

**Mobility in The Mind:
European Youth Cards contributing to
employability and entrepreneurship for
young people**

Background paper for a seminar organised by

**Council of Europe &
European Youth Cards Association (EYCA)**

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1. Introduction:

- European Youth Card Association (EYCA) comprises 41 organisations in 38 countries who deliver European Youth Cards to over 5.1 million young people.
- European Youth Cards are a tool to promote youth mobility and active citizenship to young people.
- EYCA works with Council of Europe and with the European Commission to make an impact on all aspects of youth mobility.
- Recent developments in Europe have prompted EYCA and many of its member organisations to consider how best to contribute to addressing youth unemployment in Europe.
- In May 2013 EYCA President, Jarkko Lehikoinen, called together a group of strategic advisors to consider the question of youth unemployment and to identify the potential contributions EYCA could make.

2. President's Commission: European Youth Cards contributing to employability and entrepreneurship for young people?

The 2013 EYCA President's Commission comprised representatives from nine EYCA member organizations, plus additional advisors invited to present their particular perspectives on youth unemployment and EYCA's response:

- Ana Martinez Fernandez, Injuve, Spain
- Angela Dato, Responsabile Sviluppo e Progetti, Associazione Carta Giovani Italy
- Dražen Gečević, Secretary General, Croatian Youth hostels Association
- Krzysztof Lisek, MEP and Polish Youth Projects Association
- Louise Macdonald, Chief Executive, Young Scot
- Luc Pire, Director, Carte Jeunes Wallonie-Bruxelles
- Marcus Liddle, former President of EYCA and Board member of Young Scot
- Miroslav Jungwirth, CRDM, Czech Council of Children and Youth
- Ruta Labalaukytė, Executive Manager, Europos jaunimo kortelė, Lithuania
- Wolfgang Schick, former President of EYCA

In addition, specific perspectives to inform the discussion and recommendations of the Commission were invited from external guests.

- Fabienne Metayer, Youth Unit, European Commission
- Jacques Spelkens, Head of the Development of CSR Networks, GDF SUEZ
- Natalja Turenne, Youth Department, Council of Europe

The specific purpose of the meeting was to:

- consider the current and emerging context for youth employability and entrepreneurship
- identify existing and potential contributions EYCA and its member organisations can make to this agenda
- Identify potential specific actions for EYC and for EYCA member organisations

3. Why should European Youth Cards contribute to employability and entrepreneurship for young people?

Unemployment is the biggest issue facing young people in Europe today, and its effects will continue to be felt till at least the end of the decade.

- Across Europe, youth unemployment stands at 23.5% - twice as high as for adults.
- One third of under 25s have been unemployed for more than a year.
- More than 7.5 million young Europeans aged between 15 and 24 are not in employment, education or training.
- More than one third of young people in work are on temporary contracts.
- In Greece and Spain, more than half the young people are unemployed. Italy, Portugal, Ireland, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Latvia, Hungary and Slovakia all have youth unemployment rates of 30% or above.
- The cost of not having young people as part of the labour market in Europe has been estimated at €150 billion per year. With taxpayers paying the bill, this is not only an issue today but a threat for any economic recovery for tomorrow. Quite literally, we can't afford to ignore youth unemployment.
- Figures show that unemployment was rising even when economies were still growing.

Governments, civil society and business need to work together to find new answers to youth unemployment. Europe's leaders highlight the urgency of tackling youth unemployment:

"This is the post-crisis generation, they will forever hold today's governments responsible for their plight. For my generation Europe showed us and gave us the support we needed. The hopes that we could get a job after school, and succeed in life. Can we be responsible for depriving today's young people of this kind of hope?"

François Hollande, French President May 2013.

"We need to be more successful in our fight against youth unemployment, otherwise we will lose the battle for Europe's unity"

Wolfgang Schäuble, Germany's Finance Minister, May 2013

"We have to rescue an entire generation of young people who are scared. We have the best-educated generation and we are putting them on hold. This is not acceptable,"

Italian Labour Minister Enrico Giovanni, May 2013

At the President's Commission meeting, the European Commission representative strongly encouraged EYCA's contribution to employability and entrepreneurship agendas. This is clearly a current priority for European Commission's overarching priorities connected to 2020 agenda of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, as well as supporting specific initiatives such as EU's Youth Guarantee.

"It is natural EYCA has a role to play in employment and building co-operation with the business sector."

Fabienne Metayer, Youth Policy, European Commission

GDF Suez employs approximately 230,000 people around the globe to produce and distribute energy. The head of GDF Suez's Corporate Social Responsibility services offered an employer's point of view on the current youth unemployment crisis in Europe:

- new talents and skills have to be encouraged at an early age (12-14)
- mobility means being willing to follow where employment projects happen
- mobility is also a mind set (e.g. changing your specialisation, being open to life-long learning; work in different departments within the same organisation, as well as working in different organisations/sectors/regions or countries)
- employers are interested in the "savoir faire" (technical skills and competencies) but increasingly important is the "savoir être" (personal attitudes and social skills, such as teamwork and time planning)
- co-creating social value in partnership with civil society and, in this case, with young people is essential to companies' future success.

"Even big bureaucratic companies like ours need young people to be entrepreneurial. That is why we should all be working together to promote and develop mobility in the mind"

Jacques Spelkens, GDF Suez.

Even with so many young people looking for work, industries and businesses continue to explain they cannot find young people with the skills for the job. Education and training can meet some of this shortfall but programmes like the youth guarantee in Finland and modern apprenticeships in the UK could simply be too expensive to be grafted onto economies in southern and south east Europe.

Traditional career trajectories and routes into work no longer apply in today's Europe. Young people need skills and capacities to navigate an increasingly complex world of work. Innovative routes into work and more focused support for to young people to create their own work opportunities, are needed now more than ever.

Mobility is a key issue for young people in relation to employability and entrepreneurship. They need to be able to access tools, skills and opportunities to move not only geographically but across skill sets, between industry sectors, to straddle business and the voluntary sector or package together paid work/new business development/volunteering or study.

In short, young people's ability to be entrepreneurial is key to their future success. Organisations which work to support young people should be involved in equipping them to create and grasp opportunities, to see the wider picture, to stay active, and to be confident and engaging citizens.

4. European Youth Cards already contribute to employability and entrepreneurship for young people?

EYCA member organisations are committed to creating better opportunities for youth mobility and active citizenship. Many EYCA member organisations already deliver information, services and opportunities which are closely connected to employability and entrepreneurship.

This paper presents ten brief case studies, but there are many, many more across the EYCA network.

4.1 EUROPEAN YOUTH CARDS PROVIDING JOB-HUNTING SUPPORT

JOB INTERVIEW PREPARATION AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT - Associazione Carta Giovani, Italy

In spring 2012, Carta Giovani took part in three fairs on tourism and education for young people, where they organised information sessions on how to write a CV and how to prepare for job interviews for work opportunities in the tourism sector.

Group and individual sessions were promoted via Carta Giovani and the event websites, as well as through targeted emails. An online application process was managed by Carta Giovani.

Angela Dato, from Carta Giovani, says: “This year we are going ahead with the activities, again at Fare Turismo. In addition, we have started a new initiative to focus specifically on green jobs.” Further development in this field has included Carta Giovani contributing to a publication about green job opportunities in emerging sectors of the economy in Italy.

Carta Giovani also cooperates with the Region of Lazio to provide financial support to young cardholders as a contribution towards travel fees for job interviews, or to participate in languages courses and job experience/volunteering opportunities.

Reimbursement of travel expenses is available for young people aged 16-30 who live in Lazio Region and travel to other Italian region or another European country for work or learning opportunities. Carta Giovani manages and promotes this opportunity to young cardholders in Lazio.

VIDEO CVs - Mobin, Slovenia

Mobin Slovenia started to think about what the European Youth Card could do to help young people enter the labour market, and to contribute to increasing their employability. Video CV workshops was the idea that emerged.

Young people participate in an intensive group process which is the key to the success of the Video CV workshops. Mobin workshop leaders support participants to explore personality traits, interests, skills, competences, and non-formal education achievements. Young people are guided through a process of self-reflection and goal-setting.

Using the specially designed Mobin handbook, young people script and create their own Video CV: a creative way to communicate who the individual is and why he/she is the most suitable candidate for the job. Video CVs communicate (verbally and nonverbally) passion, imagination, self-confidence and personality.

This is not a substitute for the classic CV, but a supplement which gives young people an advantage over other candidates.

Video CV workshops are supported by the Employment Service of Slovenia, who find them fresh, different and innovative - training young people to stand out from the crowd with creativity, self-motivation and innovation.

Mobin Slovenia design and deliver the programme as well as publicizing it to other young cardholders in Slovenia.

ONLINE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES - Diak Kedvezmeny, Hungary

Diak Kedvezmeny are responsible for delivering European Youth cards in Hungary. They also work with student societies: special employment agencies that provide jobs for students only. With significant tax allowances for employing students in Hungary, student societies are an important connector between employers and young people.

diakkedvezmeny.hu website includes job advertisements placed by student societies. Student societies are small, but they control 80-90% of the whole student job market.

Diak Kedvezmeny is now in the process of reconstructing the job opportunities page and plans to include jobs information in its Facebook page as part of the overall communication of opportunities available to young people through the youth card in Hungary.

4.2 EUROPEAN YOUTH CARDS DEVELOPING APPRENTICESHIPS

MATCHING YOUNG PEOPLE & APPRENTICESHIPS - Europski omladinski centar, Serbia

"Online Apprenticeship Platform - building the employability of young people in Serbia" aims to increase the number of young people with skills and qualifications and to help them access positive work experiences in Serbia. Regional databases of practice opportunities for young people are planned all over Serbia, to match supply and demand.

Europski omladinski centar, Serbia will work with companies who already provide discounts through the youth card to identify apprenticeship opportunities for young cardholders.

Specific emphasis is given to project activities for more vulnerable groups, especially young women and young people from minority groups. The project will identify incentives for employing young people; raise awareness of youth apprenticeships and regional development; and will support the development of additional support institutions to facilitate youth employment.

DIGITAL CREATIVES MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS - Young Scot, Scotland

The Digital Creatives Modern Apprenticeship lasts for one year, during which time Young Scot supports apprentices to achieve the Pearson Certificate in Creative and Digital Media at Level 3 (a nationally recognised qualification) and also to prepare for subsequent employment or progression.

Apprentices are employed by Young Scot on a formal 12-month contract and seconded to key partner organisations. The host organisations in the first phase of the programme are NHS Health Scotland, Creative Scotland, Central Scotland Police, sportscotland and Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA). Young Scot itself also hosts three apprentices. Placement partners cover salary costs (at National Minimum Wage rate) and additional training costs.

Following an induction period at Young Scot's offices, the apprentices spend four days a week with their placement partner, and one day training at Young Scot. Work done on placement is relevant for individual college portfolios, allowing the apprentice to continuously learn and to produce evidence of learning.

The Modern Apprentices develop skills to create and deliver digital content for their placement organisations, as well as relevant content to promote youth card-related benefits to young people across Scotland.

Positive impacts are delivered at three levels:

- *for the Modern Apprentices* - new and enhanced skills gained, along with increased confidence and experience and enhanced opportunities to progress into further employment.
- *for the placement organisations* - young people directly impacting upon their services and products using a co- production approach and principles of inclusive design.
- *for Scotland* - enhanced access to up-to-date, relevant information and opportunities to support young people through transitions and to help them make informed decisions and choices. This leads to more informed and engaged citizens, and wider benefits, socially and economically, for Scotland as a nation.

4.3 EUROPEAN YOUTH CARDS SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

DIFFERENT ROUTES TO NEW BUSINESSES - Asociația Euro<26, Romania

European Youth Card in Romania developed a 'Business Plan 2012-2013' competition through high schools across the country. All participants received a European Youth Card. Winners of the regional stages of the competition participate in personal development and entrepreneurial workshops, organised by the youth card.

Workshops are run by trainers certified and experienced in personal and professional development: participants gain entrepreneurial skills and knowledge to help them develop a business vision and mission, objectives and strategies, and to develop business ideas.

You are young, you have skills: is a training initiative for university students and graduates in partnership with the Students' Culture House of Bucharest. Euro<26 Romania has trained over 100 young people (aged 19-35 years old): Training the Trainers; Project Management; Evaluation for professional competence; Youth Work.

New Chances: Euro<26 Romania are partners in two projects to provide alternative vocational training for young people in the oil and mining industry. Young employees are supported to consider careers as pension administrators or human resource inspectors. Euro <26 is a recognised training provider in these areas.

M-Power: is a project for teaching entrepreneurial skills to young Roma. Euro <26 is now developing a follow-up *M-Power* project in several regions of Romania.

4.4 EUROPEAN YOUTH CARDS PROVIDING SUPPORT SERVICES FOR EMPLOYABILITY

SCHOLARSHIPS - Carnet Jove, Catalunya, Spain

Carnet Jove has developed a series of participatory actions with a more social aspect through its Connecta't programme since 2004. Financed directly by Carnet Jove, these opportunities and events are exclusive to cardholders and have a specific focus on specific culture, creativity, solidarity and employment.

Carnet Jove Catalunya Scholarships is the most significant of Carnet Jove's social programmes started in 2012, and designed to increase access to professional employment in: graphic design, written journalism, comic illustration, engineering, IT, photography, radio, television, graphic art, computer graphics, fashion, acting, and music editing. All 12 scholarships aim to fill the gap between university studies and professional employment. It is often difficult for young people to take this in-between step because they do not have enough work experience on their CV.

Young people are selected for scholarships following a public call to cardholders. 500 young people applied for the 12 scholarships. The selection process takes into account all the capacities of the candidates, not only professional experience.

CJC scholarships last for one year (longer than is usual) and include financial support of €5,000 for each participant. Companies which offer the placements are leaders in their sectors: the highest circulation daily newspaper in Catalunya, the radio station with the highest number of listeners, the leading TV station etc.

Evaluation of the scholarships project by both companies and young people has been very positive. Although a job is not the direct objective of the programme, and the current crisis does not make the situation easier, one of the students has already been hired by the company where they worked. All others are embarking on a journey in their professional life with a significant addition to their CV.

MOVING INTO WORK - Carné Joven de la Comunidad de Madrid, Spain

In addition to Carné Joven's culture and travel benefits, the youth card promotes opportunities in the education sector (especially language courses) as a fundamental way to combat youth unemployment. Carné Joven have doubled efforts to involve educational centres and to negotiate better offers for cardholders. They currently have 114 educational partners, including language centres, driving schools, professional and artistic centres, etc.

In 2012, after analysis of the socioeconomic situation of young people in the region (impact of economic crisis and high youth unemployment rate), Carné Joven expanded the concept of mobility and citizenship, linking it more with travel, culture and leisure activities:

- links to Youth on the Move initiative have been added to their website, including Your first EURES job, Youth in Action, Eurodesk, lifetime learning programme, the European Youth Portal, etc.
- “NO PARES” section on the website includes access to EUROPASS as an effective way to present skills and qualifications anywhere in Europe.
- Travel insurance coverage anywhere in the world is included in the initial cost of the youth card - €4. The cardholder pays only once and this is valid until the age of 30.
- Promotion of the benefits of the European Youth Card in the educational activities of the Youth in Action Programme (not only in European Voluntary Service).
- In addition to discounts at hotel chains, there are discounts and services for student accommodation in shared apartments and dormitories.
- Additional discounts for the cardholders for language courses offered through TIVE offices.
- Promotion of Lifeguard courses with Madrid Federation of Lifesaving and Rescue, as a job opportunity for the summer season in public pools and neighboring communities.
- 50% discount at the International School of Fashion Design and ISA.

4.5 EUROPEAN YOUTH CARDS AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR EMPLOYABILITY

TOURISM APPRENTICES - Jugendkarte, Austria

The [Glücksbringer-Lehrlingskarte](#) (rough translation, ‘lucky charm apprentice card’) is a new EYCA co-branded card in Austria, given exclusively to young people who do an apprenticeship in tourism. The card goes together with a marketing campaign of the Austrian tourism and leisure industry, to publicise careers and training opportunities in the tourism sector.

Markus Albrecht, responsible for European Youth Cards in Austria since August 2012, explains: “After a regional pilot phase, the card was launched at national level in autumn 2012 as an EYCA co-brand for 12,000 apprentices in tourism in Austria.”

The card is issued by the Austrian Economic Chambers, the body responsible for vocational education and the recognition of acquired professional qualifications for apprentices. The new card is supported by the Department of Tourism in the Federal Ministry for Economy, Family and Youth, which also finances the EYCA function of the card through direct co-operation with Jugendkarte.

TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP

European Youth Card, Allianssi, Finland

In Finland, the European Youth Card works in partnership with two of the biggest trade unions to connect young workers to youth information and consultation opportunities, as well as to the full range of benefits and discounts available to European Youth Cardholders.

The national metalworkers union and the union for public, health and welfare workers both give young people a free co-branded European Youth Card when they join (paid for by the unions).

From the unions' side, they see this as a valuable incentive to young people to join the union and benefit from both youth card and union opportunities. They are particularly interested in recruiting young workers and an association with the European Youth Card gives the union a current and relevant image.

For the European Youth Card, the union partnership has added 46,000 new members - ones which may never have considered having a card before. More importantly, part of the agreement is that the trade unions will disseminate youth information and surveys to their members, giving Allianssi access to the views and opinions of young workers as a demographic group.

This was especially valuable during the first year of the Structured Dialogue on employment.


5. European Youth Cards contributing to employability and entrepreneurship for young people? - EYCA President's commission conclusions

- Unemployment is one of the biggest issues facing young people in Europe today and for the coming years
- Links between EYCA's vision to promote and develop youth mobility and citizenship and the need to address youth unemployment are self-evident
- Other agencies have a specific focus on youth employability, but as the European network committed to promoting youth mobility and active citizenship, EYCA clearly has a role to play in this agenda. Doing nothing about youth unemployment is NOT an option for EYCA and its member organisations
- ...and EYCA member organisations are already active on this agenda.
- Traditional routes into employment are no longer enough for young people in Europe
- Businesses need stronger connections to young people engaged in non-formal learning, of the type delivered by many EYCA member organisations
- EYCA and its member organisations need to work with partners to communicate more effectively the value of non-formal learning to employers, to families, to the wider community
- Mobility in the mind is a concept that will be key to young people's future success and needs to be nurtured and supported.
- Strengthened effort is needed to support young people to create new routes into employment and into creating employment.
- EYCA and its member organisations have reach/ trust / credibility with young people. They also have a unique position as a mediator between young people and stakeholders in government and in business. EYCA should work with businesses and governments to co-create more social value for young people.
- European Youth Cards should also be an employability / entrepreneurship tool for young people

What should EYCA do now?

In the first instance, EYCA needs to build on what it already has/already does:

- extend the reach of European Youth Cards with more cardholders and with new member organisations in the priority white territories.
- develop more European benefits and opportunities.
- establish more co-operation with governments and social value partnerships with business partners
- continue to improve quality within the EYCA network, share practice and ideas and evidence of what is achieved.
- support the development of innovative practice related to the youth card.
- do more to exploit the concept and influence of a community of over 5 million cardholders across Europe



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