



Commission launches Youth Employment Support: a bridge to jobs for the next generation

Brussels, 1 July 2020

Today the European Commission is taking action to give young people all possible opportunities to develop their full potential to shape the future of the EU, and thrive in the green and digital transitions. The coronavirus pandemic has emphasised the often difficult start many young people face in the labour market. We need to act fast. Now is the time to direct our attention towards the next generation.

The Commission is using this opportunity to ingrain the green and digital transitions in the DNA of the EU's youth and employment policies. With NextGenerationEU and the future EU budget, the Commission already proposed significant EU financing opportunities for youth employment. It is now for the Member States to prioritise these investments. At least €22 billion should be spent on youth employment support.

Executive Vice-President for an Economy that Works for People, Valdis **Dombrovskis**, said: *"It is more important than ever that we help the next generation of Europeans to thrive and get on the jobs ladder, especially at this time of crisis. We are proposing clear and specific ways forward for our young people to get the professional chances that they deserve. Today's proposals also set out what EU funding is available to support Member States in boosting youth employment. By investing in the youth of today, we will help to create a competitive, resilient and inclusive labour market for tomorrow."*

Nicolas **Schmit**, Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, said: *"Now is the time to carry out much-needed reforms of the support measures we offer to young people. We owe it to the millions of graduates and those taking their early steps on the labour market to mobilise all the support we can. Our youth deserve the very best opportunities possible to develop their full potential."*

Youth Employment Support: a bridge to jobs for the next generation

The Youth Employment Support package is built around four strands that together provide a bridge to jobs for the next generation:

- The EU created the Youth Guarantee in 2013 and has since built bridges to the labour market for some 24 million young people. The Commission's proposal for a Council Recommendation on a **Bridge to Jobs** reinforces the Youth Guarantee and steps up the outreach to vulnerable young people across the EU, now covering people aged 15 - 29. The Recommendation keeps the pledge that if you sign up to the Youth Guarantee, you will receive an offer of employment, education, apprenticeship or training within four months. Bridge to Jobs will be more inclusive to avoid any forms of discrimination, with a wider outreach to more vulnerable groups, such as youth of racial and ethnic minorities, young people with disabilities, or young people living in some rural, remote or disadvantaged urban areas. It will link in with the needs of companies, providing the skills required - in particular those for the green and digital transitions - and short preparatory courses; and it will provide tailored counselling, guidance and mentoring.
- The Commission's proposal for a Council Recommendation on **vocational education and training** aims to make systems more modern, attractive, flexible and fit for the digital and green economy. More agile, learner-centred vocational education and training will prepare young people for their first jobs and gives more adults opportunities to enhance or change their careers. It will help vocational education and training providers to become centres of vocational excellence, while supporting diversity and inclusiveness.
- A **renewed impetus for apprenticeships** will benefit both employers and young people, adding a skilled labour force to a wide range of sectors. The European Alliance for Apprenticeships has made available more than 900,000 opportunities. The renewed Alliance will promote national coalitions, support SMEs and reinforce the involvement of social partners: trade unions and employers' organisations. The goal is to sustain the apprenticeship offers now, as apprentices we train now will be highly skilled workers in a few years' time.

- Additional **measures to support youth employment** include employment and start-up incentives in the short term, and capacity building, young entrepreneur networks and inter-company training centres in the medium term.

More details on each of these measures can be found in the [accompanying Q&A](#).

The Commission urges Member States to step up youth employment support by making use of the **significant funding available** under NextGenerationEU and the future EU budget. For example, the EU can help fund:

- Start-up grants and loans for young entrepreneurs, mentoring schemes and business incubators
- Bonuses for SMEs hiring apprentices
- Training sessions to acquire new skills needed on the labour market
- Capacity-building of public employment services
- Career management training in formal education
- Investments in digital learning infrastructure and technology

Background

During the aftermath of the global 2008 financial crisis, youth unemployment went up from 16.0% in 2008 to a peak of 24.4% in 2013. The figures went down since, with record lows of 14.9%, just before the pandemic hit. Nevertheless, youth unemployment has always remained more than twice as high as general unemployment. The latest figures show that youth unemployment stood at 15.4% across the EU in April 2020. Many fear that a spike is just in front of us.

Significant EU funding is available for Member States to implement reforms spearheaded by the initiatives presented today. The European Social Fund Plus will be a key EU financial resource to support the implementation of the youth employment support measures. As part of the Recovery Plan for Europe, the Recovery and Resilience Facility and REACT-EU will provide additional financial support for youth employment.

For more information

[Q&A on Youth Employment Support: a bridge to jobs for the next generation](#)

[Factsheet on Youth Employment Support](#)

[Communication "Youth Employment Support: a bridge to jobs for the next generation"](#)

[Commission proposal for a Council Recommendation on a Bridge to Jobs - reinforcing the Youth Guarantee](#)

[Commission proposal for a Council Recommendation on Vocational Education and Training](#)

[Factsheet on Vocational Education and Training](#)

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Press contacts:

[Marta WIECZOREK](#) (+32 2 295 81 97)

[Siobhán MILLBRIGHT](#) (+32 2 295 73 61)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)