



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF
B U L G A R I A
T O T H E U N I T E D N A T I O N S

11 East 84th Street, New York, NY 10028, Tel: (212) 737 4790, Fax: (212) 472 9865, e-mail: bulgaria@un.int

World Youth Skills Day 2016

“Skills development to improve youth employment”

Ms. Asya Tsvetanova, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Bulgaria to the United Nations

New York, 15 July 2016 (CR 1)

Mr. Moderator,

Young people between the age of 10 and 24 form a quarter of the world’s population thus representing a major human resource for the development and prosperity of their societies and beyond.

Bulgaria is convinced that young people could and should be the key agents of positive social change globally.

Unfortunately, youth creativity, vision and enthusiasm are often hampered by numerous challenges, the most important being youth unemployment and access to quality education, but also multiple forms of discrimination.

Unemployment is a major obstacle for young people to play an active role in their societies.

Young people tend to be three times more likely than adults to be unemployed. Globally, one in six young people is without a job and not in education or training. An increasing number of young people are forced to turn to unskilled part-time jobs to support themselves, which may offer a short-term solution to their financial struggles but rarely contributes to their development in the long run. When young people cannot fulfill their full potential, the whole society suffers.

Regardless of the amount of education or qualifications young people may have, this potential is wasted if they are not given the opportunity to hone their skills through practical experience. Creating opportunities for young people to pursue internships or

other means of gaining professional experience prior to graduation is essential in tackling the unemployment issue.

Bulgaria believes that efforts should be focused on substantially reducing the proportion of young people not in employment or training by providing support and investment in formal and non-formal education. All forms of education should focus on entrepreneurial and leadership skills.

Greater recognition of non-formal training could increase its potential as a bridge between the labor market and the formal education system, which definitely remains a core factor in the development of any individual. Moreover, non-formal education can help young people recognize their role and position in a global society and make decisions for themselves as independent and dynamic individuals, and responsible citizens.

I would like to also stress the importance of non-formal education as a key tool for the inclusion of young persons with disabilities, which would help reduce the rate of youth unemployment in general.

Investment in education and extracurricular activities could be the answer to combating inequality.

In a recent study conducted among young people in Bulgaria to gauge opinions about the most pressing youth issues 80% of the surveyed identified youth unemployment as their greatest concern.

Youth unemployment is usually perceived as a domestic issue because to a great extent it depends on local economy and demographics. However, it is closely related to poverty eradication, age discrimination, gender equality and youth empowerment, all of which are being dealt with at a global level as well. Bulgaria believes that a global effort is needed to address those challenges in order to significantly decrease the rate of youth unemployment worldwide.

Mr. Moderator,

The Bulgarian Government has developed a National Strategy for Youth which includes measures aimed at integrating a youth perspective in Government policies and ensuring the full enjoyment of human rights by all young people.

The Strategy functions as an important tool for mobilizing and pooling the efforts of central institutions, local authorities, social partners and NGOs for creating a supportive environment for young people, so that they could meaningfully participate in public life and reach their full potential.

In 2013 a High-level National Council for Youth was established under the Minister of Youth and Sports as a consultative body that ensures better policy making as regards youth affairs. The Council serves also as a useful platform for communication and coordination between the different Government institutions and youth organizations.

Mr. Moderator,

The Government of Bulgaria attaches great importance to the human rights of young people and their meaningful involvement in all spheres of the political, social and public life. Youth participation in decision-making processes is a key objective on the youth agenda both at national level and globally. Bulgaria promotes actively the participation of young people at international fora through the UN youth delegate programme. Since 2007 youth delegates have been included regularly in Bulgaria's official delegations to the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly and to the Commission for Social Development of the UN Economic and Social Council, and their voice has been heard and taken into consideration.

Mr. Moderator,

Bulgaria undertakes sustained and coordinated measures for creating opportunities and improving the well-being of young people, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, including children and youth with disabilities.

Bulgaria continues to strongly advocate for a more substantial involvement of young people in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in all processes that affect their lives at national, regional and global levels.

Thank you, Mr. Moderator.