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# YOUTH IMPACT

## REPORT ON EXISTING EVALUATION STANDARDS AND PRACTICES

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2020

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Forschungsinstitut für innovative  
Arbeitsgestaltung und Prävention e.V.

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## PREFACE

This document presents the **Research Design of Work Package 3** of the YOUTH IMPACT project. Three reports on Existing Evaluation Standards and Practices of YEEA's from Poland, Slovakia and Czechia are provided here. The aim of the YOUTH IMPACT project is to improve the impact evaluation capacity of YEEA's implementers and to increase the capacity of research in the field of impact evaluation.

The template structure of the reports was developed by FIAP Institute, the German expert partner of the project. The reports are based on the Desk Research activities and questionnaires completed by each partner institution from the three remaining partner countries: Foundation In Support Of Local Democracy (Poland), PEDAL Consulting (Slovakia) and Channel Crossings (Czechia). Questionnaires were answered by Ministries', NGOs' and other organisations' representatives from each country (YEEAs). They aimed at mapping three different levels: European, State and Federal Level, Institutional Level and the Civil Society Level in order to cover the whole spectrum of actions and programmes focusing on support of young people seeking employment, and/or starting their own businesses.

The reports contain description of the initial situation of youth (un)employment in the country, which provides an overview of youth unemployment to increase awareness of the situation as basis for research activities in the field of YEEA's. Mapping of national youth employment and entrepreneurship actions and their evaluation standards and impact evaluation standards of YEEAs follow. These two parts offer a possibility to perceive differences in national strategies, to locate potential cooperation partners on a common background, and to provide examples of good practices found among the questioned organisations.

This report and results presented below per each partner country serve as a foundation for design and development of YOUTH IMPACT project outcomes in following work packages: EMPLOYMENT EVALUATION & SUPPORT SERVICE and ENTREPRENEURSHIP EVALUATION & SUPPORT SERVICE. Tools developed in the two work packages are going to be piloted and implemented in each partner country. Toolboxes constructed within each workpackage are to be published on-line and make accessible to any organisation interested in impact evaluation, especially in the field of youth employment services and support.

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## INTRODUCTION

To address well our project tasks we must start with the definition of YEEAs because only following this term and the EU policies associated with it we can properly define our target groups and their actions to be evaluated in every project country, as well as clearly describe and support capacities involved in the above mentioned evaluation.

The European Commission's main website on the EU Youth Strategy concerning employment and entrepreneurship actions sets the aims, mentions the YEEAs actions, and names the instruments to be followed in each EU country.

**The general aim of the YEEAs** (to be measured in the impact evaluations we want to support) is **to promote/support/ develop youth employment and entrepreneurship**. To ensure its realisation, the EU and its member countries work together to:

- invest in the **skills** employers look for
- develop **career guidance** and counselling services
- promote **opportunities** to work and train **abroad**
- support **quality internships/apprenticeships**
- improve **childcare** and shared family responsibilities
- encourage **entrepreneurship**
- and more generally – address the concerns of young people in employment strategies.

The legal/political instruments promoting the above aim and actions are:

1) Employment and Entrepreneurship are one of the eight fields of action promoted by the **EU Youth Strategy** (2010–2018)

2) The **Youth Guarantee** is a commitment by all Member States to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. It is based on a **Council Recommendation** adopted in April 2013 following a proposal from the Commission.

3) In its December 2016 Communication **Investing in Europe's Youth** the Commission proposes a renewed effort to support young people:

- Better opportunities to access employment
- Better opportunities through education and training
- Better opportunities for solidarity, learning mobility and participation.

4) The initiative of **European Solidarity Corps**, which is aimed at creating opportunities for young people to volunteer or work in solidarity related-projects that benefit communities and people around Europe.

- 5) A **Quality Framework for Traineeships** has been set up with a view to proposing guidelines for traineeships outside formal education to provide high quality learning content and fair working conditions.
- 6) The **European Alliance for Apprenticeships** aims at finding ways to reduce obstacles to mobility for young people
- 7) The EU Youth Strategy **Council Resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field** (2010-2018) includes creativity and entrepreneurship among its eight fields of action;
- 8) youth entrepreneurship is stressed in the Council **Conclusions on promoting youth entrepreneurship to foster social inclusion of young people** (2014). Special attention is paid to 'social entrepreneurship' that combines a social and entrepreneurial dimension;
- 9) An expert group report on **Developing the creative and innovative potential of young people through non-formal learning in ways that are relevant to employability** (2014) highlights the strong need to ensure educators and employers are more aware of the value of non-formal learning, to improve partnership work and cross-sector innovation, and to enhance the ability of adults working directly with young people;
- 10) The study **Working with young people: the value of youth work in the European Union** (2014) confirms the impact of youth work in areas including entrepreneurship and culture, by developing transversal skills, exercising skills in practice and increasing cultural activities which influence young people's creativity;
- 11) The **Erasmus+ programme** (2014–2020) has a strong focus on innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly in the Key Action 2 through strategic partnerships and transnational youth initiatives.
- 12) Entrepreneurship is a key competence in the **European Reference Framework on Key Competencies for Lifelong Learning** (2006).<sup>1</sup>

### **Who are the beneficiaries of YEEAs?**

Taking into account the scope of YEEAs – it becomes clear that the group of YEEAs' beneficiaries are not just unemployed youth (not employed, ready to work and looking for a job) but also the young people who are inactive (not employed but do not seek a job) and of course they are not in formal or non-formal education. This scope refers directly to the category of NEETs.

NEETs – **young people neither in employment, education or training** corresponds to the percentage of the population of a given age group and sex who is not employed and not involved in further education or training.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/youth/solidarity-corps\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/youth/solidarity-corps_en)

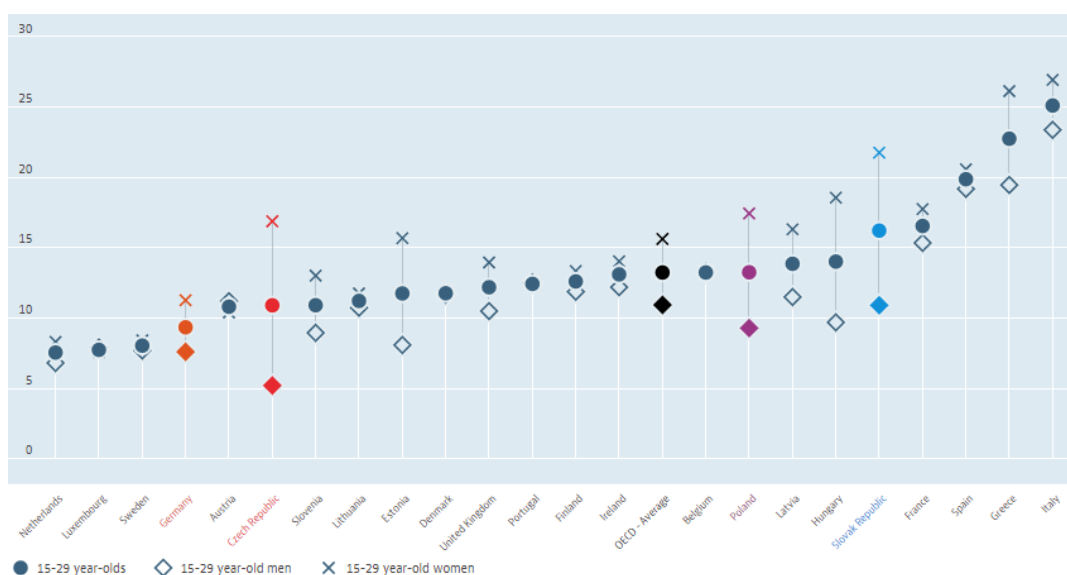
The concept has been widely used as an indicator to inform youth-oriented policies on employability, education, training and also social inclusion in the 28 EU Member States since 2010.

NEETs were specifically referred to for the first time in European policy discussions in the Europe 2020 flagship initiative 'Youth on the move'. The age category covered by the term was 15–24 and was later broadened to include those aged 15–29. The concept is now centrally embedded in the policy discourse at EU level.

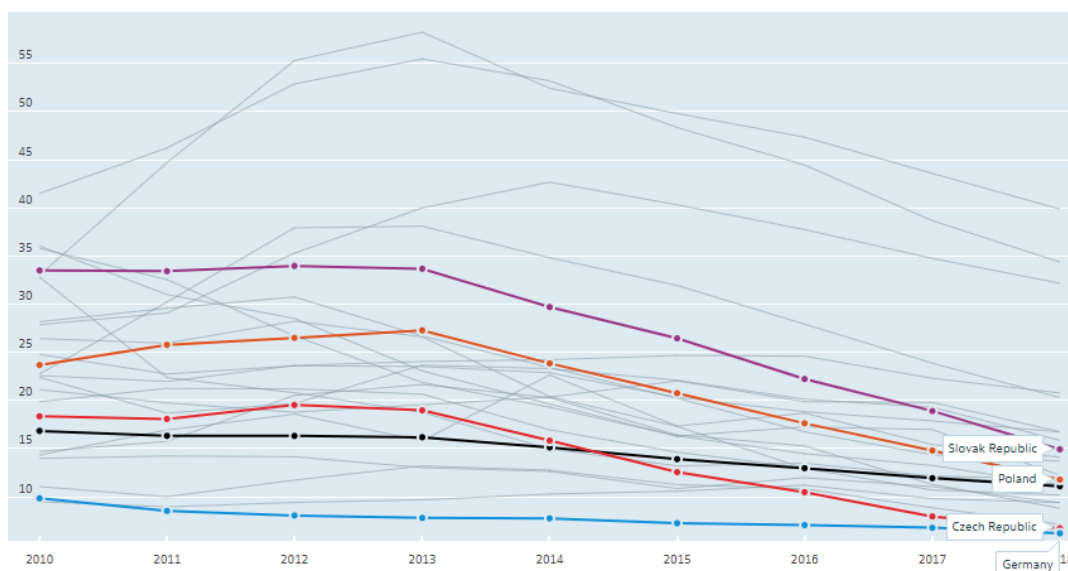
The scope of NEET group should be measured by the **NEET rate**. The numerator of the indicator refers to persons who meet the following two conditions: (a) they are not employed (i.e. unemployed or inactive according to the International Labour Organisation definition) and (b) they have not received any education or training (i.e. neither formal nor non-formal) in the four weeks preceding the survey. The denominator in the total population consists of the same age group and sex, excluding the respondents who have not answered the question 'participation in regular (formal) education and training'.

### NEET indicator

YOUTH NOT IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION OR TRAINING (NEET) 15-29 YEAR-OLDS / 15-29 YEAR-OLD MEN / 15-29 YEAR-OLD WOMEN

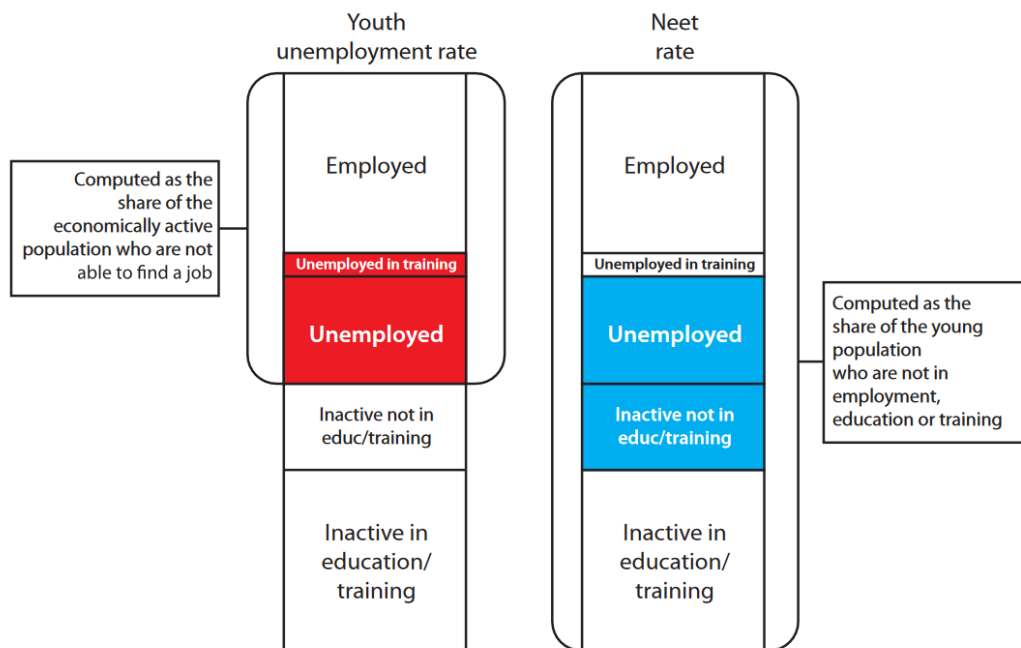


### Youth unemployment rate 2010 – 2018



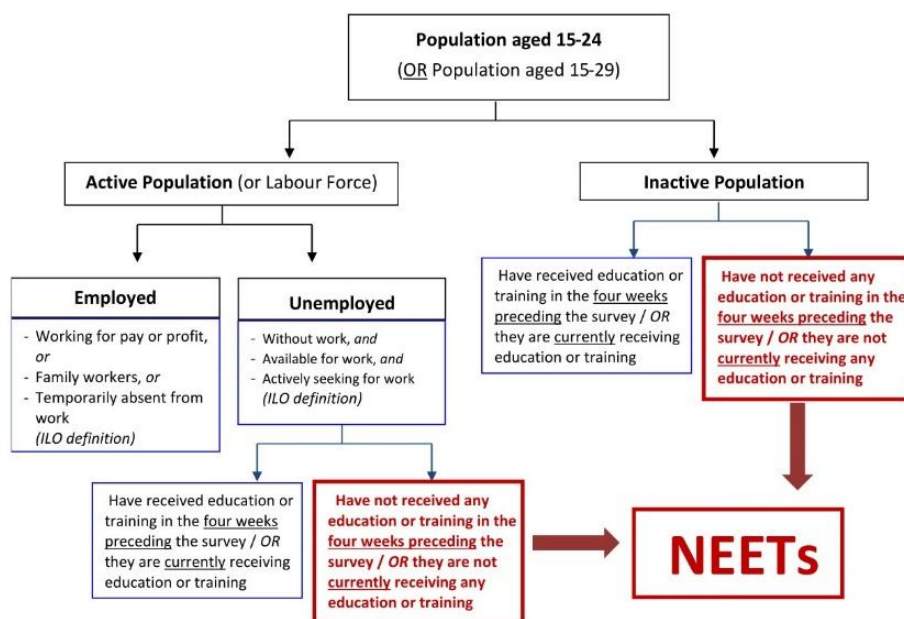


**Diagram 1: Conceptual difference between youth unemployment rate and NEET rate**



Source: Eurofound 2012.<sup>2</sup>

**Diagram 2: Calculation schema for youth NEET indicator**



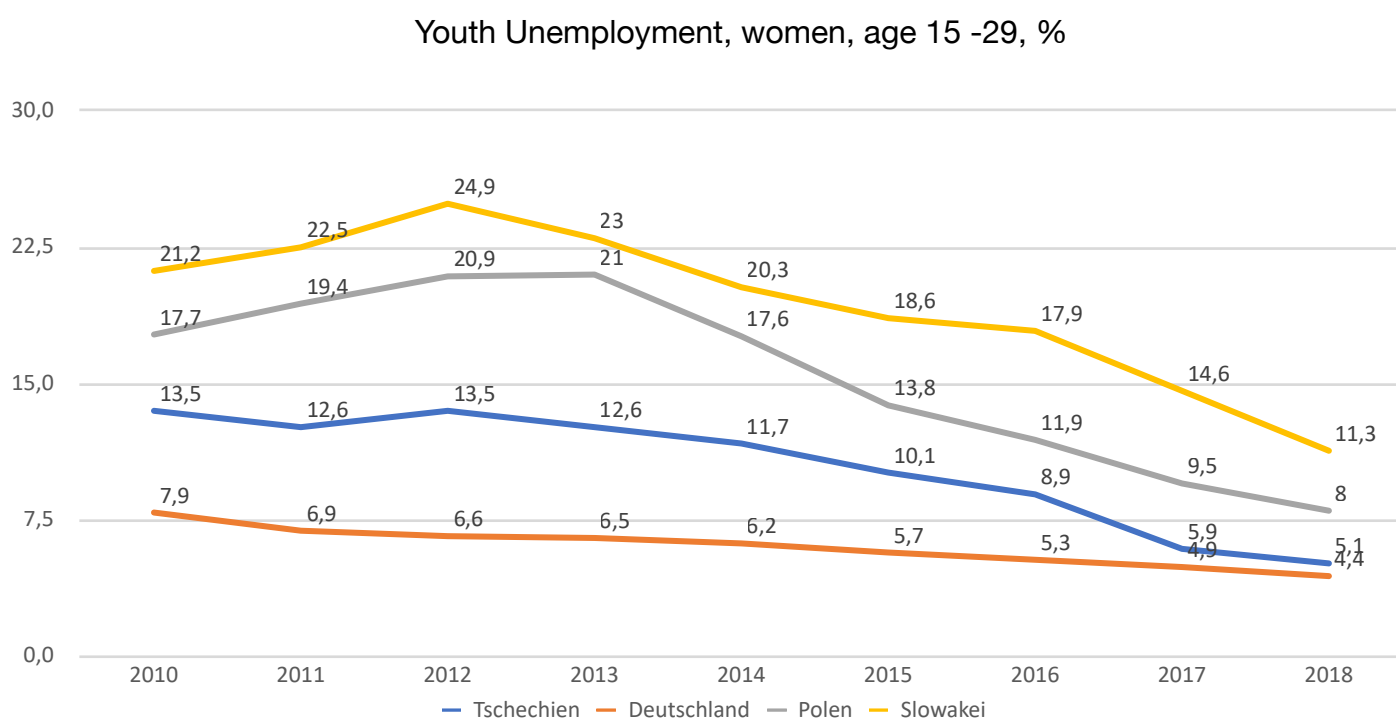
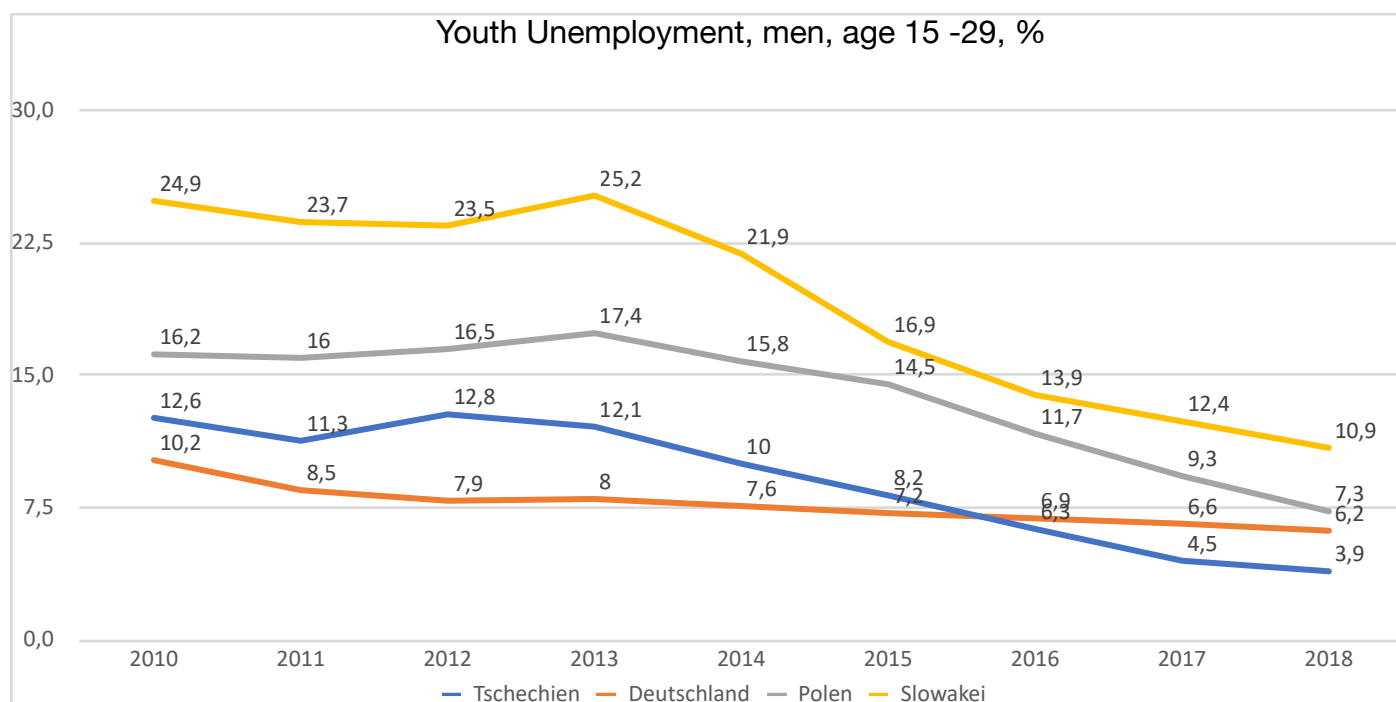
Note: This schema has been created by the ETF to show how the NEET indicator is extracted.

Source: ETF 2015.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pl/publications/report/2012/labour-market-social-policies/neets-young-people-not-in-employment-education-or-training-characteristics-costs-and-policy>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/young-people-not-employment-education-or-training-neet>

## YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN PARTNER COUNTRIES BY GENDER





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# YOUTH IMPACT

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POLAND

**FOUNDATION IN SUPPORT OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY**

2019

Authored by: Slawomir Nalecz, PhD & Zofia Penza-Gabler

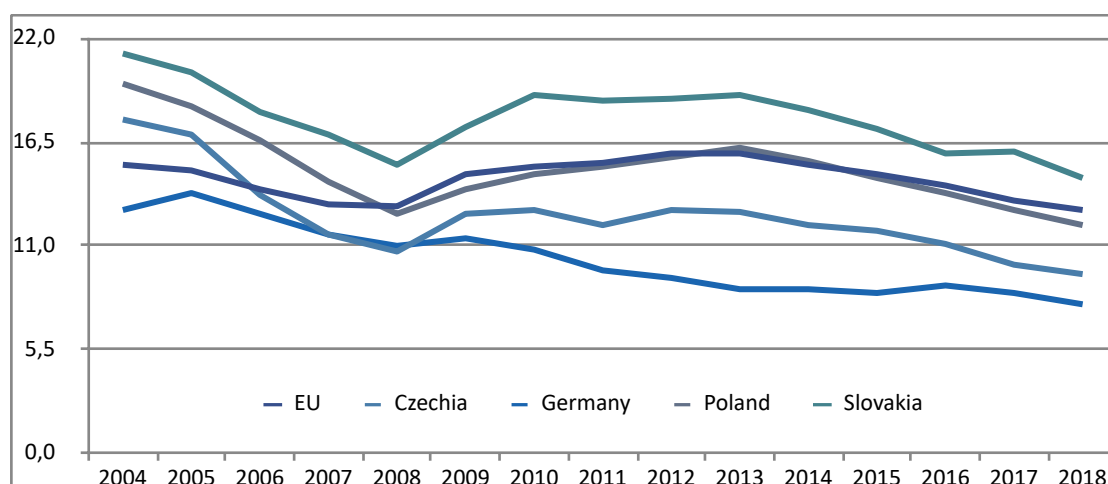
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## Initial Situation of Youth Unemployment in Poland

The analysis of data on youth who are *Not in Employment, Education or Training* (NEET) in Poland reveals certain important facts:

1. In 2004, when Poland joined the EU, its NEET rate for the youth aged 15–29 was 19.6%, i.e. the second highest among the 4 project countries and much higher than the UE average (15.3%).
2. After the accession, the NEET rate had been rapidly decreasing till 12.7% in 2008, when the global financial crisis broke up and reversed the trend (similarly as in the other 3 project countries and in the EU on average),
3. Since 2008, the NEET 15–29 rate in Poland closely mirrors the EU average rate following upward trend till 2013 (16.2%) and then falling down, reaching the 12.1% in 2018 (slightly below the EU average of 12.9%),
4. The recent result of 12.1% positions Poland slightly better (lower) than the EU average of 12.9% and better (lower) than one of the project countries (Slovakia 14.6%) but still much worse than the other 2 project countries (Czechia 9.5% and Germany 7.9%)
5. In sum, regardless the impact of 2008 crisis, Poland reduced its NEET 15–29 indicator by 7.5 p.p. since joining the EU in 2004, and improved its relative position to the EU considerably, while keeping its position in the middle of two other post-communist countries (Slovakia and Czechia) and being outdistanced by Germany, where the NEET rate was always the lowest among the project countries.

**Figure 1. NEETs rate concerning youth aged 15–29 (in percent of the population of the same age)**



Source of the data: Eurostat (online data code: edat\_lfse\_20)

### Comparative database of educational attainment in this age group

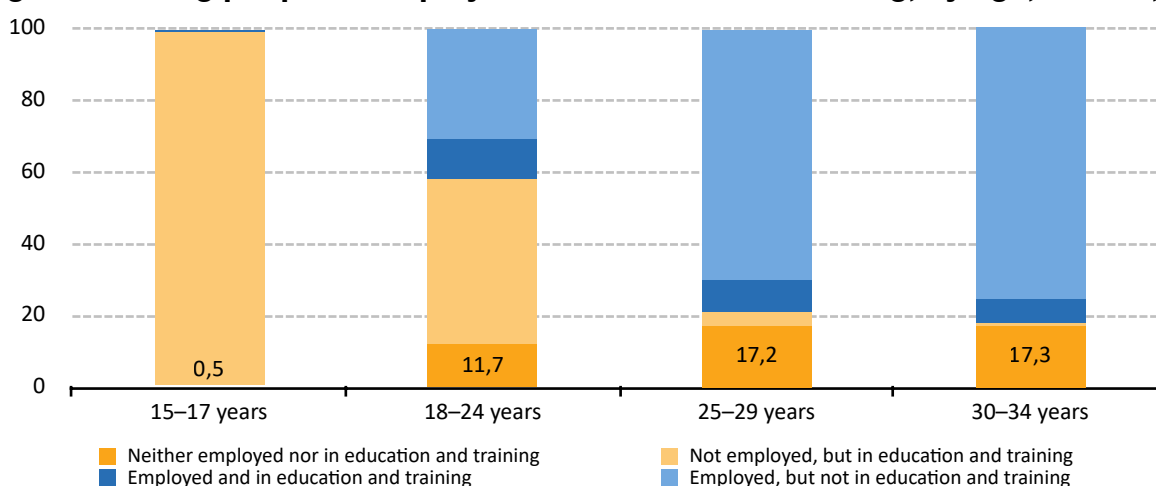
Comparative analysis of the employment and education status by age group reveals huge structural differences among the groups.

1. Nearly whole population aged 15–17 is still engaged in education solely (98.4%) and very rarely the education/training is combined with employment (1.1%). The legal framework in Poland requires staying in education till the age of 18. Therefore there is hardly any space for

unemployment. Nevertheless, there is a tiny fraction of “unknown cases” which in reality can fulfil the conditions of NEET category. The data on situation of this age group is very similar in Czechia and Slovakia (although the NEETs group in SK is relatively big – 3.2%). In Germany the category of NEETs is also marginal (0.3%) – overwhelming majority continues education (86.6%), while those who are both employed and still in education/training is relatively big (12.8%).

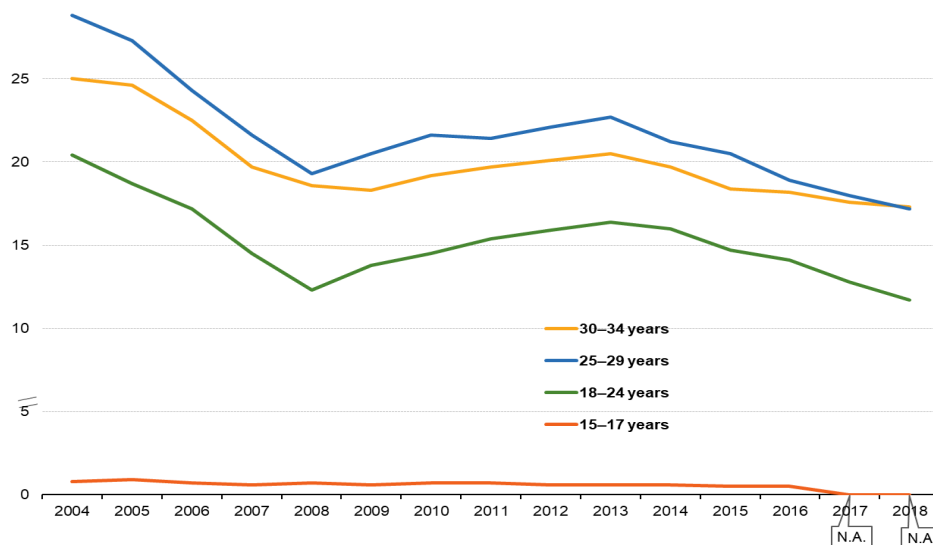
2. The NEETs are really present among youth aged 18 and more. In the group 18–24, the NEETs rate in Poland is 11.7%, while the most numerous in this age group are still the young people who attend universities or other schools (46.1%). The category of combining employment with education or training is nearly the same popular as NEETs (11.2%).
3. The highest rate of NEETs is found among youth aged 25–29 (17.2%) and remains at the same level even among older age group (30–34 years old), while the rate of young people engaged in education or training becomes small minority (in education only – 3.5%, simultaneously in employment and education or training – 8.9%).

**Figure 2. Young people in employment or education / training, by age, Poland, 2018 (%)**



Source of the data: Eurostat (online data code: edat\_ifse\_20)

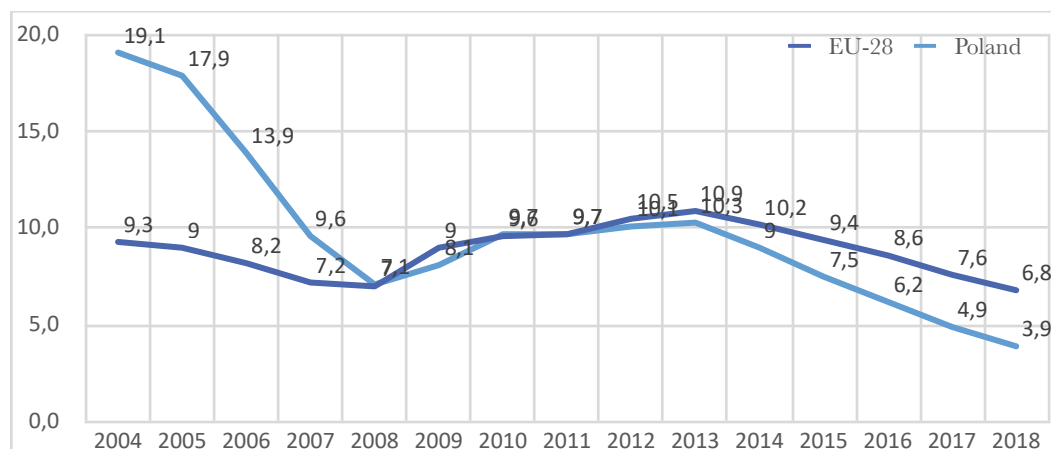
**Figure 3. Young people neither in employment nor in education and training, by age, Poland, 2004–2018 (%)**



Source of the data: Eurostat (online data code: edat\_ifse\_20)

The NEETs rates in the age groups of 18–24 and 25–29 years old were quite dynamic over time and reflected mostly the unemployment which accounted for more than half of all NEETs (presently 55%).

**Figure 4. Unemployment rate among youth (15–24 yo), 2004–2018 (%)**



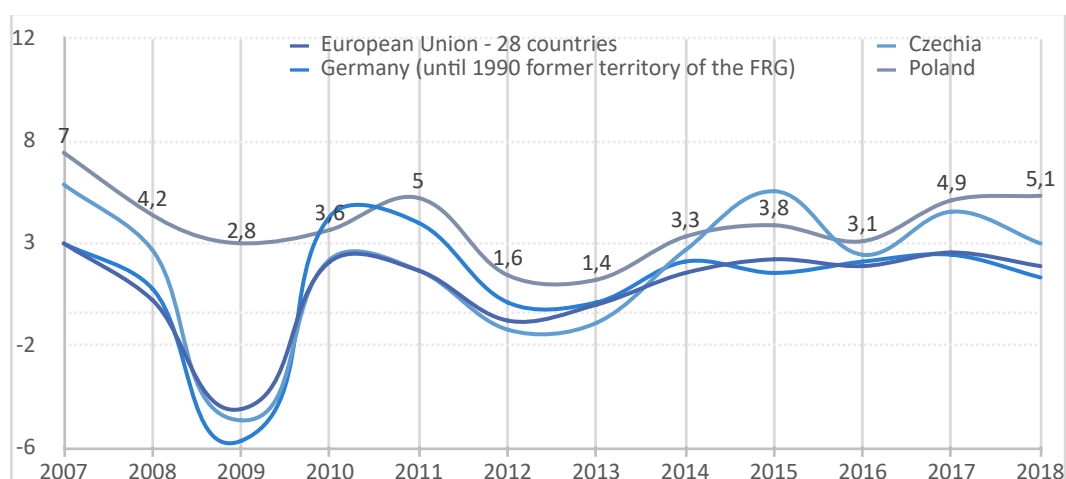
Source of the data: Eurostat

Other important trends influencing unemployment and NEET rate were depopulation of the youth group as well as economic trends and youth employment policies. As a result three phases of the youth unemployment developments are visible:

- integration with the EU, emigration and economic recovery processes (2004–2008),
- economic crisis (2009–2013),
- economic recovery and implementation of the youth employment policies.

The economic growth was obviously one of the most influential for short-term unemployment rates.

**Figure 5. GDP growth rate in Poland and EU-28, 2007–2018 (%)**

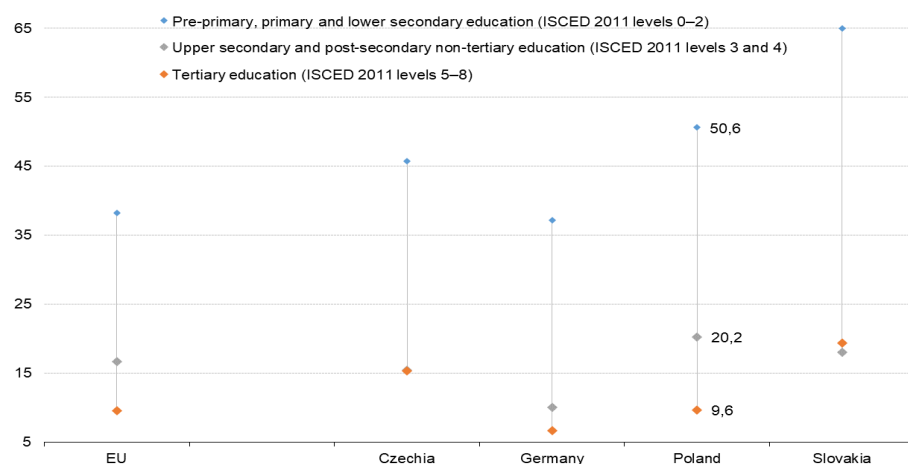


Source of the data: Eurostat

As for the impact of education level on the chances of becoming a NEET – the situation in Poland is quite diversified according to the age group. The differences of NEETs rate are big among the people aged 25–29 (41 p.p.) and much smaller in the age group 18–24 (5 p.p.). What is surprising

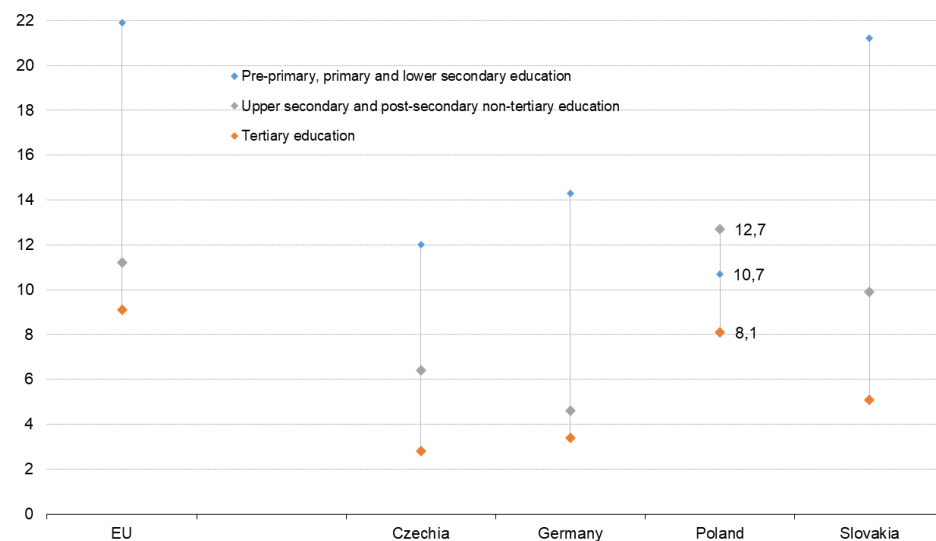
among the youth aged 18–24 the chances of becoming NEET are lower for those who have primary and lower secondary education than for the those with upper secondary and postsecondary non-tertiary education younger group.

**Figure 6. NEETs rate among youth aged 18–24 by educational attainment level, 2018 (%)**



Source of the data: Eurostat

**Figure 7. NEETs rate among youth aged 25–29 by educational attainment level, 2018 (%)**



Source of the data: Eurostat

## Supply and demand on the national labour markets / skills shortage

According to *2018 Europe 2020 Employment Performance*<sup>4</sup> report Poland has high rates of formal education participation both at tertiary and upper secondary levels. The tertiary education graduates account for nearly 46% of Poles who are in their early thirties (30–34 yo). This measure shows already higher value than the Poland’s target (45%) and well ahead the EU-28 average (41%). What is more there are only 5% of so called “early leavers” i.e. young people aged 18–24 left education and training without completing upper secondary education or complete vocational education, while the same indicator for the EU-28 is twice higher.

<sup>4</sup> to download: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=20000&langId=en>

**Table 1. Developments in formal education attainment in Poland and the EU-28, 2013–2018**

	Pol and 201 3	Pol and 2018	EU- 28 averag e 2013	EU- 28 averag e 2018
<b>Early leavers from education and training (18–24)</b>	5.6 %	4.8 %	11.9 %	10.6 %
<b>Tertiary educational attainment (30–34)</b>	40.5 %	45.7 %	37.1 %	40.7 %

Source of the data: Eurostat

As the *2018 Europe 2020 Employment Performance* report states the key challenge of the Polish education system remains “low levels of adults' skills related to insufficient focus on transversal skills in general education and quality of higher education”. Furthermore, as well as “limited labour market relevance of vocational education and training and weak participation to adult learning” is also noticeable (table 2).

**Table 2. Young people (25–34 yo) participation in education or training in Poland and the EU-28, 2018**

	Poland 2018	EU 2018
<b>Participation rate in education or training during 4 weeks preceding the interview</b>	9.6%	17.8%

Source of the data: Eurostat (trng\_lfse\_01)

While participation in initial vocational education and training (IVET) is above the EU average, the sector has been faced with a number of challenges, including lack of flexible pathways, low quality of teaching and absence of a mechanism matching IVET supply with labour demand (European Commission, 2017).<sup>5</sup>

The research “Labour market in the eyes of employers” (*Rynek pracy widziany oczami pracodawców*<sup>6</sup>) conducted in 2014 by The Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (*Polska Agencja Rozwoju Przedsiębiorczości, PARP*) shows that employers complain mainly about the shortcomings of these competences, which they considered as the most useful for work:

- professional competences – more than half of employers looking for employees and experiencing difficulties in finding them (58%) indicated lack of such skills of applicants. Since such studies were conducted in years 2010–2014, it is worth emphasizing that the lack of these competences has been a growing problem since autumn 2010;
- self-organizing competences – more than a quarter of employers stated that was hard to find independent, entrepreneurial, stress-resistant job candidates;
- interpersonal competences – one tenth of employers stated that the lack in communication skills, in cooperation in a group was a problem in recruitment.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/2225\\_en.pdf](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/2225_en.pdf)

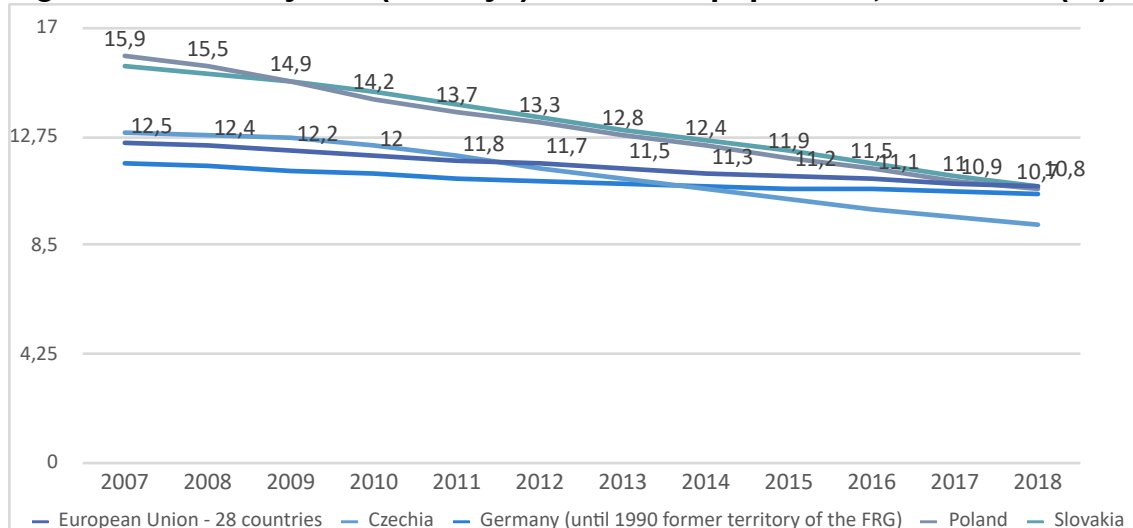
<sup>6</sup> <https://www.uj.edu.pl/documents/102715934/546e8b8c-5922-49f3-b15f-b1c4cdae1197> (p.67)

<sup>7</sup> [https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/analytical\\_highlights/poland-mismatch-priority-occupations](https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/analytical_highlights/poland-mismatch-priority-occupations)

## Demographical aspects

The most important of the demographic processes influencing labour market situation of youth is depopulation of this group, due to the relevant birth trends and migration. Over the last 10 years the share of youth aged 18–24 in the population of Poland has decreased by a third. This trend was the steepest among all countries participating in the Youth Impact Project.

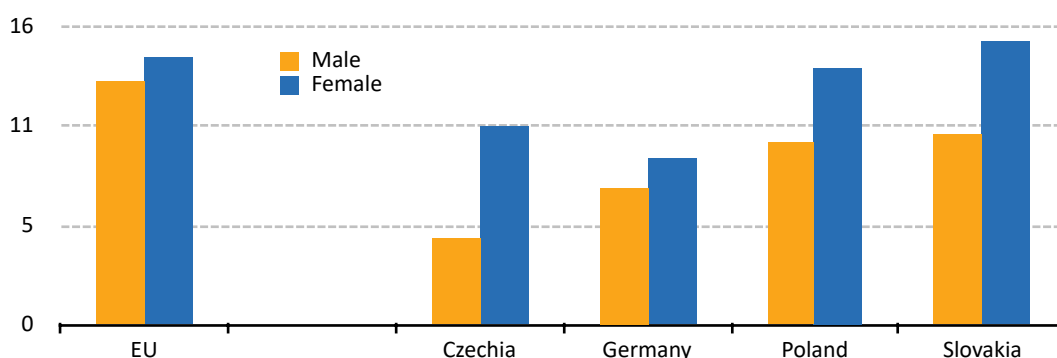
**Figure 8. Share of youth (15–24 yo) in the total population, 2007–2018 (%)**



Source of the data: Eurostat

The data presented in figures 9 and 10 demonstrate considerable gender related difference of NEETs' prevalence. The NEETs' rate is higher among women than men in all age groups except 15–17 years old. The gender gap in NEETs rate is significant among youth aged 18–24 (4 pp) and grows much higher among 25–29 years old (17 pp). The same trend can be observed also in the other countries participating in the Youth Impact project. Poland NEETs rate among 25–29 years old is 9% for men and 26% for women. The gender gap is smallest in Germany (7% vs. 15%) and biggest in Czechia (5% vs. 26%).

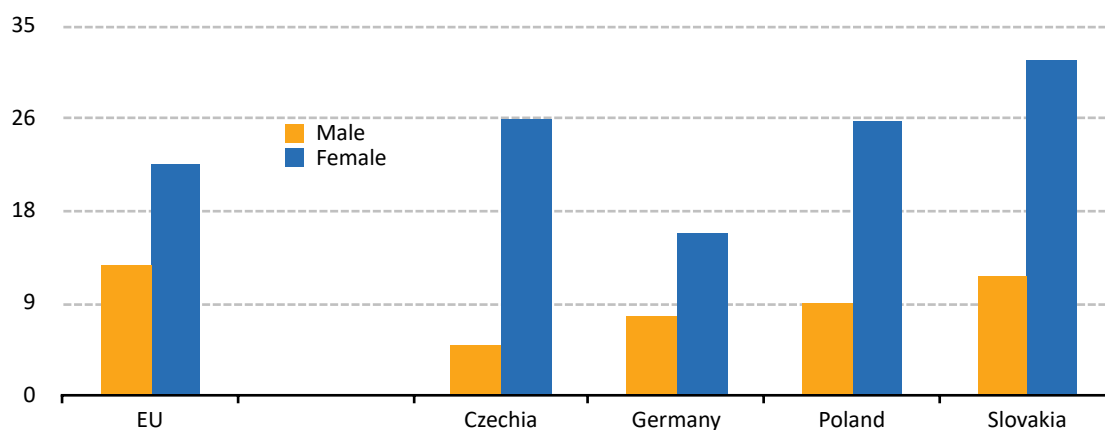
**Figure 9. NEETs rate among youth aged 18–24 by sex, 2018, %**



Source of the data: Eurostat



**Figure 10. NEETs rate among youth aged 25–29 by sex, 2018 (%)**



Source of the data: Eurostat

More detailed data presented in the table 2 show that for all project countries the NEET rate is nearly the same among men who are unemployed and those who are inactive, while among women there are several times higher NEET rate in the category of inactive than in the category of unemployed. This disparity is bigger in the group of 25–29 years old than among women aged 18–24. Therefore the highest NEET rate are found among inactive women aged 25–29. In Poland the rate of NEETs in this category is as high as 22.5 %, only slightly lower than in Czechia (23.8%), and much higher than in Germany (12.9%) or Slovakia (8.4%).

**Table 3. NEETs' rate among unemployed and inactive, by sex and age group, 2018 (%)**

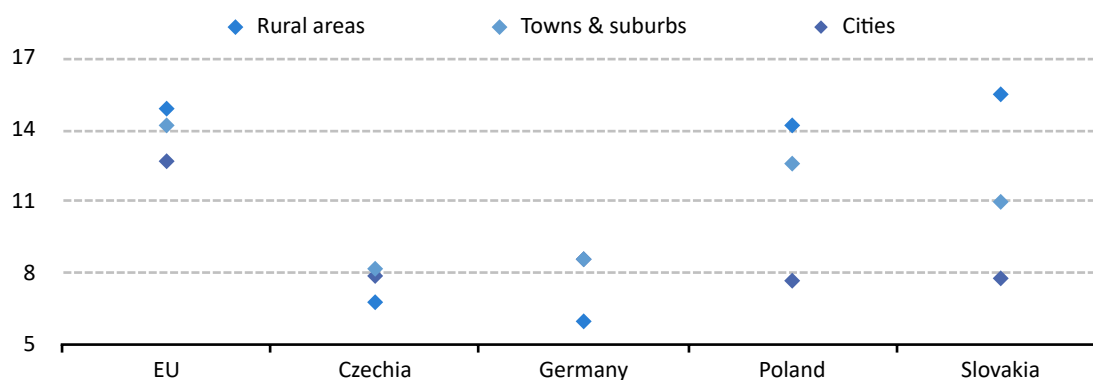
	aged 18–24						aged 25–29					
	Unemployed			Inactive			Unemployed			Inactive		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
<b>EU-28</b>	6.0	6.8	5.1	7.7	6.3	9.3	6.3	6.6	6.0	10.8	5.8	16.0
<b>Czechia</b>	2.3	2.5	2.0	5.3	2.1	8.7	2.3	2.1	2.4	12.9	2.5	23.8
<b>Germany</b>	2.7	3.3	2.0	5.4	4.0	6.9	3.0	3.6	2.4	8.2	3.8	12.9
<b>Poland</b>	4.5	5.3	3.7	7.2	4.5	10.1	3.7	4.0	3.5	13.5	4.9	22.5
<b>Slovakia</b>	3.2	3.6	2.7	5.3	3.8	6.9	6.2	5.7	6.8	6.2	4.1	8.4

Source of the data: Eurostat (online data code: edat\_ifse\_20)

The findings on highest NEET rate among inactive women correspond with the Eurofound report on NEETs, in which one can read “In Poland the group of NEETs is mainly composed of *NEETs due to family responsibilities*” (2016).

Last but not least of the demographic factors highly influencing chances of becoming a NEET is place of residence. urbanisation level.

**Figure 11. NEETs' rate among youth aged 18–24 by degree of urbanisation, 2018 (%)**

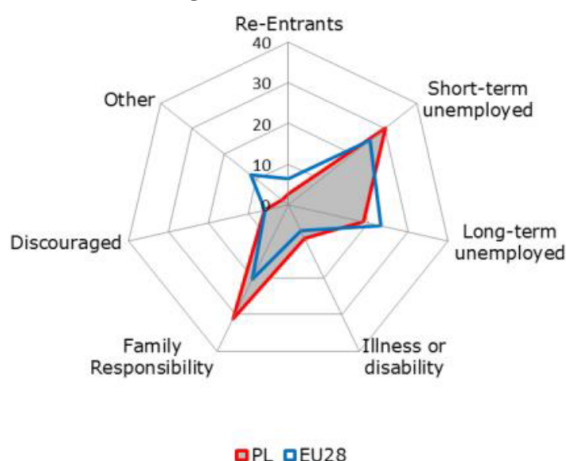


Source of the data: Eurostat

## Most affected groups of youth unemployment

There are several groups of youth having serious problems in their transition from education to work phase of their lives. The 2016 Eurofound's study "Exploring the diversity of NEETs" demonstrated that the single biggest category of NEETs in Poland is composed of persons who are not in education, training nor work "due to family responsibilities" (31% in 2013)<sup>8</sup>. This group is highly dominated by women. Their situation is not necessarily so bad as they are often living together with other persons who make the household budget with his work compensation. Over the last 3 years there has been an increase in the inactivity of women observed after 2015 which is due to, among others, Family 500+ Programme.<sup>9</sup> The programme profoundly reduced motivation to work among families with children and increased inactivity rate among women. A factor of insufficiency of affordable, high-quality social care services also plays a role and was mentioned among key employment challenges in 2018 *Europe 2020 Employment Performance*.

**Figure 12. Main categories of NEETs, Poland, 2013 (%)**



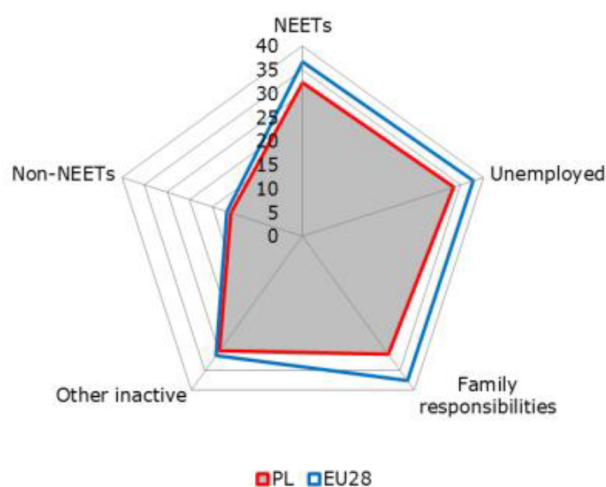
Source: Eurofound 2016

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pl/publications/report/2016/labour-market-social-policies/exploring-the-diversity-of-neets>

<sup>9</sup> Magda, I., Kielczewska, A., Brandt, N. (2018). *The Effects of Large Universal Child Benefits on Female Labour Supply*. IZA Discussion Paper No. 11652: <https://www.iza.org/publications/dp/11652/the-effects-of-large-universal-child-benefits-on-female-labour-supply>

Figure 12 shows also other than “inactive due to family responsibilities” categories of NEETs, which should be considered as more affected by the NEET status. The Figure 13 helps in understanding that these are the unemployed, surely more long-term than the short-term, who are most often at risk of social exclusion. Considering the effects of 500+ Programme we can assume also that inactivity caused by other reasons than care for children should be less supported financially and therefore the **persons with disabilities and their guardians** are in more difficult financial situation. The same refers to inactive **youth coming from so-called difficult background** (e.g. **dysfunctional families, foster care**), or **who experienced some serious problems** (e.g. **addictions, imprisoned or stay in other correctional institution, migration, to early leaving the educational system, early pregnancy, becoming alone parent** etc).

**Figure 13. Risk of social exclusion by main categories of NEETs, Poland, 2013 (%)**



Source: Eurofound 2016

## Conclusions

Five years ago the youth labour market situation in Poland closely mirrored the EU-28 average across key indicators. Since then the downward trends concerning unemployment and NEETs among youth aged 15–29 were much stronger in Poland than in the European Union on average. The youth unemployment rate for Poland fell from 19% to 8% while the relevant figures for the EU-28 indicators reached 12%. The NEETs rate decreased from 16% to 12% reaching the EU-28 average. The number of NEETs contracted by 0.5 mln, but the decrease of unemployment is caused mostly by contraction of youth population (from 8 to 6.7 million in the group of 15-29 years old) and not related to the creation of work places for the youth - the number of young people having a job stayed the same during last 5 years. What is more this reduction of the number of NEETs was almost entirely accounted for by the falling number of the unemployed. This means the Youth Employment Entrepreneurship Actions have not been very successful with the inactive NEETs.

According to a study by Magda et al. (2018), there has been an increase in the inactivity of women observed after 2015 which is due to, among others, Family 500+ Programme. The

programme reduced motivation to work among families with children, and widened already substantial gender gap in the category of inactive NEETs. Besides inactive women (most of them young mothers), persons with disabilities, and so many of the youth coming from so-called difficult background (e.g. dysfunctional families, foster care), or those who experienced some serious problems (e.g. addictions, imprisoned or stay in other correctional institution, migration, to early leaving the educational system etc.) must be still in focus the YEEAs. The actions addressed to those NEETs who do not come to Public Employment Service institutions must be intensified.

# Mapping Polish Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Actions and their Evaluation Standards

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## European, State and Federal Level

Political institutions on European, state- or regional level

**1) Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy** was formed in 2005 to administer issues related to labour and social policy of Poland. It was named Ministry of Labour and Social Policy until late 2015 when it was renamed to Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy. The ministry was formed from the former and short-lived Ministry of Social Affairs (created in 2004) and the Ministry of Economy. The new ministry acquired the competences in the fields of employment and combating unemployment, relations and conditions of labour, labour-related benefits, and trade union relations. The social policy part of the ministry deals with the issues of family, social benefits and welfare.

The Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy acts as the coordinator of public employment services. The system of employment organs is of government and self-governmental character, and its essential feature is the independence of each organizational unit. The formal and organizational separation between local government bodies and government bodies means that we are dealing with a decentralized model.

The general labour market policy is set at the national (government) level: the Ministry of Family, Social Policy Work prepares and coordinates state policy in the field of labour market, but poviats and voivodeship labour offices determine and coordinate local and regional labour market policies according to the market needs. At the regional and local level, labour offices are subordinated to the self-governments of the voivodeship and poviats, respectively.

In Youth Guarantee framework (described below) the Ministry is directly responsible for recruiting competition projects aimed to support NEETs in particularly difficult situation (as described below).

In 2014, the (then) Ministry of Labour and Social Policy worked on Youth Social Activity Program for 2015–2016 (*Program Aktywności Społecznej Młodzieży na lata 2015–2016, PASM*<sup>10</sup>). The purpose of the program was "Increasing development opportunities and improving the initial conditions of young people in social and professional life"

The Ministry's website is <https://www.gov.pl/web/rodzina>

**2) Ministry of Investment and Economic Development** was formed in 2018 to administer issues related to regional development (including management of the EU funds) as well

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<sup>10</sup> [http://prom.info.pl/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/PASM\\_19.05.2014.pdf](http://prom.info.pl/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/PASM_19.05.2014.pdf)

as construction, planning and housing. Earlier, the EU Funds were managed by the Ministry of Economic Development.

In particular The Department of the European Social Fund of the Ministry is responsible for: coordination and support for the implementation of the European Social Fund, implementation of tasks resulting from the Minister's performance as the Managing Authority of the Human Capital Operational Program and the Managing Authority of the Operational Program Knowledge Education Development 2014–2020, OP KED (*Program Operacyjny Wiedza Edukacja Rozwój, PO WER*). The Ministry runs also a system which gathers data on all the projects funded by the EU, including the indicators of their completion. The Ministry commissions also research projects to evaluate impact of major programs implementing the EU policies.

The Ministry's website is <https://www.gov.pl/web/inwestycje-rozwoj>

**3) Voluntary Labour Corps** (*Ochotnicze Hufce Pracy, OHP*) – public (state run) institution supervised by the Ministry of Family, labour and social policy. OHP are an institution of the labour market that performs the tasks specified in the Act on Labour Market Institutions and Employment Promotion, specialized in activities for the benefit of young people, in particular youth at risk of social exclusion, and the unemployed up to 25 years of age.

The OHP structures consists 721 organisational units and branches operating throughout Poland.

Depending on the type of activities delivered, these include:

- 217 shelter and educational units, where young people can supplement their general and vocational education;
- a network of 504 bodies implementing labour market initiatives, where young people may benefit from vocational counselling and guidance, job matching services, and vocational training and information.

All of these facilities are open institutions which implement the agenda for the local community in cooperation with local self-government authorities, employers, associations, and foundations operating in a given area.

The employees working for OHP are highly qualified; more than 50% of the staff members are young people with several years of work experience, who have received training (also as part of projects co-financed by the EU) at specialist courses in various forms of assistance provided to youth.

**The beneficiaries of the activities delivered by the Voluntary Labour Corps include:**

- young people (aged 15 to 17 years) from troubled, dysfunctional, unemployed, and poverty-stricken families who fail to continue compulsory schooling and are not in education, struggle to complete school, and need to acquire vocational qualifications;
- individuals aged 18–25, including jobseekers or those who wish to be retrained or are unemployed; school graduates, and students.

To address the needs of young people over 15 years of age who are not in learning and have no lower-secondary school education, the Voluntary Labour Corps has teamed up with local self-governments and employers to deliver educational initiatives in non-standard legal formats that enable young people to complete practical, on-the-job training. Participants in OHP courses who benefit from employment and vocational training courses sign individual work contracts on terms and conditions applicable to young workers. Consequently, they benefit from all the social benefits they are eligible for, while the term of their pre-employment vocational training is classified as part of their periods in employment. In addition, during their stay at OHP facilities, all participants with limited material resources receive free accommodation, board, and 24 hour pastoral care.

Benefiting from its in-house training workshops and long-term cooperation with local employers – businesses and craftsmen – the OHP's range of pre-employment vocational education is extremely diverse and enables young people to select the occupation of their choice. It also embraces the demand for a specific type of workforce on the local labour market. This approach effectively helps young people to become independent, which is often a major challenge in families with problems, which offer no such support. The OHP units provide young people with vocational training in approx. 60 disciplines.

Every year, over 85% of participants successfully complete education or are promoted to the next grade in spite of previous school failure and several repeated classes, while more than 90% of the young people who complete their vocational training take the qualification exam.<sup>11</sup>

Among initiatives within the YEI-funded priority axis 'Young people on the labour market' are the two projects for NEETs run by the Voluntary Labour Corps (*Ochotnicze Hufce Pracy*): 'Idea for yourself' (*Pomysł na siebie*) and 'Equal labour market' (*Równi na rynku pracy*)<sup>12</sup>:

- The project 'Idea for yourself' aims at improving the situation of NEETs aged 15–17 by bringing them back into education or training and helping them in the acquisition of professional qualifications. It targets 1,320 young people.
- The project 'Equal labour market' aims at young people aged 18–24 that are in particularly difficult situations due to family and social situations (families with long-term unemployment, socially disadvantaged, dysfunctional), are not in employment, education or training (NEETs), lack formal and professional qualifications and professional experience or possess qualifications that are not required by the labour market. It targets 6,180 young people.

According to Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy, in 2018, 5,100 NEETs took part in non-competition (*pozakonkursowe*) activation projects of Voluntary Labour Corps. They took part in the "From training to employment" (*Od szkolenia do zatrudnienia*) projects for the 18–24 age group and "I bet for the future" (*Stawiam na przyszłość*) for the 15–17 age group.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> More information on the YEEActions run by the OHP is available at [https://ohp.pl/?page\\_id=434](https://ohp.pl/?page_id=434)

<sup>12</sup> Summary of the project: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=20442&langId=en>

<sup>13</sup> <http://gdm.praca.gov.pl/-/8746279-podsumowanie-realizacji-gwarancji-dla-mlodziezy-w-2018-roku>



**4) Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (BGK, the National Development Bank)** BGK is a bank owned by the Polish state and operating under a dedicated bill of law. BGK manages several purpose funds and a number of governmental programmes (including the National Road Fund, National Housing Fund, Thermo-Modernisation and Renovation Fund and the Railway Fund).

Its mission is to support social and economic growth of Poland and the public finance sector in the performance of its tasks. As for the activities relevant for the YEEAs the BGK runs a program **First Business – Support at Start** (*Pierwszy biznes – Wsparcie w starcie*) – preferential low-interest loans (0.18% or 0.44% per annum) program managed by the BGK bank on behalf of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy.<sup>14</sup> The loans are also available within Regional Operational Programmes. The program is dedicated to 2 groups of youth: those who are in their last year of tertiary education or have graduated within the last 4 years, and those who are 15–29 years old and are registered as unemployed. Young people can get a loan of up to 20 times the national average salary (in July 2019, this was PLN 99,018, which is approximately EUR 23,027). As a part of the program, free consulting and training services are provided by financial intermediaries for those who want to apply for the loan, and those, who already took it (for 6 months). Most of the surveyed beneficiaries consider this form of support as much-needed and many favoured low-interest loans over grants.<sup>15</sup>

In 2018, there were 240 loans granted to young people under the age of 29 for starting business activity in the total amount of PLN 16.3 million. Since 2014 there were 2,000 loans granted to people in this age group, and the total amount loans reached over PLN 120 million.<sup>16</sup>

Measures: Laws, regulations, political decisions during the last 15 years

### **Examples on the European level (e.g. European Youth Guarantee) to present the national strategy**

The basic law that regulates employment support is based on the Act of 20 April 2004 on Employment Promotion and Labour Market Institutions (*ustawa z dnia 20 kwietnia 2004 r. o promocji zatrudnienia i instytucjach rynku pracy*)<sup>17</sup>.

Obligated by the Act every year the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy prepares the National Action Plan for Employment (*Krajowy Plan Działań na rzecz Zatrudnienia, KPDZ*), which operates within the National Reform Program (*Krajowy Program Reform, KPR*) for the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy in the area of the labour market, and also provides guidelines for regional governments for preparing their annual regional employment plans.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Evaluation of the program “Ex-ante evaluation of financial instruments in support of young people”: <http://www.ewaluacja.gov.pl/media/45329/InstrumentyPOWERRK.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT IN POLAND: Rapid Policy Assessments of Inclusive Entrepreneurship Policies and Programmes, OECD 2015: <https://www.oecd.org/poland/Rapid-policy-assessment-Poland-Final.pdf>, in Polish: [http://www.ewaluacja.gov.pl/media/42329/Raport\\_OECD\\_przedsiębiorczosc\\_mlodych.pdf](http://www.ewaluacja.gov.pl/media/42329/Raport_OECD_przedsiębiorczosc_mlodych.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> <http://gdm.praca.gov.pl/-/8746279-podsumowanie-realizacji-gwarancji-dla-mlodziezy-w-2018-roku>

<sup>17</sup> <http://prawo.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU20040991001/U/D20041001Lj.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> More on the plans: <https://www.gov.pl/web/rodzina/krajowe-plany-dzialan-na-rzecz-zatrudnienia-kpdz>

The plan works also by means of National Strategy of Human Capital Development 2020 (*Strategia Rozwoju Kapitału Ludzkiego 2020, SRKL*)<sup>19</sup> – one of the nine sectoral strategies implementing the medium and long-term national development strategy and the key strategy in the field of the labour market. Adopted in 2013, this strategy defines five specific objectives: increase in employment; extending professional activity and ensuring better quality of functioning of the elderly; improving the situation of people and groups at risk of social exclusion; improving citizens' health and increasing the efficiency of healthcare; raising the level of citizens' competence and qualifications.

In 2017, the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy published reports for every voivodeship with recommendations for labour market institutions regarding supporting youth on the labour market, indicating the most effective methods of reaching young people and the most effective and reliable directions of supporting young people.<sup>20</sup> The reports contain diagnosis of current situation of youth on labour market in every voivodeship, and recommendations on how to measure change.

Every set of recommendations was developed by partnerships established in each voivodeship as part of competition projects selected for funding by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy under OP KED/ PO WER Measure 2.4 Modernization of public and private employment services and better adaptation to the needs of the labour market.<sup>21</sup> Competition rules<sup>22</sup> required every set of recommendations to be developed within partnerships that consist minimum: entities dealing with youth issues, labour market institutions (public employment services, Voluntary Labour Corps, employment agencies, training institutions, social dialogue institutions, local partnership institutions), social assistance and integration institutions, entities operating in the education system, employers / employers' organizations.

Since the competition rules did not specify the scope of cooperation between the entities in partnership, nor the type of research that has to be conducted to evaluate contemporary situation, the regional reports with recommendations differ in their depth of analysis and adopted models of preparing recommendations (participatory v. expert). This means, in some places evaluation may have been conducted, in others only unstructured diagnosis.

“Poland presented a Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan in December 2013, revised in October 2015.<sup>23</sup> The scheme began in January 2014, initially targeting young people under 25. In October 2015 the age limit was raised to 29 years. Implementation is coordinated by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy, in cooperation with the Ministry of Development. A dedicated

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<sup>19</sup> <https://www.gov.pl/web/rodzina/strategia-rozwoju-kapitalu-ludzkiego-srkl>

<sup>20</sup> Here: <http://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/Strony/Wiadomosci/Rekomendacje-dla-instytucji-rynku-pracy-dotyczace-wspierania-mlodziezy-na-rynku-pracy> or here: <http://gdm.praca.gov.pl/-/6821590-regionalne-rekomendacje-dotyczace-wspierania-mlodziezy-na-rynku-pracy>

<sup>21</sup> Competition „Increasing the scope and relevance of the activation offer to young people in the most difficult situation on the labour market” (*Zwiększenie zakresu i trafności oferty aktywizacyjnej wobec osób młodych znajdujących się w najtrudniejszej sytuacji na rynku pracy*)

<sup>22</sup> [http://www.kapitalludzki.gov.pl/gfx/kapitalludzki/userfiles/91/regulamin\\_partnerstwa\\_31.08.2015.pdf](http://www.kapitalludzki.gov.pl/gfx/kapitalludzki/userfiles/91/regulamin_partnerstwa_31.08.2015.pdf), [www.kapitalludzki.gov.pl/gfx/kapitalludzki/userfiles/98/regulamin\\_konkursu\\_partnerstwa\\_ii\\_30.12.2015.pdf](http://www.kapitalludzki.gov.pl/gfx/kapitalludzki/userfiles/98/regulamin_konkursu_partnerstwa_ii_30.12.2015.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan: <http://gdm.praca.gov.pl/documents/1152786/1155303/Zaktualizowany%20Plan%20realizacji%20Gwarancji%20dla%20mlodziezy%20w%20Polsce.pdf>

website was created. Young people can register in local PES and Voluntary Labour Corps offices, as well as online via the PES website.”<sup>24</sup>

Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy coordinates Youth Guarantee program (*Gwarancja dla Młodzieży*) in cooperation with the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development, Voivodeship (regional) Labour Offices, Voluntary Labour Corps, labour market partners, and the National Development Bank (BGK).

“Key measures developed in support of YG implementation include: a 2014 amendment to the act on employment promotion and labour market institutions, which aims to improve PES efficiency by profiling support and individualising service provision; introducing new activation tools (vouchers for training, employment, traineeships and settlement, start-up loans, tripartite training agreements); the programme "Job for the youth" with wage subsidies for over 100,000 unemployed young people in 2016–2018.”<sup>25</sup>

On the basis of YG Implementation Plan the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy appointed a monitoring team. While their meetings were noticed on the Ministry’s website, there are no additional information about them (no evaluation reports nor presentations from their meetings) available online.<sup>26</sup>

In 2018, the projects supported by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy served about 1,400 NEETs in a particularly difficult situation. However, from the beginning of the Youth Guarantee implementation until the end of 2018, there were over 750 projects launched by voivodeship labour offices. These projects supported as many as 10,400 young unemployed and 37,400 economically inactive, 5,300 long-term unemployed and 6,400 people with disabilities.<sup>27</sup>

Youth Guarantee is implemented both from national funds and with the participation of funds from the European Union budget under the European Social Fund (ESF) and Youth Employment Initiative through Operational Program Knowledge Education Development (OP KED). OP KED is one of six national operational programs prepared under the financial perspective 2014–2020, as well as a direct successor of the Human Capital Operational Program implemented in 2007–2013.

Support targeted at young people is implemented under OP KED Priority Axis I – Young people on the labour market. Its goal is to provide a consistent offer of vocational and educational activation to young people across the country. The support is intended for people aged 15–29, in particular persons belonging to the so-called NEET categories, i.e. outside employment, education or training.

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<sup>24</sup> “COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on” (part 2/2) [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:73591c12-8afc-11e6-b955-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC\\_1&format=PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:73591c12-8afc-11e6-b955-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_1&format=PDF)

<sup>25</sup> “COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on” (part 2/2) [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:73591c12-8afc-11e6-b955-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC\\_1&format=PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:73591c12-8afc-11e6-b955-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_1&format=PDF)

<sup>26</sup> <http://gdm.praca.gov.pl/-/4708783-zespol-monitorujacy-spotkal-sie-po-raz-czwarty> (members: <http://gdm.praca.gov.pl/documents/1152786/1155303/Zarządzenie%20nr%2026%20w%20sprawie%20powołania%20Zespołu%20monitorującego%20Gwarancje%20dla%20młodzieży.pdf>)

<sup>27</sup> <http://gdm.praca.gov.pl/-/8746279-podsumowanie-realizacji-gwarancji-dla-młodzieży-w-2018-roku>

The intervention under Axis I is directed to both 10 regions eligible for support from YEI (dolnośląskie, kujawsko-pomorskie, lubelskie, lubuskie, łódzkie, małopolskie, podkarpackie, świętokrzyskie, warmińsko-mazurskie and zachodniopomorskie) and other regions of Poland for which it will be financed from the ESF (mazowieckie, opolskie, podlaskie, pomorskie, śląskie and wielkopolskie). When the resources of the Initiative (which must be used by the end of 2018) for the support of people from the NEET group are exhausted, support for young people will be financed across the country from the ESF.

It is worth noticing that 3/4 of all Youth Guarantee actions in Poland are funded by the Youth Employment Initiative (EU funds).

At the beginning of 2013, the European Commission (EC) supplemented its proposal for a Youth Guarantee with a Youth Employment Initiative. The initiative was directed to regions where the unemployment rate of people aged 15 to 24 exceeded 25% at the end of 2012. In Poland, it meant 10 voivodeships.

“In Poland, the activities of Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) support focuses on the needs of young people finding it very difficult to enter the labour market. According to the Managing Authority, the added value of the YEI is that it enhances the number of supported young persons and supports more individual and comprehensive support as well as introduces new forms of support for specific target groups with complex needs (for instance, youth who are in particularly difficult situations due to family and social situations such as families with long-term unemployment, socially disadvantaged, or dysfunctional). By the end of June 2016, around 88,000 young NEET persons had benefited from YEI-supported measures.”<sup>28</sup>

“In Poland, 36% of young people, who completed the YEI measure received an offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship upon leaving. First indications of long-term results from some YEI projects in Poland show that, 2–6 months after participation, 69% of participants worked or were in education or training, and 57% were employed. These are significant achievements as regards the overall employability of the young people targeted, in particular given their profile and level of detachment from the labour market.”<sup>29</sup>

#### Objectives: apparen long-term and short-term objectives of national and regional strategies

The Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy informs about its objectives in **yearly operational programs and in long-term strategy**.

In the National Action Plan for Employment for years 2015–2017 the objectives concerning NEET were not as precise, since the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan was still in the making. Thus, the plan mentions three quite similar objectives as parts of two directional actions:

- Directional action I. Developing innovative labour market policies

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<sup>28</sup> “COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on” (part 1/2) [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:73591c12-8afc-11e6-b955-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC\\_2&format=PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:73591c12-8afc-11e6-b955-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_2&format=PDF)

<sup>29</sup> “COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on” (part 1/2) [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:73591c12-8afc-11e6-b955-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC\\_2&format=PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:73591c12-8afc-11e6-b955-01aa75ed71a1.0001.02/DOC_2&format=PDF)

- Task 1.1. Supporting young people on the labour market
  - Objective: Creating an innovative approach in supporting the activation of young people aged 15–24, including in particular those who are outside employment, education and training, the so-called NEET, without the obligation to have the status of an unemployed person under the Act on employment promotion and labour market institution
- Directional action 6. Support for people from disadvantaged groups on the labour market (young people, long-term unemployment, women, people aged 50+, NEET group, parents with small children, disabled people)
  - Task 6.4 (p.41) Permanent integration into the labour market of young people, in particular those belonging to the NEET group and at risk of social exclusion and coming from marginalized environments, also through the implementation of the Youth Guarantee
    - Objective: Increasing employment opportunities for young people up to 29 years old who are unemployed, including in particular people from the NEET group.
    - (as part of I axis of OP KED financed by EFS and YEI, realized by the Ministry of Development)
  - Task 6.16. (p.46) Prevention of social exclusion of young people and activation of young people on the labour market, including young people from the NEET group
    - Objective: Improving the situation of young people aged 15–25 who are at risk of social exclusion (including young people from the NEET group).
    - (realized by VWC)

Plans for years 2018 and 2019 are more precise, developing *Priority II. Professional activation of previously unused labour resources, including the groups, which are most vulnerable to social exclusion and long-term unemployment*, in which three tasks concern directly young people:

- Task 6.6. Counteracting social exclusion of young people and activating young people on the labour market, including young people from the NEET group.
  - Objective: To improve the situation of young people aged 15–25 at risk of social exclusion (including youth from the NEET group) by: increasing their professional and social activity and employability, restoring them to study or referring them to training; acquisition, increase or change of professional qualifications; taking up employment or starting your own business; undertaking education / training or participating in courses leading to qualifications or employment.
- Task 6.7. Vocational and educational activation of young people up to 29 years of age, including in particular those remaining without work classified in the NEET category, as well as persons belonging to the following groups: persons leaving agriculture and their families, immigrants and re-emigrants, persons employed on short-term contracts or working under civil law contracts and poor people working OP KED.
  - Objective: increasing the employment opportunities for young people, in particular those belonging to the NEET category
- Task 6.8. Support for young people in a particularly difficult situation – central competitions announced by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy to implement the Youth Guarantee in Poland under Measure 1.3 "Support for young people in a particularly difficult situation" OP KED

- Objective: Increasing employment opportunities for young people up to 29 years of age without a job, including in particular those who do not participate in education and training (so-called NEETs)

In Human Capital Development Strategy (Strategia Rozwoju Kapitału Ludzkiego<sup>30</sup>), one of the five defined objectives is “Improvement of the situation of people and groups affected by social exclusion”. There are also several indicators that help describe the objectives of youth employment policy in this document. The table below presents baseline and target values of the indicators, as well as time:

Indicator		Baseline value (2011)	Target value (2020)	the target value was achieved in (...), reaching the level of ...	Value in 2018
Employment rates in the 20–24 age group	Total:	42,3%	44,2%	(2014) 44,5%	(2018) 53,5%
	Women:	34,5%	38,3%	(2016) 40,4%	(2018) 46,5%
	Men:	49,6%	52,0%	(2016) 55,9%	(2018) 60,2%
	City:	38,6%	41,2%	(2015) 41,4%	(2018) 51,2%
	Village:	47,3%	50,2%	(2016) 53,7%	(2018) 55,9%
Percentage of persons aged 15–24 employed on temporary work contract		65,6%	64,0%	(2018) 62,6%	?
Social passivity index, percentage of young people aged 20–24 neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET)	20–24 age group	18,2%	16,2%	(2017) 15,4%	(2018) n.d.
	25–29 age group	21,4%	18,0%	(2017) 18%	(2018) n.d.

Source: Statistics Poland: <https://strateg.stat.gov.pl/dashboard/#/strategie/krajowe/9>

### Is it possible to define measures fostering employment and entrepreneurship on this level?

Support is to be provided both as part of non-competition projects implemented by labour market institutions (PLOs and OHP), as well as within competitions conducted by VLOs and Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy.

According to the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan in Poland, within 4 months each participant of project under axis I OP KED should be presented a high-quality offer of employment, further education, apprenticeship or internship. As part of the support, the Program participant will be able to use at least 3 different types of individual assistance (2 of them have been indicated as obligatory, the third and subsequent – optional – will be selected depending on the needs of individual persons) from the following:

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.gov.pl/web/rodzina/strategia-rozwoju-kapitalu-ludzkiego-srkl>

- labour market instruments and services for individualisation of support and assistance in determining the professional path:
  - identification of individual needs, profiling (depending on the degree of distance from the labour market) (obligatory),
  - career counselling (including planning career development and raising and supplementing professional qualifications) or job placement (including choosing a profession in accordance with qualifications and competences) (obligatory),
- labour market instruments and services targeted at people who leave the education system prematurely or people who need to supplement or acquire new skills and competences:
  - continuing education (for people who need to complete formal education or confirm qualifications through appropriate examinations),
  - training or other forms of acquisition, increase or adaptation of competences and qualifications to the employers' requirements,
- labour market instruments and services for gaining the professional experience required by employers:
  - internships and apprenticeships or other forms to acquire or supplement work experience and practical skills in the exercise of the profession:
  - subsidized employment or reimbursement of workplace equipment / accessories in combination with subsidized employment
- labour market instruments and services to increase cross-sectoral and geographical mobility:
  - facilitating the change of an industry or sector by changing or supplementing competences or qualifications, including through apprenticeships, internships and trainings,
  - support for geographical mobility, including by covering the costs of commuting to work, providing funds for settlement / initial development in a new place of residence,
- labour market instruments and services targeted at disabled people:
  - levelling the barriers encountered by the disabled in gaining and maintaining employment, among others by financing the work of a disabled person's assistant, equipping the workplace to the needs of the disabled
- labour market instruments and services for the development of entrepreneurship and self-employment:
  - subsidies for setting up an enterprise, as well as consulting and training in running a business to help young people set up and run their own business.

Target Group: special target groups of young people these structural measures are aiming at (special age groups, gender differences, educational level)

Youth Guarantee program in Poland concentrates on people aged 15–29, in particular from the so-called NEET (not in employment, education or training). It describes 4 sub-groups of the youth, to which the offer will be adjusted:

- i) People aged 15–17 years leaving education prematurely – people who neglect the school obligation (up to 16 years old) or the learning obligation (up to 18 years old).
- ii) People aged 18–29 outside of employment, education and training (NEET), including people who require special support, i.e. distant from the labour market, from disadvantaged backgrounds, from rural areas (who need deepened intervention)



- iii) People aged 18–29 registered as unemployed – including registered students of extramural and evening studies,
- iv) Unemployed youth and jobseekers who are graduates of schools and universities, within 48 months from the date of finishing school or obtaining a professional title, aged 18–29 – in the field of supporting entrepreneurship of young people.

Ministerial strategies distinguish between “regular” NEETs – to whom non-competition projects run by PLO and VLC are directed, as well as VLO-chosen regional competition projects – and young people in particularly difficult situation (for example youth who were brought up in foster care, just leaving the custody, graduates of youth special education centres and youth sociotherapy centres, mothers staying in the single mother homes, young people leaving prisons or detention centres) – to whom Ministry-chosen central competition projects are directed.

The disproportionate participation of young mothers in the NEETs group has been noticed in the strategies, but proposed solutions either qualify more as family policy activities (e.g. supporting local governments in providing places in guardianship institutions (kindergartens, shelters) for all children, program MALUCH+) or are vaguely described (e.g. “enabling reconciliation of work and family responsibilities”<sup>31</sup>).

### **Are there special target groups of organizations (employing entities, training providers etc.) who are working with young unemployed?**

It depends on the target group of young unemployed. When it comes to competition projects for “regular” NEETs – part of Youth Guarantee (*działania konkursowe*) – labour market institutions (according to the Act of 20 April 2004) can apply:

- public employment services,
- Voluntary Labour Corps,
- employment agencies,
- training institutions,
- social dialogue institutions,
- local partnership institutions.

Other entities are eligible to apply for projects supporting youth in particularly difficult situation, such as: organizational units for supporting the family and foster care system (in accordance with the Act of 9 June 2011 on supporting the family and the foster care system), youth educational centres, youth sociotherapy centres, special school and education centres, special educational centres, single mother homes, Central Board of Prison Service, State Fund for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled.

There are also organizations chosen to be providers of specific measures. For example, BGK runs its preferential low-interest loans program through regional funds (mostly regional development

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<sup>31</sup> rozwiązania ułatwiające godzenie życia zawodowego z życiem rodzinnym, KPDZ 2019, p.7. <https://www.gov.pl/attachment/233d0d65-50eb-46a3-ac74-9a789cb7c5d5>

agencies), which also organize free consulting and training for borrowers, but there is no particular measure supporting young entrepreneurs.

There are also other organizations, which work with all categories of unemployed persons, without specifically targeting youth.

National Program for Social Economy Development (*Krajowy Program Rozwoju Ekonomii Społecznej, KPRES*<sup>32</sup>) focuses on social economy entities, which – through economic and public benefit activities – serve professional and social integration of people at risk of social marginalization, job creation, provision of social services of general interest (for the general interest) and local development. The Program mentions, among others:

- social enterprises (*przedsiębiorstwa społeczne*) – important branch of them are social cooperatives, whose goal is to restore to the labour market people at risk of social exclusion, low employability and enabling the unemployed to become professionally active, not only they conduct business activity, but also promote social and professional reintegration.
- reintegration entities (*podmioty reintegracyjne*) – serving social and professional reintegration of people at risk of social exclusion, i.e. Vocational Activity Establishments (*Zakłady Aktywności Zawodowej*), Occupational Therapy Workshops (*Warsztaty Terapii Zajęciowej*), Social Integration Centres (*Centra Integracji Społecznej*), Social Integration Clubs (*Kluby Integracji Społecznej*); these forms will under no circumstances be social enterprises, but they can prepare their beneficiaries to run or work in a social enterprise, they can also be carried out as a service to the local community by social enterprises.

#### Development of Skills: structural measures aiming at the development of skills

Yes, youth activation is understood as support for individual and comprehensive professional and educational activation by developing new skills and mastering the ones given person already has (through e.g. career counselling, psychological counselling, training, courses, postgraduate studies, professional internships, job placement, etc.)

#### **Which focus could be defined?**

Skills that can be useful in finding a job, chosen according to the “career development plan”. Development of skills is rather instrumental in these strategies.

#### **Is the development of skills the priority of these structural measures? Are these measures aiming on the development of special skills (employment/entrepreneurship)?**

It depends on the target group.

- For people aged 15–17 it is the priority to improve their skills (language skills, digital skills, some are offered entrepreneurship training), give them opportunity to learn a profession, and support them psychologically.
- “standard” NEETs are offered job placement, vocational guidance and professional information (individual and in group), training in active job search (activation classes, job search skills workshops, individual consultations).

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<sup>32</sup> [http://www.ekonomiaspoleczna.gov.pl/download/files/KPRES\\_na\\_strone.pdf](http://www.ekonomiaspoleczna.gov.pl/download/files/KPRES_na_strone.pdf)

- NEETs in need of special support receive “standard” offer and also “deepened intervention” offer, which includes e.g. soft skill classes, language, digital skills, category B driving license courses (if such skill will be useful for the implementation of tasks in a specific profession, according to the path of professional development adopted for a given person).
- youth aged 18–29 registered as unemployed are offered job placement, vocational guidance and professional information, training in active job search, as well as subsidies for courses improving skills, postgraduates studies etc. People in this group are offered loans for starting a business and additional business consultations

Unemployed youth and jobseekers who are graduates of schools and universities are offered loans for starting a business and additional business consultations.

In general there seem to be no special focus on one type of skills. The priority for youth activation is to find them a job, development of skills is an instrument to achieve this goal.

Impact Evaluation: institutional concepts (formative/summative evaluation) to evaluate the impact of the measures (evaluation of new laws and regulations)

There seem to be no available comprehensive evaluation of the annual National Action Plan for Employment (*Krajowy Plan Działań na rzecz Zatrudnienia, KPDZ*). Monitoring of the implementation of the Plan is supported by Annual Reports on Implementation, which are supposed to describe (among others) achieved effects, in quantitative and qualitative terms, and contain conclusions and recommendations resulting from the completion of the task. In reality, the reports describe how every task was conducted, adding quantitative information (how many project were implemented, how many people took part in projects, etc.), while the qualitative analysis of realizing tasks is summarized by the sentence: “The task was carried out according to plan”. Every report has general recommendations (like “The improving situation on the labour market should not lead to the abandonment of actions directed at groups furthest from the labour market.”) and indicators describing parts of labour market (unemployment rate, job activity rate, also concerning young people). The reports are not available online, but – when asked – the Ministry send them without undue delay. Any progress in achieving earlier set goals is rather implied than thoroughly described in the following year plan, with help of quantitative indicators obtained from GUS and counted by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy.

The results of Youth Guarantee program are described both through monitoring indicators, and qualitative analysis. Key indicators to monitor the results of the Youth Guarantee are based on the Labour Force Survey (data for people aged 15–24 and 25–29: economic activity rate, employment rate, unemployment rate, NEET rate, percentage of unemployed according to BAEL in the total population in a given age group) and based on the registered unemployment statistics (data for people under 25 years old and people aged 25–29: percentage in the total number of registered unemployed, percentage covered by active labour market programs in the total number of active forms participants; percentage change in the number of unemployed in relation to the change in the total number of unemployed; average time of being unemployed).

Institutions conducting projects are obliged to monitor and evaluate their actions on the basic level.

- OHP checks status of their trainees after 6 months. On the basis of the data, two indicators are determined: % of people who, at the end of the project, are not registered at the labour office (presumption of employment); and % of people who started work within 6 months after the end of the activity.
- BGK monitor their loan program, mostly to decide whether a loan will be repaid. They check their results after 12 months, after 36 months, after 84 months (max. time to repay).

Evaluation of actions taken is led every year as a part of an on-going evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of support implemented on behalf of young people under the Operational Program Knowledge Education Development (OP KED/ PO WER).<sup>33</sup> As part of the project, quantitative research of support participants and qualitative interviews with project coordinators will be carried out. Until November 2019, there were four reports outcome indicators measurement and two subject reports published. There will be two more reports published till the end of the project.

### **Which evaluation standards can be defined on this level?**

Institutions conducting projects are obliged to monitor and evaluate their actions on the basic level. The Ministry checks employment status of every beneficiary of activation projects after 6 months.

### **What are the indicators of impact evaluation?**

There are four long-term outcome indicators, aimed at monitoring of the effects of Operational Program Knowledge Education Development:

- the number of people participating in continued education, training programmes leading to a qualification, an apprenticeship or a traineeship,
- the number of people in employment, including self-employment,
- the number of people in self-employment,
- the number of disadvantaged people in employment, including self-employment.

All of the indicators refer to the situation of the Programme participants 6 months after finishing their participation in the Programme.

### **Which instruments are used (quantitative/qualitative)?**

In annual implementation reports on National Action Plan for Employment the instruments are quantitative (data from Labour Force Survey (*Badanie Aktywności Ekonomicznej Ludności, BAEL*) conducted by Statistics Poland (*Główny Urząd Statystyczny, GUS*).

<sup>33</sup> About the evaluation project: [www.ibs.org.pl/news/ewaluacja-programu-wsparcia-osob-młodych-na-ryнку-pracy](http://www.ibs.org.pl/news/ewaluacja-programu-wsparcia-osob-młodych-na-ryнку-pracy), I subject report: [www.power.gov.pl/media/16948/IBS\\_raport\\_02032016\\_mj\\_JB.pdf](http://www.power.gov.pl/media/16948/IBS_raport_02032016_mj_JB.pdf), I report of outcome indicators measurement (2016): [www.power.gov.pl/media/19541/IBS\\_I\\_Raport\\_Wskaznikowy\\_07042016.pdf](http://www.power.gov.pl/media/19541/IBS_I_Raport_Wskaznikowy_07042016.pdf), II report of outcome indicators measurement (2017): [www.power.gov.pl/media/40758/wersja\\_na\\_strone\\_10\\_07\\_2017.pdf](http://www.power.gov.pl/media/40758/wersja_na_strone_10_07_2017.pdf), III report of outcome indicators measurement (2018): [www.power.gov.pl/media/56886/III\\_raport\\_wskaznikowy\\_27\\_03\\_18.pdf](http://www.power.gov.pl/media/56886/III_raport_wskaznikowy_27_03_18.pdf), II subject report: [www.power.gov.pl/media/70186/II\\_Raport\\_tematyczny\\_final.pdf](http://www.power.gov.pl/media/70186/II_Raport_tematyczny_final.pdf), IV report of outcome indicators measurement (2019): [www.power.gov.pl/media/76365/IV\\_raport\\_wskaznikowy\\_20190522.pdf](http://www.power.gov.pl/media/76365/IV_raport_wskaznikowy_20190522.pdf), Evaluation plan: [www.power.gov.pl/media/5003/Plan\\_Ewaluacji\\_PO\\_WER.pdf](http://www.power.gov.pl/media/5003/Plan_Ewaluacji_PO_WER.pdf)

In evaluation of the support provided to young people under the Operational Programme Knowledge, Education, and Development (OP KED) most of the instruments are quantitative, but there are also some qualitative. Four reports of outcome indicators measurement present various quantitative data from the Ministry of Investment and Development (support recipient database provided by PLO and VLC), from Social Insurance Institution (*Zakład Ubezpieczeń Społecznych*, ZUS), and from computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI) with project participants. Two subject reports also used some qualitative data from: computer-assisted web interviews (CAWI) with project coordinators and in-depth interviews (IDI) with support coordinators at the local and central level.

### **Who evaluates the instruments/measures?**

The evaluation of instruments/measures introduced in National Action Plan for Employment is conducted by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy itself.

The evaluation of instruments/measures under the Operational Programme Knowledge, Education, and Development (OP KED) is conducted by Institute for Structural Research (IBS), IMAPP and IQS.

### Development: existing experiences and evaluation results used to develop the situation

There is no official information on how evaluation results are used. We know from our interviews that the results of IBS reports are taken into account and minor correction are introduced in the European funded programs based on above mentioned reports.

### **How can they be relevant for evidence-based decision making in that field?**

According to the interviews we have conducted, the European funded programs are updated every year. But there is no reliable information if or how it influences decisions on governmental level.

### **How are evaluation results presented to implementers?**

The reports on “Evaluation of the support provided to young people under the Operational Programme Knowledge, Education, and Development (OP KED)” are available online. In II subject report it is mentioned that *Preliminary conclusions and recommendations were discussed during expert workshop with representatives of institutions responsible for the coordination and implementation of the support, as well as with representatives of the employers.*<sup>34</sup> Unfortunately there is no information about when and where such meeting took place, or representatives of which institutions (VLC, PLO etc.?) took part.

On the basis of YG Implementation Plan the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy appointed a monitoring team. It consists of representatives of institutions supporting youth on the labour market and organizations of youth and youth trade union structures and employers'

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<sup>34</sup> II subject report, p. 14: [http://www.power.gov.pl/media/70186/II\\_Raport\\_tematyczny\\_final.pdf](http://www.power.gov.pl/media/70186/II_Raport_tematyczny_final.pdf)

organizations. They meet regularly to analyse the progress in the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, as well as learn about the most interesting projects implemented under this initiative. There is no information if the results Annual Reports on Implementation of National Action Plan for Employment are ever presented.

European regulations (e.g. European Youth Guarantee) are implemented on national level

Poland presented a Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan in December 2013, revised in October 2015 – all details are described above.

### **Are there strategies to motivate implementers to refer to European regulations?**

There is no need to – most of support provided to NEETs is based on European regulation, so implementers refer to European regulations by default.

### **Which laws and regulations, which structural decisions, during the last 15 years were important to empower institutional and private implementers to realize programs and projects against youth unemployment?**

- EU Strategy for Youth – Investing and Empowering (*Inwestowanie w młodzież i mobilizowanie jej do działania – strategia UE na rzecz młodzieży*<sup>35</sup>)
- Act of 20 April 2004 on Employment Promotion and Labour Market Institutions (*ustawa z dnia 20 kwietnia 2004 r. o promocji zatrudnienia i instytucjach rynku pracy*<sup>36</sup>)
- EU „Youth on the Move“ initiative
- National Action Plan for Employment (*Krajowy Plan Działań na rzecz Zatrudnienia, KPDZ*<sup>37</sup>)
- Human Capital Development Strategy 2020 (*Strategia Rozwoju Kapitału Ludzkiego 2020, SRKL*<sup>38</sup>)
- Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan (*Gwarancje dla młodzieży*<sup>39</sup>) : \_
- European Social Fund and its part – Operational Program Knowledge Education Development (*Program Operacyjny Wiedza Edukacja Rozwój, PO WER*)
- the Act on the Integrated Qualifications System (*Ustawa z dnia 22 grudnia 2015 r. o Zintegrowanym Systemie Kwalifikacji*)

### **Are there approaches to evaluate these structures in a systemic way?**

In 2016, the Ministry of Development ordered a meta-analysis of the results of evaluation studies conducted in years 2016–2019 concerning evaluation of ESF support (European Social Fund).

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<sup>35</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0200:FIN:PL:PDF>

<sup>36</sup> <http://prawo.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU20040991001/U/D20041001Lj.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> [www.gov.pl/web/rodzina/krajowe-plany-dzialan-na-rzecz-zatrudnienia-kpdz](http://www.gov.pl/web/rodzina/krajowe-plany-dzialan-na-rzecz-zatrudnienia-kpdz)

<sup>38</sup> [www.gov.pl/web/rodzina/strategia-rozwoju-kapitalu-ludzkiego-srkl](http://www.gov.pl/web/rodzina/strategia-rozwoju-kapitalu-ludzkiego-srkl)

<sup>39</sup> [www.gdm.praca.gov.pl/documents/1152786/1155303Zaktualizowany%20Plan%20realizacji%20Gwarancji%20dla%20młodzieży%20w%20Polsce.pdf](http://www.gdm.praca.gov.pl/documents/1152786/1155303Zaktualizowany%20Plan%20realizacji%20Gwarancji%20dla%20młodzieży%20w%20Polsce.pdf)

First analysis – partial report #1<sup>40</sup> – was published in October 2016 and analysed over 1000 evaluation reports from different fields of intervention from years 2005–2015. Second analysis – partial report #2<sup>41</sup> – was published in May 2017 and analysed 19 evaluation studies concerning ESF funds impact. Among them the “Evaluation of the support provided to young people under the Operational Programme Knowledge, Education, and Development (OP KED)” was analysed and assessed very positive.

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## Institutional Level

Actors: Implementing public institutions: employment agencies, job centres, public bodies

Since 2000, the Public Employment Services (PES) in Poland has been delivered both by regional self-governments through 16 Voivodeship Labour Offices (VLO) and powiat self-governments thorough 340 Powiat Labour Offices (PLO) as well as by state administration bodies, namely the Minister responsible for labour and social policies, 16 voivodes, and the Voluntary Labour Corps (*Ochotnicze Hufce Pracy, OHP*). Each body is autonomous with no hierarchical relationship with any other.<sup>42</sup>

1. **Voivodeship Labour Offices, VLOs** (*Wojewódzki Urząd Pracy, WUP*) – run by regional self-government authorities, responsible for coordination public labour market policies on the regional level (NUTS 2)

VLO's tasks include defining and coordinating regional labour market policy, distribution of the Labour Fund resources into employment promotion measures, development of human resources and activation of the unemployed, preparation of analyses and statistics on the labour market in voivodeship (region) and study of labour demand and monitoring of deficit and surplus professions.

VLO plays a large role in the implementation of tasks financed from the European Social Fund, affecting the activation of regional labour market. Since 2007, the VLO has been the Implementing Institution (II-level Intermediate Body) for Measure 6.1 Improving access to employment and supporting professional activity in the region under Priority VI Labour market open to all Human Capital Operational Program.

Since 2014, VLO, on behalf of the voivodeship self-government, has been carrying out tasks related to the operation of the National Training Fund, mainly based on art. 8 sec. 1 point 2a of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions. A VLO collects information on demand for means on training from powiat (LAU 1) labour offices, and proposes allocation of funds for trainings to be approved by the Voivodeship Board.

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<sup>40</sup> [http://www.ewaluacja.gov.pl/media/42297/Raport\\_metaanaliza.pdf](http://www.ewaluacja.gov.pl/media/42297/Raport_metaanaliza.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> [https://www.power.gov.pl/media/45639/Raport\\_koncowy\\_zlozony\\_graficznie.pdf](https://www.power.gov.pl/media/45639/Raport_koncowy_zlozony_graficznie.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> [www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/THE%20LOCAL%20IMPLEMENTATION%20OF%20YOUTH%20GUARANTEES\\_FINAL2015.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/THE%20LOCAL%20IMPLEMENTATION%20OF%20YOUTH%20GUARANTEES_FINAL2015.pdf)



In the new EU 2014–2020 Agenda, VLOs act as Intermediate Bodies, which implement two programs:

- Operational Program Knowledge Education Development (OP KED) Measure 1.1 and Measure 1.2 addressed to support for young people who are not employed. VLOs are responsible in it for regional competitions for project activating NEETs age 15–29, especially those unregistered
- Regional Operational Program (RPO) Voivodeships Priority Axis VIII supporting access to employment for all jobseekers and economically inactive people, including the long-term unemployed and long-term inactive persons. Supported are, among others local initiatives for employment, labour mobility and equality between men and women in access to employment (including support in childcare).

Every year VLOs prepare Regional Action Plans For Employment (*Regionalny Plan Działań Na Rzecz Zatrudnienia*<sup>43</sup>), which sum up all of VLO responsibilities resulting from national and European strategies.

In 2012, Ministerial Program “Youth on the job market. Actions to decrease unemployment among youth” (*Młodzi na rynku pracy. Działania na rzecz zmniejszenia bezrobocia młodzieży*<sup>44</sup>) was enacted. As a part of the program a pilot project Your Career – Your Choice (*Twoja kariera – Twój wybór*<sup>45</sup>) for years 2012–2014 was launched.

VLO's implement Youth Guarantee as they:

- cooperate with powiat labour offices and social partners in their area as well as with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Ministry of Investment and Development in the scope of implementing the Youth Guarantee,
- define the priorities and objectives of the Youth Guarantee programs in line with the needs of regional labour markets,
- define in partnership the rules for regional competitions,
- accept and consider applications from implementers of individual projects under the Youth Guarantee, also in the form of regional competitions,
- use the EURES system for the effective implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

2. **Voivode's Office (*Urząd Wojewódzki*)** – voivode is appointed by the Prime Minister and is the regional representative of the central government. The voivode acts as the head of central government institutions at regional level. Voivode's Offices usually have special departments devoted to the labour market.

The tasks of the voivode in the field of labour market policy include supervising the implementation of tasks performed by the voivodeship marshal or staroste, voivodeship or powiat labour offices and other entities (based on the Act of 20 April 2004 on Employment Promotion and Labour Market Institutions, *ustawa z dnia 20 kwietnia 2004 r. o promocji zatrudnienia i*

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<sup>43</sup> (example: <http://wuprzeszow.praca.gov.pl/documents/60111/807579/Regionalny%20Plan%20Działań%20na%20rzecz%20Zatrudnienia%20na%202017%20rok.pdf>)

<sup>44</sup> <http://psz.praca.gov.pl/documents/10828/181145/1%20-%20Program%20Młodzi%20na%20Rynku%20Pracy.pdf>

<sup>45</sup> [http://psz.praca.gov.pl/documents/10828/181145/IIa%20-%20Twoja%20kariera%20-%20Twój%20wybór%20\(Projekt%20pilotażowy\).pdf](http://psz.praca.gov.pl/documents/10828/181145/IIa%20-%20Twoja%20kariera%20-%20Twój%20wybór%20(Projekt%20pilotażowy).pdf)

*instytucjach rynku pracy*), as well as analysis of semi-annual reports on Sheltered Workshops (*Zakład Pracy Chronionej*) and Vocational Activity Establishments (*Zakłady Aktywności Zawodowej*) in terms of employment levels, employment rates and the number of disabled people in individual disability groups (among others based on the Act of 27 August 1997 on Vocational and Social Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons, *Ustawa z dnia 27 sierpnia 1997 r. o rehabilitacji zawodowej i społecznej oraz zatrudnianiu osób niepełnosprawnych*).

### 3. Poviats Labour Offices, PLOs (*Powiatowe Urzędy Pracy, PUP*)

Voivodeship Labour Offices and Poviats Labour Offices are not connected with each other in terms of subordination and carry out a different scope of tasks. PLOs are run by poviats self-government authorities, responsible for coordination public labour market policies on the poviats level (LAU 1).

Poland is using vouchers for internships and vocational training courses. Such support was first implemented in a project in selected Poviats Labour Offices since June 2012 and envisaged to last until the end of 2013. The coupons (which included also post-graduates studies) were provided as part of a pilot project entitled “Your Career – Your Choice” launched as part of the aforementioned Youth on the Labour Market Programme. The aim was to develop and test new labour market instruments addressed to the unemployed under 30 years of age. Within this pilot project the young unemployed were offered the assistance of a tutor who – on the basis of an individual plan – determined the activities which need to be taken in order to facilitate the entry on the labour market of the particular young jobseeker.<sup>46</sup>

Right now, as part of Labour Offices support for which only unemployed under 30 can apply, there are such tools:

- System of vouchers (for internships or vocational training courses)<sup>47</sup>
- Subsidised employment<sup>48</sup>
- Subsidized placement (financial resources to cover the cost of living in connection with taking up employment, other gainful employment or business outside the place of former residence).<sup>49</sup>

According to Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy in 2018, 161,100 unemployed people up to 30 years were covered by various forms of activation and support by labour offices. The most popular forms of activation were internships (with 67,300 participants), starting subsidized work (74,200 participants) and training (17,600 participants).<sup>50</sup>

As part of Youth Guarantee program PLOs are responsible for non-competition activation project (*działania pozakonkursowe*).

### 4. Voluntary Labour Corps, VLC (*Ochotnicze Hufce Pracy, OHP*)

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<sup>46</sup> [http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/THE%20LOCAL%20IMPLEMENTATION%20OF%20YOUTH%20GUARANTEES\\_FINAL2015.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/THE%20LOCAL%20IMPLEMENTATION%20OF%20YOUTH%20GUARANTEES_FINAL2015.pdf)

<sup>47</sup> <http://psz.praca.gov.pl/dla-bezrobotnych-i-poszukujacych-pracy/podnoszenie-kwalifikacji/staze-i-bony-stazowe>

<sup>48</sup> <http://psz.praca.gov.pl/dla-bezrobotnych-i-poszukujacych-pracy/formy-wsparcia/bon-zatrudnieniowy>

<sup>49</sup> <http://psz.praca.gov.pl/dla-bezrobotnych-i-poszukujacych-pracy/formy-wsparcia/bon-na-zasiedlenie>

<sup>50</sup> <http://gdm.praca.gov.pl/-/8746279-podsumowanie-realizacji-gwarancji-dla-mlodziezy-w-2018-roku>

The VLC structures consists 721 organisational units and branches operating throughout Poland. Depending on the type of activities delivered, these include:

- 217 shelter and educational units, where young people can supplement their general and vocational education;
- a network of 504 bodies implementing labour market initiatives, where young people may benefit from vocational counselling and guidance, job matching services, and vocational training and information.

All of these facilities are open institutions which implement the agenda for the local community in cooperation with local self-government authorities, employers, associations, and foundations operating in a given area.

In 2019, the Voluntary Labour Corps continue the implementation of two projects under the Youth Guarantee program: “From training to employment – ESF” and “From training to employment – YEI”. The goal of the projects is the professional activation of people aged 18–24 from the NEET group.

The projects aim at enabling professional start for people aged 18–24 who, due to unfavourable environmental, family or personal circumstances, require professional and comprehensive educational and educational support measures aimed at obtaining qualifications, acquiring skills in navigating the labour market, and as a consequence taking up employment and becoming independent. Support vary depending on the individual situation of the potential project participant. The projects also provide for the participation of people with disabilities as those who have the greatest difficulties entering or staying on the local labour market. Participation in projects is completely free.

Youth participating in projects will obtain, increase or change their professional qualifications. They will also have increased general competences and social skills in the area of interpersonal communication and self-presentation. They will be given the opportunity to acquire practical skills and professional experience as part of professional internships, and to gain knowledge in the field of techniques and methods of seeking work.

As part of projects in 2019, young people were able to participate in:

- individual and group classes with a vocational counsellor,
- active job search workshops,
- vocational courses (along with a scholarship and reimbursement of child or dependent care costs), supplemented with various types of general development training (including language, computer, driving licenses)
- image creation workshops combined with stylist's service,
- vocational internships (with a scholarship and reimbursement of child or dependent care costs),
- individual job placement / brokerage in the organizing of professional internships.

In 2019, projects are implemented in more than 140 VLC organizational units throughout the country, including in education and youth work centres, education and upbringing centres, youth

career centres, job placement centres, vocational training centres, environmental labour corps, labour corps, training and upbringing centres. The estimated number of participants in both projects is 1600 people.

5. **Academic entities** – Academic Career Offices and Academic Entrepreneurship Incubators, whose offer is dedicated both to students and graduates.

Academic Career Office – unit operating for the professional activation of students and graduates of a university, run by a university or student organization, whose tasks include in particular:

- providing students and graduates of the university information on labour market and opportunities to raise professional qualifications,
- collecting, classifying and sharing job offers, internships and apprenticeships,
- maintaining a database of students and graduates of university interested in finding a job,
- helping employers in acquiring suitable candidates for vacancies and professional internships,
- helping in active job search

**Academic Entrepreneurship Incubators** – units run by universities, which concentrate on supporting students and graduates in developing entrepreneurship skills, usually offering mentoring, skills workshops, as well as support in starting a business, infrastructure support for business activities, and in running a business.

6. **Other labour market institutions** named in Act of 20 April 2004 on Employment Promotion and Labour Market Institutions like employment agencies, social dialogue institutions (trade unions or trade union organizations, employers' organizations, unemployed organizations, non-governmental organizations), local partnership institutions, and – most importantly – training institutions like public schools and lifelong education institutions (Vocational and Lifelong Learning Centres (*Centrum Kształcenia Zawodowego i Ustawicznego, CKZiU*), Practical Training Centres (*Centrum Kształcenia Praktycznego, CKP*), as well as educational NGOs (Vocational Development Centre (*Zakład Doskonalenia Zawodowego, ZDZ*), which conduct qualifying vocational courses (*Kwalifikacyjne kursy zawodowe, KKZ*), professional skills courses (*Kurs umiejętności zawodowych, KUZ*) and general competence courses (*Kurs kompetencji ogólnych, KKO*). While such offer is not dedicated exclusively to young people, they can benefit from it.

Measures: How do YEEA's refer to different dimensions of implementation?

YEEA's on regional level are directly connected with strategies on country level.

For example, Regional Operational Programs (*Regionalny Program Operacyjny, RPO*) – planning documents (part of EU Cohesion Policy) defining areas that voivodeship self-government bodies undertake to support the development of a region – directly state that the actions under objective “Increasing employment of people who were identified as at risk in the labour market” will be

aimed at 30+ year old, while “people between 18 and 29 years of age are not included because support will be provided at national level.”<sup>51</sup> (“Complementary support for people aged 15–29 will be provided under the priority axis: Young people on the labour market, the national ESF program – OP KED”<sup>52</sup>).

**YEEA’s focused on organizations (enterprises, schools, training institutions) and individuals (young unemployed persons in special target groups and people working with them). Are there any YEEA’S which are extraordinary successful?**

In our interviews and research we have not found any extraordinarily successful actions, which is probably connected to lack of comparable evaluation.

Objectives: objectives of these measures (long-term improvement and development of work force, short-term integration into the labour market)

Long-term integration into the labour market.

Target Group: special target groups of young people these institutional measures are aiming at (special age groups, gender differences, educational level)

Mostly the same as described above, on Level I.

Regional Operational Programmes aim also at one additional target group – parents of children under 3 years – as part of objective: Facilitating the return to professional activity of persons caring for children under 3 years old. It is important to notice that this group constitutes of people different ages (both under and over 29 years old) and its realization means creating new childcare facilities for children and subsidizing cost of current childcare services, none of which is directly activating the unemployed parents.

Although it is not an intended target, the evaluation reports showed that there is a problem of so-called *creaming* phenomenon linked with intention to achieve highest employment efficiency through selecting persons who have highest chances on the labour market rather than people who need help the most. *Creaming* can be visible in the observable characteristics of project participants (e.g. gender, age, disability, place of residence, education), but may also relate to the features that are not observable in statistical data, such as the level of motivation or the level of soft skills.

**Are there special target groups of organizations (employing entities, training providers etc.) who are working with young unemployed?**

There are not so many organisations focused on supporting young people in getting a job. Out of 150,000 active NGOs registered in the database ngo.pl only 260 mentioned they provide labour market and activation services to young people. It is quite difficult to assess the accuracy of this

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<sup>51</sup> Regional Operational Programme for Mazowieckie Voivodeship 2014-2020, p.229 <https://www.funduszedlamazowska.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/zal.-nr-1-rpo-wm-3.0-wcag-zmiany-notyfikacja-2018.docx.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> Regional Operational Programme for Dolnośląskie Voivodeship 2014-2020, p. 259 [http://rpo.dolnyslask.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/RPO-WD-2014-2020\\_wersja-obowi%C4%85zuj%C4%85ca-od-10.07.19-r..pdf](http://rpo.dolnyslask.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/RPO-WD-2014-2020_wersja-obowi%C4%85zuj%C4%85ca-od-10.07.19-r..pdf)

number (it can be too high due to the fact that some organisations in the register are in fact inactive, or it can be too low because some organisations did not mention labour market oriented activities however they still work on social inclusion, empowerment or key skills development which from the other perspective can be seen as developing employability of their beneficiaries).

There are no statistics on the types of the above mentioned organisations, but a random inspection of the organisations from the above list allowed for some preliminary observations.

- There are much more training providers than employing entities, which is easy to understand given the fact that only one fifth of Polish NGOs has at least one person employed on the basis on normal work contract.
- Among the organizations, which are training providers there are much more entities offering soft skills development or counselling than those providing hard skills (certified competencies such as welder, hairdresser etc.).
- Organisations supporting youth entrepreneurship seems to be the least numerous.

Another observation is that number of organisations focused entirely or mainly on employment or entrepreneurship support for young people is many times smaller than the number of organisations serving all unemployed/inactive persons,

Organisations addressing their services towards youth are quite often focused on youth with some special problem like physical or mental disability, foster care etc.).

#### Development of Skills: approach regarding different levels of skills (soft skills/hard skills)

The offer seems to be concentrated rather on soft skills (learning how to present oneself, how to search for a job and other social or psychological competences).

**Which skills are considered to be transferred concerning aspects of employability and entrepreneurship (is entrepreneurship already considered to be skill preventing unemployment)?**

It seems that entrepreneurship is often considered to be one of the skills preventing unemployment – at least on the strategic level, since there are not many instruments promoting it.

**Impact Evaluation: systematic approaches and instruments to evaluate the impact of the YEEA'S on the institutional level (formative/summative)**

VLOs and PLOs are obliged to report to the Ministry of Investment and Development as a part of Youth Guarantee program. Based on this and other data the “Evaluation of the support provided to young people under the Operational Programme Knowledge, Education, and Development (OP KED)” reports are prepared.

In earlier Multiannual Financial Framework, youth work activation was part of Human Resources Development Operational Program. As such it was more regional and there were regional attempts by VLOs to evaluate its results.<sup>53</sup>

### **What are the indicators of impact evaluation on this level?**

Four long-term outcome indicators, aimed at monitoring of the effects of Operational Program Knowledge Education Development (OP KED), which are counted on the national level, are also counted on regional level:

- participations the number of people participating in continued education, training programmes leading to a qualification, an apprenticeship or a traineeship,
- the number of people in employment, including self-employment,
- the number of people in self-employment,
- the number of disadvantaged people in employment, including self-employment.

All indicators refer to the situation of the Programme participants 6 months after finishing their participation in the Programme.

### **Which instruments are used qualitative/quantitative?**

Evaluation on regional, institutional level concentrates on collecting quantitative data. The word "evaluation" goes with monitoring in Regional Action Plans For Employment (*Regionalny Plan Działań Na Rzecz Zatrudnienia*), it seems that the authors of such plans do not differentiate between them much.

### **Which innovative instruments of impact evaluation are used on this level (e.g. participative approaches, SWOT-Analysis)?**

Statistical data analysis (for measuring employment efficiency), questionnaires, and sometimes also qualitative analysis are used. SEOT Analysis is used sometimes for diagnosis of situation before introducing action plan.

### **Who evaluates the instruments/measures?**

Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy with help from Ministry of Investment and Development, sometimes also Voivodeship Labour Offices.

### **Are there any Best-Practices which are adaptable to the situation in the other countries?**

We have not found any, which would be adaptable in other countries.

Development: impact evaluation develop existing projects and programsThe Youth Guarantee Program is updated every year. The results of IBS reports are taken into account and based on them minor correction are introduced.

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<sup>53</sup> Evaluation of Human Resources Development Operational Program in 2011-2014 in Łódź region. <http://www.ewaluacja.gov.pl/strony/badania-i-analizy/wyniki-badan-ewaluacyjnych/badania-ewaluacyjne/ocena-skuteczności-wsparcia-adresowanego-do-osób-w-wieku-15-30-lat-w-projektach-realizowanych-w-ramach-vi-i-vii-priorytetu-po-kl/>

Based on the results of evaluation the Ministries is working on the new programs, which will address directly needs of the most affected group (young women / caregivers, people with disabilities, and people in difficult situation). For example, it is preparing the analysis of young mothers' situation and possible solutions based on good practices from other countries, and working on a program, which will concentrate on professional activation of the people with disabilities.

### **How are the results used to optimize existing instruments?**

Based on the opinions send by Labour Offices there were minor changes introduced in the way projects are funded and accounted.

### **How are the results communicated to political stakeholders and decision makers on the one hand and to the community of implementers on the other hand?**

Political stakeholders are and community implementers share their experiences in implementing Youth Guarantee through meetings of the monitoring team, which consists representatives of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy (including Deputy Minister), institutions involved in realization of YG (Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego, Voluntary Labour Corps, Ministry of Investment and Development, Convention of Directors of Voivodeship Labour Offices, Council of the Forum of Directors of Poviats Labour Offices, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Science and Higher Education), and other institutions and organizations involved in development of labour market (Academy of Information Culture, European Centre of Youth Cooperation, Youth Forum Lewiatan, Good Network Foundation, Lesław A. Paga Foundation, Student Foundation Forum Business Centre Club, Youth Trade Union Forum Commission, Polish Chamber of Commerce, the "Youth Reform Poland" organization, the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity", National Agreement of Trade Unions, Employers of the Republic of Poland, Student Parliament of the Republic of Poland, the Project Poland Association, Association of Crafts of the Future, Polish Council of Youth Organizations, Rural Youth Union, Polish Craft Association).

While their meetings were noticed on the Ministry's website, there are no additional information about them (no evaluation reports nor presentations from their meetings) available online.

The reports on "Evaluation of the support provided to young people under the Operational Programme Knowledge, Education, and Development (OP KED)" are available online. According to II subject report *Preliminary conclusions and recommendations were discussed during expert workshop with representatives of institutions responsible for the coordination and implementation of the support, as well as with representatives of the employers.*<sup>54</sup> There is no information about when and where such meeting took place, or representatives of which institutions (VLC, PLO etc.?) took part.

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<sup>54</sup> II subject report, p. 14: [http://www.power.gov.pl/media/70186/II\\_Raport\\_tematyczny\\_final.pdf](http://www.power.gov.pl/media/70186/II_Raport_tematyczny_final.pdf)



## **Which social services do public bodies, employment agencies etc. provide to support the transition from school to work and to promote labour market integration?**

As described above VLC/OHP provides plethora of different activities and opportunities for young people, among them VLC gives all participants with limited material resources opportunity to stay in their facilities, where they receive free accommodation, board, and 24 hour pastoral care. Participants in VLC courses who benefit from employment and vocational training courses sign individual work contracts on terms and conditions applicable to young workers. Consequently, they benefit from all the social benefits they are eligible for, while the term of their pre-employment vocational training is classified as part of their periods in employment.

PLOs are supposed to cooperate closely with social assistance institutions. It should involve the exchange of information on implemented projects and those in their care (i.e. unemployed persons benefiting from social assistance benefits) to avoid duplication of actions and their compatibility, and provide comprehensive services for the professional activation of joint clients. Knowledge of projects implemented by individual OPS and PLOs allows to support the recruitment process and possible implementation of partner projects.<sup>55</sup>

## **How are these services evaluated? Do evaluation respect the perspective of participants?**

We do not have information on evaluation of this type of services.

## **Which target groups can be defined regarding institutional programs and projects (are institutional measures aiming at employing entities and training providers)?**

Central and region competitions are for projects proposed by various different entities – employing entities, training providers, NGOs etc.

## **Do evaluation actions integrate the perspective of these target groups?**

The perspective of the target groups is taken into account in the evaluation at the national level. Some data in evaluation of the support provided to young people under the Operational Programme Knowledge, Education, and Development (OP KED) came from computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI) with project participants, from computer-assisted web interviews (CAWI) with project coordinators and in-depth interviews (IDI) with support coordinators at the local and central level.

There may be monitoring/evaluations at the PLO level that integrate the perspective of their beneficiaries, but it is difficult to say if and how many, because such data is unavailable.

## **Are there systemic measures integrating different stakeholders in society (unions, entrepreneurs, training providers etc.) in impact evaluation?**

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<sup>55</sup> More on how it goes: <https://www.pulshr.pl/rekrutacja/urzedy-pracy-stoja-przed-nowymi-wyzwaniami-bez-reformy-sie-nie-obejdzie.63088.html>

Yes, through Youth Guarantee monitoring team described above, although this team probably concentrates more on collecting present data and maybe evaluating the outcome rather than on evaluating the impact.

### **How do institutional actors interact with private actors?**

If private actors mean employers then all institutional actors need to work with them to provide services to the youth. Additionally to receiving job offers from employers, institutional actors support them in creating jobs for youth

Institutional actors also support private actors through means like subsidies from National Training Fund for lifelong learning of employees of the company.

### **Are there any tools to evaluate institutional measures and to improve impact which can be defined as innovative, interactive and applied (to praxis)?**

There is an interesting case of the evaluation conducted in Małopolskie Voivodeship.<sup>56</sup> It was the first RCT (*randomized controlled trial*) evaluation of the active labour market policies (ALMPs) in Poland and it concerned the impact on unemployed of contracting out (to the private sector) ALMP services. In Poland the majority of ALMP interventions are conducted by Poviats Labour Offices (PLOs); however they are increasingly outsourced to private companies. As the authors of the study Gajderowicz and Jakubowski write in their paper in *European Research Studies Journal* “The major difference between the public and private providers are: 1) flexibility of ALMP tools by private providers (while public LOs can use limited catalogue of interventions); 2) incentives compatibility, as the income for out-sourced companies depends on professional success of unemployed.”

The evaluated programme was run from 2015 to 2017 in the Małopolskie Voivodeship (province) of Poland and relied on private agencies who provided contracted services for the unemployed. It provided a lot of flexibility in performing contracted tasks, there was lack of formalism and detailed controlling – private companies were paid a success fee and were free to decide what kind of services to provide to each unemployed person.

The programme wasn't addressed to young unemployed, but was designed for unemployed people who were to some extent disadvantaged in the labour market (with less promising profiles – as categorized by PLOs<sup>57</sup>) of all ages. Eligibility criteria were as follows: 1) being unemployed for more than 12 months in the two years before the start of the programme; 2) being in profile II or III, according to the official profiling tool.

What is interesting is that the RCT evaluation was not planned. In Małopolskie Voivodeship randomized choice of participants was used to avoid selection of the most difficult cases for the programme (which apparently was the case in some regions, where local LOs were assigning the

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<sup>56</sup> Gajderowicz, T., Jakubowski, M. (2019) *What Works for Disadvantaged Unemployed: Private or Public ALMP Services? Evidence from Poland*, in: *European Research Studies Journal*, Volume XXII, Issue 4, 2019. [https://econpapers.repec.org/article/ersjournal/v\\_3axxii\\_3ay\\_3a2019\\_3ai\\_3a4\\_3ap\\_3a332-346.htm](https://econpapers.repec.org/article/ersjournal/v_3axxii_3ay_3a2019_3ai_3a4_3ap_3a332-346.htm)

<sup>57</sup> Introduced by Polish government in 2014, profiling involved dividing all unemployed into 3 categories, based on data collected during a computer-based interview with the unemployed. Assignment to a given category determined the type of labour market programs that a particular person can receive from the local labour offices (e.g. job placement, vocational training, apprenticeship, activation allowance). After criticism by human rights watchdogs, Human Rights Commissioner, Supreme Audit Office, Labour Offices, and the Constitutional Court ruling at the end in 2018 that the way profiling was introduced was a breach of the Polish constitution, the amendment to the law was introduced, which abolishes the scoring system in June 2019.

most difficult cases to demonstrate that private agencies could not outperform their services), and was enforced by the regional Voivodeship Labour Office. Such method of choosing participants allowed the in-depth evaluation later on.

The programme was suspended after the first two interventions, which in Małopolskie were in January 2015 – November 2016, and April 2016 – December 2017, as Gajderowicz and Jakubowski write: “based on internal report that reviewed basic statistics and official opinions across Poland . . . [which] suggested that the programme was unsuccessful, but this could have been entirely due to poor selection for the programme.”

The exact results can be found in Gajderowicz, Jakubowski (2019).

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## Civil Society Level

Actors: NGO's, private organizations, associations

- 1. Foundation for the Support of Local Democracy** – Some of FSDL local branches offer training and support to the young people as part of ESF funded projects. One of the local offices is a so-called OWES (Social Economy Support Centre, Ośrodek Wsparcia Ekonomii Społecznej), which means that it supports creating social enterprises (more about it below).
- 2. The Foundation for the Development of the Education System** (FRSE, Fundacja Rozwoju Systemu Edukacji) was founded in 1993. FRSE has been appointed the Polish National Agency of the Erasmus+ Programme implemented in the years 2014–2020. In 2018 it was also appointed the National Agency of the European Solidarity Corps (Europejski Korpus Solidarności<sup>58</sup>)
- 3. Social economy entities**, which – through economic and public benefit activities – serve professional and social integration of people at risk of social marginalization, job creation, provision of social services of general interest (for the general interest) and local development.
  - social enterprises (przedsiębiorstwa społeczne) – important branch of them are social cooperatives, whose goal is to restore to the labour market people at risk of social exclusion, low employability and enabling the unemployed to become professionally active, not only they conduct business activity, but also promote social and professional reintegration.
  - reintegration entities (podmioty reintegracyjne) – serving social and professional reintegration of people at risk of social exclusion, i.e. Vocational Activity Establishments (Zakłady Aktywności Zawodowej, ZAZ), Occupational Therapy Workshops (Warsztaty Terapii Zajęciowej, WTZ), Social Integration Centres (Centra Integracji Społecznej, CIS), Social Integration Clubs (Kluby Integracji Społecznej, KIS); these forms will under no circumstances be social enterprises, but they can prepare their beneficiaries to run or work in a social enterprise, they can also be carried out as a service to the local community by social enterprises

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<sup>58</sup> More: <http://eks.org.pl/>

Social economy entities are supported by Social Economy Support Centre (Ośrodek Wsparcia Ekonomii Społecznej, OWES). Centres are units of entities or partnership of entities, separated in organizational and accounting terms, which operate non-profit or allocate profit for OWES activities. Centres also conducts activities to support the social economy through cooperation with local government units and their organizational units, natural persons and enterprises. OWES run local animation services, which are aimed at stimulating the activity of local community and especially at professional and social activation of people at risk of exclusion. This means they organize workshops and trainings on creating social enterprises, like social cooperatives, offer financial support in form of one-time subsidy and bridge subsidies for the establishment and operation of a social cooperative, and support creating new jobs social enterprises.

**4. Local NGOs**, which take part in central and regional competition project recruitments and run projects based on their specialization.

Examples of central projects:

- “Bezpieczna Przystań” Foundation, [www.bezpiecznaprzystan.org](http://www.bezpiecznaprzystan.org), which runs project “Impuls for independence” (Impuls do samodzielności) addressed to the young people in particularly difficult (as described above, in Level 1 part)
- Academy of Digital Culture, [www.aki.edu.pl](http://www.aki.edu.pl), which runs project “To the future” (Ku przyszłości) addressed to the young people in particularly difficult (as described above, in Level 1 part)<sup>59</sup>

Examples of regional projects:

- “Efekt Motyla” Foundation, [www.fundacjaefektmotyła.wordpress.com](http://www.fundacjaefektmotyła.wordpress.com), which runs projects like “POWER to change!” (POWER do zmian!) addressed to NEETs in małopolskie voivodeship
- PROREW association, [www.stowarzyszenieprorew.pl/](http://www.stowarzyszenieprorew.pl/), which runs project like “POWER in youth” (W młodości POWER) addressed to NEETs in małopolskie voivodeship
- U-WORK Polish-Ukrainian Cooperation Foundation, [www.u-work.pl](http://www.u-work.pl), which runs project “We’ll give you POWER to work” (Damy Ci POWER do pracy), which is addressed to young immigrants both from NEETs group and working.

Local companies specializing in consulting and/or training, which run OP KED / PO WER competition projects.

Examples of central projects:

- OŚWIATA i BIZNES Sp. z o.o., [www.oswiata.slask.pl](http://www.oswiata.slask.pl), which runs project “Chance for work” (Szansa na pracę) addressed to the young people in particularly difficult (as described above, in Level 1 part)
- Społeczna Szkoła Zarządzania i Handlu w Oświęcimiu, [www.szih.pl/](http://www.szih.pl/), which runs project „Vocational Activation Zone” (Strefa Aktywizacji Zawodowej), addressed to the young people in particularly difficult (as described above, in Level 1 part)

Examples of regional projects:

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<sup>59</sup> Results of central competition <https://www.power.gov.pl/nabory/1-101/>

- JMM Mariusz Lewandowski, [www.jmm.net.pl](http://www.jmm.net.pl), which runs projects like “From internship to job” (Od stażu do angażu) addressed to NEETs from łódzkie voivodeship or “With POWER – support at start” (Z POWERem – wsparcie w starcie) addressed to NEETs living in certain poviats in małopolskie voivodeship;
- Humaneo, [www.humaneo.pl](http://www.humaneo.pl), which runs projects like “Youth with POWER” (Młodzi z POWERem) addressed to NEETs in certain poviats in mazowieckie voivodeship, or “Youth ready for changes” (Młodzież gotowa do zmiany), addressed to NEETs in lubuskie Voivodeship
- Akademia Kształcenia Europejskiego Krzysztof Kuryłowicz, [www.ake-ue.pl](http://www.ake-ue.pl), which runs projects like „Małopolski POWER” addressed to NEETs in małopolskie voivodeship

**5. Employment agencies** – non-public organizational unit providing services in the field of job placement, job placement abroad with foreign employers, career counselling, personal counselling and temporary work. Such economic activity requires an entry in the register of employment agencies. Every entity, which provide such services (excluding temporary work), need to register as such, including: local government units, universities, associations, foundations, social and professional organizations and other organizations whose statutory purpose is to provide these services. Their general offer is aimed to all unemployed, not only young, but they also run competition projects.

Measures: Projects focused on organizations and individuals (see above)

Projects run as part of competition are either directed to all NEETs (regional projects chosen by VLOs), or to those in particularly difficult situation (national projects chosen by the Ministry).

Erasmus+ Programme concentrates on individuals – mostly students and teachers, but recent graduates (till 1 year) can also apply for internships abroad – as well as on building transnational partnerships for innovation, exchanging information and experience (for example between vocational schools, vocational training centres etc.)

European Solidarity Corps concentrate both on organization, which can provide volunteering, internship and work opportunities, and individuals aged 17-30, which can take part in the Corps. It is not aimed directly at NEETs, just at young people.

Objectives: main objectives regarding YEEA's aiming at organizations and individuals

The main objective of every YEEA is bring people back to the labour market, mostly by developing their skills and finding them internships or jobs. Rarely activation means which aim at developing their entrepreneurship skills.

Every project chosen in central and regional competitions has its own planned effects. For example, project “Chance for work” (Szansa na pracę) led by company OŚWIATA i BIZNES Sp. z o.o will recruits 30 people, from whom 24 people should receive high-quality job offers or further training or internships (among other objectives) after finishing the project.

**Are these objectives developed adapted to the needs of the local, regional or national labour markets?**

They should be as projects in regional competitions are chosen by VLOs on the basis of Youth Guarantee and their own data.

Are there objectives directly aiming to the categories of Employability and Entrepreneurship?

Project run from OP KED / PO WER funds are mostly aiming to categories of employability, with focus on finding a job.

Actions led by Social economy entities are aiming more at social and professional reintegration of people at risk of social exclusion.

Target Group: special target groups of young people these Projects are aiming at (special age groups, gender differences, educational level)

Erasmus+ concentrates on people studying/training, or recent graduates.

Regional projects funded through OP KED/ PO WER concentrate mostly on people living in rural areas (defined according to the DEGURBA classification: category 3 rural areas, thinly populated). Sometimes there is also gender component added – project have defined number of participants and women to men proportions are set at ca. 55% to 45%.

### **Are there special target groups of organizations who are working with young unemployed?**

It seems projects directed to young unemployed are run by NGOs and companies, which are specializing in activating unemployed in general.

Development of Skills: Which skills are regarded to be important

a) for the unemployed

b) for implementors, training providers and employing entities?

a) There are no research that show what skills the unemployed find the most important in job searching.

b) According to the report “Analiza kwalifikacji i kompetencji kluczowych dla zwiększenia szans absolwentów na rynku pracy”<sup>60</sup> [Analysis of key qualifications and competences to increase graduates' chances on the labour market], due to fast pace of changes on the job market, it is “soft” competences that ultimately decide about employment, i.e. cognitive competences (analytical skills, heuristic skills, ingenuity, critical thinking), interpersonal competences (incl. communication and media, and those related to team creation, team work, most of all interdisciplinary), self-organisation competences (the project method, timely delivery of tasks, independent decision-making, ability to work under pressure, self-organisation of work, flexible response to change).

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<sup>60</sup> In the report there is a table, which shows demand for competences depending on the area of education. While it concerns only graduates, it gives interesting insight in today's job market (Table 27, p. 81) <https://www.uj.edu.pl/documents/102715934/001bcfee-7b59-4983-9eaf-2ca7adbc7ad2>

**Which skills are considered to be transferred concerning aspects of employability and entrepreneurship (is entrepreneurship already considered to be skill preventing unemployment)?**

Mostly soft skills. Entrepreneurship is a skill taught only to some participants as part of preparation to starting a business. Those, who are not planning it when projects start, rather won't be offered such training.

**Impact Evaluation: systematic approaches and instruments to evaluate the impact of YEEA'S on the civil society level?**

The "Evaluation of the support provided to young people under the Operational Programme Knowledge, Education, and Development (OP KED)" measure the results for both participants of VLCs and PLOs projects, and competition projects participants. The evaluation though can be hardly defined as impact evaluation, it is rather outcome evaluation.

**What are indicators of evaluation, who determines indicators?**

As the evaluation of civil society projects is conducted at national level, the indicators are defined by OP KED programme, and they are described above in the report.

**Which instruments are used, which innovative methods are used?**

There seem to be few evaluations done at the local project level thus it is hard to find any innovative methods.

**Who evaluates the YEEA's? Are there external and internal evaluation concepts?**

The main evaluation is external. If any organization wants to evaluate the outcome or impact of their projects, usually they do it on their own, with little help of external agents (rather consult expert than hire them to conduct full research). Since there is no direct funding for evaluation, the NGOs do not have additional funds that can be spend on external evaluation and try to conduct it internally.

Therefore, most of the evaluation at the civil society level is quantitative – based on short polls, with some unstructured qualitative insight coming from people who work with beneficiaries.

**How are the implementers (organizations, individuals) empowered to measure the impact of their activities?**

There seem to be no real support for implementers to measure the impact of their activities. As it is described above, evaluation on project level is not supported – if and how the implementers will do it, is entirely their own decision.

### Development: impact evaluation development existing in YEEA's?

There is no real impact evaluation, so there is no answer to this question.

### **How are the results used to optimize existing instruments?**

As above. There is no real impact evaluation, only outcome evaluation.

### **In which extent are civil society organizations implementers of projects and measures in the four countries, how are they interacting with institutional bodies, how are they financed, how are they perceived in society?**

In Poland, civil society organizations implement approx. 5–10% of youth activation projects funded from the EU funds. Most of the projects directed to “mainstream” NEETs are funded that way, while actions addressing needs of youth in so-called difficult situation have more varied funding (CSR foundations, local governments funds etc).

There seems to be no research on how such organizations are perceived in Polish society, because it is hard to place them in one category. The diversity of actions taken by NGOs in this field and lack of public awareness of the significance of the issue make it difficult to design the study, which would check public reception.

### **In which extend and how are they supported to implement and to evaluate their programs and measures in a systematic way? (Research partners, professional instruments etc.)?**

There seem to be no programs that support NGOs implementing actions against youth unemployment in a systematic way. Nevertheless such organizations can look for support of their evaluation activities among professional evaluators or can get an evaluation course e.g. in Polskie Towarzystwo Ewaluacyjne (Polish Evaluation Society). Of course more elaborated activities would have to be financed in one or another way.

### **How do they identify the needs of young unemployed and how do they match these needs with the needs of the labour market?**

It depends on the project and types of their beneficiaries. When the project is addressed to “mainstream NEETs”, it is usually planned based on the local job market analysis – what kind of jobs are available, are there any companies around, which would like to cooperate in the frame of the project etc. When it is addressed to “NEETs in a difficult situation”, it is based more on the general knowledge that the specialized implementers possess because of their experience in working with such group. “NEETs in difficult situation” usually have various problems, which have to be addressed in an activation project, regardless of whether the project is aimed at returning to education or starting to work.



### **Which needs do they have to be supported?**

There is a wide range of needs that must be supported to improve employability or entrepreneurship of a particular unemployed or otherwise inactive person (skills, knowledge, psychological support, career counselling, job shadowing, supported employment, loan etc.) It is risky to prioritize them as it really depends on the target group, its location, age etc. There are different type of organisations: some of them are specialised in certain areas and support specific needs, other provide more universal support.

### **Are there important resilient networks to support their work (among different organizations)?**

There seems to be no network of organizations providing youth activation projects, but there are informal networks of NGOs from various fields that can provide exchange of knowledge and support them in their work as non-governmental entities. Important part of it is ngo.pl website.

### **How do they work together with companies and other employing entities?**

It depends on the organization and on the type of project. Some smaller, local organizations form long-term relations with local companies, which result in training and internships on location.

### **How do they organize competence development inside their organization?**

Employees participate in external trainings or/and conferences.

## Impact Evaluation of YEEA's in Poland

**Is there an overall concept of impact evaluation on the three levels? Is there a common evaluation culture? Are there cultural approaches/differences?**

Across all sectors attitudes towards evaluation are strongly related to the perception of the possibility that the conclusions of the evaluation are likely to be implemented. This statement is supported by the results of a survey organized by Polish Evaluation Society in 2010.<sup>61</sup> Respondents pointed out that the most important feature of the evaluator is the ability to propose practical solutions based on the conducted research (Bartosiewicz-Niziołek 2020). Such attitudes make quite a good ground for the evaluation approach proposed by Patton (2008). This approach is based on participation and active involvement of target users in the process of evaluation.

According to the results of the other qualitative research<sup>62</sup> the assessment of usability as well as the need to conduct evaluation in the current financial perspective (2014–2020) depended on the experience of the respondents to date – primarily the benefits gained from the evaluation of previously implemented projects.

Respondents who had not previously had to do with evaluation or conducted it due to an external requirement, identified evaluation activities with monitoring and control. This approach did not bring new knowledge, but only served to demonstrate the degree of achievement of the assumed results, as well as the correctness of the project implementation, which were to prevent the possible loss of allocated funds. These respondents perceive evaluation as an additional burden and unnecessary expense, and they approve of the current restrictions on project evaluation. Due to the low usefulness of evaluation understood in this way, they claim that they would not conduct it unless it was required.

Respondents who have a favourable attitude towards evaluation, which is the result of positive experience in this field, perceive it as a tool to support the process of project implementation or even an inseparable part of its management, mainly serving: obtaining feedback, ensuring quality, and improving implemented tasks by developing corrective actions. , duplication of best practices and avoidance of errors during the implementation of subsequent projects, as well as indicating directions for further work and strengthening team collaboration. The need for evaluation was also associated with the efficiency of spending public money.

Some respondents more appreciate internal evaluation, which they associate with current feedback, as well as better knowledge of the project and the needs of its implementer, while others prefer external evaluation, due to its objectivity, expert knowledge and the possibility of confronting with a wider context. According to the respondents, the quality of evaluation depends on the knowledge and experience of the evaluators in a given research area or project specifics,

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<sup>61</sup> The study was conducted in 2010 among representatives of education institutions (including higher education) and employment services. The sample size was 106 respondents and was not representative.

<sup>62</sup> 14 In-depth Individual interviews with coordinators of projects from all sectors (public, non-profit, for-profit) conducted by Polish Evaluation Society in 2018.

as well as the mode and criteria for selecting contractors. Some people emphasized that their own involvement in evaluation affects its quality.

The high degree of evaluation utilization is influenced by its high quality, good cooperation with the contractor, as well as the manner of conducting this process, especially the participatory approach.

Respondents, who were aware of the benefits of evaluation believe that its conduct should result from their own needs, not an imposed requirement and are interested in evaluating currently implemented projects. A new approach to project evaluation, requiring the approval of the Managing Authority of the Programme, is often assessed negatively by them and perceived as a limitation.

Some respondents did not know that evaluation of projects in the current financial perspective is possible, while those who know the current guidelines better indicate that in practice evaluation has been eliminated at the project level. This state of affairs results in a lack of feedback from the recipients, as well as a lack of knowledge about the quality and usability of implemented activities, ways of improving them and preventing various difficulties and risks, as well as the sustainability of the results obtained. According to the respondents, the evaluation conducted at the program (system) level will not replace the evaluation of projects because it does not provide their implementers with adequate support (Bartosiewicz-Niziołek 2020).

**Which evaluation standards can be defined on the three levels? (In Germany the DeGEval (German association for Evaluation) describes binding standards in four categories. Are there similar standards in the three countries? What are the categories? Are these categories sufficient?**

PES conducts monitoring of results based on employment indicators, generated by Social Insurance Institution on data of EU programme participants. Impact evaluation – understood as measurement of employment effects – is carried out after the end of the project at the national level or often on regional level. It is commissioned by the Ministry of Investment and Development.

Monitoring of pre-determined indicators is the most often used at the level II and III. It results in „creaming” effect, i.e. involving into activities primarily those beneficiaries who are the most likely to be successful. In this case impact evaluation almost does not exist, since the regulations limiting financing evaluation were introduced within the EU-funded projects.

If impact evaluation should be understood as a RCT – there is little understanding of the concept especially on the II and III level. Mostly evaluation concerns output or outcome but no net effects are measured (as compared to the control group).

**Are there any agile (new )approaches regarding the “landscape” of impact evaluation of YEEA’s, which are supposed to support the implementers and to develop the instruments?**

None that we are aware of.

## What are the common indicators of YEEA's in the three countries?

There are four long-term outcome indicators, aimed at monitoring of the effects of Operational Program Knowledge Education Development:

- participations the number of people participating in continued education, training programmes leading to a qualification, an apprenticeship or a traineeship,
- the number of people in employment, including self-employment,
- the number of people in self-employment,
- the number of disadvantaged people in employment, including self-employment.

## Which internal and external tools of impact evaluation are common in the four countries?

According to qualitative research conducted by the Polish Evaluation Society in 2018 among the people commissioning evaluation, those people were executing internal evaluation and external evaluation as well as in some cases self-evaluation. Internal evaluation of innovative projects is usually implemented by the project team, while experienced experts or research companies are contracted for the external evaluation. In case of **internal evaluation**, the emphasis was on the effectiveness of implemented activities, possibility of its improvement, as well as current and future needs of its recipients. Information was collected through surveys, individual and group interviews, as well as analysis of monitoring data, i.e. value of achieved indicators (Bartosiewicz-Niziołek 2020).

The **external evaluation** primarily aimed at analysing of utility and perspective of using results (potential sustainability). The goals were to summarize effects of implemented action and assessment of possibility its continuation. The conducted research (similarly as in case of internal evaluation) included analysis of documentation, interviews (individual and group), surveys, observation, however to a greater extent it was based on the experts assessment and discussion panels with participation of the beneficiaries. The method of case study was used rarely in external evaluation (ibidem).

In systemic projects as well as in innovative ones, "evaluation was the standard procedure". If professional evaluator was not engaged, evaluation was conducted by the project coordinator: "It was the component of each project, very often included into the budget. If no, coordinator saw this need and executed it in the form of supervision, through interviews, meeting with the people implementing the projects and the beneficiaries. Also local coordinators talked to beneficiaries. Evaluations were also commissioned externally (...). There were no projects without any form of evaluation, information was always collected in one or another way. The majority of coordinators appreciated feedback on their projects (ibidem).

In systemic projects, the most common were the on-going and ex-post evaluations. The first one was focused mainly on project management, assessment of implemented activities and increasing its effectiveness as well as feedback from recipients: "The objective was to obtain information on the activities – how the implementation is going, what kind of problems the implementers and recipients encounter, what kind of support they expect, what are the conditions of cooperation in group, what helps, what disturbs?. What they focused on, depended on the information they needed and the nature of cooperation with people. "It was about better results

achievement, better activity effectiveness and finding the way to increase co-worker effectiveness through supporting them” (ibidem).

In case of initiatives aiming at competences development, evaluation served also as a tool to measure the increase which was one of the project results. It was emphasised that competences development and change of attitudes is a long-term process therefore it is difficult to study this type of effects and prove them directly after project completion. Nevertheless limited periods of financing/grant cycles force such practices. Ex-post evaluation was conducted at the end of project implementation thus dedicated time for research was limited (ibidem).

As for the **evaluation potential among NGOs** a survey of associations and foundations brought the following results concerning year 2011 (before the regulations limiting evaluation of the EU projects were introduced):

- 2/3 of NGOs did not assess their activities, 17% analysed external data pertaining to their activities, 16% assessed their activity through interviews, meetings and surveys and only 9% systematically analysed methods of their work ,structure, management, communication etc.
- only 2% of NGOs commissioned external evaluation,
- monitoring or evaluation was more common among organisations with the largest budgets – such activities 4/5 organisations with income over 1 mln PLN, and 4/10 organisations with income with between 100 thousands – 1 mln PLN (*Życie codzienne organizacji pozarządowych w Polsce*, Klon/Jawor, 2012).

After entering into force regulations limits significantly financing for evaluation in EU projects (implementation of financial perspective 2014–2020) evaluation potential among NGOs contracted substantially:

- major reduction in number of evaluations,
- decrease of interest in evaluation trainings.

**Is there a difference between the evaluation of institutional and civil society implementers, how do they implement internal evaluation, how do they perceive external evaluation?**

According to Bartosiewicz-Niziołek there is not much difference. Both in local public entities and NGOs, underestimate the role of evaluation in the process of management, which hinders or even prevents from taking rational decisions that could result in improvement of the entity's activities.

Important factor of evaluation practices is cooperation, not only with external evaluator but also inside given institution. If evaluation is implemented only by the specialised unit while other organisational units do not participate in conceptualisation and collecting data, then later they are not interested in results of the research or they treat it as negative assessment or personal attack (*Ocena zdolności monitoringu i ewaluacji we wdrażaniu RPO WZ na lata 2007-2013 oraz systemu wdrażania rekomendacji wykonanych badań ewaluacyjnych*”, raport końcowy z badania zrealizowanego, CASE, 2010).

On the other hand an analysis of drivers among personnel of public institution and NGO, can lead to a hypothesis that aim driven, less regulated, less hierarchical structure of NGOs should result

in more openness for evaluation results and implementation of conclusions on changing certain activities of the entity.

### **How are they supported to evaluate the impact of their activities themselves?**

Since the beginning of the new financial perspective (2014–2020), they have not been supported, except very extraordinary cases. Generally organisations cannot be granted money to cover the cost of evaluation on their own. However they are obliged to gather and to deliver to PES the information on the employment status of the people they supported at the end and 6 months after the beneficiaries finished participation in the project.

### **What are their needs to improve impact evaluation? ( This question can be used to develop interactively a co-creative concept of evaluation with the cooperation partners in the four countries. FIAP could provide a workshop concept)**

This will be elaborated while developing evaluation packages with organisations (in next stage of the project). Each organisation has its own specifics, needs and level of advancement in evaluation.

### **How can the improvement of employability be evaluated, how can the improvement of entrepreneurial skills be evaluated?**

At this moment we can point to experimental methods as a possible improvement (both for employability and entrepreneurship), but it is likely new improvements can be invented during the Youth Impact project realisation.

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# YOUTH IMPACT

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SLOVAKIA

**PEDAL Consulting**

2019

Authored by: Robert Miskuf

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## Initial Situation of Youth Unemployment in Slovakia

Slovak public education system has been questioned for over two decades. Despite proclaimed attempts, no substantial reform of either primary, secondary or tertiary education happened.

With the arrival of a number of major automotive companies into the country (Volkswagen, PSA Peugeot Citroën, KIA, Land Rover), Slovakia became the biggest per capita car producer in the world. However, this development increased pressure on the quality of the workforce, especially in technical fields and language skills.

There is an enlarging gap between young educated professionals, who are able to secure good quality graduate jobs in a number of large Western corporations, and a group of young people with formal secondary education, but lacking real skills and struggling to gain any kind of experience on the entry-level job market.

There is also a substantial subgroup of young people, living in severely deprived conditions in slums, often directly placed into special elementary schools, fail to gain any formal education and often remain practically illiterate and unemployed for decades. The quality of the education system may be measured through different indicators.

One of the international indicators is PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) which assesses 15-years-old students in mathematics, reading, science, problem-solving as well as financial literacy within 65 countries. SK achieved 445 points in the PISA 2015 financial literacy test. The average score for Slovak pupils is below the OECD average.

Another indicator of the quality of education is the unemployment rate of students. According to EuroStat, in November 2018, there were 13,9% unemployed young people registered in Slovakia which represents about 27,000 people.



# Mapping Slovak Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Actions and their Evaluation Standards

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## European, State and Federal Level

Actors: Political institutions on European, state- or regional level

### **European Commission** <sup>63</sup>

The European Commission (EC) is an institution of the European Union, responsible for proposing legislation, implementing decisions, upholding the EU treaties and managing the day-to-day business of the EU.

### **European Labour Authority**<sup>64</sup>

ELA is an organization to ensure that EU rules on labour mobility are enforced in a fair, simple and effective way. The agency for just rules on the labor market is soon to be established in Bratislava, Slovakia.

### **Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic**<sup>65</sup>

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic is responsible for employment support, social care and functioning of the pension scheme. It is an important state administration body for the social and legal protection of children and for family policy coordination.

### **Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family**

The Central Office of Labor, Social Affairs and Family is a state administration body ensuring the performance of state administration in the area of social affairs and services. The institution was set up in January 2004 by Act No. 533/2003 on state administration bodies in the area of social affairs and employment services, as amended. It is carrying out management, control, coordination and methodical guidance of performance through local offices of labour, social affairs and family.

### **IUVENTA - Slovak Youth Institute**<sup>66</sup>

Slovak Youth Institute is a state institution, directly managed by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic. Its scope of activities includes youth work outside school and family, and youth policy framing in the Slovak Republic and beyond. The aim of its activities is to implement the state policy towards children and youth.

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<sup>63</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/index\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/index_en)

<sup>64</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1414&langId=en>; <https://euractiv.sk/section/socialna-politika/news/slovensko-bude-mat-prvu-agenturu-eu-politici-hovoria-o-posilneni-proeuropskeho-renome/>

<sup>65</sup> <https://www.employment.gov.sk/en/>

<sup>66</sup> <https://www.iuventa.sk/en/IUVENTA/Slovak-youth-iustitute-short-introduction.alej>

## **Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for Roma Communities<sup>67</sup>**

The office proposes, coordinates and controls activities aimed to solve problems of the Roma minority and, after approval by the Government of the Slovak Republic, it implements the systemic solutions to achieve equal status of the Roma minority in society.

## **Slovak Business Agency<sup>68</sup>**

The Agency is the oldest specialized non-profit organization for the support of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including young entrepreneurs, as well as young potential future entrepreneurs. Slovak Business Agency was founded in 1993 by a common initiative of the EU and the Government of the Slovak Republic. It is a unique platform of public and private sector actors.

Measures: Laws, regulations, political decisions during the last 15 years - Examples on the European level (e.g. European Youth Guarantee) to present the national strategy

## **Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Youth for 2014 – 2020<sup>69</sup>**

The Strategy of the Slovak Republic for youth for the years 2014-2020 defines strategic objectives of the policy towards youth, while it reflects the needs of youth, particularly in the field of young people's education, employment, creativity and entrepreneurship, their active participation, health, wellbeing and relation to nature, social inclusion and volunteering. It tackles also global themes and defines strategic objectives within the youth work itself.

## **Youth Guarantee National Implementation Plan in the Slovak Republic<sup>70</sup>**

The Youth Guarantee is a commitment by all Member States to ensure that all young people under the age of 29 years receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship, traineeship within a period of four months after becoming unemployed or completing formal education. Over the years 2014 - 2015 in this area about 30.5 million euros were assumed to be used on early intervention and activation and about 143.5 million euros for the support measures for labour market integration.

## **Updated Action Plans on Strategies of the Slovak Republic for Integration of Roma Communities until 2020 for Areas of: D.2.1 Education, D.2.2 Employment, D.2.3 Health, D.2.4 Housing, and D2.5 Financial Integration<sup>71</sup>**

The Action Plan is the basic document on Roma integration in the Slovak Republic. The Plan was born based on the initiative of the EU, calling member countries to action, in terms of bettering the social and economic situation of Roma. The framework provided by the EU was then taken into account when setting the usage of the European structural funds. Operational Programme Human Resources, as one of the programs reacting to the EU calling to action, was set to focus

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<sup>67</sup> [https://www.minv.sk/?kontakty\\_rk](https://www.minv.sk/?kontakty_rk)

<sup>68</sup> <http://www.sbagency.sk>

<sup>69</sup> [http://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Slovakia\\_2014\\_Youth\\_Strategy.pdf](http://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Slovakia_2014_Youth_Strategy.pdf)

<sup>70</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1161&langId=en>

<sup>71</sup> <https://www.minv.sk/?strategia-pre-integraciu-romov-do-roku-2020>

on three main areas: combating youth unemployment, supporting disadvantaged groups, and supporting marginalised Roma communities.

**Regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 October 2018 laying down the legal framework of the European Solidarity Corps and amending Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013, Regulation (EU) No 1293/2013 and Decision No 1313/2013/EU<sup>72</sup>**

The European Commission emphasised the need to strengthen the foundations for solidarity work across Europe, to provide young people with more and better opportunities for high-quality solidarity activities covering a broad range of areas, and to support national, regional and local actors, in their efforts to cope with different challenges and crises. Different Union programmes were mobilised to offer volunteering, traineeship or job opportunities to young people across the Union. These activities, whether implemented before or after the entry into force of this Regulation, should continue to apply the rules and conditions set by the respective Union programmes that have financed them under the first phase of the European Solidarity Corps.

Young people should be provided with easily accessible opportunities to engage in high-quality solidarity activities with a strong European dimension as a means to contribute to strengthening cohesion, solidarity, social inclusion and democracy in participating countries to the benefit of local communities, while improving their competences for their personal development, thus boosting their self-esteem, autonomy and motivation to learn, stimulating their educational, social, artistic, linguistic, cultural, civic and professional development, as well as facilitating their active citizenship, employability and transition into the labour market. Those solidarity activities would also support the mobility of participants.

**EU Youth Strategy, based on the Council Resolution of 26 November 2018<sup>73</sup>**

Young people are an important part of the European society. Even the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU emphasises the importance of encouraging young people to participate in the democratic life of Europe. This aspect of the Treaty is directly expressed in one of the two main objectives of the EU's Youth Strategy, namely to encourage young people to actively participate in society. The Strategy outlines initiatives in eight areas: employment and entrepreneurship, social inclusion, participation, education and training, health and well-being, voluntary activities, youth and the world, and creativity and culture.<sup>74</sup>

The EU Youth Strategy focuses on three core areas of action, around the three words: Engage, Connect, Empower, while working on joined-up implementation across sectors. During a 2017-2018 dialogue process which involved young people from all over Europe, 11 European Youth Goals were developed. These goals identify cross-sectoral areas that affect young people's lives and point out challenges. The EU Youth Strategy should contribute to realising this vision of young people.

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<sup>72</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018R1475>

<sup>73</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C:2018:456:FULL>

<sup>74</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/survey/getsurveydetail/instruments/flash/surveyky/2163>

The EU Youth Strategy is based on several instruments, such as mutual learning activities, Future National Activities Planners, EU Youth Dialogue, EU Youth Strategy Platform and Evidence-base tools. The EU Youth coordinator is the European Commission's contact and visible reference point for young people.

### **Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Action based on Small Business Act for Europe<sup>75</sup>**

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs helps provide aspiring European entrepreneurs with the skills necessary to start and/or successfully run a small business in Europe. New entrepreneurs gather and exchange knowledge and business ideas with an experienced entrepreneur, with whom they stay and collaborate for a period of 1 to 6 months. The stay is partly financed by the European Commission.

Objectives: Are there long-term and short-term objectives of national and regional strategies apparent?

The structure of the strategy reflects European Union Strategy on Youth with the aim of most possible synergy and effectiveness in reaching its objectives. Wider youth regional strategy is not apparent.

Regional Authority Offices take decisions on regional youth policy. As provided in the Act on Youth Work Support, it is their obligation to elaborate regional concepts of youth work support, but wider youth regional strategy is not mandatory.

Some of the regions have adopted their own regional youth policy strategy/conception. Although it's thematic fields are identical to the national strategy, planned measures differ from region to region.<sup>76</sup>

### **Is it possible to define measures fostering employment and entrepreneurship on this level?**

Yes, it is. Areas of main important measures go as follows:

- Supporting the creation of new job opportunities for young people in regular paid employment. (Implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, and the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, together with territorial offices has been involved too.)<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> <https://www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu/page.php?cid=20>

<sup>76</sup> <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/sites/youthwiki/files/gdlslovakia.pdf>

<sup>77</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1327&langId=en#navItem-relatedDocuments>;  
<https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=20303&langId=en>

- Through work experience to employment. (Implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, and the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, together with 43 territorial offices which have been involved too.)<sup>78</sup>
- Upskilling young jobseekers entering the labour market (REPAS+ and KOMPAS+). Implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, and the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, together with territorial offices has been involved too.)<sup>79</sup>
- Orientation at the labour market: development of career counselling. (Provided e.g. by non-profit organizations like EPIC and People in Need Slovakia.)<sup>80</sup>
- Public employment services: mentoring support and services for specific youth groups. (Provided by the local offices of labour, social affairs and family but mentoring support also by non-profit organizations like EPIC, People in Need Slovakia, and JÓNA.)<sup>81</sup>
- Vocational education and training: development of the dual education system, apprenticeships and internships. (Supported by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, and provided by public and private secondary vocational schools, but also by private entities providing vocational education and training to adults, e.g. Newport Group.)<sup>82</sup>
- Employers' motivation: creation of working placements for specific groups. (Provided e.g. by non-profit organizations like EPIC and People in Need Slovakia.)<sup>83</sup>
- Entrepreneurship opportunities: information on entrepreneurship support tools. (Provided e.g. by non-profit organization Slovak Business Agency.)<sup>84</sup>
- Entrepreneurship literacies: development of entrepreneurship skills. (Provided e.g. by IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute in form of trainings but also in form of Erasmus+ grant opportunities supporting development of entrepreneurship skills of young people under 30 years.)<sup>85</sup>
- Mentoring for young entrepreneurs: guidance provided to entrepreneurs with and during their innovative entrepreneurship projects. (Provided e.g. by non-profit organization Slovak Business Agency.)<sup>86</sup>
- Entrepreneurship publicity: information on successes, benefits and opportunities. (Provided e.g. by non-profit organization Slovak Business Agency but also by platform like STARTITUP promoting start-up projects and initiatives of young Slovaks.)<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=20115&langId=en>

<sup>79</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=20133&langId=en>

<sup>80</sup> <https://epic-org.eu/en/promoting-youth-employment/>

<sup>81</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=105&langId=en>

<sup>82</sup> <http://dualnysystem.sk>

<sup>83</sup> <https://clovekvohtrozeni.sk/program-pre-zamestnavanie-romov-premierna-cele-komunity/>

<sup>84</sup> <http://www.sbagency.sk/chcem-podnikat>

<sup>85</sup> <https://www.iuventa.sk/sk/Aktualne-skolenia.alej>

<sup>86</sup> <https://www.npc.sk/sk/>

<sup>87</sup> <https://www.startitup.sk>

Target Group: special target groups of young people these structural measures are aiming at (special age groups, gender differences, educational level)

Structural measures	Target groups
supporting the creation of new job opportunities for young people in regular paid employment	young people registered with public employment service and are aged 25 or younger who have been on the jobseekers register for at least three months; or aged 29 or younger who have been on the jobseekers register for at least six months
through work experience to employment	young people registered with public employment service and are aged 25 or younger who have been on the jobseekers register for at least three months; or aged 29 or younger who have been on the jobseekers register for at least six months
upskilling young jobseekers entering the labour market	NEET – young people not in employment, education or training under the age of 29 years
development of career counselling	young people from marginalized Roma communities; NEET – young people not in employment, education or training under the age of 29 years
support of mentoring and services for specific youth groups	young people from marginalized Roma communities; NEET – young people not in employment, education or training under the age of 29 years
development of the dual education system, apprenticeships and internships	young people studying practical study program; young adults in NEET situation
creation of working placements for specific groups	young people from marginalized Roma communities; NEET – young people not in employment, education or training under the age of 29 years
development of entrepreneurship skills	young people under 30 years old with no gender, nor educational level requirements
guidance provided to entrepreneurs with and during their innovative entrepreneurship projects	young (future) entrepreneurs

Are there special target groups of organizations (employing entities, training providers etc.) who are working with young unemployed?

- Local Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family: providing public employment services, mentoring support and career counselling services for specific youth groups.
- IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute: offering trainings and grant opportunities to prevent NEET situations of young people and/or to involve in non-formal education those with fewer opportunities (young Roma, young people in NEET situation, etc.); entrepreneurship literacies, development of entrepreneurship skills at trainings

- NGOs orientated to youth unemployment (e.g. EPIC, People in Need Slovakia, V.I.A.C. – Institute for support and development of youth): orientation at the labour market and development of career counselling; employers' motivation and creation of working placements for specific groups; entrepreneurship literacies and development of entrepreneurship skills through educational projects focusing on social entrepreneurship

## Development of Skills

### **Do the structural measures aim on the development of skills?**

Yes, development of skills is carried out by educational and other supporting actions, like career counselling, aiming at developing skills.

### **Which focus could be defined?**

The focus is placed on skills increasing employability, work readiness competencies (e.g. social skills), other soft skills (e.g. presentation, negotiation), language skills, entrepreneurship competencies, and technical approach skills (e.g. mathematical skills, design thinking).

### **Is the development of skills the priority of these structural measures? Are these measures aiming on the development of special skills (employment/entrepreneurship)?**

Skills development is one of the priorities and all of the skills development activities aim to strengthen the employment/entrepreneurship potential. The most visible measures are seen in the area of language skills, IT skills, soft skills and entrepreneurship competencies, also promoting setting start-ups.

### Impact Evaluation: institutional concepts (formative/summative evaluation) to evaluate the impact of the measures (evaluation of new laws and regulations)

Slovakia has introduced several procedures aimed at supporting the employment of youth, resulting in declining unemployment rates. These measures significantly support and help when placing job seekers on the labour market. Nevertheless, targeted support of youth employment is still a challenge. Support for youth employment is divided into three areas:

- **Counselling:** Support of career guidance at all levels of Education (Primary schools, Secondary schools, High schools, Colleges and Universities).
- **Employment Services:** Employment services which are used to specifically promote and enhance the quality of demand in the labour market, and to be more focused according to regional specifics and needs. Greater focus on employment and employability of disadvantaged groups, could be secured with assistance, mentoring, training centres, centres of work, apprenticeship and so on.
- **Employers and employees:** There are insufficient training and development programmes for young people in the field of labour relations, as well as employees' rights and obligations of employees. Motivation of employers should be provided by the direct promotion of "best practices", especially in the field of supporting the practice and experience of young people

without work habits and in the area of mentoring. The public sector should be leading by example. Communication strategies of companies as well as working conditions, should be adapted to suit the new incoming generation of youth, which has been built on new values and expectations.

### **Which evaluation standards can be defined on this level?**

- Reduction of inactivity rate of young people (decrease of NEET situations).
- Increase employment of young people.

### **What are the indicators of impact evaluation?**

Compared to 2014 the current situation in the labour market has significantly changed. During that time in 2014, Slovakia had the sixth largest unemployment rate of young people in the European Union (33,60%).

In 2016, according to the statistical data from the Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, the average amount of job seekers younger than 29 years old was 81.700 people, which is 27,14% of the total number of registered job seekers.

The improvement of employment circumstances of young people is related to the overall recovery of the economy, which has begun to yield new jobs, as well as arrived with supporting measures concentrating on the integration of young people into the labour market.

### **Which instruments are used (quantitative/qualitative)?**

Taking into account the number of young people in education, the inactivity rate of young people under 25 years (so those who are not employed or part of the education or training process – NEET) in 2013 was at the level of 13,7% in Slovakia (13% in EU28). The inactivity rate of young people under 29 in Slovakia has reached in 2013 the level of 19% (15,9% average in EU28).<sup>88</sup>

### **Who evaluates the instruments/measures?**

The data is collected by the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic and also by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic.

Development: existing experiences and evaluation results used to develop the situation

Through the Priority axis 2 “Youth Employment Initiative”, Operational Programme Human Resources for the Programming period 2014 – 2020 has been implemented via national projects aimed to promote employment and employability of young people under the age of 29 years, for example the following projects: “Successfully on the labour market”, “Chance for Young”, “Practice for graduates starting employment”.<sup>89</sup>

### **How can they be relevant for evidence-based decision making in that field?**

For example, a national project "Practice for Employment" was being prepared – it aimed to increase employment and protect the market. The project was about to focus on the skills,

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<sup>88</sup> <https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/praca-zamestnanost/podpora-zamestnanosti/national-employment-strategy-slovak-republic-until-2020.pdf>

<sup>89</sup> [https://www.iuventa.sk/files/yr2018\\_anj\\_print\\_05122018.pdf](https://www.iuventa.sk/files/yr2018_anj_print_05122018.pdf)



knowledge and practicalities of young people under 29 and the long-term unemployed.<sup>90</sup> Project aims has been the following:

- to increase the opportunities for young people to be employed in the labor market, through the acquisition of skills and working habits through incorporation
- to encourage the employers to employ young people
- to promote employability, employment, and reducing unemployment among selected groups of jobseekers

The outputs and outcomes of such a project can straightforwardly support effective and evidence-based decision making in the future.

### **How are evaluation results presented to implementors?**

The results were presented in the final evaluation report about Youth Guarantee in December, 2017. Despite some positive developments, challenges have remained at the labour market. Slovakia has made progress on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee. Counselling and individualized services for long-term unemployed has been provided. EMCO takes note of the programme "Be active and have a job" and the skills anticipation project, and looks forward to hearing more on their results. The current partnerships involve all the relevant partners, although partnerships at local level and in implementation could be improved. A stronger partnership with the educational side would also be of benefit, to promote enrolment in the dual VET system, or access to second chance education (which remains weak). Slovakia should also increase the outreach to inactive NEET. The current project "Activation and support of young NEET" is a promising project, and its results should be monitored and evaluated. In general, monitoring and evaluation processes should be strengthened.<sup>91</sup>

### **Are European regulations (e.g. European Youth Guarantee) implemented on national level?**

Yes. Slovakia presented a Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan in February 2014, revised in April 2014.<sup>92</sup>

### **Are there strategies to motivate implementors to refer to European regulations?**

One of the motivation factors is the Youth Guarantee Knowledge Centre online platform of the EU where access to information on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee all around the EU can be found. In addition to reports and guidelines linked to the Youth Guarantee, inspiring practices from a range of Member States and regions across Europe supporting young people in their transition from school to work can be found. The material which can be accessed through the thematic search engine is the result of the Commission's work with various Youth Guarantee stakeholders in Member States.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> <https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/praca-zamestnanost/podpora-zamestnanosti/vysledky-implementacie.pdf>

<sup>91</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1327&langId=en>

<sup>92</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1161&langId=en&intPagId=3351>

<sup>93</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1327&langId=en#navItem-relatedDocuments>

## **Which laws and regulations, which structural decisions, during the last 15 years were important to empower institutional and private implementors to realize programs and projects against youth unemployment?**

Legal regulations valid in the Slovak Republic and both strategic and conceptual materials namely the Act Nr. 282/2008 Coll. on youth work support and on the amendment the Act Nr. 131/2002 Coll. on universities and on amendment certain laws as subsequently amended and the Act Nr. 406/2011 Coll. on volunteering and on amendment of certain laws.<sup>94</sup>

- EU Strategy for Youth – Investing and Empowering adopted by the Council of the European Union on 27. 4. 2009<sup>95</sup>
- EU „Youth on the Move“ initiative, which is part of the Europe 2020 Strategy, and which moves young people into the centre of the EU agenda, to create an economy based approach, based on knowledge, innovation, high rate of education and skills, flexibility and creativity, inclusive labour markets and active participation in the society
- Recommendation of the Council as of 22. April 2013 on introducing the guarantee for young people (2013/C120/01)<sup>96</sup>
- Article 165/2 of the Lisbon Treaty which calls for the promotion of young people's involvement in democratic life in Europe<sup>97</sup>
- The Council of Europe's document titled „Future of the Council of Europe's Youth Policy: AGENDA 2020“<sup>98</sup>
- AGENDA 21 and the National Strategy of the Slovak Republic's sustainable development – The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic is, in accordance with art. 15.1 point. d) of Act no. 575/2001 Coll. on the organization of government activities and the central state administration as amended, the central government authority for the employment strategy, coordinating its development and the policy of labour market<sup>99</sup>

## **Are these regulations evaluated in a qualitative or quantitative way (did they have an impact on unemployment, did they offer sustainable solutions etc.)?**

On the basis of available documents, it may be generally stated that Slovakia continues to implement the tools of active labour market policies under the Guarantees Initiative for young people under 29 years and to support the long-term unemployed following the successfully implemented projects of the Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion 2007 – 2013. Thanks to active labour market measures and national projects implemented under the YEI and Guarantees for young people, young people's transition from education to the labour market has been facilitated and their employment rate is expected to be increased in Slovakia.

## **Are there approaches to evaluate these structures in a systemic way?**

There is no clear regular evaluations of these structures.

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<sup>94</sup> [http://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Slovakia\\_2014\\_Youth\\_Strategy.pdf](http://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Slovakia_2014_Youth_Strategy.pdf)

<sup>95</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0200:FIN:SK:PDF>

<sup>96</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:SK:PDF>

<sup>97</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:306:FULL:SK:PDF>

<sup>98</sup> Declarations of the 8th Conference of the Ministers of the Council of Europe responsible for youth , Kyiv, Ukraine, October 2008

<sup>99</sup> <http://www.minzp.sk/files/dokumenty/strategicke-dokumenty/narodna-strategia-trvalo-udrzatelneho-rozvoja- slovenskej-republiky-obsah.rtf>

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## Institutional Level

### Actors

- Implementing public institutions: employment agencies, job centers, public bodies  
Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic
- Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family
- Local Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family
- IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute

### Measures: How do YEEA's refer to different dimensions of implementation?

Support is divided in three groups:

1. **Counselling:** Support of career guidance at all levels of education (Primary schools, Secondary schools, High schools, Colleges and Universities).
2. **Employment Services:** Employment services which are used to specifically promote and enhance the quality of demand in the labour market, and to be more focused according to regional specifics and needs. Greater focus on employment and employability of disadvantaged groups, could be secured with assistance, mentoring, training centres, centres of work, apprenticeship and so on.
3. **Employers and employees:** There are insufficient training and development programmes for young people in the field of labour relations, as well as employees' rights and obligations of employees. Motivation of employers should be provided by the direct promotion of "best practices", especially in the field of supporting the practice and experience of young people without work habits and in the area of mentoring. The public sector should be leading by example. Communication strategies of companies as well working conditions, should be adapted to suit the new incoming generation of youth, which has been built on new values and expectations.

YEEA's focused on organizations (enterprises, schools, training institutions) and individuals (young unemployed persons in special target groups and people working with them). Are there any YEEA'S which are extraordinary successful?

A good example is EPIC,<sup>100</sup> non-profit organization, which follows the values and mission of:

- **Influencing public policies on employment and social inclusion of marginalized groups** - the activities of non-profit organization EPIC in public policies focus on following three topics: 1. preparation of the standard scale of unit costs, related to provision of the selected employment services, 2. enforcement of the social aspect in public procurements, financed by the European Union, and 3. preparation of the conditions for the absorption of financial assistance of the European Union in the Program period 2014-2020, related to inclusion of the marginalized Roma communities;
- **Initiating and assisting in preparation and implementation of programs targeting increased employment on the local level** - the aim of this program of the organization is to increase young people's preparedness to react on actual requirements of employers, while providing them with opportunities for networking with potential employers participating in the activities (EPIC implements a few projects in scope of this program: Job Interview Simulator,

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<sup>100</sup> <https://epic-org.eu/en/home/>

Capacities of youth workers on the field of youth employment services, Youth Guarantee on the local level, Roma Youth for Community, Youth Employment Week);

- **Awareness-raising on employment of people with various types of disabilities** - support of employment of people with health disabilities is part of a program aiming at promoting democratic values, including human rights. EPIC supports public discussion on improving the life of people with disabilities, through increasing their chances to apply on the open labor market, but also on the quality of life of people with disabilities, which is currently in most cases defined by social isolation and poor economic situation (project implemented within the program: “The Tools to Increase Employability of People with Health Disabilities”<sup>101</sup>;
- providing individualized employment services designed for disadvantaged groups.

Objectives: objectives of these measures (long-term improvement and development of work force, short-term integration into the labor market)

Long-term: increase the youth employment

Short-term: preparedness to react on actual requirements of employers

Target Group: special target groups of young people these institutional measures are aiming at (special age groups, gender differences, educational level)

- NEET – Young people not in employment, education or training under the age of 29 years
- Young people under 30 years old with no gender, nor educational level requirements
- Young people from marginalized Roma communities
- Young people with fewer opportunities and/or with disabilities

**Are there special target groups of organizations (employing entities, training providers etc.) who are working with young unemployed?**

Local Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, NGO's orientated to youth unemployment

Development of Skills: an approach regarding different levels of skills (soft skills/hard skills)

Everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning that develops key competences and basic skills. Key competences and basic skills are needed by all for personal fulfilment and development, employability, social inclusion and active citizenship. Therefore, the European Commission works with EU countries to support and reinforce the development of key competences and basic skills for all, from an early age and throughout life.

In May 2018, the Council for Education, Youth, Culture and Sports adopted a Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning which replaces an earlier Recommendation in this area. The approach is to promote key competences and basic skills development by:

- Providing high-quality education, training and lifelong learning for all
- Supporting educational staff
- Promoting a variety of learning approaches and contexts, in a lifelong learning perspective

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<sup>101</sup> <https://epic-org.eu/en/the-tools-to-increase-employability-of-people-with-health-disabilities/>

## Exploring approaches to assessment and validation of key competences

By 2020 less than 15% of 15-year-olds should be classed as 'low-achieving' in those basic skills, as measured by PISA tests. The Commission supports EU countries in strengthening basic skills and key competences for all by facilitating mutual learning and exchange of good practice.<sup>102</sup>

### **Which skills are considered to be transferred concerning aspects of employability and entrepreneurship (is entrepreneurship already considered to be skill preventing unemployment)?**

The definition of the set of key competences needed for personal fulfilment, health, employability and social inclusion has been shaped not only by societal and economic developments, but also by various initiatives in Europe during the last decade. Special attention has been given to improving basic skills, investing in language learning, improving digital and entrepreneurial competences, the relevance of common values in the functioning of our societies, and motivating more young people to engage in science related careers.<sup>103</sup>

#### Impact Evaluation

##### *Information and Advisory Services:*

In 2014, 2.911 services to 21.670 primary school students were provided.

In 2014, 1.800 services to 35.036 secondary school students were provided.<sup>104</sup>

##### Information exchanges:

In 2014, 29 information exchanges for 382 primary schools and 425 secondary schools were carried out.<sup>105</sup>

##### Professional advisory services:

In 2014, 201.438 professional advisory services were carried out.<sup>106</sup>

##### Internship – Graduate practice:

In 2014, 9.416 graduates were integrated to graduate practices.<sup>107</sup>

Are there systematic approaches and instruments to evaluate the impact of the YEEA'S on the institutional level (formative/summative)?

Systematic approach in evaluating the impact of YEEA'S is not in place.

### **What are the indicators of impact evaluation on this level?**

The indicator of proportion of young unemployed people in the population of the same age group (SR/EU average). In 2013 this indicator reached the value of 12,2% in the Slovak Republic, what was slightly above the EU28 average (10,6%).<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/school/key-competences-and-basic-skills\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/school/key-competences-and-basic-skills_en)

<sup>103</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018H0604\(01\)&rid=7](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018H0604(01)&rid=7)

<sup>104</sup> <https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/praca-zamestnanost/podpora-zamestnanosti/vysledky-implementacie.pdf>

<sup>105</sup> <https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/praca-zamestnanost/podpora-zamestnanosti/vysledky-implementacie.pdf>

<sup>106</sup> <https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/praca-zamestnanost/podpora-zamestnanosti/vysledky-implementacie.pdf>

<sup>107</sup> <https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/praca-zamestnanost/podpora-zamestnanosti/vysledky-implementacie.pdf>

<sup>108</sup> <https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/praca-zamestnanost/podpora-zamestnanosti/national-employment-strategy-slovak-republic-until-2020.pdf>

## Which instruments are used qualitative/quantitative?

Qualitative Surveys - Paper surveys or questionnaires, Observation, Case Studies, Quantitative Data Collection Methods

## Which innovative instruments of impact evaluation are used on this level (e.g. participative approaches, SWOT-Analysis)?

Statistical data analysis, questionnaires, qualitative analysis, and on-the-spot checks are used.

## Who evaluates the instruments/measures?

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic.

## Are there any Best-Practices which are adaptable to the situation in the other countries?

Three good practice examples on institutional level can be presented:

- **Contribution to support job creation in the first regular paid employment:** Supporting the creation of new job opportunities for young people in regular paid employment. (Implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, and the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, together with territorial offices has been involved too.)<sup>109</sup> The measure was introduced in 2014. Since 2015. 5.158 employers were reached, and in 2015-2017, 8.387 young people were supported. Out of which, 6.046 young people have potentially remained active in the labour market.
- **Through work experience to employment.** (Implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, and the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, together with 43 territorial offices which have been involved too.)<sup>110</sup> Practice has been implemented in 2015-2019. By the end of 2017, 4.258 took part in the project and 6.838 young people entered the project. 5.189 participants (76%) remained active in the labour market.
- **REPAS+ and KOMPAS+:** Upskilling young jobseekers entering the labour market. Implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, and the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, together with territorial offices has been involved too.)<sup>111</sup> The practice has been introduced in 2017 and it is ongoing. By end of July 2018, 6.075 young people improved their key competences, and 6.181 were retrained. 33.93% of REPAS+ participants found a job in 3 months after the training ended, and 24.66% of young people involved in KOMPAS+ found a job in 3 months after the course ended.

## Development: How does impact evaluation develop existing projects and programs?

Through the Priority axis 2 “Youth Employment Initiative” Operational Programme Human Resources for the Programming period 2014 – 2020 were implemented and continue to implement national projects aimed to promote employment and employability for young people up to the age of 29 years old, e.g. “Successfully on the labour market”, “Chance for Young”, “Practice for graduates starts employment”.

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<sup>109</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=20303&langId=en>

<sup>110</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=20115&langId=en>

<sup>111</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=20133&langId=en>

Nevertheless, it is essential to support the growth and employability of youth through connecting the educational needs and the demands of the labour market. In an effort to support the consistency of education and requirements of the labour market, a new law was implemented on vocational education and training. The dual education system, should in fact support the requirements of employers and allow future employees who are in the process of education receive the skills required to support them in the labour market. However, the current dual education system is at present concentrating only on secondary vocational education and it is not being utilized efficiently. The lack of consistency in education and consideration of requirements in the labour market are directly harming graduates, who are unable to find jobs in their field of study. Directly in relation to this, it is of paramount importance to establish an effective formal educational system and career guidance in line with labour market requirements.<sup>112</sup>

A national project "Practice for Employment" was being prepared - it aimed to increase employment and protect the market. The project was about to focus on the skills, knowledge and practicalities of young people under 29 and the long-term unemployed.

Regional differences, especially in the the lack of job offers and the vast gap in remuneration causes, the depopulation of regions as people need to move from their home region to find jobs. Taking into consideration the structure of the economy in Slovakia and regional disparities, according to the statistical data from 2016, the biggest problem with employment of young people is in Prešov, Banská Bystrica and Košice. These regions also have the highest gaps in salaries. Young people from these regions are forced to migrate for work not only within Slovakia, but also abroad.<sup>113</sup>

### **How are the results used to optimize existing instruments?**

The existing instruments as follows are adjusted based on the success of the instruments evaluated by the state administration: <sup>114</sup>

- Information and advisory services – job selection, adaptation of employees in new job placements
- Information exchanges – information about the most requested professions, EURES –
- European Employment Services offer studies, internships, voluntary stays abroad
- Professional advisory services – solve problems with job applications, identify barriers in entering the labour market, evaluate the competencies
- Contribution to the creation a work position in the first regular paid job.
- Dual education system.
- National projects – Support the unemployment in self-government, support the creation new work positions
- Cross-cutting solutions for youth unemployment.
- Internships – contribution to graduate practice in the amount 128,76 euros per month.

### **How are the results communicated to political stakeholders and decision makers on the one hand and to the community of implementors on the other hand?**

Policy makers and decision makers are oftentimes invited to take part in seminar, workshops, conferences where usually results and current situation is being presented. A very good example

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<sup>112</sup> [https://www.iuventu.sk/files/yr2018\\_anj\\_print\\_05122018.pdf](https://www.iuventu.sk/files/yr2018_anj_print_05122018.pdf)

<sup>113</sup> [https://www.iuventu.sk/files/yr2018\\_anj\\_print\\_05122018.pdf](https://www.iuventu.sk/files/yr2018_anj_print_05122018.pdf)

<sup>114</sup> <https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/praca-zamestnanost/podpora-zamestnanosti/vysledky-implementacie.pdf>

of a functioning communication of an NGO and local municipality and wider community is the project Youth Guarantee on the local level carried out by EPIC.<sup>115</sup> This Project aims to pilot test the good practice of Youth Guarantee (YG) approach from Finland in the environment of one Slovak municipality. The realization of this objective shall be the starting point for the possible revision of the Youth Guarantee applications in Slovakia towards the local level. The project is about to end. The ongoing information communicated to the external environment promises a very good outcome of this initiative which will be transferable to other municipalities too.

**Which social services do public bodies, employment agencies etc. provide to support the transition from school to work and to promote labor market integration?**

Local Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family

**How are these services evaluated?**

No regular evaluation results are presented externally.

**Do evaluation respect the perspective of participants?**

No

**Which target groups can be defined regarding institutional programs and projects (are Institutional measures aiming at employing entities and training providers)?**

- Young people not in employment, education or training under the age of 29 years
- Young people registered with public employment service and are aged 25 or younger who have been on the jobseekers register for at least three months; or aged 29 or younger who have been on the jobseekers register for at least six months

**Do evaluation actions integrate the perspective of these target groups?**

No.

**Are there systemic measures integrating different stakeholders in society (unions, entrepreneurs, training providers etc.) in impact evaluation?**

No.

**How do institutional actors interact with private actors?**

E.g. a financial contribution to employers who create a job position for young jobseekers is provided. The financial contribution is a percentage – dependant on the region – of costs incurred by the employer. Another example is when employee mentoring costs (e.g. the mentors' wage) are covered up to a maximum EUR 81 per month per mentored employee. And up to 95% of the total labour costs of the mentored employee, with a maximum of EUR 649 per month for a full-time position are covered.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> <https://epic-org.eu/en/youth-guarantee-on-the-local-level/>

<sup>116</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=20303&langId=en>; <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=20115&langId=en>



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## Civil Society Level

Actors: NGO's, private organizations, associations

### **EPIC, n.o.**<sup>117</sup>

The EPIC non-profit organization was registered in Slovakia on June 19, 2012 by its parent organization EPIC Assist seated in Brisbane (Australia). EPIC Slovakia follows the values and mission of its parent organization. Non-profit organization EPIC is a member of the American Chamber of Commerce and Social Innovation Europe. Main goals:

- Influencing public policies on employment and social inclusion of marginalized groups,
- Initiating and assisting in preparation and implementation of programs targeting increased employment on the local level,
- Awareness-raising on employment of people with various types of disabilities,
- Providing individualized employment services designed for disadvantaged groups

### **People in Need Slovakia, n.o.**<sup>118</sup>

People in Need Slovakia is a non-profit organization aiming to help people who are in greatest need. Since 1999, they have provided a helping hand to those deprived of human dignity and freedom due to all sorts of circumstances. To people suffering the consequences of war; victims of natural disasters or those who live under the suppression of authoritarian regimes or in conditions of deep poverty – all over the world as well as in Slovakia. They are a proud member of the People in Need network operating in Central Europe.

### **JÓNA, n.o.**<sup>119</sup>

JÓNA, n.o. is a non profit organization with the aim to increase the living standards of (young) women in Prešov self-governing region.

### **IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute**<sup>120</sup>

IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute is a state institution, directly managed by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic. Its scope of activities includes youth work outside school and family and the youth policy in the Slovak Republic and beyond. The aim of its activities is to implement the state policy towards children and youth.

### **Measures: Projects focused on organizations and individuals**

see above: EPIC, non-profit organization, is carrying out several projects promoting and supporting youth employment. The following are the most relevant:

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<sup>117</sup> <https://epic-org.eu>

<sup>118</sup> <https://clovekvochrozeni.sk/about-us/>

<sup>119</sup> <http://www.jona.sk>

<sup>120</sup> <https://www.iuventa.sk/en/IUVENTA/Slovak-youth-iustitute-short-introduction.alej>

### **Project Youth Guarantee on the local level**

This Project aims to pilot test the good practice of Youth Guarantee (YG) approach from Finland in the environment of one Slovak municipality. The realization of this objective shall be the starting point for the possible revision of the Youth Guarantee applications in Slovakia towards the local level.

The model of Youth Guarantee became one of the main approaches of the European Union in tackling the youth unemployment. It is trying to reflect the situation of young people up to 25 years, especially NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), by facilitating their access to the first and better job.<sup>121</sup>

### **Project Roma Youth for Community**

Objectives of the project:

- Support of young people to be aware of their strenghts and weaknesses
- Support of young people to identify and motivate them to achieve professional goal
- Support of Roma identity and cultural heritage<sup>122</sup>

### **Project Job Interview Simulator**

Objectives of the project:

- to increase young people's preparedness to react on actual requirements of employers. Project provides opportunities for networking fresh graduates with potential employers participating in realisation of the project.
- to help a group of at least 200 students from at least 4 universities (approx. 10 % of all will be students with disabilities) to successfully handle a job interview and to get a job (min. 50 % of training participants will get a job after graduation/training). This training is going to be specially implemented with the help of big companies;
- to strengthen the capacities of youth workers in the area of youth employment with youth in the area of youth employment (with emphasis on young people with lack of opportunities), to train min. 10 youth workers with youth in area of youth employment and :to create specialised programmes for youth employment directly at employers and to network the youth and employers;
- to create min. 40 work places for young people trough two specialised programmes, which are going to be realised by at least 3 business entities and at least 3 municipalities;
- to ensure conditions for project activities to make it sustainable when project is finished.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> <https://epic-org.eu/en/youth-guarantee-on-the-local-level/>

<sup>122</sup> <https://epic-org.eu/en/roma-youth-for-community/>

<sup>123</sup> <https://epic-org.eu/en/job-interview-simulator/>

Another example is People in Need Slovakia with its **Program of social integration** aimed at employing Roma people from marginalized communities. This innovative program has supported the employment of 40 unemployed, mostly young adults.<sup>124</sup>

Objectives: main objectives regarding YEEA's aiming at organizations and individuals

- Support of Employment of People with Health Disabilities
- Support of Social Entrepreneurship
- Promoting Youth Employment
- Support of the International Work Mobility
- Support of Public Policies
- Support of Employment of Marginalized Groups

**Are these objectives developed adapted to the needs of the local, regional or national labor markets?**

Objectives react to actual needs of the local, regional or national labor markets.

**Are there objectives directly aiming to the categories of Employability and Entrepreneurship?**

All of these objectives aim to support services to increase youth employment.

Target Group: special target groups of young people these Projects are aiming at (special age groups, gender differences, educational level)

NEET – not in Education, Employment or Training under 29 years old.

**Are there special target groups of organizations who are working with young unemployed?**

NGOs orientated on influencing public policies on employment and social inclusion of different types of marginalized groups.

Development of Skills: Which skills are regarded to be important

- a) for the unemployed? social skills, communication skills, working habits, financial literacy, etc.
- b) for implementors, training providers and employing entities? soft-skills, leadership skills, communication skills, pedagogical skills, etc.

**Which skills are considered to be transferred concerning aspects of employability and entrepreneurship (is entrepreneurship already considered to be skill preventing unemployment)?**

Entrepreneurship, especially social entrepreneurship, has a key role, e.g. via supporting the establishment of startups, which are one of the ways to increase youth employment.

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<sup>124</sup> <https://clovekvozhrozeni.sk/program-pre-zamestnavanie-romov-premiena-cele-komunity/>

## Impact Evaluation: Are there systematic approaches and instruments to evaluate the impact of YEEA'S on the civil society level?

Not in a systematic way, there is no joint approach and output providing the evaluation in the civil society level. There are concrete projects focusing on youth employability evaluated. For example EPIC evaluated and presented the summary of the Job Simulator project.<sup>125</sup> Or the same organization had the Capacities of youth workers on the field of youth employment services project evaluated by an external evaluator but made not public. Some other organizations, e.g. People in Need Slovakia report on their activities in annual reports.<sup>126</sup>

### **What are indicators of evaluation, who determines indicators?**

- The indicator of proportion of young unemployed people in the population of the same age group (SR/EU average).
- The indicator of success is also the ratio of those who remain in the working process (after being placed and mentored) out of the whole group of previously being in a NEET situation. E.g. the activities of the People in Need Slovakia in Roma communities via their community centers and employees there.

### **Which instruments are used, which innovative methods are used?**

- Employers needs identification
- Discovering of talents of the young people in NEET situations
- Involving whole families from marginalized communities<sup>127</sup>

### **Who evaluates the YEEA's? Are there external and internal evaluation concepts?**

Concepts do not exist. The evaluation is carried out mostly on concrete project level, whether just internal or also external depends also on the requirements of the funds donor.

### **How are the implementors (organizations, individuals) empowered to measure the impact of their activities?**

E.g. most of the grant opportunities are very much concerned about measuring the impact. If this part is not elaborated properly, funds are usually not given to the applicant.

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<sup>125</sup> <https://epic-org.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/simulator-pracovnych-pohovorov-INFO-AFTER-eng.pdf>

<sup>126</sup> <https://clovekvozhrozeni.sk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/CVO-vyrocka-2017-final-online.pdf>

<sup>127</sup> <https://clovekvozhrozeni.sk/program-pre-zamestnavanie-romov-premiena-cele-komunity/>

## Impact Evaluation of YEEA's in Slovakia

**Is there an overall concept of impact evaluation on the three levels? Is there a common evaluation culture? Are there cultural approaches/differences?**

One of the main important stakeholders in this context is the Slovak Evaluation Society (SES), which was established as the non-governmental, non-profit organization (civil association) in 2006 to serve as a network for the evaluation professionals (evaluators, evaluation managers/commissionaires, evaluation users and other people from practice, academic sector and research interested in evaluation) with an aim to build evaluation culture in Slovakia. Its role is to promote the use of evaluations for all the interventions financed from the public funds, in order to strengthen transparency and improve the accountability of public expenditures.

The purpose of SES is to operate as:

- a forum to gather, utilize and spread the evaluation knowledge, experience and results,
- a platform for the study, and exchange of the experience and knowledge on evaluation practice and research, and
- a network concentrating sector specific knowledge and improving evaluation methods and techniques.

SES will carry out the activities to make sure that the evaluations will become indispensable tool of the public administration's management. SES will develop cooperation with partner organisations operating in Slovakia and abroad, and its activities will focus on education and training activities as well as methodological support in the area of monitoring and evaluation.

**Which evaluation standards can be defined on the three levels? What are the categories? Are these categories sufficient?**

In Slovakia, DeGEval standards are also used:

<http://www.evaluacia.sk/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/Odpor%C3%BA%C4%8Dania-pre-zad%C3%A1vate%C4%BEOv-evalu%C3%A1ci%C3%AD1.pdf>

**Are there any agile (new )approaches regarding the “landscape” of impact evaluation of YEEA's, which are supposed to support the implementors and to develop the instruments?**

We are not aware of this.

**What are the common indicators of YEEA's in the three countries?**

The situation is very similar as in Poland. There are four long-term outcome indicators, aimed at monitoring of the effects of Operational Program Knowledge Education Development:

- participations the number of people participating in continued education, training programmes leading to a qualification, an apprenticeship or a traineeship,

- the number of people in employment, including self-employment,
- the number of people in self-employment,
- the number of disadvantaged people in employment, including self-employment.

### **Which internal and external tools of impact evaluation are common in the four countries?**

Internal evaluation is in most cases conducted by the internal project team.

External evaluation is used especially in the context of projects funded or co-financed by public institutions. These evaluations are undertaken by independent experts who normally look at the extent to which the KPIs, defined at the beginning of the projects, were fulfilled.

The outcome of the evaluation exercise is the Evaluation Report.

#### Example:

Extract from the Evaluation report - Assessment of the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of joint support from the ESF and the funds specifically allocated to the Youth Employment Initiative.

The objectives of the evaluation report:

*“An assessment of the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of joint support from the ESF and the funds specifically allocated to the Youth Employment Initiative (hereinafter referred to as the "Evaluation Report") shall be submitted in accordance with Art. Article 19 (6) of General Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council 1304/2013 of 17 December 2013 on the European Social Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006. The evaluation report is the second mandatory evaluation in the Slovak Republic to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of joint support from the ESF and specifically earmarked funds for the Youth Employment Initiative, including the implementation of the Youth Guarantee Scheme. The first evaluation was carried out in 2015 for 2014. In the Slovak Republic, financial resources for IZM are specifically allocated in PA 2 of the OP HRE, which was approved by the European Commission by Implementing Decision no. CCI 2014SK05M0OP001 of 9 December 2014, under the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the specific budget allocated to the Youth Employment Initiative under the Investment for growth and jobs in Slovakia objective. The Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic is the Managing Authority for the implementation of ESF projects to support employment growth and also the Initiative to support the employment of young people.”*

<https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/esf/op-ludske-zdroje/hodnotenie/izm/hodnotenie-izm-2018-final.pdf>

### **Is there a difference between the evaluation of institutional and civil society implementors, how do they implement internal evaluation, how do they perceive external evaluation?**

There is no significant difference.

## **How are they supported to evaluate the impact of their activities themselves?**

Normally, there are no funds allocated to the internal evaluation of activities.

## **What are their needs to improve impact evaluation?**

The first "mandatory" evaluations appeared in Slovakia as part of EU-funded programs. Who prepares them, controls their quality and whether they are applied properly remains unknown. For this reason, SES came up with the initiative to collect this data and collect it in a central database, with the active cooperation of the responsible institutions. This database should be an archive of available evaluations and information about them, and serve as a tool in the preparation of further procurements (eg to check references, search for relevant suppliers, etc.). The database exists, but it is not complete as it was possible to obtain data only on the basis of the law on free access to information, which is time-consuming and not 100% reliable. This method does not allow SES to publish all evaluation reports. The data is updated once a year. We consider the database to be an effective tool that improves transparency in the evaluation market.

In general, dedicated budget should be allocated to evaluation activities in all the projects which receive public funding.

## **How can the improvement of employability be evaluated, how can the improvement of entrepreneurial skills be evaluated?**

This will be determined by the Youth Impact project in later phases.

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# YOUTH IMPACT

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CZECHIA

**CHANNEL CROSSINGS**

2019

Authored by: Radka Zgarbová

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## Initial Situation of Youth Unemployment in Czechia

Even though the **unemployment rate of young people** in the Czech Republic is still below the EU average, it significantly **exceeds the overall unemployment rate in the Czech Republic**.

There was a sharp **rise in youth unemployment as early as 2009** and continuing growth until 2010. After 2012, the youth unemployment rate (15–29 years) began to decline steadily.

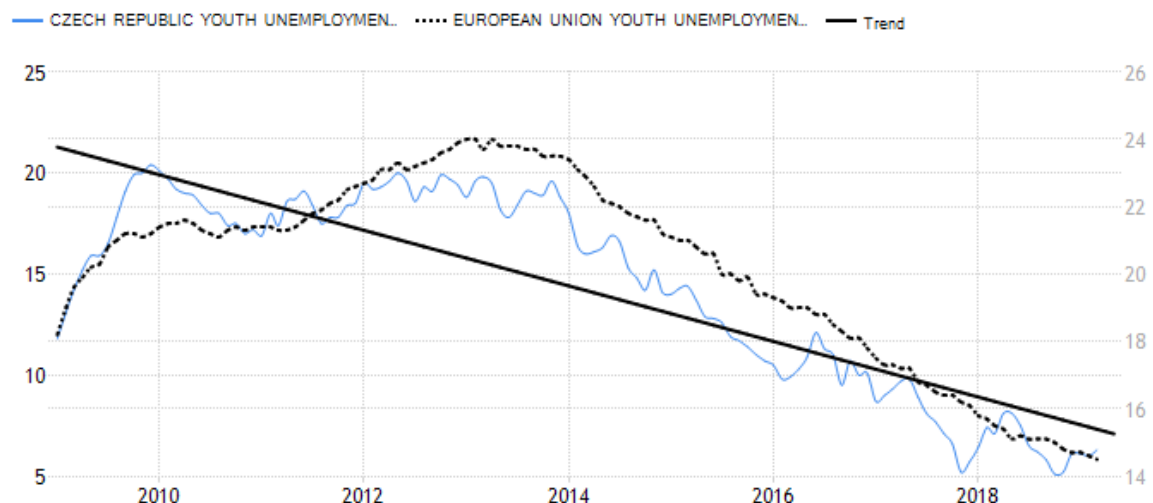
There are economic links to the German economy apparent as well as continuing economic growth in the Czech Republic – growth of industry and services. The automotive industry, chemical and IT and technology sectors are growing as well. The Czech economy is traditionally based mainly on industry and foreign trade. Manufacturing industry accounts the largest proportion of Czech economy compared with others in the EU and represents more than a third of all employment. The production of cars, by companies like Toyota, Peugeot, Citroën, Škoda, and Hyundai, is crucial in the Czech economy. Unfortunately, Czech workers account for cheap labour abroad and they are paid low wages.

We can see vast differences between regions and the **existence of socially excluded localities**, where young people often receive not only any work experience, but also no qualification.

Graduates and young people are one of the most vulnerable groups at the labor market. They do not have the experience and experience they can offer to employers, and they also lack important contacts - more difficult to judge from a short professional history of a graduate.

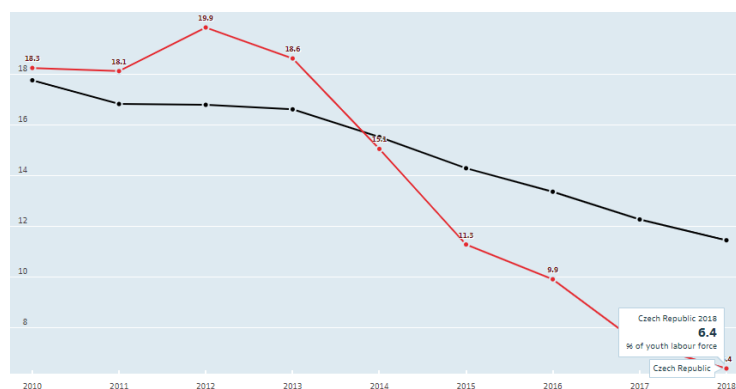
The unemployment rate is traditionally the highest among secondary school leavers with a vocational certificate (Least problems entering the labor market with university graduates).

Educational system in the Czech Republic identifies **lacking systemic elements that would better prepare young people for their first job** - insufficiently focused on practice, inadequate graduate communication and language skills. There is a mismatch between employers' and graduates needs - the **profiles of graduates do not correspond with the requirements of employers** (no required skills and practical abilities of graduates). The reason could be the lack of cooperation between the private sector and schools - schools are opening up fields whose graduates are not in demand on the labor market - and therefore lack of practical knowledge gained during the school years.

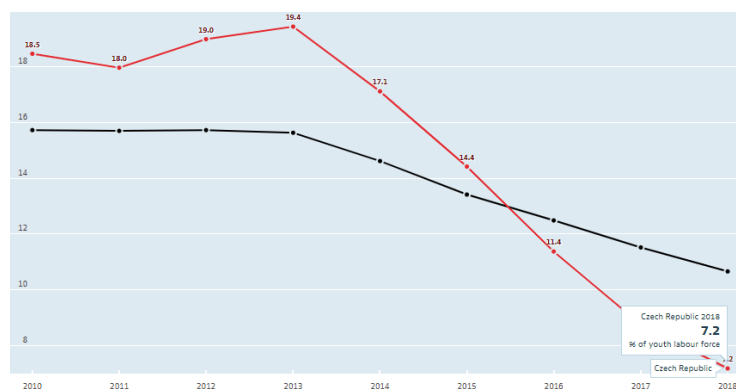


SOURCE: TRADINGECONOMICS.COM

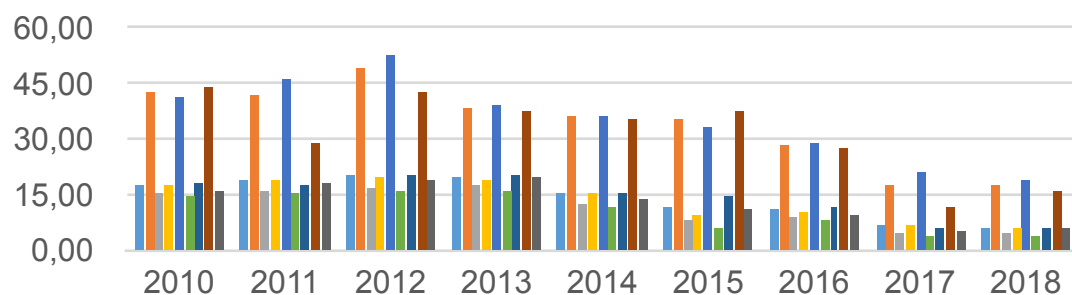
## Unemployment of young men in Czechia



## Unemployment of young women in Czechia

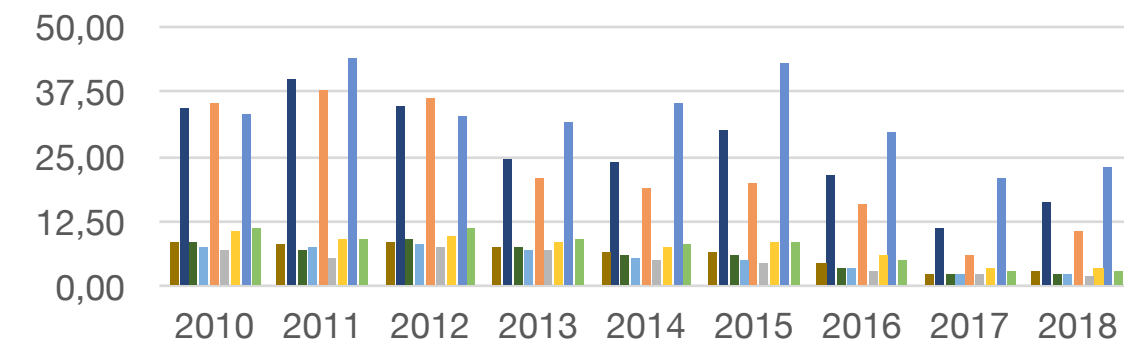


## Unemployment by education level, age 15 – 24



- TotalAll ISCED 2011 levels
- TotalLess than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)
- TotalUpper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)
- MalesAll ISCED 2011 levels
- MalesLess than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)
- MalesUpper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)
- FemalesAll ISCED 2011 levels
- FemalesLess than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)
- FemalesUpper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)

## Unemployment by education level, age 25 – 29



- TotalAll ISCED 2011 levels
- TotalLess than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)
- TotalUpper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)
- MalesAll ISCED 2011 levels
- MalesLess than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)
- MalesUpper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)
- FemalesAll ISCED 2011 levels
- FemalesLess than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)
- FemalesUpper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)

# Mapping Czech Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Actions and their Evaluation Standards

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## European, State and Federal Level

Actors: Political institutions on European, state- or regional level

- **European Commission (EC)**

The European Commission is an institution of the European Union (EU). As a politically independent executive body, it is responsible for drawing up proposals for new and amending old European legislation, as well as for implementing the decisions of the European Parliament and of the Council of the EU.

- **European Labour Authority (ELA)**

The aim of this newly established (2018) EU-level body is, among others, to:

- 1) facilitate access to information concerning rights and obligations in cases of cross-border mobility for employees, employers and national administrations
- 2) support coordination between Member States in the cross-border enforcement of relevant Union law
- 3) act as a mediator between Member State authorities in order to resolve cross-border disputes
- 4) facilitate the search for solutions in the event of labour market disruptions

- **Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA)**

The Ministry is primarily responsible for employment (e.g. labour market, employment support, employment of foreigners), social policy (e.g. people with disabilities, social services, social benefits, family policy), social security (e.g. pensions, sickness insurance), labour legislation, occupational health and safety, equal opportunities for women and men (gender issues), European integration and the European Social Fund. The MoLSA provides methodological guidance for Labour Offices, the Czech Social Security Administration, the State Labour Inspection Office and the Office for International Legal Protection of Children.

- **Labour Office - General Directorate**

The central institution under the supervision of the MoLSA manages and supervises the operations of its regional branches located throughout the country. It mainly carries out coordination, methodological management and financing of active labour market policies and instruments, while participating in the development of national and systemic projects funded by the EU that are aimed at promoting employment. The General Directorate plays a fundamental role in implementing the employment policies of the Czech Republic (particularly through its regional branches).

- **Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS)**

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is a central government body for pre-school and educational establishments, primary, secondary and higher education, science policy, research and development, including international cooperation in this field, state-awarded academic titles, national child and youth care, physical education, sport, tourism and the national sports teams. In the context of youth employment policy, the Ministry plays a crucial role especially in the areas of further training and career counselling for students. Equally important is its role in developing concepts for educational policies that are subsequently introduced into the education system of the Czech Republic and have a significant impact on the readiness of young people to enter the labour market.

Measures: Laws, regulations, political decisions during the last 15 years Examples on the European level (e.g. European Youth Guarantee) to present the national strategy

- **European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)**

EU funds allocated for the implementation of the Common Strategic Framework. These funds represent the key instrument for the implementation of the European cohesion policy. Finances invested through these funds aim to reduce economic and social disparities among the Member States and their regions.

- **Operational programmes financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds**

Operational programmes are key strategy documents of a financial and technical nature for a specific public policy area. They are drawn up by the Member States and describe in detail the objectives and priorities that the Member State intends to accomplish in the area in the current programming period. Furthermore, they contain a description of the type of activities that are eligible for ESIF funding, as well as a list of authorised applicants. For the transfer of public policies from the Union to the national level, the operational programmes are one of the most essential both theoretical and executive implementation instruments in various thematic areas of public policy.

- **Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)**

The YEI supports primarily young people who are not in education, employment or training (so-called NEETs), including those not registered as job seekers with the Labour Office. It focuses on the worst-affected NUTS II regions where, in 2012, youth unemployment rates for persons aged 15 to 24 were higher than 25%. In 2017, the regions with youth unemployment higher than 25% in 2016 were also included. Although the YEI itself targets persons aged 15 to 24, in the Czech Republic, the target group was expanded to include persons aged 25 to 29 in order to implement the intervention.

- **Employment Policy Strategy 2020**

Employment Policy Strategy 2020 is developed as a ministerial strategy document, and therefore focuses mainly on those measures that may directly affect the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, including its subordinate institutions. The Employment Strategy identifies the problems of

the Czech labour market and their causes, highlights the main groups to be targeted by support measures and instruments of active and state employment policy in reducing unemployment, proposes measures to increase the employment and employability of job seekers and persons interested in a job, and promotes the adaptability of employers and employees. The Employment Strategy also respects the regional aspect of employment policy and increases the focus of employment policy measures on economically backward areas and on addressing the problems of groups on the margins of the labour market who are at risk of social exclusion.

*The Employment Strategy has identified four main priorities:*

- 1) supporting access to employment, mainly for groups at risk in the labour market
- 2) promoting gender equality in the labour market
- 3) promoting the adaptation of companies and employees to changing labour market needs
- 4) development of public employment services

The Employment Strategy constitutes a key guideline, which will allow the subsequent preparation of essential documents of the Ministry, such as Operational Programme Employment 2020 and Youth Guarantee Programme for young people under the age of 25.

#### • **Operational Programme Employment 2014–2020 (OPE)**

Operational Programme Human Resources and Employment is a ministerial document of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs based on the Employment Policy Strategy 2020. Operational Programme Employment for the implementation of the European Social Fund in the period 2014-2020 defines the priorities to invest more than 2.1 billion euros for promoting employment, social inclusion and an efficient public administration. The MoLSA (the managing authority) is responsible for its effective, efficient and economical management and implementation in accordance with the principles of sound financial management.

The Operational Programme defines four essential thematic priority axes which cover the themes of promoting employment, gender equal opportunities, employee and employer adaptability, further education, social inclusion and combating poverty, strengthening the efficiency of public administration and public services and promoting transnational cooperation and social innovation in the areas of employment, social inclusion, and public administration.

The structure of the priority axes of OP Employment is as follows:

- Priority axis No. 1: Promotion of employment and workforce adaptability
- Priority axis No. 2: Social inclusion and combating poverty
- Priority axis No. 3: Social innovation and transnational cooperation
- Priority axis No. 4: Efficient public administration

Investment priorities 1 and 5 within priority axis No. 1 (Promotion of employment and workforce adaptability) are particularly important with respect to the issue of youth unemployment. One of the main issues identified in Operational Programme Employment is the rising unemployment rate of persons under the age of 25 in the Czech Republic.

In terms of youth employment, the following priority is important:

- Employment: Almost 60% of the total allocation will be dedicated to helping people into jobs, with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups like low-skilled, older or young people (the latter using the ESF and Youth Employment Initiative to implement the Youth Guarantee). This axis also aims to improve workers' skills to meet the demands of the labour market, at increasing the quality of public employment services and at reducing inequality between men and women in the labour market.

- **Guarantees for young people under the age of 25**

The Youth Guarantee Programme is a ministerial document of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs from 2013-2014 based on the Employment Policy Strategy 2020. It is a national programme resulting from a joint commitment of EU Member States following up on the Youth Employment Initiative, in which they pledged to ensure that all young people receive a quality offer of employment, further education or training within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. In the Czech Republic, the age limit was subsequently changed to include young people under the age of 30.

- **Operational Programme for Research, Development and Education 2014-2020 (OP RDE)**

The Operational Programme for Research, Development and Education defines priorities in the form of investments exceeding 2.7 billion euros financed by the European Union Structural Funds. These investments are to support the development of the human resources required for a knowledge-based economy and sustainable development in a socially cohesive society. OP RDE's objective is to contribute to the shift of the Czech Republic towards an economy based on an educated, motivated and creative workforce to produce high-quality research results which will be used to enhance the competitiveness of the Czech Republic. The programme defines interventions within the priority axes.

- Priority axis No. 1: Strengthening capacity for high-quality research
- Priority axis No. 2: Development of universities and human resources for research and development
- Priority axis No. 3: Equal access to high-quality pre-school, primary and secondary education
- Priority axis No. 4: Technical assistance

Objectives: long-term and short-term objectives of national and regional strategies apparent

In general, national policy objectives are aligned with strategic objectives defined at EU level. They are primarily aimed at promoting and developing further vocational education and training, creating traineeships, or promoting retraining, which would be more responsive to the changing needs of the labour market.

The Employment Policy Strategy 2020 defines probably the most specific objective following the European policy objectives on the matter: *“reducing the unemployment rate of persons in the age group 15 to 24 by 2020 to one third of the level in 2010”*.

The national strategy under the Youth Employment Initiative is to give priority and increased financial support to the NUTS II Northwest region (Karlovy Vary and Ústí nad Labem Regions), where the employment situation of young people is the most alarming.

### **Linking objectives at the national level (interministerial cooperation)**

In relation to the interaction between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and their coordination of shared youth employment objectives, the MoLSA's Operational Programme Employment claims *“cooperation of both ministries in the setting of the strategic political framework”*. The MoLSA's Youth Guarantee Program for young people under the age of 25 indicates a close involvement of both ministries in its preparation. However, it does not identify specific actors or departments that would corroborate the information. In the Employment Policy Strategy 2020, the claim of close cooperation between the ministries is partially undermined by a requirement for more efficient cooperation between the MoLSA and the MEYS, including the update of the already defined competencies of both ministries: *“The MoLSA will seek mutual definition of competencies and cooperation with the Ministry of Education in the field of career counselling for pupils and students.”*

It is therefore not possible to state with certainty that there is a comprehensive and coordinated approach of the key players at the national level (MEYS and MoLSA).

At the regional level, the public administration implements all the measures laid down by the central government. In 2011, the Czech Republic took actions to reform employment services which resulted, among other things, in a reduction in the number of regional employees of the Labour Office by approximately two thousand officials. In practice, this has led to insufficient staffing and material and technical equipment at the regional branches, which are subsequently hardly able to provide the necessary individual assessment of the client's needs as declared in the strategy documents. This has been particularly evident in the areas of retraining and counselling, in which the branches to this day have not been able to respond in a sufficiently flexible manner to the needs of young people nor to the current vacancies offered by employers.

It was precisely the individual approach and the associated assessment of the client's personal needs that should have been the basic indicator for providing interventions that would enable the strategic objectives of the employment policy to be achieved at the national level.

### **Is it possible to define measures fostering employment and entrepreneurship on this level?**

The measures that foster employment and entrepreneurship are generally defined by the key actors (MoLSA and MEYS). These definitions are refined at the level of operational programmes and their sub-projects or in separate projects conducted mainly under the responsibility of these ministries.

### **At the level of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports:**

The MEYS creates conditions for:

- increasing the share of practical training in the content of education
- increasing cooperation between schools and employers
- the integration of qualifications and skills required by employers into teaching

The MEYS's **Operational Programme for Research, Development and Education** promotes the introduction of processes **to strengthen long-term employability** in the labour market (entrepreneurship, creativity, etc.).

Examples of activities implemented based on **OP RDE**'s challenges:

- **Templates for secondary and post-secondary vocational schools** - encourage students to **create and manage a fictitious company**
- **Regional Action Plans (RAP) and Ips P-KAP** - promote **entrepreneurship and creativity** in secondary and post-secondary vocational schools

In previous programming periods (**Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme 2007-2013**), the project with the most ambition for improving the employment of young people was:

- "Internships in Companies I. and II." - a financial contribution to employers who create a specific internship position in the company

**At the level of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs:**

Building on the Employment Strategy, it particularly supports:

- instruments for **incentive and information** purposes (for both the unemployed and employers)
- **early intervention**
- **counselling**

Examples of activities previously performed under the responsibility of the MoLSA:

- **"Youth Guarantee Programme for persons under the age of 25"** – This national programme is decentralised into projects implemented in the regional branches of Labour Offices (e.g. "Guarantees for young people in the South Bohemian Region", "Guarantees for young people in the Moravian-Silesian Region"). It seeks to *"ensure that all young people receive a quality offer of employment, further education or training within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education"*. The age limit in the Czech Republic was subsequently expanded to 29 years of age.
- **"A contribution towards the creation of socially useful jobs for job seekers in the process of a collective redundancy"** – a financial contribution for employers who created a specific position for a given target group
- Project **"Internships for young people"** - a financial contribution to employers who created a specific internship position in the company



- Project **“Professional experience for young people under the age of 30”** – a project combining parts of the previously mentioned “Internships in companies” (MEYS) and “Creation of socially useful jobs with an employee’s wage contribution” (MoLSA)

All the examples given above are of projects under the auspices of the MoLSA that rely on central government subsidies for employers who have created job opportunities for a given target group. These subsidies have been primarily funded through the European Social Fund via national operational programmes (OP Human Resources and Employment 2007-2013, OP Employment 2014-2020).

Target Group: special target groups of young people these structural measures are aiming at (special age groups, gender differences, educational level)

A considerably broader definition of target groups is seen at the national level. Usually, the target group is defined by the age range regardless of gender or education. Increased attention is paid to deprived regions (Karlovy Vary and Ústí nad Labem Regions), where the situation of young people is the most severe. The narrower definition and structuring of the target groups usually takes place only at the institutional level, where more specifically targeted support programmes are formed.

Horizontal measures	Target groups
Promoting entrepreneurship (creation and management of fictitious companies)	Students of secondary and post-secondary vocational schools
Ensuring quality labour supply	All young people under the age of 29
Providing further education offers	All young people under the age of 29
Ensuring quality apprenticeship or internship positions	All young people under the age of 29
Providing professional experience	Young people under the age of 29
Creating socially useful jobs	Young workers in the process of a collective redundancy

**Are there special target groups of organizations (employing entities, training providers etc.) who are working with young unemployed?**

**The National Institute for Education (NIE)**, run by the MEYS, provides support in the form of educational and career counselling, particularly through the Career Guidance Centre, which tackles:

- difficulties young people face while pursuing education
- adult education – both formal (in secondary schools) and non-formal (validation and recognition of skills gained through professional experience)
- career counselling issues

**Regional branches of the Labour Office** (run by the General Directorate of the LO, or rather MoLSA) provide counselling to specific target groups in the individual regions of the Czech Republic, including young people under the age of 30. Based on the clients' affiliation to the target group, they provide them with support through involvement in existing programmes that are carried out by the Labour Office (e.g. "Youth Guarantee Programme").

In the non-profit domain, the foundation **People in Need** plays a significant role both in the Czech Republic as well as in Central Europe. It offers career counselling geared towards improving qualifications to increase employability.

### **Development of Skills: Do the structural measures aim on the development of skills?**

It is evident that a central goal of the instruments created and financed by public funding is to improve the **practical skills** of young people and therefore enhance their employability. Increased attention is also paid to the early retirement of young people from the education system.

### **Which focus could be defined?**

It is predominantly:

- improving relevant skills in the workplace through professional experience or internships
- promoting entrepreneurial skills (e.g. financial and administrative literacy, presentation and negotiation skills, language skills)
- improving ICT skills
- support for career counselling, teaching assistants, etc.

### **Is the development of skills the priority of these structural measures? Are these measures aiming on the development of special skills (employment/entrepreneurship)?**

Yes, the promotion of skills development is a priority in the individual measures. Considering the scope and scale of interventions, it is evident that the emphasis is mainly on acquiring skills through apprenticeships or internships with potential employers and preventing early retirement of young people from the education system.

Impact Evaluation: institutional concepts (formative/summative evaluation) to evaluate the impact of the measures (evaluation of new laws and regulations)

The National Coordination Authority (NCA) for the implementation of EU funds in the Czech Republic, under the Ministry of Regional Development, developed the Guidance Document on Evaluation for the programming period 2014-2020. It is, at present, the most significant conceptual framework for evaluating public employment policies approved by the government of the Czech Republic (Resolution No. 597 of 9 August 2013).

The Guidance Document is binding for all programmes under the ESI Funds covered by the Partnership Agreement, i.e. European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF), Cohesion Fund (CF) and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), and whose

managing authority is within the responsibility of the Czech Republic. With the exception of provisions that are explicitly mentioned as recommendations, it is required for large national programmes (predominantly financed by ESI Funds) as well as their sub-projects to undergo evaluations. The standards of these evaluations are further specified in the Guidance Document.

## **Which evaluation standards can be defined on this level?**

The evaluation standards in the Guidance Document are based on the standards of the Czech Evaluation Society. Their basic principles are:

### Utility

#### **1.1 Stakeholder Identification**

Subjects affected by the evaluation shall be identified and their needs shall be addressed.

#### **1.2 Evaluator Credibility**

Persons conducting an evaluation shall be independent and competent, so that the stakeholders accept the evaluation findings.

#### **1.3 Information Selection and Scope**

Answers to evaluation questions must be based on unbiased data.

#### **1.4 Interpretation of Findings and Recommendations**

Perspectives, procedures and values used to interpret the findings shall be carefully described in final reports. If a recommendation is a part of the evaluation, it shall be factual, relevant and feasible.

#### **1.5 Report Clarity and Scope**

Evaluation reports shall clearly describe the findings of the evaluation, including the context, purposes and procedures of the intervention. The evaluator shall agree with the client on the scope and form of the output in advance.

#### **1.6 Report Timeliness**

Confirmed conclusions shall be presented continuously to the stakeholders, so that they can be used in a timely fashion.

#### **1.7 Evaluation Impact**

Evaluations shall be conducted in a way that encourages their use by stakeholders.

### Feasibility

#### **2.1 Practical Procedures**

The design of evaluation procedures shall reduce the risk of distortion of obtained information.

#### **2.2 Political Viability**

Evaluation shall anticipate the different positions of various stakeholders; evaluation shall strive for stakeholder's cooperation so that possible attempts by the stakeholders to distort or misuse the evaluation findings can be averted or counteracted.

#### **2.3 Cost Effectiveness**

Evaluation shall be efficient and produce information of sufficient value, so that the costs can be justified.

#### **2.4 Evaluation Team**

The team introduced in the evaluation proposal shall be maintained throughout the whole course

of evaluating the intervention. If any changes in the team are necessary, the client shall be informed in advance and asked for agreement with such changes.

### Propriety

#### **3.1 Service Orientation**

Evaluations shall assist to address and effectively serve the needs of various target groups.

#### **3.2 Formal Contract**

Obligations of the contracting parties involved in the evaluation (i.e., in particular, what is to be done, how, by whom and when) shall be agreed to in writing.

#### **3.3 Rights of Human Subjects**

Evaluation shall be designed and performed in a way that respects and protects the rights and dignity of human subjects.

#### **3.4 Interpersonal Interaction**

Evaluators shall respect human dignity in their interactions with other persons involved in an evaluation, so that participants are not threatened or harmed.

#### **3.5 Completeness and Fairness**

Evaluation shall be complete and balanced in its examination and recording of the strengths and weaknesses of the programme being evaluated, so that strengths can be developed and weaknesses can be identified and eliminated.

#### **3.6 Disclosure of Findings**

Stakeholders involved in the evaluation shall ensure that the full set of evaluation findings are made accessible to all entities affected by the evaluation.

#### **3.7 Conflict of Interests**

Conflicts of interests shall be resolved openly and honestly, so that they do not compromise the evaluators and the results of their work.

#### **3.8 Financial Responsibility**

Use of financial resources shall reflect sound accountability procedures and be ethically responsible.

### Accuracy

#### **4.1 Evaluand Documentation**

The evaluator shall clearly and accurately describe and document the intervention being evaluated.

#### **4.2 Context Description**

Along with actual intervention, the context in which the intervention is being evaluated shall also be examined in enough detail.

#### **4.3 Procedures Description**

The purposes and procedures of the evaluation shall be monitored and described in enough detail so that they can be reviewed and repeated.

#### **4.4 Defensible Information Sources**

Information sources used in evaluation shall be identified and described so that the adequacy of the information can be assessed.

#### 4.5 Valid Information

The data collection methods shall ensure that the conclusions and interpretations arrived at are valid for the intended use.

#### 4.6 Reliable Information

The data collection methods shall assure that the information obtained is reliable for the intended use.

#### 4.7 Systematic Information

The information that is obtained, processed and reported in an evaluation shall be systematically reviewed and any errors found shall be corrected.

#### 4.8 Information Analysis

If answers to evaluation questions are based on quantitative or qualitative data, then such data shall be analysed systematically and appropriately.

#### 4.9 Justified Conclusions

The conclusions reached in an evaluation shall be explicitly justified so that stakeholders can assess and accept them.

#### 4.10 Impartial Reporting

Reporting procedures shall guard against distortion caused by the personal feelings or interests of any stakeholder.

#### 4.11 Meta-evaluation

The conducted evaluation shall be evaluated against these and other standards.

The minimum standards for evaluating the quality of outputs and cooperation with the evaluator should, according to the Guidance Document, include following questions:

- **Meeting the needs:** Did the evaluation answer the questions formulated by the contracting authority in the tender document with sufficient quality?
- **Adequate scope:** Does the evaluation describe a given issue fully in its conclusions; are the conclusions relevant to the programme?
- **Transparent process:** Were both project partners and other stakeholders involved in the evaluation proposal and discussion of its results to take into account their different views in line with the triangulation method?
- **Rationale for proposals:** Have appropriate methods been selected and appropriate data sources used in relation to evaluation questions?
- **Data reliability:** Have the available sources of information been obtained and verified?
- **Credibility of results:** Are all results and conclusions sufficiently substantiated? Has the appropriate combination of methods been used?
- **Impartiality of conclusions:** Are the recommendations and conclusions justified and impartial?
- **Clarity of the report:** Are all the conclusions sufficiently explained and the report written in a comprehensible manner for the public?
- **Applicability of recommendations:** Does the report provide recommendations that are useful, sufficiently detailed and relevant to stakeholders?
- **Quality of cooperation with the evaluator:** Did the evaluator meet the deadlines? Have there been any problems communicating with the evaluator?

## What are the indicators of impact evaluation?

At the national level, the development of youth employment is most commonly reported as the percentage of supported individuals.

### Youth unemployment in the Czech Republic (CZ):

Unemployment rates/ target groups	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>CZ ages 15 - 29</b>	10.70%	8.90%	7.30%	5.20%
<b>EU 28 countries ages 15 - 29</b>	17.30%	15.70%	14.30%	12.70%
<b>CZ ages 15 - 19</b>	37.30%	30.90%	24.70%	22.40%
<b>EU 28 countries ages 15 - 19</b>	25.70%	23.60%	21.80%	20.10%
<b>CZ ages 20 - 24</b>	13.50%	10.80%	9.20%	6.60%
<b>CZ ages 25 - 29</b>	7.40%	6.60%	5.40%	3.50%

### Operational Programme Employment (as of 9 July 2019):

<b>CZK 1,305 million</b>	Funds spent on promoting the employment of young people under Operational Programme Employment 2014-2020
<b>10,226</b>	The number of young people involved in the projects
<b>CZK 128 thousand</b>	Average costs per project participant

## Which instruments are used (quantitative/qualitative)?

The data used to evaluate the implemented measures at the national level are mostly quantitative. This is consistent with the instruments used, which are of more of a monitoring than an evaluative nature (registry of job applicants at the Labour Offices, declared numbers of supported persons in projects, the volume of funds disbursed by the social welfare system, etc.). The qualitative instruments are used mainly at the stage of more thorough inspections of implemented policies initiated by the Supreme Audit Office (SAO) or the National Coordination Authority (NCA).

## Who evaluates the instruments/measures?

### Czech Statistical Office (CSZO)

A central body of the state administration of the Czech Republic which collects, analyses and evaluates quantitative data related to public policies.

### Supreme Audit Office (SAO)

The Supreme Audit Office is an independent audit institution with the mission to review the state's management of public revenue and expenditure. The SAO's task is to provide feedback to

makers and implementors of national policies so they know how successfully their policies have been implemented and at what price, how effective they have been, and what economic and other impacts they have made. The SAO submits to the Government, to the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, to the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, to experts, and to the general public the independent and impartial information about whether national resources have been used effectively, economically, and efficiently and whether all binding legal regulations have been observed in their use.

The SAO's purpose is to answer whether and to what degree public resources have contributed to the desired improvements and to call attention to weaknesses in their spending.

#### Development: existing experiences and evaluation results used to develop the situation

The strongest political actor in the youth unemployment market is the MoLSA through its current implementation of the operational programmes. One of the national goals of the Czech Republic within the Europe 2020 Strategy is *“decreasing the level of unemployment among young people (15-24 years old) by one third compared to 2010”*. According to the Ministry's data, this goal had already been achieved by August 2015. However, the audit report of the Supreme Audit Office (Audit No. 18/28 from 2019), which evaluated the implementation of measures of Operational Programme Employment, revealed that despite clear evidence indicative of new circumstances in the youth unemployment rate in the labour market, the MoLSA continued to provide aid to the same extent as at the time of launching the programme.

The SAO found serious errors in setting project objectives and monitoring indicators. The MoLSA had not set measurable targets for the projects that would enable the assessment of whether the OPE projects had met their purpose. At the same time, the effectiveness of the funds spent cannot be evaluated for any of the audited projects. The reason is that the Labour Office does not monitor the project participants and their further professional employment in the labour market after the end of the project. Statistics, which are regularly prepared by the LO, do not record the impact of implemented projects on the development of youth unemployment in the relevant region.

In December 2013, the MoLSA prepared the Implementation Plan of the Youth Guarantee Programme of the Czech Republic (the “IP of the YG Programme”) for the Youth Guarantee Programme of the Czech Republic (the “YG Programme”). At the time of commencement of the SAO audit, an updated version of the IP of the YG Programme from April 2014 was available. The MoLSA did not carry out any intended updates to the 2014 Youth Guarantee Programme, did not define the responsibilities of individual institutions for the programming period of 2014-2020, and did not determine the financial costs of the key initiatives.

The MoLSA did not provide the European Commission with all the required data on how the situation of young people has changed after joining the Youth Guarantee Programme in the longer term.

The SAO found that there was no significant difference between client care in the project and the standard active employment policy regime. At the same time, there is no continuous coordinated support for socially useful jobs that allows assistance to be provided even after the project is over.

## **How can they be relevant for evidence-based decision making in that field?**

Although the assessment of the effectiveness of the programme that is currently most important for the implementation of youth employment policy in the Czech Republic was not entirely positive, it is clear that it is precisely thanks to the SAO report that weaknesses in implementation can be identified and improved upon in future planning.

### **Namely through:**

- setting improved objectives in terms of their measurability and cost-effectiveness
- better choice of monitoring indicators signalling the fulfilment of project objectives

## **How are evaluation results presented to implementors?**

The SAO's report is called the Audit Conclusion. Once it is formally ready for publication, it is sent to the Prime Minister and to the Presidents of both Chambers of Parliament. Only then is the audit conclusion published on the SAO website and in the appropriate section of the SAO Bulletin. The auditee or the responsible ministry draws up an opinion on the audit's conclusion for discussion at a session of the Government. In the opinion, the auditee proposes measures for correcting the shortcomings ascertained by the SAO audit.

## **Are European regulations (e.g. European Youth Guarantee) are implemented on national level?**

In December 2013, the MoLSA prepared the **Youth Guarantee Programme** followed by the **Implementation Plan of the Youth Guarantee Programme** in 2014 as a reaction to the Youth Employment Initiative launched by the European Commission.

The YG Programme is implemented in the whole territory of the Czech Republic. In the Karlovy Vary and Ústí nad Labem Regions (the NUTS II Northwest region), the measures are also financed from the funds that the Czech Republic will receive under the YEI initiative.

## **Are there strategies to motivate implementors to refer to European regulations?**

There is some contradiction between what some actors perceive as desirable at the strategic level and what is stated in the employment policy strategy documents. This discrepancy is due to different perceptions of the situation of young people at the national and European Union level. The Czech Republic is among the countries with the lowest overall youth unemployment rates in Europe. However, in the context of pan-European policy, the problematic employability of young people is one of the main strategic priorities and its solution, tackled with considerable emphasis and targeted measures, such as the Youth Guarantee Programme, is required from all Member States. At the strategic level in particular, the shape of policy is therefore significantly influenced by the perception of young people at the transnational level, which is however not based on their actual situation in the Czech Republic.



**Which laws and regulations, which structural decisions, during the last 15 years were important to empower institutional and private implementors to realize programs and projects against youth unemployment?**

**COUNCIL RESOLUTION** of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018).

In the period up to and including 2018, the overall objectives of European cooperation in the youth field were to:

- 1) create more and equal opportunities for all young people in education and in the labour market
- 2) promote the active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity of all young people

The main fields of action in which initiatives (later developed into further programmes at national and transnational level) needed to be taken were outlined, as follows:

- Education and training
- Employment and entrepreneurship
- Health and well-being
- Participation
- Voluntary activities
- Social inclusion
- Youth and the world
- Creativity and culture

**Passing of Act No. 324/2004 Coll. on Employment**, which identified young people as a target group of the employment policy (referred to as graduates and adolescents).

**Passing of Act No. 73/2011 Coll. on the Labour Office of the Czech Republic** – The adoption of this Act resulted in a significant reduction in the number of employees at individual Labour Offices. The remaining employees were mainly concerned with paying benefits, and had almost no time left for active employment policy. While this was partially remedied by the MoLSA through later measures, the situation regarding individual approaches to clients has remained unsatisfactory and has had a negative impact on the implementation of related employment policies targeted at specific groups (young people, women above the age of 55, etc.).

A more effective systemic and financial support system aimed at young people up to the age of 30 was introduced only with the implementation of operational programmes and ESF funding (OP Employment 2014-2020 and the Youth Guarantee Programme related to it).

**Are these regulations evaluated in a qualitative or quantitative way (did they have an impact on unemployment, did they offer sustainable solutions etc.)?**

At the national level, mostly quantitative indicators are presented. They are generated from monitoring based primarily on the individual's records in social systems of public administration. For this reason, evaluation can only be discussed cautiously. The presented indicators do not consider economic cycles, socio-economic factors, or other contributions from interventions in other policies, which can greatly distort the impact of interventions on youth unemployment.

## **Are there approaches to evaluate these structures in a systemic way?**

At the moment, we cannot speak of a systemic evaluation based on well-defined quality standards. We can see rather systemic monitoring of the data at the quantitative level without any significant opportunity for further specification of the presented data.

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### **Institutional Level**

#### Actors

The institutions with the highest level of financial support to address youth unemployment within the framework of the YEI initiative are currently those in the Czech Republic that have been included in the NUTS II Northwest region (Karlovy Vary and Ústí nad Labem Regions), i.e. regional departments of the two regions with the highest levels of unemployment in persons below 25 years of age. The Moravian-Silesian Region receives a smaller (however, still above-average within the Czech Republic) amount of YEI support, as youth unemployment, based on available data, is declining relatively slowly there (from 20.9% in 2012 to 11% in 2017).

These are mostly institutions within regional branches of the Labour Office.

- Labour Office of the Czech Republic, regional branch in Ústí nad Labem
- Labour Office of the Czech Republic, regional branch in Karlovy Vary
- Labour Office of the Czech Republic, regional branch in Ostrava
- Karlovy Vary Region
- Ústí nad Labem Region
- Educational institutions in these regions (primary schools, secondary vocational schools, grammar and secondary schools, vocational and higher educational institutions)

#### Measures: How do YEEA's refer to different dimensions of implementation?

At the institutional level, we can identify several areas of YEI support:

- 1) Consulting services and awareness raising for individuals, undertaken primarily in educational establishments (from primary to university level).
- 2) Employment policies (employment mediation, consultancy, and educational and training activities) are implemented mainly through regional branches of the Labour Office.
- 3) Employers' support in regions - programmes aimed at gaining work experience, gaining professional experience (trainee programmes) or acquiring qualified new employees are executed in cooperation with Labour Offices, educational establishments and the non-profit sector.

Basic YEI project characteristics in NUTS II regions					
Project Title	Budget (in CZK)	Implementor	Call No.	Launched	Completed
YEI initiative for NUTS II Northwest Karlovy Vary Region	141 911 666	Labour Office	03_15_003	XII.15	V.19
YEI initiative for NUTS II Northwest Ústí nad Labem Region	497 447 592	Labour Office	03_15_003	XI.15	VII.19
Nestůj a pojď II (Don't Just Stand There – Go! II)	35 476 949	Karlovy Vary Region	03_15_116	V.16	XII.18
CESTA (JOURNEY) – a YEI initiative in the area of the Děčín District and the Šluknov Hook	23 683 116	Ústí nad Labem Region	03_15_116	VI.16	XII.18
TRANSFER – a comprehensive YEI programme in the Ústí nad Labem Region	99 378 865	Ústí nad Labem Region	03_15_116	VI.16	XII.18
Změna je cesta (Change Is a Path)	9 999 000	Ústí nad Labem Region	03_18_091	V.18	X.19
YEI initiative for the Moravian-Silesian Region	23 052 494	Moravian-Silesian Region	03_18_091	VII.18	X.19

### 1) Comprehensive YEI programme in the Ústí nad Labem Region: TRANSFER

Project focusing on young people up to 29 years of age who are inactive in the labour market or are not actively involved in the formal or non-formal education system. The objective is to support these persons in gaining work experience, increase their motivation, improve their skills, increase their knowledge, give them a better picture of the current labour market or restart their personal growth. Finally, the target group's entrepreneurial skills should be enhanced.

The programme was further subdivided into the following implementation activities:

- Consultancy
- Mentoring programme: “New Perspective”
- Mentoring programme: “From School to Business”
- One-on-one coaching
- Professional qualification and requalification
- Mentoring programme: “Work Motivation”
- Mentoring programme: “Team”
- Employment mediation

## **2) YEI programme in the area of the Děčín District and the Šluknov Hook: CESTA**

Project addressing the regional specificities of the Děčín microregion relevant to the target group. It is implemented through regional cooperation among the Labour Office of the Czech Republic, educational establishments, local authorities and the non-profit sector. The implementation of key activities of the project develops the specific skills of the target group, supports their experience with regional employers, enables them to work face-to-face in an intergenerational environment, and gradually develops their work experience (through short-term internships or part-time work followed by full-time work). Completing the mentoring programmes “Career” and “Business Education” provides the target group with the necessary information about the suitable educational choice, career choice, and unsuitable career decisions and how to prevent them. Finally, it provides part of the target group with entrepreneurial skills.

The programme was further subdivided into the following implementation activities:

- Modular mentoring programme: “Support”
- One-on-one mentoring programme: “Career”
- One-on-one coaching for selected representatives of the target group
- Programme: “Business Education”
- Professional qualification and requalification
- Programme: “Preparing for Work”
- Programme: “We Provide Jobs”

**YEEA’s focused on organizations (enterprises, schools, training institutions) and individuals (young unemployed persons in special target groups and people working with them). Are there any YEEA’S which are extraordinary successful?**

Good examples are programmes implemented by the People in Need, which has become a non-profit organization with a large outreach that extends beyond the borders of the Czech Republic. Among other things, it successfully helps young people at risk of social exclusion by providing them with tutoring and career counselling. The outputs of these projects are closely related to the subsequent employability of the target group in the labour market.

The programmes require collaboration with established local civic associations, volunteers and temporary workers, educational establishments and the families of young people. The close and institutional individual connection established between People in Need, the families of young people and volunteers is an important factor in the success of the programmes.

The institution is successful particularly because of a well-managed approach that integrates key actors and harnesses their combined effects on the individual. This kind of approach remains a major challenge at the level of public administration (i.e. for the largest implementors).

Objectives: objectives of these measures (long-term improvement and development of work force, short-term integration into the labor market)

In general, it can be identified through these measures that the projects aim to provide comprehensive and preferably individual support.

Short-term objectives: To increase the employment rate of supported young people who are not in education, employment or training.

Long-term objectives: To increase the employability of the at-risk target group of young people by increasing their flexibility in the labour market.

Target Group: special target groups of young people these institutional measures are aiming at (special age groups, gender differences, educational level)

The YEI initiative in the aforementioned projects (“CESTA” and “TRANSFER”) targets primarily:

- young people up to the age of 29 who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs), including those not registered as job seekers with the Labour Office
- young people up to the age of 29 who are not active in the labour market nor are actively involved in the education system in the microregions of Děčín, Varnsdorf, Rumburk and Šluknov

Note: The YEI initiative further subdivides the target groups into so-called sub-target groups, most often based on the socio-economic, cultural or health characteristics of young people where the risk of unemployment is higher.

**Are there special target groups of organizations (employing entities, training providers etc.) who are working with young unemployed?**

Yes, there are organizations in the Czech Republic, primarily in the non-profit sector, that specialise in youth unemployment. These mainly deal with cultural, ethnic, social and/or health-related disadvantages. These groups are often socially excluded or at risk of social exclusion (Roma children and adolescents, people with disabilities, young people facing social reinsertion after serving a prison sentence etc.).

Development of Skills: approach regarding different levels of skills (soft skills/hard skills)

Although the individual institutions often overlap in their approaches to skills development, the focus of their YEI activities is to a large extent determined by their primary purpose.

The regional educational establishments mainly focus on preventing youth unemployment and social exclusion. For this reason, they create conditions for increased collaboration between schools and employers and as a consequence also a transfer of the required qualifications and skills into teaching. The main focus of their activities is to develop so-called “soft skills” with

respect to both the current situation in the labour market and the introduction and development of the concepts of lifelong learning.

The regional institutions that provide assistance with respect to youth employment and employability focus mainly on the development of so-called “hard skills”, primarily related to gaining experience with the working environment and working approaches and methods.

**Which skills are considered to be transferred concerning aspects of employability and entrepreneurship (is entrepreneurship already considered to be skill preventing unemployment)?**

- financial literacy
- administrative and basic legal literacy
- presentation and negotiation skills
- language skill
- ICT skills

The skills that are believed to reduce the unemployment rate at the national level are entrepreneurship and creativity (promoted in the national operational programmes, see OP RDE). As a consequence of their recognised positive status at the national level, they are implemented through sub-programmes at the regional level that explicitly promote these skills (e.g. programmes such as “Templates for secondary and post-secondary vocational schools” and “Regional Action Plans”).

Impact Evaluation: systematic approaches and instruments to evaluate the impact of the YEEA'S on the institutional level (formative/summative)

Although most YEI projects are required to carry out an evaluation of their activities and a guidance document with evaluation standards was issued at the national level (see Chapter I.), at this stage there is no systematic approach to the assessment of the impact of individual measures at the institutional level. There is often confusion between the outputs or results of a project and its actual impact, with the exception of evaluations carried out directly by the evaluation departments of the ministries themselves (MEYS, MoLSA). Over the past 15 years, the ministries established the necessary evaluation capacities in order to develop a systematic approach, including data collection, within the projects that they evaluate.

**What are the indicators of impact evaluation on this level?**

Quantitative indicators are utilised most often. These are usually the numbers of supported persons in the individual programmes or adjusted (geographically, structurally, gender-based etc.)

levels of unemployment in the target group presented as percentages. Suitably selected qualitative indicators that would help to evaluate the actual effectiveness of the projects are rarer.

### **Which instruments are used qualitative/quantitative?**

Both methods (qualitative and quantitative) are used. The most common are interview surveys (PAPI and CAWI modes) and interviews (structured, semi-structured). Increasingly, qualitative elements such as case studies, expert panels, focus groups and observations (participant/non-participant) are included.

### **Which innovative instruments of impact evaluation are used on this level (e.g. participative approaches, SWOT-Analysis)?**

From the perspective of evaluation approaches and innovative project instruments for evaluating project success, the use of the theory of change, the problem tree or the theory of frames is increasing.

### **Who evaluates the instruments/measures?**

Providing project evaluation in regions varies depending on the beneficiary. Each project has an obligation to carry out an evaluation; for some projects, internal evaluator positions are created, while others may carry out the evaluation through an external source. Sometimes (especially for larger projects), both methods are combined.

At the institutional level, evaluations of other bodies are provided and supervised mainly by the evaluation units of the MEYS and the MoLSA, which also finance individual projects aimed at youth employment within operational programmes.

Evaluations carried out at the ministries are further supervised at the national level by the evaluation unit of the National Coordination Authority and, in case of in-depth investigations, by the Supreme Audit Office.

### **Are there any Best-Practices which are adaptable to the situation in the other countries?**

General evaluations of youth unemployment policies show that it is not enough to introduce measures that respond to the needs of the labour market; they must also consider the individual readiness of young people for the labour market.

In order to get young people into work, their personal obstacles must first be identified. Clients require quality individual support and counselling. At the same time, flexibility is needed in order to suitably respond to changing labour market needs and economic cycles requiring specific skills.

To implement the measures, it is necessary to provide institutional mechanisms (particularly staffing capacity) in such a way that enables an individual approach to the client and thus for their needs to be accurately determined. This is the only way to achieve an approach that focuses not only on the pace of young people's integration into the labour market but also on the quality and sustainability of their employment. The pursuit of an individual approach should be the goal of all good practices across countries involved in the YEI initiative.

#### Development: How does impact evaluation develop existing projects and programs?

Considering that the outputs or results of the projects were often confused with their impacts and that no criteria have often been laid down to assess the implications of a project on meeting the target value, it is not possible to assess with certainty the real direct impact of the youth employment support (if the goal is to do more than quantify the youth employment issue as a percentage).

Whether it was primarily due to the direct impact of existing programmes and projects or not, the fact at the national level however remains that youth unemployment in the Czech Republic as of 2019 is the second lowest within the EU countries (surpassed only by Germany).

#### **How are the results used to optimize existing instruments?**

The outputs of evaluations and audits of individual programmes are used in the development of new calls for projects under operational programmes. These calls define thematic areas and supported measures that will be funded by the ministries in the following period. Finally, the outputs of evaluations and inspections are translated into adjustments of project methodologies (rules for beneficiaries, etc.), either existing ones or those that are still in the process of implementation.

#### **How are the results communicated to political stakeholders and decision makers on the one hand and to the community of implementors on the other hand?**

The essential means of communication for all actors are evaluation reports (initial, ongoing, and final) that are available to the public. Working groups with presentations of evaluations are most often set up for political actors. In the case of larger national projects, the results of evaluations are also presented at major conferences. For implementors, the results of evaluations and good practice are communicated mainly through open, publicly accessible events such as workshops, round tables, discussion panels and seminars.



**Which social services do public bodies, employment agencies etc. provide to support the transition from school to work and to promote labor market integration?**

MoLSA through the regional branches of the Labour Offices.

**How are these services evaluated?**

There is no system for the evaluation of these services and their qualities, only systemic monitoring.

**Do evaluation respect the perspective of participants?**

No, they do not.

**Which target groups can be defined regarding institutional programs and projects(are institutional measures aiming at employing entities and training providers)?**

- young people up to the age of 29 who are not in education, employment or training, including those not registered as job seekers with the Labour Office
- young people up to the age of 29 who are inactive in the labour market or are not actively involved in the formal or non-formal education system

**Do evaluation actions integrate the perspective of these target groups?**

Rarely. The results are often only aggregated based on monitoring indicators in projects.

**Are there systemic measures integrating different stakeholders in society (unions, entrepreneurs, training providers etc.) in impact evaluation?**

No, there are not.

**How do institutional actors interact with private actors?**

At the institutional level, the policy implementors are encouraged to cooperate with the private sector (employers). It is precisely the employers (and in a broader context the labour market) who are the ultimate implementors of the very purpose of youth employment policy strategies (by providing work experience and internships, creating training centres, and offering part-time positions for students, flexible working hours, etc.).

In order to create these opportunities, private actors receive various forms of financial support under the YEI projects (see the projects “Internships in Companies”, “Professional experience for young people under the age of 30”, etc.).

Moreover, it is the private actors who have the opportunity to actively launch a discussion with the public institutions on thematic areas that should be supported through future policies, programmes and projects.

**Are there any tools to evaluate institutional measures and to improve impact which can be defined as innovative, interactive and applied (to praxis)?**

At the national level, counterfactual evaluations were piloted in projects a number of times as they appeared to be an innovative instrument for evaluating public policies. However, at present, there is no consensus on their practical application to public policies, either among evaluation experts nor individual institutions.

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## Civil Society Level

Actors: NGO's, private organizations, universities, platforms, state education organizations, foundations, associations, CSR private activities.

***1. Local NGOs, which take part in central and regional competition project recruitments and run projects***

**EDUin** focusing on education issues and our effort is to inform the public about everything that's happening in education and is important. Providing the general public with available information in an understandable and interesting way explaining how and why our schools are changing, how we all learn, not just our children.

Connecting experts from various fields who deal with the subject of education and human resource development and have inspiring ideas. Promoting the results of researches and studies and introduce them to the general public in an engaging and comprehensible form.

**NGO OSE** supports activities and development of projects in the field of education and training of personal partnership, fundraising and targeted grant consultancy within international and European programs.

Project: H40 - <https://www.h40.cz/> - Business start-up incubator, community centre

**NGO Genesis** is non-governmental organisation with long tradition and simple philosophy. TO KNOW IS TO GROW. We provide individual and group training. If you are building a career that requires you to be good in soft skills, you are our person and we are your non-profit.

Project REDONION: <https://genesisngo.webnode.cz/l/clanek-s-tipy-pro-upravu-textu/> - Recognition of non-formal education, Empowerment of Young people and Development of Youth Work

**Řemeskŭlna** is NGO, which is focusing on craft, apprenticeship, skills sharing, craft-workshops for adults, parents with kids, kids and teens with craft-man, photographers, chefs, and other interesting lecturers and mentors. We would like to start a start-up incubator for craftsmen next year, spreading dual-education for companies, training, mentoring programs for instructors of apprentices. Workshop for kids: <https://remeskulna.cz/kalendar-akci/>

**Mimo domov** is non-profit organization, which was established in 2008 and focuses on the systemic improvement of care for vulnerable children.

## **2. Platforms**

**Alliance for Youth** advances strategies to ensure the healthy development of youth, our most valuable resource and our future! Alliance for Youth is a responsible steward of public and private funding and invests in research/evidence-based strategies that improve risk and protective factors

Alliance for Youth, through strong stakeholder partnerships, continues to champion prevention and reduction of underage drinking and illegal drug use, abuse and dependency as well as championing improvements in mental/emotional health, delinquency, juvenile violence, school drop-out, and early childhood trauma.

<https://www.aliancepromlade.cz/>

## **3. National institutions**

NÚV:

The mission of **the National Institute for Education**, Education Counselling Centre and Centre for Continuing Education of Teachers (NÚV) is to enhance in various ways the continuing development of a general, vocational, art and linguistic education, and to support schools in the area of their pedagogical-psychological, educational and career counselling, as well as in the methodology used in the continuing education of teachers. All these services emphasize a general focus on lifelong education while maintaining close cooperation with the EU.

Project Info absolvent: <https://www.infoabsolvent.cz/>

Information system, which assists you in finding an educational and professional career. You will find all schools and fields of education, information on the transition to the labor market and further education. Profi test or video demonstrations of technical professions will help you choose your profession. ISA + is a great asset for pupils with disabilities as well as for students with learning difficulties.

## **4. Foundations**

<https://www.nadacevodafone.cz/>

<https://nadacnifond.avast.cz/index>

## **5. Private organization – CSR projects focusing on the education.**

<https://www.csas.cz/cs/page/abecedapenez>

<https://www.skoda-auto.cz/o-nas/rozjeduto>

## **6. Universities – start-ups projects**

**VŠEM** realizes study programs in economic and social areas for nearly 2,500 students since 1996.

[www.akcelatorvsem.cz](http://www.akcelatorvsem.cz)

<https://xport.vse.cz/>

<https://www.pointone.czu.cz/>

Measures: Projects focused on organizations and individuals (see above)

- Projects run as part of the competition is either directed to all NEETs (regional projects or national projects chosen by **the Ministry**).
- **Erasmus+** Programme concentrates mostly on individuals or organizations. These projects mostly concentrate on students, apprentices, and teachers. In these days is a project which is building transnational partnerships for innovation, exchanging information and experience very important and necessary for young career development.
- **European Solidarity Corps** concentrates both on organization, which can provide volunteering, internship and work opportunities, and individuals aged 17-30, which can take part in the Corps.
- **NGO's activities** which are developed directly in the organizations and financing from own sources.
- **The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds).**

The European structural and investment funds are:

**European regional development fund (ERDF)** – promotes balanced development in the different regions of the EU.

European regional development fund (ERDF)

- **European social fund (ESF)** - supports employment-related projects throughout Europe and invests in Europe's human capital – its workers, its young people and all those seeking a job.  
European social fund (ESF)
- **Cohesion fund (CF)** – funds transport and environment projects in countries where the gross national income (GNI) per inhabitant is less than 90% of the EU average. In 2014-20, these are Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.  
Cohesion fund (CF)

- **European agricultural fund for rural development (EAFRD)** – focuses on resolving the particular challenges facing EU's rural areas.  
European agricultural fund for rural development (EAFRD)
- **European maritime and fisheries fund (EMFF)** – helps fishermen to adopt sustainable fishing practices and coastal communities to diversify their economies, improving quality of life along European coasts.

#### European maritime and fisheries fund (EMFF)

(Evaluation is a process based on a thorough collection of primary and/or secondary data, their systematic and orderly arrangement, professional processing and subsequent evaluation. The aim is to obtain reliable data for strategic management, management of the Partnership Agreement implementation and coordination of programmes, evaluate effects implemented by intervention and improve the quality, efficiency and consistency of aid from the ESI Funds. Evaluation, if properly carried out and the results are applied, thus contributes to economy in the use of public funds. As far as evaluations in the area of ESI Funds are concerned, the set-up of policies, programmes and programmes, their intervention logic, implementation and effects are evaluated.

Implementation and coordination of the fulfilment of the Evaluation Plan of the Partnership Agreement is ensured by the Evaluation Unit of the National Outcomes of the conducted evaluations are published in a library of evaluations.)<sup>128</sup>

#### Objectives: main objectives regarding YEEA's aiming at organizations and individuals

Every YEEA brings people back to the labour market, mostly by developing their skills (mostly soft skills) and finding them internships, jobs or international internships. In the Czech Republic are many start-ups programs and hubs helping to new entrepreneurs.

NGO's project chosen in central and regional competitions has its own planned effects. Non-profit organisations engaged in the work with children and youth represent a necessary complement to leisure-based educational facilities. Their unique mission lies especially in that they provide children and young people with a background of strong personal relationships that often last throughout their lives. Many organisations of this type offer not only "a way to spend the leisure time" but a long-term educational forming of the whole child's or teenager's personality. Belonging to a good group gives to many young people not only five, eight or twelve years spent in a happy bunch of friends but also a lifelong orientation based on a solid and well-reflected value foundation as well as a lot of skills and knowledge that help them find their way in the complex world of today. One of the most important piece of experience young people learn in children and youth associations is an understanding that the most valuable things in human life cannot be bought and that "gratis" does not at all mean "worthless". Development of competencies and broadening the individual's perspective. Approaching practice, involving young people in practice during their studies. International practice, career counselling.

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<sup>128</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes/overview-funding-programmes/european-structural-and-investment-funds\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes/overview-funding-programmes/european-structural-and-investment-funds_en)

## **Are these objectives developed adapted to the needs of the local, regional or national labor markets?**

Yes, these needs stem from regional, local labor market needs – arising from regional challenges.

## **Are there objectives directly aiming to the categories of Employability and Entrepreneurship?**

Projects run from The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA ) and Ministry of Education and Youth and Sports (MEYS) funds are mostly aiming to categories of employability, with focus on finding a job.

MoLSA was established in 1990. It is responsible for social policy (e.g. people with disabilities, social services, social benefits, family policy), social security (e.g. pensions, sickness insurance), employment (e.g. labour market, employment support, employment of foreigners), labour legislation, occupational safety and health, equal opportunities of women and men, European Social Fund and other social or labour related issues. MoLSA supervises three Government-funded organizations: the Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs, the Institute for Occupational Safety Education and the Occupational Safety Research Institute.

Actions led by Non – governmental sector are aiming in many areas – from youth education to labour market integration, social services, helping with the disabilities integrations.

Target Group: special target groups of young people these Projects are aiming at (special age groups, gender differences, educational level)

**EU funds** - In the period from 2014 to 2020 the Czech Republic can draw down around CZK 600 billion from the European funds, In the programming periods from 2004 to 2013 more than 80, 000 projects were supported. In the current programming period the contracts concluded with the beneficiaries cover the implementation of more than 120,000 projects. European funds support a variety of worthwhile projects in the Czech Republic, providing funding for better education, healthcare, environment and transport as well as for business projects that contribute to economic growth and employment.

### **• Operational Programme Employment**

The aim of the Operational Programme Employment (OPE) is to improve the human capital of the population and public administration in the Czech Republic, i.e. the basic elements of competitiveness. CR must pay attention to these areas if it wants to succeed in today's complex world. OPE is aimed also at promoting equal **opportunities for women and men, the adaptability of employees and employers, further education, social inclusion** and combating poverty, health services, modernization of public administration and services, and promote international cooperation and **social innovation in the field of employment, social inclusion** and public administration.

- **Erasmus+** concentrates on people studying/training, or recent graduates and teachers.
- **Regional projects** concentrate mostly on people living in rural areas.

### **Are there special target groups of organizations who are working with young unemployed?**

NGOs, the Career counselling companies, NUV, associations, The National Employment Services.....etc.

### Development of Skills: Which skills are regarded to be important

#### **a) for the unemployed**

Most of the long-term unemployed young people come from families who have not experienced that work is a daily standard. It's important to have the work as a duty to yourself, your family and society. A young unemployed has to know the opportunities that are available in the labour market and what are his options. How he can develop his/her competencies and skills for future works

#### **b) for implementors, training providers and employing entities?**

The main key are "soft" competences that help in the labour market. The training providers, employing entities have to help with soft skills development (analytical skills, ability to work under pressure, self-organisation of work, flexible response to change, critical thinking, team work, most of all interdisciplinary).

### **Which skills are considered to be transferred concerning aspects of employability and entrepreneurship (is entrepreneurship already considered to be skill preventing unemployment)?**

To be prepared for changes, know the options which labor market offers (or to know whom to contact). To have a job as living standard.

### Impact Evaluation: systematic approaches and instruments to evaluate the impact of YEEA'S on the civil society level

Here are some recommendations for NGO's:

International Initiative for Impact Evaluation: <http://www.3ieimpact.org/>

- Better Evaluation: [www.betterevaluation.org](http://www.betterevaluation.org)
- Evropská komise: The Centre for Research on Impact Evaluation (CRIE)
- Evropská komise, DG Regio: Impact Evaluation Centre
- UNDP – Evaluation: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/>
- OECD: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/>

- World Bank Group, The Independent Evaluation Group: <http://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/about-us>
- Evropská komise, EuropeAid: [http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/evaluation\\_guidelines/](http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/evaluation_guidelines/)
- European Evaluation Society: <http://www.europeanevaluation.org/>
- Česká evaluační společnost: <http://www.czecheval.c/?id=40>

**Project Strategic Transitions for Youth Labour in Europe** - The aim of this project is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the causes of very high unemployment among young people and to assess the effectiveness of labour market policies designed to mitigate this phenomenon. This aim will be achieved through 10 objectives organised around 12 research, dissemination and management work packages. The central concept informing this project is based on a policy performance and learning approach to the problems of overcoming youth unemployment for different groups of young people. Using a comparative framework, that is sensitive to the impact of historical and regional legacies, our analysis enables us to both identify where policies are working and why. It illuminates when and how labour market analysis informs policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. This requires a multi-disciplinary and internationally comparative perspective. It provides a recent historical analysis accounting for factors prior to, and following on from the recent periods of economic crisis. This involves an on-going process of including a wide range of EU stakeholders to inform the research and disseminate the results about what works under different institutional conditions.<sup>129</sup>

**The Supreme Audit Office** examined the provision and drawing of EU support for increasing the employment of young people between 2014 and 2018. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs distributed over 1.3 billion CZK from the Operational Program Employment 2014-2020 (OPE) and over 10,000 young people were involved. The SAO revealed a number of shortcomings, both in the system set-up and, above all, in drawing money. The Ministry has not set measurable targets under the program and it is therefore not possible to assess whether the aid has fulfilled its purpose. Moreover, when providing it, it did not take into account the significantly low youth unemployment. It is also not possible to say whether it was effective for any of the projects, as the Czech Labor Office does not monitor their impact on this group's unemployment. Support from the OPE should help to increase the employment of persons aged 15 to 29 years. Since 2013, their unemployment has dropped to 6.7% in 2018. In the long term, it has been well below the EU average. However, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs still provided support for increasing employment at the same level as at the time of the program's establishment and economic crisis. Under the “Europe 2020” strategy, the Czech Republic set itself the goal of reducing youth unemployment by one third compared to 2010, which it had already met in 2015 before the audited projects even started.

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<sup>129</sup> <https://www.style-research.eu/project/>



### **What are indicators of evaluation, who determines indicators?<sup>130</sup>**

Indicators are determined by the EU, individual - personal interview with the individual - seeing the young person's shift at the end:

- Funds spent on supporting the employment of young people from the Operational Program Employment 2014-2020.
- Number of young people involved in project.
- Average cost per project participants.

### **Which instruments are used, which innovative methods are used?**

It was not identified from the organizations surveyed.

### **Who evaluates the YEEA's? Are there external and internal evaluation concepts?**

The main evaluation is external but also by internal experts in the biggest NGOs (professionals focusing on the evaluation of the project). In the case that the NGOs do not have additional funds that can be spent on external evaluation and try to conduct it internally- in this case, the quality of evaluation is not always high.

### **How are the implementors (organizations, individuals) empowered to measure the impact of their activities?**

Some non-profit organizations want to improve their projects in the future and therefore tend to evaluate projects. – Learn from previous mistakes and create better projects in the future. There seem to be no real other support for implementers to measure the impact of their activities.

### **How are the results used to optimize existing instruments?**

As above. There is no real impact evaluation, only outcome evaluation.

### **In which extent are civil society organizations implementors of projects and measures in the four countries, how are they interacting with institutional bodies, how are they financed, how are they perceived in society?**

The number of young people aged 15 to 24 in the Czech Republic continues to decline. In 2015 in the first quarter was the number of unemployed young people 49 100. If we compare this number to the second quarter of 2017, when it was 25,900, we see considerable progress. According to the CZSO (Q1, 2017), 27,200 thousand Czechs were out of work 24 years and in the second Q2 25 900 were out of work. So we see that unemployment of young people in the Czech

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<sup>130</sup> <https://www.nku.cz/en/>

Republic is declining, but the fact that youth unemployment is still significant remains higher than the total unemployment rate. The projects directed to NEETs are funded that way and also by varied funding (CSR foundations, local governments funds etc). NGO's are perceived by Czech society as essential players in this issues, which are necessary to address youth unemployment and similar issues.

**In which extend and how are they supported to implement and to evaluate their programs and measures in a systematic way? (Research partners, professional instruments etc.)?**

In Czech Republic does not exists constant programs that support NGOs implementing actions against youth unemployment in a systematic way. NGO's can find support of their evaluation activities among professional evaluators or can get an evaluation course and be members in **The Czech Evaluation Society (CES)**, which is a voluntary, self-governed, non-profit, apolitical, and independent association of professional evaluators. Their members evaluate public and private-sector development projects and programs. CES organizes various evaluation events, the most important being the annual evaluation conference where good practices from different areas, new methodological approaches and international experience are being shared. CES also sponsors a professional peer-reviewed journal The Evaluation Theory and Practice, the only journal in the Czech Republic dedicated to evaluation.

**How do they identify the needs of young unemployed and how do they match these needs with the needs of the labor market?**

Questionnaire surveys, job market analysis, focus group, working whit coordinators of the socially disadvantage group. Working and collaborating links within the project with companies, stakeholders, the national employment services, partners.

**Which needs do they have to be supported?**

Help with setting up the project evaluation, evaluation of project success and impact outside subsidized projects monitored by the Ministry. Finding an innovative method that is easy to implement, cost-effective. Setting the organization to self-assessing impact. Universal tool for internal evaluation.

**Are there important resilient networks to support their work (among different organizations)?**

It was not identified from the organizations surveyed.

**How do they work together with companies and other employing entities?**

Collaborating whit people who are interested in the topic of education and they are not indifferent to what is happening in education, people who want to participate actively in changing the

character of education and the school system, experts from various fields ranging from education, psychology, media, sociology, PR to specialists in human resource development and company managers, organizations that are interested in promoting common ideas, volunteers who help with the projects.

**How do they organize competence development inside their organization?**

Employees participate in external trainings, courses, having expert supervisions.

## Impact Evaluation of YEEA's in Czechia

**Is there an overall concept of impact evaluation on the three levels? Is there a common evaluation culture? Are there cultural approaches/differences?**

At the moment, it is not possible to speak of systematically carried out evaluations on precisely defined quality standards and for all three areas I. II. III.

**Which evaluation standards can be defined on the three levels?**

I. Ministry of Youth and Sport - obligatory to evaluate interventions by the Regulation (Eu) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council. Evaluation outcomes are mainly used for preparation of the next projects, upcoming calls, interventions.

II. Mostly, the indicators evaluated are based on projects that are artificially set and fulfilled and saved and do not copy reality. It is only awaiting the finding that is desirable to end the project.

**What are the common indicators of YEEA's in the Czech Republic?**

- Quantitative control indicators.
- In practice, it is often the number of persons executed in individual programs or differently (geographically, structurally, gender, etc.).
- Modified unemployment values of the target group.
- The number of people in employment, self-employment
- The number of registered young unemployed at the Labour Office of the Czech Republic.
- The number of participants in the workshop, seminars.

**Which internal and external tools of impact evaluation are common in Czechia?**

- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Questionnaires
- Desk research

**Is there a difference between the evaluation of institutional and civil society implementors, how do they implement internal evaluation, how do they perceive external evaluation?**

External when there is external evaluation obligatory by the ordinance (+ ad hoc evaluation in cases where specific know-how is needed), other cases internally.

**How are they supported to evaluate the impact of their activities themselves?**

III. level – Ngo's self interest, social interest. Interest in improving future projects.

I. and II.level - regulations, directives, improvements for next calls.

### **What are their needs to improve impact evaluation?**

Evaluation outcomes are mainly used for preparation of the next upcoming calls and interventions. The results/outcomes of evaluations are public and published.

Standard evaluation tools from desk research to CIE

### **How can the improvement of employability be evaluated, how can the improvement of entrepreneurial skills be evaluated?**

Focus groups, quantitative, qualitative methods, interviews (after months, years)-focusing on personal progress and needs changings. New improvements can be invented during the Youth Impact project realisation.

## Skill Development and Management in YEEA's

### Which skills are considered to be important to improve the employability of young people and to foster entrepreneurship?

It is important that school leavers entering the labour market receive already during the educational process training that enhances their employability. The school leavers should be able to adapt flexibly to new conditions, to respond to new tendencies and trends, and should be prepared to develop their potential and take adult training. However, this requires well-working connections between the world of education and the world of work allowing the school system to respond to the changing requirements and needs of the labour market. At the same time, it is important that the communication between the two worlds works well and effectively. <sup>131</sup>

1. **Self-management** - Readiness to accept responsibility, flexibility, resilience, self-starting, appropriate assertiveness, time management, readiness to improve own performance based on feedback and reflective learning
2. **Team working** - Respecting others, cooperating, negotiating, persuading, contributing to discussions, awareness of interdependence with others.
3. **Business and customer awareness** - Basic understanding of the key drivers for business success and the importance of providing customer satisfaction and building customer loyalty
4. **Problem solving** - Analysing facts and circumstances to determine the cause of a problem and identifying and selecting appropriate solutions
5. **Communication** - The ability to effectively tailor messages for the purpose and audience and use the best tools available to communicate them
6. **Resilience** - Ability to work under pressure
7. **Efficiency** - Applying the 80/20 rule and other techniques for yielding higher results in less time. Switching between different chores and progressing effectively day-to-day.
8. **Networking** - Growing a network facilitates business opportunities, partnership deals, finding subcontractors or future employees. It expands the horizons of PR and conveying the right message on all fronts.
9. **Branding** - Building a consistent personal and business brand tailored to the right audience.
10. **Sales** - Being comfortable doing outreach and creating new business opportunities. Finding the right sales channels that convert better and investing heavily in developing them. Building sales funnels and predictable revenue opportunities for growth.

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<sup>131</sup> www.nuv.cz

### Important skills to improve the employability of young people:

- Increased share of on the job training – improving relevant skills at the workplace, through internships
- Developing and improving soft skills
- Support for business skills (financial and administrative literacy, presentation skills, negotiation, language skills).
- Support the startup programs, sharing of good and bad practice
- Enhancing ICT skills
- Support for career guidance, teacher assistants,
- Career guidance for parents
- Greater insight and knowledge of the labour market, environment and opportunities
- Flexibility and adaptability
- International exchanges
- Education of instructors, teachers

For their personal development and employability, young people need to be equipped with basic, cross-cutting as well as technical and specific competencies. Well designed curriculum in education and training, with social involvement responding to the needs of the labor market and the needs of young people can contribute to curtailment skills mismatches. Workplace learning, including apprenticeships and traineeships, can also contribute to a smoother experience the transition of young people to the labor market and reduce the risk of longterm transitions.<sup>132</sup>

### **Which surveys regarding the needs of enterprises are used to design skills development in projects and programs?**

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

### **Which skills are related to the concept of entrepreneurship?**

According to Ernst & Young, the survey wins the view that passion for the matter is crucial (73 percent), the goal to go (64 percent) is important and limits the aforementioned qualities, honesty, innovativeness, risk-taking or reliability. The largest entrepreneurs refused flexibility (33 percent), affecting quality (18 percent) or loyalty (14 percent). As completely undesirable entrepreneurs consider the experience they receive during the business.<sup>133</sup>

### **How can organizations of civil society be supported to develop the competences of their trainers etc.)?**

Better advice and information for all young women and men and their centers providing tailor-made career services focused on employability is a good way, how to strengthen links between secondary, continuing and higher education and training and the labor market. This is particularly

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<sup>132</sup> [https://www.spcr.cz/images/EU/R%C3%A1m%C3%A9c\\_akc%C3%AD\\_pro\\_zam%C4%9Bstn%C3%A1v%C3%A1n%C3%AD\\_mlad%C3%BDch\\_lid%C3%AD\\_fin.pdf](https://www.spcr.cz/images/EU/R%C3%A1m%C3%A9c_akc%C3%AD_pro_zam%C4%9Bstn%C3%A1v%C3%A1n%C3%AD_mlad%C3%BDch_lid%C3%AD_fin.pdf)

<sup>133</sup> <https://www.ey.com/cz/cs/newsroom/news-releases>

evident in some sectors, including utilities. Young people often they are not aware of career opportunities and activities offered by employers and businesses in both the private and public spheres. Disadvantaged groups of young people, such as marginalized people (socially marginalized) young people, those who lack basic skills and those who do not complete school education, they require special attention in counseling and information.

Training (coaching), tutoring and mentoring at the beginning (mentoring), including intergenerational cooperation, can facilitate the integration of young people in their first employment. Such an approach can help businesses to promote youth employment and older workers at the same time. Also, individual competence development plans can enable employers and employees to recognize the required competencies of young people workers in a certain working situation. The diversity of contractual arrangements can help better match employers' needs the needs of young workers, for example, to cope with changing demand for goods and services, to represent employees absent due to illness or family responsibilities or to enable young people to better reconcile work with private life or study obligations.

### **Is there an overall concept of impact evaluation on the three levels? Is there a common evaluation culture? Are there cultural approaches/differences?**

Across all sectors attitudes towards evaluation are strongly related to the perception of the possibility that the conclusions of the evaluation are likely to be implemented. This statement is supported by the results of a survey organized by Polish Evaluation Society in 2010.<sup>134</sup> Respondents pointed out that the most important feature of the evaluator is the ability to propose practical solutions based on the conducted research (Bartosiewicz-Niziołek 2020). Such attitudes make quite a good ground for the evaluation approach proposed by Patton (2008). This approach is based on participation and active involvement of target users in the process of evaluation.

According to the results of the other qualitative research<sup>135</sup> the assessment of usability as well as the need to conduct evaluation in the current financial perspective (2014–2020) depended on the experience of the respondents to date – primarily the benefits gained from the evaluation of previously implemented projects.

Respondents who had not previously had to do with evaluation or conducted it due to an external requirement, identified evaluation activities with monitoring and control. This approach did not bring new knowledge, but only served to demonstrate the degree of achievement of the assumed results, as well as the correctness of the project implementation, which were to prevent the possible loss of allocated funds. These respondents perceive evaluation as an additional burden and unnecessary expense, and they approve of the current restrictions on project evaluation. Due to the low usefulness of evaluation understood in this way, they claim that they would not conduct it unless it was required.

Respondents who have a favourable attitude towards evaluation, which is the result of positive experience in this field, perceive it as a tool to support the process of project implementation or

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<sup>134</sup> The study was conducted in 2010 among representatives of education institutions (including higher education) and employment services. The sample size was 106 respondents and was not representative.

<sup>135</sup> 14 In-depth Individual interviews with coordinators of projects from all sectors (public, non-profit, for-profit) conducted by Polish Evaluation Society in 2018.



even an inseparable part of its management, mainly serving: obtaining feedback, ensuring quality, and improving implemented tasks by developing corrective actions. , duplication of best practices and avoidance of errors during the implementation of subsequent projects, as well as indicating directions for further work and strengthening team collaboration. The need for evaluation was also associated with the efficiency of spending public money.

Some respondents more appreciate internal evaluation, which they associate with current feedback, as well as better knowledge of the project and the needs of its implementer, while others prefer external evaluation, due to its objectivity, expert knowledge and the possibility of confronting with a wider context. According to the respondents, the quality of evaluation depends on the knowledge and experience of the evaluators in a given research area or project specifics, as well as the mode and criteria for selecting contractors. Some people emphasized that their own involvement in evaluation affects its quality.

The high degree of evaluation utilization is influenced by its high quality, good cooperation with the contractor, as well as the manner of conducting this process, especially the participatory approach.

Respondents, who were aware of the benefits of evaluation believe that its conduct should result from their own needs, not an imposed requirement and are interested in evaluating currently implemented projects. A new approach to project evaluation, requiring the approval of the Managing Authority of the Programme, is often assessed negatively by them and perceived as a limitation.

Some respondents did not know that evaluation of projects in the current financial perspective is possible, while those who know the current guidelines better indicate that in practice evaluation has been eliminated at the project level. This state of affairs results in a lack of feedback from the recipients, as well as a lack of knowledge about the quality and usability of implemented activities, ways of improving them and preventing various difficulties and risks, as well as the sustainability of the results obtained. According to the respondents, the evaluation conducted at the program (system) level will not replace the evaluation of projects because it does not provide their implementers with adequate support (Bartosiewicz-Niziołek 2020).

### **Which evaluation standards can be defined on the three levels? (**

PES conducts monitoring of results based on employment indicators, generated by Social Insurance Institution on data of EU programme participants. Impact evaluation – understood as measurement of employment effects – is carried out after the end of the project at the national level or often on regional level. It is commissioned by the Ministry of Investment and Development.

Monitoring of pre-determined indicators is the most often used at the level II and III. It results in „creaming” effect, i.e. involving into activities primarily those beneficiaries who are the most likely to be successful. In this case impact evaluation almost does not exist, since the regulations limiting financing evaluation were introduced within the EU-funded projects.

If impact evaluation should be understood as a RCT – there is little understanding of the concept especially on the II and III level. Mostly evaluation concerns output or outcome but no net effects are measured (as compared to the control group).

**Are there any agile (new )approaches regarding the “landscape” of impact evaluation of YEEA's, which are supposed to support the implementers and to develop the instruments?**

None that we are aware of.

**What are the common indicators of YEEA's in the three countries?**

There are four long-term outcome indicators, aimed at monitoring of the effects of Operational Program Knowledge Education Development:

- participations the number of people participating in continued education, training programmes leading to a qualification, an apprenticeship or a traineeship,
- the number of people in employment, including self-employment,
- the number of people in self-employment,
- the number of disadvantaged people in employment, including self-employment.

**Which internal and external tools of impact evaluation are common in the four countries?**

According to qualitative research conducted by the Polish Evaluation Society in 2018 among the people commissioning evaluation, those people were executing internal evaluation and external evaluation as well as in some cases self-evaluation. Internal evaluation of innovative projects is usually implemented by the project team, while experienced experts or research companies are contracted for the external evaluation. In case of **internal evaluation**, the emphasis was on the effectiveness of implemented activities, possibility of its improvement, as well as current and future needs of its recipients. Information was collected through surveys, individual and group interviews, as well as analysis of monitoring data, i.e. value of achieved indicators (Bartosiewicz-Niziołek 2020).

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In case of initiatives aiming at competences development, evaluation served also as a tool to measure the increase which was one of the project results. It was emphasised that competences development and change of attitudes is a long-term process therefore it is difficult to study this type of effects and prove them directly after project completion. Nevertheless limited periods of financing/grant cycles force such practices. Ex-post evaluation was conducted at the end of project implementation thus dedicated time for research was limited (ibidem).

As for the **evaluation potential among NGOs** a survey of associations and foundations brought the following results concerning year 2011 (before the regulations limiting evaluation of the EU projects were introduced):

- $\frac{2}{3}$  of NGOs did not assess their activities, 17% analysed external data pertaining to their activities, 16% assessed their activity through interviews, meetings and surveys and only 9% systematically analysed methods of their work ,structure, management, communication etc.
- only 2% of NGOs commissioned external evaluation,
- monitoring or evaluation was more common among organisations with the largest budgets – such activities  $\frac{4}{5}$  organisations with income over 1 mln PLN, and 4/10 organisations with income with between 100 thousands – 1 mln PLN (*Życie codzienne organizacji pozarządowych w Polsce*, Klon/Jawor, 2012).

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- major reduction in number of evaluations,
- decrease of interest in evaluation trainings.

**Is there a difference between the evaluation of institutional and civil society implementers, how do they implement internal evaluation, how do they perceive external evaluation?**

According to Bartosiewicz-Niziołek there is not much difference. Both in local public entities and NGOs, underestimate the role of evaluation in the process of management, which hinders or

event prevents from taking rational decisions that could result in improvement of the entity's activities.

Important factor of evaluation practices is cooperation, not only with external evaluator but also inside given institution. If evaluation is implemented only by the specialised unit while other organisational units do not participate in conceptualisation and collecting data, then later they are not interested in results of the research or they treat it as negative assessment or personal attack.

On the other hand an analysis of drivers among personnel of public institution and NGO, can lead to a hypothesis that aim driven, less regulated, less hierarchical structure of NGOs should result in more openness for evaluation results and implementation of conclusions on changing certain activities of the entity.

### **How are they supported to evaluate the impact of their activities themselves?**

Since the beginning of the new financial perspective (2014–2020), they have not been supported, except very extraordinary cases. Generally organisations cannot be granted money to cover the cost of evaluation on their own. However they are obliged to gather and to deliver to PES the information on the employment status of the people they supported at the end and 6 months after the beneficiaries finished participation in the project.

### **What are their needs to improve impact evaluation?**

This will be elaborated while developing evaluation packages with organisations (in next stage of the project). Each organisation has its own specifics, needs and level of advancement in evaluation.

### **How can the improvement of employability be evaluated, how can the improvement of entrepreneurial skills be evaluated?**

At this moment we can point to experimental methods as a possible improvement (both for employability and entrepreneurship), but it is likely new improvements can be invented during the Youth Impact project realisation.

# Summary and Conclusion of Evaluation Skills and Competences

**Is there an overall concept of impact evaluation on the three levels? Is there a common evaluation culture? Are there cultural approaches/differences?**

Across all sectors attitudes towards evaluation are strongly related to the perception of the possibility that the conclusions of the evaluation are likely to be implemented. This statement is supported by the results of a survey organized by Polish Evaluation Society in 2010.<sup>136</sup> Respondents pointed out that the most important feature of the evaluator is the ability to propose practical solutions based on the conducted research (Bartosiewicz-Niziołek 2020). Such attitudes make quite a good ground for the evaluation approach proposed by Patton (2008). This approach is based on participation and active involvement of target users in the process of evaluation. According to the results of the other qualitative research<sup>137</sup> the assessment of usability as well as the need to conduct evaluation in the current financial perspective (2014–2020) depended on the experience of the respondents to date – primarily the benefits gained from the evaluation of previously implemented projects.

Respondents who had not previously had to do with evaluation or conducted it due to an external requirement, identified evaluation activities with monitoring and control. This approach did not bring new knowledge, but only served to demonstrate the degree of achievement of the assumed results, as well as the correctness of the project implementation, which were to prevent the possible loss of allocated funds. These respondents perceive evaluation as an additional burden and unnecessary expense, and they approve of the current restrictions on project evaluation. Due to the low usefulness of evaluation understood in this way, they claim that they would not conduct it unless it was required.

Respondents who have a favourable attitude towards evaluation, which is the result of positive experience in this field, perceive it as a tool to support the process of project implementation or even an inseparable part of its management, mainly serving: obtaining feedback, ensuring quality, and improving implemented tasks by developing corrective actions. , duplication of best practices and avoidance of errors during the implementation of subsequent projects, as well as indicating directions for further work and strengthening team collaboration. The need for evaluation was also associated with the efficiency of spending public money.

Some respondents more appreciate internal evaluation, which they associate with current feedback, as well as better knowledge of the project and the needs of its implementer, while others prefer external evaluation, due to its objectivity, expert knowledge and the possibility of confronting with a wider context. According to the respondents, the quality of evaluation depends on the knowledge and experience of the evaluators in a given research area or project specifics,

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<sup>136</sup> The study was conducted in 2010 among representatives of education institutions (including higher education) and employment services. The sample size was 106 respondents and was not representative.

<sup>137</sup> 14 In-depth individual interviews with coordinators of projects from all sectors (public, non-profit, for-profit) conducted by Polish Evaluation Society in 2018.

as well as the mode and criteria for selecting contractors. Some people emphasized that their own involvement in evaluation affects its quality.

The high degree of evaluation utilization is influenced by its high quality, good cooperation with the contractor, as well as the manner of conducting this process, especially the participatory approach.

Respondents, who were aware of the benefits of evaluation believe that its conduct should result from their own needs, not an imposed requirement and are interested in evaluating currently implemented projects. A new approach to project evaluation, requiring the approval of the Managing Authority of the Programme, is often assessed negatively by them and perceived as a limitation.

Some respondents did not know that evaluation of projects in the current financial perspective is possible, while those who know the current guidelines better indicate that in practice evaluation has been eliminated at the project level. This state of affairs results in a lack of feedback from the recipients, as well as a lack of knowledge about the quality and usability of implemented activities, ways of improving them and preventing various difficulties and risks, as well as the sustainability of the results obtained. According to the respondents, the evaluation conducted at the program (system) level will not replace the evaluation of projects because it does not provide their implementers with adequate support (Bartosiewicz-Niziołek 2020).

**Which evaluation standards can be defined on the three levels? (In Germany the DeGEval (German association for Evaluation) describes binding standards in four categories. Are there similar standards in the three countries? What are the categories? Are these categories sufficient?**

PES conducts monitoring of results based on employment indicators, generated by Social Insurance Institution on data of EU programme participants. Impact evaluation – understood as measurement of employment effects – is carried out after the end of the project at the national level or often on regional level. It is commissioned by the Ministry of Investment and Development.

Monitoring of pre-determined indicators is the most often used at the level II and III. It results in „creaming” effect, i.e. involving into activities primarily those beneficiaries who are the most likely to be successful. In this case impact evaluation almost does not exist, since the regulations limiting financing evaluation were introduced within the EU-funded projects.

If impact evaluation should be understood as a RCT – there is little understanding of the concept especially on the II and III level. Mostly evaluation concerns output or outcome but no net effects are measured (as compared to the control group).

**Are there any agile (new )approaches regarding the “landscape” of impact evaluation of YEEA’s, which are supposed to support the implementers and to develop the instruments?**

None that we are aware of.

## What are the common indicators of YEEA's in the three countries?

There are four long-term outcome indicators, aimed at monitoring of the effects of Operational Program Knowledge Education Development:

- participations the number of people participating in continued education, training programmes leading to a qualification, an apprenticeship or a traineeship,
- the number of people in employment, including self-employment,
- the number of people in self-employment,
- the number of disadvantaged people in employment, including self-employment.

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## Fact Sheet Activities and Evaluation Practices of implementors of “Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Support Activities”

YEE's in Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia			
Youth unemployment rate (2019)	CZECH REPUBLIC (5,3%)	POLAND (7,8%)	SLOVAKIA (16,7%)
<b>Perceived reasons for Youth unemployment (perspective of interviewees)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students and graduates are not sufficiently prepared to the needs of the labour market</li> <li>Expectations (salary, working conditions)</li> <li>Not enough information, vocational orientation, career counseling</li> <li>Lack of motivation and capacities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills mismatch/no preparation to the needs of the labour market</li> <li>Expectations</li> <li>Lack of capacities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mismatch between the needs of the labour market</li> <li>Lack of vocational training opportunities / lack of practical preparedness</li> <li>Poor quality of career counselling</li> </ul>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disadvantaged pupils in all stages of education biography, pupils with special needs</li> <li>Vulnerable, autistic children</li> <li>University students</li> <li>Mothers with small children</li> <li>Young people at the beginning of their career</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People with disabilities, people in difficult situation</li> <li>Young women</li> <li>Young people in foster care or recent care leavers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Longterm unemployed</li> <li>Graduates without workexperience</li> <li>Disabled young people</li> <li>Young mothers</li> <li>Roma youth</li> </ul>
<b>Main Field of Action of the Cooperation partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevention activities at schools (counselling, skill development, cooperation schools and enterprises)</li> <li>Support of teachers (to enable them for vocational orientation)</li> <li>Competence development of unemployed (handicraft, digital skills, entrepreneurial skills, critical thinking)</li> <li>Involvement of parents / improvement of esteem for apprenticeship</li> <li>Cooperation with enterprises (internships, practical training)</li> <li>Interactive approach to improve motivation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Career counselling</li> <li>Job placement/job crafting (mediation between company and new employee)</li> <li>Job coaching/Training (in case of disabled people , adapting the workplace)</li> <li>Skill development / self empowerment (emotional support)</li> <li>Internships with focus on social skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support of people with disabilities</li> <li>Preparation for the job, cooperation with employer</li> <li>Social entrepreneurship</li> <li>Internships</li> <li>Talent profiling / competence development</li> </ul>

<b>Existing evaluation approaches / Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantitative evaluation: questionnaires, statistical methods, number of events, number of persons supported, etc., skill evaluation through standardized examinations, control group evaluation</li> <li>Qualitative evaluation: case studies, interviews, group interviews, expert panels,</li> <li>External and internal evaluation, regulations of the European commission/ European parliament</li> <li>Indicators: given indicators by the EU and national institutions (numbers of participants etc.), personal interviews with the participants,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantitative evaluation: questionnaires, pre and post tests, statistical methods</li> <li>Qualitative evaluation: competence questionnaire, evaluation on the basis defined standards (internal book of standards) computer assisted web interviews with coordinators, interviews with participants, in-depth interviews on local and central level, studies,</li> <li>More external evaluation (lack of capacities for internal evaluation), monitoring through labour offices (focus on effectiveness of labour market instruments, no impact evaluation</li> <li>Indicators: number of people participating in programs leading to a qualification, professional situation 6/8 months after leaving the program, number of people working in the six month after leaving the program, number of self-employed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantitative evaluation: surveys, statistical analyses, comparison of control groups</li> <li>More qualitative approaches: problem centered interviews, surveys, dialogue/workshops with experts and participants, observations/case studies</li> <li>Indicators: number of measures and participants, improved school performance, behavioural changes, skill development, number of participants placed in work, indicators are usually defined by the lead organization, very strict indicators have a negative impact on activities</li> </ul>
<b>Conclusions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No systematic approach to the assessment of the impact individual measures</li> <li>No difference between outputs (results) and impact</li> <li>Evaluation does not respect perspective of participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Systemic evaluation approaches, but focus on outcome</li> <li>Evaluation is focused on ex-post, no on-going evaluation</li> <li>No integration of internal perspective, no tailoring to target group, focus on monitoring</li> <li>No information about how evaluation results are used</li> <li>Evaluation is no longer desired by ministries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No systemic approaches for internal and external evaluation</li> <li>No evaluation of the effectiveness of measures</li> <li>No involvement of participants</li> <li>No ongoing evaluation to improve the process</li> </ul>

## First scenarios to inspire impact evaluation activities

- Awareness/added value of impact evaluation: Function of Impact Evaluation / Object of Impact Evaluation (difference output, outcome, impact) / Complexity of evaluation (short, medium, long term impact; direct, indirect impact; positive, negative impact ...) / Instruments: Presentation of Concept of IE; Presentation of Best Practices; Workshops (Definition of goals, target values, strategic and operational goals; definition of an systematic approach and concept for IE)
- Analysis of different perspectives of impact evaluation (target group/customer; internal perspective/organization; financial perspective; learning and development perspective ....)/ Instruments: Strategy Map with different perspectives
- Innovation management: degree of social innovation; degree of participation, motivation, creativity, degree of knowledge Instruments: Design of Role Plays and competitions to measure impact; Interviews with Participants and different stakeholders; analysis of changing living standard of target group; social perception