



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 31.7.2017
C(2017) 5520 final

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion concerning the Communication on Investing in Europe's Youth {COM(2016) 940 final}.

The Commission welcomes the Camera Deputaților's support for the Commission's efforts to offer young people better opportunities and accompany them in their school-to-work transition. The Commission is committed to working with Member States towards the full implementation of the Youth Guarantee through a range of instruments including financial support, mutual learning and technical assistance. Particular emphasis is being put on improving support for young people facing multiple barriers. As the Camera Deputaților rightly points out, this requires a complex set of interventions. Accordingly, nine projects supported through the European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation are building up and strengthening partnerships in order to reach out to a wider range of young people who are neither in education, employment nor training, especially inactive ones and those facing multiple barriers.

Important steps have been taken in recent years to better understand the root causes of youth unemployment. In the context of the European Semester for economic policy coordination, the Commission is closely monitoring structural reforms affecting young people's labour market participation. It has proposed, where relevant, Country Specific Recommendations related to youth employment and outreach towards non-registered young people who are neither in education, employment nor training. The recommendations also focus on labour market segmentation, which particularly affects young people. The Commission's proposal for 2017 Country Specific Recommendations, published on 22 May 2017, calls on Romania to strengthen the activation of groups who are furthest away from the labour market, including young people.

*Mr Liviu DRAGNEA
President of the Camera Deputaților
Palace of the Parliament
Str. Izvor nr. 2-4, sector 5
RO – 050563 BUCHAREST*

Furthermore, the Commission has contributed to improving the knowledge of youth unemployment and assessing the effectiveness of policies, whether through specific analytical publications¹ or by monitoring the Youth Guarantee's implementation, including through a specific data collection². Additionally, the Commission is continuously striving to improve its understanding of young people's situation on the labour market, with new initiatives such as the proposal for the tracking of graduates presented on 30 May 2017.³

The Commission shares the Camera Deputaţilor's view that entrepreneurship is key for achieving smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The Commission is very attentive to policies supporting entrepreneurship and self-employment for under-represented groups such as young people. Additionally, it financially supports youth entrepreneurship through the European Social Fund and the European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation.

The Commission fully agrees with the Camera Deputaţilor on the important role of education systems in addressing the underlying causes of youth unemployment, particularly as regards vocational education and training. The Commission encourages Romania's active participation in the numerous initiatives at European level aimed at promoting apprenticeships, such as the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, which offer opportunities for mutual learning in the field of apprenticeships, and 'ErasmusPro' for mobility of apprentices and vocational education and training (VET) learners which will be launched this autumn. As pointed out by the Camera Deputaţilor, the Commission services are working on a proposal for a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships that Member States could use when developing their apprenticeship systems. As announced in the Communication, the Commission will propose apprenticeship support services to enhance knowledge sharing, cooperation and peer-learning on apprenticeships.

Finally, the Commission would like to draw the Camera Deputaţilor's attention to the publication "High-Performance Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning: 20 Guiding Principles" which was produced in the framework of the Education and Training 2020 Working Group on Vocational Education and Training. It provides guidelines on how to involve small and medium-sized enterprises and link apprenticeships better to the labour market. In addition, the Commission would like to stress that the Working Group will also develop policy pointers on support to and cooperation between teachers and trainers in work-based learning.

¹ See the annual reviews on Employment and Social Developments in Europe, in particular for 2013, 2014 and 2015 on the following webpage: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=113&langId=en>

² See the analysis of the Youth Guarantee in the Member States (2016) and the report on the performance monitoring data of the Youth Guarantee.

³ Proposal for a Council Recommendation on tracking graduates {COM(2017) 249 final}.

The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the concerns raised by the Camera Deputaților and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Julian King
Member of the Commission*