Basic information

2010/2307(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Youth on the move: a framework for improving Europe's education and training systems **Subject** 4.15 Employment policy, action to combat unemployment 4.40.01 European area for education, training and lifelong learning 4.40.04 Universities, higher education 4.40.10 Youth	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
CULT Culture and Education	ZVER Milan (PPE)	27/09/2010
	Shadow rapporteur ROTH NEVEĎALOVÁ Katarína (S&D) LØKKEGAARD Morten (ALDE) JUNQUERAS I VIES Oriol (Verts/ALE) MCCLARKIN Emma (ECR) VERGIAT Marie-Christine (GUE/NGL)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs (Associated committee)	STEINRUCK Jutta (S&D)	22/09/2010

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Education, Youth, Sport and Culture	VASSILIOU Androulla

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
		COM(2010)0477	Summary

15/09/2010	Non-legislative basic document published		
16/12/2010	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
16/12/2010	Referral to associated committees announced in Parliament		
12/04/2011	Vote in committee		Summary
20/04/2011	Committee report tabled for plenary	A7-0169/2011	
12/05/2011	Decision by Parliament	T7-0230/2011	Summary
12/05/2011	Results of vote in Parliament		
12/05/2011	Debate in Parliament		
12/05/2011	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

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Committee dossier	CULT/7/04823

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE454.698	10/02/2011	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE460.798	17/03/2011	
Committee opinion	EMPL	PE456.784	21/03/2011	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A7-0169/2011	20/04/2011	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T7-0230/2011	12/05/2011	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2010)0477	15/09/2010	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2011)6333	19/09/2011	

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	PT_PARLIAMENT	COM(2010)0477	21/01/2011	

Youth on the move: a framework for improving Europe's education and training systems

2010/2307(INI) - 15/09/2010 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: to propose “Youth on the Move”, an initiative to unleash the potential of young people to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the European Union.

BACKGROUND: the Europe 2020 Strategy sets ambitious objectives for smart, inclusive and sustainable growth. Quality education and training, successful labour market integration and more mobility of young people are key to **unleashing all young people's potential**.

There are close to 100 million in the EU, representing a fifth of its total population. Despite the unprecedented opportunities which modern Europe offers, young people face challenges – aggravated by the economic crisis - in education and training systems and in accessing the labour market. Youth unemployment is unacceptably high at almost 21%. In order to reach the 75% employment target for the population aged 20-64 years, the transition of young people to the labour market needs to be radically improved.

The communication states that fewer than one person in three in the EU (31.1%) has a higher education degree compared to over 40% in the US and over 50% in Japan. The Europe 2020 Strategy has agreed the EU headline target that by 2020, at least 40% of 30-34 years olds should have completed tertiary or equivalent education. Moreover, currently, 14.4% of 18-24 years old in the EU have less than upper secondary education and are not in further education and training. The EU benchmark is to reduce early school-leaving to 10%.

The Commission proposes this new initiative to unleash the potential of young people to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the European Union.

CONTENT: Youth on the Move is the **EU's flagship initiative torespond to the challenges young people face and to help them succeed in the knowledge economy**. It is a framework agenda announcing key new actions, reinforcing existing activities and ensuring the implementation of others at EU and national levels, while respecting the subsidiarity principle. Candidate countries should also be able to benefit from this initiative, through the appropriate mechanisms.

Youth on the Move will focus on **four main lines of action**:

1. Education and lifelong learning: smart and inclusive growth depends on actions throughout the lifelong learning system, to develop key competences and quality learning outcomes, in line with labour market needs. Europe needs to extend and broaden learning opportunities for young people as a whole, including supporting the acquisition of skills through non-formal educational activities.

Youth on the Move will support these actions, inter alia, by proposing:

- a Council Recommendation to encourage Member States to **tackle the high level of early school leaving**, through the 2011 European Year of Volunteering;
- a Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

The Commission is also promoting **apprenticeship-type vocational training** and **high quality traineeships** as workplace learning experiences, building bridges to the labour market.

2. Promoting the attractiveness of higher education: higher education is a major driver of economic competitiveness in the knowledge-driven economy, making high quality third-level education essential in achieving economic and social objectives. With an increasing number of jobs requiring high-level skills, more young people will need to enter and complete higher education in order for the EU to reach the Europe 2020 target of 40% attainment of higher education or equivalent. In addition, research should attract and retain more young people by providing attractive employment conditions. Realising these objectives will require a multi-faceted approach, aiming at modernising higher education, ensuring quality, excellence and transparency and stimulating partnerships in a globalised world. Member States need to step up efforts to **modernise higher education** in the areas of curricula, governance and funding**,** by implementing the priorities agreed in the context of the Bologna process, supporting **a new agenda for cooperation and reform** at EU level and focusing on the new challenges in the context of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

Higher education is becoming increasingly internationalised. More **mobility**, international openness and transparency are needed to attract the best students, teachers and researchers, to create and reinforce partnerships and academic cooperation with universities from other parts of the world. This will require a specific emphasis on reinforcing international cooperation, programmes and policy dialogue in higher education.

The Commission will also:

- present a Communication setting out the key challenges and actions needed for higher education in Europe in a 2020 perspective will be presented in 2011, including an EU internationalisation strategy;

- present in 2011 the results of a feasibility study to develop an alternative multi-dimensional global university ranking system, which takes into account the diversity of higher education institutions.

3. Mobility: learning mobility is an important way in which young people can strengthen their future employability and acquire new professional competences. The Commission's aim is to extend opportunities for learning mobility to all young people in Europe by 2020 by mobilising resources and **removing obstacles to pursuing a learning experience abroad.** It will also seek to develop a **Youth on the Move card** to speed up the integration process for mobile learners when moving abroad and provide other advantages in line with national youth or student cards. A dedicated website will also be created to give full transparency to all relevant EU programmes, opportunities and rights related to learning mobility for young people.

In addition, the Commission will propose in 2010 **EU benchmarks on learning mobility**, focusing in particular on students in higher education and VET.

The Commission will also propose a **European Skills Passport** (2011), based on existing elements of Europass, to record in a transparent and comparable way the competences acquired by people throughout their lives in a variety of learning settings, including e-skills and informal and non-formal learning. This should facilitate mobility by easing the recognition of skills across countries.

The Commission shall develop a new initiative: "**Your first EURES job**", as a pilot project (subject to it receiving the required financial support by the budgetary authority) to help young people with finding a job in any of the EU-27 Member States and moving abroad.

4. Youth employment: Europe must urgently improve the **employment situation of young people**. Youth on the Move presents a framework of policy priorities for action at national and EU level to reduce youth unemployment by facilitating the transition from school to work and reducing labour market segmentation. Particular focus is put on the role of **Public Employment Services**, encouraging a **Youth Guarantee** to ensure all young people are in a job, in education or in activation, creating a **European Vacancy Monitor** and **supporting young entrepreneurs**.

Exploiting the full potential of EU funding programmes: several existing programmes already support the Youth on the Move objectives. For education and training, the Lifelong Learning programme (including Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius and Grundtvig), Youth in Action, Erasmus Mundus, Tempus and Marie Curie Actions address specific target groups. Their objectives should be strengthened, rationalised and better used to support the Youth on the Move objectives.

These programmes alone, however, will not be able to cater for all demands. Hence, there is a need to link up funding from many sources and have wider engagement of public authorities, civil society, business and others in support of the Youth on the Move objectives, to achieve the critical mass required.

It will harness the financial support of the relevant EU programmes on education, youth, and learning mobility, as well as the **Structural Funds**. **All existing programmes will be reviewed** to develop a more integrated approach to support the Youth on the Move initiative under the **next Financial Framework**.

Future actions and review: Youth on the Move will be implemented in close synergy with the "Agenda for New Skills and Jobs" flagship initiative, announced in Europe 2020. The actions announced in this Communication will be reviewed and updated over time, within the 2020 horizon. The Commission will launch an information campaign in 2010 to support the Youth on the Move initiative for the next decade.

Youth on the move: a framework for improving Europe's education and training systems

2010/2307(INI) - 12/05/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Youth on the Move (YoM): - a framework for improving Europe's education and training systems.

Recalling that young people are particularly affected by the crisis and that the youth unemployment rate exceeds 20%, Parliament proposes a series of recommendations designed to improve education and vocational training systems with young people specifically in mind.

General remarks and financial support: Parliament 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. In this context, it regrets that the national schedules drawn up by Member States as a further contribution to meeting the educational objectives of the 'EU 2020' strategy are, according to the Commission, inadequate. For Members, one of the goals of higher education must be to ensure employability, but it must also nurture their creativity and innovativeness.

Welcoming the YoM, Members call 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. They also call for these programmes to be promoted more effectively and for their target population groups to be made more aware of the opportunities they provide.

Parliament considers that **no young person who has had problems in his or her educational career for whatever reason must be lost to working life**. Such young people must instead receive targeted support. It points out that access to education must not be contingent on the social or financial status of a young person’s parents and the importance of horizontal mobility at all levels of education, both at school and during vocational training. In this regard, mobility should be made more attractive and that financial support should be widespread and sufficient.

Taking 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, Parliament 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**. The Member States should make greater investment in education and training systems at all levels and support financially the implementation of mobility programmes. Members propose that Member States target **a total investment of at least 2% of GDP in higher education**.

Youth and mobility: Parliament calls for the active involvement of young people at all stages of EU programmes. In this context, it asks the Commission to come up with a Green Paper on Youth Participation. Parliament also focuses on the following points:

- on the issue of **early school-leaving**, Parliament calls for action to be taken at an early age in order to reduce early school-leaving to below 10%, as agreed under the EU 2020 Strategy. It emphasises that early school-leaving, as a known factor increasing the risk of future exclusion from both employment and society, must be dramatically reduced;
- as regards **mobility**, several measures are proposed to promote the mobility of young people from European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) countries but also of teachers and of workers in the field of youth and education. Particular attention should be paid 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. Parliament calls on the Commission to urgently take measures to encourage mobility generally, and more particularly for young people who are disabled or young people with children;
- as regards **linguistics**, Parliament 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.

Parliament also urges the Member States to promote mobility in the context of training and employment by:

- increasing awareness and making information easily accessible to all those young people interested;
- highlighting the added value of mobility at the early stages of education;
- ensuring that learning outcomes from mobility experiences between Member States are validated; and
- reducing administrative burdens and stimulating cooperation between the relevant authorities across the Member States.

Members call on the Commission to facilitate learning and employment mobility by:

- strengthening the EU's education and youth programmes, such as Erasmus, Leonardo and Youth in Action;
- enhancing the implementation of existing European instruments and tools, such as the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and Europass; and
- 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'.

European higher education and the Bologna process: Parliament stresses the importance of beginning a new, more constructive dialogue between all stakeholders within the Bologna process. It 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. The resolution 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.

A number of measures have been proposed to: (i) promote and enhance cooperation between universities; (ii) emphasise the importance of the existing research and innovation funding programmes. **Parliament 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. It also underlines 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. The resolution recognises the value in students being offered study grants by private enterprises. Greater support should be provided for the mobility of **young researchers**.

Vocational education and training (VET): Parliament invites 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. It 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 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. Members take the view that better cooperation needs to be encouraged between educational establishments, youth organisations, the various labour market sectors and employers. Parliament 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. It 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.

The resolution states 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. However mobility must not lead to a lowering of social standards in the host country. It 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.

Transition from education and training to work: Parliament 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. In this context, they highlight the importance of making university timetables more flexible for students who have already entered the workforce and want to study simultaneously.

Members reiterate their strong support for the **EU target for 40% of young people to complete tertiary** or equivalent (i.e. higher and vocational) education. They stress the importance of guidance instruments for young people to help them in their educational and professional choices. The importance of 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.

High-quality traineeship: Parliament 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. It points out that such **traineeships must not take the place of real jobs** and must offer adequate pay and welfare protection. Members call on the Member States to **develop policies that promote the recruitment of young people**. The Commission is called upon 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.

Employment situation for young people: the resolution urges the **Member States to shift towards investment and job creation**. Members point 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. They stress that unemployment at a young age puts the individual at a very high risk of poverty in the long term.

In this context, Members call for:

- employment and traineeship contracts to provide social rights for all from day one of the contract;
- for an EU framework laying down rights and protection arrangements for atypical and insecure jobs;
- the protection of young people against discrimination at the workplace, especially on the grounds of age and professional experience;
- measures to be taken by the Member States to provide as much information, choice and training as possible to help young people fulfil their potential;
- quality career and vocational guidance services to be further developed;
- measures to be taken to present a comprehensive overview of possible educational and training paths and later career choices;
- free, publicly-funded training places and a standardised system of training assistance to be provided for integrating particularly disadvantaged young people into the labour market;
- the creation of employment opportunities for disabled young people;
- the dramatic reduction of early school-leaving which is a known factor increasing the risk of future exclusion from both employment and society;
- the need to lay down **minimum standards for traineeships**, for example as regards income and social rights, including social protection and social security arrangements;
- the promotion of the EU's coordinated active labour market measures;
- the importance of non-formal and informal learning and education and voluntary work for the development of young people to be strengthened which will enable them to be actively involved in society and to take responsibility for their lives.

Parliament reiterates the importance of specific, verifiable objectives to reduce youth unemployment. It 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.

Lastly, Members stress 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**.