

EUROPEAN UNION



**Committee of the Regions**

**RESOL-V-004**

**99th plenary session, 31 January-1 February 2013**

**RESOLUTION**  
**of the**  
**Committee of the Regions**

**A YOUTH GUARANTEE**

CDR2562-2012\_00\_00\_TRA\_RES - RESOL-V-004

## THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

- having regard to the European Commission proposal of 5 December 2012 for a Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee (COM(2012) 729),
- having regard to the European Parliament Resolution on a Youth Guarantee of 16 January 2013 (2012/2901(RSP)),
- having regard to the Commission Communication "Youth on the Move" (COM(2010) 477),
- having regard to the respective opinion of the Committee of the Regions (CdR 292/2010 fin),

### Whereas:

- the economic crisis has brought youth unemployment rates in the EU to unacceptably high levels, with 5.7 million young people being unemployed,
  - young people neither in employment, education or training (NEETs), currently reaching 7.5 million, represent costs equivalent to 1.2% of the EU's GDP<sup>1</sup>,
  - a Youth Guarantee would contribute towards reaching three of the five headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy by helping reduce the rates of early school leavers and of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion, and increase the number of people having completed third level education,
  - implementing a Youth Guarantee across the Eurozone would not exceed 21 billion euros, which represents around 0.45% of Eurozone government spending<sup>2</sup>,
  - many Member States have failed to follow up on calls by the European Commission and the European Council to introduce a Youth Guarantee with a view to increasing youth employment,
  - the Youth Guarantee is a key component of the European Commission's Youth Employment package,
1. welcomes the European Commission's resolve to give a new impetus to tackling youth unemployment, a multi-faceted problem that urgently requires a coordinated and

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<sup>1</sup> See Eurofound report "NEETs- Young people not in employment, education or training: Characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe": <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2012/54/en/1/EF1254EN.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Study by ILO / International Institute for Labour Studies on 'EuroZone job crisis : trends and policy responses', 2012 [http://www.ilo.org/global/research/publications/WCMS\\_184965/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/research/publications/WCMS_184965/lang--en/index.htm)

comprehensive political effort; to this effect, supports the European Commission's proposal for a Council Recommendation on a Youth Guarantee, which would be a key instrument in the fight against youth unemployment;

2. recalls that it has strongly supported in its respective opinion<sup>3</sup> the target of providing all young people with an offer of a job, vocational training or further education in a university or college, within four months of leaving school, as set out in Europe 2020 strategy's Youth on the Move flagship initiative;
3. suggests that Youth Guarantee schemes, and more particularly their employment, apprenticeship or traineeship components, be extended to recent graduates up to the age of 30;
4. highlights the important role of regional and local authorities in the fields of employment, training and education policies as confirmed during the conference held by the CoR on the Europe 2020 flagship initiative "Youth on the Move" on 13 December 2012;
5. welcomes the Commission's emphasis on partnership-based approaches for the introduction and implementation of Youth Guarantee schemes. Insists, however, that these partnerships be developed from the very beginning of policy development and involve all relevant stakeholders, in particular local and regional authorities. The latter have so far largely been left out of the process related to the Europe 2020 strategy and the European Semester, at a significant cost to democratic legitimacy as well as the effectiveness of the measures adopted;
6. agrees with the European Commission on the necessity for early intervention and activation when it comes to youth employment and shares the view that the principle of mutual obligation should be applied from the outset;
7. insists that supportive measures for labour market integration designed in the context of a Youth Guarantee should imperatively include language skills, as well as practical work experience, which improve employability and boost labour mobility within the EU;
8. stresses the importance of linking the Youth Guarantee schemes with youth mobility between Member States and an enhanced role for the Youth on the Move flagship initiative and regional and local authorities in this respect. The latter often implement mobility schemes at local level and EU support for better inter-regional cooperation could lead to better results;
9. welcomes in this respect the proposal of the European Commission to introduce a European Professional Card, aimed at simplifying procedures for the recognition of professional qualifications; insists in this respect that traineeships which form part of the training for a regulated profession, regardless of whether they are remunerated, should be recognised throughout the EU and subject to a contract; this is important for young Europeans, who are

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<sup>3</sup> CdR 292/2010 fin.

affected to a worrying degree by unemployment, and for whom professional mobility constitutes a realistic way of entering or re-entering the labour market;

10. stresses the importance of raising the awareness of young people of the possibilities to spend time studying, in training or in employment in other Member States; these experiences can play a fundamental role in boosting an individuals' spirit of independence and self-responsibility, while contributing to developing new and innovative ideas;
11. points out that the EU should ensure that mobility programmes are accessible under equal conditions to all young people, and thus recommends offering support to regions with specific geographical features, such as rural and sparsely populated areas, and in particular outermost regions and islands;
12. notes, however, that the fundamental way to increase youth employment is to encourage the creation of new jobs at all levels of qualification, not simply in sectors that require high-level qualifications;
13. emphasises that an important tool is the creation and support of dual education systems, under which relationships are established between students and their future employers from the start of their studies;
14. highlights the need to focus measures that boost skills and competences on addressing mismatches between labour market needs and skills offer; to this effect, continued education, apprenticeships and traineeships must be firmly anchored in the employment goal; furthermore, the role played by employers under Youth Guarantee schemes in providing the necessary career development opportunities is important;
15. recalls, in the context of enhancing skills within the framework of Youth Guarantee schemes, that the Committee of the Regions established the European Entrepreneurial Region (EER) award label. One of its main goals is to promote entrepreneurial spirit and the implementation of business-friendly policies that lead to job creation. EER regions have given a particular focus to encouraging young people to become entrepreneurs;
16. welcomes the European Commission's emphasis on quality employment recommending that Member States ensure that their Youth Guarantee schemes include a good-quality offer of employment. Moreover, the economic crisis should not be used as an excuse for relaxing occupational health and safety requirements. Social partners should be fully involved in the elaboration of a quality framework for employment offered under Youth Guarantee schemes. Highlights the significantly higher exposure of young people to poverty as confirmed in the European Commission's Employment and Social Developments Review 2012<sup>4</sup>;

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<sup>4</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-13-5\\_en.htm?locale=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-5_en.htm?locale=en).

17. urges Member States to closely involve employers also from the private sector in the implementation of the Youth Guarantee in order to offer as many opportunities for young people as possible;
18. stresses that youth unemployment is particularly high in the Member States which are currently under severe budgetary constraints. Endorses therefore continued focused support for these Member States, with additional financial measures if necessary, to cope with the challenge of introducing and implementing Youth Guarantee schemes at national level as foreseen e.g. in the June 2012 Growth Pact;
19. agrees that, in the absence of specific funding foreseen by the European Commission for Youth Guarantee schemes, the initiative should be co-financed with the use of Cohesion Policy funding instruments, in particular the European Social Fund (ESF); cautions therefore against cuts in the Cohesion Policy budget in the context of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020;
20. calls on the European Commission and Member States to ensure that future Partnership Agreements on cohesion policy adequately address youth unemployment in particular and also facilitate Youth Guarantee schemes, by making use of the European Social Fund allocations to implement good practices and innovative approaches already in place in some countries;
21. calls on the Member States and the local and regional authorities to establish the necessary coordination between employment service and educational administrators in order to ensure that young people leaving school early and finding themselves unemployed can benefit from European funding for training and youth measures, especially with a view to improving their skills and providing second chance educational opportunities;
22. calls on the Member States to submit in 2013 National Job Plans in which progress towards the introduction and implementation of Youth Guarantees is also included;
23. urges for the introduction and implementation of Youth Guarantee schemes as of January 2014 at the latest;
24. acknowledges that guaranteeing quality employment to young people cannot be achieved without an improvement in the overall economic situation. Therefore, calls on Member States to adopt policies aimed at boosting growth and job creation in general, and enabling young unemployed people who have left school without qualifications to acquire skills, alongside the measures related to the Youth Guarantee; In this context, welcomes the integration of this initiative into the European Semester exercise;
25. calls on Member States to heed the Commission's recommendation to ensure the widest possible awareness of the new services and support measures available under the Youth

Guarantee schemes, an area where the involvement of regional and local authorities is crucial because of their active role in implementing such schemes;

26. calls on the European Commission to create an effective mechanism to assist the Member States in the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, including the exchange of best practice and know-how, and asks for the involvement of the CoR in this process;
27. suggests that the European Commission make the proposal of a Youth Guarantee one of its communication priorities in 2013 and that social media is widely used to this effect;
28. instructs the President of the Committee of the Regions to submit this resolution to the President of the European Parliament, the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, the Irish Presidency of the EU and the forthcoming Lithuanian Presidency of the Council.

Brussels, 1 February 2013.

The President  
of the  
Committee of the Regions

Ramón Valcárcel Siso

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