

At the National Debate, held on Saturday 3rd March with various youth representatives, coming from all youth organisations of all political, religious and cultural beliefs in Malta, the hereunder points were the outcome of what the Maltese Youths discussed and debated and are the messages they would like to convey to the Member States leaders.

The future of a European Treaty

We agree that certain problems that are being faced by small countries should be taken into special consideration and we also feel that, aid should be given by the European Union. We also feel that the countries' veto is too much limited for foreign policy, defence and taxation issues. We also reached an agreement that the European Union should move from a unanimous way of voting to a majority one and we agree on the emergency brake and the co-decision.

The work of the commissions should be done more transparently and we encourage the idea that there is a commissioner for each country.

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The Economic and Social Model

We agreed that there should be a just framework between the economic as well as the social aspect. We also recommend that there should be incentives, which make youths more economically independent instead of falling on the state's social welfare services.

Sustainable Development

- Gender Equality

The EU should ensure that its member states provide policies which promote gender equality. The EU shall have the power to intervene and correct any discriminatory laws relating to gender equality within its member states e.g. (the law of Parental leave in Malta).

- Energy and transportation

Education and enforcement are crucial aspects for the EU, to promote the phasing out and eventual abolishing of high polluting fuels, instead of imposing ECO related taxes. This should be done in the light that the “polluter pays” principle ultimately backfires on the consumer, and consequently is not an effective solution. An alternative is required where the tax revenue obtained is re-inverted with an aim to improve the quality of the environment by reducing pollution.

Youth and Education

We agree that formal, non formal and informal education are important. Formal education should include various aspects and train students in key competencies, in order to facilitate the transition from school to the workplace.

Education in all its forms should be a life long process and not simply an academic strive for qualifications. We encourage an inclusive education which is not discriminatory on the basis of gender, racial and religious beliefs. The system should be one which does not exclude those who are more prone to be dropouts.

It is important to develop research in the educational field, monitor and evaluate the current system whilst developing training courses that cater for individual needs. The policies devised need cater for people who have different competencies. Students should also be offered the opportunity of apprenticeships for vocational and other courses. The Syllabus should consider the needs of individual students and that exams and assessments are fair.

Media plays an important role therefore its messages should be consistent with the values taught in class.

Democracy and Civil Society

- Point One: Why are people not exercising their right to vote?

Even though our local experience shows that the turn out in local, general and EP elections is one of the highest in Europe (about 90 – 95 %), we do feel that the

same cannot be said about other European countries where the turnout in their elections seems to be constantly on the decline.

This may be attributed to the fact that European citizens feel that those representing them are not at par with the electorate's needs and are not always easily accessible especially in larger countries.

- Point Two: What it takes for you to engage in something?

Organisations should organize activities of both social and cultural interests as well as debates on current issues effecting their environment so that a personal interest can be ignited.

- Point Three: How can we ensure a European dimension in the political debate on a regional and national level?

The Media's attention to European Affairs should be a continuous one. Members of the European Parliament should be closer to the electorate by keeping them informed about their work in the European Parliament.

CSO s should act as intermediaries between the civil society in general and its' representatives and this can be done amongst others by organizing debates to provide information on EU issues more accessible.

The EU in a globalizing world

We acknowledge and approve the late initiatives and decisions taken by the Commission, like the reduction of gas emissions and other laws concerning gender equality and we encourage the EU to influence and forward its policies to other countries in the world.