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News | 06.09.2013

Youth Unemployment

Wrong message, wrong strategy



The European Parliament will next Wednesday vote in plenary on a report on youth unemployment. This report comes in response to the EU's alarming rates of youth unemployment. However, the Greens/EFA group doesn't believe that this report gives the right solutions to the current situation and so the group will be proposing an alternative and more ambitious report to be voted on the same day in Strasbourg. The Greens/EFA group feels strongly that to tell young people “you must try harder and we’ll provide you with better training” is not a sufficient response to the massive challenge that the EU is currently facing. Instead, Member States and the EU should go further and look at job creation for young people and immediately end any measures which are counterproductive to youth employment. The Greens/EFA group already abstained in the vote in the Employment and Social Affairs committee because of insufficient consideration of crucial measures on youth unemployment such as job creation and human rights. This report could even be seen as a step back compared to the 2009 report on youth employment by Greens/EFA rapporteur Emilie Turunen. Even though during the negotiations our MEPs managed to include some good green elements, including strong wording on anti-discrimination and the mention of the negative impact of crisis measures as well as the need for a one-year relief plan, the result is far from adequate. As **Raül Romeva i Rueda**, Greens/EFA spokesperson on youth issues, stated: *"This resolution is insufficient and its reference to the so-called answer to youth unemployment being for education institutions to adapt their curricula to labour markets or for measures to focus solely on high-level education and training is simply unacceptable. The message "You must try harder and we'll make a small effort to help you try*

harder" is not what young people need to hear. It ignores the fact that there are simply not enough jobs, which is due to poor policy-making as well as young people's lack of a say in the policies affecting their lives. They need to hear that we support them and that we will reform policies to ensure that they too can benefit from decent employment and living standards: jobs, rights and opportunities". Since the Greens/EFA group considers that in the current context of deep crisis, this report is even weaker than the 2009 report and fails to provide tangible measures in response to the appalling figures on youth unemployment in Europe, they decided to outline political alternatives in an alternative resolution. In the words of Green MEP **Karima Delli**, member of the Employment and Social Affairs committee: *"We urgently need to tackle youth unemployment **now** and it must be done correctly. We need to immediately end these destructive austerity measures that are increasing youth unemployment and social exclusion; we need to focus on job creation but without forgetting the qualitative aspect of decent work and rights at work, especially in times of high crisis and especially for young people. And we cannot afford to exclude young stakeholders from the policy making that is affecting them: We need to give youth a key role in defining the strategies".*

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Karima Delli

Member

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