

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002290/24
to the Commission
Ioan-Rareş Bogdan (PPE)
(29 October 2024)**

Subject: Equal treatment of young people in the labour market

In the context of the current economic and social challenges, young people in the European Union often face significant obstacles in accessing opportunities for equitable and high-quality employment.

High youth unemployment, age-based discrimination and a lack of access to education and adequate vocational training are contributing to inequality of treatment in the labour market.

To ensure an equitable transition from education to stable and well-paid jobs, it is essential for European policies to promote equality of opportunity and combat all forms of discrimination. To this end, European Commission measures are vital to ensure that all young people, regardless of their social, regional or cultural context, have equal access to opportunities in the labour market.

We therefore wish to find out:

1. How is the European Commission supporting equal access for young people to employment opportunities in the labour market throughout the European Union?
2. What initiatives are in place to ensure that young people receive appropriate vocational training and education so that they can access well-paid and high-quality jobs?
3. How is the Commission ensuring that young people in all regions of Europe, including less-developed ones, have access to the same work opportunities?

Submitted: 29.10.2024

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu on behalf of the European Commission
(17 December 2024)**

EU law protects the equal treatment of young people in the labour market by means of Council Directive 2000/78/EC (the Employment Equality Directive) ⁽¹⁾, which prohibits discrimination based on the ground of age in the area of employment and occupation.

The Commission supports Member States and relevant stakeholders to modernise vocational education and training (VET) systems to cater for current and future labour market needs in line with the 2020 Council Recommendation on VET ⁽²⁾, through mutual learning and EU funding.

This includes the Erasmus+ programme which co-funds cooperation partnerships, including the Centres of Vocational Excellence. Erasmus+ also supports the skills acquisition of young Europeans through learning mobility abroad, with specific funding rules providing additional support to participants with fewer opportunities.

The Commission supports the implementation of the Youth Guarantee ⁽³⁾ which was reinforced in 2020 to better address the most vulnerable young people, and to guarantee equal treatment for all young people, regardless of their background or where they are in the European Union.

In addition, it supports the implementation of ALMA ('Aim-Learn-Master-Achieve'), which is a social inclusion initiative helping vulnerable young people who are not currently engaged in employment, education, or training (NEETs) integrate into society and the labour market through mobility.

EU cohesion policy supports equal access to inclusive and quality opportunities, including in employment, education and training. Particular focus is on helping vulnerable groups, including young people, in all regions, in particular in the less developed ones.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2000/78/oj>

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32020H1202%2801%29>

⁽³⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.C_.2020.372.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AC%3A2020%3A372%3ATOC