

## NEWS RELEASE

### Schwarzkopf Foundation, the European Youth Parliament and TUI Foundation launch EU Crash Courses in Spain to counteract growing Euroscepticism

The motto of the project is 'Experiencing Europe. Understanding Europe.' and it is designed for young trainers to give schoolchildren a basic knowledge of European politics, get them involved in open dialogue and encourage them to be active citizens. Schools in Barcelona, Madrid and Mallorca can within the project called *Understanding Europe* register for one of the free four-hour EU Crash Courses between September and December 2016. In Spain, the courses for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade within the *Educación Secundaria Obligatoria* (ESO) are available in either English or Spanish.

Political crises have had a negative impact on young peoples' confidence in the EU, putting European solidarity at risk. Concerns about the loss of national sovereignty and identity are causing a shift towards populism and nationalism. "As a partner in this project we are delighted to have Spain as the next destination for our EU Crash Courses. They provide participants with a forum for open dialogue about Europe and us with the opportunity to communicate the European vision to them in a targeted way," commented Thomas Ellerbeck, Chairman of the TUI Foundation's Board of Trustees, on the project's expansion to Spain. "We want to inspire young people to believe in and support the vision of a shared Europe," said Ellerbeck.

"A basic knowledge of the European Union is crucial for the participation of young people in Europe. The schoolkids learn about how decisions are made in the EU, develop their own opinions, discuss Europe critically but, constructively. This process helps them to shape their own personal vision of the Europe they would like to live in," said Aritz Labrador, the Spanish project coordinator. All the courses are taught by students like Labrador. At the age of 18, he's not much older than the people he is teaching, so he is able to interact with them as a peer. Labrador and the other young trainers were trained in the peer education method to communicate the EU Crash Course content to the schoolchildren and promote reciprocal understanding through providing these courses in schools.

*Understanding Europe* is a project run by the Schwarzkopf Foundation and the European Youth Parliament Spain (EYP ES) in cooperation with the TUI Foundation. In Spain it is organised by EYP ES, one of the EYP's 40 independent national youth organisations. Since 2006 EYP ES has been encouraging young Europeans to become open-minded, tolerant and active citizens. The Schwarzkopf Foundation in Berlin is the EYP's international umbrella organisation.

The TUI Foundation supports and organises projects on the theme of 'Young People in Europe' that promote the education, training, tolerance and dialogue ability as well as equality of opportunity for young people in the European Union.

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