

Paris-Brussels, 21 July 2014

The Italian Presidency of the European Union that started July 1st represents a unique window of opportunity for Italy to set the European process for the next five years and to provide leadership at a pivotal moment in the history of the EU. Breathing new life into a federating European project, strongly challenged by the economic and fiscal crises and currently undermined by a damaging lack of confidence from many European citizens, has always been at the heart of EuropaNova and *Friends of Europe's* projects and missions.

The second meeting of the 2014 selection of the "40 UNDER 40" – European Young Leaders programme, co-organized by EuropaNova and *Friends of Europe*, was held in Rome from 2 July to the 5 of July 2014. The Young Leaders gathered in the Italian capital to discuss crucial topics ranging from youth unemployment, immigration to the imperatives of the institution's new mandate.

The Young Leaders agreed that the European Union had to regain confidence in its own value, stressing the importance of delivering economic successes soon. Nurturing a European identity, increased solidarity and greater and more creative innovation process can be bolstered by creating a new dynamic with the identification of a few key priorities as the last European Council meeting suggested. Important issues such as Youth unemployment or immigration can only be tackled rightfully by the European Union with a mutual understanding and a shared vision of the world's challenges.

The Young Leaders had the opportunity to meet and debate with Sandro Gozi, Italian Undersecretary of State for European Affairs, Paul Taylor, European Affairs Editor at Thomson Reuters, and Alain Le Roy, French Ambassador to Italy, in the prestigious Palazzo Farnese. Michel Barnier, Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner to Internal market and Services, also discussed with the participants during an impromptu meeting. An out-of-the-box session was held in the premises of the Academy of Sciences of the Vatican, in the presence of Mgr Robert Murphy, Diplomat of the Secretariat of State of the Vatican.

The new 2015 selection of the European Young Leaders will be announced in October 2014 after the Selection Committee, presided by Enrico Letta, meets in September to select the new 40 under 40 candidates of the programme.

For more information, please visit the programme website

www.4ounder40.eu

The "40 UNDER 40" – European Young Leaders Programme

The "40 UNDER 40" – European Young Leaders programme, co-organised by the think-tanks EuropaNova and *Friends of Europe*, promotes a European identity by engaging 40 of the European Union's most promising individuals in initiatives that will shape our common future. The programme was launched in 2011, with the support of the European Commission (Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency), and contributes to forging a new European leadership through the Young Leaders' capacity to inspire people. The aim is to develop a dynamic community of European leaders, sharing knowledge and good practice in order to foster cooperation between all Europeans.

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