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**COVER NOTE**

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

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Delegations will find attached the SK country fiche.

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## SLOVAKIA

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

Despite some positive developments, challenges remain in the labour market. Slovakia has made progress on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee. Counselling and individualized services for long-term unemployed are being 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

### 2. YG monitoring 2016: key data

#### Highlights

- ❖ On average during 2016, nearly six in ten (57.7%) of those registered in the Slovakian YG scheme had been waiting for an offer for more than 4 months, with a third of these, or one in five (18.2%) of the total, registered for more than 12 months.
- ❖ Only one in three (36.6%) of those leaving the scheme in 2016 took up an offer within 4 months of registration, a poor result that shows no improvement since 2014 (36.2%).
- ❖ The YG scheme in Slovakia covered just under half (49.5%) of NEETs aged under 25, significantly fewer than in 2014 (60.9%). The YG scheme does not address the large numbers of inactive NEETs.
- ❖ Follow-up data show that more than half (54.2%) of those leaving the YG in 2016 were known to be in employment, education or training 6 months later. Outcomes are sustained over time, as longer-term follow-up data show that the proportions are maintained, with a slight increase of positive situations 18 months after exit.

## Introduction

Slovakia presented a Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan in January 2014, which was approved by the government in February 2014 and subsequently updated in line with the national reform programme in April 2014.

The YG in Slovakia is available to young people aged under 29, and especially targets those affected by long-term unemployment. There are special provisions for young disabled persons. Strengthening activities in the area of outreach was identified as a key challenge in the Commission's 3-year assessment of the YG and the YEI<sup>1</sup>.

Further information is available in the national YG implementation plan.

## 1 Quality of data

### 1.1. Key changes compared to 2015

The YG data for 2014 and 2015 previously provided by Slovakia were comprehensive and complete with all breakdowns. Nevertheless, there has been a key improvement in the 2016 data: by linking the administrative registers of the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and the Family (PES) and Social Insurance Agency, the situation after exit from the YG can be monitored for all those in insured employment and not only those who remained in contact with the PES (i.e. unemployed or in an active LMP measure), which was the case previously. This improvement has been applied to follow-up data for 2016 and previous years and has significantly reduced the proportion in unknown situations, although the numbers are still significant (34.2%).

The Commission's 3-year assessment had identified the need to improve tracking of participants on leaving and this effort to implement linking of registers represents an important step forward in this respect.

#### *Improved completion of data:*

- After linking of PES and social security databases, follow-up data are now much more comprehensive, as people in insured employment can be tracked (previously, situation was only known for those who were still in contact with the PES).

### 1.2. Data quality 2016

The YG data provided by Slovakia during the 2016 data collection were comprehensive and complete with all breakdowns. There are virtually no unknown destinations in the exits data (0.5%), as all destinations can be monitored, including inactivity. Moreover, the proportion of unknown situations 6 months after exit has been reduced by half, although it remains quite high (34.2%), primarily because people that are inactive (or in uninsured employment) cannot be tracked.

Improvements made in the 2016 data have been applied retrospectively so that data are fully comparable across years.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=16299&langId=en>

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	
<b>Providers</b>	Public Employment Services (PES)
<b>Participants</b>	Registered unemployed aged 15-29.
Completion of data	
<b>Missing data</b>	None.
Data recording	
<b>Entrants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Entry to the YG coincides with registration as unemployed so all entrants are registered unemployed.</li> <li>– Exit from the YG coincides with the ending of the unemployment spell so exits to unemployment are zero.</li> <li>– Exits to inactivity include: imprisonment, remand custody, maternity leave, depart to an EU Member State or a third country for over 15 calendar days (except in the case of treatment in a third country), request for de-registration for care of children aged under 10 or verified personal care for a closely-related person dependent on full-time personal care, request for de-registration and no cooperation with the PES.</li> </ul>
<b>Exits by destination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Proportion of unknown destinations: 0.5%</li> <li>– All situations except inactivity are monitored (linked database of PES and social security agency).</li> <li>– Proportion of unknown situations (6m after exit): 34.2%</li> </ul>
<b>Follow-up T</b>	
Comparability of data	
<b>Definitions</b>	– No known divergences from the specifications of the Indicator Framework.
<b>Across time</b>	– Data comparable.

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.

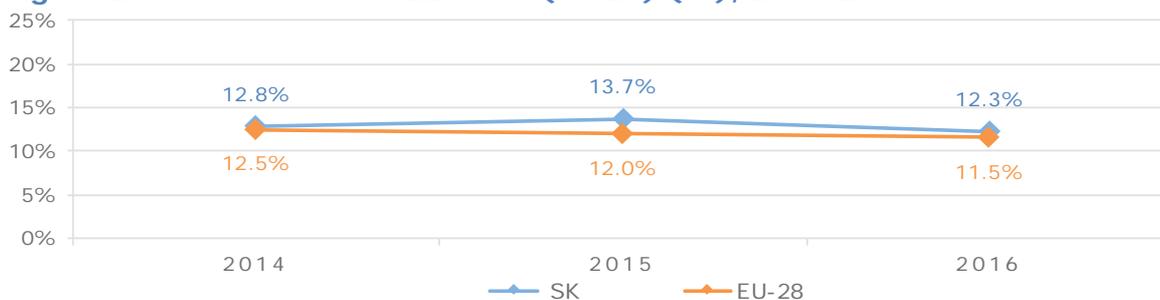
### 2.1 Aggregate monitoring: Macroeconomic indicators

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 Slovakia was 12.3%, slightly above the EU-28 aggregate figure of 11.5, and virtually the same as in 2014, when the YG was launched (see [Figure 2](#)).



**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, nearly six in ten (57.7%) of young people aged 15-24 registered in the YG preparatory phase had been waiting for an offer for more than 4 months. This proportion has remained more or less constant across the three years of YG implementation to date and is well above the EU average of 49.1% (see Table 3). It implies relatively inefficient implementation of the YG in terms of delivering timely offers.

Four in ten (42.0%) YG participants had been registered for more than 6 months and two in five (18.2%) for more than 12 months (Figure 3).

**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)	57.7%	-2.0	49.1%
<b>Breakdown by age</b>			
15-19	62.6%	-1.4	46.2%
20-24	55.9%	-2.2	49.3%
<b>Breakdown by gender</b>			
Men	57.9%	-3.1	48.0%
Women	57.4%	-0.6	49.9%

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

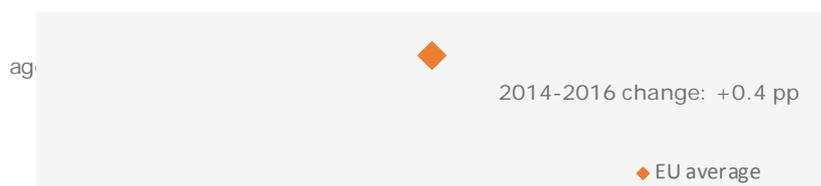
The supplementary indicator on positive and timely exits shows that only just over a third (36.6%) of those leaving the YG in 2016 took up an offer within the target period of 4 months, a poor result that has again changed little since 2014 (36.2%), and is some way below the EU average (44.5%).

### 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)

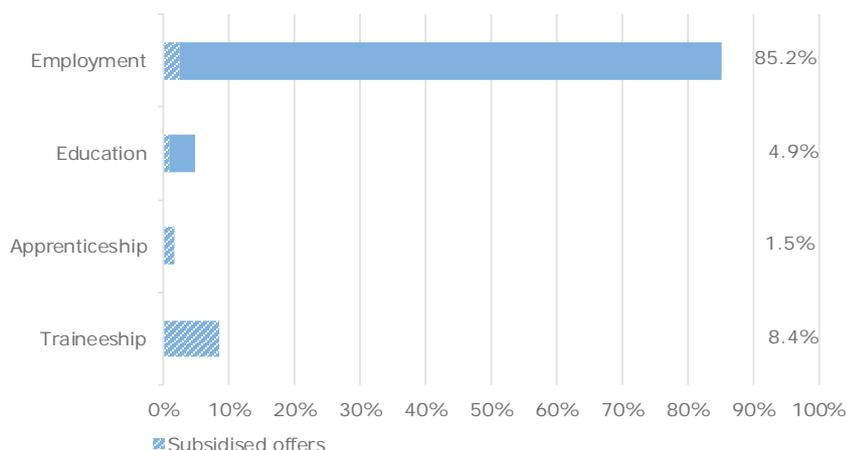


Source: DG EMPL, YG monitoring database, data extracted 14 November 2017.

More than three quarters (76.5%) of those leaving the YG within 4 months of registration in 2016 went to positive destinations. The large majority of those (85.2%) took up an offer of employment, less than one in ten (8.4%) a traineeship, while just 4.9% and 1.5% took up offers of education and apprenticeships respectively (Figure 4).

All traineeship and apprenticeship offers were subsidised, 14.4% of education offers and just 2.6% of employment offers, meaning that, most offers (83.0%) taken up within 4 months were open market jobs.

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



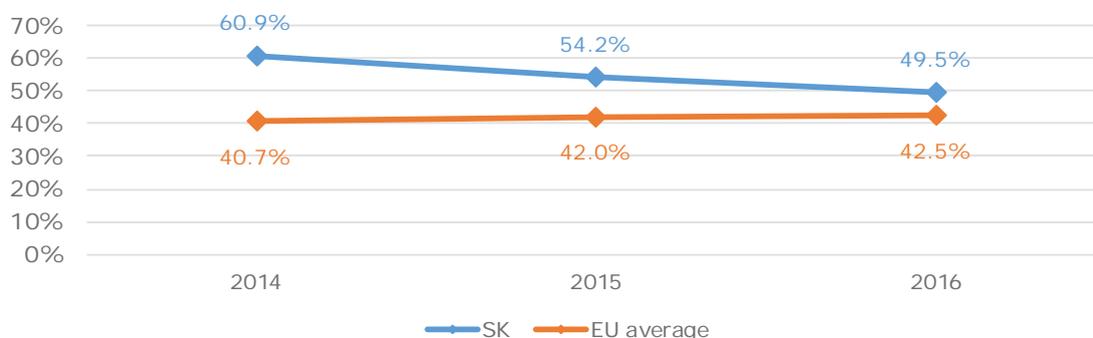
Source: DG EMPL, YG monitoring database, data extracted 14 November 2017.

## 2.3 Direct monitoring: coverage of the YG target population

The Council Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee<sup>2</sup> 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.

Results show that, on average in 2016, just under half (49.5%) of the NEET population in Slovakia was covered by the YG scheme, slightly above the EU average of 42.5%, but down more than 10 percentage points compared to 2014 (60.9%). The overall decline derived mainly from reduced coverage of those aged 15-19 (fall of 30.9 pp, from 84.1% to 53.2%) compared to those aged 20-24 (-7.1 pp, from 55.4% to 48.3%). This reflects an increase in the population of younger inactive NEETs that are not well covered by the YG scheme. Indeed, improving outreach to inactive NEETs has been highlighted by the Commission as one of the key challenges for the Slovakian YG.

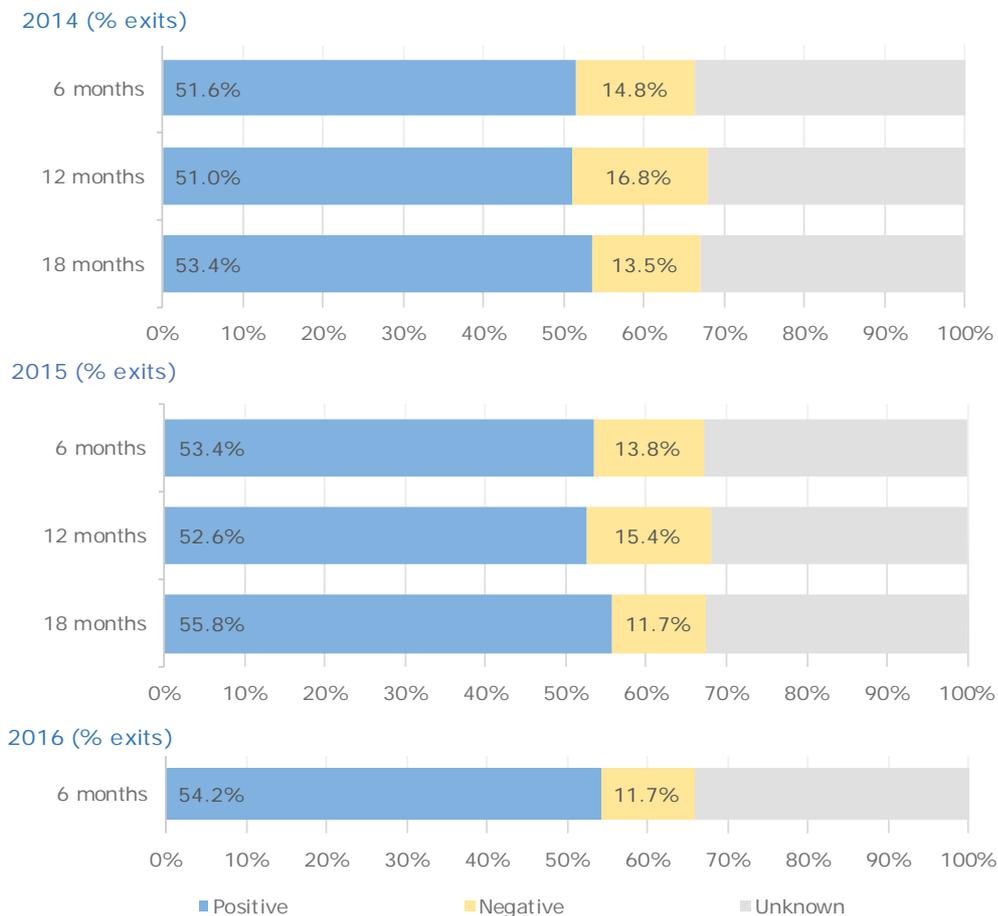
## 2.4 Follow-up: sustainability of YG outcomes

The main follow-up indicator on the situation of young people after exiting the YG preparatory phase shows that, in Slovakia, more than half (54.2%) of those leaving during 2016 were known to be in a positive situation (i.e. in employment, education, an apprenticeship, or a traineeship) 6 months after exit. This figure is slightly above the EU average of 48.5% (Figure 6). However, this could be understated, as despite the efforts made to link databases from social security and the PES, the subsequent situation was still unknown for more than a third of participants (34.2%).

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

Longer-term follow-up data for participants exiting the YG in 2014 and 2015 suggest that such outcomes are sustainable over time, as the proportions of participants in positive situations is maintained, if not slightly increased for at 18 months after exit. As previously pointed out, the high recycling rates suggest that some participants in positive situations may be in fact re-entrants that have taken up a second offer, but this issue requires further exploration.

**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

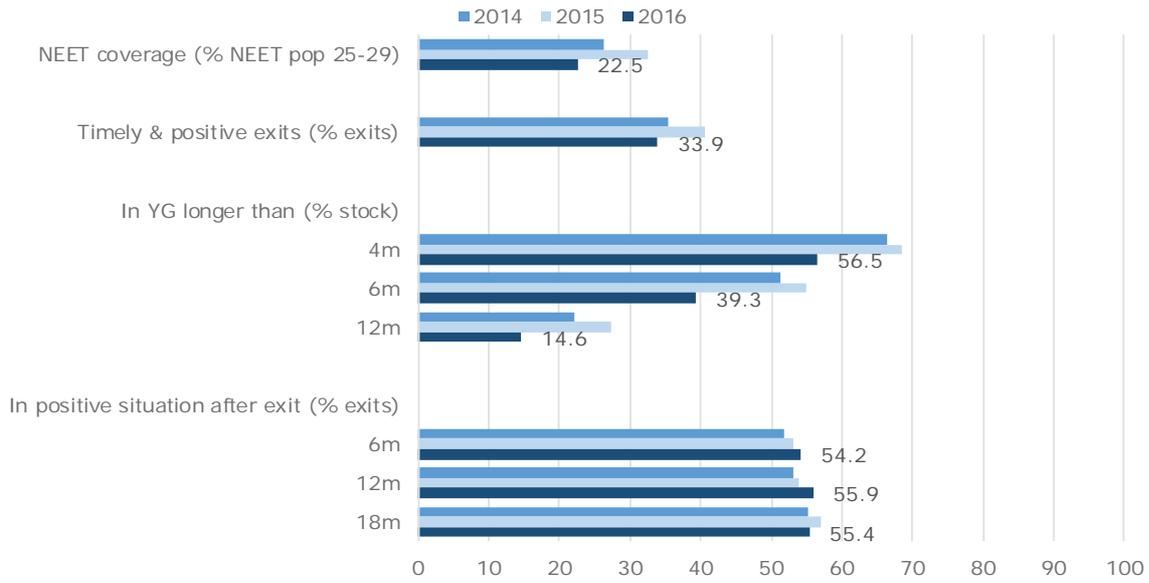
The Slovakian YG scheme also covers young people aged 25-29. Accordingly, optional data for the 25-29 age-group were provided and key results are shown in [Figure 7](#).

The main indicator shows that, on average in 2016, over half (56.5%) of those aged 25-29 registered in the YG at any point during the year had been registered for more than 4 months, in line with the situation for the main target group aged 15-24 (57.7%), though an improvement on the situation in 2014 (-9.9 pp from 66.4%).

The supplementary indicator on positive and timely exits shows that only a third (33.9%) of those aged 25-29 leaving the YG in 2016 took up an offer within 4 months, again close to the result for the main target group (36.6% for 15-24). It means that two in three did not get an offer within the target period.

Only over a fifth (22.5%) of NEETs aged 25-29 in Slovakia were covered by the YG in 2016, well below the figure for the main target group (49.5% for those aged 15-24).

**Figure 7: Key indicators for the 25-29 age-group, 2014 – 2016**



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

# 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).<sup>3</sup> 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 countries<sup>4</sup> 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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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).

<sup>4</sup> 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))