It will also commence work on the Students and Researchers Directive due to be published in the first quarter of 2013. In line with the practice under recent Presidencies, Ireland will ensure that the situation regarding illegal migration in Europe is fully debated within the Council.

The establishment of the Asylum and Migration Fund Regulation will contribute to the
effective management of migration flows in the EU in accordance with the common policies on immigration and asylum. Ireland aims to complete discussions on the proposal during the Presidency.

**Irish Presidency in Numbers**

- 6 Months Ireland will be at the centre of decision making in Europe
- 7 Presidencies held by Ireland
- 11 Informal Ministerial meetings
- 27 Member States of the European Union
- 40 Anniversary of Ireland’s membership of the European Union
- 40 Anniversary of Ireland reducing voting age from 21 to 18 years
- 170 Meetings will be held in Ireland during the Presidency
- 500 Million EU citizens
- 2013 EU Year of the Citizen

The Presidency will also prioritise the Regulation establishing the instrument for financial support for external borders and visas during the Presidency. This is part of an overall framework for EU financial support in the field of internal security of which management of external borders is one of the key pillars. Its objective is to contribute to the operational costs at national and EU level of border control and the visa system. The Presidency aims to conclude negotiations on this Regulation.

**Strengthening the rights of citizens** - The EU was founded on respect for the rule of law, individual rights, and the role of citizens in democratic processes. In parallel with the development of the Single Market and Schengen, citizens across the EU enjoy the right to live, work, travel, and study in other Member States. But many obstacles remain in the way of citizens in taking full advantage of their rights when they leave their country and travel to other Member States. For this reason the Irish Presidency will work intensively during the European Year of Citizens to further the Rights and Citizenship Programme. This broad-ranging proposal contains programme elements which aim to combat violence against women and children and promote citizenship rights, the rights of the child, non-discrimination, gender equality, data protection and consumer protection in the single market. The Presidency will work to secure adoption of the Programme.
Introducing Ireland

- **Name of State:** Ireland (Éire in Irish)
- **Capital:** Dublin
- **Population:** 4.6 million (2012)
- **Government:** Parliamentary Democracy with two chambers
- **Unemployment:** 14.7% (October 2012)
- **Land Area:** 70,200 km²
- **Currency:** Euro
- **Flag:** Tricolour of green, white and orange.
- **National Day:** Saint Patrick’s Day, 17 March
- **Ireland’s national language is Irish, but it is spoken as the everyday language only in the Gaeltacht (Irish speaking) regions.**
- **Ireland’s most famous musical export is U2. Other acts that have achieved international success include The Boomtown Rats, Thin Lizzy and more recently Boyzone, Westlife and Damien Rice.**
- **Irish writers include James Joyce, Oscar Wilde, William Butler Yeats, Samuel Beckett, Flann O’Brien, John McGahern, Maeve Binchy, Seamus Heaney, Edna O’Brien, Roddy Doyle, Marian Keyes, Eoin Colfer and Emma Donohue**
- **10% of Irish people are natural redheads**
- **Barack Obama’s great great grandfather came from Moneygall, Offaly**
- **The harp is the national symbol of Ireland. The Celtic cross, the shamrock and the Irish wolfhound are all well known Irish symbols**
- **Dustin the Turkey, a glove puppet celebrity represented Ireland in the Eurovision Song Contest in 2008. He was unceremoniously knocked out in the first round**
- **A genealogy nightmare! There were 453 John Murphy’s living in Dublin, according to the 1911**
- **53% of the population of Dublin is under 35 years of age**
- **The remains of St. Valentine, the patron saint of love, are stored at a shrine in Whitefriar Street Carmelite Church**
### Dates for your Diary

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<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
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<td>10 Launch of European Year of Citizens, Dublin</td>
<td>4-5 EYCS COFACE and ICA Conference – Vulnerable Families – What can Europe do?</td>
<td>10-13 EU Youth Conference and Director Generals meeting, Dublin</td>
<td>15-16 High Level Event on Hunger, Nutrition and Climate Justice, Dublin</td>
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<td>10 Trio Meeting before High Level Group Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming</td>
<td>5 Youth Working Party</td>
<td>10-13 Young Farmers Conference</td>
<td>22-23 Meeting of Directors General for Higher Education</td>
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<td>10-11 Meeting of High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming</td>
<td>15 Education, Youth, Culture and Sports Council</td>
<td>11-12 EPSCO Informal Meeting of the Employment Committee</td>
<td>29-30 EPSCO Conference on Gender Equality and Europe 2020</td>
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<td>14 Youth Working Party</td>
<td>15 Structured Dialogue – Closing date for registration</td>
<td>12-13 EYCS Conference on Quality Assurance in Qualifications Frameworks</td>
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<td>14-17 European Parliament plenary session (Strasbourg)</td>
<td>18 Structured Dialogue – Report deadline for NWGSD</td>
<td>14 EYCS Meeting of the Bologna Follow up group</td>
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<td>16 Taoiseach presents presidency programme to European Parliament, Strasbourg</td>
<td>18-19 EYCS Conference – Integration, Innovation and Improvement – The professional identity of Teacher Educators</td>
<td>19-20 EYCS Conference on Better Assessment and Evaluation to improve Teaching and Learning</td>
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<td>21 Structured Dialogue: Invitation to EUYC to register for EU Youth Conference</td>
<td>20 International LGBT and ILGA Conference on tackling homophobic and transphobic bullying in schools, venue tbc</td>
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<td>May</td>
<td>June</td>
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<td>9 Europe Day</td>
<td>13-14 Formal Meeting of Education Committee</td>
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<td>14-16 EYCS Formal Meeting of the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education</td>
<td>20-21 Employment, Social Affairs and Consumer Affairs Council</td>
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<td>16-17 Education, Youth, Culture and Sports Council</td>
<td>20-21 Youth: EYCS Roundtable peer learning event</td>
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<td>20-21 EYCS Meeting of Directors General for Vocational Education and Training</td>
<td>27-28 European Council</td>
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<td>22-23 European Economic and Social Committee plenary session</td>
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<td>22-24 EPSCO EURES Working Group</td>
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<td>29-31 Peer learning event building on work of EU Thematic Working Group on Early Childhood Education and Care, DES, Dublin</td>
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<td>*EPSCO Conference</td>
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Welcome to Valerie Duffy who is the new Presidency Project Officer for the duration of the Irish Presidency. Valerie is based in the offices of the National Youth Council of Ireland and can be contacted at eupresidency@nyci.ie. A big THANK YOU to the outgoing Cyprus Presidency Project Officer Yiannis Trimithiotis.

More Information on the Irish Presidency?

If you wish to view additional Irish Presidency information, please check out www.eu2013.ie website (to be launched on Monday, December 17th) or follow the Irish Presidency on twitter @eu2013ie and #eu2013ie where detailed information will be available.
**Funding Potential!!**

**Recommend for Structured Dialogue and other Youth Events**

**Youth in Action Programme – Deadlines**

(According to the Programme Guide valid as of 1 January 2013)

Applications must be submitted for the deadline corresponding to the start date of the project. For projects submitted to a National Agency there are three application deadlines per year:

Projects starting between  
1 May and 31 October  
1 August and 31 January  
1 January and 30 June  

Application deadline
1 February  
1 May  
1 October

For projects submitted to the Executive Agency there are three application deadlines a year:

Projects starting between  
1 August and 31 December  
1 December and 30 April  
1 March and 31 July  

Application deadlines
1 February  
1 June  
1 September


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This newsletter has been created from the joint project between European Youth Forum and National Youth Council of Ireland, on the Irish EU Presidency.
The European Youth Forum
The European Youth Forum (YFJ) is the platform of youth organisations in Europe. Independent, democratic and youth-led, it represents 98 National Youth Councils and International Youth Organisations from across the continent. The Forum works to empower young people to participate actively in society to improve their own lives, by representing and advocating their needs and interests and those of their organisations towards the European Institutions, the Council of Europe and the United Nations.
Website: www.youthforum.org Twitter: @Youth_Forum #yfj

National Youth Council of IRELAND
The National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI), founded in 1967, is the representative body for national voluntary youth work organisations in Ireland. It represents and supports the interests of around 50 voluntary youth organisations and uses its collective experience to act on issues that impact on young people. It seeks to ensure that all young people are empowered to develop the skills and confidence to fully participate as active citizens in an inclusive society. NYCI’s role is recognised in legislation through the Youth Work Act 2001 and as a Social Partner in the Community and Voluntary Pillar. Website: www.youth.ie Twitter: @nycinews