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REPORT

on promoting youth access to the labour market, strengthening trainee,
internship and apprenticeship status
(2009/2221(INI))

Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

Rapporteur: Emilie Turunen

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on promoting youth access to the labour market, strengthening trainee, internship and apprenticeship status (2009/2221(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Lisbon Strategy evaluation document (SEC(2010)0114),
- having regard to the Commission Communication on New Skills for New Jobs - Anticipating and matching labour market and skills needs (COM(2008)0868),
- having regard to the Commission Staff Working Document - Annex to Commission Communication on New Skills for New Jobs (SEC(2008)3058),
- having regard to the Commission Communication on A Shared Commitment for Employment (COM(2009)0257),
- having regard to the proposal for a Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation (COM(2008)0426),
- having regard to the Council Conclusions on New Skills for New Jobs - Anticipating and matching labour market and skills needs, adopted in Brussels on 9 March 2009,
- having regard to Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation¹,
- having regard to the Commission Communication on Promoting young people's full participation in education, employment and society (COM(2007)0498), accompanied by the Commission Staff Working Document on Youth employment in the EU (SEC(2007)1093),
- having regard to its resolution of 20 May 2008 on progress made in equal opportunities and non-discrimination in the EU (the transposition of Directives 2000/43/EC and 2000/78/EC)²,
- having regard to the Commission Communication on An EU Strategy for Youth – Investing and Empowering. A renewed open method of coordination to address youth challenges and opportunities (COM(2009)0200),
- having regard to its legislative resolution of 2 April 2009 on the proposal for a Council directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of

¹ OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p.16.

² OJ C 279E, 19.11.2009, p. 23.

religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation¹,

- having regard to the Commission Green Paper on Promoting the learning mobility of young people (COM(2009)0329),
- having regard to the Commission report entitled Employment in Europe 2009, November 2009,
- having regard to the independent report entitled New Skills for New Jobs: Action Now prepared for the Commission, which provides advice and key recommendations on developing the initiative further in the context of the EU's future 2020 strategy for growth and jobs, February 2010,
- having regard to the independent report entitled Pathways to Work: Current practices and future needs for the labour-market integration of young people, Young in Occupations and Unemployment: Thinking of their better integration in the labour market, commissioned by the Commission in the context of the Youth Project (Youth Final Report, September 2008),
- having regard to the Eurofound study on Youth and Work, March 2007,
- having regard to the Cedefop study on Professionalising career guidance: Practitioner competences and qualification routes in Europe, March 2009,
- having regard to the Cedefop study on Skills for Europe's future: anticipating occupational skill needs, May 2009,
- having regard to the Cedefop fourth report on vocational education and training research in Europe: synthesis report entitled Modernising vocational education and training, December 2009,
- having regard to the OECD Employment Outlook 2008 entitled Off to a Good Start? Youth Labour Market Transitions in OECD Countries, November 2008,
- having regard to the European Youth Pact aimed at promoting the participation of all young people in education, employment and society, March 2005,
- having regard to Petition 1452/2008 by Ms Anne-Charlotte Bailly (German), on behalf of Génération Précaire, on fair internship and proper access of the young people to the European Labour Market,
- having regard to the judgment (C-555/07) of the European Court of Justice on the principle of non-discrimination on grounds of age, January 2010,
- having regard to its resolution of 20 May 2010 on university-business dialogue: a new partnership for the modernisation of Europe's universities²,

¹ OJ C 137E, 27.5.2010, p.68.

² Texts Adopted, P7_TA(2010)0187.

- having regard to Article 156 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
 - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and the opinion of the Committee on Culture and Education (A7-0197/2010),
- A. whereas the economic crisis has caused a massive rise in unemployment rates in the EU Member States; whereas young people have been disproportionately affected by this trend; whereas the rate of youth unemployment is rising more sharply in relation to the average unemployment rate; whereas more than 5.5 million young people in the EU under 25 were unemployed in December 2009, equivalent to 21.4 % of all young people, creating the paradox that while young people, owing to the ageing of the population, constitute a cornerstone of the social security systems, at the same time they remain on the economic margin,
 - B. whereas there are few possibilities for young people to find permanent regular employment; whereas young people mainly enter the labour market via atypical, highly flexible, insecure and precarious forms of employment (marginal part-time, temporary or fixed term employment etc.), and the likelihood that this is a stepping stone to permanent employment is low,
 - C. whereas employers seem to be using traineeships and internships more frequently to replace regular employment, thereby exploiting the obstacles to entering the labour market faced by young people; whereas such forms of exploitation of young people need to be addressed and effectively eradicated by Member States,
 - D. whereas four out of the ten measures adopted at the Prague 2009 extraordinary EU summit on employment bear on education, vocational training, lifelong learning, apprenticeships, facilitating mobility, and better forecasting of labour market needs and the matching skills,
 - E. whereas youth unemployment and underemployment impose heavy social and economic costs on society, resulting in the loss of opportunities for economic growth, erosion of the tax base which undermines investment in infrastructure and public services, increased welfare costs, underutilised investment in education and training, and the risk of long-term unemployment and social exclusion,
 - F. whereas younger generations will have to reduce the gigantic public debt caused by the present generation,
 - G. whereas economic and demographic projections point out that 80 million job opportunities will arise in the EU in the next decade, the majority of which will require a high skilled workforce; whereas the employment rate for people with high skill levels across the EU as a whole is approximately 85 %, for medium skill levels 70 % and for low skill levels 50 %,
 - H. whereas economic growth is crucial for job creation, as more economic growth brings more employment possibilities; whereas more than 50% of new jobs in Europe are created by SMEs,

- I. whereas the transition from education to work and between jobs is a structural challenge for young people all over the EU; whereas apprenticeships have a largely positive impact on young people's access to employment, especially if they enable the direct in-house acquisition of work skills and expertise,
- J. whereas education programmes should be improved significantly, while university-business partnerships, efficient apprenticeship schemes, career development loans and investment in training by employers should be encouraged,
- K. whereas young people often face discrimination on the grounds of their age when entering the labour market and when jobs are being cut back; whereas young women are more likely to face unemployment and poverty or to be engaged in casual or undeclared employment than young men; whereas on the other hand young men have been hit hardest by unemployment during the current economic crisis; whereas disabled young people face even greater obstacles to their integration into the labour market,
- L. whereas decent work shifts young people from social dependence to self sufficiency, helps them escape poverty and enables them to make an active contribution to society, both economically and socially; whereas legislation in some Member States introduces age discrimination through restrictions to young people's rights that are solely based on age, such as the lower minimum wage levels for young people in the UK, limited access to the Revenu de solidarité active in France and reduced unemployment benefits for young people in Denmark, all of which, although intended to get young people into work, are unacceptable and can be counterproductive preventing young people from starting an economically independent life, especially in times of crisis with high youth unemployment;
- M. whereas the Lisbon Strategy's benchmarks on youth and the modernisation of vocational training (VET) have not been fully met,
- N. whereas flexicurity has been the overall strategy for the EU's labour markets, aiming at flexible and reliable contracts, lifelong learning, active labour-market policies and social security; whereas, unfortunately, in many countries this strategy has been narrowly interpreted as 'flexibility', losing sight of the holistic approach and of employment security and social security,
- O. whereas as a result of demographic change after 2020 a massive shortage in skilled labour will seriously affect the European economic area and this trend can be countered only by adequate education, training and retraining,
- P. whereas small and medium-sized enterprises play their part in the European economic fabric owing both to their number and to their strategic role in combating unemployment,
- 1. Urges the Commission and the Member States to take a rights-based approach to youth and employment. The qualitative aspect of decent work for young people must not be compromised, and the core labour standards and other standards related to the quality of work, such as working time, the minimum wage, social security, and occupational health and safety, must be central considerations in the efforts that are made;

Creation of more and better jobs and labour market inclusion

2. Calls on the Council and the Commission to define a job strategy for the EU that combines financial instruments and employment policies in order to avoid ‘jobless growth’ and that entails setting ambitious benchmarks for the employment of young people; strongly encourages having in the job strategy a special focus on developing green jobs and jobs in the social economy, whilst ensuring that Parliament is involved in the decision-making process;
3. Stresses how important it is for Member States to develop green jobs, for instance by providing training in environmental technologies;
4. Invites the Member States to create efficient incentives, such as employment subsidies or insurance contributions for young people that will guarantee decent living and working conditions; in order to encourage public and private employers to hire young people, to invest both in quality job creation for young people and in continuous training and upgrading of their skills during employment, and to support entrepreneurship among youth; points to the special role and importance of small enterprises regarding expertise and traditional know-how; encourages ensuring that young people have access to the recently established European Microfinance Facility;
5. Underlines the importance of entrepreneurial education, being an integral part of the process of acquiring the skills needed for new types of employment;
6. Calls on the Member States to have ambitious policies on training young people;
7. Calls on the Commission to promote and support – taking into account the beneficial national partnerships run between schools, universities, enterprises and the social partners – pilot projects in the new strategic development sectors which provide suitable scientific, technological and employment-oriented training for young people, and especially women, in order to promote innovation and competitiveness within enterprises, using study grants, higher education-level apprenticeships and non-atypical employment contracts for that purpose;
8. Calls on universities to make contact with employers at an early stage and provide students with the opportunity to acquire skills needed for the employment market;
9. Calls on the Member States to instigate wide-ranging measures aimed at stimulating the economy, such as tax reduction and reduction of the administrative burden on SMEs, in order to bring growth and create new jobs, especially for young people;
10. Hopes for a successful take-up of microloans by young people; considers that the founders of start-ups must receive consistent and professional advice;
11. Calls on the Member States to establish inclusive and targeted labour-market policies that secure the respectful inclusion and meaningful occupation of young people, e.g. through the setting-up of inspirational networks, trainee arrangements that include financial aid enabling the trainee to relocate and live close to the place where the traineeship is held, international career centres and youth centres for individual guidance covering

particularly matters such as collective organisation and knowledge of legal aspects relating to their traineeship;

12. Recognises the difficulties that young people encounter in gaining access to finance in order to set up and develop their own business; calls on the Member States and the Commission to adopt measures to facilitate young people's access to finance, and to set up in cooperation with the business community mentoring programmes for young people on the creation and development of undertakings;
13. Calls on the Member States to promote the skills of early school-leavers and prepare them for employment by means of innovative projects;
14. Calls on the Member States to include cooperation between schools and employers at an early stage in their plans to redesign training schemes; considers that local and district authorities must be included in the planning of education and training as they have the network contacts with employers and know what employers need;
15. Calls on the Commission to expand financial capacity for, and to ensure better use of, the European Social Fund, to earmark a minimum of 10 % of this fund for projects targeting young people and to ease access to the fund; urges the Commission and the Member States not to jeopardise the running of small and innovative projects through excessive control and to review the effectiveness and added value of programmes, such as 'Youth in Action', in terms of job opportunities for young people; urges the Member States to improve their targeting of youth;
16. Urges the Member States to prioritise business-education provider co-operation as the right tool with which to combat structural unemployment;

Education and transition from education to employment

17. Calls on the Member States to intensify efforts to reduce early school leaving in order to achieve the goals set out in the EU 2020 Strategy of no more than 10 % of early school leavers by 2012; invites the Member States to make use of a wide range of measures to fight early school leaving and illiteracy, e.g. lowering the number of students in each class, providing assistance for pupils who cannot afford to complete their compulsory education, increasing the emphasis on practical aspects in the syllabus, introducing mentors in all schools, establishing an immediate follow-up of early school leavers; points to Finland which has succeeded in reducing the number of early school leavers by studying with them the possibility of seeking a new direction; invites the Commission to coordinate a project on best practices;
18. Calls on the Member States to improve links between the educational system and the world of work and devise means of predicting demand for skills and abilities;
19. Calls for efforts to ensure that all children receive the encouragement they need right from the start, and particularly to safeguard the targeted encouragement of children with language problems or other handicaps, so that they are afforded the greatest possible education and career opportunities;

20. Calls for more and better apprenticeships; refers to the positive experiences with the dual system within Vocational Educational and Training (VET) in countries such as Germany, Austria and Denmark where the system is seen as an important part of young people's transition from education to employment; calls on the Member States to support apprenticeship schemes and to incite companies to provide training opportunities for young people even in times of crisis; stresses the importance of adequate training to secure the high-skilled workforce companies will need in the future; stresses that apprenticeships must not replace regular jobs;
21. Calls for better and secured internships; calls on the Commission and the Council, following the commitment given in Communication COM(2007)0498 'to propose an initiative for a European quality charter on internships', to set up a European Quality Charter on Internships setting out minimum standards for internships to ensure their educational value and avoid exploitation, taking into account that internships form part of education and must not replace actual jobs. These minimum standards should include an outline of the job description or qualifications to be acquired, a time limit on internships, a minimum allowance based on standard-of-living costs in the place where the internship is performed that comply with national traditions, insurance in the area of their work, social security benefits in line with local standards and a clear connection to the educational programme in question;
22. Calls on the Commission to provide statistics on internships in each Member State which include:
 - number of internships
 - length of internships
 - social benefits for interns
 - allowances paid to interns
 - age groups of internsand to produce a comparative study on the different internship schemes existing in the EU Member States;
23. Calls for each Member State to monitor compliance;
24. Calls on the Member States to establish a European system for the certification and recognition of knowledge and skills acquired through apprenticeships and traineeships, which will help to increase young workforce mobility;
25. Calls for young people to be protected from those employers – in the public and private sector – who, through work experience, apprenticeship and traineeship schemes, are able to cover their essential and basic needs at little or no cost, exploiting the willingness of young people to learn without any future prospect of becoming fully established as part of their workforce;
26. Highlights the importance of promoting young people's labour and training mobility across the Member States, and the need to improve the recognition and transparency of

qualifications, skills and diplomas in the EU; calls for the redoubling of efforts to develop the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning and the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training, and for the Leonardo da Vinci programme to be strengthened;

27. Calls upon the Member States to speed up the harmonisation of national qualification profiles and European qualification profiles so as to further increase the mobility of young people in the fields of education and work;
28. Stresses the role of private sector education providers, as the private sector is usually more innovative in designing courses and more flexible in providing them;
29. Urges the Member States to provide young people in traineeship, work experience or apprenticeship schemes with full workplace and social security entitlements, subsidising where appropriate a part of their contributions;
30. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to incorporate apprenticeship, traineeship and work experience schemes into the social security systems;
31. Invites the Member States to strengthen their systems for educational guidance at the primary to secondary school stage, in order to help young people and their families select education and training channels that effectively correspond to actual aptitudes, abilities and aspirations, thereby reducing the risk of drop-out and failure;
32. Recognises that, in times of crisis, young people seek education and should be encouraged to do so; calls on all Member States to secure equal access to education for all by guaranteeing a minimum right to free well-funded education from nursery school to university and by securing financial support for young students; invites the Member States to invest further in education and training, even if fiscal and social constraints are present, to implement the European Qualifications Framework as fast as possible and, where necessary, to establish national skills frameworks;
33. Recalls that the aim of the Copenhagen process is to encourage individuals to make use of the wide range of vocational learning opportunities available (e.g. at school, in higher education, at the workplace, or through private courses);
34. Calls on the Commission to expand EU programmes that support education and up-skilling, such as Lifelong Learning, the European Social Fund, the Marie Curie and Erasmus Mundus Actions and the Science Education Initiative;
35. Calls for Member States to set up National Task Forces on Youth to ensure a stronger coherence between the educational system and the labour market, promoting a stronger and shared responsibility between government, employers and individuals for investing in skills; calls for the Member States to provide advisory bodies at all schools to help smooth the transition from education to the labour market and promote cooperation between public and private actors;
36. Considers it extremely important to adapt the education and training system to the rapidly changing labour market and the demand for new professions;

37. Considers language learning crucial for facilitating young people's access to the labour market and for promoting their mobility and equal opportunities;

Adapting to the needs of the individual and the labour market

38. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to provide young people with information on the demands on the labour market, provided that suitable review mechanisms are introduced to monitor developments in occupations; calls on the Commission and the Member States to develop lifecycle-based policies and strategies in which education and employment are better integrated, in which safe transition is a key point and in which there is a constant up-skilling of the labour force providing them with the key competences required by the labour market;

39. Calls on the Commission to intensify its work on recognition of professional qualifications, including non-formal learning and work experience, in order to support the mobility of young people;

40. Calls upon the Member States to promote the recognition of educational achievements acquired in the framework of non-formal and informal learning so that young people can further demonstrate their education and competence as required when seeking work on the labour market;

41. Calls for greater support and prestige for vocational training;

42. Urges the Commission to revise the flexicurity strategy in conjunction with the social partners in order to place transition security at the top of the agenda while creating mobility and easier access for young people; underlines that flexibility without social security is not a sustainable way of combating the problems young people face on the labour market, but on the contrary is a way of evading young people's labour and social security rights;

43. Appeals to the Member States to include all four flexicurity components in the national designs for youth employment strategies, namely:

- a. flexible and reliable contractual arrangements,
- b. comprehensive lifelong training, traineeship or learning programmes securing the continued development of skills,
- c. effective active labour-market and workfare policies that focus on skills, quality employment and inclusion,
- d. effective labour mobility mechanisms,
- e. social-security systems that provide young people with a secure transition between various employment situations, between unemployment and employment or between training and employment, rather than forcing them to be flexible,
- f. effective monitoring mechanisms to guarantee labour rights;

44. Calls on the Member States and the social partners to secure quality work to prevent young people falling into the ‘precariousness trap’; calls on the Member States and the social partners, on the basis of existing national laws and in cooperation with the Commission, to establish and implement better standards protecting those who work in insecure or low-quality jobs;
45. Calls on the Commission to assess the long-term consequences of youth unemployment and fairness between generations;
46. Underlines the need for strong and structured social dialogue in all workplaces in order to protect young workers from exploitation and the often precarious nature of temporary work; underlines the need for the social partners to address young workers and their specific needs;
47. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to do more to ensure that the Employment Equality Directive, which outlaws discrimination on the grounds of age in employment, has been transposed correctly and is being implemented effectively; believes that much more must be done to ensure that both employees and employers are aware of their rights and obligations under this legislation;
48. Calls on the Member States and the social partners to implement strategies to inform and educate young people on their rights at work and the various alternative routes to their integration in the labour market;
49. Invites the Commission and the Member States to foster rapprochement between the worlds of work and education so that training paths such as dual training can be designed that combine theoretical notions with practical experience, in order to equip young people with the requisite general skills and specific expertise; invites the Commission and the Member States also to invest in support for an awareness campaign on vocational training (VET) and technical and entrepreneurial studies, so that these career paths are no longer perceived as a disqualifying choice, but as a chance to fill gaps in the market for technical jobs, demand for which is markedly increasing, and to rekindle the European economy;
50. Calls on the Member States and the social partners to undertake more intensive planning and implementation of programmes to increase young people’s access to the labour market through active employment policies, particularly in those regions and sectors with high youth unemployment;
51. Urges the Member States to absorb the impact youth unemployment will have on the pension rights of that generation and, by taking generous account of the time spent in education, give young people an incentive to continue their education for a long period;
52. Calls on the social partners to intensify their efforts to inform young people of their right to participate in the social dialogue, and to boost participation by this large section of the economically active population in the structures of their representative bodies;

Disadvantages and discrimination

53. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that national legislation

affecting youth, and in particularly national legislation based on the Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC), is not used to discriminate against young employees' access to social benefits; believes that much more must be done to ensure that both employees and employers are aware of their rights and obligations under this legislation;

54. Calls on the Member States to provide for initiatives likely to ensure that young immigrants can learn the language of their host country, that the qualifications they have acquired in their home country are recognised and that they have access to key skills, thereby enabling their social integration and participation in the labour market;
55. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to provide adequate and better childcare facilities, such as all-day schools, for young parents at an acceptable cost, thereby making it more possible for young parents, especially mothers, to be able to participate in the labour market;
56. Calls for the assistance given by Member States to young parents in the form of either childcare or crèches to be substantial enough that it does not deter them from participating in the labour market;
57. Calls for the Member States to establish a short-term effort focused on young unemployed men in the sectors affected by the crisis, while not losing sight of the long-term problems experienced by young women in accessing the labour market;
58. Calls for the Member States to introduce affirmative action measures for young people in those areas of the labour market where youth is under-represented, so as to overcome the consequences of previous age discrimination and achieve a truly diverse workforce, making reasonable adaptations as appropriate for young people with disabilities; points to good experience as regards affirmative action in combating discrimination;
59. Stresses the need to develop specific programmes for people with disabilities aimed at increasing their chances of accessing the labour market;
60. Underlines the importance of encouraging traineeships and mobility for young people involved in schools or training for artistic activities such as the cinema, music, dance, the theatre or the circus;
61. Considers that there should be greater support for volunteer programmes in various fields, including, inter alia, the social, cultural and sporting fields;
62. Calls on the various branches of industry to set up generation partnerships in businesses and organisations and in this way generate an active exchange of know-how and combine productively the experience of different generations;
63. Recognises the importance of young people being able to be financially independent and calls for the Member States to ensure that all young people are individually entitled to a decent level of income that secures for them the possibility of creating an economically independent life;
64. Calls on the Member States to ensure that young people can, if they so wish, receive

effective assistance in choosing their career, finding out about their rights and managing their minimum income;

Strategies and governance tools at EU level

65. Suggests that the Council and the Commission come forward with a European Youth Guarantee securing the right of every young person in the EU to be offered a job, an apprenticeship, additional training or combined work and training after a maximum period of 4 months' unemployment;
66. Welcomes progress towards defining the EU 2020 Strategy but regrets that there has been no public and transparent evaluation of the Lisbon Strategy, and in particular of the European Youth Pact, including benchmarks for youth, and regrets that the social partners, civil society and youth organisations were not consulted sufficiently during the process of developing the EU 2020 Strategy;
67. Calls on the Member States to introduce and assess new binding youth benchmarks; invites the Commission to evaluate annually existing youth benchmarks and the Youth Guarantee in order to deliver results and progress based on statistical information that is better disaggregated and broken down, especially by gender and age group;
68. Calls on the Council and the Commission to agree to and deliver on new improved governance and information tools for the work on youth employment;
69. Suggests the setting up of a permanent EU youth taskforce involving youth organisations, Member States, the Commission, Parliament and the social partners to monitor developments on youth employment, enable cross-section policies, share best practice examples and initiate new policies;
70. Highlights the importance of involving young people in the setting up of education and training policies so that their needs can be better taken into account; recommends in that regard that the Commission consult representatives of national youth councils on the priorities for young people;
71. Calls on the Member States to assess policy impacts on youth, to include youth in all processes and establish youth councils to monitor youth-related policies;
72. Calls on the European Institutions to set a good example by removing their advertisements for unpaid traineeships from their respective websites and to pay:
 - a minimum allowance based on standard-of-living costs of the place where the internship is performed,
 - social security benefits to all their interns;.
73. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

As the economic downturn has caused a massive rise in unemployment rates in EU27, it is clear that young people have been hit disproportionately hard. Today, more than 5.5 million young people under 25 are unemployed, equivalent to 21.4 percent, which is twice as high as the overall unemployment rate. Unfortunately time is not bringing salvation to Europe's young people: unemployment rates are expected to rise even further.

Youth unemployment is one of Europe's most pressing problems. We risk losing a generation to social exclusion, while gambling with the economic and social future of the EU.

Youth unemployment imposes heavy social and economic costs on our societies, resulting in the loss of opportunities for economic growth, erosion of the tax base which undermines investment in infrastructure and public services, increased welfare costs, and underutilised investment in education and training. Europe's youth is a treasure chest of unused human resources. The economic and social outlook calls for action.

Starting your working age life as unemployed creates long-term personal scars. Studies clearly indicate that those who are unemployed when young continue to suffer from its harmful impacts later in life. Unemployment while young increases the risk of long-term unemployment and has a negative impact on income levels in later life. Furthermore, when unemployment rises, poverty, illness, crime and suicide rates go up. We cannot accept to lose Europe's young to social exclusion.

Not only the economic crisis has created barriers for youth to access the labour market and create an adult, independent life. Since the 1980s there has been a special focus on labour market barriers experienced by youth. Some facts indicate the scale of the problem:

Young workers are not only more often unemployed than adult workers, they are also more often employed in precarious, temporary jobs of low quality, with lower wages and less social security. Furthermore young workers experience lower standards on occupational health and safety and are at least 50 percent more likely to be injured in the workplace than their more experienced counterparts.

The good news is that there is much to gain if we manage to include young people in the labour force and in society. Promoting more and better jobs for young people has several positive impacts: It unleashes multiplier effects throughout our economies and societies, boosts investment and consumer demand as well as assures more stable and cohesive social ties across generations. Last but not least: decent work and inclusion shift young people from social dependence to self sufficiency, helping them to escape poverty and enabling them to actively contribute to society.

All Member States must take action and fight youth unemployment with policy priorities and strategies that reflect the national specificities. But at the same time the EU needs to unite around common strategies. Meeting the youth challenge requires an integrated and coherent approach that combines interventions at macro and micro economic levels, focuses on labour supply and demand and addresses both the quantity and quality of employment. A coherent mix of educational, financial, employment and social policies is needed.

With economic and political investments in new jobs, education and training, stronger social security systems, a more dynamic labour market and in decent work - we can transform the European labour market and reorient the current trends towards a better future for the youth.

Let's put youth at the top of the political agenda. Let's take up this challenge. Let's turn Generation Lost to Generation Hope.

27.4.2010

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND EDUCATION

for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

on promoting youth access to the labour market, strengthening trainee, internship and apprenticeship status
(2009/2221(INI))

Rapporteur: Katarína Neved'alová

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Culture and Education calls on the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas four out of ten measures adopted at the Prague 2009 extraordinary EU summit on employment bear on education, vocational training, lifelong learning, apprenticeships, facilitating mobility, and better forecasting of labour market needs and matching skills,
1. Considers education and training crucial for the integration of young people into the labour market and emphasises the importance of making lifelong learning schemes, including formal and non-formal education schemes, accessible to all and equipping people with the skills and competences outlined in 'New Skills for New Jobs'; recalls that acquiring basic knowledge and a good level of general culture is a key factor in professional mobility;
 2. Recalls that the aim of the Copenhagen process is to encourage individuals to make use of the wide range of vocational learning opportunities available (e.g. at school, in higher education, at the workplace, or through private courses);
 3. Underlines the importance of ensuring that all young people have a solid core of basic competences, essential to promote lifelong mobility and to enable them to cope with the changes in the labour market and the appearance of new economic and social needs;
 4. Considers language learning crucial for facilitating young people's access to the labour market and for promoting their mobility and equal opportunities;

5. Underlines the importance of promoting entrepreneurship and helping young people in starting their own business and of promoting and extending the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme; therefore recommends an EU information campaign, in education institutes, covering entrepreneurship, start-up capital, taxation on start-up business, and continuous training support;
6. Stresses how important it is for Member States to develop green jobs, for instance by providing training in environmental technologies;
7. Stresses the need to develop specific programmes for people with disabilities aimed at increasing their chances of accessing the labour market;
8. Underlines the importance of entrepreneurial education, an integral part of the process of acquiring the skills needed for new types of employment;
9. Considers essential the establishment of partnerships between the world of education and work, and calls for the improvement of mobility and language facilities for teachers, workers, students and young entrepreneurs, expanding the Erasmus programme;
10. Underlines the need for new initiatives or programmes at EU level to improve the mobility of students between higher education systems and the business sector;
11. Calls upon the Member States to speed up the harmonisation of national qualification profiles and European qualification profiles so as to further increase the mobility of young people in the fields of education and work;
12. Supports the provision of traineeships as an integral part of the education curriculum, giving students the opportunity to acquire skills and gain work experience, thus facilitating their future integration into the labour market; stresses the educational function of traineeships and points out that they should not replace jobs;
13. Considers the development and provision of internships with a strong link to study curricula extremely important as they are an opportunity to consolidate their skills and start working with only some previous experience and training; considers that internships (with fair financial compensation) are a necessary means to combine education and work, as certain schemes show an employment rate of 70% following a successful internship;
14. Welcomes the outcome of the meeting of the European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education on the Bologna Process 2020 (April 28-29, 2009) which called for stronger partnerships between public authorities, higher education institutions, students, employers and employees as a way of better implementing lifelong learning policies;
15. Calls upon the Member States to promote the recognition of educational achievements acquired in the framework of non-formal and informal learning so that young people can further demonstrate their education and competence as required when seeking work on the market;
16. Considers that apprentices should be properly trained and that this on-the-job training should serve as a means to acquire not only competences and skills but also professional

awareness; supports strengthening the link between education and work, and suggests that digital competences, new technologies, science and language should be given a central role in education;

17. Calls for a closer monitoring of the trainees' activities and their working agreements in order to prevent any abuses, such as those regarding the traineeship's duration;
18. Stresses that the current economic recession can be put to good use as a unique opportunity for reviewing policies and strengthening programmes that facilitate access by young people to the labour market;
19. Calls for greater support and prestige for vocational training;
20. Underlines the importance of encouraging traineeships and mobility for young people involved in schools or training for artistic activities such as the cinema, music, dance, the theatre or the circus;
21. Recalls that the new EU 2020 strategy has a crucial role to play in improving citizens' employability; young people being a key factor in achieving its objectives and one of the most affected groups, considers it essential that they be provided with better education and training and encouraged to pursue it; underlines the need for a refocusing of the EU budget to make the budgetary priorities of the EU match the political priorities emphasised in the EU 2020 strategy;
22. Calls for the Member States to introduce affirmative action measures for young people in those areas of the labour market where they are under-represented;
23. Considers that there should be greater support for volunteer programmes in various fields, including, inter alia, the social, cultural and sporting fields;
24. Highlights the importance of involving young people in the setting up of education and training policies so that their needs can be better taken into account; recommends in that regard that the Commission consult representatives of national youth councils on the priorities for young people;
25. Calls on Member States to take all measures to combat the high drop-out rate among pupils, thereby enabling them to gain additional qualifications and facilitating their future labour market insertion;
26. Considers it extremely important to adapt the education and training system to the rapidly changing labour market and the demand for new professions;
27. Is extremely concerned about the increasing numbers of unemployed young people, especially in the current economic crisis; urges Member States to ensure that labour markets are as flexible as possible to ensure that those in their final stages of education or training can easily find work and move between jobs;
28. Underlines the importance of embedding digital and media literacy at all levels in education and of continuing the process during internships, in order to achieve digital

fluency for all citizens;

29. Urges Member States to provide young people with the necessary facilities to develop skills required by industry, in order to ensure a higher possibility of gaining employment at the end of education or training.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	27.4.2010
Result of final vote	+: 25 -: 4 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Maria Badia i Cutchet, Malika Benarab-Attou, Lothar Bisky, Piotr Borys, Jean-Marie Cavada, Silvia Costa, Santiago Fisas Ayxela, Mary Honeyball, Cătălin Sorin Ivan, Petra Kammerevert, Morten Løkkegaard, Katarína Nevedálová, Doris Pack, Chrysoula Paliadeli, Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid, Marco Scurria, Joanna Senyszyn, Timo Soini, Emil Stoyanov, Hannu Takkula, László Tőkés, Marie-Christine Vergiat, Milan Zver
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Liam Aylward, Ivo Belet, Oriol Junqueras Vies, Hans-Peter Martin, Iosif Matula
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Vicky Ford

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	2.6.2010
Result of final vote	+: 42 -: 1 0: 4
Members present for the final vote	Regina Bastos, Edit Bauer, Jean-Luc Bennahmias, Mara Bizzotto, Milan Cabrnoch, David Casa, Alejandro Cercas, Ole Christensen, Derek Roland Clark, Sergio Gaetano Cofferati, Marije Cornelissen, Frédéric Daerden, Karima Delli, Proinsias De Rossa, Frank Engel, Sari Essayah, Richard Falbr, Ilda Figueiredo, Pascale Gruny, Marian Harkin, Roger Helmer, Nadja Hirsch, Liisa Jaakonsaari, Martin Kastler, Ádám Kósa, Jean Lambert, Patrick Le Hyaric, Olle Ludvigsson, Elizabeth Lynne, Thomas Mann, Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, Csaba Óry, Siiri Oviir, Konstantinos Poupakis, Sylvana Rapti, Licia Ronzulli, Jutta Steinruck, Traian Ungureanu
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Georges Bach, Raffaele Baldassarre, Jürgen Creutzmann, Marielle Gallo, Joe Higgins, Franz Obermayr, Antigoni Papadopoulou, Evelyn Regner, Birgit Sippel, Emilie Turunen
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Oldřich Vlasák