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General Assembly

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Motion

Start Here, Grow Anywhere: A Europe for Young Entrepreneurs

Signed by: European Liberal Youth (LYMEC)
Co-signed by: Lithuanian Youth Council (LiJOT)

Recognising that:

- entrepreneurship can give young people opportunities to innovate, create employment and build sustainable livelihoods, contributing to their economic independence and autonomy;

- entrepreneurship can provide young people with a viable alternative to traditional employment and a way to develop solutions to social, environmental and technological challenges;

- Europe has a strong base of innovative startups and entrepreneurs, but too few companies are able to grow into globally competitive scale-ups while remaining in Europe;

Concerned that:

- young people often have fewer savings, assets, professional networks and opportunities to access finance, making administrative costs and complexity a disproportionate barrier to starting a business;

- fragmentation of the European Single Market forces entrepreneurs expanding across borders to navigate different legal, administrative and regulatory requirements, limiting their ability to scale;

- European startups face a significant financing gap compared with their US counterparts, particularly as they move from early-stage funding towards larger growth rounds;

- these barriers encourage some of Europe's most promising startups and entrepreneurs to seek capital, restructure or scale in the United States, meaning Europe risks losing economic activity, investment and the future growth of companies that originated here;

- the EU had only 110 unicorns at the beginning of 2025, compared with 687 in the United States, highlighting Europe's persistent scale-up gap;

Affirming:

- the European Youth Forum's commitment to young people's economic and social rights, economic independence, decent work and the reduction of structural inequalities;

- that simpler rules for entrepreneurship must not undermine labour rights, social protection, fair working conditions, environmental safeguards or safeguards against abuse;

Welcoming European initiatives aimed at reducing barriers for startups and scale-ups, improving access to finance and completing the Single Market, including the proposed **EU Inc. framework**, whilst respecting national and EU labour standards and safeguards against misuse of company forms.

Calls on the European institutions and Member States to:

1. **Complete the Single Market for startups and scale-ups** by reducing unnecessary regulatory and administrative barriers to operating across borders.

2. **Create a simple and accessible European company framework**, including through EU Inc. and a European Startup Passport, allowing businesses to be registered and managed digitally, quickly and at low cost across the Union, with simplified and transparent cross-border compliance.

3. **Complete the Savings and Investments Union and deepen European capital markets** to unlock more European capital for startups and scale-ups and strengthen cross-border investment.

4. **Make entrepreneurship accessible to young and first-time founders** through multilingual information, entrepreneurship education, simplified procedures, mentoring and professional networks, including funded cooperation with youth organisations providing non-formal education, peer learning and mentoring.

5. **Develop a European network of innovation hubs, incubators and technology clusters,** connecting young entrepreneurs with universities, investors, businesses and mentors across Europe.

6. **Promote green innovation and circular entrepreneurship** by improving access to finance, research and innovation networks for startups developing resource-efficient technologies, sustainable products and solutions for reuse, repair and recycling.

7. **Support entrepreneurs regardless of socioeconomic background**, including by improving access to early-stage finance for young people without family wealth or established business contacts.

8. **Support diverse and voluntary business ownership models**, including cooperatives and employee-owned enterprises, by ensuring equal access to finance, entrepreneurship support and the Single Market.

9. **Support student entrepreneurs** by encouraging Member States to establish a clear student-entrepreneur status allowing students to combine education with entrepreneurial activity, alongside mentorship, appropriate social protection, simplified tax and administrative arrangements, and support structures within educational institutions.

10. **Ensure adequate social protection for young entrepreneurs, self-employed people and employees of startups and scale-ups**, whilst safeguarding labour rights and maintaining quality employment as a core objective of youth policy.

11. **Involve young entrepreneurs and youth organisations in designing and evaluating European entrepreneurship policy**, including whether reforms genuinely make it easier to start and scale companies across Europe.

Calls on the European Youth Forum to advocate for a Europe in which young people can start, finance and grow businesses regardless of their socioeconomic background, whilst defending quality employment and social rights and ensuring that young entrepreneurs are represented in European economic policymaking.







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