

Commission launches new discussion on youth, entrepreneurship, volunteering and CSR

The European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion today ran a conference on youth, entrepreneurship, volunteering and CSR.

With youth unemployment at such high levels currently within the European Union and employers looking to take on the best young talent, creative ways of encouraging volunteering among young people with the help of companies through their corporate social responsibility activities needs to be highlighted.

The seminar brings together a number of companies who already partner with young people either through the career-oriented volunteering that the young people do with them or through other support that they give to youth benevolent activities. The benefits of encouraging such activity are many: for companies to have access to the next generation of prospective employees, for young people to gain motivation and employability potential, for volunteering to achieve the recognition it has earned, and for entrepreneurship to be confirmed in its centre-stage role.

The seminar covered a number of questions:

- How young people can be encouraged to better take advantage of the growing number of opportunities to volunteer and gain relevant experience/training by working on socially-respectful projects.
- How young people's practical experience in volunteering and associated non-formal/informal learning can be built upon to prepare them for the labour market, and put them in a better position to obtain work.
- Why and how companies can be more involved in supporting youth volunteers and projects through CSR.
- How skills gained through volunteering can be better recognised and validated.
- How the support offered by the EU Youth in Action Programme to companies active in CSR who wish to carry out European Voluntary Service projects can be optimised.

The Commission wrote a Communication on CSR in 2011, and a Communication on volunteering also in 2011. Council conclusions were completed in May 2012 on fostering the creative and innovative potential of young people. This seminar contributes to the implementation of each of these initiatives, and is spearheading consideration of these themes in a new way.

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