European Commission

More about Mobility and Employment

Young people across the EU came together to discuss the topics most important for them and ideas for Europe's future. It is now easier than ever to study abroad in the EU thanks to freedom of movement. However, there are concerns over unpaid internships and universities not providing enough opportunities for practical experience.

Debates focused on key issues – making career choices, unpaid internships, ways to support young people into work and enabling mobility across Member States. The importance of playing to someone's strengths and using their talents/interest was highlighted in consultations, although some felt that studying something that would not lead to a job was not worthwhile. Careers guidance and decision making was a vital issue for young people to make informed choices.

The lack of widely available information about EU programmes, mobility and study options was a concern, as well as structural barriers to labour market entry (lack of local transport, lack of local jobs, or lack of relevant practical experience gained during university studies). It was thus suggested that there should be mandatory work experience included in educational and training programmes.

Young people were concerned that they would not be taken seriously and that there was a lack of opportunity offered by employers to prove otherwise or develop their skills. They also argued that unpaid internships are unethical, exploitative and unnecessary. This was a significant issue, alongside successive internships with no job offers at the end, which were seen to negatively affect employment chances. Thus, it was said that internships should be paid.

Young people also viewed mobility and freedom of movement as a strength of the EU, yet said they felt unprepared to consider moving abroad due to difficulties in finding job information or how to apply in different countries. Language barriers were also seen as an obstacle as this can impact where people move to, thus language support was suggested.

The infographic focuses on the ideas that arose from the consultations and statistics relating to some of the topics young people believe the EU should prioritise. The next step is to explore the ideas and stimulate discussions based on the information and questions provided.

About the New Narrative for Europe

The New Narrative for Europe aimed to identify a new, encompassing narrative for the EU, accounting for the constant evolution of the continent and addressing Europe's core values of freedom, democracy, human dignity, equality, and respect for human rights.