A Letter To Europe

To whom it may concern

Hello,

this is young Europe\*.

We are Romanian, German, Austrian, Serbian, Nigerian and a lot more. We live in Craiova and Berlin and Graz. We live in Europe. We are 15, 16, 17 or 18 years old. We are funny and outgoing and smart. Political and old enough to vote or too young to vote. We are tall and handsome and proud to write this letter. We are almost always fine and definitely not “politisch” but cute and again funney! We enjoy playing tennis since we are seven, playing video games on our playstations or sleeping eight hours and thirty minutes a day. We like art and politics, music and sports, fashion and different languages. We are open to new things and places. We are going to high school and we don’t know what we are going to be but we want to learn as much about ourselves as we can.

When we think about Europe, we see a map of Europe with “Europe” written on it. But we also see our home country, our castles, buildings that are very old but beautiful, the amazing landscapes of Romania, mountains and museums. We think about great places and adventures and good food. Like cevapcici, pork and chicken. Or fufu, jollof rice, sarma and rakija. When we think about Europe we think about many people with different points of view who can achieve a lot if working together. We think about cultural diversity and people interacting with each other. A bundle of opportunities and a ton of potential in politics. But we also see, sorry we have to say that, a chunk of countries that should try harder to stick together and build a stronger Europe. We see so much different standards and systems, for example in education. Too many injustices and problems, that has to be addressed.

We are young. And being young means to us lots of freedom, to live our childhood with our friends, to not have any or many responsibilities. We have opportunities and time to decide what we want to do with our lives. Right now, we want to do stupid things and play videogames. We want to relax and study. Try everything, learn many things, and have time for ourselves. It also means we can eat immeasurable amounts of food without getting fat. But being young comes with some disadvantages too: We have fewer rights and our feelings are not always taken seriously. Sometimes we are not treated with respect.

Even if a lot of people don’t take us seriously and we maybe don’t understand much or everything about Europe, we want to talk about some problems we see… We really don’t get Europe’s ignorance to racism, colonialism, the complete ignorance of poor people. Or why there are still so many dumb or corrupt people who can decide about important things. For us that’s the cause of bad education and why to much money is spend on things we don’t really need. This is probably a reason why the politic of Europe is inefficient. They take enormous amounts of time to make such simple decision and by that destroy opportunities. Like doing something against the climate change or focus on social things instead of economic growth.

While we at it: What makes as really angry when we think about the world we live in is racism, our school systems, climate change, discrimination, starvation, oppression, exploitation, poverty, coal-fired power plants, factory farming, cis men, ableism, class discrimination, queerphobia, conservatives, capitalism, corrupt regimes, conspiracy theorists, extremists, terrorists. We are angry that people do not realize that they have the opportunities to gain power and lead to progress. Sorry, we are not angry people. We try not to be angry when we look at the world.

But we will live quite long here and to be honest we want to see it filled with kind people and no judgments. We don’t have to be best friends but at least don’t attack each other. We want to see a world with schools, that really help children to find what they want in life. Where everybody is conscious about their potential. An antifascist, anticapitalistic, maybe socialist, green world with no borders and less production. Socialism!? Okay cringe... But anyway!!! Can we make this happen?

Dear reader, do what ever you want with this letter. School is out and we are leaving – to study more or go to the park with friends or cooking lunch for our siblings.

Sincerely

Young Europe\*

\* This letter was written as part of a workshop at the Young Europe Festival. Over two days, school classes from Berlin, Craiova and Graz watched theatre productions and communicated with each other via chat. The letter is composed of their individual and personal responses. The result is a multi-perspective but also contradictory picture of young people's demands and wishes for today's Europe.