



EUCIS-LLL PRESS RELEASE

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Validation arrangements needed to bring European youth back in employment!

The [Youth Guarantee Recommendation](#) was adopted in April 2013 and is part of the [Youth Employment Package](#); it is aimed at contributing to reduce critical levels of youth unemployment in Europe by making sure young people under 25 cannot stay more than four months after finishing education or becoming unemployed without being proposed a job, an internship, a training, etc. Member States have been asked to submit national [Youth Guarantee implementation plans](#); 19 plans have already been submitted. The majority of the implementation plans do not touch on the topic of validation of non-formal and informal learning at all. EUCIS-LLL would like to stress that there should be a strong link between validation and youth employment initiatives in line with the numerous actions undertaken by the Platform in the field of validation.

Dramatically, **youth unemployment** reached 59,2% in Greece in 2013¹, while those neither in employment nor in education and training (**NEETs**) have significantly increased in OECD countries since the start of the crisis². It is reported that some **80 million** European Union employees, unemployed persons, particularly the young unemployed will need to update their skills and qualifications to enable them to **improve their employment prospects** and find gainful employment. To remedy this situation, the EU has undertaken a whole series of actions including the elaboration of the Youth Guarantee Recommendation helping young people to get back on tracks of employment, education or training.

We call on Member States to **include measures to develop genuine arrangements for the validation** of non-formal and informal learning outcomes in their implementation plans. Indeed, validation mechanisms **give opportunities for second chances, improve access to education and enhance motivation to learn** (see EUCIS-LLL dedicated [task force](#)). It is also a concrete instrument to tackle youth unemployment and achieve a better match between jobs and skills by acknowledging those acquired outside of the formal education system. Validation is also important in **creating a sense of self-worth and self-confidence** in young EU citizens and enhancing their position and acceptance in society. Validation thus contributes to social inclusion, personal development, empowerment and employability.

Youth unemployment is a plague that cannot be tackled without a **coherent framework of action** overseeing different education and training sectors as well as employment and social policies. Validation has been recognised as a priority within the [Council Recommendation on Validation of non-formal and informal learning in 2012](#) as well as in the **2006 Council Resolution on the recognition** of the value of non-formal and informal learning within the European Youth field and the **2009 EU Strategy for Youth** which called for better recognition and validation of skills acquired through non-formal education. Validation should thus be mentioned in national implementation plans so that the **Youth Guarantee Fund** can contribute to build **well-functioning validation systems** in partnership with stakeholders that will benefit young generations by 2018. Validation processes are **an investment for our youth and our societies' welfare!**

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Notes to the editors: The European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL) is an umbrella organisation that gathers 33 European networks active in the field of education and training, coming from all EU Member States and beyond. Currently these organisations represent more than 45 000 educational institutions (schools, universities, adult education and youth centres, etc.) or associations (involving students, teachers and trainers, parents, HRD professionals, etc.) covering all sectors of formal, non-formal and informal learning. Their members reach out to several millions of beneficiaries. www.eucis-lll.eu

¹ Commission's Communication "[Taking stock of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth](#)", 2014

² OECD's "[Society at a glance. OECD social indicators: the crisis and its aftermath](#)", 2014