***EUROPEAN LABOR MARKET OPPORTUNITIES***

***FOR YOUNG PEOPLE***

**Key note speaker: Angela – Ramona Dumitru**

**MEP counselor dr.**

**ERASMUS PLUS PROJECT - KA2  
"Young citizens of Europe - our future.   
The path of knowing, growing and understanding"**

*Distinguished guests, teachers and students involved in this project meeting,*

*Among the seven countries gathered in this partnership:*

*-6 are already members of the European Union, in the chronological order of the membership: Italy (1958), Finland (1995), Poland (2004), Romania (2007), Bulgaria (2007), Croatia (2013)*

*-and for one – Turkey – the European Union opened the negotiations of adherence with Ankara ten years ago (in October 2005).*

*This project has been funded with support from the European Commission and has as main activities learning about European values and meeting politicians, therefore I was invited to talk to you about “European labor market opportunities for young people”.*

***"Youth guarantee will offer a chance to millions of young people"***

*The youth guarantee will ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive an offer of good-quality employment, continuing education, apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.*

*I am very pleased about the adoption of the youth guarantee. This is a very positive step which the Socialists and Democrats have been campaigning on for over a year. The youth guarantee will offer a fresh start for millions of young people. This is a great victory for a fairer Europe, as well as for our social-democrat family, as it follows the path we started out on almost four years ago. There is no doubt that this is a step further, but we can't stop here because we face a structural problem. The next step should be to extend the guarantee to all young EU citizens and legal residents up to the age of 25 years, and recent graduates under 30 as requested by the European Parliament. We will closely follow the implementation in all member states, as the recommendation still needs to be transformed into action to change the lives of millions of young Europeans. I'm very pleased that we now have this first tool focused on young people. This is a first step to respond to youth unemployment, which affects 23.4% – almost a quarter – of young people. This is also a key social element of the strategy to exit the crisis. The European Parliament will fight to ensure that the European Social Fund can finance this guarantee, without taking money from other programmes which promote solidarity in Europe. We want to ensure that 25% of the cohesion policy funding will be earmarked for the European Social Fund. The EU heads of state and government have decided to allocate €6 billion in EU funds (€3 billion from the European Social Fund, €3 billion from a new budget line). The funds will enable the countries worst hit by the crisis to finance a youth guarantee. Beyond the youth guarantee, efforts to combat youth unemployment must rely on a comprehensive strategy, including measures to support, foster entrepreneurship among young people and reduce failure at school. Youth guarantee schemes, which aim to ensure that young people under 25 years old are offered a job, training, or a traineeship within four months of their becoming unemployed, should be extended to include graduates under 30 years old.*

*In the debate, MEPs also stressed the need to tailor national education systems to labour market needs. They also called for better recognition of skills and aptitudes acquired outside formal education, e.g. through traineeships, volunteering, or social work.*

***EU support for good-quality traineeships and apprenticeships***

*MEPs urge EU member states to remove all barriers to cross-border traineeships for young EU citizens. The EU should do more to support initiatives that multiply good-quality apprenticeship contracts and improve the mobility and employability of young people.*

***Don't exploit trainees!***

*To discourage employers from exploiting young trainees, MEPs say the EU should introduce quality standards for pay, working conditions, health and safety.*

***Youth employment: Commission proposes package of measures***

*High youth unemployment has dramatic consequences for our economies, our societies and above all for young people. This is why we have to invest in Europe's young people now. This Package would help Member States to ensure young people's successful transition into work. The costs of not doing so would be catastrophic.*

*The proposed recommendation urges Member States to establish strong partnerships with stakeholders, ensure early intervention by employment services and other partners supporting young people, take supportive measures to enable labour integration, make full use of the European Social Fund and other structural funds to that end, assess and continuously improve the Youth Guarantee schemes and implement the schemes rapidly.*

*The Commission will support Member States through EU funding, by promoting exchanges of good practice among Member States, monitoring implementation of Youth Guarantees in the European Semester exercise and awareness-raising.*

*To facilitate school-to-work-transitions, the Package also launches a consultation of European social partners on a Quality Framework for Traineeships so as to enable young people to acquire high-quality work experience under safe conditions. Furthermore, it announces a European Alliance for Apprenticeships to improve the quality and supply of apprenticeships available by spreading successful apprenticeship schemes across the Member States and outlines ways to reduce obstacles to mobility for young people.*

***Some 5.5 million young people on the labour market (more than 1 in 5) cannot find a job, and 7.5 million young people aged 15-24 are NEETs - not in employment, education or training.****The economic cost of not integrating young people into labour market has been* [*estimated by Eurofound*](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/press/releases/2012/121022.htm)*at over €150 billion per year, or 1.2% of EU GDP. Some countries, such as Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia and Poland, are paying 2% or more of their GDP.**Avoiding these economic costs now and in the future outweighs by far the fiscal costs of the proposed Youth Guarantee.*

***Background***

*Young people are those most at risk in the European labour market, and increasingly run the risk of being marginalised. This fact has immediate consequences, but also medium and long-term implications. The deepening labour market crisis can scar a large part of an entire young generation, damaging employment, productivity and social cohesion now and in the future.*

*The proposed measures in the Youth Employment Package build on the actions of the*[*'****Youth Opportunities Initiative'***](http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1006)*, launched in December four years ago (2011). With the help of Commission Action Teams, the eight Member States with the highest youth unemployment rates are re-allocating EU structural funds to boost youth employment, develop youth jobs plans and step up education and training programmes.*

*The Commission also uses other policy instruments to address youth unemployment, such as the Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs). In July 2012, nearly all EU Member States received* [*recommendations*](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/131662.pdf) *aimed at improving the situation of young people. CSRs, adopted by the EU's Council of Ministers on the basis of Commission proposals, are a policy coordination tool to strengthen governance and reinforce coordination of economic policies at EU level in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy.*

# *Only when the labour markets improve, can we say that the crisis is over!*

*Europe's economy might be showing signs of improvement, but many people have yet to feel the benefits as both unemployment and the cost of living remain high.*

# *Parliament reiterates its call to open EU labour markets to Bulgarians and Romanians*

# *Integrating refugees into the European labour market*

# *Given the large numbers of refugees coming to Europe from war-torn countries and the increasing number of asylum applications that are being accepted, questions are being raised not only about the relocation system, but also about the overall policy for integrating refugees who have had their asylum applications accepted into the European labour market. There is also a need for integration into the education, health and social security systems, etc. To address these challenges, a coordinated, Europe-wide approach is needed when it comes to refugees and their families. The kinds of activities that those who have been granted asylum may require include: education for children and adults on language, culture and the law; the verification and recognition of qualifications; vocational training, workplace traineeships and apprenticeships, labour market entry programmes, and social responsibilities such as guaranteeing board and lodging until people become financially independent. A particularly pressing need is emerging for extra administrative staff in the Member States, including translators and specialists in asylum law. Alongside these challenges there is also a risk of ethnic and religious conflict and discrimination, and the need to stem the rising tide of intolerance and xenophobia in Europe.*

***European Parliament at your service : employment***

*The European Parliament employs some 8000 officials and other staff in total. They come from all 28 EU Member States and are posted to Parliament’s three places of work (Luxembourg, Strasbourg, Brussels) and to the Information Offices in the Member States.* ***T****he EU civil service consists of officials divided into three function groups: administrators (AD), assistants (AST) and secretaries and clerks (AST/SC).*

*How do I become an official?*

*Officials are selected by means of open competitions organised by the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO). EPSO selects staff for Parliament and for all the other EU institutions. Notices of competition are published in the Official Journal and on the EPSO website.*

*The potential long-term benefits of your programme, such as deepening the sense of belonging to European community is a wonderful desiderate that I congratulate you for.*