

Thursday 12 May 2011

Youth on the Move: – a framework for improving Europe’s education and training systems

P7_TA(2011)0230

European Parliament resolution of 12 May 2011 on Youth on the Move: - a framework for improving Europe’s education and training systems (2010/2307(INI))

(2012/C 377 E/09)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission communication of 9 June 2010 entitled ‘A new impetus for European cooperation in Vocational Education and Training to support the Europe 2020 strategy’ (COM(2010)0296),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 15 September 2010 entitled ‘Youth on the Move: An initiative to unleash the potential of young people to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the European Union’ (COM(2010)0477),
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 3 March 2010 entitled ‘EUROPE 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’ (COM(2010)2020),
- having regard to its resolution of 18 May 2010 on ‘An EU Strategy for Youth – Investing and Empowering’ ⁽¹⁾,
- having regard to the Council resolution of 27 November 2009 on the European Year of Voluntary Activities Promoting Active Citizenship ⁽²⁾,
- having regard to the Council Conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (‘ET 2020’) ⁽³⁾,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 11 May 2010 on the social dimension of education and training and on competences supporting lifelong learning and the ‘new skills for new jobs’ initiative ⁽⁴⁾,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 17 June 2010 on the new strategy for jobs and growth, notably the part confirming the headline targets on the improvement of education levels,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 19 November 2010 on the Youth on the Move initiative, recognising the importance of a more integrated, cross-sectoral approach in response to the challenges young people face ⁽⁵⁾,
- having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions of 28 January 2011 ⁽⁶⁾, and the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee of 15 March 2011 ⁽⁷⁾ on the Youth on the Move initiative,
- having regard to Articles 165 and 166 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 Culture and Education and the opinion of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (A7-0169/2011),

⁽¹⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2010)0166.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 17, 22.1.2010, p. 43.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 2.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 135, 26.5.2010, p. 2 and p. 8.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ C 326, 3.12.2010, p. 9.

⁽⁶⁾ CdR 292/2010.

⁽⁷⁾ SOC/395.

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- A. whereas, in the context of the EU 2020 strategy, young people's knowledge and skills are essential if the objectives of smart, inclusive and sustainable growth are to be achieved,
- B. whereas Youth on the Move (YoM), a flagship initiative of the EU2020 strategy, aims to enhance the attractiveness of higher education in Europe, the overall quality of all levels of education and training and student and worker mobility through the more effective use of existing European programmes,
- C. whereas the 'EU 2020 strategy' states that 'by 2020 all young people in Europe must have the possibility to spend a part of their educational pathway in other Member States',
- D. whereas youth has a key role to play in achieving the five EU headline targets for 2020: employment, research and innovation, climate and energy, education, and the fight against poverty,
- E. whereas YoM strengthens the existing EU Youth Strategy (COM(2009)0200) by equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and competences needed for work and life,
- F. whereas young people have suffered particularly badly from the crisis and youth unemployment rates in the EU are over 20 %, which is twice the average for adults, and in some Member States over 40 %,
- G. whereas youth unemployment of close to 21 % is one of the most pressing challenges facing Europe,
- H. whereas owing to the economic crisis Member States are cutting investment in education and training, directly affecting young people's future prospects, while Europe is facing an increasing demographic challenge in achieving the growth it needs,
- I. whereas the economic costs of educational underperformance are significantly higher than the costs of the financial crisis,
- J. whereas the crisis emphasised the need to reform our economies and societies, and the vital importance of high-quality vocational education and training systems underpinning those reforms, to better equip Europe to face the challenges of today and tomorrow,
- K. whereas, owing to the progressive decline in public investment in universities and the subsequent increase in fees and/or reduction in social support and study grants, a growing number of students are dropping out of the university system, leading to a widening social gap,
- L. whereas human capital is a strategic tool for ensuring the successful economic and social development of our societies,
- M. whereas, according to Europass data, an increasing number of young people are expressing a desire to travel within the European Union for either educational or occupational purposes,
- N. whereas education is fundamental to fostering young people's creativity and innovative potential; whereas education gives people the necessary tools to develop intellectually, enter the labour market, develop as a person and take up their social and civic role,
- O. whereas research shows that mobility contributes to a sense of European citizenship and involvement in democratic processes,

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- P. whereas access to mobility programmes should be possible not only for university students, but also for young people with a low level of qualifications, since such access can increase labour market opportunities,
- Q. whereas mobility programmes should be accessible to all young people, regardless of the type of education they have chosen,
- R. whereas the number of young people able to go abroad to study and work, in particular under EU programmes, is not increasing fast enough,
- S. whereas in its first decade the Bologna process encountered many difficulties in achieving its targets seeking in the area of the development of European higher education,
- T. whereas reducing early school-leaving is pivotal both to preventing young people from running the risk of social exclusion and poverty and to improving and facilitating their access to the labour market,
- U. whereas the transition from education and training to work presents young people with a major challenge,
- V. whereas volunteering represents an important opportunity to acquire more competences through informal and non-formal learning, to take on social responsibility, to understand the importance of European integration and to play an active role as European citizens in a wide range of areas, and whereas that opportunity should be promoted, especially within the framework of the European Year of Volunteering 2011,
- W. whereas youth organisations are major providers of non-formal education complementary to formal education, which is essential to equip young people with skills and competences in order to become active citizens and facilitate their access to the labour market; whereas through this youth organisations help to achieve the aims of the EU 2020 strategy,
- X. whereas it is vital to involve young people, and the various youth organisations that represent them, in the decision-making process so as to provide them with a sense of ownership and ensure that they are actively contributing their ideas to a youth strategy,
- Y. whereas one of the central objectives of YoM is to strengthen European cohesion and produce citizens with an awareness of their European identity,

General remarks and financial support

1. Welcomes YoM as a political initiative to foster the existing education, mobility and employment programmes for young people and as an incentive for Member States to reach the targets of the EU 2020 strategy;
2. Stresses that YoM encourages higher education establishments to raise their standards by fostering greater cooperation with establishments all around the world, and points out that cooperation with US establishments can be particularly beneficial in this respect;
3. Points out that investing in education is without doubt essential for sustainable growth and development and that, even in times of economic crisis, financing youth programmes and education should not be regarded as a cost to be met now, but rather as an investment in the future of Europe;

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4. Emphasises that the objective of all youth initiatives must be to guide young people so they are successfully integrated into society and to prepare them on a continuous basis for the Europe of the future, which means also giving them opportunities to engage in social activities and to help shape society and making it possible for all young people to enjoy the benefits of schooling, of higher and non-formal education, vocational education and training and of further training that lays stress on meeting the requirements of a modern, competitive, inclusive and sustainable society, in order to make it easier for them to gain access to the labour market;
5. Stresses that the crisis must not be used as a reason to cut education costs, since higher-level education for young people is necessary in order to overcome the impact of the crisis;
6. Deplores the fact that, according to the Commission, the national schedules drawn up by Member States as a further contribution to meeting the educational objectives of the 'EU 2020' strategy are inadequate;
7. Acknowledges the fact that one of the goals of higher education must be to ensure employability, but points out that it must also nurture the creativity and innovativeness of young people and help them to develop intellectually and socially;
8. Recognises that the success of the YoM initiative depends largely on the implementation of its key actions by the Member States; therefore asks the Commission to closely monitor and analyse crucial elements during the implementation process with a view to helping the Member States and ensuring better coordination between them;
9. Calls on the Commission to report regularly to Parliament on the effectiveness of the YoM key actions and the progress made by Member States;
10. Urges the European institutions to set up a strong structured dialogue in the field of education within the Education and Training 2020 framework, to fully involve youth organisations and other stakeholders in the implementation of education measures, in order to follow up YoM in cooperation with young people, and to debate priorities and actions for young people, giving them a stronger role in the decision-making process on issues that affect them;
11. Calls on the Commission, in its proposal for a new multiannual financial framework (MFF), to increase progressively investment in mobility and youth programmes, such as Lifelong Learning (Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius, Grundtvig), Marie Curie, Erasmus Mundus and Youth in Action, in their present form, as well as in the European Voluntary Service; calls for these programmes to be promoted more effectively and for their target population groups to be made more aware of the opportunities they provide; calls for continued investment in cooperation with candidate and potential candidate countries and to present a proposal for the next generation of mobility and youth programmes in line with the targets of the EU 2020 strategy;
12. Stresses that no young person who has had problems in his or her educational career for whatever reason must be lost to working life, but that such young people must instead receive targeted support; points out that access to education must not be contingent on the social or financial status of a young person's parents; emphasises the importance of horizontal mobility at all levels of education, both at school and during vocational training;
13. Stresses that mobility should be made more attractive and that financial support should be widespread and sufficient, with a special focus on the most disadvantaged; reiterates that this position should be reflected in the next MFF; calls, with a view to enhancing training mobility, for the share of the budget earmarked for the Leonardo Programme to be increased;
14. Emphasises that ambitious funding is necessary to meet the objective of giving everyone the opportunity to undertake part of their education and training abroad; takes the view that education and training must be a priority for the European Union and that this objective should be reflected in the next MFF;

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15. Calls for the educational programmes aimed at promoting mobility to be extended beyond 2013 and asks the Commission to increase the funding allocated to such programmes when future framework programmes are drawn up;
16. Calls on the European Union to harness its own financial instruments in order to help young people, making better use of the European Investment Bank and the European Investment Fund;
17. Asks Member States to make greater investment in education and training systems at all levels, to support financially the implementation of EU mobility programmes at national level, and to secure or raise the quality of education in general;
18. Is convinced that the Youth in Action Programme is crucial for youth participation in Europe and that this programme should be strengthened and continued; therefore calls on the Commission to maintain a separate Youth in Action Programme in the forthcoming MFF;
19. Stresses the importance of the YoM initiative, which is instrumental in involving young people in society, and calls on the Commission to make use of the know-how gained from the Youth in Action Programme;
20. Encourages Member States to target a total investment of at least 2 % of GDP in higher education, as recommended by the Commission in the Annual Growth and Employment Survey, as the minimum required for knowledge-intensive economies;
21. Draws attention to the importance of flexible education programmes that are compatible with simultaneous employment;

Youth and mobility

22. Calls for young people to be actively at all stages of EU programmes, from framing to implementation;
23. Emphasises the importance of young people being included not only in the labour market and the economy, but also in shaping the future of Europe; asks the Commission to come up with a Green Paper on Youth Participation;
24. Agrees that action must be taken at an early age in order to reduce early school-leaving to below 10 %, as agreed under the EU 2020 Strategy, with a special focus on disadvantaged areas; welcomes the Commission proposal for a Council recommendation to support Member States' efforts to reduce school drop-out rates;
25. Emphasises that early school-leaving, as a known factor increasing the risk of future exclusion from both employment and society, must be dramatically reduced; stresses that this phenomenon must be addressed in a multifaceted way, in combination with social measures to enhance education and training in disadvantaged areas;
26. Calls on the EU institutions, in view of the fact that youth mobility can help to support democratic processes, to establish a framework allowing young people from European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) countries to be involved in the YoM initiative, thus providing young people from both EU Member States and ENP countries with better learning opportunities;
27. Emphasises the importance of also facilitating the mobility of teachers and of workers in the field of youth and education, because they can act as catalysts for the young people coming under their supervision;

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28. Recognises the important contribution of regional and local governments to stimulating mobility;
29. Calls on the Commission and the Member States also to pay special attention and give support to those who are most at risk, to categories of young people with fewer opportunities and to those seeking a 'second chance' to get back into education;
30. Calls on the Commission to collect data at national, regional and local levels on the practical barriers to mobility, and to take all necessary steps to remove them in order to ensure high-quality mobility that is accessible to all throughout the entire path of education, including vocational education and training (VET); takes the view that the Mobility Scoreboard proposed by the Commission would be very useful in achieving this objective;
31. Encourages the Commission to take more initiatives for youth mobility, also in regions adjacent to the EU;
32. Calls on the Commission to take urgent action to encourage mobility with a view to promoting education, employment and recognition of professional qualifications;
33. Points out the importance of taking measures to ensure that young people, including those who come from disadvantaged areas, are mobile at every stage of their education, that the full portability of grants when they are abroad is guaranteed and that their interim results and qualifications are recognised in all Member States, as suggested in the European Qualifications Framework;
34. Recognises that disabled young people, as well as young people with children, must be afforded additional support in gaining access to existing mobility programmes and in taking full advantage of them and striking a study-work-life balance;
35. Recalls that in addition to international mobility, encouragement should be given to internationalisation at home, and support given to the creation of an international cooperation network from the student's home university and country; emphasises the potential of the virtual mobility of young people as a supplement to geographical mobility;
36. Emphasises the importance of recognising skills obtained through any form of learning, including, non-formal and informal learning, and their role in developing important skills and competences that will guarantee people access to and their adaptability to the needs of the labour market, and calls for skills and competences acquired in this manner to be included in the Mobility Scoreboard;
37. Recommends encouraging projects that sustain the transmission of knowledge and skills from generation to generation; draws attention to the benefits to be gained from the skills and cultural capital of mobile international students;
38. Calls on the Commission to present a comprehensive strategy to promote non-formal education and to support providers of non-formal education;
39. Stresses the importance of mobility in strengthening the feeling of European citizenship, enhancing European culture and European values of mutual respect, broadening the involvement of young people in the democratic process and building a stronger European dimension in young people;
40. Reminds Member States to introduce the learning of the 'mother tongue plus two' languages at an early stage in life and in early childhood education; points out that for people without a second language mobility will not become a reality; draws attention to the importance of learning the languages of neighbouring countries;

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41. Calls on Member States to promote learning and employment mobility by: (a) increasing awareness and making information easily accessible to all those young people interested; (b) highlighting the added value of mobility at the early stages of education; (c) ensuring that learning outcomes from mobility experiences between Member States are validated; and (d) reducing administrative burdens and stimulating cooperation between the relevant authorities across the Member States;

42. Calls on the Commission to facilitate learning and employment mobility by: (a) strengthening the EU's education and youth programmes, such as Erasmus, Leonardo and Youth in Action; (b) enhancing the implementation of existing European instruments and tools, such as the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and Europass; and (c) developing the new tools that it has already examined, such as the Youth on the Move website, the Youth on the Move card, the European skills passport and the pilot project 'Your first EURES job';

43. Welcomes the key new actions of the YoM initiative, such as a single central mobility website, a mobility card complementing and reinforcing the success of established youth and student cards and a European Skills Passport which is intended to become an online lifelong learning portfolio, all of which upgrade useful and already existing mobility tools; calls, moreover, for improved visibility for all existing and future programmes;

European higher education and the Bologna process

44. Stresses the importance of beginning a new, more constructive dialogue between all stakeholders within the Bologna process, taking stock on the basis of its successes, and its problems, in order to further improve it;

45. Calls on the Commission to widen the focus of the Modernisation Agenda for Universities, and renew the priorities to meet new challenges, such as the social dimension of higher education, promoting student-centred learning and supporting Member States in their efforts to reach the 40 % attainment benchmark;

46. Strongly believes that university autonomy is necessary, but simultaneously stresses the responsibility of universities towards society; calls on the Member States to invest in the reform and modernisation of higher education;

47. Draws attention to the need to find a balance between higher education systems, on the one hand, and the needs of the economy and society in general, on the other, and to interlink them through appropriate curricula that equip people with the competences and skills needed for the society and economy of the future;

48. Calls on Member States, regions and local authorities to promote and enhance cooperation between universities, VET centres and the private sector, in order to enhance the 'university-business' dialogue and to ensure better coordination between the three corners of the knowledge triangle, namely research, education and innovation;

49. Emphasises the importance of the existing research and innovation funding programmes under the Framework Programme for Research and Development and cohesion policy, and of ensuring better coordination with education measures; considers, furthermore, that cross-border cooperation is essential to the success of the YoM initiative; calls, therefore, on the stakeholders to make full use of the opportunities available under the cohesion policy's Territorial Cooperation Objective;

50. Stresses the importance of flexible training arrangements, such as open universities and greater use of online further education facilities, thereby giving all young people access to a high standard of education to an advanced level and ensuring that they are not deprived of this opportunity for reasons of distance or scheduling; considers that, given the delayed entry of young people on to the employment market and the problems in ensuring the sustainability of social security schemes, it is extremely important to create suitable conditions for combining study and work;

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51. Encourages universities to bring their programmes and structures more closely into line with the specific needs of the labour market, to consider the needs of businesses when developing their curricula and to pursue new methods of cooperation with private and public companies by encouraging the creation of public-private partnerships (PPPs) and sponsorships, while fostering and supporting youth entrepreneurship;
52. Points to the need for universities to develop programmes to encourage entrepreneurship among students via training programmes, and by setting up points of contact with financial players interested in supporting innovative projects;
53. Emphasises the importance of promoting entrepreneurship and helping young people to start their own business and of promoting and extending the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme; recommends, therefore, implementing an EU information campaign in education establishments that covers entrepreneurship, start-up capital, taxation of start-up businesses and continuous training support;
54. Urges the Commission to establish a database of innovative projects which facilitates exchanges of good practices between projects already tried and tested by Member States or universities, in order to help connect graduates and enterprises and guarantee graduates immediate access to the world of work;
55. Recognises the value in students being offered study grants by private enterprises;
56. Suggests that, instead of the global university ranking system, the Commission introduces an information-based system on European university programmes which would, among other things, issue regular public reports on the employability of students on each programme and on mobility opportunities;
57. Urges the Commission to make all the necessary efforts to complete the European Research Area, providing greater support for the mobility of young researchers in order to promote European excellence in the field of research;
58. Believes that the Member States need to ensure that a system of grants providing access to higher education is available to young men and young women on an equitable basis, with the aim of avoiding any replication of inequalities, and with special emphasis on tertiary education;

Vocational education and training

59. Calls on the Member States to modernise and increase the attractiveness and quality of VET so that it can be better adapted to the current and future needs of the changing labour market, which by 2020 will require new knowledge and skills based on diplomas that should be mutually recognised in all Member States; in that connection, highlights the great success of dual education systems in the Member States concerned;
60. Emphasises that adapting education systems and vocational training to the future skills requirements of the labour market is one of the keys to combating youth unemployment, and therefore that the transition from school, vocational education and training or higher education to employment must be better prepared and must follow on directly from education or training; takes the view that better cooperation needs to be encouraged between educational establishments, youth organisations, the various labour market sectors and employers, for example with specialists in various fields giving lectures or seminars to familiarise students with their future work;
61. Emphasises, therefore, the major importance of implementing effectively the 'European Youth Guarantee' initiative and making it an instrument for active integration into the labour market; stresses that Member States have not so far made any convincing commitment to implementing the European Youth Guarantee initiative and calls on them to do so speedily;

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62. Takes the view that mobility for the acquisition of new skills is a strong tool for improving the skills and competences, personal development and active citizenship of young people; takes the view that voluntary mobility in the framework of schooling and vocational training, further training and higher education should therefore be promoted for all young people, irrespective of their financial, social and ethnic background, the type of education or training in which they are engaged, and of their disabilities, health problems or geographical situation, and should be encouraged by means of professional guidance and counselling made available throughout the process;

63. Emphasises that mobility must not lead to a lowering of social standards in the host country; emphasises the importance for increased mobility of the mutual recognition of school, vocational training and university diplomas and further training qualifications obtained within the EU;

64. Calls for the proper implementation of ECVET, EQF and ECTS; makes it clear that proof of mutual recognition must be granted within 12 months of the date on which the qualification was obtained; points out that Parliament is kept regularly informed by means of the mobility indicators;

65. Stresses the importance of supporting and further enhancing mobility in the field of VET including apprenticeships, by providing VET students and apprentices with information, counselling, guidance and hosting structures when they are abroad; places particular emphasis on the need to set up partnerships with training centres and business organisations with a view to guaranteeing the availability of high-quality mobility opportunities and making them an integral part of learning pathways;

66. Highlights the difficulties faced in moving to higher education from VET, and stresses that learning institutions must adapt in order to facilitate this transition;

67. Stresses that by providing them with knowledge and skills VET and higher education and training can improve young people's motivation and optimism as well as help them build their self-esteem;

Transition from education and training to work

68. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote voluntary work by, for example, affording it a firm legal basis and recognising it as time worked, thereby making it a valid option for young people, especially when unemployed;

69. Strongly stresses that the smooth entrance of young people on to the labour market depends mainly on the modernisation, including in terms of their curricula, of VET institutions and universities, with a view to ensuring the quality of teaching and matching study programmes to the needs of the labour market;

70. Highlights the importance of making university timetables more flexible for students who have already entered the workforce and want to study simultaneously;

71. Emphasises that young people must be given access to VET once in work, thereby enabling them to accumulate training while at work, and that continuous training, a lifelong-learning approach and professional development must be supported from the very first job and that the Member States must be urged to establish independent systems for the provision of advice on further training with a view to guaranteeing that further training becomes the norm;

72. Emphasises that high-quality initial education and vocational training covering all trades and professions increases young people's job opportunities and guarantees businesses a supply of skilled employees; calls on the Member States to establish appropriate supervisory bodies in order to ensure that such education and training is provided;

73. Strongly supports the EU target for 40 % of young people to complete tertiary or equivalent (i.e. higher and vocational) education;

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74. Stresses the importance of guidance instruments for young people to help them in their educational and professional choices, from primary school to higher levels of education and training, in order to better prepare them for a smooth transition to active life; takes the view that measures must be taken to strengthen the role of the family and social environment of young people and of their schools in guiding them in their career choices and towards finding an occupation; points out that in many cases individually tailored support, in the form of advice for young people choosing a career and starting work, is required in order to achieve that objective;

75. Invites tertiary education institutions to incorporate a properly paid, high-quality traineeship into study programmes where appropriate in order to enable young people to prepare themselves for working life, and especially in order to enable them to access jobs requiring high-level qualifications; points out that such traineeships must not take the place of real jobs and must offer adequate pay and welfare protection, and stresses the need for labour-market recognition of such traineeships; calls on the Member States to develop policies that promote the recruitment of young people;

76. Calls on the Commission to promote at European level initiatives to recognise traineeships as a period of employment for social security purposes, as some Member States are already doing;

77. Believes it vital to support private sector initiatives aimed at young people, with a view to fostering job creation and social inclusion;

78. Points to the need to use European history and European culture as prime tools for deepening European integration;

79. Believes that high-quality education and training systems can help to improve young people's chances of finding a fulfilling job, which will consequently increase their confidence in the future, boost their creativity and, in this way, contribute to the prosperity of society;

80. Recognises the role of local and regional authorities in the field of training and mobility; takes the view that their competences and experience should be seen as complementary to EU action; emphasises that, in order to achieve its goals, the EU should develop a partnership approach, particularly with local and regional authorities;

Employment situation for young people

81. Stresses that the employment situation for young people is dependent on overall economic policies; urges the Member States to shift towards investment and job creation; points out that austerity measures involving, for example, cut backs in the education system and job creation will not help young people and could potentially damage society and the economy in the longer term;

82. Emphasises that close links need to be established between the flagship initiatives which seek to tackle unemployment, such as 'Youth on the Move' and 'New Skills for New Jobs'; believes that the social partners, business representatives, local and regional authorities and youth organisations should be involved in the development of a sustainable strategy to reduce youth unemployment, in which there must be EU-wide mutual formal recognition and certification of the skills reflected in formal and informal qualifications – in line with the EU's EQF system – and acquired in formal, non-formal and informal learning situations;

83. Emphasises that, as a result of the economic and financial crisis, youth unemployment – the causes of which the ILO does not regard as lying in income and non-wage labour cost levels, participatory rights and social protection standards – became a major challenge across the EU and has not so far been sufficiently addressed by the EU and Member States; stresses that unemployment at a young age puts the individual at a very high risk of poverty in the long term; emphasises the need for quality jobs in order to prevent young people from falling into the category of working poor;

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84. Stresses that employment and traineeship contracts should provide social rights for all from day one of the contract; rejects any proposal to depart from this principle; stresses that periods of notice must not be shortened, that arrangements laid down in collective agreements and statutory provisions must apply as they do to regular employees, and that participatory rights and freedom of association must be enjoyed without restriction from day one;
85. Calls for an EU framework laying down rights and protection arrangements for atypical and insecure jobs in a manner consistent with the principle of subsidiarity;
86. Emphasises that young people must be protected against discrimination at the workplace, especially on the grounds of age and professional experience, through the effective implementation of Directive 2000/78/EC; calls for all Member States to set up a national strategy to tackle youth unemployment;
87. Emphasises that young people's main concern is to be independent and to have access to healthcare and decent accommodation at a reasonable price while being able to train, work and develop themselves; calls, therefore, on Member States to eliminate age-related discrimination as regards access to social welfare schemes;
88. Reiterates the importance of specific, verifiable objectives combined with adequate financial means for the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy and the integrated guidelines to reduce youth unemployment; emphasises, therefore, that in their National Reform Programmes the Member States should commit themselves to raising the employment rate for young people between the ages of 15 and 25 by 10 % by 2014 and to increase the youth employment rate (for those not in education) to 75 % by 2020;
89. Notes that, since some 35 % of all jobs that will become available between now and 2020 will require high qualifications combined with the ability to adapt and innovate, intensive efforts must be made to increase the proportion of people aged between 30 and 34 with a university degree or equivalent qualification to at least 40 %;
90. Recognises that implementing the integrated guidelines is the responsibility of the Member States, whilst the Commission should support and monitor action at national level through the open method of coordination (OMC); takes the view that the target groups and indicators proposed by the Commission in the initiative should be monitored and that the progress made during implementation should be measured by means of clear indicators;
91. Takes the view that measures must be taken by the Member States to provide as much information, choice and training as possible to help young people fulfil their potential, but strongly believes this is best delivered by people working on the ground at local level in each Member State;
92. Takes the view that quality career and vocational guidance services must be further developed; stresses the importance of involving the social partners in their design, organisation, delivery and funding in order to ensure labour-market relevance and efficiency;
93. Stresses the importance in terms of corporate social responsibility of helping young people make sound career choices, taking account of the needs of both the national and the European employment market, and points out that such initiatives could be accompanied by work-experience placements;
94. Takes the view that occupational choices are still strongly gender-based and that this is a factor adding to gender inequality; stresses that this has an impact both on female unemployment and on poverty; stresses that such gender-based discrimination needs to be overcome;

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95. Stresses that measures must be taken to present a comprehensive overview of possible educational and training paths and later career choices, for example with the help of equality advisers, and that an attempt must be made from an early age to interest and support girls, in particular, in taking MINT (Mathematics, Informatics, Natural sciences, and Technology) subjects and in areas of strategic importance in professional development terms, and boys in teaching, caring and social professions;
96. Emphasises that, in the light of the future shortage of skilled workers, specific measures must be taken to foster the potential of girls and women, involving, in particular, specific support programmes which encourage the preparation of girls for scientific and technical professions;
97. Welcomes the greater role played by the EIB in establishing financing programmes for students and in supporting young people setting up their own businesses; believes that the EIB should play an even greater role by investing selectively in high added-value sectors in the Member States and particularly in enterprises that are making the greatest effort to hire young people and provide them with high-quality training;
98. Emphasises that young people who have poorer chances of getting started in life, in particular the NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) group, must be supported or even mentored with a view to identifying their individual needs and focusing on increasing their integration into the labour market and their access to quality jobs;
99. Considers that free, publicly-funded training places and a standardised system of training assistance can be one effective instrument for integrating particularly disadvantaged young people into the labour market;
100. Stresses, however, that integration into the first labour market is essential and that any integration measures should aim to promote access to the regular labour market from an early stage onwards, backed by support measures focusing on the needs of individuals;
101. Stresses the specific difficulties poor young people face in spending time abroad, owing to financial and linguistic constraints and in some cases discrimination; is convinced that financial support must address the needs of the most disadvantaged in particular;
102. Stresses the importance of creating employment opportunities for disabled young people, by establishing suitably adapted training programmes, and of encouraging the provision of more employment grants for this important group of young people, in the interests of helping them to become more integrated and achieve their potential in society;
103. Calls on the Member States and the Commission to support information campaigns about education and training possibilities for young people with disabilities, such as the Exchange Ability project developed by the European Disability Forum and the Erasmus Student Network;
104. Emphasises that Eurofound's 2009-2012 work programme includes the specific project 'Active inclusion for young people with disabilities or health problems' and points to the crucial role of training centres offering social and professional skills training for youngsters with disabilities and those who grew up in institutional care; calls for support to be given to the development and use of these training centres where needed;
105. Stresses the need for measures to clarify fully the situation at national and European level regarding young people who are unemployed and not taking part in education or training; calls on the Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, to identify the reasons for the marginalisation of young people and recommend ways of reintegrating them and of taking action to remedy the problem through the achievement over the next 10 years of the relevant objectives with regard to the employability and competitiveness of the European workforce and a reduction in school drop-out rates;

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106. Emphasises that traineeships are an appropriate aid in making the right career choice at all stages of the process of choosing an occupation, and draws attention once again to the need to lay down minimum standards for traineeships, for example as regards income and social rights, including social protection and social security arrangements, in order to improve the quality of traineeships and ensure their educational value;

107. Reiterates its view that traineeships must not replace actual jobs and must be strictly limited in duration; stresses that a legally-binding European quality framework for traineeships covering all forms of education and training is urgently needed in order to prevent trainees from being exploited and that the Commission should present an action plan, with a timetable, incorporating an outline of how this quality framework would be implemented;

108. Welcomes the 'Your first EURES job' initiative to promote professional mobility, which should be closely linked with the European Vacancy Monitor so that workers and employers have a comprehensive, transparent overview of the EU job market and vacancies can be filled by suitable persons as quickly as possible; points out, however, that this must not lead to a brain drain away from certain parts of the EU;

109. Emphasises that the EU's coordinated active labour market measures, such as publicly funded work programmes for young people, and the creation of new, sustainable and good jobs – which are properly remunerated – and new businesses, as well as the promotion of a business culture in schools, incentives for new initiatives, technical assistance for start-ups, administrative simplification to speed up formalities, local service networks to facilitate management, and links with universities and research centres to promote product and process innovation, recognition of voluntary work as professional experience and the promotion of entrepreneurship, are all essential elements in the process of successfully tackling youth unemployment and supporting inclusive growth;

110. Emphasises the importance of non-formal and informal learning and education and voluntary work for the development of young people; stresses that the skills gained not only offer young people opportunities in terms of their entry into the world of work, but also enable them to be actively involved in society and to take responsibility for their lives;

111. Stresses that the ultimate goal of the YoM initiative is not only to improve European education systems and to increase youth employability, but also to create a social environment in which every young person will be able to realise his or her potential and aspirations;

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112. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

Early years learning

P7_TA(2011)0231

European Parliament resolution of 12 May 2011 on Early Years Learning in the European Union (2010/2159(INI))

(2012/C 377 E/10)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

— having regard to Article 14 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,