



RESPONDING TO CURRENT FINANCIAL TURMOIL, EUROPEAN FOUNDATION LEADERS CALL FOR LONG OVERDUE STATUTE TO AID CROSS-BORDER GIVING

FOUNDATIONS ARE A STABLE FORCE IN EUROPE SAYS EUROPEAN FOUNDATION CENTRE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

FOUNDATIONS HAVE MAJOR ROLE TO PLAY IN EUROPE 2020 AGENDA

Figures from new Gallup poll of interviewed MEPs show 86% think the EU should play a role in facilitating the work of foundations. 70% of respondents think that European foundations should play a role in the EU 2020 Agenda

BRUSSELS, 3 June 2010 – Key European foundation leaders today called for new regulation in Europe to enable them to work across borders in order to maximise their impact in today's challenging financial climate.

“A statute enabling foundations in Europe to work in neighbouring countries is long overdue – not having this mechanism in place is stopping foundations realising their potential - and in these difficult financial times foundations have an increasingly important role to play,” said Gerry Salole chief executive of the European Foundation Centre, which represents foundations from all across Europe.

Under current regulation, a foundation in one of the 27 member states will find it hard to set up a programme in another European country, even if it has the funds to do so. This means that vital work is not being carried out where it could make impact to ordinary lives in Europe.

“This is not in line with the European vision that we all support so fervently,” said Salole. “Foundations have the potential to play a key role in supporting the EU's 2020 agenda, but at the moment they are lacking the tools to do it.”

A recent study by the EU estimated that there are some 110,000 foundations in Europe, collectively spending between 83 and 150 billion euros annually on projects and programmes, and providing employment for to up to 1 million Europeans.

A recent Gallup poll shows that 70% of interviewed MEPs think that foundations have a vital role to play in supporting the development of the EU Europe 2020 initiative. 86% of respondents think the EU should play a role in facilitating the work of foundations via a European Foundation Statute.

“With a European Foundation Statute in place, foundations can make a real contribution to a strong Europe – many have already endured for hundreds of years – surviving war and political turmoil,”

noted Salole. “They have shown themselves to be resilient during the global economic downturn, demonstrating responsible leadership and creativity. Let’s use this exceptional capacity to make a positive impact and a stronger Europe.”

The call for a European Foundation Statute was made at Foundation Week currently taking place in Brussels to showcase the work of European foundations and to map out the future roles foundations can play to improve the lives of European citizens.

About the European Foundation Centre (EFC)

The European Foundation Centre (EFC), founded in 1989, is an association representing Public-benefit foundations and corporate funders active in philanthropy in Europe, and beyond. The EFC develops and pursues activities in line with its objectives: creating an enabling legal and fiscal environment for foundation; documenting the foundation landscape; strengthening the infrastructure of the foundation sector; and promoting collaboration, both among foundations and between foundations and other actors, to advance the public good in Europe and beyond.

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Members of the media are invited to attend.

For media credential information and other details related to Foundation Week, please contact:

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