



JEUNES EUROPÉENS FÉDÉRALISTES
JUNGE EUROPÄISCHE FÖDERALISTEN
YOUNG EUROPEAN FEDERALISTS

Europe, 8 November 2006

VISA = BORDERS DEMANDS BY JEF EUROPE

To His Excellency, Ambassador Eikka Kosonen
Permanent Representative of Finland to the European Union

Mobility: an important ingredient to integration

The citizens of Europe want to integrate. They want to experience the diversity of their continent. The European youth wants to meet. They want to exchange their perspectives of the world. Europe wants to be a united continent with free mobility of ideas, cultures, trends, goods, capital and people.

Visa builds borders across Europe

Schengen visa divides Europe in two. It prevents integration. It makes travelling and exchange a time consuming, costly and sometimes humiliating experience. Especially for youth non-governmental organisations, visa procedures and fees are a considerable obstacle in their effort to work efficiently and to include all young Europeans regardless of their origin and social background in their activities.

The Council decision: a step in the wrong direction

Instead of encouraging European integration, the Member States of the European Union chose to double the visa fees earlier this year. This will increase the total amount of visa fees being spent and make the total EU revenue from visa amount to a considerable chunk of what the EU is investing in these states in terms of aid. An irrational and unfair decision.

Not with us – the current regime must be changed!

JEF Europe – together with other NGOs, youth parties and Members of the European Parliament – takes November 9, the day of the fall of the Berlin wall, as an opportunity to make Europeans and their leaders aware of these new dividing lines being put up by the EU/Schengen visa regime.

The Young European Federalists demand from the European leaders their commitment to tear down the new walls inside of Europe.

- **We want the immediate revision of the visa legislation and the relevant procedures as to make them fast and non-discriminatory.**
- **We want the immediate abolishment of visa fees for travellers between European states in order to put an end to the situation that travelling, integration and exchange are a luxury good.**

Today, young people all across Europe – on both sides of the unjust visa wall – are stressing these demands. We ask you to listen to their voices –allow us to meet!

Sincerely,

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President of JEF Europe

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JEF is a supranational, politically pluralist youth organisation with about 25,000 members in over 35 European countries. The aim of JEF is to work for the creation of a European federation as a first step towards peace and a more free, just and democratic society. Our ideas are spread through international activities and youth exchanges, publications, public actions and co-operation with other youth-organisations.