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**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL, THE  
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**Promoting young people's full participation in education, employment and society**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Empowering young people and creating favourable conditions for them to develop their skills, to work and to participate actively in society is essential for the sound economic and social development of the European Union, particularly in the context of globalisation, knowledge-based economies and ageing societies where it is crucial that every young person is given the possibility to fulfil his or her potential.

While overall conditions for young people in Europe today are positive – freedom and security, prosperity, longer life expectancy –, there is increasing concern that many of them cannot prosper. High rates of child poverty, poor health, school drop-out and unemployment among a too large number of young people, indicate a need to review the investments Europe is making in its youth<sup>1</sup> starting earlier, also taking into account the essential role of families<sup>2</sup>. Social exclusion of young people carries high social and economic costs and needs to be prevented.

The challenges young people are facing today are complex and diverse. There are more opportunities to learn and participate but less established pathways. Maintaining growth and prosperity in Europe, whilst promoting social cohesion and sustainable development, depends on a full contribution and participation by all young people, all the more so since their number relative to the population as a whole is shrinking. Young people will have to bear the growing cost of an ageing population, which calls for an intergenerational response<sup>3</sup>.

There is therefore a need for a transversal youth strategy, building on cooperation between policy makers and stakeholders at European, national, regional and local levels. Member States play the main role in implementing youth policy. In this perspective they already committed themselves in the European Youth Pact to give special attention to young people within the Lisbon Strategy<sup>4</sup>. The EU can play a complementary role by offering financial support and policy coordination. A youth policy framework has been progressively setup with the support of the European Parliament and other institutions since the White Paper on Youth<sup>5</sup>. Closer coordination between this framework and other policies impacting on youth, together with a stronger focus on youth in such policies, would be helpful to address the challenges faced by young people more efficiently, and this is the purpose of this Communication.

Furthermore, promoting young people's full participation in society would benefit from a strong partnership between the EU and young people. It is proposed here that this could take the form of a commitment by the EU and Member States to develop better opportunities for young people and a commitment by young people themselves to play an active part.

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<sup>1</sup> BEPA April 2007

<sup>2</sup> European Alliance of Families launched at Spring European Council in 2007

<sup>3</sup> COM (2006) 571, COM (2007) 244

<sup>4</sup> COM (2005) 206

<sup>5</sup> COM (2001) 681, Council Resolution C 168/2 (2002)

## 2. BETTER AND MORE EDUCATION FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE

Education is crucial for young people's transitions into the labour market and successful integration and participation in society. However, a significant number of young people leave education systems without having acquired the skills needed for a smooth transition into employment.

Nearly one in six young people in the EU are early school leavers. Member States aim to reduce this figure to an average of 10% by 2010, but it is uncertain whether this can be achieved. One in four young adults (ages 25-29) has not completed upper secondary education level. Surveys point to considerable deficiencies in pupils' mastery of basic literacy and numeracy skills, which constitute a serious obstacle to progression into vocational training or higher education, leaving them to face a precarious future in society and the modern labour market<sup>6</sup>.

Europe's current patchy provision of early childhood education<sup>7</sup> – the great benefits of which are well established<sup>8</sup> – could be improved. Efforts must be centred on developing key competences<sup>9</sup> from a very early age, starting with children in disadvantaged areas and creating accompanying mechanism to prevent early school leaving.

Education systems should deliver efficient and relevant education in a lifecycle perspective, stimulating the individual's potential for creativity and autonomy, while avoiding mismatches with the labour market. Young people need to be prepared for entry into the labour market but also to be able to carry on their education throughout their lives, for their personal development and to help them adapt to changing professional circumstances. Developing communication skills in foreign languages should be promoted in this context.

These are the major challenges - all the more pressing in a globalised and knowledge-based economy - which education systems must address if they are to meet the needs of today's young people. The Education and Training 2010 work programme<sup>10</sup> provides an EU-level framework supporting the modernisation of Member States' education and training systems. A stronger political focus on implementing good policies and practices that have emerged from this process would be beneficial. By directing investment to develop early childhood education for all and raising the quality of its provision, Member States can more effectively address the problem of early school leaving and educational disadvantage.

### *The Commission*

- invites Member States in their national lifelong learning strategies to prioritise the quality and the quantity of investment to early childhood education

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<sup>6</sup> Progress Report 2007

<sup>7</sup> Pre-primary education

<sup>8</sup> COM (2006) 481

<sup>9</sup> Recommendation (2006/962/EC): these are communication in the mother tongue, communication in foreign languages, mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology, digital competence, learning to learn, social and civic competences, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, and cultural awareness and expression.

<sup>10</sup> C 142/1 (2002)

- invites Member States to modernise higher education through changes to governance, funding and curricula
- invites Member States to build a stronger focus on education and training in the National Reform Programmes in order to avoid mismatches between education outcomes and labour market requirements e.g. by developing more and better counselling opportunities for young people and building closer links between education institutions and the world of work
- invites Member States to improve the labour market relevance, attractiveness and openness of the vocational education and training in order to better prepare young people for the labour market, e.g. through partnerships between stakeholders - including social partners and sectoral organisations
- invites Member States to implement the European Qualifications Framework which will support the mobility of young students and workers and the validation of what they have learned through formal and informal paths
- together with Member States, will develop the youth-specific elements within Europass<sup>11</sup>, based on the Youthpass delivered within the framework of the Youth in Action Programme, to facilitate the access of young people to mobility and lifelong learning

### **3. YOUTH AND EMPLOYMENT: A CHALLENGE FOR EUROPE**

Using the full potential of youth is a requisite for future economic growth and social cohesion in the EU. Labour markets need to urgently respond to these challenges in order to fulfil the potential of the youth population.

#### **3.1. Youth unemployment: a wasted resource<sup>12</sup>**

Youth unemployment (ages 15-24) is a key concern for Europe: it stands at 17.4%<sup>13</sup>. This constitutes a waste of human capital. Over the last 25 years, no real breakthrough has been achieved in reducing it despite a general rise in educational attainment. In the current economic upswing with an estimated 7 million more persons moving into employment during the 2005-2008 Lisbon cycle, labour market performance continues to develop less favourably for young people. They are more than twice as likely to be unemployed than prime-age adults. Young adults' unemployment often turns into long-term unemployment (over 50% of the unemployed aged 25-29) or inactivity. Young women are overrepresented among the inactive and unemployed, and the gap to men increases with age.

Youth unemployment has long been regarded as a temporary phenomenon in the transition from education to the labour market. However, the causes of youth employment problems and the risks they entail have to be reconsidered in the changing demographic and economic

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<sup>11</sup> DECISION 2241/2004/EC: Europass provides a community framework for transparency of qualifications and competences improving the opportunities for young people to make their learning outcomes more visible

<sup>12</sup> See detailed analysis in SEC (2007) 1093 presented with this Communication, and Employment Observatory 2005 Review

<sup>13</sup> EU-27 youth unemployment rate in 2006. For more details on figures see SEC (2007) 1093

context. Skills and education (or their lack) is one key explanation, but difficult transitions and labour market segmentation are also parts of the problem. Regional disparities in some Member States reinforce such problems.

As a consequence of educational shortcomings a quarter of all youngsters arrive at the threshold of the labour market without sufficient qualifications (see chapter 2). Half of all new jobs created in the EU today require high level qualifications, and most of the rest at least medium level. Unsurprisingly the unemployment rate of low qualified youth is significantly higher than for more educated peers. Changes in labour demand have increased the disadvantage of low qualified young people. Knowledge and service-based economies still create jobs not requiring a high formal qualification, but they demand more varied skills and competences than needed in the past. In some countries even highly educated young people have difficulties finding a job due to macro-economic or labour market institutions unfavourable to the entry of newcomers, and to a mismatch between qualifications and labour market demands.

High rates of youth inactivity (other than participation in education and training) are another phenomenon of failed labour market integration and typically coincide with overall high unemployment rates. Inactivity has negative repercussions on the readiness and economic capacity of young adults to raise families. Unemployment and inactivity of parents are strong risk factors for child poverty (see chapter 4).

### **3.2 Improving young people's transitions: flexicurity**

Settling into the labour market is often a gradual process, but becomes a problem if non-employment spells are not filled with meaningful activity; this detracts from the individuals' employability. In many Member States, one in three young people remain jobless one year after leaving education.

Despite Member States' reiterated commitment the vast majority of the 4.6 million young unemployed in the EU do not get the opportunity to make a new start within 6 months. Education and labour market institutions should step up efforts in providing all young people with tailored guidance and counselling for choosing a suitable education pathway leading to labour market qualification<sup>14</sup> hence reducing the mismatch between education outcomes and labour market requirements. Young people should receive more support through tailored job search including seizing job opportunities abroad. The EU will step up its support to Member States cooperation for promoting mobility (e.g. EURES "Your First Job Abroad" initiative).

Establishing early links between education and the labour market is essential to familiarise young people with the world of work. Internships, when linked to the training or study curriculum, are an important instrument in this respect, However, internships with little or no pay and limited educational added-value should be avoided. Member States should ensure that internships are properly defined.

Young people need appropriate employment opportunities, but having had little or no way to show their capabilities, they suffer heavily from not being taken into jobs. They are particularly affected by the dualism of the labour market. They can be trapped in jobs with poor conditions or prospects: for instance 4 in 10 are currently in temporary employment; around a quarter works part time and even more have low paid jobs. Such employment can

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<sup>14</sup> Council Resolution Guidance, May 2004; Career Guidance Handbook

serve as a stepping stone, helping young people to establish a track record of employment, but for some it can lead to a cycle of permanent low quality jobs<sup>15</sup>.

Despite the fact that Member States make great efforts in tackling youth unemployment, evaluations of active labour market policies for youth have shown that results could still be improved.<sup>16</sup> Member States should address more systematically and more broadly causes of youth unemployment within the Lisbon Strategy, including the European Youth Pact. The 2006/2007 Lisbon exercise made a number of recommendations relevant to youth employment problems.

The common principles for flexicurity provide a part of the framework to address the main causes of youth employment problems and feeling of insecurity<sup>17</sup>. They address at the same time the issues of security and flexibility. In the next Lisbon cycle, starting in 2008, Member States are invited to establish, based on their respective specific challenges and with active involvement of social partners, flexicurity strategies integrating the four policy components (flexible and reliable contractual arrangements, effective lifelong learning systems, active labour market policies, modern social security systems). Policy interventions and employment measures should be reviewed and tailored to the national circumstances and preferences. Member States should use the European Social Fund to provide young people with transition pathways from education to work, in particular where vocational training systems are less developed, and put a stronger focus on youth in structural policies aiming at the reduction of regional disparities.

### **3.3 Promoting entrepreneurship**

Europe needs more entrepreneurs. Only 15% of workers are employers or self-employed in the EU and figures dwindle to 4.2% for young people<sup>18</sup>. However, over half of young people indicate that they would be interested in following an entrepreneurial route<sup>19</sup>. Fostering the acquisition of entrepreneurial mindsets through education and training is crucial and has been recognised as a key competence. The European Youth Pact and recent Commission initiatives<sup>20</sup> also highlight the need for learning processes to support, as early as possible, the development of young people's participatory skills and entrepreneurial self-confidence and know-how.

There is a need to create favourable conditions for young entrepreneurs, by providing information, financial incentives and lifting unnecessary legal and administrative burdens. There is also a need to address specific obstacles still met by young women to create and run a business. The Commission is preparing a pilot project to promote the mobility of young entrepreneurs.

#### ***The Commission***

- will increase monitoring of youth employment in Member States and promote best practice exchange

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<sup>15</sup> Employment in Europe 2004 p. 178

<sup>16</sup> Employment in Europe 2006 p. 139

<sup>17</sup> COM(2007) 359

<sup>18</sup> 2006 Labour Force Survey

<sup>19</sup> Flash EB 192, June 2007

<sup>20</sup> COM (2006) 33 final. See also Oslo agenda

- will improve geographic mobility support through the EURES tool and launch in autumn 2007 the pilot "Your First Job Abroad" initiative for young workers to make their first mobility experience
- will propose in 2008 an initiative for a European quality charter on internships
- invites Member States to give more attention to youth in the National Reform Programmes and in multilateral surveillance
- invites Member States to establish flexicurity strategies including a specific focus on youth employment objectives, in particular in the light of the approach set out in the June Communication on flexicurity and the further work on flexicurity in the European Council
- invites Member States to promote internships with a strong link to training or study curriculum and to define adequate frames for doing so
- invites Member States to promote entrepreneurship education as a key competence and to improve conditions for young entrepreneurs e.g. by promoting the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme amongst businesses and financial institutions to facilitate access to finance for the start-up of SME's by young entrepreneurs
- encourages Member States to use national policies and EU funds, in particular the European Social Fund, the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the Rural Development Fund or any other relevant EU funds and programmes, for supporting young people's transition from education to employment and reducing regional disparities in this respect

#### **4. USING THE FULL POTENTIAL OF ALL**

Young people's participation in education, employment and society is affected by poverty, social marginalisation, discrimination and poor health. Europe has a genuine interest for both economic and social reasons to ensure that no child and young person is excluded.

##### **4.1 Social inclusion**

Child poverty which affects 19% of all children and youngsters below 18 is a major pre-occupation<sup>21</sup>. Child well-being has been seen to have important effects on subsequent education and employment. Countries with high poverty risks for children and young people typically have high levels of unemployment. Breaking the inter-generational transmission of poverty is a key challenge, and policies should address the needs of both children and their parents in a comprehensive manner. More emphasis should be placed on pre-primary education and on the education of pupils living in disadvantaged areas.

In a number of countries, social inclusion of youth with a migrant background or from disadvantaged minorities (in particular Roma) has so far not been successful. Often combined with a weak socioeconomic status of their parents, they account for a large portion of disadvantaged youth, have higher rates of early school leaving and often lower reading skills. The risk of economic inactivity for young people from ethnic minorities in some countries is one third higher than for the mainstream youth population.

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<sup>21</sup> SEC (2007) 329

Achieving social inclusion and equal opportunities is also a key issue for disabled young people. Eliminating barriers to their participation in education and training, as well as to their engagement in civic, political and community life is crucial. For all youth with fewer capabilities, active labour market policies and measures to increase their participation in vocational training are instrumental for improving opportunities to fully participate in society.

## 4.2 Gender imbalances

Young women experience higher unemployment rates than men and are more often in low quality, part-time and fixed-term jobs. Although they have made substantial progress in the last decades in education, their potential is still only partially reflected in labour market performance, including persisting pay gaps which increase with age. Gender stereotypes play a major role in this situation since women and men follow traditional education and training paths, which often place women in occupations that are less valued and remunerated. Women work much less in technical fields, despite the existence of labour market shortages. Young men are overrepresented among early school leavers.

## 4.3 Better health

Good health is a requisite for building human capital and full participation. Much ill-health later in life can be prevented early on. But a relatively high and increasing number of young people suffer already from health problems: e.g. one child in five is overweight or obese, around 10% of deaths in young females and 25% in young males are related to alcohol. Young people's health is strongly influenced by family, school and social circumstances. Lower socio-economic status and levels of education are associated with a higher incidence of mental and physical health problems, drug misuse and teenage pregnancy.

Young people are a major target group of EU health and prevention policies (in the fields of alcohol, drug abuse, tobacco, consumer health, nutrition and obesity and HIV/AIDS, and soon mental health). Greater inter-sectoral collaboration is needed to address the social dimension of health and create tailored actions to promote young people's health. The Commission has also highlighted the importance of promoting better nutrition and physical activity among young people to improve their health<sup>22</sup>.

### *The Commission*

- invites Member States to step up the fight against child poverty notably by promoting equal opportunities for children and young people with respect to education, including pre-primary education, as well as parents' labour market participation
- invites Member States to equip youth organisations and youth workers to deal with health issues
- will prepare a new health strategy in 2007 which will support tailored actions for young people
- strongly supports actions to eliminate gender stereotypes in education, culture and on the labour market by promoting gender mainstreaming and specific actions in EU education and culture programmes

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<sup>22</sup> COM (2007)391 and COM (2007)279

## **5. ACTIVE YOUNG CITIZENS**

Since the publication of the White Paper on Youth, the Commission and Member States have been working on policies for fostering young people's participative skills and active engagement in society<sup>23</sup>. Shaping youth policies in constant dialogue with young people is instrumental to their success.

### **5.1 Youth participation**

Youth participation in democratic institutions and in a continuous dialogue with policy makers is essential to the sound functioning of our democracies and the sustainability of policies which impact on young people's lives.

The Commission recently<sup>24</sup> called on Member States to continue their efforts to increase youth participation and formulate coherent information strategies for young people. The Commission also launched a genuine dialogue with young people, structured from the local through to the European level which needs to be fully implemented. The European Youth Summit "Your Europe" held in Rome in March 2007, the European Youth Week and regular Presidency Youth events are positive steps towards such a structured dialogue with young people.

Involvement in cultural activities can also enable young people to express their creative energy and contribute to fostering active citizenship. Furthermore, cultural activities can promote inclusion and facilitate intergenerational and intercultural dialogue by forging links between individuals and helping to transcend national identity. This lies at the heart of the European Year on Intercultural Dialogue in 2008, which will have a major focus on young people. They are also key messages in the Commission's Communication on culture<sup>25</sup>.

### **5.2 Voluntary activities**

Voluntary activities provide a valuable non-formal learning experience, which enables young people to acquire skills and facilitate their transition from education to employment. Through volunteering, young people develop values such as mutual understanding, dialogue and solidarity. However, it must be pointed out that voluntary activities are not a substitute for paid employment.

Young Europeans have a positive view of programmes encouraging voluntary activities, with 74% believing that such programmes are a good way of increasing their participation in society. The EU Youth in Action Programme<sup>26</sup> provides a framework for the European Voluntary Service.

Member States' reports on the implementation of the common objectives adopted for voluntary activities within the Open Method of Coordination (OMC)<sup>27</sup> show that exchanges

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<sup>23</sup> Council Resolution C 168/2 (2002)

<sup>24</sup> COM (2006) 417

<sup>25</sup> COM (2007) 242

<sup>26</sup> From 1996 to 2006, 30.000 young European have benefited from this scheme

<sup>27</sup> Council Resolution 13996/04 ( 2004)

of good practice, peer learning activities and evaluation tools would bring an added value in developing voluntary activities<sup>28</sup>.

Obstacles such as visa difficulties and lack of insurance should be eliminated, and the linkage to entitlements to social security provisions, including unemployment benefits, needs to be improved. Cross-sectoral cooperation between different authorities and appropriate legal frameworks are necessary<sup>29</sup>. Recognition of skills gained by young people in volunteering contributes to facilitating their transition from education to employment. Good practices exist but a more coherent approach is needed, building on the ongoing reflection launched at EU level<sup>30</sup>.

### **5.3. Young people and the EU: A strengthened partnership**

Institutions and policies have a key role to play in broadening opportunities for the young generation to participate in society but young people themselves must also develop a sense of responsibility for their education, health, integration in professional life and engagement in society.

Youth organisations are a key resource in this respect. The role of the European Youth Forum is important in engaging such organisations, in particular national and local youth Councils, as well as young people with fewer opportunities in the structured dialogue with policy makers.

The development of the European Union calls for a strong commitment. In a recent Eurobarometer young people have expressed their support for the EU and it is important to build on this.<sup>31</sup>

The Commission proposes to reinforce the existing partnership between EU Institutions and youth representatives in a declaration highlighting the relevance of a structured dialogue with young people at all levels and in the fields covered by this Communication. The agenda is to be defined together with young people. The dialogue should associate relevant stakeholders and youth organisations. It should also include young people with fewer opportunities and those who are not members of an organisation.

Other areas of interest to young people, such as sustainable development, the future of the EU or aid to developing countries, could also be addressed in the framework of this partnership.

An EU report on youth should be drafted every three years in association with young people, drawing on existing information and reporting on developments in the areas addressed in this communication. Ministers have welcomed such a report<sup>32</sup>.

*The Commission*

*For participation*

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<sup>28</sup> See detailed analysis in SEC (2007) 1084 presented with this Communication

<sup>29</sup> See section 3 of the staff working document on voluntary activities of young people for more substantiated information about obstacles

<sup>30</sup> DECISION 2241/2004/EC

<sup>31</sup> Youth EB 2007

<sup>32</sup> Council Conclusions 8771 (25.05.2007)

- invites Member States within the youth OMC to implement the reinforced common objectives for participation by and information for young people and to implement the structured dialogue
- invites Member States to give young people a role within the activities planned for the European Year on intercultural dialogue
- in cooperation with Member States and with due respect to their competences, will study existing national practices regarding access for young people to culture, with a view to facilitating such access
- will use relevant<sup>33</sup> EU programmes, in cooperation with Member States, to promote young people's participation, in a coordinated approach

***For voluntary activities***

- invites Member States to develop programmes, strategies, explore improvements to legal frameworks, eliminate obstacles and encourage volunteering of young people with fewer opportunities
- invites Member States to promote and recognise volunteering, building on Europass
- invites Member States to reinforce the OMC on voluntary activities, undertake peer learning activities and develop monitoring tools at European level
- will launch a consultation and impact assessment on a new initiative at EU level to promote and recognise voluntary activities of young people

***For a strengthened partnership***

- invites the European Institutions and young people to reinforce their partnership in a joint declaration foreseen later this year
- invites the European Youth Forum, within the structured dialogue, to voice the concerns of young people with fewer opportunities and of those who are not members of any organisation
- will draw up an EU report on youth to be prepared by the Commission every three years

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

The present Communication is a major step in a policy process on youth issues which started in 2001 with the White Paper on Youth. It conveys, in a context of aging societies, a strong message for better, earlier and more investment in young people to promote their education, employment, social inclusion, health and active citizenship in a lifecycle approach. Investment should not merely be financial. Personal involvement is needed by relevant stakeholders, such as policy makers, labour and education institutions, enterprises, youth workers, researchers, families and organisations working for and with young people.

The Communication highlights the need to substantially reduce youth unemployment and improve the quality of jobs. All young people, and Europe as a whole, need to have the skills and opportunities to work productively for economic and social well-being. Key to young

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<sup>33</sup> For instance Youth in Action, Lifelong Learning, Competitiveness and Innovation framework programme and its more specific entrepreneurship and innovation programme and the proposed Community Action programme in the field of Health 2007 – 2013

people's full participation is access to a good job which also requires qualitative and relevant education. Promoting full participation of young managers, entrepreneurs and workers is also a key component in building innovative, knowledge based and internationally competitive EU economies.

Working towards young people's full participation in society can be done more successfully through a transversal youth strategy. This requires stronger cross-sectoral cooperation between policy fields impacting on youth and a greater focus on youth in such policies. Member States are to this end invited to take a number of measures aiming at forging closer links between existing processes, such as the Lisbon Strategy, health strategies and various open methods of coordination<sup>34</sup>, in order for them to deliver further and better opportunities for young people, and concentrate on actions that will be more beneficial to young people's professional integration, social inclusion and active citizenship.

The Commission proposes a number of new initiatives building bridges between education and employment and fostering young people's active citizenship. These include an initiative on a European quality charter on internships, a pilot initiative "Your First Job Abroad", an upcoming new health strategy, an impact assessment on voluntary activities for young people and a study pertaining to young people's access to culture. In addition the Commission proposes to promote transversal coordination through an EU report on youth every three years.

Full participation of young people in society can however only be successful if young people are committed to work as partners towards this objective, hence the Commission's proposal to empower young people and strengthen the existing partnership between the European Institutions and the young generation.

Technical Annex: reference documents

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<sup>34</sup> In the fields of education, inclusion and youth

### **Technical Annex: List of reference documents (in chronological order)**

- (1) COM (2001) 681: White Paper on a new impetus for European Youth (21.11.2001)
- (2) Education and Training 2010 C 142/1: Detailed Work Programme on the follow-up of the objectives of Education and training systems in Europe (14.06.2002)
- (3) Council Resolution C 168/2 (2002): Resolution of the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council regarding the framework of European Cooperation in the youth field (27.06.2002)
- (4) Council Resolution Guidance: Council Resolution on Strengthening Policies, Systems and Practices in the field of Guidance. (May 2004)  
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/resolution2004\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/resolution2004_en.pdf)
- (5) Employment in Europe (EiE) 2004: Employment in Europe 2004
- (6) Council Resolution 13996/04 (2004): Council Resolution on Common objectives for voluntary activities, 13996/04 (15.11.2004)
- (7) DECISION 2241/2004/EC: Decision of the European parliament and of the Council of 15.12.2004 on a Single Community framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences (Europass)
- (8) European Youth Pact: Annex 1 to the Presidency Conclusions of the European Council of 22 and 23 March 2005
- (9) COM (2005) 206: Commission Communication on European policies concerning youth - Addressing the concerns of young people in Europe – implementing the European Youth Pact and promoting active citizenship (30.05.2005)
- (10) COM (2006) 33: Commission Communication on Implementing the Community Lisbon Programme: Fostering entrepreneurial mindsets through education and learning (13.02.2006)
- (11) COM (2006) 208: Commission Communication "Delivering on the modernisation agenda for universities: education, research and innovation" (10.05.2006)
- (12) COM (2006) 417: Commission Communication on the follow-up of the White Paper on a new impetus for European Youth: Implementing the common objectives for participation by and information for young people in view of promoting their active citizenship (20.07.2006)
- (13) COM (2006) 481: Commission Communication on Efficiency and Equity in European education and training systems (08.09.2006)
- (14) COM (2006) 571: Commission Communication "The demographic future of Europe – from challenge to opportunity" (12.10.2006)
- (15) Employment in Europe (EiE) 2006: Employment in Europe 2006

- (16) European Employment Observatory Review: Autumn 2005 (Youth employment). Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2006. ISSN 1725-5376
- (17) Recommendation (2006/962/EC): Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on key competences for lifelong learning (18.12.2006)
- (18) COM (2006) 857: Commission Communication "Employment in rural areas: closing the jobs gap" (21.12.2006)
- (19) SEC (2006) 1772: Commission Staff Working Document: Report on employment in rural areas (21.12.2006)
- (20) SEC (2007) 329: Commission Staff Working Document: Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion. Supporting document (06.03.2007)
- (21) BEPA April 2007: Bureau of European Policy Advisers "Investing in youth: an empowerment strategy"  
[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/policy\\_advisers/publications/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/policy_advisers/publications/index_en.htm)
- (22) COM (2007) 244: Commission Communication "Promoting solidarity between the generations" (10.5.2007)
- (23) Council Conclusions 8771 (2007): on future perspectives for European cooperation in the field of youth policy (25.05.2007)
- (24) COM (2007) 279: White Paper on a Strategy for Europe for Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity related health issues (30.05.2007)
- (25) COM (2007) 359: Commission Communication "Towards common principles of flexicurity: More and better jobs through flexibility and security" (27.06.2007)
- (26) Youth EB 2007: "Looking behind the figures – the main results of the Eurobarometer 2007 survey on youth" of February 2007, on [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.html)
- (27) Flash EB 192, Entrepreneurship Survey of the EU (25 Member States), United States, Iceland and Norway: Analytical Report, April 2007
- (28) Progress Report 2007: Progress towards Lisbon objectives in Education and Training: DG EAC 2007 Report based on indicators and benchmarks (forthcoming)
- (29) COM (2007) 242: Commission Communication on a European agenda for culture in a globalizing world (10.05.2007)
- (30) COM (2007) 391: White Paper on sport: the EU and sport: matching expectations, and annexed Action Plan (11.07.2007)
- (31) Oslo agenda for Entrepreneurship Education in Europe  
[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/support\\_measures/training\\_education/doc/oslo\\_agenda\\_final.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/support_measures/training_education/doc/oslo_agenda_final.pdf)

- (32) Career Guidance Handbook: Career Guidance – A handbook for policy-makers. Commission staff working paper and joint publication with OECD. <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/53/53/34060761.pdf>
- (33) LFS: "Labour Force Survey - User Guide" Eurostat 2007
- (34) European Alliance of Families: launched by Member States at the Spring European Council 2007. For more details see [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/families/european-alliance-for-families\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/families/european-alliance-for-families_en.html)
- (35) European Youth Portal: overall source of information for young people. <http://europa.eu/youth>
- (36) Youth in Action Programme 2007-2013: the new EU programme in the field of youth. <http://ec.europa.eu/youth>