

Brussels, 20 February 2026
(OR. en)

6184/26
ADD 1

SOC 70
EMPL 28
EDUC 43
JEUN 25
ECOFIN 177

NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Employment Committee review of the implementation of the Youth
Guarantee
- Country-specific conclusions

With a view to the Council (EPSCO) on 9 March 2026, delegations will find attached the country specific conclusions of the **Employment Committee** review of the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, as transmitted by this Committee (EMCO).

The Key Messages from EMCO on its review of the implementation of the Youth Guarantee can be found in document **6184/26**.

**EMCO review of the implementation of the
2020 Council Recommendation on A Bridge to Jobs – Reinforcing the Youth Guarantee**

Country-specific conclusions

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WORKSHOP 1

Bulgaria

Bulgaria is demonstrating improvements in the implementation of the reinforced Youth Guarantee. The NEET rate has declined considerably since the last review in 2023, approaching the EU average, while the share of inactive NEETs remains among the highest in the EU and programme coverage remains limited.

Positively, school dropouts have fallen thanks to the successful approach adopted, although they remain high in rural areas.

Bulgaria continues to suffer from insufficient capacity to implement effective labour market policies, hindering its ability to support young people. Recent changes to the legal framework and ongoing work on data integration should allow NEET-relevant data to become more easily accessible, thereby facilitating outreach to inactive NEETs, who constitute the majority and are currently largely outside the Youth Guarantee. Ensuring the quality, timeliness and interoperability of data between institutions will be crucial to translating mapping, prevention and outreach efforts into concrete and individualised support.

Bulgaria has taken positive steps in developing cooperation with local employers for subsidised employment and mentoring schemes, effectively utilising ESF+ funding for activation and upskilling measures, and addressing remoteness, particularly for Roma communities. Nonetheless, there is still room for improvement to enhance prevention measures for younger NEETs and to further strengthen cooperation among all relevant stakeholders.

Furthermore, Bulgaria should better address the personal barriers faced by young people, such as low education, health issues, and the constraints of living in areas with limited job opportunities. To tackle these challenges, Bulgaria would benefit from strengthening the integration of services for NEETs, for example by further expanding the number of dedicated youth centres or coordination facilities.

Romania

Romania faces severe challenges, with the youth NEET rate being the highest in the EU and youth unemployment remaining significantly above the EU average, with little change in recent years. While some progress has been made since the 2023 review - including the introduction of digital tools in Public Employment Service, as well as efforts to improve early NEET identification - coverage of NEETs remains extremely low compared to the EU average.

Romania relies extensively on the ESF+ funding for tailored, youth-centred projects, with PES counselling services playing a key role in prevention. However, to make further progress, Romania should step up the implementation of youth employment measures under the ESF+ and further develop partnerships with employers to better adapt training to labour market needs and improve the quality of offers through enhanced monitoring.

Furthermore, Romania would need to strengthen outreach methods through the full institutionalisation of inter-agency coordination and significantly improve the follow-up of offers through further digitalisation of Public Employment Services. Romania could also benefit from developing additional support infrastructure - such as childcare facilities and public transport - especially in rural and disadvantaged areas, where service gaps persist and local data remain limited.

Lithuania

Lithuania is implementing the reinforced Youth Guarantee well, despite a recent sharp rise in both the NEET rate and youth unemployment. The increase in the NEET rate was mainly driven by a rise in inactive NEETs during 2023 and 2024. A key challenge remains the very low coverage of the youngest NEETs (15-19) by the Youth Guarantee in 2024, which is almost half the EU average.

Positive developments include an increase in the number of both regional career centres developed by the Public Employment Service and open youth centres supported by the Agency of Youth Affairs, which has significantly boosted their capacity for integrated services, mapping and prevention. Preventative measures are generally successful, with a network of regional career centres offering a wide range of services. However, the lack of information on risk cases linked to school attendance or educational performance limits prevention efforts.

The overall efficiency of the Youth Guarantee scheme is high: the time taken to receive an offer is better than the EU average, and the quality of placement offers is good, as demonstrated by positive outcomes six and twelve months after exiting the Youth Guarantee, which are slightly above EU averages. These outcomes indicate that the one-stop-shop approach and integrated service delivery model are working effectively. However, the capacity to further extend the scope of the Youth Guarantee may be constrained by low spending on active labour market policies.

The unpopularity of apprenticeships and traineeships leads to these active policy measures remaining underused. Lithuania could consider introducing additional measures to promote them, including via incentives for small and medium-sized enterprises.

Latvia

Youth unemployment and NEET rates in Latvia are currently close to the EU average, but both have increased in 2024, showing the vulnerability of this group to the economic downturn and potentially placing renewed pressure on the Youth Guarantee scheme going forward.

Overall, the Youth Guarantee performs relatively well, using an integrated service model that effectively brings together municipalities, social service providers, the Public Employment Services, employers and educational institutions.

However, the main challenge remains coverage, with two-thirds of NEETs not registered in the Youth Guarantee scheme in 2024. To bring more inactive NEETs into the scheme, Latvia should strengthen outreach efforts, particularly in regions and rural areas facing greater structural barriers.

Collaboration and data sharing between the different bodies, as well as academic analysis, could be further improved particularly with a view to strengthen the early prevention support mechanism. In addition, there is a need to strengthen the follow-up of young NEETs after they exit the scheme in order to enhance the long-term sustainability of support. The identified structural barriers reinforce the need for Latvia to continue improving integrated service provision.

Hungary

Hungary has demonstrated new commitments to strengthen the implementation of the Youth Guarantee. In Hungary, youth unemployment is not particularly high, and the NEET rate remains below the EU average. However, coverage of the Youth Guarantee has so far been extremely low, possibly due to technical reasons, as highlighted in the 2024 Youth Guarantee Country Fiche. Weaknesses persist in reaching the most vulnerable groups, as over 60 per cent of NEETs are inactive, with women, persons with disabilities and certain regions requiring particular attention. Hungary should also consider the structural barriers these groups face in accessing the Youth Guarantee scheme, including the need to expand care services, transport and local services tailored to their needs.

Support for basic skills development should be strengthened, and NEETs should be further encouraged to take up offers that boost employability. Furthermore, training pathways offering longer-term prospects, especially for the low-skilled, should be improved.

Measures introduced to strengthen NEET mapping and outreach and to reinforce Youth Guarantee counsellor capacity are welcome, as is the introduction of new type of jobseeker training support system and pilot post-placement mentoring services, whose impact should be monitored.

While the highly centralised system of active labour market policies provides a good opportunity to steer policy and cooperation, there is ample scope to incentivise and strengthen collaboration - particularly among service providers in education, social services, health and guidance - to facilitate the outreach of those furthest from the labour market.

The system is expected to be further strengthened by recently launched surveys and impact studies. Finally, as the Hungarian Youth Guarantee is currently project-based and reliant on EU funding, Hungary could build on this experience and consider mainstreaming the scheme into national policy.

Greece

Greece is progressing in the implementation of the reinforced Youth Guarantee. The NEET rate has decreased significantly, although it remains above the EU average. Most young NEETs are unemployed, pointing to structural challenges in the labour market, such as barriers to job creation or skills mismatches. In this context, efforts to develop an effective skills forecasting mechanism to identify current and future labour market needs, as well as to promote active policies and outreach, are commendable. For long-term success, the continued effective delivery and consolidation of the skills forecasting mechanism are key to aligning educational curricula with labour market needs.

There is still scope to strengthen both preventive and outreach activities by more actively involving local partners outside the formal labour market and education institutions, including those targeting young Roma.

The decreased coverage of the scheme and offer timeliness below the EU average highlight the need to improve the quality of offers and activation measures. The integration of digital skills assessment and its provision at the preparatory stage could be further strengthened.

The success and sustainability of start-up incentives and expanded wage subsidies targeted at young people depend critically on the readiness of support services, especially for vulnerable NEETs.

The newly introduced subsidies for transport in rural and suburban areas, as well as for housing costs, should also be noted.

Community Centres could potentially function as one-stop shops, in partnership with other stakeholders and service providers, to deliver more integrated and sustainable activation pathways.

Portugal

Portugal continues to improve the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, with the NEET rate remaining steadily below the EU average in recent years and a significant number of measures and programmes available to young NEETs.

However, a key challenge remains outreach to all young NEETs, particularly those who are inactive and further from the labour market. The National Strategy for Identifying Young NEETs provides a relevant framework for linking Public Employment Services with local partners - including municipalities, youth associations and private social welfare organisations - and demonstrates a degree of sustainability. Nonetheless, Portugal should achieve more effective activation of young inactive people.

Cooperation between Public Employment Services and employers need to be improved to facilitate the identification and reporting of labour shortages and skills gaps. This could help also in view of the structural high level of youth unemployment. The Public Employment Services could improve services by setting up dedicated teams for partnerships with employers and by developing integrated services aimed at offering better job opportunities to young NEETs.

Among the positive policy actions recently introduced is the offer of open-ended, full-time contracts with competitive salaries.

In addition, vocational education and training courses and dual training apprenticeships, co-financed by the ESF+, remain vital for providing relevant qualifications aligned with skills shortages.

Better coordination among all institutional stakeholders is recommended to make the best use of available funds for the implementation of innovative NEET policies. Furthermore, the sharing of NEET-specific data among institutions at regional, local and national levels remains limited and would require a coordination mechanism to ensure the interoperability of information systems.

Slovakia

Slovakia is progressing well in the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, with the overall NEET rate at the EU average. The country uses diverse approaches to reach its target groups, including social work, online platforms and targeted campaigns. However, the effectiveness of outreach is hindered by uneven territorial coverage and seemingly insufficient human resources. To improve activation and access to the Youth Guarantee, greater field presence and more targeted social work for marginalised youth and communities could be beneficial.

The recent inclusion of inactive individuals in material need among Youth Guarantee beneficiaries is commendable, as is the scaling up of regional one-stop shops for young people.

To increase efficiency and ensure positive outcomes, stronger evidence-based targeting, improved resource allocation and enhanced systemic coordination are necessary.

The planned reforms under the National Plan for the Reinforced Youth Guarantee show good potential for success, as they include a comprehensive set of measures. Slovakia could also benefit from improved coordination among ministries, Public Employment Services, education institutions and employers.

Despite these advancements, Slovakia continues to face persistent challenges, notably high shares of female NEETs, low-skilled, vulnerable unemployed youth, typically from marginalised Roma communities. As this issue was highlighted in the 2023 review, Slovakia should take action to facilitate the engagement of these disadvantaged groups in the programme. Finally, regional disparities remain evident, with job opportunities concentrated in the west of the country and higher unemployment in the eastern regions. To address these territorial disparities, quality offers should be available in all regions, supported by integrated one-stop shops and other services providing more proactive assistance.

Croatia

Croatia is making good progress in the implementation of the reinforced Youth Guarantee, having achieved a significant reduction in both the NEET rate and the youth unemployment rate since 2014. The country has implemented measures to better align career guidance, employment support and lifelong learning opportunities with the needs of young NEETs.

Lifelong Career Guidance Centres serve as key hubs for outreach, identification and activation of inactive NEETs through partnerships with various stakeholders. These efforts are reflected in sustained positive follow-up outcomes for participants, which consistently outperform the EU average.

However, challenges remain to further strengthen the effectiveness of the Youth Guarantee. Stronger mapping and outreach are required, particularly for inactive NEETs and those in rural and remote areas, primarily through greater involvement of non-governmental organisations and field workers. This will require stronger coordination among different service providers and the development of genuinely integrated services.

Croatia is encouraged to regularly review the quality of education and training offers to ensure their attractiveness and labour market relevance.

Furthermore, increased efforts are needed to remove barriers to participation, such as mobility and transport constraints and care responsibilities, as well as barriers to long-term outcomes, including insufficient support infrastructure and limited post-placement support. To achieve its full potential, the authorities are encouraged to continue identifying challenges and developing effective policies, while leveraging EU funds and instruments.

WORKSHOP 2

Estonia

In Estonia, the implementation of the reinforced Youth Guarantee is well advanced and effective. The NEET rate remains below the EU average but has increased since 2023. The youth unemployment rate has also grown since 2023 and remains a challenge. The coverage rate has decreased but remains above the EU level. Careful monitoring is required to reverse the trend and achieve positive developments.

Youth Guarantee support measures have remained strong, helping young people enter the labour market and/or continue their education. Cooperation between the national authorities involved in the scheme has been reinforced, and available funding has been significantly increased. The education reform raising the compulsory education age to 18 is a welcome step to improve the educational and employment prospects of young people.

Regional disparities continue to be a concern, particularly regarding outreach and service delivery in rural areas. A more proactive and targeted approach in these areas is encouraged.

Furthermore, there is room for improvement in sharing data between institutions and in automating data processes.

As skills shortages and mismatches continue to hinder youth employment, the Youth Guarantee could benefit from a stronger, more horizontal focus on identifying and developing the skills that employers currently require and will require in the future, with particular attention to skills needed for the twin transition. At the same time, greater engagement with employers is needed, as prejudiced attitudes and their reluctance to work with young people have been identified as important barriers.

Cyprus

Cyprus is making progress in implementing the reinforced Youth Guarantee. While challenges remain, Cyprus is addressing them through strategic partnerships, relevant policy adjustments, data-informed decisions, active use of EU resources, and efforts to reduce youth unemployment.

EU funds - both from the ESF+ and the Recovery and Resilience Facility - are being used to support various initiatives targeting NEETs. The digital module “Early Warning System”, supported by the Recovery and Resilience Facility, has been implemented and could significantly contribute to timely support for early school leavers.

Despite improvements, there is still significant room for more targeted outreach and engagement with NEETs, better alignment of education with labour market needs, strengthened partnerships with non-governmental organisations, and addressing long waiting periods and the quality of job offers.

Structural challenges, including economic conditions, seasonal employment limitations, and mismatches between education programmes and labour market needs, continue to hinder effective transitions. Improved coordination between educational institutions and employment services is needed to better align education with labour market requirements.

The lack of partnerships with NGOs and language barriers in outreach efforts limit the programme's ability to engage vulnerable groups. Strengthening collaborations and adopting more inclusive communication strategies would enhance the programme's reach and effectiveness.

Cyprus should also address data consistency issues to improve policy evaluation, expand the scheme's reach - particularly to inactive NEETs - and enhance partnerships and stakeholder engagement to support vulnerable youth populations. Improved labour market alignment, higher-quality job offers, and comprehensive outreach strategies would further contribute to more effective youth integration.

Ireland

The implementation of the reinforced Youth Guarantee is well advanced in Ireland, and both the NEET rate and youth unemployment rate are below the EU average.

Ireland continues to have a well-developed mapping system, based on national administrative data, to identify NEETs receiving unemployment benefits. There is, however, room for improvement in mapping NEETs not collecting benefits, such as those aged under 18. Prevention measures continue to be well implemented, though outreach to inactive NEETs remains challenging.

The one-stop-shop model provides a strong service infrastructure. Different services are offered depending on the duration of inactivity, allowing for a tailored approach. However, young people in Ireland appear to remain on a jobseeker's payment for a longer duration than desirable.

Ireland would benefit from enhanced reporting mechanisms which would offer clarity on the specific timelines between entering the Youth Guarantee and receiving an offer. Ireland may consider additional efforts to improve the coverage of the Youth Guarantee schemes.

Continued efforts are also encouraged to address barriers such as health issues, low housing affordability, and regional disparities, which hinder young people's mobility and may prevent them from accessing employment or training opportunities.

Luxembourg

The implementation of the reinforced Youth Guarantee is well advanced in Luxembourg. The NEET rate is below the EU average but has increased, and this trend should therefore be closely monitored.

General strengths include the successful identification of unemployed or inactive young people, who receive tailored guidance, are coached, trained or employed, and are monitored, resulting in quality offers. The percentage of registered persons in the scheme waiting for an offer for more than four months is well below the EU average.

Positive measures taken since the last review in 2023 include improved outreach, provision of personalised counselling, language screening, and monitoring of young people by the national employment agency (ADEM), as well as the monitoring and detailed analysis of early school dropouts and inactive youth carried out by the National Youth Service.

However, the youth unemployment rate is above the EU average, and the coverage rate in the Youth Guarantee scheme remains considerably below the EU average. More systematic outreach, particularly to inactive NEETs in more remote areas, could help increase coverage.

Overall implementation and long-term labour market integration could be enhanced by improving outreach, better aligning training with labour market needs, facilitating secure data exchange, and strengthening collaboration among the various actors within the Youth Guarantee ecosystem.

Poland

Poland is making progress in implementing the reinforced Youth Guarantee. The NEET rate in Poland is below the EU average, although regional differences exist. The proportion of inactive NEETs has increased.

The adoption of the new law, “Act on the Labour Market and Employment Services”, is a positive development. Several projects co-financed by the ESF+ also contribute to implementation. For EU-funded projects, attention should be given to ensuring the sustainability of offers even without EU funding. Overall, Poland is addressing a number of challenges faced by NEETs, aiming for faster, more effective and coordinated action by services to provide comprehensive support.

Disparities in NEET rates across regions should be addressed by applying tailor-made solutions. This should include improving outreach and the accessibility of offers in the regions concerned. The mapping of NEETs’ needs could also be improved to enhance support.

It is a positive development that the work of the Labour Offices is increasingly adapted to the needs of their target group. There is room to develop this further by diversifying services and tailoring them more to regional characteristics. Attention should also be given to effective outreach to young people who are not registered at the Labour Office.

Belgium

Belgium is well advanced in the implementation of the reinforced Youth Guarantee, and continued efforts for further improvements are being made. The NEET rate is below the EU average, although regional differences exist. The coverage rate is significantly higher than the EU average.

Belgium continues to implement integrated and coordinated service delivery across all regions and makes good use of EU funding opportunities, with examples of European Social Fund Plus projects supporting vulnerable youth and the Youth Guarantee in all regions. With the support of Recovery and Resilience Facility funding, actions have also been taken to reduce early school leaving and absenteeism, including personalised pupil guidance and closer monitoring of school attendance.

Challenges remain in meeting the four-month target for making an offer and in increasing the share of timely and positive exits. Continued efforts should focus on improving these aspects. Further improvements in coverage could be explored, particularly targeting youth with a migrant background and older NEETs.

A persistent challenge is the exchange of data and information. To enhance a coordinated approach and improve prevention, Belgium should work on improving data and information sharing between public organisations and services. Better data sharing could support mapping and prevention efforts.

Belgium should continue working towards full implementation of the Youth Guarantee and invest in targeted measures to ensure the socio-professional inclusion of young people.

Czechia

Czechia has made progress in implementing the reinforced Youth Guarantee. Steps have been taken to support disadvantaged young people. The youth NEET rate is below the EU average, although a significant gender gap persists.

Since the last review, Czechia has taken measures to unlock the potential of women in the workforce by creating more places in Early Childhood Education and Care. This should contribute to reducing the gender gap among NEETs. Further efforts are, however, needed to address this gap fully.

The delivery of the Youth Guarantee relies heavily on EU funding. Attention should be given to ensuring long-term financial sustainability.

Challenges remain in identifying and reaching non-registered NEETs, particularly the most vulnerable groups such as young women and Roma. Continued efforts are needed to improve outreach, coordination of services, and tailor-made approaches for vulnerable NEET groups.

Enhanced cooperation between Public Employment Services, municipalities responsible for social services, civil society organisations, and education providers could further contribute to improving the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

Malta

Malta shows progress in the implementation of the reinforced Youth Guarantee. The NEET rate is below the EU average, and youth unemployment is low. There is good potential to support young people's integration into work or education.

However, the coverage rate has declined sharply in recent years, particularly among those aged 15–19. Renewed and diversified outreach efforts are needed to re-engage this group.

Timely outcomes remain a challenge, as many participants still wait too long for an offer or do not secure a lasting employment or education pathway. Limitations have also been noted in the capacity to monitor progress effectively. Efforts are encouraged to improve data collection, follow-up, and the overall quality of offers.

Coordination between Jobsplus and stakeholders has improved. Further integrating health, psychosocial, and basic or soft-skills support could make interventions more tailored to vulnerable groups.

Aligning training with evolving green, digital, and soft-skills needs is essential for sustainable labour market integration, while ensuring accessibility for NEETs.

The development of mapping and profiling tools provides valuable insights for targeted approaches. These efforts represent significant progress toward evidence-based interventions. Continuous refinement and expansion of these tools could contribute to further personalising and improving outreach and support.

Malta could consider developing comprehensive strategies to ensure the effective coordination of all Youth Guarantee activities while further fostering collaboration among the various stakeholders.

Slovenia

Slovenia continues to make good progress in implementing the reinforced Youth Guarantee. Slovenia's NEET rate has been steadily decreasing and is well below the EU average. The youth unemployment rate is also significantly below the EU average.

Implementation of the Youth Guarantee has been reinforced through effective collaboration among key stakeholders, including strong partnerships with educational institutions, the Public Employment Service, and Social Work Centres.

Slovenia has been very active in addressing youth unemployment, precarious work, and preventing school dropouts through several measures and programmes. Slovenia is encouraged to continue this work.

Efforts have been made to reach non-registered NEETs through a mix of methods and specialised youth counsellors. Slovenia should continue these outreach efforts to further improve the provision and effectiveness of the Youth Guarantee, particularly for inactive NEETs, people with a migration background, Roma, and women. Expanding the network of specialised youth counsellors could contribute to this.

Slovenia could benefit from a stronger focus on the challenges faced by young Roma, including enhanced engagement with Roma families and young Roma mothers.

The delivery of the Youth Guarantee relies heavily on EU funding. Attention should be given to ensuring long-term financial sustainability.

Slovenia is also encouraged to address issues that currently hinder data exchange between service providers.

WORKSHOP 3

Italy

Italy is showing progress in the implementation and coverage of the Youth Guarantee, with significant decreases in the NEET and youth unemployment rates. Nonetheless, both indicators remain above the EU average.

According to the information provided and discussed during the review, Italy has good mapping and monitoring capacity. Coverage of the NEET population has increased substantially, but there is still scope to improve available support measures and outreach, particularly for NEETs who are not registered as job seekers - a growing and hard-to-reach group. The project to support NEETs through an AI application (appLI) is promising and may help increase the share of individuals receiving an offer within four months, which is relatively low in Italy. Care should be taken not to overlook youth with limited digital skills, ensuring a sufficiently broad range of approaches.

Cooperation between services involved could be further improved and may vary across regions due to strong regional autonomy. As Italy is in a transitional phase, the effects of recent changes will need to be monitored. In any case, stronger cooperation across territories could be beneficial, as territorial disparities remain a significant barrier to sustainable integration, and regions could learn from each other.

Finland

Finland is well advanced in implementing the reinforced Youth Guarantee. Despite a recent increase, the NEET rate remains below the EU average. The youth unemployment rate, however, is high.

According to the information provided and discussed during the review, Finland has strong mapping and monitoring capacity, effective outreach to NEETs, and good cooperation with different service providers. Accordingly, Youth Guarantee coverage in Finland has consistently been above the EU average throughout the available time series.

The PES reform came into force in January 2025. After the reform, responsibility for arranging PES services is on municipalities and employment regions. As part of the reform, a new incentive model was also introduced. The new incentive model, which increases the responsibility of municipalities to fund unemployment benefits, is an innovative feature. The reform should improve the effectiveness of integrated service provision at the local level, but it will be essential to evaluate its effects and address any unintended consequences to ensure that all young people receive the same quality of support.

For future monitoring, it is important that data on the outputs of Youth Guarantee services delivered by municipalities is comparable, and it is positive that discussions on data are planned.

It is also welcome that a specific measure addressing mental health and well-being for young people is foreseen, as this is an issue of growing concern.

Germany

Germany is advanced in implementing the reinforced Youth Guarantee and shows above-average outcomes regarding the youth unemployment rate and NEET rate.

Some challenges remain - such as the lack of an education history register and the above the EU average rate of early school leavers - but Germany shows developments in the use of sources and instruments to map NEETs. Several measures are being introduced to continue providing outreach and support such as the Vocational Training Guarantee, whose scope could be further broadened in the future to better cover the needs of unplaced apprenticeship applicants. More targeted prevention and outreach measures are particularly important for young people in precarious situations who are not yet, or not successfully, reached by existing services; these could be supported also by improved data exchange between federal, regional and communal institutions working in the area of social services. Outreach measures of the Employment Agency towards youth at risk of becoming NEETs could be expanded. Quality of the offer is a priority in Germany, and Youth Guarantee data show that offers made lead to sustainable outcomes compared with the EU average. The approach of the “Bildungsketten” (education chains) initiative aims to offer young people long-term, individual, and professional support in the transition from school to vocational training through coordinated measures by the federal and state governments. The vocational training guarantee aims to ensure that suitable offers remain available, such as dual learning opportunities, including for early school leavers. The mobility grant is also an interesting feature, with its results awaited with interest.

Austria

Austria shows commitments in implementing the reinforced Youth Guarantee, which is reflected in good outcomes regarding the youth unemployment rate. The NEET rate is still below the EU average but has been stagnating in the last ten years.

Based on the review, Austria has a comprehensive mapping and monitoring capacity, using a wide range of sources and instruments. Many prevention and outreach approaches are available, and new ones have been developed since the 2023 review. Recent efforts include: expanding offers for low-skilled young people and those with a migrant background (Youth Colleges), promoting inclusion and opening access to PES training for young people with disabilities by focusing on abilities and development potential rather than early exclusion from the labour market (AF25 /“Fit for work until 25”) and reinforced inclusion of supportive measures within PES offers (e.g. additional psycho-social and basic-skills support) to address structural challenges low-skilled young people from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds face.

While the Youth Guarantee monitoring framework shows that the percentage of NEETs reached by the programme is above the EU average, some structural and legal barriers still prevent access for certain NEETs, particularly those facing multiple challenges, low skilled and from disadvantaged socio-economic background.

Quality of the offer is a priority for Austria, but there is still scope to improve outreach and tailor offers to the most vulnerable groups, including youth with a migrant background and young people with caregiving responsibilities, especially in light of the stagnating NEET levels. Looking ahead, Austria is encouraged to share the results of the evaluations currently planned.

France

France is well advanced in implementing the reinforced Youth Guarantee. However, there has been a recent increase in the youth unemployment rate and NEET rate, with striking regional disparities, notably in the outermost regions, that call for strengthened efforts.

Efforts to improve mapping and monitoring capacity are paying off, resulting in better overall mapping. There is a good range of prevention practices, especially for the 16–18 age group. However, there is still scope to improve timeliness and available outreach measures, particularly for NEETs who are not registered as job seekers, even though several initiatives have been launched in recent years.

The integrated support model introduced in 2024 seems very promising, and the review showed clear awareness of the groups in the most precarious situations, which is an important step toward improving outreach. Future results from the Youth Guarantee monitoring framework will need to be monitored to determine whether this translates into positive effects detected by indicators.

Denmark

Denmark is well advanced in implementing the reinforced Youth Guarantee. However, some structural barriers remain, making it important to continue efforts.

Denmark has a well-established nationwide mapping and monitoring capacity. The Youth Commitment programme aims to provide strong prevention approaches and early intervention, which are key levers for success.

There is still scope to improve outreach measures for NEETs who are not registered as job seekers. As in many countries, the employment system is primarily designed for individuals receiving unemployment benefits, which poses a challenge for engaging those outside the unemployment benefit system.

Cooperation with different service providers is strong, and the quality of offers is clearly a priority, with a specific budget allocated for this purpose. Specific support for young people with mental health challenges is being developed. As this is a growing concern in several Member States, this initiative could potentially serve as a good practice in the field.

Sweden

The Swedish Youth Guarantee is overall well-functioning and built on solid experience. Still, there is scope to further improve the mapping of services available to NEETs and to use a wider range of approaches to prevent young people from becoming NEETs and to reach out to NEETs who are not registered as jobseekers.

Working through municipalities allows for tailoring to local circumstances and more direct outreach to NEETs, although they pose fragmentation risks. In particular, differences in municipal support could jeopardise young people's opportunities, as support may vary depending on where they live and could be affected if local finances deteriorate.

The reform regarding data exchange between the Public Employment Service and municipalities in relation to jobseekers in need of municipal adult education could help mitigate these potential adverse effects, with results eagerly awaited.

Netherlands

The Netherlands shows very good Youth Guarantee outcomes overall. Key strengths include the effective integration of administrative data from different sources and a law enabling the overcoming of barriers related to data protection regulation. There is a good range of available prevention practices, but there is scope to improve outreach to inactive NEETs, particularly regarding collaboration between schools, municipalities, and other involved organisations.

The new transition centres are a promising step in this direction and should further improve Youth Guarantee coverage. Quality of the offer is clearly a priority and is enhanced by the move towards more personalised support, including the use of youth and career coaches, as well as career counsellors, who provide tailored guidance to young people.

However, a decentralised system can lead to uneven service quality and coordination across regions and may contribute to below-average timeliness, which is something to monitor. Looking forward, insights from the evaluations that will be carried out are awaited.

Spain

Overall, Spain has a higher-than-average NEET and youth unemployment rate but is showing positive developments and progress in implementing the reinforced Youth Guarantee.

Regarding mapping and monitoring, several changes are being implemented, with effects of these potential improvements eagerly awaited. The range of available prevention practices has grown since the 2023 review, and there is strong collaboration with different organisations, including NGOs, to reach the most vulnerable groups. A notable development is the virtual one-stop shop. However better coordination and information sharing to avoid overlapping of initiatives between PES is needed.

Spain is also one of the Member States with a strategy that sets specific objectives for priority groups, including women, persons with low qualifications, and people with disabilities. Targeted outreach to these groups will continue to be key to improving their integration.

Finally, there is further scope to improve cooperation among service providers and local employers to identify the most suitable offers for those in the Youth Guarantee scheme. Intensified efforts are also needed to reduce marked regional disparities.