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Six Demands to make the EU work for young people

More than a decade after the financial crisis, 15.5% of all of young people under 25 are not in education, employment or training, with youth unemployment rates reaching around 40% in Greece and Spain, and 35% in Italy. Yet austerity measures continue to destroy many young people's opportunities for a better future. The Greens/EFA Group has 6 demands to make the EU work for young people:

1) Fair, green jobs

Green jobs can offer quality employment to young people and contribute to climate justice. Through investments in renewable energies and other sustainable sectors, we can **create more green jobs for young people** across Europe. Rural areas need to become vibrant economies providing plenty of opportunity for young Europeans through a sustainable Common Agricultural Policy.

But jobs also need to be fairer. **Time is up for discriminatory youth wages** and exploitative jobs. It is unacceptable that in some Member States, young people are paid less (sometimes up to half of the salary) than their colleagues over 25 for performing the same work. Fair entry-level jobs must be the norm rather than the exception and offer training opportunities for young employees to develop their skills.

2) Pay your interns!

We call for a ban on all unpaid internships and trainings, and for the following criteria to be met at all times: **quality learning, decent remuneration** of at least the national minimum wage or 60% of median income (if there is no minimum wage), and **full social security coverage as well as ensuring that the internship is proper educational experience**. Unpaid internships are inaccessible to young people from less privileged socio-economic backgrounds and are fundamentally unjust.

3) Binding measures for EU countries

The Greens/EFA Group pushed for the introduction of the [European Youth Guarantee](#), which requires Member States to set up programmes to help young people enter quality education, training or employment. Currently this is only optional. **We insist that the Youth Guarantee should be made binding for all Member States.**

4) Quality education & training

Research shows that **investment in education is one of the most profitable uses a country can make of taxpayers money**, with huge positive economic and social impact. Education curricula across the EU must prepare young people for life and not just equip them with skills for the job market. Critical thinking, media literacy, and the ability to recognize online misinformation should be central to our education systems. We also call for the **removal of any barriers to education** and for the integration of learning about the EU, particularly about how democracy works.

5) Increase EU Funds going toward young people

The Greens/EFA Group wants to increase funding for youth programs over the next decade on Youth 2030, which includes Erasmus+, European Solidarity Corps and the Youth Employment Initiative. We also want to grow the Rights, Equality and Citizenship program with €3 billion over the 2021-2030 period.

6) Meaningful participation in decision-making

Young people should have the right, the means, the space and the opportunity to participate in and influence the decisions that affect their lives. We believe that the **voting age should be lowered to 16** across the EU and at all elections. We also want to see substantive consultation of youth organizations at key steps of decision-making processes.

We want European youth to be empowered and able to make their own decisions. Young people are tired of empty words and so are we. Let's make the EU work for young people.

- [Link to 8 demands for a Social Union](#)

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Zita Herman

Advisor on Budgets

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