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COVER NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: Investing in Youth Employment: Implementation of the Youth Guarantee

Delegations will find attached the EL country fiche.

GREECE

1. Conclusions - 2017 multilateral surveillance review of the implementation of the YG

The labour market situation is improving in Greece, but continues to be very challenging, with youth unemployment and NEET rates well above EU average. Greece has taken important steps towards an effective implementation of the Youth Guarantee. Partnerships provide a strong basis for further improvement of outreach efforts. The capacity of the Public Employment Service is key and the significant modernisation of the PES should support the provision of personalised services. The reform of the apprenticeship system, recently adopted, needs to be swiftly implemented to show effects. The new web portal is very promising and, together with other measures, could contribute to increase the effectiveness of the Youth Guarantee system. Quality and timeliness of offers remain a challenge that requires continued efforts, as does the need to increase the labour market relevance of training.

2. YG monitoring 2016: key data

Highlights

- ❖ Six out of ten (60.2%) of those registered in the YG scheme at any point during 2016 had been waiting for an offer for more than 4 months.
- ❖ Only just over a quarter (26.4%) of those leaving the YG in 2015 took-up an offer within the 4-month target.
- ❖ On average, 46.1% of NEETs aged 15-24 in Greece were registered in the YG preparatory phase at any point during 2016. This represents a significant improvement in coverage to the previous year (33.9%), though this partly reflects the reduction in youth unemployment and, therefore, the decreasing share of unemployed NEETs (inactive NEETs are not addressed by the scheme).
- ❖ Only two in five (41.4%) of those that left the YG in 2016 were known to be in a positive situation 6 months after leaving.
- ❖ Longer-term follow-up data for those leaving the YG in 2014 and 2015 suggest that the limited positive outcomes achieved are sustainable, with the proportion known to be in a positive situation remaining at similar levels (around 40%) 12 and 18 months after exiting the YG.

Introduction

The Greek Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan was presented in December 2013 and updated in June 2014. The design of the YG scheme drew upon the experience gained from the "Action Plan of Targeted Interventions to Strengthen Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship within the Operational Programme of NSRF"¹ (January 2013), which was the first cohesive effort to tackle youth unemployment. The scheme is based on the broader national strategy laid out in the "Partnership Agreement for the Development Framework, 2014-2020" and the "Action Plan for Creating New Jobs and Supporting Unemployed People" (May 2013).

The Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Welfare is in charge of the strategic planning and implementation of the YG, with the Employment Directorate of the Ministry appointed as the National Coordinator and responsible for fostering dialogue and cooperation with all institutions involved. The Ministry of Labour is supported by the PES (OAED) and other actors including the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Rural Development and Food, the Ministry for Development and Competitiveness, the Ministry of Merchant Marine and Island Policy, the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Culture, local authorities and social partners.

Further information is available in the national YG Implementation Plan.

1 Quality of data

1.1. Key changes compared to 2015

There have been no changes in the way that the YG data for 2016 have been compiled when compared to previous years. However, follow-up data for the EPAS apprenticeship programme for reference year 2015 have been improved to include a breakdown by age. Additionally, the share of exits to subsidised employment is fully reported (in previous years it was understated as part of exits were recorded simply as exits to employment).

1.2. Data quality 2016

With the exception of exits to education and follow-up data regarding young people in education, apprenticeship, and inactivity, Greece has provided all of the data requested. However, there are still some technical issues to be solved, especially regarding the correct recording of people that take part in a traineeship programme that does not break the unemployment spell (currently an exit is recorded but the person remains in the stock). The proportion of unknown destinations for exits is also too high (46.3%), which means that the indicator results have low reliability and limited comparability.

¹ National Strategic Reference Framework

Details of the data provided and any divergence from the definitions are presented in [Table 1](#).

Table 1: Completion and comparability of direct monitoring data, 2016

Coverage of data	
Providers	Public Employment Service (PES) (OAED)
Participants	Young people aged 15-24 registering with the PES as unemployed (PES main register) or in the apprenticeship program (EPAS register).
Completion of data	
Missing data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exits to education. - Exits to self-employment cover only participants in ALMPs. - Exits to traineeships are not fully recorded as training providers accepting the voucher 18-24 were not obliged to report no. of participants to the PES. The numbers affected are thought to be small. - Breakdown of entrants by previous YG experience is available only for participants in the PES main register but there is not information about those that did not take-up an offer. - Follow-up data for situations self-employment, education, apprenticeship and inactivity (PES main register). - Number of participants that have not reached the observation point after exit (situation "not applicable" in follow-up data).
Data recording	
Stocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PES stock data include participants that exited to traineeships that do not break the unemployment spell. - Exit to unemployment is not possible, as exit data refer to deregistration from unemployment records. - Inactivity means exit reason is due to unavailability for work (temporarily or permanently according to legislation) such as army enlistment, maternity, illness, imprisonment, travelling abroad. - Exits to education cannot be monitored (under unknown). - Exits to employment and traineeship are understated. Exits to self-employment are counted only when participants participate in an ALMP measure, rest is under unknown destination. Participation in some traineeships does not break the unemployment spell and in this case the person remains in the stock and no exit is recorded. - Proportion of unknown destinations: 46.3%
Exits by destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow-up data for situations self-employment, education, apprenticeship and inactivity cannot be monitored (PES main register). - Follow-up data for participants in apprenticeships (EPAS register) are estimated based on the duration of the programme. - Proportion of unknown situations (6m after exit): 35.3%
Follow-up T	
Comparability of data	
Definitions	Stock data include participants that exited the YG to ALMPs that do not break the unemployment spell.
Across time	Data are comparable but the difference in reporting methods (2014 data cover only new starts) should be considered.

Source: YG monitoring template (quantitative data).

2 Monitoring results

This section presents the results of YG monitoring on the basis of the [Indicator Framework for](#)

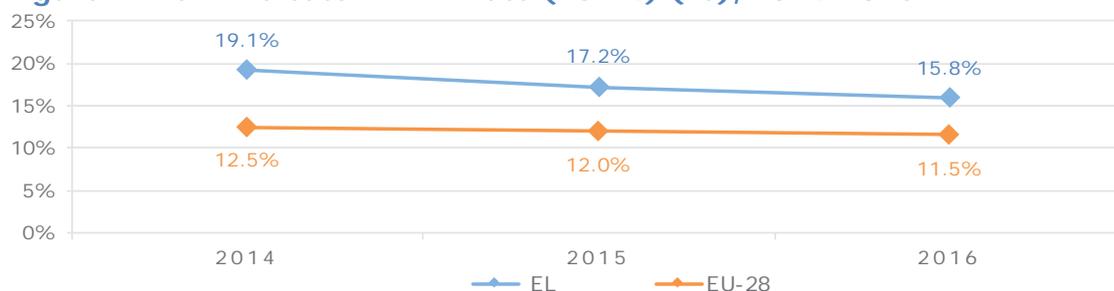
Monitoring the Youth Guarantee. Aggregate monitoring indicators are based on data from the EU Labour Force Survey and are considered comparable between countries. Direct and follow-up monitoring indicators are, however, based on national administrative data and, although they are in principle based on a common methodological framework, differences in definitions, institutional practices and the capacity to collect all of the necessary data, particularly in relation to follow-up, may impact on the comparability of data between countries. Readers are recommended to refer to the *Notes about the data* in annex to this report.

2.1 Aggregate monitoring: Macroeconomic indicators

Indicators for aggregate level monitoring of the YG are based on data from the EU Labour Force Survey (LFS) and are intended to monitor the general situation of young people in the EU. The evolution of these indicators through time represents an indirect means of monitoring the effects of implementing the YG and may also reflect the impact of preventive measures to help young people avoid falling into unemployment or inactivity. The aggregate level indicators are complemented by the direct and follow-up level indicators that monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of YG delivery and help to disentangle the impact of policy measures from general economic developments.

The main indicator for YG monitoring at the aggregate level is the NEET rate for young people aged 15-24 – i.e. the proportion of people aged 15-24 that are not in employment, education or training. In 2016, the NEET rate in Greece was 15.8%, well above the EU average of 11.5%, although this represents a considerable improvement (reduction) compared to 2014 (19.1%), the year the YG implementation started (see [Figure 2](#)). This decline derives almost entirely from a 27% fall in the number of unemployed NEETs as the number of inactive NEETs has hardly changed.

Figure 2: Main indicator: NEET rate (15-24) (%), 2014-2016



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey, data extracted 19 October 2017.

2.2 Direct-monitoring: effectiveness of YG implementation

The main indicator for direct monitoring shows that, on average in 2016, three fifths (60.2%) of young people aged 15-24 registered in the YG preparatory phase had been waiting for an offer for more than 4 months, well above the EU average of 49.1% (see [Table 3](#)). This result represents a progressive deterioration in the efficiency of implementation. Although the increase of 16.4 percentage points compared to 2014 result is partly to be expected (as 2014 data covered only new starts after 1 January 2014 so that durations in excess of 4 months were only possible from May onwards), the situation has also worsened compared to 2015 (55.5%). The data indicate that prolonged retention in the preparatory phase is more prevalent amongst young women (62.6%) than young men (56.6%).

Table 3: Main indicator: Proportion of young people in the YG preparatory phase beyond the 4-month target, 2016

Still in the YG preparatory phase after 4 months:	2016	2014-2016 change (pp)	EU average Total (15-24)
Total (15-24)	60.2%	+16.4	49.1%
Breakdown by age			
15-19	58.6%	+14.6	46.2%
20-24	60.5%	+16.7	49.3%
Breakdown by gender			
Men	56.6%	+11.8	48.0%
Women	62.6%	+19.6	49.9%

Source: DG EMPL, YG monitoring database, data extracted 14 November 2017.

The proportion of participants registered in the YG for more than 6 months (47.4%) and more than 12 months (26.0%) were also well above the EU averages (36.2% and 18.3% respectively, [Figure 3](#)) and have increased considerably over time (+22.1 pp and 26 pp).

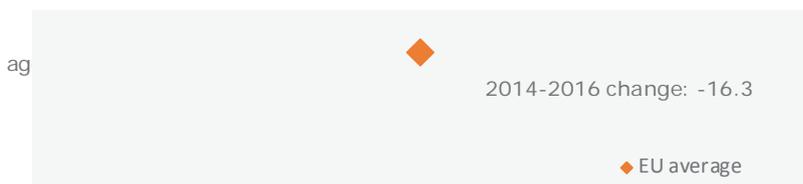
The supplementary indicator on positive and timely exits shows that only just over a quarter (26.4%) of young people leaving the Greek YG in 2016 took up an offer within 4 months of registration ([Figure 3](#)). This figure is well below the EU average (44.5%) but is liable to be understated to some extent because of a high proportion of unknown destinations (44.6% of those leaving within 4 months compared to the EU average of 20.2%). The Greek data are based on reasons for ending an unemployment spell and a significant proportion of the unknowns are likely to relate to young people that found a job under their own initiative but did not inform the employment services. In addition, exits to education and some exits to traineeships and self-employment cannot be monitored.

Figure 3: YG implementation, direct monitoring indicators, 2016

Main indicator: Proportion of young people in the YG preparatory phase beyond the 4-month target (durations 4,6 and 12 months) (% YG stock)



Supplementary indicator: Positive and timely exits from the YG preparatory phase (% exits)

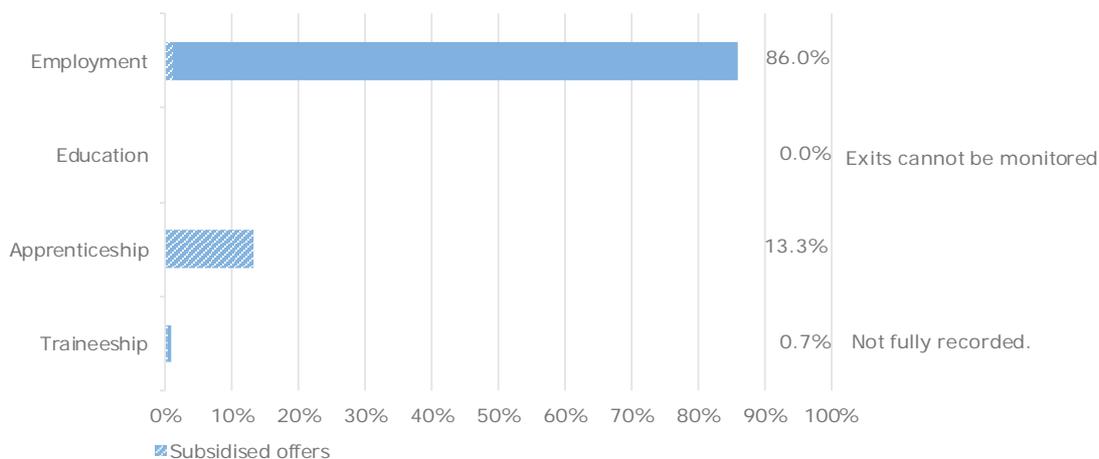


Source: DG EMPL, YG monitoring database, data extracted 14 November 2017.

Just over half (53.9%) of those leaving the YG within 4 months of registration went to positive destinations. Almost nine in ten of these (86.0%) took up an offer of employment, with the remainder taking up apprenticeships (13.3%) and traineeships (0.7%) (Figure 4). As traineeship providers were not obliged to report the beginning of traineeships to the PES the number of traineeships is slightly understated. Offers to education cannot be monitored.

All apprenticeship offers and half (50.5%) of traineeships were subsidised but only 1.2% of employment offers. Based on the available data, 85.0% of all offers taken up within 4 months were open market jobs.

Figure 4: Distribution of positive and timely exits by destination (% timely & positive exits), 2016



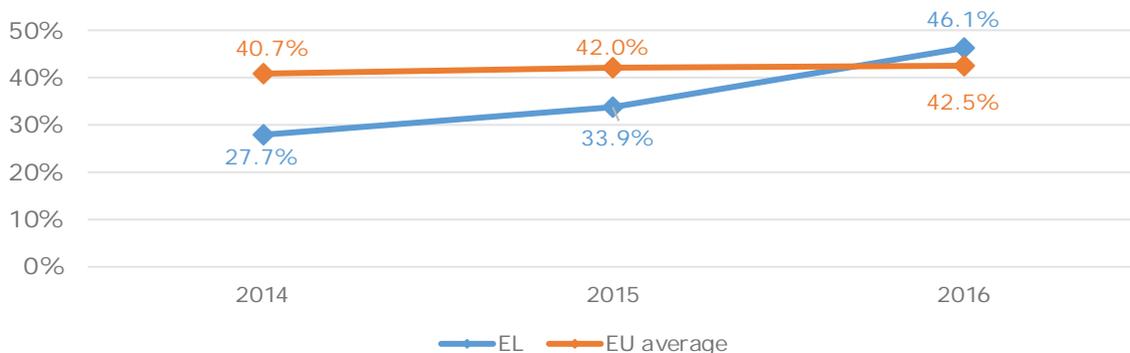
Source: DG EMPL, YG monitoring database, data extracted 14 November 2017.

2.3 Direct monitoring: coverage of the YG target population

The Council Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee² aims 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 four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. Reaching the entire population, and in particular those that do not come forwards on their own initiative, is one of the key challenges confronting YG providers in all countries.

The second supplementary indicator for direct monitoring uses NEET rates and population data published by Eurostat together with the annual average stock of participants in the YG preparatory phase in order to estimate the proportion of the NEET population that is covered by the YG scheme (see Figure 5). Note that the criteria used to delimit the NEET population used in the denominator, which is derived from the EU Labour Force Survey (LFS), may differ from the specific conditions applied in each country to register in the YG, so that the two populations may not fully overlap. In other words, the LFS NEET population is a proxy for, rather than an exact measure of, the YG target population. Consequently, results for this indicator should be considered as the best available estimate of the coverage of YG schemes.

Figure 5: YG participants as a proportion of the NEET population (%), 2016



Source: DG EMPL, YG monitoring database, data extracted 14 November 2017.

In Greece, nearly half (46.1%) of NEETs aged 15-24 were enrolled in the YG scheme at any point during 2016, much improved compared to previous years (see Figure 5), and above the EU average of 42.5%. The increased coverage compared to 2014 may partly be explained by the improved reporting method as 2014 data covered only new starts, which means that young people already registered with the PES before 2014 and still eligible for support were not counted in the data. Additionally, the improved coverage is also related to a significant reduction in the number of unemployed NEETs so that their share in the overall NEET population has reduced. The number of inactive NEETs, who are not addressed by the Greek YG, has hardly changed over the period.

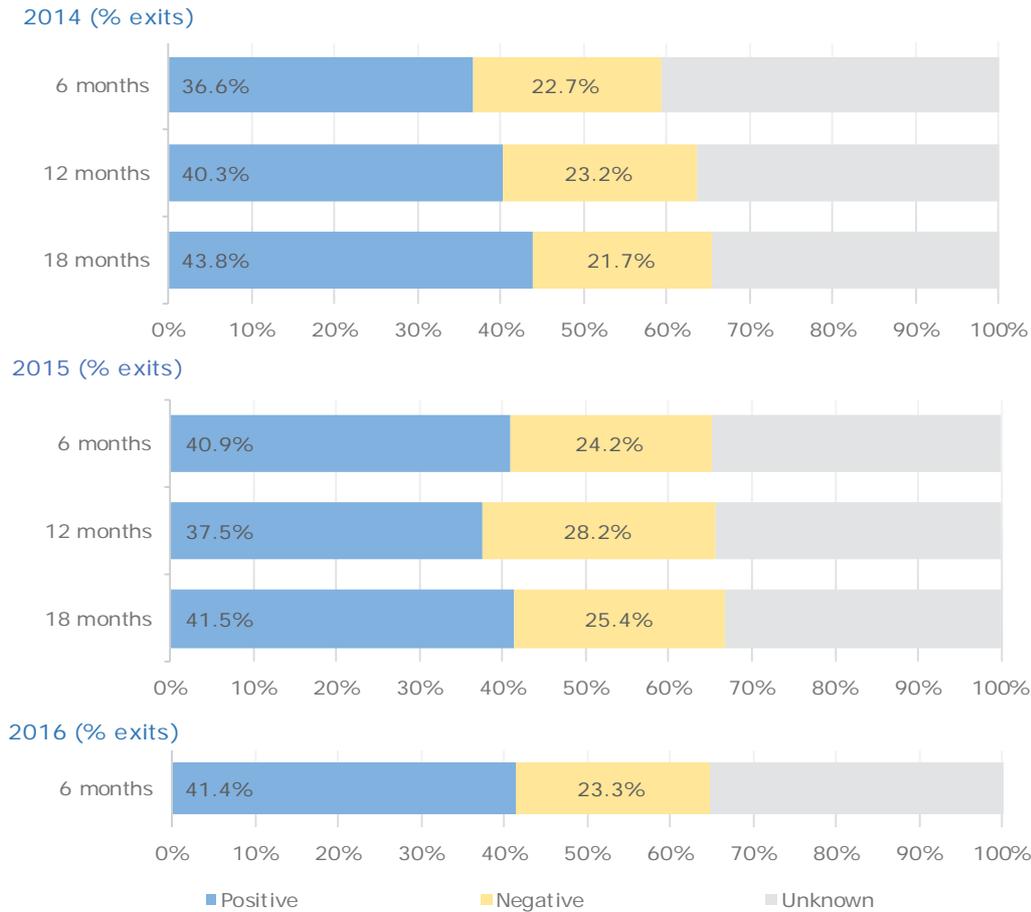
2.4 Follow-up: sustainability of YG outcomes

The main follow-up indicator on the situation of young people after exiting the YG preparatory phase shows that, in Greece, two fifths (41.4%) of those leaving during 2016 were known to be in a positive situation (i.e. in employment, apprenticeship, or traineeship) 6 months after exit. This figure is below the EU average of 48.5%, though improved compared to previous years (Figure 6). The figure is likely to be understated as situations self-employment, education, apprenticeship (main PES register) cannot be monitored and the share of people in unknown situations is relatively high (35.3%).

Longer-term follow-up data for 2014 and 2015 suggest that outcomes are sustainable as the proportion known to be in a positive situation 12 and 18 months after exiting remains on similar to the 6 months after exiting levels.

² <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF>

Figure 6: Follow-up main indicator: Situation of young people 6, 12 and 18 months after exiting the YG preparatory phase, 2014-2016



Source: DG EMPL, YG monitoring database, data extracted 14 November 2017.

2.5 Additional results for the 25-29 age-group

The Greek YG covers only young people aged under 25. Accordingly, Greece did not provide optional data for the 25-29 age-group.

Annex

Notes about the data

Comparability. Data are compiled on the basis of a common methodology - the [Indicator Framework for Monitoring the Youth Guarantee](#), endorsed by the Employment Committee (EMCO) in May 2015, and the accompanying methodological manual – and are therefore considered broadly comparable between countries. Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that the data for direct and follow-up monitoring are derived from national administrative registers that are designed to support and monitor specific national systems, which vary in terms of the processes followed and definitions applied and may, therefore, result in some inherent differences between countries. These differences are, however, expected to be relatively minor and more important differences are those that derive from the way in which YG schemes have been implemented and the capacity of countries to provide complete data.

In relation to implementation, the size and composition of the population registered in the YG will initially be different for countries that implemented the YG as a completely new approach and monitored inflows starting from zero, compared to countries that implemented the YG as a reinforcement of existing processes and monitored inflows accumulating with the existing stock. Countries in the former group will tend to have a smaller stock with lower average duration. Differences that result from this artefact of the data are guaranteed to reduce through time, evidence of convergence was apparent already in the 2015 data, and continued in the 2016 data.

The capacity of countries to monitor what happens to young people on leaving the YG impacts on the quality of data on both exits and follow-up but particularly for the latter. Almost half of Member States (15) either provide no follow-up data (8) or do not know the subsequent situation of the majority (at least 2/3) of young people passing through the YG (7 countries).³ The problem derives from a lack of capacity to routinely link administrative registers or legal restrictions to do so. The investment needed to link PES registers and other administrative registers (e.g. social security) would have benefits not only for YG monitoring but also for other EU level data collections (e.g. LTU and LMP) as well as providing a base for policy evaluation at national level.

Coverage indicator. The second supplementary indicator for direct monitoring measures the proportion of the NEET population (average across the year) that is registered in the YG preparatory phase (annual average stock). Whilst data for the numerator are derived from administrative data in each country, the only available comparable data on the size of the NEET population that can be used as a denominator derive from the EU Labour Force Survey. This uses a definition of NEETs that is common across countries⁴ but which may vary from the definitions applied in the context of national YG schemes and in the administrative data used to monitor these. Results should thus be interpreted as an estimation, rather than a definitive measurement, of the extent to which YG schemes achieve the objective of reaching all young people that become, or are already, NEET.

EU level data. Figures labelled “EU-28” used in aggregate level monitoring are based on aggregates of all NEETs in all Member States and therefore represent weighted averages, which can be significantly influenced by the situation in a small number of large countries. Figures labelled “EU average” are unweighted averages of all available country figures. In relation to the destination of exits and follow-up data, the EU averages are liable to be understated due to significant numbers of unknown destinations or subsequent situations in some countries.

³ Based on 2016 data for Follow-up T-1 (i.e. data on the situation of participants who left the YG preparatory phase in 2015).

⁴ See [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_and_training_\(NEET\)](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_and_training_(NEET))