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Call to member states of the Council of Europe Development Bank

Young people are today one of the groups most affected by the current economic crisis, with youth unemployment rates unprecedented in Europe. Young people in Europe continue to experience great difficulties in the labour market:

- Youth unemployment is rising in most European countries. Overall 23% of young job-seekers aged 15–24 in the 28 European Union countries were not able to find a job as at January 2014.
- 15.9% of young people aged 15-24 are NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training), with their numbers reaching as high as 14 million in 2014. The cost of NEETs is more than €150 billion yearly according to Eurofound.
- The Youth unemployment rate has doubled in the Council of Europe member states (also members of the EU) since the beginning of the crisis, with percentages rising to 56.8% in Greece, 53.9% in Spain and 49.0% in Croatia at the beginning of 2014. Youth unemployment also exceeded the 50% rate in 2013 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" according to the ILO.
- During the crisis young people on temporary contracts were more likely to remain employed, with less than a quarter succeeding in getting a permanent contract.
- Although the EU Youth Guarantee was designed to help young people's access to the labour market, it does not cover young people in need outside the European Union. We need to support the young people of all the Council of Europe member states.
- The current crisis and youth unemployment have led to a European brain drain. Vital human capital is lost from Europe which makes its future development more difficult.
- Because of high unemployment, the transition of young people to a working life has changed considerably. Young people's autonomy has been "sacrificed". They face many problems including housing. This situation threatens inter-generational solidarity and social justice in our societies.
- There is a lack of support to young people who are starting/creating a job. More funds are required to support job creation/entrepreneurship and mechanisms/infrastructures that guide young people into labour market.
- Efforts should be made to enable smoother transitions from education to the labour market, remove barriers depriving young people from access to quality jobs supporting a decent living, and should ensure that young people benefit from welfare, credit and housing schemes. Such efforts would not only help young people but at the same time would be a good investment for the future.

Considering the above, and taking into consideration recent studies showing how quicker school-to-work transitions (the 'Nordic' and 'Apprenticeship' models) contribute to lower youth unemployment, **the Advisory Council on Youth encourages all the member states of the Partial Agreement on the Council of Europe Development Bank to consider submitting projects to the Bank which could address the problem of youth unemployment and precarious work under the "Creation and preservation of viable jobs" sector of action.**

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