

The Icelandic Youth Council

Alþingi
Erindi nr. P 141/466
komudagur 30.10.2012

Björgvin G. Sigurðsson
Formaður allsherjar- og menntamálanefndar
Alþingi
Kirkjustræti
101 Reykjavík

Reykjavík, 26. október 2012

Efni: Fjárlagafrumvarp 2013 og ríkisframlög til æskulýðsmála

1. mál

Landssamband æskulýðsfélaga (LÆF) lýsir yfir gríðarlegum áhyggjum vegna þeirra breytinga á fjárútlátum ríkisins til æskulýðsmála sem koma fram í fjárlagafrumvarpi 2013.

Í 3.gr. Æskulýðslaga (70/2007) er kveðið á um skuldbindingu Alþingis til að stuðla að fjölbreyttu æskulýðsstarfi ungs fólks. LÆF telur að íslensk stjórnvöld geti ekki skilað lögbundnu hlutverki sínu á fullnægjandi hátt ef fjárlagafrumvarp 2013 fær fram að ganga í óbreyttri mynd.

LÆF fagnar aukningu á útgjöldum til málaflokksins en gagnrýnir þó harðlega breytingar í núverandi frumvarpi þar sem liðurinn *Æskulýðsmál* hefur verið felldur niður án hliðstæðrar viðbótar. Þessi breyting mun hafa það í för með sér að starfandi æskulýðsfélög á Íslandi gætu þurft að loka eða draga verulega úr starfsemi sinni þar sem nú hefur verið lokað á flesta möguleika þess að sækja styrki til rekstrar eða árlegra verkefna. Það fjármagn sem áður var opið til rekstrarstyrkja og árlegra verkefna hefur nú verið fært undir liðinn *Æskulýðssjóður* en reglur um *Æskulýðssjóð* útiloka umsóknir um styrki til reksturs eða árlegra verkefna.

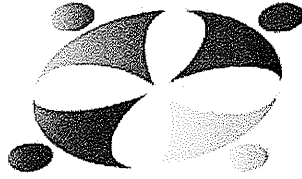
LÆF óskar eftir því eftir upplýsingum um þau rök sem liggja á bak við breytingarnar og ítrekar jafnframt ósk um fund með ráðherra vegna þessa.

Fyrir hönd LÆF

Sindri Snær Einarsson
Formaður

The Icelandic Youth Council – LÆF
Posthusstræti 3-5
101 Reykjavík – Iceland

Samrit var sent á formann Fjárlaganefndar og formann Allsherjar- og menntamálanefndar
Phone: 354 561 561 Fax: 354 561 4661
youth@youth.is – www.youth.is



The Icelandic Youth Council

Björgvin G. Sigurðson
Allsherjar- og menntamálanefnd
Alþingi, Kirkjustræti
101 Reykjavík

Reykjavík, 30. október 2012

Efni: Fjárlagafrumvarp 2013 og ríkisframlög til æskulýðsmála- Viðbótar upplýsingar

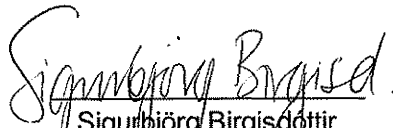
Kæri Björgvin,

Þann 26. október sl. sendi Landssamband æskulýðsféiaga þér umsögn sambandsins á fyrstu drögum að fjárlagafrumvarpi 2013 og ríkisframlögum til æskulýðsmála.

Nú hefur LÆF borist stuðningsbréf frá Evrópska æskulýðsvettvanginum (European Youth Forum- YFJ) og viljum við koma því á framfæri okkar máli til stuðnings.

Meðfylgjandi er bréf YFJ.

Með góðri kveðju,


Sigríð Björg Birgisdóttir
Framkvæmdastýra LÆF



Rue Joseph II straat, 120
1000 Brussels
Belgium
Tel: + 32 2 230 64 80
Fax: + 32 2 230 21 23
www.youthforum.org
youthforum@youthforum.org

Judicial Affairs and Education Committee,
Austurstraeti 8-10
150 Reykjavik
Iceland

Brussels, 3 October 2012

Dear Members of the Judicial Affairs and Education Committee,

The European Youth Forum regrets the decision of the Icelandic government to cut all administrative grants available to the Icelandic Youth Council (LÆF). Youth organisations in Europe face difficulties in securing administrative grants and struggle therefore to sustain themselves and reach their true ability. The alternative for youth organisations is to rely on project grants, which fail to provide the needed quality and sustainability of administrative grants.

In Article 1 of the Icelandic Youth Act nr. 70/2007, the following is stated:

"The purpose of this act is to support children and young people for participation in youth activities. Youth activities are organised club or leisure activities intended for children and young people to use their spare time working in concert for ideals, goals and interests which they themselves value."

Relying only on project grants makes it impossible for youth organisations to organise themselves into sustainable, well-functioning and professional organisations that are able to create the space for young people to work towards their ideals, goals and interests, as stated in the Icelandic Youth Act. The operational support for youth organisations and National Youth Councils needs to become more sustainable in order to bring the added value of supporting the functioning of these networks and allow them to fully play their role, which goes beyond singular projects. National Youth Councils are able to ensure the follow up of projects, to follow and contribute to the development of National policies and challenges on a long-term perspective and connect them to the realities at grass-root level. They play a unique role in the dialogue that takes place between the State and civil society.

In Europe, while the challenges young people face continue to rise, we are facing parallel and contradicting processes of higher public rhetoric on youth and a eroding prioritisation of youth policy and support to the youth sector. The political support for young people is *de facto* decreasing, leading to a lack of financial support for young people, students, and youth organisations. Social exclusion and high numbers of youth unemployment are consequences and clear evidence of this devastating development. It is most important, especially during the crises, to invest in youth work, youth organisations, and National Youth Councils, since they are the actors that work with young people directly. The work that they do prevents the social exclusion of young people and supports the development of their skills as well as active citizenship and participation.

The importance of promoting the development of National Youth Councils and Youth NGOs in general as part of a process of consolidating and further developing democracy has been recognised by the Council of Europe and the European Union, as well as many governments in Europe, which have a close consultation with non-governmental youth organisations with regard to youth issues. Representative, democratic, and independent National Youth Councils are the largest and most legitimate structures to represent the views of young.

CC: Minister of Education Science and Culture and Budget Committee

C0254-12



Rue Joseph II straat, 120
1000 Brussels
Belgium
Tel: + 32 2 230 64 90
Fax: + 32 2 230 21 23
www.youthforum.org
youthforum@youthforum.org

largest and most legitimate structures to represent the views of young.

The value of the participation of young people in organisations is significant for both the young people themselves and for society as a whole. By supporting youth organisations to reach their potential, the government benefits in a more capable, educated, and socially thinking young generation.

Project grants are important to youth organisations, but administrative grants makes them better capable to develop better projects and submit well prepared and clear applications to grants supporting their project ideas.

The European Youth Forum strongly hopes that the Icelandic government rethinks its decision and makes administrative grants available for LÆF, but also for other youth organisations in Iceland, and distribute the available funds to organisations where young people work in a fair way.

I remain at your disposal should you have any queries regarding this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Giuseppe Porcaro
SECRETARY-GENERAL