

Promoting employment: EU and ILO enhancing the fight against youth unemployment in Eastern Europe

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An Informal Meeting of Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs took place at the margin of the International Labour Conference (ILC) on 16 June 2011. During this meeting – jointly organised by Hungary, holding the Presidency of the EU Council, and the ILO – the European Commission, Ministers of Belgium, Spain (as the members of the current Trio Presidency), Poland (as the forthcoming Presidency), Azerbaijan, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Ukraine and representatives of employer and worker organizations debated how to secure decent work for young people in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus.

Creating decent jobs for young people entering the labour market is an essential element of the progression towards wealthier economies, fairer societies and stronger democracies. The Hungarian Presidency of the EU Council selected youth employment in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus as a central theme for the Informal Meeting of Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs during the 100th session of the International Labour Conference. For the purpose of the meeting, the ILO prepared a background paper entitled [Youth Employment in Eastern Europe: Crisis within the crisis.](#)

The impact of the global economic crisis on youth employment has been severe in most countries. In countries of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, the global economic crisis has exacerbated the youth employment crisis that was already an enormous challenge. The youth unemployment rates, at well above 35 per cent in some of the countries, are among the highest in the world.



But there is not only unemployment. Young people in Eastern Europe as well have to cope with precarious jobs and informal employment. Some of them are totally giving up hope of finding a decent job. Another important problem is those young people who are neither in employment nor in education (NEET). Transition of young people from inactivity to labour market has to be improved.

Mr. Sándor Czomba, the Hungarian Minister of State for Employment Policy, says that capable and effective education and training system is a starting point for the successful labour market participation of young people. He has highlighted that youth employment is a specific flagship initiative of the EU's 10 year strategy for growth and jobs (Europe 2020) and the Hungarian Presidency identified this issue as an



overarching aim in the last semester. “The vulnerable situation of young people heightens the risk of a ‘lost generation’ who become discouraged and are forced to live at the margins of the labour market”, says Susanne Hoffmann, Regional Director of the ILO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia.

The EU, through the European Commission and the current and the future Presidency of the Council, and ILO affirmed their commitment and agreed on strengthening their collaboration in fighting youth unemployment.

The discussions at this Informal Ministerial Meeting are also very relevant in the light of the preparations for the 2012 June International Labour Conference as a general discussion on Youth Employment will be on the agenda.




Further resources

ILO Publications

- ILO. 2011. [Youth employment in Eastern Europe: Crisis within the crisis](#) (pdf 502 KB), Informal Ministerial Meeting, Geneva, 2011 (Geneva)
 - [Français](#) (pdf 368 KB) • [Español](#) (pdf 370 KB) • [Russian](#) (pdf 547 KB)
- ILO. 2011. [Policy options to support young workers during economic recovery](#) (pdf 656.15 KB) (Geneva)
 - [Français](#) (pdf 748.34 KB) • [Español](#) (pdf 691 KB)
- ILO. 2010. [Youth employment in crisis: Questions and answers on the situation of youth on the labour market](#) (Geneva)
 - [Español](#) (pdf 691 KB)
- ILO. 2010. [Global employment trends for youth: August 2010: special issue on the impact of the global economic crisis on youth](#) (pdf 3.22 MB) (Geneva)
 - [Español](#) (pdf 4.14 MB)
- ILO. 2010. [Employment and social protection policies from crisis to recovery and beyond: a review of experience](#) (pdf 819 KB), an ILO report to the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers Meeting, Washington, DC, 20–21 April 2010 (Geneva).
- ILO. 2010. [Employment policies for social justice and a fair globalization](#) (pdf 1.55 MB), Report VI, International Labour Conference, 99th Session, Geneva, 2010 (Geneva).
- ILO. 2010. [Recovery and growth with decent work: Report of the Director-General](#) (pdf 750 KB), Report I(C), International Labour Conference, 99th Session, Geneva, 2010 (Geneva).
 - [Français](#) (pdf 922 KB) • [Español](#) (pdf 761 KB)
- ILO. 2009. [Recovering from the crisis : a Global Jobs Pact](#) (pdf 93.22 KB) (Geneva)
 - [Français](#) (pdf 105.47 KB) • [Español](#) (pdf 107.50 KB)

- ILO. 2009. [*The financial and economic crisis : a Decent Work response*](#) (pdf 603 KB) (Geneva)
 - [Français \(pdf 834 KB\)](#) • [Español \(pdf 759 KB\)](#)

ILO Videos

- [Global Voices: How the crisis has affected you](#) - 
- [Young voices in search of decent work](#) - 
- [Decent Work: A better world starts here](#) - 

ILO Websites

- [Youth employment](#)
- [ILO Programme on Youth employment](#)
- [Global Jobs Pact](#)
- [Decent Work](#)
- [ILO Global Job Crisis Observatory: Youth employment](#)
- [ILO Global Job Crisis Observatory: Employment promotion](#)
- [ILO Library: Resource guide on youth employment](#)