

Youth Unemployment

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party, gathered in Dublin, 8-10 November 2012

Noting that

- youth unemployment rates are at crisis levels across a number of EU Member States and that youth unemployment rates are more than double the standard unemployment rate in many EU Member States;
- across the EU youth unemployment rates have reached an average of 22% and are as high as 50% in some Member States;
- the unemployment crisis in Europe has hit young people hardest. The true rate of unemployment is currently being masked by emigration and large numbers of young people entering or staying in education;
- a growing number of young Europeans neither find themselves in employment, education, nor training. This is a waste of individual talent;
- the European Commission as part of the Europe 2020 Strategy for Growth has called on all Member States to draw up a national plan to combat youth joblessness;
- the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, in January 2012 called for specific policies to be put in place by EU Member States to tackle youth unemployment along with providing increased supports for small and medium sized businesses;
- the focus of the European Commission's response to date has been on maximising European structural funds in order to meet the challenges posed by youth unemployment.

Considering that

- there has been no concrete response to the youth unemployment crisis across Europe and that no new funding has been announced to support Member States in implementing policies in this regard;
- research has shown that young people who experience unemployment for more than a year between the ages of 16-24 are more likely to be unemployed and welfare dependent later in life;
- those who find themselves unemployed at a young age are far more likely to be paid less in later life and experience reduced social mobility;
- a period of unemployment can bring about serious mental and

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physical health problems by increasing susceptibility to illness including both physical ailments and loss of self-esteem leading to depression;

- youth unemployment has a direct negative effect on the economy as well as society in terms of the cost of providing social protection payments, taxes foregone and the societal impact of emigration;
- unless this crisis is urgently tackled we could end up with a whole generation of young people in long term unemployment;
- despite the growing levels of education, this is the most affected generation by youth unemployment for a long time;
- youth unemployment levels vary enormously across Europe;
- Such variations are both a result of different formal and vocational educational systems, and of different labour market structures and regulations

Urgently calls upon its members to

- make every effort at an EU level to bring about a detailed and coordinated response to tackling youth unemployment, each Member State committing to put in place a detailed national plan to tackle youth unemployment by mid-2013;
- call for additional structural funds to be urgently put aside for those Member States with the highest rates of youth unemployment;
- ensure that the EU puts aside significant funds in the post-2014 EU budget for addressing youth unemployment, focusing on providing professional training leading to concrete job opportunities and allowing unskilled, or highly educated but non-integrated in the job market, young workers to overcome their situation;
- put in place a range of measures to support job creation in small and medium sized businesses including facilitating urgent access to finance for SMEs, supporting in particular young entrepreneurs;
- advocate more labour market mobility and equal rights to employment for all individuals with a single European job market with comprehensive and comparable levels of education;
- advocate educational systems with higher links to market requirements, where students have a possibility of using the talents they have developed.

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