



Council of the  
European Union

Brussels, 23 February 2016  
(OR. en)

6154/16  
ADD 2

SOC 69  
EMPL 44  
ECOFIN 108  
EDUC 31  
JEUN 17

**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations  
Subject: Investing in Youth Employment: Implementation of the Youth Guarantee  
- Endorsement of the EMCO key messages on the way forward

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Delegations will find attached the "Horizontal Conclusions of the multi-lateral surveillance review of the implementation of the Youth Guarantee" submitted by the **Employment Committee**, with a view to the Council meeting (EPSCO) on 7 March 2016.

The key messages which are drawn from this report are contained in doc. 6154/16.

## Horizontal Conclusions of the multi-lateral surveillance review of the implementation of the Youth Guarantee

The EMCO review of Youth Guarantee implementation in the Member States which was carried out in December 2015 indicated that a large majority of Member States are seriously committed to implementing the Guarantee. There was a real sense of increased momentum in implementation since the previous EMCO review (carried out in December 2014).

It should be noted that a significant number of implementing measures have only been introduced relatively recently (or will be implemented shortly) so a definitive assessment of the impact of these measures remains difficult.

It is clear that the Guarantee is, in many Member States, acting as a driver for wider reforms. A number of Member States reported significant progress in institutional co-operation, between different levels of governance, and across a broad range of actors. As a general point, Member States continued to underline the crucial importance of strong partnerships with key stakeholders in both the design and delivery of measures.

The crucial role that the education system plays in securing successful transitions to the labour market and, particularly by early intervention, preventing youth from entering the labour market with insufficient qualifications and skills, was underlined in many cases. The education system also needs to ensure that young people are informed about, and in touch with, the labour market. Some Member States have made significant progress in tackling early school leaving, and a number of promising initiatives in this field were reviewed. Indeed, the review identified a considerable number of interesting projects within the framework of the Youth Guarantee across Member States. Mutual learning exercises (including bilateral technical work) have produced useful results and should be further developed.

The review identified a number of common challenges:

- Young people facing multiple barriers (low education attainment; low work experience; migrant background; health or social issues including disability) are at particularly high risk of unemployment or becoming NEET.
- Outreach to NEETS remains a major challenge in many Member States. This is particularly for those who are not registered with Public Employment Services. The experience of Member States, and the work of EUROFOUND, have indicated the importance of treating NEETs as a heterogeneous group (both within and between MS). Further initiatives to improve identification of subgroups of NEETs and thereby more focused strategies are very welcome. There are also some good prevention initiatives focusing on the provision of labour market information at school.
- Outreach to employers to engage them in the delivery of the Guarantee is not always particularly easy, but remains essential to the success of many programmes.
- The definition of what constitutes a "quality offer" under the Guarantee: Member States interpret this in significantly different ways (e.g. in some a short training course will count as a quality offer, whereas in others the offer needs to be rather more permanent or sustainable). This has also affected data collection, for obvious reasons. The issue of sustainability is also very important for those Member States where there is a significant amount of subsidised employment, where follow-up to ensure that this has a positive effect in the longer-term is crucial.
- Public Employment Services play a crucial role in the delivery of Youth Guarantee measures: if they are under-resourced or lack capacity to deliver then measures will not achieve their potential
- Despite the progress noted above, there remain coordination issues with local and regional delivery of measures. There could also be much greater use of internal mutual learning processes within Member States.
- A number of Member States have experienced positive results from innovative local projects within the framework of the Guarantee, and now face the challenge of upscaling these in order to meet needs at national level.

Significant progress has been made in the collection of data on the Guarantee and the data collected is proving to be very useful, although there remain some particular issues, such as the problem of the definition of "quality offer" noted above.

However, it should be noted that some Member States are providing data strongly aligned to the agreed Indicators Framework while, for some notable divergences exist and some lack follow-up date. This should be addressed in order to improve the situation in future years.

More broadly, the longer-term evaluation of the Youth Guarantee now needs to be considered.