Press release | 23.04.2013

Youth unemployment

MEPs approve crucial EU funding instrument on youth employment

The European Parliament's employment and social affairs committee today approved the creation of a new youth funding programme under the European Social Fund: the Youth Employment Initiative. The Greens welcomed the vote, which will make €6 billion available to fund the implementation of the European Youth Guarantee Scheme (1). The Greens have been strongly pushing for EU measures to address the high levels of youth unemployment in Europe and advocated a 'youth guarantee scheme' from the outset. As such, the group welcomed today's vote, with Green employment spokesperson **Elisabeth Schroedter** stating:

"Today's vote is another step in providing a coherent, EU-level response to the problem of youth unemployment in Europe. The Youth Employment Initiative will provide €6 billion from 2014-20 for the implementation of the European Youth Guarantee Scheme, which sets out concrete measures to tackle youth unemployment, such as through training and apprenticeships. The top priority of the European Social Fund over the coming funding period must be to address the unacceptably high levels of youth employment, and this initiative is just one - albeit important - element under this overarching priority.

"Crucially, MEPs today voted to ensure there is a wide scope for the implementation of the initiative, with no unnecessary distinctions. This means it should apply to all young people from 15 to 30, regardless of their levels of education, where they are, or other irrelevant distinctions. EU governments should follow suit."

Green employment spokesperson **Raül Romeva** added:

"With crisis-hit EU member states those most affected by rocketing youth unemployment, EU support is essential. The 7.5 million young people in the EU currently not in employment, education or training need to be given some kind of perspective and the youth guarantee does just that.

"The original proposals on EU youth funding were only foreseen for crisis regions but the Greens ensured that while crisis countries with high youth unemployment are the main priority, other member states can also make use of the ESF to tackle youth employment problems. Another important Green amendment will ensure the funding is not only concentrated on employment measures but also targets the high-risk group of early school leavers, so as to offer opportunities for young people before they drop out.

(1) The European Youth Guarantee Scheme is a Green proposal, endorsed by the EP in 2009 and adopted

by Council finally this year. The scheme aims to ensure that all young people are entitled to receive a good-quality offer of employment, education, apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months after becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

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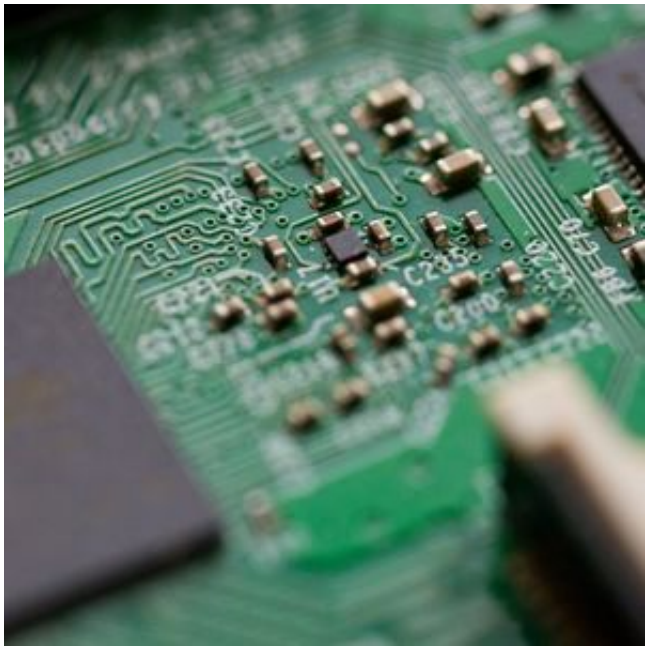


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