

President Jean-Claude Juncker
European Commission
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels
BELGIUM

Commissioner Marianne Thyssen
European Commission
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels
BELGIUM

12th May 2015

Re: European Commission's commitment to youth employment

Dear President Juncker,

Your appointment as President of the European Commission was an encouraging sign for the European Trade Union Confederation and its European Trade Union Federationsⁱ. We particularly welcomed your proclaimed determination to combat the paramount problem of unemployment in the European Union. We wish you a successful mandate despite the fact that your presidency comes amid undeniable social, economic and financial crises of an unprecedented nature. During your presidency, you can rely on our cooperation and strong commitment towards a more prosperous, fair and social European Union. We hope that your tenure will lead the way towards a Europe in which workers have guaranteed rights, fair pay, and high quality jobs and one in which all workers, irrespective of their age, gender, place of origin, sexual orientation, or employment contract, enjoy equal treatment and equal opportunities.

As detailed in our ongoing Campaign "back2ourfuture"ⁱⁱ, we hope that you will prioritise resolving the alarming youth unemployment rates across Europe. We believe that young people are currently paying the highest price for the Commission's failure thus far to address the human suffering caused by the crisis. 'Austerity measures' have slashed budgets, discouraged investment and caused social hardship throughout the continent, impacting young people in particular, who are twice as likely to be unemployed than any other age group. With a historically high general unemployment rate in Europe of roughly 11%, EU youth unemployment averages at more than twice as much and reaches almost 60% in some countries (i.e. Greece: 57.3%, Spain: 56%). Unless we act now, the wellbeing and livelihood of a whole generation will be severely threatened.

For these reasons, we welcome your commitment to youth employment and your promise to bring about additional investment to be channelled in order to help the younger generation back to work in decent jobs, further complementing the efforts already started with the Youth Guarantee Scheme, the implementation of which needs to be accelerated and progressively broadenedⁱⁱⁱ.

We have always considered the modest 6 billion euros set aside over a 7-year period to implement the Youth Guarantee as being too little, too late. With an estimated cost of 21 billion euros annually to set up an effective tool, and without any enforcement measures for implementation on national level, the EU promise remains far from

capable of tackling the youth unemployment crisis^{iv}. We ask that the European Commission, together with the Member States, re-examine the design of the Youth Guarantee as well as its effective implementation, and prioritise direct and transparent measures to reduce youth unemployment. We welcome the current efforts to front-load 1 billion euros in 2015 but express our concern over the capacity of Member States to adequately use the available funds.

We seize this opportunity to convey to you the concerns raised in the ETUC/ETUI report "The Youth Guarantee in Europe"^v and urge you to consider acting upon some of its conclusions: that supply-side labour market measures (such as the Youth Guarantee) must be complemented by effective demand-side measures that help in increasing consumption and lead to higher aggregate demand while fully involving trade unions as interlocutors during the implementation process.

We understand that job creation represents the top priority of the European Parliament and the Commission. How will you ensure that the newly created employment will be of high quality and not precarious jobs? Young workers, especially women and migrants, are abnormally concentrated in precarious work arrangements, often trapped in a vicious circle of dead-end, low-paid, fixed-term and poorly protected jobs and internships. The economic cost of this labour market polarisation is huge, undermining social protection systems and endangering the European social model. We call on you to bring an end to this state of affairs and prevent a jobless generation.

We therefore take this opportunity to invite you and your services to meet with our youth policy officers to engage in a constructive and open discussion on the dire reality facing young workers and job seekers on the ground. We would be delighted to explain to you the goals of our ongoing Campaign which is engaging and cooperating with Members of the European Parliament of all mainstream political groups, as well as with European employers' associations via our respective social dialogues. We would welcome a similar level of commitment from the European Commission to ensure an effective collaboration on this important issue. Let us work together to fulfil your stated principle: "the economy has to serve people and not the other way around."

We look forward to your favourable reply and remain at your disposal for a possible meeting at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

Bernadette Ségol
ETUC General Secretary



Salvatore Marra
ETUC Youth President



Sascha Ernzt
President industriAll Youth



Byron McGinley
ETF Youth Committee Co-Chair



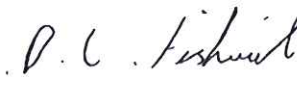
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ⁱ The [European Trade Union Confederation](#) (ETUC) was founded in 1973, it now represents 90 trade union organisations in 39 European countries, plus 10 European Trade Union Federations.

The [European Federation of Building and Woodworkers](#) (EFBWW) is the European Industry Federation for the construction industry, the building materials industry, the wood and furniture industry and the forestry industry. The EFBWW has 72 affiliated unions in 31 countries and represents a total of 2.4 million members.

EFFAT is the [European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions](#) representing 2.6 million members from 120 national trade unions from 35 European countries.

EPSU is the [European Federation of Public Service Unions](#) and comprises 8 million public service workers from over 265 trade unions.

The [European Transport Workers' Federation](#) (ETF) represents more than 2.5 million transport workers from 243 transport unions and 41 European countries, in the following sectors: railways, road transport and logistics, maritime transport, inland waterways, civil aviation, ports & docks, tourism and fisheries.

[industriAll European Trade Union](#) represents 7.1 million workers across supply chains in manufacturing, mining and energy sectors on the European level.

[UNI Europa](#) UNI Europa is the European trade union federation for 7 million service workers in sectors that constitute the backbone of economic and social life in Europe. Headquartered in the heart of Brussels, UNI Europa represents 272 national trade unions in 50 countries, including: Commerce, Financial Services, Gaming, Graphical and Packaging, Hair and Beauty, Information Technologies and Communication, Media, Entertainment and Arts, Postal Services and Logistics, Private Care and Social Insurance, Property Services: Industrial Cleaning and Private Security, Professional Sport and Leisure and Temporary Agency Workers.

ⁱⁱ <http://www.back2ourfuture.org/>

ⁱⁱⁱ http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/docs/pg_en.pdf

^{iv} [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-15-4102_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-4102_en.htm)

^v [http://www.etuc.org/sites/www.etuc.org/files/circular/files/etuc - the youth guarantee in europe en 0.pdf](http://www.etuc.org/sites/www.etuc.org/files/circular/files/etuc_the_youth_guarantee_in_europe_en_0.pdf)

