

What youth organisations are doing in the field of employment and education?

The European Youth Forum (YFJ) is an independent, democratic, youth-led platform, representing 99 National Youth Councils and International Youth Organisations from across Europe. The YFJ works to empower young people to participate actively in society to improve their own lives, by representing and advocating their needs and interests and those of their organisations towards the European Institutions, the Council of Europe and the United Nations.

The two pillars consisting of National youth Councils and International Youth Organisations are guarantee of an vibrant platform, that responses to the needs of membership and young people. While NYCs have their respected governments as main contra parts, the International youth organizations are working towards European institutions and programs.

I would like to outline to you today the state of affairs as perceived by young people and youth organisations as well as our main positions on crucial topics that were already mentioned today. Next to it I will try to outline to you the Youth Employment Action a pan-european - also know as “kill the youth unemployment” initiative.

I will not talk about numbers, am sure that by now I am sure that people in this room fully understand the scope and seriousness of situation on the field of youth employment.

In the last decades young people have been deeply affected by the increasing segmentation of labour market and the parallel development of new atypical forms of employment. Young people with fewer opportunities, often marginalized and therefore lacking access to qualifications., face particular challenges that we believe deserve specific responses from policy makers as well as employers, trade unions .

Unemployment not only hinders personal development, and lowers life chances out-setting youth to poverty and social exclusion, it also prevents young Europeans from contributing to the overall growth of their country, region and the world. What is

more: Addressing youth unemployment is also an urgent task with regards to the ageing of the European society, especially the sustainability of social protection structures.

A fundamental rights approach to employment is needed in order to offer all employees the same rights in labour market.

Improving the labour market integration of young people shall be conceived as a collective responsibility, which requires the equal involvement of actors such as public authorities, the social partners and youth organizations.

We have seen in the past that effective policies are those, who involve all affected parties on equal footing, we can not imagine a way out of current employment crisis without involving young people and youth organisations.

YOUTH GUARANTEE

The European Youth Forum strongly believes that Youth Guarantees can be an efficient and proactive approach to overcoming the disproportional unemployment among young people and contributing to their social inclusion. In the long term Youth Guarantee would bring an important contribution to the sustainability of the European Social Model.

Youth organisations, and the active participation of young people play an important role in empowering young people, providing a space for self-development, NFE, learning to participate and the development of competences. The work within youth organisations and other CSOs allows young people to make their own choices and to take responsibility for their actions and creates possibilities for recognising and identifying their personal potential. Moreover, youth organisations have a key role in aggregating the opinions of young people and represent their views in the public debate and the dialogue with public authorities. As such a youth civil society contributes to all fields of action and their identified objectives.

Youth Employment Action

In the past number of years, the YFJ has developed several

positions on Youth Employment and has been lobbying actively for decent working conditions for young people as well as for a better transition from education to employment.

YFJ therefore decided co-ordinate, together with its members, a large-scale, long-term, trans-national project aimed at developing best practice on how to create entrance to the labour market and decent working conditions for young people.

We have several youth organization from across Europe involved and working hard on projects, this are few examples;

Finnish Youth Cooperation (Alliannssi) *Project: Work for Young People*

The Lithuanian Youth Council (LiJOT) *Project: The Lithuanian Youth Occupation Development Partnership*

The Slovakian Youth Council (RMS) *Project: Young Entrepreneurs Support Network*

Conclusion

The participation of young people in youth organisations and in broader civil society should be increased, with the focus on the participation of more and more diverse young people we need to bring even more young people from the margins into the spotlight. We see the need to involve more young people and more youth organisations in the cycle of policy making if we strive for an real impact of these policies. Young people have a lot to say and we have to enable the channels for them to be heard.

With this I would also like to thank OECD to open the attentive ear and made ground for our ever-developing cooperation.

As it was back then when we were sending our position to European Commission regarding the European Recovery Plan, our message is still clear: in times of crisis invest in youth!