

Youth employment: 3 measures to make a difference

As heads of state and ministers will gather in Berlin tomorrow to discuss youth employment, EUROCHAMBRES highlights three measures to create jobs for Europe's 15-24 year olds.

1. Demand-side measure

To help small & medium sized enterprises (SMEs) – the main source of employment creation in the EU – provide jobs, bank lending needs to be revived. The European Council proposals in this area have many merits. However, they must be developed in a coherent manner that reaches its target: not banks, but small business owner-managers. This is why EUROCHAMBRES continues to advocate a European Guarantee Platform structure to coordinate EU measures and funds for guaranteeing and securitising lending to SMEs.

2. Supply-side measure

Even with escalating levels of unemployment, some companies find it impossible to recruit staff with the right skills set. Apprenticeship schemes have helped address this problem in some member states, the 'dual system' in Germany and Austria being a prime example. EUROCHAMBRES calls for similar vocational education & training (VET) schemes to be established across the EU, based on a combination of classroom and work-based learning and on a strong partnership between education providers and businesses. This process can be accelerated through cross-border VET capacity building schemes between officials, teachers, trainers, Chambers and companies.

3. Supply-demand matching

Europe must become a single labour market, not a collection of 28 national ones. Mobility of workers of different levels and skills is a key factor in a fully functioning labour market. EUROCHAMBRES recommends in particular a single Erasmus style apprenticeship mobility programme that builds on various short-term cross-border measures in this area.

Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary General of EUROCHAMBRES, said: *"The EUR 6 billion for the Youth Employment Initiative are impressive and it's clear that EU leaders have heard our message that supply and demand measures need to be combined. But they must now convey to their administrations a sense of urgency in converting these funds and ideas into concrete actions."*

EUROCHAMBRES and its network of Chambers are ready to offer their full support as partners of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships launched by the European Commission today.

Further information: Ms Bettine Gola, Tel. +32 2 282 08 81, gola@eurochambres.eu
Press contact: Ms Guendalina Cominotti, Tel. +32 2 282 08 66, cominotti@eurochambres.eu
All EUROCHAMBRES' press releases can be downloaded from
www.eurochambres.eu/content/default.asp?PageID=153



Follow @EUROCHAMBRES on Twitter!