

## Young adult NEETs aged 25-29 in Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia

**Author: Sławomir Nałęcz, PhD,**

Jerzy Regulski Foundation in Support of Local Democracy, Warsaw, Poland  
(slawomir.nalecz@frdl.org.pl)

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Abstract

Young people aged 25-29 is a group of special interest in public policies related to transition between education and work. This fact was highlighted in 2020 when the adoption of the EU Council recommendation reinforcing Youth Guarantee took place. The recommendation included this age group as a part of young people (15-29 y.o.) entitled to receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving education. The study provides current characteristic of the target group of this recommendation together with analysis of the influence of COVID-19 pandemic, its subgroups and brief categorisation of projects addressing their needs.

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## Introduction

On October 30, 2020, a new recommendation of the Council of the European Union (reinforced Youth Guarantee) included the group of people aged 25-29 among young people entitled to be supported in their transition from education to work, in particular to receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving education. The group of people aged 25-29 who are neither in employment nor education/training (NEET) has been a beneficiary of some earlier country-level policies supporting the transition between education and professional work. Since the adoption of the reinforced Youth Guarantee they are fully integrated with policies previously addressed to the youth aged 15-24. The reinforced Youth Guarantee recommendation admits that young NEETs are a heterogeneous group and should be supported in relevant way. The following study helps to understand this diversity in the context of current situation in countries where the Youth Impact project is implemented.

## Who are the young adult NEETs?

Across the EU-27 countries nearly every fifth young adult aged 25-29 is neither in employment nor in education and training (18.6%). The 2020 data from Czechia and Poland showed similar results (17.5% and 19.4% accordingly) while in Slovakia the problem of young adults stuck between education and work was even bigger (22.0%).

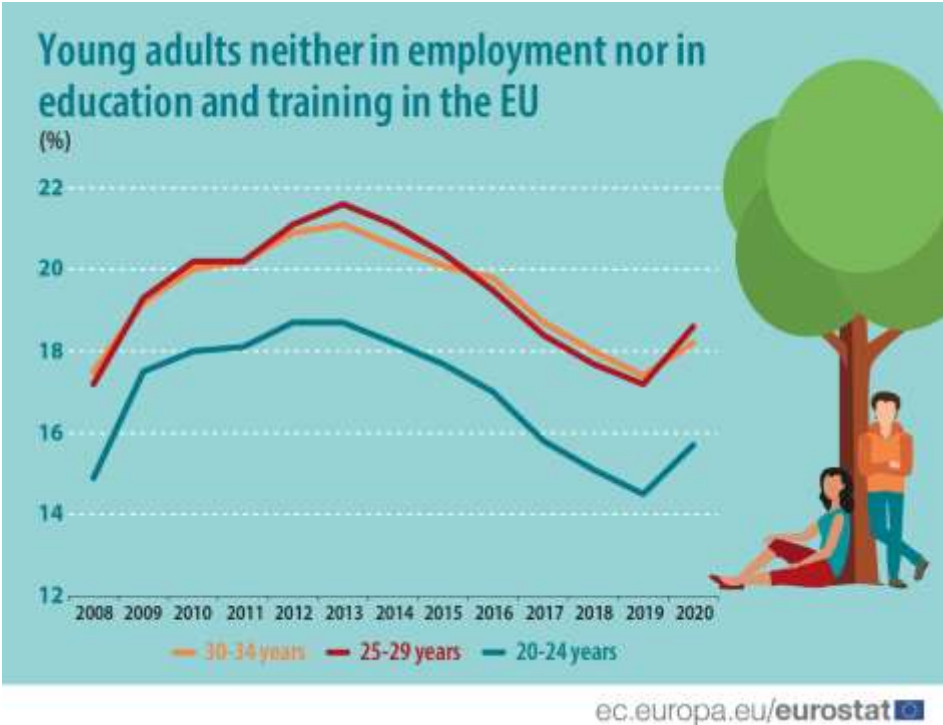
**Table 1. NEET's rate among young adults aged 25-29, 2016-2020 (%)**

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
EU-27	19.5%	18.4%	17.7%	17.2%	18.6%
Czechia	17.2%	15.3%	15.2%	15.8%	17.5%
Poland	18.9%	18.0%	17.2%	17.7%	19.4%
Slovakia	21.7%	22.1%	21.3%	20.7%	22.0%

Source: Eurostat, edat\_lfse\_20

Of course, the NEET rate observed in 2020 was higher than in previous year due to contraction of labour market caused by COVID-19 pandemic, but what is even more important for the characteristics of the 25-29 years old group is the stable difference to the younger age group (18-24 y.o.) and similarity with the older one (30-34 y.o.). Two main reasons for this situation are participation in formal education and parenthood (more on them later).

**Chart 1. Dynamic of NEET's rate among young EU-27 citizens by age groups, 2008-2020 (%)**

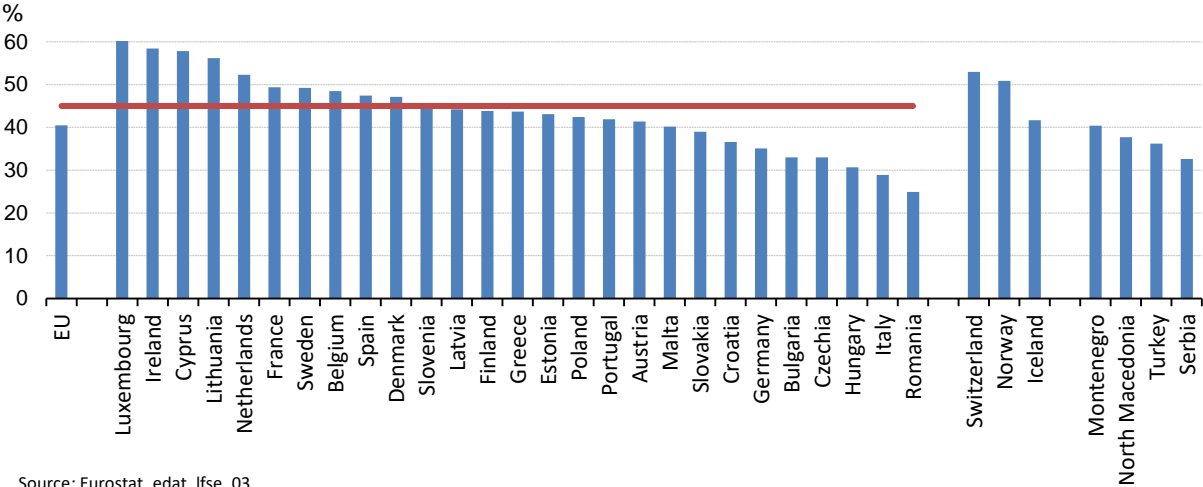


Source: Eurostat, *Over 1 in 6 young adults not in employment or education.*  
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/edn-20210714-2>

**Graduates of tertiary education**

The most numerous group of young adults who try to enter the labour market after reaching the age of 24 are graduates of tertiary education. The 2020 Eurostat data show that as many as 40.5% of young EU citizens completed tertiary education. In Poland it was 42%, in Slovakia - 39% and in Czechia - 33%.

**Chart 2. Population aged 25–34 with tertiary educational attainment (ISCED 5–8), 2020 (%)**

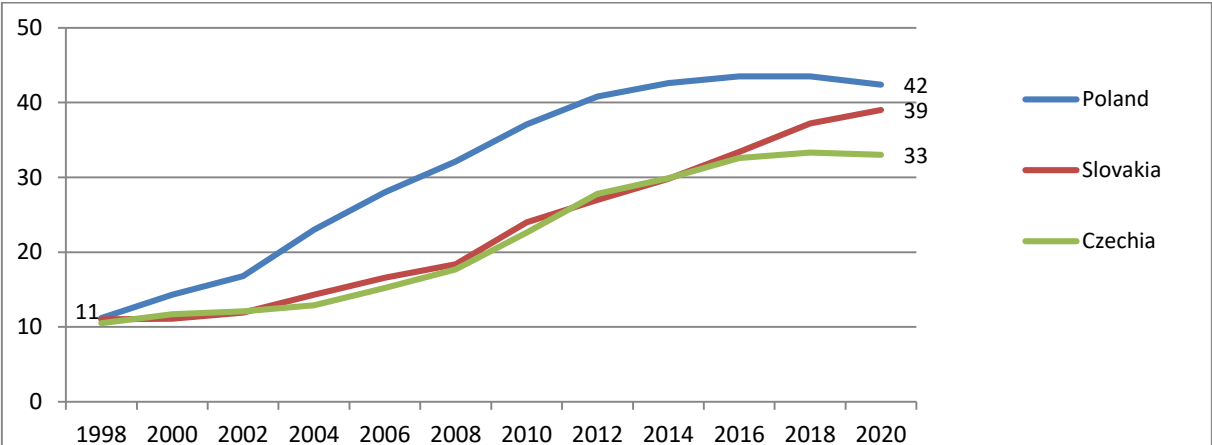


Source: Eurostat, edat\_lfse\_03

Since the 1990s the transition between education and work has delayed for bigger and bigger group of young people due to longer education period. In Czechia, Slovakia and Poland the

proportion of tertiary education graduates among people aged 25-34 grew from the level of 11% to 33% in Czechia, 39% in Slovakia and 42% in Poland.

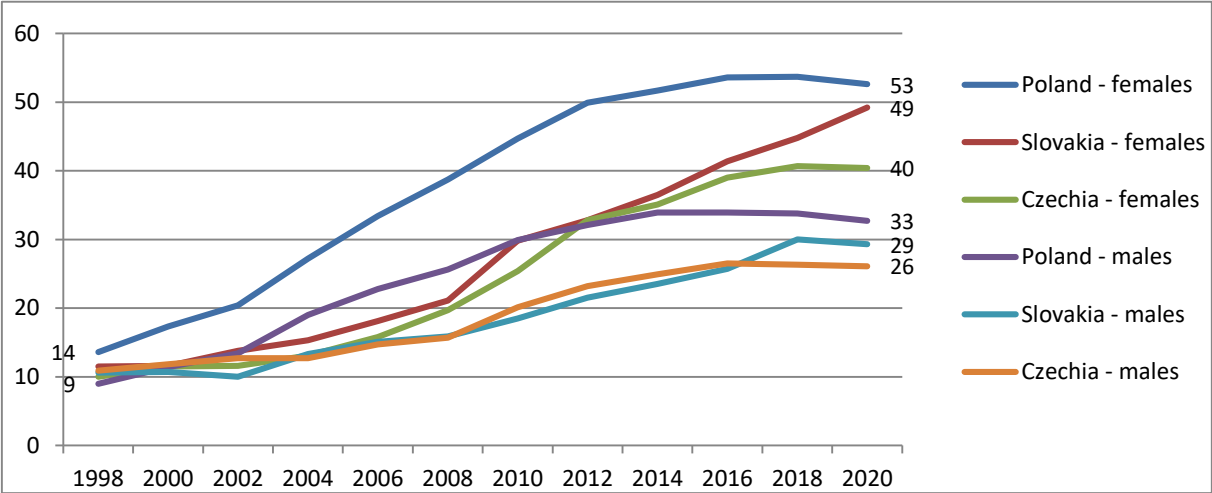
**Chart 3. Population aged 25–34 with tertiary educational attainment (ISCED 5–8), 1998-2020 (%)**



Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat, edat\_lfse\_03

The changes were much more dynamic among women than men. Although in 1998 the tertiary education attainment rate was confined between 9% and 14% for both sexes, in 2020 the rate of women with tertiary education reached 40%, 49%, 53% in Czechia, Slovakia and Poland while the respective percentages for men were 26%, 29% and 33%.

**Chart 4. Men and women aged 25–34 with tertiary educational attainment (ISCED 5–8), 1998-2020 (%)**



Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat, edat\_lfse\_03

The most popular challenge for tertiary education graduates concerning their employment is a lack of work experience (Kocór et al. 2015). There are quite a lot of programmes, projects and permanent activities focused on this issue offered by agencies of the tertiary education institutions such as career offices, student volunteering centres, graduate/alumni clubs as well as by student organisations, various NGOs and employers. The main types of such actions are internships, apprenticeships and volunteering. These actions are mostly addressed to students, as a kind of preventive measure, but also to recent graduates (see Appendix 1 for more detailed information).

Owing to all these circumstances the NEET rate among graduates of tertiary education institutions aged 25-29 is relatively low. According to Eurostat data concerning the year 2020, on average in the EU-27 countries 11% of such graduates were NEETs. In Poland, 10% of young people aged 25-29 who attained tertiary education diploma have no job nor continue education. In Czech Republic and especially in Slovakia the chance of becoming a NEET after completing tertiary education is a bit higher: 13% and 15% accordingly (Eurostat, edat\_lfse\_21).

### Less educated NEETs

According to the 2020 Labour Force Survey average results from 27 of the EU countries show that upper secondary education and especially lower education attainment dramatically increases chances of getting a NEET status in the age group of 25-29 years old. There are 18% of NEETs among young people with upper secondary attainment and 44% of NEETs among those who got lower secondary or primary education. More specifically, Eurostat data show that education attainment very strongly impacts chances of becoming a NEET in Poland (the least educated group has 5.6 times higher chance of getting NEET status than tertiary education graduates) and that impact is also quite strong in Slovakia and Czech Republic (the chances of becoming a NEET are respectively 4.2 times and 3.2 times higher for the least educated group as compared to the university graduates).

**Table 2. NEET's rate among young adults aged 25-29 by their educational attainment, 2020 (%)**

<b>Educational attainment</b>	<b>EU-27</b>	<b>Czechia</b>	<b>Poland</b>	<b>Slovakia</b>
Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education (ISCED levels 0-2)	43.9%	42.7%	56.1%	64.4%
Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED levels 3 and 4)	17.8%	16.3%	21.1%	21.3%
Tertiary education (ISCED levels 5-8)	11.0%	13.4%	10.0%	15.4%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>18.6%</b>	<b>17.5%</b>	<b>19.4%</b>	<b>22.0%</b>

Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat, edat\_lfse\_21

An important factor which can reduce the negative impact of lower education attainment is participation in some various forms of life-long learning. Unfortunately, new evidence confirms that the low skilled, in particular, tend not to take part in life-long learning activities and, in consequence, risk being locked in a "low-skillstrap" (EC DG Employment 2019). As for the Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia this participation in education or training was significantly lower than the EU average: in Czech Republic only 10% of young adults were supplementing or updating their competences, while in Poland and Slovakia it was only 6% and 5% accordingly. These results decreased significantly in comparison to the previous year due to COVID-19 pandemic.

**Table 3. Participation rate in education and training (last 4 weeks) among young adults aged 25-34, 2016-2020 (%)**

Year	2017	2018	2016	2019	2020
EU-27	17.5%	17.8%	17.2%	17.8%	16.1%
Czechia	14.8%	13.3%	13.8%	12.6%	9.7%
Poland	7.7%	9.6%	7.6%	8.1%	6.3%
Slovakia	6.3%	6.4%	5.6%	5.9%	5.4%

Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat, trng\_ifse\_01

### NEETs beyond the cities and in poorly developed regions

It is important to know that non-participation of young adults in the labour market refers not only to the city dwellers but even more to inhabitants of smaller towns and rural areas. The average results for EU-27 countries show the lowest NEET rate occurs in cities, slightly higher in towns and suburbs, while in rural areas the rate is the highest. The particularly unfavourable position of the young adults from rural areas is most striking in Poland (NEET rate reaching 24% in rural areas is twice higher than in the cities) and is often affected by transport-related exclusion (low accessibility or lack of public transport in the place of residence). In Slovakia, the situation of having no job refers to 1 of 4 inhabitants of rural areas as well as towns and suburbs while in Czech Republic it concerns 1 of 5 young people in small towns and 1 of 6 in rural areas.

**Table 4. NEET's rate among young adults aged 25-29 by degree of urbanisation, 2019-2020 (%)**

COUNTRY/ type of locality	2019	2020
EU-27 overall	17.2%	18.6%
Cities	15.4%	17.1%
Towns and suburbs	18.2%	20.0%
Rural areas	19.3%	20.0%
CZECHIA overall	15.8%	17.5%
Cities	13.2%	14.9%
Towns and suburbs	16.8%	20.1%
Rural areas	17.4%	17.4%
POLAND overall	17.7%	19.4%
Cities	11.1%	12.7%
Towns and suburbs	20.9%	20.9%
Rural areas	21.8%	23.9%
SLOVAKIA overall	20.7%	22.0%
Cities	14.0%	12.0%
Towns and suburbs	23.6%	25.9%
Rural areas	21.2%	23.1%

Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat, edat\_ifse\_29

The COVID-19 related growth of NEET rate is more visible in rural areas (Poland and Slovakia) as well as in towns and suburbs (Czechia and Slovakia) than in cities. This phenomenon is related to weaker business structures in remote areas. Moreover, the NEETs aged 25-29 living in rural areas or small towns are often too small group to be 'on the radar' of local or regional municipalities or educators.

Eurostat data on unemployment of young people in Slovakia, Poland and Czech Republic show that in each of these countries the unemployment rates in most underdeveloped regions were more than 3 times higher than in the capital cities. For the age group of 25-29 the Východné Slovensko region in Slovakia had nearly 11% unemployed rate, while Bratislavský kraj had only 3%; in Poland the unemployment rate reached 7% in Świętokrzyski and Lubuski regions, while in the capital region of Warsaw – only 2%; and in Czech Republic Moravskoslezsko and Severozápad regions had 4%–5% unemployment while in the most developed regions of Praha, Střední Čechy and Jihozápad the rates were on the level of 1%–2%. Taking into account these discrepancies young people from the disadvantaged regions characterised by the lack of job opportunities tend to leave these regions and move either to more economically advanced regions or abroad.

**Table 5. Unemployment rate among young people aged 25-29 by country and regions, 2019-2020 (%)**

COUNTRY / Region \ Year	2019	2020
<b>EU-27 overall</b>	8.0%	8.8%
<b>Czechia overall</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>
Praha ( <b>capital</b> )	1.8%	3.9%
Střední Čechy	1.4%	3.2%
Jihozápad	1.6%	2.7%
Severozápad	4.1%	5.2%
Severovýchod	2.2%	4.1%
Jihovýchod	2.3%	2.9%
Střední Morava	3.0%	3.9%
Moravskoslezsko	5.0%	4.2%
<b>Poland overall</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>
Malopolskie	2.9%	4.3%
Śląskie	2.9%	2.6%
Wielkopolskie	2.7%	:
Zachodniopomorskie	4.3%	:
Lubuskie	:	:
Dolnośląskie	2.9%	4.2%
Opolskie	:	:
Kujawsko-Pomorskie	4.2%	:
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	:	:
Pomorskie	3.1%	:
Lódzkie	4.4%	5.3%
Świętokrzyskie	7.3%	:
Lubelskie	6.5%	6.8%
Podkarpackie	5.7%	:
Podlaskie	4.0%	:
Warszawski stołeczny ( <b>capital</b> )	1.6%	:
Mazowiecki regionalny	5.6%	5.7%
<b>Slovakia overall</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>7.4%</b>
Bratislavský kraj ( <b>capital</b> )	:	3.2%
Západné Slovensko	4.6%	5.9%
Stredné Slovensko	8.4%	7.6%
Východné Slovensko	9.4%	10.8%

Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat, lfst\_r\_lfu3rt



## Inactive vs. unemployed NEETs

The analysis of the composition of the NEET group among young adults shows that the majority of them are people who are inactive i.e. they do not look for a job. The group of young people staying out of the labour market is about 12% across the EU-27 but in Czechia, Poland and Slovakia this rate is higher and revolves around 15%. At the same time, the second component of the NEET group, i.e. the unemployed (actively looking for a job) is relatively low in Czechia and Poland (3-4%) where labour market conditions are more favourable, while in Slovakia the unemployment is on the similar level as the average of EU-27 countries (7%).

**Table 6. NEET's rate among young people by labour status, 2020, (%)**

	NEETs aged 18-24 years old			NEETs aged 25-29 years old		
	Overall	Unemployed	Inactive	Overall	Unemployed	Inactive
EU-27	<b>14.4%</b>	5.9%	8.5%	<b>18.6%</b>	6.8%	11.8%
Czechia	<b>8.9%</b>	2.5%	6.4%	<b>17.5%</b>	2.7%	14.8%
Poland	<b>11.9%</b>	3.8%	8.1%	<b>19.4%</b>	3.6%	15.8%
Slovakia	<b>13.9%</b>	7.1%	6.8%	<b>22.0%</b>	6.6%	15.4%

Source of data: own elaboration based on Labour Force Survey, Eurostat, edat\_lfse\_20

When compared with the younger age group the young adults aged 25-29 keep nearly the same rate of people who unsuccessfully seek employment but there is a big rise in the category of inactive persons. Of course, the latter is related to end of formal education period (even the MA students typically complete their formal education at age of 24) but it also related to sex and parenthood (elaborated in the next paragraph).

## Caregivers – mostly women

The NEET status is more frequently reported by young adult women than men: 23% vs. 15% on average across the EU-27. The disproportion between sexes is even bigger in Poland and Slovakia where the number of women, who have no job and are not in education is three times higher than the number of men with the same status (there are 3 NEET persons among 10 young adult women and only 1 NEET person among 10 men). In Czechia the disparity is even more striking – there are six times more women than men among young adult NEETs: the NEET status among men is exceptionally rare (only 5%) while the share of NEETs among young women is similar to Slovakia and Poland (see: 2. and 3. column in the table below).

**Table 7. NEETs among young adults aged 25-29 by labour status and sex, 2020, (%)**

	NEETs overall			Unemployed			Inactive		
	Overall	Females	Males	Overall	Females	Males	Overall	Females	Males
EU-27	18.6%	23.0%	14.5%	6.8%	6.3%	7.3%	11.8%	16.7%	7.2%
Czechia	17.5%	30.6%	5.3%	2.7%	2.9%	2.6%	14.8%	27.6%	2.7%
Poland	19.4%	29.2%	10.0%	3.6%	3.2%	4.1%	15.8%	26.0%	5.9%
Slovakia	22.0%	33.0%	11.5%	6.6%	6.3%	6.9%	15.4%	26.7%	4.6%

Source: own elaboration based on Labour Force Survey, Eurostat, edat\_lfse\_20

Surprisingly, there is no disproportion between young adult men and women regarding unemployment. Regardless of the different percentage of unemployment in various countries, the rates of unemployment are nearly the same for both sexes: quite low in Czech Republic (3%) and Poland (3-4%), while in Slovakia at the same level as the average for EU-27 (6-7%).

Inactivity status (not seeking employment nor taking part in education and training) is several times more popular among women than among men. In Czechia, Slovakia and Poland inactivity status was reported by 26-28 out of 100 women and only 3-6 out of 100 men aged 25-29. Such intense feminization of the inactivity subgroup of young adult NEETs in the Central and Eastern EU countries sticks out of the EU-27 average (17 out of 100 young adult women and 7 out of 100 men “stay at home”). Staying out of the labour market can be a necessity or a choice, depending on local circumstances (insufficient availability of nurseries, kindergartens and other caregiving institutions, lack or too limited number of attractive or at least sufficiently flexible employment options within the reach of available transport, cultural factors supporting “stay-at-home” maternity, etc). Activation project for caregivers, mostly women, need a specialised approach, including provision of care services to let the NEET them take part in activation projects and take up a job afterwards (see Appendix 2 for examples of such projects).

Another factor contributing to higher rates of inactivity among women aged 25-29 in Slovakia, Poland and even Czechia is that the mean age for giving first birth in these countries is significantly lower than the average of respective indicators across the EU-27 countries (27.2 y.o. in Slovakia, 27.6 y.o. in Poland, 28.5 y.o. in Czechia versus the EU-27 average of 29.4 years old).

The family/care responsibilities in which women have the overwhelming role is also the most common reason of being a NEET in the EU-27 countries – even among the very wide age group aged 15-29. In the Central and Eastern European countries the subgroup of young people (15-29) who “stayed at home” due to family or care responsibilities was the biggest in Czechia (65%) and Poland (53%) (Eurofound 2021: 16).

**Table 8. Breakdown of NEETs aged 15–29, EU-27, 2019 (%)**

Subgroups of NEET	%
Caregivers (taking care about the family) <sup>1</sup>	24%
Short-term unemployed <sup>2</sup>	21%
Long-term unemployed <sup>3</sup>	14%
People with disabilities or illnesses <sup>4</sup>	10%
Re-entrants <sup>5</sup>	10%
Discouraged workers/job-seekers <sup>6</sup>	5%
Other	16%

Source: Eurofound (2021), *Impact of COVID-19 on young people in the EU*, calculations based on EU-LFS 2013 and 2019 microdata

## Young adults with disabilities

Another group of young adults having some stable features and significant share among NEETS aged 15-29 (10%) are people with disabilities (PwDs).

There is no fresh data on PwDs aged 25-29 but the available information on a bit wider age group in Poland suggest that among young adults with disabilities (aged 25-34) 71% are NEETs (67% - inactive and 4% unemployed).

There are some serious barriers to the integration of the young PwDs with the labour market, among them is the fact that young people with disabilities more often than the others have very limited professional and social competences.

The gap in these competences is primarily linked to formal education attainment as well as to the level of to which the education is inclusive. In 2011, the rate of early school leavers (i.e. those who have finished education at the level not higher than lower secondary school) among people having difficulties in basic activities was 27%-28% and only 5% among the rest of young people aged 18-24, who had no such health issues. At the level of tertiary education the difference was also quite high: rates of tertiary education graduates between people with and without having difficulties in basic activities reached 21 percent points in Poland and 10 percent points in Czech Republic .

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<sup>1</sup> Caregivers – they are not seeking work as they are busy taking care for children or incapacitated adults or due to other family responsibilities. Some of them are not able to participate in the labour market because there is no other way of taking care for a child or adult family member (incl. financial reasons), while others have voluntarily withdrawn from the labour market or education to take up family responsibilities.

<sup>2</sup> **Short-term unemployed** - unemployed for less than a year, seeking work and available to start within 2 weeks.

<sup>3</sup> **Long-term unemployed** - unemployed for more than a year, seeking work and available to start within 2 weeks. Such a situation puts at high risk of disengagement and social exclusion, damages young people's employability, their human capital and their future employment outcomes; in some cases, the damage will last for the rest of their lives.

<sup>4</sup> **People with disabilities, illnesses** – they are not seeking employment or are not available to start a job within two weeks because of illness or disability.

<sup>5</sup> **Re-entrants** - young people who will soon re-enter employment, education or training, because they have already been hired or enrolled in education or training and are waiting to begin.

<sup>6</sup> **Discouraged workers** – they have stopped looking for work because they believe that there are no job opportunities for them. They are at high risk of poor employment outcomes over the course of their working lives and lifelong disengagement, as well as experience of social exclusion.

Also social competences, especially the competences concerning relations with people having no disabilities, are influenced by the educational pathways of young PwDs. The 2018 data on enrolment to primary and upper secondary schools show that only a tiny percent of pupils with special education needs attend mixed classes. In Poland the rate of pupils who spent at least 80% of their primary and lower secondary education in inclusive settings was only 2%, while in Czechia and Slovakia the rates were 7% and 9% respectively (Ramberg et al. 2020: 67).

A very serious mental barrier for professional career of PwDs can be their low self-esteem, apprehension about limited own abilities and competencies, especially if linked with previous unfortunate work experience or a long period of job seeking, with low trust in bad employers and with ineffective labour offices or other aid organisations. These kinds of issues must be very carefully diagnosed and looked after in any employment project addressed to young PwDs.

An important factor inhibiting the professional activity of young PwDs could be a fear of losing or suspending the PwD social pension and often some other payment for the assisting family member. Assisting a young PwD as an alternative professional career of one of his/her family members may at certain point become a barrier resulting in not seeking employment by a PwD, or taking a low-paid job or even working unofficially. Therefore, when conducting activation projects, it is important to find a way of cooperating not only with the young PwD taking part in the project but also with his/her caregiver, especially if this is her/his main source of income.

## Conclusions

In 2020, almost 19% of young people aged 25-29 were neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET) and this figure represents a significant growth and change of long-term trend, associated with labour market contraction caused by COVID-19 pandemic.

Taking into account longitudinal perspective, the transition from school to workplace has been delayed for bigger and bigger group of young people due to longer education period. Unfortunately in Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia the tertiary education graduates often lack work experience or face mismatch of their competences with expectations of employers. Still, these problems are typically not so difficult to deal with as to overcome results of long-time unemployment or inactivity which happens to roughly every second person of people aged 25-29, who completed not more than lower secondary school. These young adults often fall into category of long-term unemployed or discouraged NEETs and require longer, more holistic programmes/projects covering not only hard skills development but also mental support and development of social competences. Another structural factor contributing both to lower educational attainment and higher rates of NEET among young people aged 25-29 is

living in rural or less economically developed areas coupled with insufficiency of public transport.

The analysis of NEET population showed also that inactive subgroup (not seeking job) is twice more numerous than the subgroup of unemployed (looking for a work but could not get one). From the gender point of view there is a huge problem of inactivity of young women due to family obligations – the most numerous group of NEETs aged 25-29. This group also needs specialised approach, including provision of care services to let the NEET women take part in activation projects and take up a job afterwards.

The most complicated integration programs/projects are needed in case of young people with disabilities or members of socially excluded groups. The NEETs with disabilities require not only adjustments of workplaces and often also special care according to their physical or mental limitations but also during the activation project they often need appropriate psychological support and social competences improvement next to development of so called hard skills.

The reinforced Youth Guarantee recommendation admits that young NEETs are a heterogeneous group and should be supported in relevant way. Taking into account many challenges related to young people's social situation, their competences, their ways of communication and expression, possible lack of motivation and trust being the result from earlier disappointments, it would be advisable to involve them in the activation project also at the planning level to better support them in their transition from education to work. And to realize the recommendation of the Council of the European Union from October 2020, the reinforced Youth Guarantee, to make sure that young people aged 25-29 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving education.

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## Appendix 1.

### Activities/programs and projects focused on university students and graduates

Activities/programs and projects focused on university students and graduates are typically run by agencies of the tertiary education institutions such as career offices, graduate clubs or business incubators, as well as by student organisations, NGOs and employers.

**Career Offices** support gaining the lacking competences taking into account diagnosis of employers' needs, including such actions as

- assistance in planning career development paths,
- transferring practical skills,
- facilitating skills connected with navigating on the labour market,
- providing contacts with employers (e.g. job fairs, promotion of graduates in social media),
- assistance in finding job offers,
- organising internships and apprenticeships.<sup>7</sup>

**Alumni clubs'** mission is to maintain ties between the university and its graduates, at the same time providing them with some services and offering additional education. The employment/employability support actions of the alumni clubs include:

- establishing business contacts (as part of social groups on the internet, meetings of graduates),
- promoting success stories of the graduates,
- developing the knowledge and skills of graduates by encouraging them to post-graduate studies, courses, training, etc. organised by the university (e.g. club members can take advantage of a discount on post-graduate studies, MBA or language courses),
- mentoring (e.g. the Graduate - Mentor Program which is about sharing knowledge/experience of the graduates who become an entrepreneur, manager or specialist in some industry).

**Academic Business Incubators** –university agencies or other type of entities acting in partnership with the tertiary education institutions in order to support economic activity of students / graduates, doctoral students as well as employees of a given university.<sup>8</sup> Incubators can carry out 2 types of activity:

- pre-incubation, i.e. support for young people planning to set up own business, without formally registering it in official registers and offices (instead - making use of the incubator's legal personality),
- incubation, i.e. support provided after official registration of a new business (the offer of support includes: accounting, use of office space and equipment, legal and business consultancy, assistance in obtaining financing, training, etc.).

**AIESEC, IASTE, ELSA, AGEE** are international student and young graduates organisations providing their members with opportunities for development of leadership qualities as well as other social

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<sup>7</sup> For example, *Wroclaw University of Technology Career Office* prepares students and graduates to enter the labour market through training, counselling and cooperation with employers (<https://biurokarier.pwr.edu.pl>). Besides, there are also activities counteracting COVID-19 related contraction of vacancies by means of offering various jobs at the university to own students and doctoral students (e.g. <https://www.uw.edu.pl/student/praca-dla-studentow-i-doktorantow-uw/>)

<sup>8</sup> In Poland academic business incubators act on the basis of the Law on Higher Education and Science. An example of an incubator connected to particular university is Academic Entrepreneurship Incubator of the Wroclaw University of Technology (<http://www.inkubator.pwr.wroc.pl/>) while AIP Foundation is an example of NGO run incubator which established entire network of academic incubators in many tertiary education institutions across Poland (<https://aip.link/>).

and professional competences. Moreover, they provide contacts and promotion among employers, as well as opportunities of work experience through the following activities:

- international volunteering,<sup>9</sup>
- international and domestic internships,<sup>10</sup>
- domestic internships / apprenticeships,<sup>11</sup>
- fairs and research activities as well as other forms of gathering and transferring information on reciprocal expectations between graduates and employers,<sup>12</sup>
- training courses, workshops and knowledge competitions,<sup>13</sup>
- language workshops.<sup>14</sup>

**Employers own initiatives** focused on tertiary education students and graduates aim at getting highly educated, most adequately trained, well verified and generally best fitting new employees for the benefit of big corporations which typically organise such projects.<sup>15</sup> At the same time young people can get training of useful skills, develop social competencies and even get some mentoring support as well as the most important work experience. The more recognised company – the bigger value of these work or training activities for young person CV, however sometimes the young people also get paid for their work.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> An example of such activities is *Global Volunteer* program organised by AIESEC - a volunteer project aimed at young people interested in practical experience in projects responding to economic, ecological and socio-cultural problems of the modern world. Volunteering usually lasts 6 weeks. All projects support UN Sustainable Development Goals.

<sup>10</sup> An example of such activities is *Global Talent* program organised by AIESEC. It offers professional internships lasting from 6 weeks to 18 months, which are used to acquire skills useful in a professional career; IAESTE organises International Internship program and paid engineering internships in over 80 countries.

<sup>11</sup> There are many student organisations providing internships. In Poland ELSA runs free or paid internship programs in the field of legal professions; AIESEC conducts business /managerial internships in the small and medium-sized enterprises sector and in international corporations for students and graduates of economics, management, marketing, PR and finance; there are also technical internships for students and graduates of IT, mechanics, engineering and chemistry, as well as educational internships for students and graduates of philology and language school teachers, e.g. in language schools

<sup>12</sup> An example of such research on student expectations is a contest *Employer of the Year* carried out by AIESEC.

<sup>13</sup> AEGEE organises many knowledge competitions in various areas of law as well as in mediation, speech competences, also organises workshops in the form of court hearings; ELSA organises seminars and scientific conferences; AIESEC organises expert panels and training courses as part of the Youth Speak Forum project.

<sup>14</sup> Such courses conducted by foreign teachers, including the so-called Language Tours - several hours of meetings with a teacher who, while walking around the city, teaches popular phrases organised as part of the AIESEC University project

<sup>15</sup> *PZU Career program* is addressed to graduates of various Polish universities and advanced students. It provides a 3 months or 6 months internship accompanied by introductory training, training of various competences, group integration activities as well as individual support from senior PZU employees (<https://www.pzu.pl/praktyki>).

<sup>16</sup> For instance Bosch company has a permanent program *Your first steps in Bosch* aimed mainly for students and graduates up to the age of 26, which offers paid internships for graduates up to the age of 26 as well as paid part-time work for students (<https://www.bosch.pl/kariera/studenci-i-absolwenci/>).



## Appendix 2.

### Activities/programs and projects focused on young women

An on-line project **M.arter** is an example of **commercial internet services** for parents, especially mothers who want to reconcile some form of employment (including own business) with parenthood or want to get back to work after some maternity break. The service provides on-line courses, webinars, workshops, individual consultations, etc. <sup>17</sup>

The **Mommypreneurs** is an example of free of charge projects **addressed to young, inactive mothers** (aged 15-29) and is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment. The project aims to equip young women with new digital and entrepreneurial competences in order to get a job or start their own business. The project actions include:

- providing free and professional care for students' children during the trainings,
- trainings of digital and entrepreneurial competences,
- linking the project participants with employers and mentors (including through networking meetings organised as part of the project).<sup>18</sup>

**MakerWoman FabLab** is another example of non-commercial **projects aimed at women who have no job, including university students and graduates** as well as the **other women returning to work after some break related to maternity**. These projects are run by the Orange Foundation and include:

- workshops and consultations,
- learning to use software and working with machines such as a laser plotter and CNC machine,
- creating your own prototype,
- learning 2D and 3D design, prototyping, modelling.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> <https://marter.cz>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.mommypreneurs.uni.lodz.pl/szkolenia>

<sup>19</sup> <https://fablabtwarda.pl/makerwoman/>