

YouthProAktiv

Declaration of Young Europeans on Youth Unemployment

YouthProAktiv is a coalition of young people promoting a culture of proactivity and entrepreneurship in education and policy.

Youth Unemployment causes short-term and long-term damage to societal and economic development. It devalues the full human capital of an entire generation. Therefore, we believe that providing effective solutions for this problem is to contribute decisively to the economic and social recovery of Europe as a whole.

The European Youth can and will play an indispensable role in resolving the problems afflicting our crisis-afflicted continent. This, however, requires important changes in the existing mentality and an openness to new best practices with regard to education and entrepreneurship in different countries. These changes must start in education systems, which are no longer able to respond effectively to the needs of the 21st century labour market.

The desired changes leading to new paradigms can only be achieved by effective, concentrated measures and political will necessary to implement them. Consequently,

1. We call for a reform of the educational system which will individualise and personalise European education, making actual room for young people to discover and appreciate their own talents, boost their potential, and develop the abilities that will allow an efficient and sustainable transition from the academic to the professional life. This can be based upon good case practices of other Member States. We call for an agreement among states on a minimum of quality criteria to be implemented
2. We encourage the implementation of a system of one-year mandatory internship for students prior to entering university, thus providing them with valuable and practical experience. From this system, students will draw concrete academic and professional benefits that will also help them set out an entrepreneurial path. We encourage the implementation of a system of mandatory practical experiences as part of school curriculum.
3. We call for the addition of a dedicate coaching role in secondary education which is not a member of the teaching staff. Tasked with guiding individual students towards their personalised development plan. This should incorporate participation of companies and entrepreneurs.

4. We call for an incorporation of mandatory comprehensive IT courses in the school curriculum to equip students at all levels with specific IT skills that have become basic in a digital age and essential for all entrepreneurial activity, e.g. basic programming language and mastery of mobile devices such as tablets.
5. We urge for improvement of language education to facilitate worldwide reallocation which may lead to global entrepreneurial mindset.
6. We call for a reduction of the financial risks for young entrepreneurs by broadening the tax exemptions for start-ups.
7. We urge a cut of all unnecessary red tape that hampers entrepreneurial dynamism and a harmonisation of the legal framework for start-ups and SMEs in the EU Member States, thus facilitating entrepreneurial mobility.
8. We advocate for the introduction of “Second-Chance Allowance”, i.e. allowances for people who became bankrupt during their efforts for starting a business.
9. We encourage the setting of a minimum threshold of co-working spaces in European countries. These spaces will be co-financed by the EU and made available for all entrepreneurs.
10. We call for the immediate beginning of “quality internships” supported by initiatives and platforms with proven success. We call for the immediate end of professional unpaid internships.

We believe that the only viable option to effectively tackle the structural problem of youth unemployment depends upon the implementation of structural measures that can effectively establish an entrepreneurial mindset in Europe.

Confident that these proposed actions are all conducive to a desired change in the existing paradigms from which Europe as a whole will benefit, we share the belief that they ought to be addressed urgently and the time to do so is now, not tomorrow.