



Local and Regional Government: Supporting the European Framework of Action on Youth Employment

Context

The European Sectoral Social Partners representing Local and Regional Government fully support the recently adopted Cross-Sectoral Social Partner Framework of Action on Youth Employment. We welcome such a Framework in light of the ever increasing unemployment rate of young people across Europe.

It is important to note that Social Partners representing the public sector have highlighted this worrying trend in our sector on numerous occasions, and see it as further contributing to the effects of the crisis and the ongoing demographic challenges facing our sector.

In particular, Youth Employment needs to be addressed in light of the emerging ageing population, the 'attractivity' of the public sector for young people, the need for greater efficiency, and the steady on-going re-structuring occurring due to economic and fiscal pressures.

The European Sectoral Social Partners therefore ask the Council to continue to act for more jobs, training and decent work¹ for young workers. In particular we call upon the Council to seek to introduce measures that public sector employers might deploy to increase the number of quality, secure jobs available to young workers in the public sector where the promotion of such entry is needed, and the private sector.

There is also a need to invest into social care and social services of general interest infrastructure. Such an investment can promote employment for youth in the public sector in light of demographic changes. In addition, introducing measures to tackle the unemployment of the young have to be a balanced choice acting on behalf of both "supply" and "demand".

¹ Based on the ILO definition of 'Decent Work' <http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/decent-work-agenda/lang--en/index.htm>

The youth guarantee is a positive step in this direction but needs to be implemented with an appropriate level of funding at national and EU level that makes it possible to act at local and regional level.

Some Facts “Young Workers in Public Services”

The proportion of young workers in the public administration (includes local and regional government administration) workforce ranges from 1.5% in Italy up to 8.3% in Germany. Recent research suggests that precarious work is a problem for the young in public services, particularly for those with training status or lack of tenure. In a number of countries, fixed-term and part-time contracts work well and serve their purpose for both employee and employer; however, in others, such have become the norm for certain groups of workers, predominantly young. The fact that young workers are much more likely to be on low wages does not seem to be keeping them in work. In some cases, already lower levels of employment of young workers have been exacerbated by a shake out of those on fixed-term and training contracts/stages. This is consequently contributing to a longer term ageing of the public service workforce.

The European Social Partners in Local and Regional Government call for action

Through this joint statement, the Social partners of local and regional government support the Cross-Sectoral Framework of Action (FoA) adopted in April 2013 and agree on the following steps:

At European Level:

- Using this Framework of Action as a foundation and source of inspiration for European Sectoral Social Partners to implement certain actions in the 4 priority areas of learning, transition, employment and social entrepreneurship;
- Dedicating meetings in 2013 and 2014 for discussion and agreement on promoting and disseminating this FoA to all National Social Partners represented in the Committee;
- Monitoring the implementation and follow up of this FoA in our sector- through, for example, an annual report in 2014.

At National Level:

- Consider, in those areas falling within the responsibility of national social partners, the definition and context for understanding this FoA, through, for example, working groups;
- Agreeing on common action points amongst Social Partners and monitoring related work done at National Level;
- Promoting the FoA as a good tool to increase employment activity for young people;

Local and Regional Government Sector remains committed

With the above mentioned actions, our Social Dialogue Committee remains confident that this FoA will be successful in helping to boost youth employment in all sectors. Alongside this, however, it is important to take into consideration a number of factors:

- The Annex with case studies of Social Partner actions in the FoA must be regularly updated to provide other Social Partners with additional knowledge and good practice ideas;
- There is a renewed need for the European Level, in particular the various European Funding mechanisms, to mainstream Youth Employment into all policy areas and to financially support action points set out in this FoA;
- For the public sector, priority should be attractiveness, knowledge transfer from old to young and provision of high quality public services and administration.