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European Union

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
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To: Delegations

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Subject: European Court of Auditors' Special Report No 5/2017 "Youth unemployment - have EU policies made a difference? An assessment of the Youth Guarantee and the Youth Employment Initiative"
- Council Conclusions (15 June 2017)

Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on European Court of Auditors' Special Report No 5/2017 "Youth unemployment - have EU policies made a difference? An assessment of the Youth Guarantee and the Youth Employment Initiative", adopted by the EPSCO Council at its 9548th meeting held on 15 June 2017.

European Court of Auditors' Special Report No 5/2017 - "Youth unemployment - have EU policies made a difference?"

Council Conclusions

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. WELCOMES the European Court of Auditors' Special Report No 5/2017 and the Commission's detailed replies to it;
2. NOTES that the labour market situation of young people has improved since the adoption of the Youth Guarantee (YG); in most Member States the youth unemployment rate and the rate of young people neither in employment, education nor training (NEETs) have substantially decreased since 2013, while RECOGNISING that youth unemployment and NEET rates are still too high and that increased efforts are needed to fully implement the YG;
3. REAFFIRMS that although there has been an improvement in the situation of the unemployed youth, tackling youth unemployment and inactivity remains a policy priority; and UNDERLINES that in December 2016, the European Council called for the continuation of the YG and welcomed the increased support for the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI);
4. RECOGNISES the significant efforts made by the EU and its Member States to this end; and APPRECIATES the support provided by the European Commission to Member States in setting up their YG schemes and, where appropriate, in putting into use the YEI;
5. ENCOURAGES the Commission to continue working closely with Member States to identify the main implementation problems and offer support where possible;

6. RECOGNISES that monitoring of the national implementation of YG schemes has been undertaken through the **Employment Committee's** multilateral surveillance and the indicator framework, as part of the European Semester; and ACKNOWLEDGES the efforts made to better account for the monitoring of the quality of YG offers;
7. CONSIDERS it useful that the Court aimed to assess whether the YG was delivering results in the Member States and whether the YEI was contributing towards them, and, in particular, whether Member States had made progress in implementing the YG, had appropriately addressed the factors which might impact its implementation and whether they implemented the YEI in such a way as to contribute to the achievement of the YG objectives;
8. WELCOMES the Court's acknowledgement that progress has been made in the YG implementation and that positive results have been achieved, although it has not yet fully achieved the YG's aim of delivering a good quality offer to all young people and NEETs within four months;
9. NOTES that the Court assessed the YG and the YEI in their initial stages of implementation, that its observations are based on a limited territorial and temporal scope; and EMPHASISES that progress has been made in the implementation of the YG and the YEI since then;
10. RECALLS that national specificities need to be taken into account when designing and amending national YG implementation plans so as to gear them towards national, regional and local circumstances;
11. CONSIDERS that the YG and the YEI have provided a strong impetus for structural reforms and policy innovation, areas which are outside of the scope of the Court's report;
12. UNDERLINES that NEETs are a heterogeneous group with diverse needs, and that reaching out to NEETs requires strong and persistent efforts of national authorities and cross-sectoral cooperation;

13. NOTES that due consideration should be given to the recommendations made in the Special Report of the European Court of Auditors with a view to continuing efforts to tackle youth unemployment and inactivity and achieving the aims set out in the YG, specifically with regard to setting realistic and achievable objectives and targets.
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