

Youth on the Move: strong on ideas, weak on deliverables, too public sector focused

The Youth on the Move communication adopted today by the European Commission received a mixed reaction from the Chamber network. The paper is strong on rhetoric but weak on measures, prompting fears that its impact will prove limited. The heavy reliance on public bodies for its delivery is also a cause for concern.

Strong on ideas

The paper identifies the correct aims and targets. Chambers in particular support the emphasis on enhancing the value and status of vocational training, improving mobility and modernising higher education. These aims are backed up with a handful of positive measures, such as a Council recommendation on learning mobility, benchmarking on employability and an internationalisation strategy for higher education, including a new university ranking system that takes into account student employability.

Weak on deliverables

However, other actions in the paper fail to inspire Chambers, and several elements that Chambers had hoped would feature are missing, notably specific targets for Vocational Education and Training (VET) and for mobility and, linked to this, a commitment to develop and dedicate a budget line to a new Erasmus programme for apprentices.

Too public sector focused

Beyond this, the regular reference to public services in relation to delivery worries Chambers. EUROCHAMBRES' Secretary General, Arnaldo Abruzzini, said: *"Let's be frank – public employment services have a very mixed track record, yet the Commission places them at the heart of this youth mobility agenda. Meanwhile, intermediary bodies such as Chambers, which are constantly liaising between the providers of training and employment opportunities and young people, are not even mentioned. This emphasis must shift if Youth on the Move is to deliver on its commendable aims and make a tangible difference."*

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