

## Winners of EYE Entrepreneur of the 2016 Awards announced

**Isabel Alvarez (Spain) and Katian Caria (Portugal) have won the EYE Entrepreneur of 2016 Awards in the New Entrepreneurs and Host Entrepreneur categories, respectively, as announced at the awards ceremony in Athens on Thursday, 5 October. The winners have been selected among 6 finalists, all participants of the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs (EYE) programme, an initiative of the European Commission that promotes European cross-border exchanges for entrepreneurs.**

Constantinos Michalos, President of the Athens Chamber of Commerce and the Union of the Hellenic Chambers of Commerce, congratulated the finalists and the winners in both categories, and said: *"I convey my heartfelt congratulations to the winners and to all the participants. Investing in the development of the skills of entrepreneur- whether aspiring, new or experienced- is a key step to bring opportunities for all in the Single Market. This is the 'Europe of growth' in which we believe."*

Giacomo Mattinó, Head of Unit at the Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs at the European Commission, said: *"Behind each of the nominees, there is a story that represents the main challenges that European SMEs need to overtake to scale up across borders. The experiences of all of them in Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs are a successful synthesis of what the European Commission wanted to achieve with this programme: an exchange that delivers growth, business contacts and win-win experiences for both sides."*

The ceremony took place in Athens as part Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Network Meeting, which brought together the Intermediary Organisations (in charge of the implementation of the program in the participating countries), representatives from the European Commission and the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME) and key external stakeholders from Greece.

### About the winners

**Isabel Álvarez (Spain)** was awarded as **EYE New Entrepreneur of 2016**. Isabel leads a career company near Zaragoza, specialized in youngsters, that provides career direction, guidance counselling and learning strategies. In 2016 she took part in an exchange in Ireland, where she developed her administration skills, developed a partnership with her host entrepreneur and rethought her strategy and business model.

For the **EYE Host Entrepreneur of 2016** category, the prize went to **Katian Caria (Portugal)**. Katian leads a SME specialised in training, mediation & coaching. As part of the programme's business exchange, she hosted a Slovenian young entrepreneur who helped her to expand her business portfolio and internationalise her professional network.

### About Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs enables a new or aspiring entrepreneur to collaborate with an experienced entrepreneur in another country for up to six months. The entrepreneurs exchange ideas and contribute to the development of each other's businesses, turning the exchange into a beneficial opportunity for both entrepreneurs.

Since its launch, the programme has demonstrated a positive impact in stimulating innovative business practices, development of new products and services, and expansion into new markets for the entrepreneurs involved. More than 17,000 entrepreneurs have applied for the programme, with 10,000 experienced and new entrepreneurs already taking part. 55.3 million EUR from the COSME Programme has been allocated to Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs until 2020.

-----  
Further information: Ms Ivelina Fedulova, Tel. +32 2 282 08 69, [fedulova@eurochambres.eu](mailto:fedulova@eurochambres.eu)  
Press contact: Mr Luis Piselli, Tel. +32 2 282 08 92, +32 483 69 20 26, [piselli@eurochambres.eu](mailto:piselli@eurochambres.eu)  
More information on Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs: [www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu](http://www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu)