

Common Declaration of European Young Leaders

European Democracy Youth Summit
January 29-31, 2016

We, young leaders of Europe, gathered at IRI's "European Democracy Youth Summit" on January 29-31, 2016, have examined current challenges to democracy on our continent and have decided the following:

Acknowledging that:

- we live in a changing world, requiring new approaches to address today's problems;
- individuals and organizations with a clear identity and integrity are the cornerstone of a functional political sphere;
- the path to achieving a general sense of stability and re-instilling trust lies in a balance between effective communication and the exercise of good and transparent governance;
- too many political parties have failed to recognize this shift and we choose to find a solution while remaining true to the European core values; and
- political and Islamist extremisms pose a major threat to European democracy and security.

We, as individuals, call on:

- political parties to involve citizens in the decision-making process. This includes making use of new technologies and social networks in order to communicate in an effective way;
- the EU, national and local authorities to address problems that young people face and take action, namely on employment and education;
- national governments to improve the current legislative framework to create an environment that allows young people to capitalize on their creativity and launch new initiatives, start-ups and businesses;
- authorities across Europe to reduce bureaucracy and taxes in order to foster economic growth and job creation;
- education programs to focus on developing skills and critical thinking, which will allow them to understand and adapt to the quickly changing society and labor market;
- all governmental levels to increase transparency with the aim of regaining trust that has been lost in the political process;
- authorities to investigate financing of political extremist and populist organizations by non-democratic state interests;
- national governments to join forces to tackle terrorism by cutting off funding to Islamist extremism, monitoring and prosecuting returning jihadists and banning extremist preaching;
- European states to increase security cooperation and exchange of intelligence information; and
- national governments to develop better integration policies for young people in schools and communities.

A collection of handwritten signatures in blue ink, including names such as Belinda Kellard, Lubo Kovacic, Peter B. Bue, ANTONI, IREN, H. Ousou, Drea, Igor Liban, Veronika Gijic, Idencia/Patrick, Luis Viegas Cardoso, Charlotte Kude, and Jan E. Cam.