



## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 24<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

**Press contacts:** Sarah Farndale, *European Youth Forum*, + 32 2286 9436 / (+32) 496 396 765 [sarah.farndale@youthforum.org](mailto:sarah.farndale@youthforum.org) / [press@youthforum.org](mailto:press@youthforum.org)

## Youth Forum welcomes positive ruling on non-EU student visas

**Brussels, 24<sup>th</sup> September 2014 // The European Youth Forum strongly welcomes the recent ruling from the European Court of Justice (ECJ) that Member States must allow non-EU nationals to stay for more than three months to study. The Youth Forum now calls on the Council to start negotiations on the Visa Directive for Conditions of Entry of third-country nationals to ensure that this becomes a reality.**

In a positive move for the freedom of movement for young people, following the hearing of the case *Mohamed Ali Ben Alaya v Germany*, the ECJ ruled that Member States are obliged to admit to their territory third-country (non-EU) nationals who wish to stay for more than three months for study purposes, where they meet the conditions for admission listed by EU law. This means that Member States are prohibited from introducing additional conditions for admission.

The Youth Forum believes that this is a step towards greater mobility for young people and will continue to advocate for other measures to increase freedom of movement, such as the abolition of overly bureaucratic procedures and fees. The Youth Forum would like to see the following demands implemented in the Visa Directive:

- That this freedom of movement be extended to those that want to travel to volunteer.
- A maximum of 60 days for a reaction on an appeal from a decision on a visa.
- Visas to be granted for the entire territory of the EU/Schengen Area.
- Automatic and timely provision of residence permits for the full period of any granted visa.
- An accreditation system for organisations that facilitates and eases applications.

**Peter Matjašič, President of the European Youth Forum**, comments:

“The mobility of young people is vital for intercultural understanding, enhancing education and is a fundamental precondition for ensuring that young people can contribute to European integration and growth. At a time of global change, opening up the EU for young people from outside its borders will not only create vital social, cultural and economic links between their countries/regions and the EU, but also huge economic potential will be released.

“This Court of Justice ruling is a really important step towards ensuring greater freedom of movement for young people. It is, however, now vital that there are changes to visa legislation. Following the [report](#) from the European Parliament on the Visa Directive in February, it is now time for the Council to engage with the

Parliament on this report and ensure that the EU allows freedom of movement of all young people.”

[ENDS]

**Notes to the editor:**

The ECJ ruling can be found [here](#).

#### **About the European Youth Forum**

*The European Youth Forum is the platform of youth organisations in Europe. Independent, democratic, youth-led, it represents 97 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 Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations. For more information, visit [www.youthforum.org](http://www.youthforum.org)*