



PERMANENT MISSION OF HUNGARY
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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Youth Integration for Sustainable Development

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**Intervention by
H.E. Ambassador Katalin Bogyay
Permanent Representative**

Distinguished Guests, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the Permanent Mission of Qatar, Ambassador Alya bint Ahmed Al Thani, and the International Federation for Family Development for inviting me to speak at this event.

Youth is our future – a generation who will shape our societies from the next 5-10 years on. Youth have different challenges all over the world, and their challenges in Europe and in Hungary remain numerous. Access to decent jobs, finding the work that matches the qualifications and aspirations of young people, the dynamic change of the labor market, and increasing costs of living all bring the risk of dependence on parents, long-term unemployment, sense of solitude and uselessness, which may lead to mental health issues, addiction, depression, crime or radicalization.

Let me share a quote with you from Kurt Vonnegut:

“What should young people do with their lives today? Many things, obviously. But the most daring thing is to create stable communities in which the terrible disease of loneliness can be cured.”

(Kurt Vonnegut, *Palm Sunday: An Autobiographical Collage*)

Indeed, all that we do for young people should be in the service of enabling them to become successful individuals and, most importantly, pillars of a resilient society. Access to decent work is key in this regard. Engaging in work is not only a way to get the bills payed – it is the foundation for a lifestyle, a family, a mentality, and an example to pass on to new generations.

Let me share with you just a few examples from Hungary.

First of all, education and employment has to go hand in hand. The Youth Guarantee Programme combines employment and education measures to assist young people under 25, who have been registered as jobseekers for at least six months. Community spaces provide professional services for young people, including information, counselling on career choices, career planning, job seeking, education to young people to assist smooth integration into the labor market. Community spaces operate within the New Generation Centre, a background institute of the national youth policy of Hungary, and has already opened its first foreign youth office and talent centre in London in 2016. The tailor-made volunteering programme provides young people between 18 and 21 an opportunity to gather experience, acquire useful civic skills and facilitate their choice of career through volunteering for 6-12 months,

Education on sustainability cannot start early enough. The Green Kindergarten Programme develops the environmental consciousness of 3-5 years old children through nature-based activities and excursions. The Sustainability Week in primary and secondary schools aims to increase children's interest in environmental protection. The Hungarian Scout movement teaches children and youth to become committed, healthy and responsible members of their community, who respect their environment and appreciate their culture and roots.

Youth desperately need decent housing options to start their independent life and found a family. The Chance for a Home programme provides for young people's homes in rural areas, which also balances urbanisation, and improves the competitiveness of those areas.

And lastly, we have to close the digital divide, ensure a safer online environment for our youth, and increase their digital consciousness to avoid the harms of the digital space.

The Digital Immune Reinforcement Programme develops a practice-oriented guide to avoid the attacks of malicious cyber-criminals.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

These are all examples of what practical steps governments can make to help our young population start their life, their jobs, and become integral and valuable members of society – members who provide not only economic, but social and environmental sustainability in our future.

I started by saying that youth is our future – a generation who will shape our societies from the next 5-10 years on. Youth have different challenges all over the world, and I look forward to hearing the experience of Qatar, the distinguished experts from the US and Brazil and the insight of academia on this exciting topic.

Thank you for your attention.