



# THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND



# YOUTH EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE



## Support to Youth Employment: 2014-2018

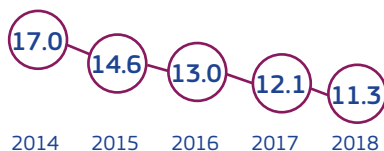
UNITED KINGDOM

### SUMMARY

Youth Employment measures funded by the YEI and the ESF aim at improving access to employment for young people. During the period 2014-2018, the EU and the United Kingdom spent a combined total of 428.6 million euro (=27% of the total budget) in ESF/YEI investments to achieve this objective. As a result, 189 469 participations in youth employment activities have taken place in the United Kingdom. This factsheet summarises the main actions, outputs, results and lessons learned so far of the implementation of youth employment measures funded by the EU.

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

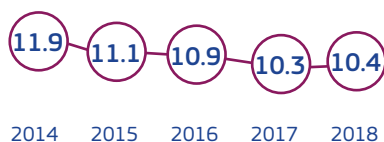
#### YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



► In 2014, the rate of **young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)** and of unemployment were high and at about the EU averages. There are significant differences between the regions with youth unemployment rates ranging from 13.2% in the East Midlands to 23% in North East.

► The **NEET rate** in 2018 is almost the same as that observed at the EU level (10.5%). The gap between the regions is narrow and ranges from 8.4% in South West to 12.4% in North East.

#### NEET RATE (15-24 YEARS)



► The **youth unemployment rate** is below that observed across the EU (15.2%). For young people aged 25-29 the unemployment rate is only half the rate observed at the EU level.

► The **labour market situation for young women** seems to be slightly worse than that of young men (higher NEET, but similar youth unemployment rates). This is particularly the case for young women aged 25-29 whose NEET rates are significantly higher than those of men (18.4% vs. 9.1%).

#### EXPLANATORY NOTES

ESF European Social Fund  
YEI Youth Employment Initiative

OP Operational Programme  
NEET Young people not in employment, education or training

- This factsheet was prepared before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Figures present the situation for youth employment operations under Investment Priority 8.ii for the programming period 2014-2020 implemented up to 2018, as reported by 6th September 2019. In many instances, operations are not yet complete at this stage. They are provided only as an indication of progress.
- Target achievements are calculated dividing the outputs and the results by the targets set in the Operational Programmes. Targets set should be reached by 2023.
- Participants' data are collected on starting an operation. Data on results are collected at the end of an operation or even later. Because of this time lag, the two sets of data (participations and results) should not be directly compared.

## ESF PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

ESF 984

Million Euro are budgeted to the support of young people, including national funding

YEI 578  
Million Euro

ESF 550

Million Euro  
The EU contributes a large share of this funding

YEI 397  
Million Euro

ESF YEI Five out of six regional Operational Programmes (OPs) implement specific actions to support young people's integration into the labour market. The OP England covers specific actions through both ESF and YEI funding, while the OP Scotland implements actions through YEI only. The OPs East Wales, West Wales and the Valleys, and Northern Ireland cover actions through ESF funding.

- ▶ The **investments in the OPs** focus on preparing young people for working life, in particular by reducing the number of NEET or at risk of becoming NEET.
- ▶ In the **OP Scotland**, a specific focus is put on the provision of apprenticeships, training, job search and counselling, and start-up support for young entrepreneurs.

## STATE OF PLAY

- ▶ **Number of participations** of young people reported in specific actions promoting the sustainable integration of young people into the labour market by the end of 2018.\*

ESF 114 578

YEI 74 891

- ▶ The achievement of the expected number of participations differs across the OPs. While the OP Scotland and OP Northern Ireland are on a positive track towards reaching the expected number of participations, the OP East Wales and OP West Wales and the Valleys are at about 50% and lower.

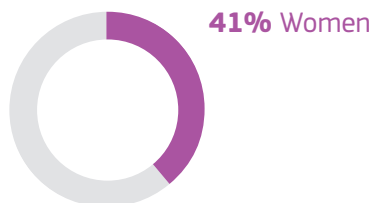
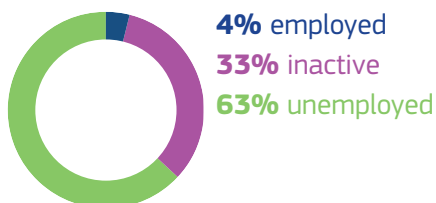
ESF 21%

Achievements of targets for participation

58% YEI

\* As one person could participate more than once in ESF operations over time, the number of participations is reported, not the number of participants. These figures exclude Technical Assistance.

## PARTICIPANT PROFILES WHEN RECEIVING SUPPORT



27% <25 years  
73% ≥25 years

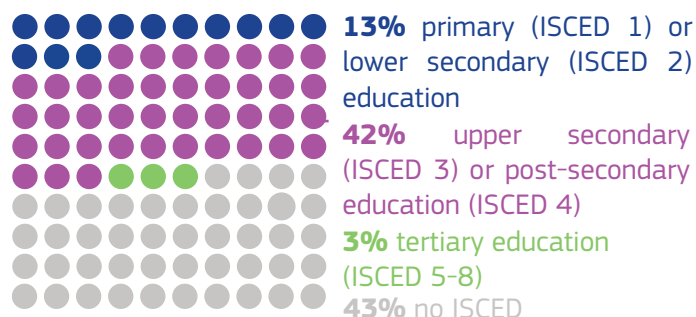


Migrants, participants with a foreign background, ethnic minorities | 37 299

Other disadvantaged | 38 560\*

Participants with disabilities | 70 489

Homeless | 3 936



- Variations in labour market status: Share of unemployed participants in the OP East Wales and West Wales and the Valleys: above 80% ⇔ Share of inactive participants in the OP Scotland 65%.
- Extended age group of eligible persons up to 29 years in the OP England.
- Differences in the participation of migrants: Share of migrants in the OP England: ⇔ 25% Share of migrants in OP Northern Ireland: 5% and OP West Wales and the Valley: 2%.

Overall, **95 074 young people achieved a positive result upon leaving**, 71 679 under the ESF and 23 395 under the YEI.

**ESF 15 785** Participants in employment **12 112 YEI**

**25 154** Participants gaining a qualification **3 291**

**29 200** Participants in education **7 209**

**1 540** Inactive participants engaged in job searching **783**

- In UK England about one third was employed after participation. Furthermore, 63% of YEI leavers received a job offer between the start of the programme and six months after leaving.
- In UK Scotland, six months after leaving the programme, only about 500 participants were in employment (7% of the target) and 1 500 participants were in education or training (35% of the target).
- 57% of participants in East Wales Priority were in employment six months after leaving their ESF operation.

**ESF 28%** Achievement of targets for results

**48% YEI**

\* Participants may refuse to give this information. Consequently, disadvantages are likely to be underreported.

## LESSONS LEARNED SO FAR

### ESF

#### Traineeships operations

Providers praised the high degree of flexibility of the Traineeships programme, enabling them to utilise provision (either directly delivered or delivered by third party providers) that best meets the needs of young people.

#### Tackling poverty

Traineeships help to tackle poverty by providing young people with work opportunities and by tackling barriers to employment, and that equal opportunities are an embedded element across training provision.

#### Social media

Social media is increasingly seen as a key route to promotion of the programme and is actively used by all providers but particularly so by those in the private sector; 'word of mouth' was also cited by many providers.

### YEI

#### Reaching the disadvantaged

YEI projects are successfully targeting and engaging young disadvantaged NEETs in the OP England: 72% of participants were recorded as disadvantaged according to the definitions used for the YEI.

#### 'Soft' impacts

'Softer' impacts of YEI were also evident, contributing to the achievement of broader YEI impacts, such as reducing barriers to work and learning, supporting access to traineeships and apprenticeships, and improvements in confidence, motivation and communication.

#### Good job offers

Almost two-thirds of the participants in UK England rated the quality of the job offers as either 'very good' or 'good', and the majority of respondents entering a traineeship felt that it would improve their chances of getting a job.

#### Success factors

The co-location with other services supporting young people (such as in children's centres), development of partnership with Jobcentre Plus, effective governance procedures, 'wraparound' support to address personal barriers facilitated by a 'key worker' were identified as main success factors.

In UK-Scotland, the person-centered approach, the case management model, the outreach activity, the flexibility of provision and the involvement of employers in the design of specific operations are considered as crucial for the YEI delivery.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The ESF in the United Kingdom <https://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=381>

Website of the ESF UK: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/england-2014-to-2020-european-structural-and-investment-funds>

- European Commission, Study for the Evaluation of ESF support to Youth Employment
- Evaluation of YEI in South West Scotland
- Impact evaluation of the YEI in England

