

SEMINAR

“Youth employment, our future, our priority”



The European Union continues to be at a crossroads, suffering the effects of the worst crisis since its creation, more than 50 years ago. This crisis has not only an economic and financial nature. It is also a political one, because of the lack of confidence and credibility among citizens and companies.

With unsupportable levels of unemployment, particularly among the youngest, the European Union and the main concerned countries, such as Spain, need a “shock therapy”. In a joint and coordinated effort with its Member States, the European Union should be able to offer short-term solutions while preserving the path of structural reforms, so as to create a solid basis for recovery which will make us stronger in the long run.

Youth unemployment is one of the most pressing concerns the European Union and its Member States must face as a matter of urgency to shape our common future. Solutions are neither easy nor automatic. Ultimately, they rely on political will, responsibility, compromise and courage.

They should be based on, first, a realistic diagnosis recognising the national structural weaknesses that have been exacerbated by the crisis. Second, an assessment on what can be done at national and European level; taking into account that social dialogue plays a crucial role in promoting and paving the way to the necessary reforms to reach our common goal: sustainable growth and jobs in the long term.

Different actions have already been proposed at European level, covering the main issues to be tackled, from well-functioning labour market institutions to the need of addressing the current skills mismatch through the enhancement and/or reform of education and training systems, including work-based learning models.

Actually the next European Council, to be held on 27 and 28 June, will be focused on accelerating the implementation of the agreed measures to foster youth employment, taken into consideration the specific needs of each country.

More than ever, it is time of action! We must focus all our energy in applying the solutions that have been already identified.

Youth guarantee schemes should be adaptable enough so as to get positive results. Structural Funds, particularly the Youth Employment Initiative, should be ready as soon as possible, as a key complement of our continuous structural reform effort.

In parallel, access to finance should be unblocked, all superfluous barriers affecting economic activity should be removed and, last but not least, more efforts should be done to promote entrepreneurship. We absolutely need to strengthen our business fabric if we want to return to growth.

The Confederation of Employers and Industries of Spain, CEOE, is, has been and always will be, fully committed to employment, in particular youth employment, making proposals and showing its availability and openness for dialogue.

This is why we are organising this seminar in collaboration with the Spanish MEP Verónica Lope, member of the Employment and Social Committee, seeking to proactively contribute to the debate.

Our aim is therefore to have a constructive discussion on, firstly, the important task that the European Parliament can develop to foster youth employment with an active involvement of the Spanish MEP; the latest measures put in place by the Spanish government and those proposed by the European Commission; and the CEOE views on enhancing vocational and education training.

Secondly, we will discuss on the best practical solutions that can be implemented in the short term, making effective use of the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative; elaborating ad-hoc projects by employers to enhance labour market integration of young people in Spain; being aware of the cost-benefits and key factors for a successful dual training system in Switzerland and Germany; and, finally, promoting entrepreneurship as companies, mainly SME, are the real engine for growth and jobs.

Thirdly, we will pay attention to the latest agreement of the European social partners, which is the Framework of Actions on Youth Employment. This is a major agreement that demonstrates their full commitment to find the way out through negotiated solutions in the framework of social dialogue.