

## Empowering Europe's youth to avoid a 'lockdown generation'

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Fair pay for traineeships and apprenticeships

- Mental health should be an integral part of the EU's post-COVID-19 recovery
- Make the Reinforced Youth Guarantee binding, more effective and inclusive

**To mitigate the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on young people, the EU must take urgent and targeted action, say MEPs.**

Following [a plenary debate in January](#), Parliament on Thursday adopted a resolution with 580 votes in favour, 57 votes against and 55 abstentions that condemns the practice of unpaid internships and calls for mental health to be made an integral part of Europe's socio-economic recovery from the pandemic.

### No unpaid traineeships

The text condemns the practice of unpaid internships as "a form of exploitation of young workers and a violation of their rights" and calls on the Commission and the member states to propose a common legal framework to ensure fair remuneration for traineeships and apprenticeships.

Parliament also recalls the need for a binding, more effective and inclusive [reinforced Youth Guarantee](#) as a bridge to jobs. In order to reach young people more effectively, MEPs ask the Commission to look into the feasibility of creating a single digital space that merges the existing European Youth Portal, Europass and Eures platforms. The platform could serve as a central point to provide assistance and information to young people on training, jobs, internships, financial support, mobility programmes, rights associated with European citizenship, etc.

### Support young people's mental health

To help address mental health problems that young people face such as anxiety and depression, which have worsened significantly during the pandemic, MEPs call on the member

states to make mental health an integral part of the EU's socioeconomic recovery and an occupational health priority. Moreover, mental health care must be accessible and affordable.

### Youth is essential for shaping EU policies

MEPs emphasise that young people must play a vital role in shaping employment and social policies in Europe. They also insist that spending on youth priorities within NextGenerationEU, the Recovery and Resilience Fund (RRF) and the ESF+ should complement other EU programmes such as the reinforced Youth Guarantee, the Child Guarantee and Erasmus + and national measures to promote skills, education, training and labour market integration.

### Quote

[Dragoş Pîslaru](#) (Renew Europe, RO), Chair of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee, said:

*"It is our responsibility to ensure that our youth is not left behind in the wake of this pandemic. In particular, we call for better European coordination of the available funding instruments and for effective assistance in finding quality employment or education that matches the reality of the labour markets while fostering mobility and support for the mental health of young people."*

### Further information

[Procedure file](#)

[The adopted text will be available here \(17.02.2022\)](#)

[EP Research Service on Youth in Europe: Effects of COVID-19 on their economic and social situation \(September 2021\)](#)

[European Youth Event 2021 report: Youth Ideas Report for the Conference on the Future of Europe](#)

[Eurofound report: Impact of COVID-19 on young people in the EU\(9.11.2021\)](#)

[European Youth strategy](#)

[Watch again: Empowering European Youth: post-pandemic employment and social recovery \(plenary debate 20.01.2022\)](#)


[Watch again: One Youth, One Europe debate \(plenary 16.02.2022\)](#)  
[Committee on Employment and Social Affairs](#)

## Contacts

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Elzelien VAN DER STEEN

Press Officer

 (+32) 2 28 42623 (BXL)

 (+32) 477 45 42 84

 [elzelien.vandersteen@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:elzelien.vandersteen@europarl.europa.eu)

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