



Study for the Evaluation of ESF Support to Youth Employment

Annex 5: Case Study – Spain
(Contract VC/2018/0715)

Written by Elvira González Gago
April – 2020

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
Directorate H Audit, evaluation and communication
Unit G.4: Evaluation and Impact Assessment

Contact: Jiří Polášek

E-mail: EMPL-G4-UNIT@ec.europa.eu

*European Commission
B-1049 Brussels*

Study for the Evaluation of ESF Support to Youth Employment

Annex 5: Case Study: Spain

(Contract VC/2018/0715)

***Europe Direct is a service to help you find answers
to your questions about the European Union.***

Freephone number (*):

00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11

(*) The information given is free, as are most calls (though some operators, phone boxes or hotels may charge you).

LEGAL NOTICE

This document has been prepared for the European Commission however it reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (<http://www.europa.eu>).

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2020

© European Union, 2020

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.

**Please quote this report as: Metis GmbH, Fondazione G. Brodolini, Applica, Ockham IPS (2020)
Study for the Evaluation of ESF Support to Youth Employment, for the European Commission,
Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.**

**The opinions expressed are those of the Contractor only and do not represent the Commission's
official position.**

Table of Contents

List of abbreviations and acronyms	7
1 Background and Context.....	8
1.1 Labour market context	8
1.2 National ALMP targeting young people in Spain	9
2 The ESF / YEI in Spain.....	10
2.1 Role of the ESF / YEI.....	10
2.1.1 CSRs addressed by the ESF	10
2.2 Programme architecture and monitoring system	10
2.2.1 Programme architecture.....	10
2.2.2 Operational Programme monitoring system	15
2.3 Intervention logic	16
3 Scale of ESF / YEI investment	18
4 Effectiveness.....	20
4.1 Data based on the AIR 2018	20
4.1.1 Outputs.....	20
4.2 Target achievement	21
4.2.1 Results.....	22
4.3 Answers to the Evaluation Question	22
4.3.1 Evaluation question 1.1 – To what extent have the financial implementation and the achievement of the expected outputs progressed according to the targets set in the programmes? What were the main factors involved (delays in implementation, ESF absorption...)?	22
4.3.2 Evaluation question 1.2 – How and to what extent does YEI contribute to the achievement of the general objective of sustainable integration (also after the end of the operation) of young people into the labour market and to the specific objectives under ESF? How did it contribute to addressing the problems faced by NEETs?.....	23
4.3.3 Evaluation question 1.3 – To what extent were the target groups reached by the operations, including disadvantaged persons, those from marginalised communities and those leaving education without qualifications? Please classify different types of NEETs according to labour market status, age (15-25 or 15-29 or over), ISCED level, category of disadvantage (marginalised groups, disabilities, migrants, ex-offenders, addiction problems, homeless, single parents, carers, women having suffered violence or abuse, participants from rural areas).....	24
4.3.4 Evaluation question 1.4 – What was the quality and timeliness of the offers received by the participants?	25
4.3.5 EQ1.5 – Which types of interventions were the most effective and most sustainable, for which groups and in which contexts (e.g., more developed, less developed and transition regions; urban and rural areas etcetera)? Please classify different types of intervention according to detailed type, duration, within/outside the firm, with/without a certification, etc. For more options, please see the mapping template.	26
4.3.6 Evaluation question 1.6 – What main factors (geographical, socioeconomic, organizational, etc.) had a bigger impact in the effectiveness of ESF and YEI operations in the field of youth employment, by type of operation? Please identify the method used to identify impacts.	26
4.3.7 Evaluation question 1.7 – To what extent did YEI and ESF contribute to structural changes in national education systems, vocational training systems, public employment systems or youth policies?	27
5 Efficiency	28
5.1 Data based on the AIR 2018	28
5.2 Answers to the Evaluation Questions.....	28

5.2.1	Evaluation question 2.1 – To what extent were operations cost-effective? What types of operations were more and less cost-effective? In what contexts? What were the determining factors?	28
5.2.2	Evaluation question 2.2 – Are there significant cost differences between regions in the implementation of the operations? What are these differences related to? Please be specific with regard to the cost structure and whether the costs are programmed, committed, or declared/certified?	29
5.2.3	Evaluation question 2.3 – To what extent were the organisational arrangements, including management and control systems at all levels, conducive to the effectiveness of operations? Was there administrative burden, in particular gold plating involved?	29
5.2.4	Evaluation question 2.4 – In particular, how timely and efficient were the procedures for reporting and monitoring?	29
5.2.5	Evaluation question 2.5 – How visible were YEI and other ESF-funded youth employment operations?	30
6	Relevance	31
6.1	Evaluation question 3.1 – To what extent were the objectives and the operations funded by the YEI relevant to the needs of young people in the Member State/region? To what extent were the objectives and operations of other ESF-funded youth employment operations relevant for them?.....	31
6.2	Evaluation question 3.2 – To what extent were OPs flexible and able to adapt to changes in the implementation context, notably the evolution in the situation of youth employment?	31
6.3	Evaluation question 3.3 – Were the most relevant groups, in the different socioeconomic contexts (e.g., more developed, less developed and transition regions; urban and rural areas etcetera), targeted from the design stage? Were the most important needs of these groups addressed? How were gender issues addressed?	31
7	Coherence	33
7.1	Evaluation question 4.1 – In which manner were the YEI and other ESF-funded youth employment operations complementary with each other? What were the main factors in this regard?	33
7.2	EQ4.2 – To what extent were they complementary and coherent with other policy objectives funded by the ESF and other EU programmes and policy initiatives oriented to young people and youth-employment (e.g., ERDF, EAFRD, EMFF, Erasmus+, EURES...)?	33
7.3	Evaluation question 4.3 – To what extent were they complementary and coherent with other national/regional activities oriented to young people and youth employment at national/regional level? Please focus on employment-related activities funded through national and regional funds.	33
8	Added value	35
8.1	Evaluation question 5.1 – To what extent did the YEI and other ESF-funded operations produce effects at the national and regional level that would not have taken place without the EU intervention?	35
9	Sustainability	37
9.1	Evaluation question 6.1 – To what extent are the effects of YEI and ESF support likely to continue after the end of the funding, both at individual and youth employment policy level?.....	37
10	Gender sensitivity	38
11	Conclusions.....	39
12	Good Practice	41
13	Information sources	43
13.1	Bibliography.....	43

13.2 List of interviewees	43
13.3 Focus Group with stakeholders	44
14 Annex	45

Tables and Figures

Table 1.	Key figures on the labour market situation of young people	8
Table 2.	Prevalence of recommendations linked to Investment Priority 8.ii Sustainable integration into the labour market	10
Table 3.	Programme architecture	11
Table 4.	Main actors in YE activities in Spain.....	14
Table 5.	Distribution of expenditure on young people (<25) participating in active labour market operations by source of funding and type of intervention, Spain, 2014-18	15
Table 6.	Allocations to Youth Employment ESF + YEI – including Operational Programme amendments until 2018.....	18
Table 7.	Changes to Youth Employment allocations in Operational Programmes since start programming	18
Table 8.	Overview of the financial progress - ESF / YEI	19
Table 9.	Financial progress	19
Table 10.	Number of participations under Investment Priority 8.ii (ESF and YEI)	20
Table 11.	Overview of number of indicators with targets under Investment Priority 8.ii.....	21
Table 12.	Average achievement rate of output targets under Investment Priority 8.ii – by Operational Programme.....	21
Table 13.	Overview results – Investment Priority 8.ii - YEI	22
Table 14.	Overview results – Investment Priority 8.ii - YEI (2).....	22
Table 15.	Eligible expenditures declared to EC per participation	28
Table 16.	Eligible expenditures declared to EC per immediate result achieved	28
Table 17.	Total common outputs for participations ESF/YEI under Investment Priority 8.ii, cumulative until 2018, by Operational Programme and indicator.....	45
Table 18.	Common Result Indicators Investment Priority 8.ii, ESF / YEI, by Operational Programme (1).....	47
Table 19.	Common Result Indicators Investment Priority 8.ii, ESF / YEI, by Operational Programme (2).....	48
Figure 1.	Logic of intervention.....	17
Figure 2.	Share of eligible costs by type of intervention, 2015-2018	21

List of abbreviations and acronyms

AIR	Annual Implementation Report
ALMP	Active Labour Market Policies
BO	Beneficiary Organization
CF	Cohesion Fund
CSR	Country Specific Recommendations
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EAPN	European Anti-Poverty Network
EC	European Commission
EMFF	European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
EU28	European Union (28 countries)
IB	Intermediate Body
ILO	International Labour Organization
IT	Information Technologies
LMP	Labour Market Policy
MA	Managing Authority
MITRAMISS	Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security
NEET	Young people (15-24) not in Employment, Education or Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OP	Operational Programme
PAX	Priority Axis
PES	Public Employment Services
pp	Percentage point
R&D	Research and Development
SEPE	National Public Employment Service
SFC2014	System for Fund Management in the European Union
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
UAFSE	ESF Administrative Unit
YEI	Youth Employment Initiative
YG	Youth Guarantee

1 Background and Context

1.1 Labour market context

In 2018, one in eight (12.4%) young people aged 15 to 24 in Spain were not in employment, education or training (NEET). This represents an improvement since the beginning of the programming period in 2014 (17.1%) but is still above the rate observed at the EU level (10.5%, see Table 1). The proportion of active young people of the same age that were unemployed stood at 34.3%, more than double that observed across the EU (15.2%), but substantially down from 53.2% in 2014. There were also positive developments for those aged 25 to 29 for whom the NEET rate dropped from 26.7% to 20.6% and the unemployment rate from 30.3% to 20.4%. Nevertheless, both rates are above those seen at the EU level (17.1% and 9.2% respectively). Since 2014 there has been a noticeable decrease in the rate of early school leavers¹ from 21.9% to 17.9%, though the rate is still 7 percentage points (pp) higher than at EU level (10.6%). The labour market situation of women aged 15 to 24 seems to be better than that of men at the same age, as women in 2018 had lower NEET (11.9% vs 13.0%) and unemployment rates (33.3% vs 35.2%), but the situation is reversed for older women aged 25 to 29 (see Table 1).

The Youth Employment Operational Programme, which is covered by the case study, is implemented throughout the country covering more developed, transitional and less developed regions. There are important variations by type of region, with the more developed regions having significantly lower NEET, unemployment and early school leaving rates for young people than transitional and less developed regions in both 2014 and 2018. Between 2014 and 2018, NEET and unemployment rates decreased in all types of regions, but in transitional regions, the improvement was smaller (Table 1). However, transitional regions experienced a higher decrease in the rate of early school leaving (-4.1 pp vs -3.9 pp in more developed and -2 pp in less developed regions), though they still lag behind less and more developed regions.

Table 1. Key figures on the labour market situation of young people

	NEET rate (% of total pop.)		Unemployment rate (% of labour force)		Early school leaving rate (18- 24)		
	2014	2018	2014	2018	2014	2018	
EU28							
15-24	12.5	10.5	22.2	15.2	11.2	10.6	
25-29	20.4	17.1	13.6	9.2			
National level							
Total	15-24	17.1	12.4	53.2	34.3	21.9	17.9
	25-29	26.7	20.6	30.3	20.4		
Men	15-24	18.0	13.0	53.4	35.2	25.6	21.7
	25-29	24.9	17.9	30.6	19.4		
Women	15-24	16.2	11.9	52.9	33.3	18.1	14.0
	25-29	28.6	23.3	30.0	21.4		
Regional level (15-24)							
More developed	15.6	10.8	49.4	29.2	19.7	15.8	
Transitional	20.1	15.3	59.9	44.1	25.9	21.8	
Less Developed	16.9	16.2	55.3	46.7	22.9	20.9	

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS, yth_empl_150, edat_lfse_22, yth_empl_110, edat_lfse_16), data extracted on 26.06.19.

¹ The early school leaving rate refers to the proportion of people aged 18-24 who have attained at most lower secondary education and who are not currently (within the last 4 weeks) participating in any further education or training: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/edat1_esms.htm

1.2 National ALMP targeting young people in Spain

In Spain, the provision of public services related to youth employment is a competence of the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security (MITRAMISS). At the beginning, the General Directorate for Self-Employed Workers, the Social Economy and Corporate Social Responsibility was responsible for the implementation of the national Youth Guarantee scheme and for coordinating partnerships across different levels and sectors (regional Public Employment Services [PES], other ministries and bodies, third sector organisations, youth authorities, public foundations, Chambers of Commerce). From July 2017, this responsibility was transferred to the National Spanish PES. In line with the regional competences model in Spain, the Autonomous Communities (regions) also have a key role in the implementation and management of the Youth Guarantee.

During the programming period, young people residing in Spain could benefit from 16 active labour market policy (ALMP) operations funded by national funds but were identified as a specific target group in only two operations: traineeships for people aged up to 30 and incentives to create co-operatives for people². Traineeships are funded by the central government budget and may last for up to two years. Employers recruiting young unemployed people are entitled to 100% or 75% reduction in employers' social security contributions and reimbursement of training costs. "Training contracts" are concluded with young unemployed workers without university or vocational training while "Practice contracts" are concluded with highly skilled young people. At least 15% of working time must be devoted to training. The creation of new co-operatives is funded by regional governments' budgets which provide lump-sum payments as subsistence income, exceptional assistance as a benefit in kind for newly created co-operatives, grants towards interest on loans for investment in fixed capital, financial aid for technical assistance and financial aid for training activities.

In December 2018, a Shock Action Plan for Youth Employment 2019-2021 was approved with operations for young people under 30 years of age with the objectives, among others, of giving adequate and individualised assistance to young people by providing the PES with adequate means and resources, address gender gaps and of paying special attention to particularly vulnerable groups (migrants, the long-term unemployed, school drop-outs, people with disabilities, etc.).

² Based on information from the LMP database:
<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1143&intPageId=3227&langId=en>

2 The ESF / YEI in Spain

2.1 Role of the ESF / YEI

2.1.1 CSRs addressed by the ESF

Table 2. Prevalence of recommendations linked to Investment Priority 8.ii Sustainable integration into the labour market

Country (and number of CSR over 2014-2019)	Type of CSR
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue new operations to reduce labour market segmentation to favour sustainable, quality jobs, including through reducing the number of contract types and ensuring balanced access to severance rights. Continue regular monitoring of the labour market reforms. Promote real wage developments consistent with the objective of creating jobs. Strengthen the job-search requirement in unemployment benefits. Enhance the effectiveness and targeting of active labour market policies, including hiring subsidies, particularly for those facing more difficulties in accessing employment. Reinforce the coordination between labour market and education and training policies. Accelerate the modernisation of Public Employment Services to ensure effective personalised counselling, adequate training and job-matching, with special focus on the long-term unemployed. • Implement the 2013-2016 Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment Strategy and evaluate its effectiveness. Provide good quality offers of employment opportunities, apprenticeships and traineeships for young people and improve the outreach to non-registered unemployed young people, in line with the objectives of the Youth Guarantee scheme (2014).

Source: European Council Country Specific Recommendations for Spain.

2.2 Programme architecture and monitoring system

2.2.1 Programme architecture

The Youth Employment Operational Programme was adopted in December 2014 and is entirely dedicated to the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, with a financial endowment of EUR 2.7 billion. Most EU funding for the Youth Guarantee is provided by the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) (75%) and the rest comes from European Social Fund (ESF) (25%).

The Operational Programme (OP) is organised mainly in two Priority Axes, which are the main objectives in which the ESF Operational Programmes are grouped. Therefore, ESF funding is allocated to Priority Axis (PAX) 1 "Promotion of sustainable and quality employment and labour market mobility" and the YEI to Priority Axis 5 "Sustainable integration in the labour market of young people NEET". Activities directly addressed to young people (Investment Priority 8.ii) are exactly the same in both cases, with the YEI initially applying in the period 2013-2018 and ESF funding mostly after this period. The increase of the YEI budget in June 2017 will extend the appliance of YEI until 2020. The activities are aimed at: activating NEETs; reinforcing employability and professional competences; increasing entrepreneurship and self-employment; increasing open-ended hiring.

It is worth to emphasise that, with Spain being a strongly regionalised country, it was decided that half of the resources were allocated to regional authorities on the basis of their NEET rate.

Table 3. Programme architecture

Programme architecture			Main Actions/Interventions
OP	Action-level		
	PAX	ESF/ YEI	
Youth Employment OP	1A	ESF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of sustainable and quality employment and labour mobility. Interventions in most developed regions (50% EU co-funding). • Advice, professional guidance, job information and tailored accompaniment in the search for employment, according to the profile of the person and their training needs. • Training actions or work experience. • Implementation of mobility programmes, both at national and European level, that contribute to the improvement of training and employability of young people. • Measures to promote entrepreneurship spirit among the young population, through awareness actions, the strengthening of counselling and training activities, as well as economic incentives to promote self-employment and collective entrepreneurship. • Exploration of financial instruments to facilitate access to funding for young people who launch entrepreneurial initiatives. • Incentives for hiring aimed at employers to create new opportunities for young people. • Reforms of labour market institutions, leading to the implementation of computer and management systems and structures that support the Youth Guarantee. • Strengthening the coordination of labour market institutions at the national and regional levels.
Youth Employment OP	1B	ESF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of sustainable and quality employment and labour mobility. Interventions in most developed regions (80% EU co-funding). • Advice, professional guidance, job information and tailored accompaniment in the search for employment, according to the profile of the person and their training needs. • Training actions or work experience. • Implementation of mobility programmes, both at national and European level, that contribute to the improvement of training and employability of young people. • Measures to promote entrepreneurship spirit among the young population, through awareness actions, the strengthening of counselling and training activities, as well as economic incentives to promote self-employment and collective entrepreneurship. • Exploration of financial instruments to facilitate access to funding for young people who launch entrepreneurial initiatives. • Incentives for hiring aimed at employers to create new opportunities for young people. • Reforms of labour market institutions, leading to the implementation of computer and management systems and structures that support the Youth Guarantee. • Strengthening the coordination of labour market institutions at the national and regional levels.
Youth Employment OP	1C	ESF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of sustainable and quality employment and labour mobility. Interventions in transitional regions (80% EU co-funding). • Advice, professional guidance, job information and tailored accompaniment in the search for employment, according to the profile of the person and their training needs. • Training actions or work experience.

Programme architecture			Main Actions/Interventions
	Action-level		
OP	PAx	ESF/ YEI	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of mobility programmes, both at national and European level, that contribute to the improvement of training and employability of young people. • Measures to promote entrepreneurship spirit among the young population, through awareness actions, the strengthening of counselling and training activities, as well as economic incentives to promote self-employment and collective entrepreneurship. • Exploration of financial instruments to facilitate access to funding for young people who launch entrepreneurial initiatives. • Incentives for hiring aimed at employers to create new opportunities for young people. • Reforms of labour market institutions, leading to the implementation of computer and management systems and structures that support the Youth Guarantee. • Strengthening the coordination of labour market institutions at the national and regional levels.
Youth Employment OP	1D	ESF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of sustainable and quality employment and labour mobility. Interventions in less developed regions (80% EU co-funding). • Training actions or work experience. • Implementation of mobility programmes, both at national and European level, that contribute to the improvement of training and employability of young people. • Incentives for hiring aimed at employers to create new opportunities for young people. • Reforms of labour market institutions, leading to the implementation of computer and management systems and structures that support the Youth Guarantee. • Strengthening the coordination of labour market institutions at the national and regional levels.
Youth Employment OP	1E	ESF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of sustainable and quality employment and labour mobility. Interventions in transitional regions (85% EU co-funding). • Training actions or work experience. • Implementation of mobility programmes, both at national and European level, that contribute to the improvement of training and employability of young people. • Incentives for hiring aimed at employers to create new opportunities for young people. • Reforms of labour market institutions, leading to the implementation of computer and management systems and structures that support the Youth Guarantee. • Strengthening the coordination of labour market institutions at the national and regional levels.
Youth Employment OP	5	YEI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable integration in the labour market of young people who are not employed or participated in education or training systems, particularly in the context of the Youth Guarantee – YEI / ESF. • Advice, professional guidance, job information and tailored accompaniment in the search for employment, according to the profile of the person and their training needs. • Training actions or work experience. • Measures to promote entrepreneurship spirit among the young population, through awareness actions, the strengthening of counselling and training activities, as well as economic incentives to promote self-employment and collective entrepreneurship.

Programme architecture			Main Actions/Interventions
	Action-level		
OP	PAx	ESF/ YEI	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration of financial instruments to facilitate access to funding for young people who launch entrepreneurial initiatives. • Incentives for hiring aimed at employers to create new opportunities for young people.
Youth Employment OP	8A	ESF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance. Interventions in more developed regions (50% EU co-funding). • Activities to foster appropriate management, mainly at the programming, monitoring and evaluation and control levels. • Monitoring, evaluation and control activities. • Training to enhance administrative capacities. • Follow-up and evaluation actions of all the actions and programmes developed within Operational Programmes . • Adequate dissemination of the Operational Programme actions.
Youth Employment OP	8B	ESF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance. Interventions in more developed regions (80% EU co-funding). • Activities to foster appropriate management, mainly at the programming, monitoring and evaluation and control levels. • Monitoring, evaluation and control activities. • Training to enhance administrative capacities. • Follow-up and evaluation actions of all the activities and programmes developed within Operational Programmes. • Adequate dissemination of the Operational Programme actions.
Youth Employment OP	8C	ESF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance. Interventions in transitional regions (80% EU co-funding). • Activities to foster appropriate management, mainly at the programming, monitoring and evaluation and control levels. • Monitoring, evaluation and control activities. • Training to enhance administrative capacities. • Follow-up and evaluation actions of all the activities and programmes developed within Operational Programmes. • Adequate dissemination of the Operational Programme actions.
Youth Employment OP	8D	ESF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance. Interventions in less developed regions (80% EU co-funding). • Activities to foster appropriate management, mainly at the programming, monitoring and evaluation and control levels. • Monitoring, evaluation and control activities. • Training to enhance administrative capacities. • Follow-up and evaluation actions of all the activities and programmes developed within Operational Programmes. • Adequate dissemination of the Operational Programme actions.
Youth Employment OP	8E	ESF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance. Interventions in transitional regions (85% EU co-funding). • Activities to foster appropriate management, mainly at the programming, monitoring and evaluation and control levels. • Monitoring, evaluation and control activities. • Training to enhance administrative capacities. • Follow-up and evaluation actions of all the activities and programmes developed within Operational Programmes. • Adequate dissemination of the Operational Programme

Programme architecture			Main Actions/Interventions
OP	Action-level		
	PAX	ESF/ YEI	
			actions.

Source: Youth Employment Spain Operational Programme

The Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security is the ministerial department with competences in labour, employment and Social Security relations, as well as the development of the Government's policy on migration. Its competences include the provision of public services related to youth employment and it is the Managing Authority of the ESF Operational Programmes and YEI.

As mentioned above, from July 2017, the National PES (called SEPE), an autonomous body attached to the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security, is the coordinator of the national Youth Guarantee scheme. It also coordinates partnerships across different levels and sectors (third sector organisations, National Institute for the Youth, Chambers of Commerce, the regional PES and other intermediate bodies and beneficiaries). Together with the PES of the Autonomous Communities, it composes the National Employment System, and is responsible, among others, of the design of the normative proposals at the national level regarding employment, training for employment and unemployment protection; of the coordination between active employment policies and unemployment benefits; of the design, in collaboration with the Autonomous Communities and the social partners, of the Annual Work Programme of the National Employment System and the Implementation Plans of the European Employment Strategy; of carrying out the management and control of unemployment benefits; of maintaining databases that guarantee the public registry of employment offers, job seekers' demands and contracts; and of developing the observatory of occupations, among others.

Finally, the regional PES are responsible for implementing the ALMP, and they are in charge of managing services for unemployed persons and companies seeking for employees.

Table 4. Main actors in YE activities in Spain

YEI Managing Authorities		YG Impl. Authority		PES
Name	Type	Name	Type	
Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security	Ministry of Labour / Social Policy	Spanish General Directorate for Self-Employment, the Social Economy and Corporate Social Responsibility / National Public Employment Service (SEPE)	Public Employment Service	National Public Employment Service and Employment Agencies

Source: SFC2014, ESF website.

As shown in the table below³, ESF funds in support to youth employment are mostly invested in apprenticeship schemes⁴ (69.6% of the expenditure). In this context, the

³ Note that the table includes expenditure on Young People aged less than 25 years old, whereas the Youth Guarantee System was extended to Young People until 29 years old in July 2015.

⁴ Apprenticeship is defined in LMP database as "a form of alternate training where the participants receive a salary/remuneration for participation, are linked to the employer by a contract (or an agreement), and receive a recognised diploma upon completion. The expenditure included in the database are incentives to employers to recruit apprentices and training allowances for particular disadvantaged groups.

Contract for Training and Apprenticeship (*Contrato de Formación y Aprendizaje*)⁵ and the Workshop and Trade Schools (*Escuelas Taller y Casas de Oficios*) have been considered in the Evaluation as an effective instrument under the Youth Guarantee scheme. Secondly, an important part of the ESF (co)funding has been invested in institutional training⁶ (20.3%), which has also been considered essential for the objectives of the Operational Programme. Finally, the investment of ESF funds in employment incentives has represented a substantial amount (8.7%), although its effectiveness and attractiveness for companies does not seem to be key (see below in this report).

Table 5. *Distribution of expenditure on young people (<25) participating in active labour market operations by source of funding and type of intervention, Spain, 2014-18*

	Only national funds	ESF (co)funded
Institutional training	5.3%	20.3%
Traineeships	44.2%	0.2%
Apprenticeships	1.1%	69.6%
Employment incentives	12.1%	8.7%
Sheltered/supported employment	15.6%	0.0%
Direct job creation	14.6%	0.0%
Start-up incentives	7.1%	1.3%
Total	100%	100%

Source: LMP database, data extracted on 03 July 2019.

Note: Data cover interventions in Labour Market Policies (LMP) categories 2-7 only. Expenditure on young people is estimated for each intervention as total expenditure times the proportion of young people (<25) amongst total participants (using the observation of average annual stock where available and otherwise entrants by age). Interventions with missing data on either expenditure or participants are excluded from the analysis. The source of funding for each intervention is based on responses to item 12 of the LMP questionnaire.

2.2.2 Operational Programme monitoring system

Regarding the monitoring system, data collection is centralised by the ESF Managing Authority which is attached to the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security. Intermediate Bodies and the Beneficiary Organisations provide information on financial implementation, output and result indicators to the ESF Managing Authority, the so-called ESF Administrative Unit (*Unidad Administradora del Fondo Social Europeo, UAFSE*). On the other hand, data referring to the interventions carried out with young people and their characteristics (sex, age, education level) is collected by the National Youth Guarantee System and is the responsibility of the National PES.

The information on financial data of the projects available to the UAFSE is provided by the Intermediate Bodies (IBs) and the Beneficiary Organisations (BOs) in aggregated terms (at operation level, not the level of the individuals) as established by the Operational Programme. Therefore, it is the Intermediate Bodies that have data on the participants of each project.

Regarding the accessibility to anonymised data for research purposes, including data extractions on the types of participants, this is not available in Spain at the moment, according to the Managing Authority and the National PES.

⁵ The Contract for Training and Apprenticeship is an instrument aimed at promoting the professional qualification of young people by a combination of paid activity in a company with training activity within the framework of the system of vocational training for employment or the educational system. Enterprises that offer such contracts must sign an agreement with a vocational training centre and must assign a tutor to the individual; in exchange, they benefit from reductions in social security contributions.

⁶ Institutional training covers measures where most of the training time (75% or more) is spent in a training institution (school/college, training centre or similar).

2.3 Intervention logic

The Youth Employment Operational Programme in Spain is built around five main problems that youth people are facing in the country. Thus, they are featured by high unemployment rates, as well as a high rate of those who are not in education nor employment; besides, a significant part of Spanish youth is characterised by low levels of qualification, and by lack of labour experience of those who are qualified; finally, an important part of the youth population in Spain is at risk of social exclusion.

In order to tackle these challenges, the Youth Employment Operational Programme has the final objective of supporting the reduction of the youth unemployment rate through the improvement of qualifications and the promotion of recruitment and self-employment of the young population. It also aims at activating young unemployed further away from the labour market, thus those not registered with PES. In order to do this, it focuses on four main specific objectives: a) Activation; b) Strengthening employability; c) Increasing entrepreneurship; d) Increasing permanent contracts.

To achieve the specific objectives, activation support operations are implemented within the framework of the Operational Programme, in the form of individualised advice, professional guidance, as well as information and support in the search of employment. Besides, interventions to improve the employability of young people are developed, including professional training and actions to promote entrepreneurship, including operations to promote entrepreneurial spirit and entrepreneurial culture among young people. Recruitment support operations are also implemented, including wage subsidies and other interventions aimed at employers to create new opportunities for young people. Finally, operations are implemented to allow access to the labour market for those at risk of social exclusion.

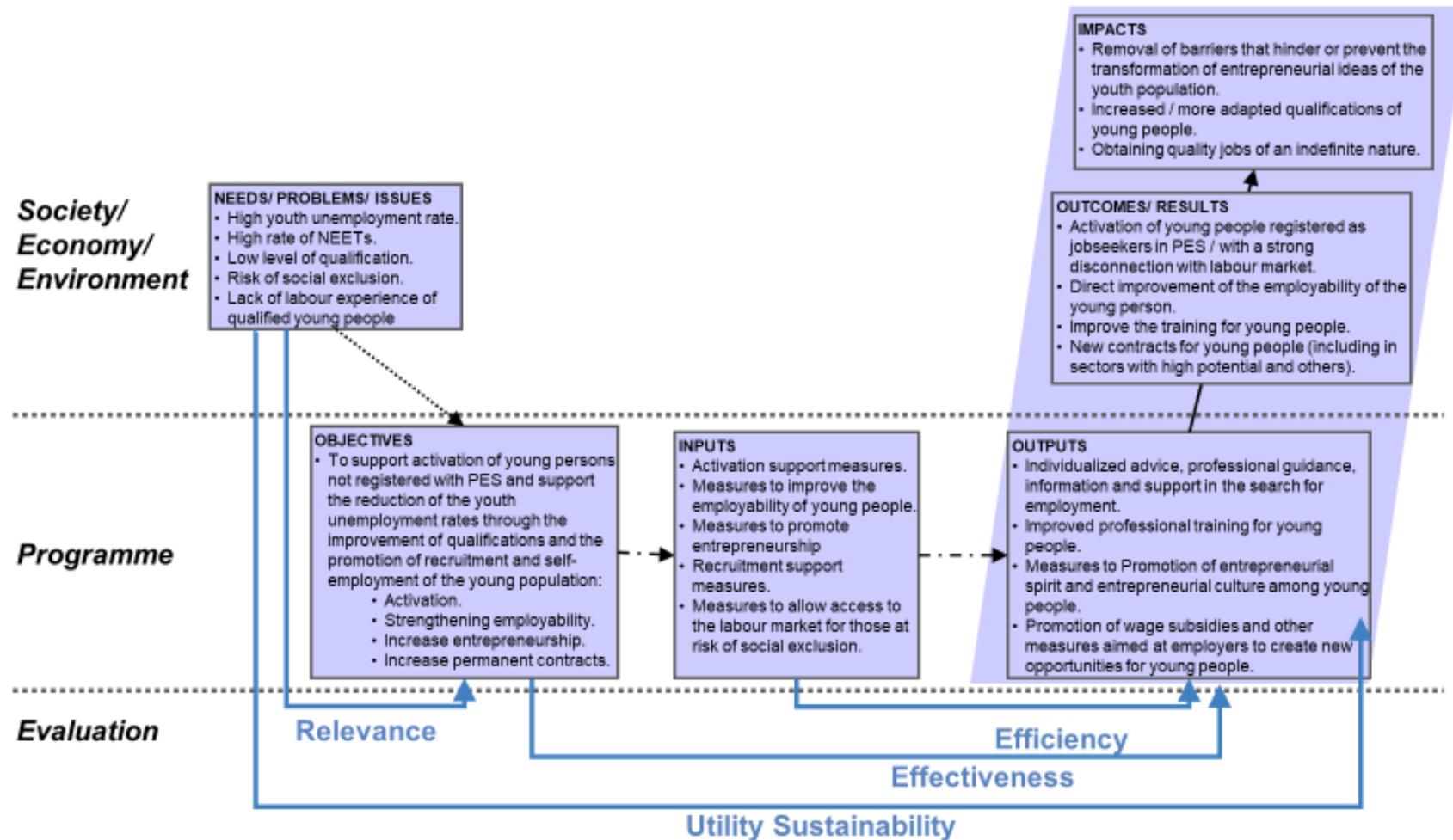
As results, the Operational Programme expects to achieve activation of young people registered as jobseekers in PES with a strong disconnection with labour market; improvement of the employability of the young person; improvement of the training for young people; and hiring of young people, including in sectors with high potential, such as IT and green economy.

Besides, these will lead to increased and more adapted qualifications of young people to the labour market requirements, the obtention of quality jobs of permanent nature, and the removal of barriers that hinder or prevent the transformation of entrepreneurial ideas of the youth population.

In order to achieve this, a large and increasing number of stakeholders take part in the partnership created to implement the Operational Programme, including the National Youth Institute, Chambers of Commerce, public foundations, private banking foundations, NGOs, etc. In line with the decentralised model in Spain, the Autonomous Communities have a key role in the implementation and management of the Operational Programme.

An insufficient initial strategic reflexion has been reported in the YEI Evaluation report and has been highlighted by several stakeholders, due to the short time available to design such a complex Operational Programme. Thus, the Operational Programme did not include a thorough diagnosis of the needs of the Spanish youth, and the initial design of the partnership did not follow a strategic approach for the posterior inclusion of important members, such as the Ministry for Education. Besides, key organisations representing groups of beneficiaries have been included since the beginning in the programming phase of the Operational Programme, while other organisations representing young persons facing particular social exclusion problems were missing.

Figure 1. Logic of intervention



Sources: Chapter 1 and 2 of this report, interviews.

3 Scale of ESF / YEI investment

After a slow start due to organisational and communication problems, as well as some issues hampering the registry of the participants within the National System of Youth Guarantee, the Operational Programme financial implementation has been progressively increasing since its launch in 2014, in particular since 2017. Thus, the project selection rate in 2018 for both ESF (82% for both Investment Priority 8.ii and Thematic Objective (TO) 8) and YEI (87% for Investment Priority 8.ii and 82% for Thematic Objective 8) are well above 71%, the rate which would correspond to 2018 if the implementation were lineal.

Regarding the expenditure declared, it shows a certain delay with regard to the costs reported. The important difference between the rate for YEI (49%) and ESF (1%) has to do with the fact that, as advanced above, although ESF and YEI activities directly addressed to young people (Investment Priority 8.ii) are exactly the same in both cases, the YEI mostly applied in the period 2013-2018 and ESF funds mostly after this period. The difference between the co-financing rates of YEI (92% on average according to the Annual Implementation Report [AIR] 2018) and ESF (depending on the type of region, from 50% to 85%) explains this preference for YEI in the initial phase, when the effects of the economic crisis and austerity policies were notable.

Table 6. Allocations to Youth Employment ESF + YEI – including Operational Programme amendments until 2018

OP	ESF ⁷		YEI ⁸		Total		Share of total funding allocated to IP8.ii of TO8 in %
	EU amount in Mio. EUR	Total in Mio. EUR	EU amount in Mio. EUR	Total in Mio. EUR	EU amount in Mio. EUR	Total in Mio. EUR	
Youth Employment OP - ESF/YEI	420.2	589.2	2 723.3	2 963.6	3 143.5	3 552.9	100%
Grand total	420.2	589.2	2 723.3	2 963.6	3 143.5	3 552.9	100%

Source: FC2014, based on AIR 2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

Table 7. Changes to Youth Employment allocations in Operational Programmes since start programming

OP	ESF ⁹		YEI ¹⁰		Total	
	EU amount in Mio. EUR	Total in Mio. EUR	EU amount in Mio. EUR	Total in Mio. EUR	EU amount in Mio. EUR	Total in Mio. EUR
Youth Employment OP - ESF/YEI	-23.3	-96.2	836.3	910.1	813.0	813.9

Source: SFC2014, based on AIR 2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

⁷ Excludes ESF allocations to YEI

⁸ Includes ESF allocations to YEI

⁹ Excludes ESF allocations to YEI

¹⁰ Includes ESF allocations to YEI

Table 8. Overview of the financial progress - ESF / YEI

OP / IP8.ii	Allocated budget to YE in Mio. EUR	Eligible costs reported in Mio. EUR	Project selection rate IP8.ii (%) 2018	Project selection rate TO8 (%) 2018	Expendit. declared in Mio. EUR	Expendit. declared IP8.ii (%) 2018	Expendit. declared TO8 (%) 2018
ESF							
Youth Employment OP - ESF/YEI	589.2	485.1	82%	82%	4.5	1%	1%
YEI							
Youth Employment OP - ESF/YEI	2 963.6	2 579.0	87%	82%	1 466.3	49%	1%

Source: SFC2014, based on AIR 2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

Table 9. Financial progress

OP / IP8.ii	Project selection rate (%)				% expenditure declared			
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2015	2016	2017	2018
ESF – IP8.ii								
Youth Employment OP - ESF/YEI	0%	2%	1%	82%	0%	0%	0%	1%
YEI– IP8.ii								
Youth Employment OP - ESF/YEI	0%	29%	65%	87%	0%	0%	25%	49%
ESF EU28 IP8.ii				77%				36%
YEI EU28 IP8.ii				98%				49%

Source: SFC2014, based on AIR 2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

4 Effectiveness

Evaluation question 1 – How effective are the YEI and other ESF-funded youth employment operations in achieving their objectives?

4.1 Data based on the AIR 2018

This sub-section provides basic data from the AIR 2018 relevant to effectiveness.

4.1.1 Outputs

Until December 2018, 757 182 participants were registered in the Youth Employment Operational Programme, out of which 99% was funded by YEI. The participation of women is balanced (50%) and the participation of young persons under 25 years reached 62%, which highlights the relevance of the group aged 25-29 years (38%).

Table 10. Number of participations under Investment Priority 8.ii (ESF and YEI)

OP / IP8.ii	ESF ¹¹			YEI ¹²			Total number of participations	Share of total number of IP8.ii participation of TO8 in %
	Total number of participations	Share of women in %	Share of participations <25 years in %	Total number of participations	Share of women in %	Share of participations <25 years in %		
Youth Employment OP - ESF/YEI	5 478	42%	86%	751 704	50%	62%	757 182	100%
Grand total	5 478	42%	86%	751 704	50%	62%	757 182	100%

Source: SFC2014, based on AIR 2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

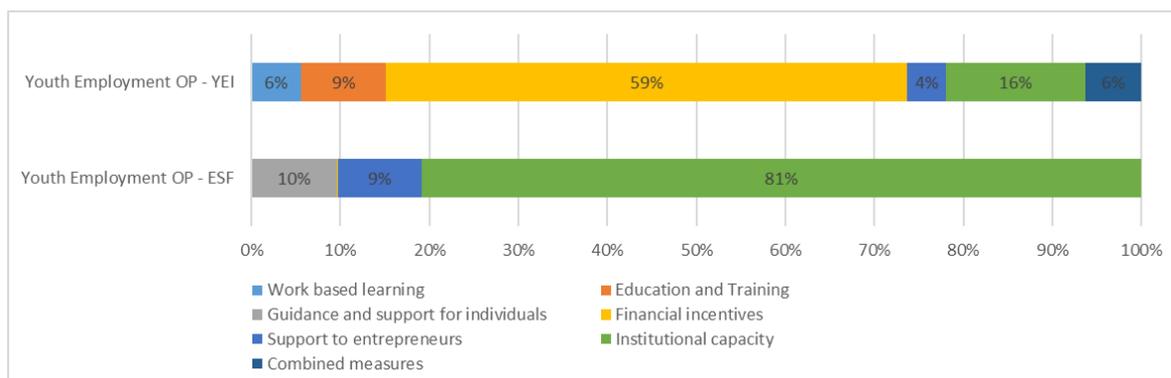
4.1.1.1 Operational Programme Type of interventions

As seen in Figure 1 below, most of the resources of YEI (59%) have been invested in financial incentives (mainly subsidies to contracts for Training and Apprenticeship, as advanced in the table 'Distribution of expenditure on young people (<25) participating in active labour market operations by source of funding and type of intervention'), followed by actions aimed at increasing institutional capacity (16%), education and training (9%), work-based learning (6%), combined operations (6%) and support to entrepreneurs (4%). It is worth emphasising that YEI funding has not been used in guidance and support for individual interventions. On the contrary, ESF funding has been invested mainly in institutional capacity (81%), guidance and support to individuals (10%) and support to entrepreneurs (9%). ESF funding has not been invested in work-based learning activities, nor combined operations, education and training and financial incentives.

¹¹ Excludes ESF allocations to YEI

¹² Includes ESF allocations to YEI

Figure 2. Share of eligible costs by type of intervention, 2015-2018



Source: SFC2014, based on AIR 2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

4.2 Target achievement

Table 11. Overview of number of indicators with targets under Investment Priority 8.ii

	Total number of indicators	Number of indicators with a target
Output indicators – ESF	337	35
Output indicators – YEI	16	6
Total output	353	41
Result indicators – ESF	154	28
Result indicators – YEI	21	
Total result	175	28

Source: SFC2014, based on AIR 2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

Table 12. Average achievement rate of output targets under Investment Priority 8.ii – by Operational Programme

	Average achievement rate under IP8.ii (%)				Benchmark in (%)	
	ESF		YEI		TOS Achievement rate	EU28 IP8.ii
	Total	Women	Total	Women		
Participations						
Youth Employment OP - ESF/YEI	1%	2%	83%	51%	25%	67%
Results						
Youth Employment OP - ESF/YEI	2%	2%	-	-	39%	59%

Empty fields mean that no targets have been defined by Operational Programme in that memberstate for youth employment

Source: SFC2014, based on AIR 2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

4.2.1 Results

Table 13. Overview results – Investment Priority 8.ii - YEI

OP	Unemployed participants			Long-term unemployed participants		
	who completed the YEI-supported intervention	who received an offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship upon leaving	in education / training, gain a qualification, or in employment, including self-employment, upon leaving	who completed the YEI-supported intervention	who received an offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship upon leaving	in education / training, gain a qualification, or are in employment, including self-employment, upon leaving
Youth Employment OP - ESF/YEI	406 510	152 250	193 635	66 842	17 832	35 300
Grand total	406 510	152 250	193 635	66 842	17 832	35 300

Source: SFC2014, based on AIR2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

Table 14. Overview results – Investment Priority 8.ii - YEI (2)

	Inactive participants			All participants, six months after leaving		
	who completed the YEI-supported intervention	who received an offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship upon leaving	in education / training, gain a qualification, or are in employment, including self-employment, upon leaving	in continued education, training leading to a qualification, apprenticeship or a traineeship	in employment	in self-employment
Youth Employment OP - ESF/YEI	36 502	11 803	20 673	50 080	122 978	9 348
Grand total	36 502	11 803	20 673	50 080	122 978	9 348

Source: SFC2014, based on AIR 2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

4.3 Answers to the Evaluation Question

4.3.1 Evaluation question 1.1 – To what extent have the financial implementation and the achievement of the expected outputs progressed according to the targets set in the programmes? What were the main factors involved (delays in implementation, ESF absorption...)?

The performance regarding the financial implementation of the Youth Employment Operational Programme is positive, and up to now, all the allocations certified have been approved and paid, no one has been rejected, as informed by the Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security. As seen in Table 7 above, 'Overview of the financial progress - ESF / YEI' the financial implementation is above (82%-87%) what would apply for the fifth year of the programme (71%).

Thus, the allocations for 2014 and 2015 have been completely spent. Taking into account that the challenge was very ambitious, with EUR 1 871 million concentrated in 2014 and 2015, a great effort has been made. However, some difficulties arose, related to the challenge of implementing the programme already in 2014, as it was approved in that year, with a high concentration of activities in 2014 and 2015. Besides, delays occurred during the launching of the programme, mainly due to the Youth Guarantee registration system that was established in Spain, as well as to the

political blockade with no agreement to elect a Government during 2016. On the other hand, the Youth Employment Operational Programme involves many different actors, including the national and regional governments, besides private organisations. This has made the implementation challenging, as the need for better coordination was underlined among organisations not used to cooperate previously. There may have been a need for more staff at the Managing Authority, as its human resources seemed insufficient to deal with all the issues related to the implementation of the Programme, coordination, promotion of exchange of knowledge, etc. This has been emphasised by different stakeholders including the Managing Authority itself.

However, after the initial delays, the pace of implementation was accelerated, and the Operational Programme has progressed since then adequately. The financial implementation data, as well as the perceptions of the interviewed stakeholders, confirm this trend.

As regards participation, the average achievement rate of the participation targets under Investment Priority 8.ii of the YEI was 83% at the end of 2018, well above the Thematic Objective 8 benchmark of 25% and of the EU28 Investment Priority 8.ii benchmark of 67% (Table 12. Average achievement rate of output targets under Investment Priority 8.ii). The average achievement rate of the participation targets of the ESF was only 1%: as explained above, the strategy has been to focus first mostly on YEI and let the ESF strand of the Operational Programme to be implemented mostly after 2021.

There are **significant differences between the Autonomous Communities** in the financial and operational implementation. Andalusia, Catalunya and the Valencian Community have behaved especially well. These differences may be explained by initial deficiencies in the strategic design of the Operational Programme, as remarked by the Evaluation and some stakeholders.

The achievement of the **expected results has also been satisfactory**, as the rate of insertion of participants in the labour market and the number of days registered with the Social Security are above the average of the Spanish labour market (although below the EU average). Thus, according to the mentioned Evaluation, 55.5% of participants in the Operational Programme activities were in employment and registered with the Social Security 12 months after the end of their activities; this rate amounts to 53.1% after six months of finishing the activities.

Regarding the types of actions, according to the Managing Authority and the above-mentioned Evaluation, the highest coverage ratio in terms of participant persons corresponds to guidance actions. In terms of insertion into the labour market, actions related to employability, mainly the training and learning contract, as well as hiring incentives **are those with the best results**. Entrepreneurship activities have little presence. Among them, support to self-employed is **effective**, although it has clear scope for improvement, for instance, supporting young entrepreneurs' investment needs. Promotion of entrepreneurship culture is equally not yielding the expected results among the young participants, showing scope for improvement.

4.3.2 Evaluation question 1.2 – How and to what extent does YEI contribute to the achievement of the general objective of sustainable integration (also after the end of the operation) of young people into the labour market and to the specific objectives under ESF? How did it contribute to addressing the problems faced by NEETs?

According to the stakeholders involved, the YEI has been essential to the achievement of the general objective of sustainable integration of young people into the labour market and to the specific objectives under ESF. The higher intensity of the attention enabled by YEI funding is key to attain better results. One should take into account that the co-financing rate among YEI interventions is 92%, which means a substantial reinforcement of budgetary means per beneficiary. As an indicator, according to the II

YEI evaluation, labour market insertion rates are significantly higher for those who take part in the activities of YEI than for those who do not. Also, other stakeholders have declared that the interventions implemented under YEI have led most of the participants to their activation, as well as to enter the labour market and to remain.

However, the II Evaluation remarks that the Operational Programme has contributed modestly to the incorporation of inactive participants to the search for employment and their return to the education and training systems. In this regard, it would have been desirable to reinforce operations in the field of education and training, including those related to certification of skills acquired through experience or non-formal education. The initial strategic design of the Operational Programme did not include education authorities in the partnership, a fact that has been regretted by some stakeholders.

Also, reinforced monitoring and accompaniment operations once in employment would have been desirable, though not possible within the YEI, in order to detect potential problems of the young people during this phase, avoiding dropping off the labour market again.

On the other hand, as emphasised by the Managing Authority and the regional PES of the Autonomous Community of Murcia, the YEI has led young people far from the public services for young, in particular NEETs, to get to know the organisations in charge of ALMP, including the Public Employment Services, NGOs, Chambers of commerce and others; the programmes and the persons available to help them in activation, training and employment offers. In the case of NEETs, according to the interviewees, YEI actions have also contributed to improving their self-esteem, qualifications, and employability, as well as fostering their activation.

4.3.3 Evaluation question 1.3 – To what extent were the target groups reached by the operations, including disadvantaged persons, those from marginalised communities and those leaving education without qualifications? Please classify different types of NEETs according to labour market status, age (15-25 or 15-29 or over), ISCED level, category of disadvantage (marginalised groups, disabilities, migrants, ex-offenders, addiction problems, homeless, single parents, carers, women having suffered violence or abuse, participants from rural areas).

With regard to disadvantaged persons, the Operational Programme has focused an important part of its actions on people with very low educational levels (near 60% of beneficiaries, similar to the share among young unemployed, according to the II YEI Evaluation). Also, the share of people with disabilities which have taken part is above the general rate of people with disabilities in Spain, according to the same source. However, other groups of young persons at risk of social exclusion require greater efforts to be reached out and the attention provided is not always sufficient and/or adequate (EAPN, 2016).

In this regard, the Managing Authority has published calls for proposals for organisations working in the field of social exclusion (including the Action against Hunger Foundation, the Gipsy Secretariat Foundation, the ONCE Foundation for people with disabilities, the Spanish Red Cross and YMCA), to select operations for these groups. Besides, some organisations working with these groups have been selected by the Managing Authority as Intermediate Bodies (including the Banking Foundation La Caixa and the ONCE Foundation), for them to implement and coordinate part of the Operational Programme as a way to promote the participation of these groups of beneficiaries in the interventions.

Finally, protocols have been set up among social service departments of some autonomous communities and specialised NGOs to better approach groups at risk of social exclusion, which implies a good practice, as social services departments rarely participate in employment-related policy operations such as the Youth Guarantee.

To what extent was gender balance¹³ achieved?

Regarding the achievement of gender balance, there is almost parity in terms of general participation in the Operational Programme, which is slightly higher for females than for males. Regarding the results, it depends on the specific intervention, as in the case of hiring, the results are better for women, while in those of entrepreneurship, they are better for males.

4.3.4 Evaluation question 1.4 – What was the quality and timeliness of the offers received by the participants?

According to the above-mentioned Evaluation, the average number of days between registration and provision of an offer is, once the initial difficulties were overcome, 101 days (less than the four months required). The rest of the stakeholders interviewed have also confirmed the adequacy of the timeliness of the offers received by the participants. However, the Evaluation also points out a number of young participants – mostly the most vulnerable – that remained registered for a longer time without receiving an offer.

In addition, the rate of completion of the actions is 90%. The analysis made by the II Evaluation in November 2018 confirms that the rate of completion of the interventions is 73% for unemployed young men and 82% of unemployed young women, more than 10 pp above the expected values for that moment.

In terms of quality, no criteria to assess the quality of the offers have been defined, so there is no possibility to determine it following any standard operation. In spite of this, some interviewees believe that, in terms of the activation of the beneficiaries, the quality has been high. One of the Intermediate Bodies, the School of Industrial Organisation, has conducted satisfaction surveys among participants in training actions, who have assessed their participation as positive. However, regarding employment offers, their high temporality rate has been emphasised, although with better results than for the Spanish labour market: in 2017, 8.19% of all youth contracts were permanent contracts while 91.81% were temporary; this contrasts with the rate of permanent hiring for the unemployed that had taken part in the interventions of the Operational Programme, which was 23.2%, according to the II Evaluation, almost three times higher than the average. This indicates that the YEI has obtained remarkably better results than the market trend.

At this point, it is important to highlight that contracts subsidised by YEI are, according to the above-mentioned Evaluation, less stable in terms of duration than the general average of the labour market for young people: 3.3% of the YEI-subsidised contracts are permanent while the average for young people in the labour market is 4.4%. Thus, according to data, as well as to the opinion of stakeholders interviewed, subsidising contracts is not effective in terms of stable labour market insertion, and the companies prefer operations which permit them to get to know the young person before hiring him/her, such as the Contract for Training and Apprenticeship.

¹³ Under gender balance, we understand not only parity (50/50) but evidence of the extent to which the different needs of men and women in accessing labour market are taken to account in the programmes. Please distinguish between specific interventions for women and gender mainstreaming. Please also mention, if possible, which political goal is being pursued in relation to gender (glass ceiling, horizontal segregation, integration of migrant women with a migration background, etc.).

4.3.5 EQ1.5 – Which types of interventions were the most effective and most sustainable, for which groups and in which contexts (e.g., more developed, less developed and transition regions; urban and rural areas etcetera)? Please classify different types of intervention according to detailed type, duration, within/outside the firm, with/without a certification, etc. For more options, please see the mapping template.

There is no readily available data about the effectiveness of the different interventions for different groups of young persons or territorial contexts. However, according to the regional PES of the Autonomous Community of Murcia and the School for Industrial Organisation, the most effective and sustainable interventions have been those involving an integral approach, including those combining training with labour experience and those developed in collaboration with NGOs. The link with the regional employment needs and close connection with local business are additional success factors. Also, the most individualised interventions have been remarked as very effective.

In terms of the level of development of the region, according to the stakeholders interviewed, better results are being obtained in more developed areas and in urban centres; on the contrary, geographical dispersion has been perceived to have a negative impact on less successful actions that have not been performed close to the young, especially in rural areas. The survey carried out to Intermediate Bodies and Direct Beneficiaries in the framework of the II Evaluation supports this perception.

4.3.6 Evaluation question 1.6 – What main factors (geographical, socioeconomic, organizational, etc.) had a bigger impact in the effectiveness of ESF and YEI operations in the field of youth employment, by type of operation? Please identify the method used to identify impacts.

No analysis of the factors with a bigger impact in the effectiveness of ESF and YEI operations by type of operation has been done, and relevant data for such analysis are not available. However, stakeholders have identified better results in more developed regions and among young people who are not at risk of social exclusion. As emphasised by stakeholders interviewed, the lower the socio-educational level, the higher the distance from the institutions, and the earlier the abandonment of the educational system, the more ineffective are the efforts to reach out to potential beneficiaries and to engage them in the interventions. Thus, ESF/YEI youth employment operations work better for more qualified and educated people and for those who live in more developed areas.

In this context, an adverse selection issue may arise: while more developed regions, including big cities, concentrate the main share of young people in need, with deep pockets of youth with low socio-educational levels, far from the institutions, and with high rates of early school leaving, their co-financing rate within the Operational Programme is considerably below than that for transitional or less developed regions, where the amount of potential beneficiaries is substantially lower. This makes it difficult to provide adequate responses to the greater needs of the large cities in more developed regions.

But also, incentives for the perversion of the system have been detected, leading Intermediate Bodies and Direct Beneficiaries to avoid rural areas in their operations and to focus on urban contexts, where they will more easily (and with fewer costs) find beneficiaries of the interventions, thereby providing better figures in terms of performance and results indicators.

4.3.7 Evaluation question 1.7 – To what extent did YEI and ESF contribute to structural changes in national education systems, vocational training systems, public employment systems or youth policies?

The Youth Employment Operational Programme has contributed to putting the focus on youth employment policies within the country, substantially improving and reinforcing the previous activities in the field and integrating them into a comprehensive programme. It has also increased coordination among the different actors working with youth notably. The YEI and ESF have put the young population at the centre of the interventions. This has implied a structural change for the employment and training services. The organisations involved in youth policies and, in particular, in the Youth Employment Operational Programme, have gained experience and knowledge in different strategies to foster young people activation, which have been integrated into their daily activity. In some cases, staff specialised in the activation of youth has been incorporated and will to a certain extent remain beyond the duration of the programmes. Besides, YEI and ESF have led to greater coordination between employment, education, social services and youth departments, including the creation of different coordination mechanisms. This has resulted in different organisations sharing a common language, setting common objectives, and in a change of the mentality of the staff of the organisations involved, which are more open now to collaboration and to integral interventions.

However, structural changes have been less significant than expected, possibly due to the lack of an initial sound strategic design in the Youth Employment Operational Programme. Appropriate analysis of the situation and needs of the young people in Spain, the specific requirements of those in more vulnerable situations, the definition of common objectives and the setup of responses to the problems were not done. One of the weakest points detected was the lack of connections with the education and training system, which is essential for the activation of youth.

The lack of time was key for this deficient initial design, together with the political blockade during 2016, almost at the beginning of the implementation period. The lack of strategy can be perceived also in the selection of the Intermediate Bodies, which seems not to respond to an integral approach to give a response to the needs; it is not clear which is the focus of action and target group of each one and what are the differences and complementarities with the rest.

As a result of this absence of initial strategy, and the invisibility during the design phase of the needs of the most vulnerable groups, the attention to these groups is based within the Operational Programme on the cooperation with NGOs, without any entity having a central/coordinating/strategical role. This has led to poor results for young people in most vulnerable situations, who have largely remained outside the Programme.

On the other hand, to foster the effectiveness of the Operational Programme and its contribution to structural changes, it would be desirable for the Managing Authority to take a more leading role, acting as a strategic coordinator and also as a central point of communication, promoting, for instance, exchange of experiences among stakeholders, identification and sharing of good practices or more coordination among stakeholders. For this, it should increase its capacity in terms of human resources devoted to the Operational Programme.

5 Efficiency

Evaluation question 2 – How efficient have the YEI and other youth-employment operations funded by the ESF been in the achievement of their objectives?

5.1 Data based on the AIR 2018

This sub-section provides basic data from the AIR 2018 relevant to efficiency.

Table 15. Eligible expenditures declared to EC per participation

OP	ESF			YEI		
	Total participati on 8.ii	Expenditure declared 8.ii in EUR	Overall unit cost 8.ii in EUR	Total participat ion	Expenditure declared in EUR	Overall unit cost in EUR
OP Youth Employment	5 478	4 526 771	826	751 704	1 466 253 416	1 951
EU28 – IP8.ii average			3 591			3 096

Source: SFC2014, based on AIR 2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

Table 16. Eligible expenditures declared to EC per immediate result achieved

OP	ESF			YEI		
	Total results 8.ii	Expenditure declared 8.ii in EUR	Overall unit cost 8.ii in EUR	Total results	Expenditure declared in EUR	Overall unit cost in EUR
OP Youth Employment	4 826	4 526 771	938	262 182	1 466 253 416	5 593
EU28 – IP8.ii						1 483

Source: SFC2014, based on AIR 2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

5.2 Answers to the Evaluation Questions

Most of the stakeholders interviewed have considered the operations very efficient in terms of the approximate costs of the activities and the activation rates of the programmes, although most of them have expressed that they do not have available data on unit costs to empirically base their assumption. Likewise, the II Evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative confirms that it has not been possible to make this calculation due to the lack of available data. The data presented in Table 15 point at two facts: on the one hand, the overall unit cost is notably below EU28 average in Investment Priority 8.ii (63% in the case of interventions funded by YEI and 23% in those funded by ESF); on the other hand, the unit cost per result obtained with YEI-funded interventions is much higher than the EU28 average, almost four times more

5.2.1 Evaluation question 2.1 – To what extent were operations cost-effective? What types of operations were more and less cost-effective? In what contexts? What were the determining factors?

There is no available information on unit costs, nor are there common methodologies to measure them. However, in terms of the approximate costs of the activities and the activations rates of the programmes, the stakeholders interviewed have considered that high levels of efficiency have been reached. In particular, the activities highlighted as more cost-effective have been those which took place in large cities – due to reasons explained above (easier access to the direct beneficiaries) – and those related to labour market guidance, with more participants than expected. Conversely, the activities related to fostering entrepreneurial culture among the youth and the ones developed in rural areas have been the least cost-effective, in the opinion of the interviewees.

5.2.2 Evaluation question 2.2 – Are there significant cost differences between regions in the implementation of the operations? What are these differences related to? Please be specific with regard to the cost structure and whether the costs are programmed, committed, or declared/certified?

The existing differences among regions in the implementation of the operations relate, according to the stakeholders interviewed, to differences in the labour costs and to the different price levels in each Autonomous Community. Besides, cost differences have been highlighted between urban and rural areas, with higher costs in rural areas in which reaching out to the beneficiaries requires stronger efforts.

5.2.3 Evaluation question 2.3 – To what extent were the organisational arrangements, including management and control systems at all levels, conducive to the effectiveness of operations? Was there administrative burden, in particular gold plating involved?

Regarding organisational arrangements, the Operational Programme has designed and put in place several mechanisms aimed at improving the effectiveness of the interventions, but mainly in terms of operational implementation rather than management and control systems. All the stakeholders interviewed have emphasised the accessibility and collaboration of the Managing Authority to help in management, control and monitoring issues.

On the other hand, the administrative burden of YEI and ESF is very high, something emphasised by all stakeholders interviewed. As an example from the II Evaluation, regarding the control systems that guarantee the eligibility of the declared expenses, the application of increasingly exhaustive and strict controls that try to prevent fraud increases the administrative burden. However, stakeholders interviewed have also agreed that the administrative burden has been reduced compared to the previous periods.

The administrative burden is also high for the beneficiaries. As an example, the II Evaluation highlights the administrative burden that a small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) may incur in benefiting from certain support to hire young unemployed, or the separate accounting that is often required for the young person who has set up a business to be able to benefit from the Operational Programme support.

Also, the interviewees have highlighted the high burden due to the several audits conducted by different organisations and which are very time-consuming. Within this context, although Spain is very advanced in the use of simplified costs and has one of the highest certification levels using this model in Europe (close to 90%), the simplified costs model is not adopted by the accountability systems of the Spanish Public Administrations, so organisations must follow different systems for one single operation, according to simplified costs but also according to the Public Sector accountability rules, which leads to difficulties within the country, especially at the time of justification.

On the other hand, problems with information sharing are frequent among the different administrations involved, in particular between the Central Government and the Autonomous Communities, which prevents the operations from being more effective. Indeed, as reported by the II Evaluation and confirmed by stakeholders, it may be the case that several stakeholders have launched activities in a territory and have thus “competed” in attracting the attention of potential participants.

5.2.4 Evaluation question 2.4 – In particular, how timely and efficient were the procedures for reporting and monitoring?

All the stakeholders interviewed have emphasised the high level of workload that procedures for reporting and monitoring imply, making them far from efficient, despite what they have considered valuable support provided by the Managing Authority.

Thus, problems with the information technology (IT) applications, the access to information of the different actions, oversaturation of information, procedures without practical application and complexity of indicators are common. Besides, a difficulty faced by most of the stakeholders interviewed has been the access to beneficiaries six months after completing the activities to monitor their situation, which is perceived as impossible by part of them.

5.2.5 Evaluation question 2.5 – How visible were YEI and other ESF-funded youth employment operations?

All the stakeholders interviewed have agreed on the high visibility of the YEI and other ESF-funded operations, through several activities combining online and traditional strategies, including face-to-face meetings with potential beneficiaries far from the media, and different kinds of events. The Management Authority has a specific unit dedicated to communication, and an evaluation of the communication strategies of the EU Operational Programmes in Spain, including the Youth Employment Operational Programme, will be carried out during 2019.

However, it should be stated that there is no specific evidence on the visibility of the YEI and other ESF-funded operations, since no study has been carried out on this issue. Moreover, challenges have been declared in terms of the effectiveness of communication actions aimed to specific collectives far from the labour market, or those not registered within the Youth Guarantee system, aggravated by the fact that communication costs are not eligible within the Operational Programme.

With this regard, part of the Intermediate Bodies have had to adapt their strategies to the new forms of communication of young people, creating profiles on social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube or Instagram, to better reach the beneficiaries and communicate their activities in this way. These practices have proved more adequate and effective to reach them.

6 Relevance

Evaluation question 3 – How relevant are the YEI and the other ESF-funded youth employment operations?

6.1 Evaluation question 3.1 – To what extent were the objectives and the operations funded by the YEI relevant to the needs of young people in the Member State/region? To what extent were the objectives and operations of other ESF-funded youth employment operations relevant for them?

The objectives and operations funded by YEI and the ESF are highly relevant for the needs of the young people. They, particularly the YEI, have led to the implementation of activities that could not have been developed otherwise, and which have had high returns in terms of activation (in education and/or employment) of the beneficiaries. However, as mentioned above, some relevant objectives for youth employment were initially not included, such as education or social services interventions. Moreover, groups of vulnerable young people were not specifically identified and no adequate support interventions to get them in the Youth Guarantee were foreseen. Also, specific actions focused on rural areas or on closing gender gaps were largely missing.

6.2 Evaluation question 3.2 – To what extent were OPs flexible and able to adapt to changes in the implementation context, notably the evolution in the situation of youth employment?

All the interviewed stakeholders agree on the high level of flexibility of the Youth Employment Operational Programme, which has been able to adapt to different changes and circumstances.

The National Youth Guarantee Plan, approved in 2013, included a common catalogue of actions to be developed by the Intermediate Bodies within the Operational Programme, including guidelines for their implementation, which implies a high level of flexibility for the Intermediate Bodies. The possibility to modify the planned interventions to a certain extent and to adapt them to specific needs of the different territories is also a source of flexibility. The successive calls for proposals have also made it possible for the stakeholders involved to progressively gain knowledge and adapt their intervention to their improved capacities. With this regard, the dialogue established with the Managing Authorities has been emphasised by stakeholders as a key factor which favours flexibility.

6.3 Evaluation question 3.3 – Were the most relevant groups, in the different socioeconomic contexts (e.g., more developed, less developed and transition regions; urban and rural areas etcetera), targeted from the design stage? Were the most important needs of these groups addressed? How were gender issues addressed?

Different stakeholders interviewed agree on the fact that the different target groups were identified from the beginning. With this regard, during the design of the Operational Programme, different organisations working with specific collectives were consulted. However, as advanced, there has been a lack of concrete identification of groups of young people in most vulnerable situations, which has led to their practical absence in the interventions. Besides, specific actions focused on rural areas were also missed, although some indicators include information about them.

Regarding gender issues, they are transversal in Spain in all the OPs, and the Institute for Women and Equal Opportunities, as the national authority on equal opportunities between women and men, prepares an Equality Opinion. This qualified Equality Opinion is included as an annexe to the Operational Programme and analyses and

guarantees the observance of the principle of equality between women and men throughout the programming process. In addition to issuing the Opinion, the Institute for Women has collaborated in the revision of the Operational Programme, in order to comply with the principle of equal opportunities between women and men. On the other hand, the Institute for Women is part of the Monitoring Committee and continues to support the process of monitoring and assessing the principle of equal opportunities for women and men in the Operational Programme.

The Equality Opinion remarks that the strategy of the Operational Programme has identified national and regional needs related to the existence of gender gaps. Besides, it highlights the fact that gender mainstreaming is foreseen in the specific objectives and there are specific actions related to the reduction of the detected inequalities. It also states that attention has been given to the use of non-sexist language and that the Operational Programme includes actions aimed at reducing the gender gaps detected. The intention of collecting data disaggregated by gender that allow the impact generated by the programme to be assessed is also praised. However, more specific interventions with real impact on gender equality are required, according to this Opinion.

7 Coherence

Evaluation question 4 – How coherent are YEI and the other ESF-funded youth employment operations, among themselves and with other actions in the same field?

YEI and the other ESF-funded youth employment operations are in general terms coherent and complementary, both among themselves and with other actions in the same field, from the design phase to the selection of beneficiaries.

However, a need for more integration in their design has been emphasised, in order to combine different tools in a comprehensive approach which maximizes synergies. In particular, complementarities among the Youth Employment Operational Programme and the ESF Operational Programme for Employment, Training and Education should have been promoted, in order to complement their activities in the field of employment and training and multiply the effects of the interventions. Besides, the fact that the Youth Employment Operational Programme has not tackled early school leaving has been perceived as a lost opportunity, as it is one of the main problems that youth faces in Spain, affecting its capacity to access the labour market.

7.1 Evaluation question 4.1 – In which manner were the YEI and other ESF-funded youth employment operations complementary with each other? What were the main factors in this regard?

7.2 EQ4.2 – To what extent were they complementary and coherent with other policy objectives funded by the ESF and other EU programmes and policy initiatives oriented to young people and youth-employment (e.g., ERDF, EAFRD, EMFF, Erasmus+, EURES...)?

The Ministry of Finance and Civil Service in Spain leads the Committee for the Coordination of EU Funds (*Comité de Coordinación de Fondos Europeos*), which should ensure the coordination of the activities of the Cohesion Fund (CF), the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the ESF and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), and guarantee the complementarity of the funds and their interventions.

The interviewed stakeholders have also emphasised the adequate definition of the tasks of each of the funds, programmes and initiatives, which leads to better complementarity. However, there is a feeling that better connection of ESF/YEI with ERDF in terms of training in the field of research and development (R&D) would be of major interest, as an important part of ERDF interventions are connected with R&D infrastructures that require the work of qualified employees in these areas. It is remarkable that in Spain no multi-fund interventions have been promoted.

7.3 Evaluation question 4.3 – To what extent were they complementary and coherent with other national/regional activities oriented to young people and youth employment at national/regional level? Please focus on employment-related activities funded through national and regional funds.

The stakeholders interviewed have also remarked the complementarity and coherence with other national and regional/local activities, which has been important for the effectiveness of the interventions. As examples of this complementarity, one can mention regional subsidies for young people hiring, in addition to the rebates in social security contributions provided by the state PES. In parallel to the operations deployed by large nation-wide specialised NGOs, acting as Intermediary Bodies or Beneficiaries, that work with groups of young people with specific difficulties, regional and local smaller NGOs also play a role in collaborating with the regional PES and local authorities, addressing the needs of some groups of young persons.

However, there is room for improvement of the cooperation between Intermediary Bodies and Beneficiaries and the coherence and complementarity of interventions of the various stakeholders: one key operation to achieve this better coherence is the possibility to share information in real-time about the services that each person is receiving from the different organisations and at the different geographic levels. As learned with the conducted interviews, this possibility should be feasible in short, but at the moment of drafting this report, it was not yet possible. Another important operation would be, as advanced above, the possibility for the Youth Employment Operational Programme to fund interventions to tackle early school leaving.

8 Added value

Evaluation question 5 – What is the EU added value of the YEI and other ESF-funded youth employment operations?

8.1 Evaluation question 5.1 – To what extent did the YEI and other ESF-funded operations produce effects at the national and regional level that would not have taken place without the EU intervention?

The YEI has increased the relevance, visibility and effectiveness of youth employment policies in Spain, through an injection of funds of nearly two billion euros (EUR 1.9 billion), giving a major boost to youth employment policies, currently reaching nearly one million young people when considering the productivity indicators of the implementation reports (978 752) included in the II Evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative. Thus, the Operational Programme has performed nearly two million interventions, of which 81% were related to guidance and lasted on average 15 days, 12% focused on employability with an average length of 438 days, 6% were aimed at promoting permanent employment contracts and lasted on average 155 days, and 1.1% were related to entrepreneurship. The average participant undertakes 3.3 actions, although most actions are short in length. As highlighted in the II Evaluation, according to these indicators the community added value of the programme is unquestionable.

One specificity of the Spanish approach is the involvement in the Operational Programme implementation, not only of the PES, but also of other organisations of different nature, used to working with specific collectives, which makes interventions with these groups more effective. The increasing specialisation of the organisations involved, and therefore the greater effectiveness, would not have been possible without the EU funding. Also, in Spain, the young participant is not unsubscribed from the system when he/she leaves the programme. This allows to have a registry of training and employment of the person, at least between his/her 16 and 30 years, which provides an important amount of data to analyse the long-term effectiveness of the operations. This should be the basis for designing more effective new policies, once the information system is completely accomplished.

On the other hand, all the interviewees have remarked the importance of YEI and other ESF-funded operations to produce effects that would not have taken place without the EU intervention. Thus, they have highlighted the new approach that has been made possible since the implementation of the Operational Programme, putting young people at the centre of the employment policies. As already mentioned, the change in the mentality and the new coordination approach, as well as the training received and knowledge gained by the staff working with youths, has only been possible thanks to the EU intervention.

Besides, thanks to the EU intervention, the impact of the projects, programmes and activities in the framework of the Operational Programme has increased, reaching a wider audience which could not have been supported without the financing means of the Operational Programme. The operations have also led the organisations to implement new programmes, different to those carried out previously and that have been proved to be effective. However, innovations have been included only to a certain extent, and an important part of the interventions have consisted in the mere increase in the volume of those already existing, without introducing new approaches to tackle the problems of young people in Spain.

Specific regions such as Catalonia have been more innovative, and new approaches, projects and interventions have been implemented within the framework of the Operational Programme, including integral interventions promoting guidance and accompaniment for people who need special support throughout insertion pathways, in

order to get them engaged, or interventions with young people suffering from mental diseases.

9 Sustainability

Evaluation question 6 – How sustainable are YEI and the other ESF-funded youth employment operations?

The youth employment operations funded by YEI and ESF will be sustainable only to a certain extent. As mentioned above, a new approach to tackle youth unemployment based on putting the young person at the focus of intervention and in partnerships and collaboration among different stakeholders has settled down, and it will possibly remain. Some of the stakeholders consulted have integrated the operations into their core activities and will keep them beyond the duration of the Operational Programme; meanwhile, others will not be able to sustain them if funding does not continue and/or is reduced.

As declared by the interviewed stakeholders, the operations with more possibilities to be sustained should funding be reduced are those involving an integral approach, combining different programmes and interventions from several points of view, that provide the young person with comprehensive solutions. These operations are indeed perceived as among the most effective and therefore as the least dispensable.

9.1 Evaluation question 6.1 – To what extent are the effects of YEI and ESF support likely to continue after the end of the funding, both at individual and youth employment policy level?

Many of the effects achieved by the Operational Programme will remain after the end of the funding. The interventions have led not only to activation of young people, but also to structural changes, such as in training and employment operations, because at present the focus is put on the youth, which has meant a significant shift in ALMP. Thus, as advanced, public employment services have incorporated and/or trained staff specialised in the activation of youth, and the interventions have led to greater coordination between employment, education, social services and youth, including the creation of different coordination mechanisms, such as the local technical round tables in Murcia region. All partners have gained knowledge and experience in activating young persons. They have also shared objectives and language. This is slowly leading to cultural changes within the organisations involved, which are more open now to collaboration and integral interventions. Part of the innovations that have been implemented by the organisations involved will remain in the future as they have proven to be very successful. Finally, the organisations involved in the Operational Programme have gained experience and knowledge in different strategies to foster young people activation, which they have integrated into their daily activity.

As per the participants, an important number of young people in Spain have benefited from the interventions of the programme, which have led to improving their skills, their knowledge about the labour market, as well as their employability, which will remain in time.

10 Gender sensitivity

According to data available, the **representation of women in the actions of the YEI has been in general terms slightly above parity** (Table 12 above), although in the case of certain disadvantaged profiles, as is the case of inactive people and people with low levels of education, the female participants have been underrepresented.

As reported in the II Evaluation, considering the data from the annual implementation reports (2017 and 2016), it is worth highlighting the **significant under-representation of inactive young women**, with an average participation of 14 pp lower than that of young men. Also, **the participation of young women with disabilities is notably lower** than that of men with disabilities (21 pp). Important gender gaps can also be observed in relation to the participation of people of immigrant origin or belonging to ethnic minorities and the homeless.

On the other hand, in terms of level of education, the presence of women is significantly higher among participants with high and medium qualifications (33.2 pp), and much lower in the group with primary education (-13.4 pp). Persons belonging to single-parent households (10.7 pp) and unemployed (7.3 pp) are two disadvantaged groups in which women have a greater presence.

Generally, women showed a slight advantage in terms of labour insertion, with the exception of some groups, such as non-Spanish nationals with compulsory secondary education or younger generations, in which it is men who show the highest insertion rates. Regarding the rate of full-time permanent contracts, in line with the general trend of the labour market, it is observed that women show a certain disadvantage (around 2 pp less). On the other hand, part-time permanent contracts are much higher among women (3 pp higher than for men).

In order to understand what is related to these variables, it is necessary to consider, first of all, that young women registered in the system were on average older than young men and that there have been very significant differences in the educational levels, with a greater proportion of women among higher levels. Both variables are related to a certain extent and point to the fact that among the participating men a young profile with no secondary or higher education is more frequent.

In general terms, it cannot be said that there is greater effectiveness in interventions when applied to women, but rather that they participate to a greater extent in actions that, in general terms, have better results in terms of labour market insertion, as is the case of actions related to hiring. In addition, the average comparison can distort the conclusions since the profile of women, as has been stated, is more qualified and, therefore, they have a higher level of employability.

Despite the higher rates of participation and insertion in the labour market, the implementing organisations perceive that women have benefited less from the actions of the YEI than men. In terms of the level of performance for men and women in different aspects, including activation, employability, entrepreneurship or return to the education/training system, the perception is also that women would have benefited less than men in all of them.

These disparities in perceived performances between men and women could find their main cause in micro-sociological issues associated with the perpetuation of traditional gender roles. In particular, women remain disempowered in terms of decisions within the family regarding access to employment and education. Gender inequality in family care and responsibilities affects women unequally in regard to men. Traditionally, male-dominated backgrounds are a barrier for women even though they know they can get higher qualifications and access to employment.

11 Conclusions

The Youth Employment Operational Programme for Spain had a slow start which caused delays in the completion of the pathway and the launch of the programme. However, implementation has been progressively increasing and, by 31 December 2017, Spain had already achieved compliance with its acquired financial commitments, with the programme currently progressing at a steady pace. However, there are still variations in the pace of execution between the different Autonomous Communities.

The results in terms of achieving the sustainable integration of young people into the labour market have been positive, and 55.5% of participants in the activities of the programme, previously unemployed, are in employment and registered with Social Security 12 months after the end of their activities within the Operational Programme; however, the results are somewhat inferior to those of the European Union average (61.7%).

The needs of the most vulnerable groups of the young population were not duly taken into account in the design of the Operational Programme and they are not taking part in the interventions as they should. Gender parity has been almost reached in terms of participation in the Operational Programme and the overall gender impact is positive, although some gaps in the participation of women in some operations remain. Regarding the timeliness of the offers, the average is below the four-month period established in the European objectives. On the other hand, there is a lack of criteria to assess the quality of the offers. However, in terms of employment offers, their high temporality rate is worth emphasising.

Regarding efficiency, there is no official data available on unit costs nor is there a common methodology to measure them, but most of the stakeholders interviewed have considered the operations efficient in terms of the approximate costs of the activities and the activation rates of the programmes. The comparison with aggregate unit costs of EU28 reveals that expenditure per participant is at 2/3 of EU28 average and the cost per result is almost 4 times more expensive as in the EU28. In spite of this absence of precise costs, the activities highlighted as more cost-effective have been those which took place in large cities, and those related to labour market guidance, with more participants than expected. Conversely, the activities related to entrepreneurial culture and those developed in rural areas have been the least cost-effective, in the opinion of the interviewees. On the other hand, significant cost differences among regions have been declared. Cost differences have also been highlighted between urban and rural areas, with higher costs in rural areas where reaching the beneficiaries requires more efforts. This provides incentives for the organisations involved to avoid these areas and to focus on large cities, where the achievement of results is easier and cheaper.

It is also worth emphasising the high workload implied by the Operational Programme. A common difficulty faced by the organisations involved is the access to beneficiaries six months after completing the activities, to monitor their situation. On the opposite side, all the stakeholders interviewed have agreed on the high visibility of the YEI and other ESF-funded operations, although challenges have been detected in terms of the effectiveness of communication actions aimed to specific collectives far from the labour market, or those not registered within the Youth Guarantee system.

With regard to the relevance of the YEI and the ESF, it has been very high, as they have led to the implementation of activities that could not have been developed otherwise, and which have had high returns in terms of activation of the beneficiaries. The stakeholders interviewed have emphasised the high level of flexibility of the Youth Employment Operational Programme. However, part of the stakeholders have underlined a lack of specific actions focused on rural areas, although some indicators include information about them.

Regarding coherence, according to the stakeholders interviewed, YEI and the other ESF-funded youth employment operation have been coherent and complementary, both among themselves and with other actions in the same field funded by other EU funds as well as by the regions and municipalities, from the design phase to the selection of beneficiaries. However, a need for more integration in their design has been emphasised, in order to combine different tools into a comprehensive approach which maximises synergies. The possibility of better complementarity of ERDF and ESF / YEI (training in R&D), as well as the possibility for YEI to tackle early school leaving, would also be of major interest.

In terms of sustainability, the youth employment operations funded by YEI and ESF will be sustainable only to a certain extent. While some of the stakeholders consulted have integrated the operations into their core activities and will keep them beyond the duration of the Operational Programme, others have declared that they will not be able to sustain them if new funding programmes are not implemented.

Structural changes have been promoted by the YEI in terms of putting the young people at the centre of the policy, setting new collaborations between the different services and administrations working with youth, and gaining knowledge on how to face the specific market labour problems of youth.

However, these changes have been less significant than expected, because of a lack of strategic design in the Youth Employment Operational Programme, as it has not responded to appropriate analysis of the situation and needs of young people in Spain, research on the specific requirements of those in more vulnerable situations, a definition of common objectives, a setup of responses to the problems, and an adequate selection of complementary Intermediate Bodies. However, some Autonomous Communities, such as Catalonia, have developed an adequate strategic approach.

Finally, to foster the effectiveness of the Operational Programme and its contribution to structural changes, it would be desirable for the Managing Authority to take a leading role, acting as a strategic coordinator and a central point of communication. The potential consideration of the National PES as Managing Authority could be of major interest, due to its central role with strategic and operational capacity.

12 Good Practice

<p>Title: Technical roundtables for Coordination of the Youth Guarantee at Municipal level (<i>Mesas Técnicas de Coordinación Municipal de Garantía Juvenil en la Región de Murcia</i>).</p> <p>Lead organisation: Regional Employment and Training Service (SEF).</p> <p>Geographical coverage: Autonomous Community of Murcia.</p> <p>Partners: General Directorate of Youth of the Regional Government and 14 Municipalities of the Autonomous Communities.</p> <p>Implementation period: March 2015-today.</p> <p>Funding: The practice does not involve additional funding.</p> <p>Target groups: All regional and municipal actors directly or indirectly related to the development of the Youth Guarantee system in the Region.</p> <p>Type of intervention: Governance and information and communication coordination among the stakeholders involved in the development of the Youth Guarantee system in the Region.</p>
<p>Description</p> <p>In Murcia, the Regional Employment and Training Service (SEF), in coordination with the General Directorate of Youth and with the collaboration of Local Authorities, has created the 'Technical roundtables for Coordination of the Youth Guarantee at Municipal level' (<i>Mesas Técnicas de Coordinación Municipal de Garantía Juvenil en la Región de Murcia</i>), which bring together the Youth Guarantee partners every two months in 14 municipalities of the region. The initiative first began in Murcia (capital) in March 2015 and later extended to the whole region. Currently, 45 municipalities are represented in 14 roundtables, which are still ongoing. Their ultimate target is Youth Guarantee beneficiaries in the municipalities of the Region.</p> <p>The roundtables, chaired by the Mayor of each municipality, bring together all municipal actors directly or indirectly related to the development of the Youth Guarantee system. Thus, they are composed by representatives of the youth, employment and social services of the municipalities, representatives of the regional administration, employment advisors, education and local development staff, and representatives of companies and entities working in the field of youth in the municipality.</p> <p>The objectives of the tables are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To establish a coordination network to maximise the resources available for the municipalities. • To map the provision of services and actions implemented within the Municipalities. • To improve knowledge about the social reality of young people. • To encourage young people to register with the Youth Guarantee System. • To assess the actions that are being developed in this area in each municipality. <p>In 2015, the regional PES in Murcia decided to organise roundtables with various service providers to connect and facilitate networking between them. The objective was to coordinate different administrative services to increase efficiency and to avoid redundancies in the provision of services. Thus, the aim is to share information about the services provided by each of the actors, so that the social services of each municipality can inform and guide the young person to the specific resource or device most valuable for him/her, optimising the existing resources.</p> <p>A secondary objective of the roundtables was to extend the Youth Guarantee to reach people in the towns and cities represented in the roundtables, for example by organising a small campaign or a concert for young people in that area. The roundtables also informed participants of available local resources for young people from different organisations, e.g. by increasing employment counsellors' knowledge of available jobs in their respective municipalities. In other occasions, roundtables helped to decide how to implement an active policy at local level, for example deciding which courses were going to be developed in the area.</p> <p>The meetings are organised every 2-3 months and attended by leaders from local authorities (e.g. local politicians). At the end of each meeting, participants agree on official recommendations to follow up and report back at the next meeting.</p> <p>Regarding the funding of the practice, the roundtables do not require additional resources to those allocated to the day-to-day implementation of the municipal and regional agencies.</p> <p>Regarding the medium-term results and effects of the practices, one of the most noteworthy results in Murcia relates to early warning because, as a result of the cooperation of different agencies of the local administration at the Tables, a written protocol has been adopted for the referral of young people at risk of social exclusion between the Regional Employment Service and the Social Services of the Autonomous Community.</p> <p>Also, a perceivable increase has been detected in collaboration between service providers</p>

through the practice, and it is considered useful to ensure integrated service delivery at local level although the cooperation was in most cases not formalised. Thus, as mentioned before, the exchange of information about the different services provided by each actor has led the municipal social services and other services to be able to inform and guide the young person to the appropriate resource available in the city.

On the other hand, the meetings of the *Mesas Técnicas* were also used to decide on some of the training offers at local level. Finally, better knowledge of the characteristics of the target group has been observed at the local level, for example in terms of willingness for mobility.

Lessons learnt:

- There is a need to ensure buy-in from the local authorities to drive the process.
- The participation of local companies helps to raise awareness of the Youth Guarantee and generates employment offers.
- Ensuring and formalising the participation of young people brings added value to the discussions.

Finally, it is worth highlighting the success factors of the practices, which are:

- Fostering active participation and ongoing commitment of local partners. There is a mixture of more formal and informal roundtables, where some only meet once or twice per year. The roundtables need to reflect the local reality.
- Focusing each meeting on limited topics has proven to be a good practice.
- Inviting only relevant actors avoids reluctance to join and decreases the chances of the meetings being regarded useless.
- More active roundtables have been organised for specific working groups, to prepare material in the lapse between meetings, assuring the continuity and monitoring of the progress of work.

As considered by the International Labour Organization (ILO, *Garantía Juvenil en España: Enseñanzas Extraídas*, 2019), this experience could inspire new methods of collaboration, encourage the exchange of information between the different levels of public administration, and ensure the commitment of companies.

13 Information sources

13.1 Bibliography

European Commission (2016), Policy Conference on 'Reinforcing the coordination of the employment and social services in Spain: experiences and new opportunities'. Brussels, 27 and 28 October 2016.

González-Gago, E (2017), 'Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative: Country Case: Spain', European Parliament.

International Labour Organization (2016), Final Report. Knowledge Sharing Workshop for Autonomous Communities. Madrid, 10 – 11 May 2016.

International Labour Organization (2017), Garantía Juvenil en España: Enseñanzas Extraídas.

Ministry for Employment and Social Security (2014), Spanish Youth Employment Operational Programme (OPYE): <https://bit.ly/2H3XIUd>

Ministry for Employment and Social Security (2016), 'First evaluation of the YEI'.

Ministry for Employment and Social Security (2017), 'Intermediate evaluation of the Youth Guarantee'.

Ministry for Labour, Migrations and Social Security (2018), 2017 Annual Implementation Report.

Ministry for Labour, Migrations and Social Security (2018), II Evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative.

Ministry for Labour, Migrations and Social Security (2019), 2018 Annual Implementation Report. European Commission (2016), Policy Conference on 'Reinforcing the coordination of the employment and social services in Spain: experiences and new opportunities'. Brussels, 27 and 28 October 2016.

Samek Lodovici, M., Drufulca, S.M., Ferrari, E., Patrizio, M., Pesce, F., De Silvis, E., Moja, C. (2018), Research for REGI Committee – Gender Dimension of the EU Cohesion Policy, European Parliament.

13.2 List of interviewees

- David Navarro. Comprehensive Programme of Qualification and Employment (*Programa Integral de Cualificación y Empleo*, PICE). Spanish Chamber of Commerce. <https://www.camara.es/>
- Effie Meletiou. Spain Country Desk Officer, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. European Commission. <https://ec.europa.eu/social/home.jsp>
- Esther M. Pérez Quintana. General Subdirector of ESF Programming and Evaluation. Secretary of State for Employment. Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security. <http://www.mitramiss.gob.es/en/>
- Íñigo Magdaleno Blanco. Consulting Technician. Regional Employment and Training Service of the Region of Murcia. <https://www.sefcarm.es/>
- Juan José Blázquez Mayoral. Deputy General Secretary for Human Resources. General Secretary. Spanish National Research Council (*Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas*, CSIC). <https://www.csic.es/>
- Maria Tussy-Flores. Head of the European Programmes Unit. ONCE Foundation (Fundación ONCE). <https://www.fundaciononce.es/>
- Miguel Sánchez Galindo. Director of Innovation, Entrepreneurs and SMEs. School of Industrial Organization (*Escuela de Organización Industrial*, EOI). <https://www.eoi.es/>

- Victoria Pardillo Guerrero. Head of the Planning and Dissemination Service. General Directorate for Budgets and European Funds. Ministry of Finance of the Region of Murcia. <https://www.carm.es/>

13.3 Focus Group with stakeholders

Held on the 17.09.19, held in Madrid at the headquarters of the National Public Employment Services with the assistance of:

1. Ana Orejas Brasero. Head of the Area of Civil Servant Staff and Labour Relations. General Secretary. Spanish National Research Council (*Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas*, CSIC).
2. Antonio Fernández Rojas. Programme Manager. European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) Spain.
3. David Bellido Trullenque. Youth Guarantee Coordinator. Public State Employment Service (*Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal*, SEPE).
4. Gabriel Pérez Sánchez. Technical Assistance to the Public State Employment Service in the field of the Spanish National Youth Guarantee Plan.
5. Leticia Henar Lomeña. Coordinator of the II Evaluation of the Spanish Youth Employment Initiative. Fresno Consulting.
6. Luis Caballero García. Head of Assistance Unit to the General Directorate. Spanish Institute of Youth (*Instituto de la Juventud*, INJUVE).
7. María García. Technical Assistance to the Public State Employment Service in the field of the Spanish National Youth Guarantee Plan.
8. María José Martínez Conesa. Deputy General Subdirector of ESF Programming and Evaluation. Secretary of State for Employment. Ministry of Labour, Migrations and Social Security.
9. Maria Tussy-Flores. Head of the European Programmes Unit. ONCE Foundation (Fundación ONCE).
10. Miguel Sánchez Galindo. Director of Innovation, Entrepreneurs and SMEs. School of Industrial Organization (*Escuela de Organización Industrial*, EOI).
11. Rosa Julia. Comprehensive Programme of Qualification and Employment (*Programa Integral de Cualificación y Empleo*, PICE). Spanish Chamber of Commerce.

14 Annex

Table 17. Total common outputs for participations ESF/YEI under Investment Priority 8.ii, cumulative until 2018, by Operational Programme and indicator

Description Common Output indicator	OP Youth Employment						Total		
	ESF			YEI					
	Total	%	% of women	Total	%	% of women	Total	%	% of women
Employment status				-	-	-	694 574	92%	51%
CO01 Unemployed	4 905	90%	40%	689 669	92%	51%	111 765	15%	50%
CO02 of which Long-term unemployed	393	7%	56%	111 372	15%	50%	62 597	8%	44%
CO03 Inactive	562	10%	56%	62 035	8%	44%	62 596	8%	44%
CO04 of which not in education or training	561	10%	56%	62 035	8%	44%	11	0%	55%
CO05 Employed, including self-employed	11	0%	55%		0%		757 182	100%	50%
Total CO1+CO3+CO5	5 478	100%	42%	751 704	100%	50%		0%	
Age							473 106	62%	48%
CO06 Below 25 years of age	4 726	86%	41%	468 380	62%	48%	284 076	38%	54%
CO06a Between 25-54 years of age	752	14%	51%	283 324	38%	54%	0	0%	
CO07 Above 54 years of age	0	0%			0%		0	0%	
CO08 Above 54 years of age who are unemployed, or inactive	0	0%			0%			0%	
Education level							357 630	47%	44%
CO09 With primary or lower secondary education (ISCED 1/2)	3 887	71%	36%	353 743	47%	44%	207 835	27%	51%
CO10 With upper secondary or post-secondary Education (ISCED 3/4)	848	15%	55%	206 987	28%	51%	166 708	22%	63%
CO11 With tertiary education (ISCED 5 to 8)	512	9%	57%	166 196	22%	63%	25 009	3%	42%
CO11a Other / unknown ISCED	231	4%	53%	24 778	3%	42%		0%	
Other background characteristics								0%	
CO12 Participants who live in jobless households		0%			0%			0%	
CO13 Participants who live in jobless households with dependent children		0%			0%			0%	
CO14 Participants who live in a single adult household with dependent children		0%			0%		757 182	100%	50%
CO14a Other households	5 478	100%	42%	751 704	100%	50%	74 014	10%	48%
CO15 Migrants, participants with a foreign	1 190	22%	38%	72 824	10%	48%	79 419	10%	40%

Description Common Output indicator	OP Youth Employment						Total		
	ESF			YEI			Total	%	% of women
	Total	%	% of women	Total	%	% of women			
background, minorities									
CO16 Participants with disabilities	55	1%	49%	79 364	11%	40%	102 873	14%	44%
CO17 Other disadvantaged	231	4%	54%	102 642	14%	44%	605	0%	40%
CO18 Homeless or affected by housing exclusion	5	0%	60%	600	0%	39%	141 980	19%	55%
CO19 From rural areas	20	0%	50%	141 960	19%	55%	694 574	92%	51%

Source: SFC2014, based on AIR 2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

Table 18. Common Result Indicators Investment Priority 8.ii, ESF / YEI, by Operational Programme (1)

OP / Fund / Indicator	OP Youth Employment			Total ESF	Total YEI	Total
	ESF	YEI	Total			
CR01 inactive participants engaged in job searching upon leaving	142	25 160	25 302	142	25 160	25 302
CR02 participants in education/training upon leaving	462	28 976	29 438	462	28 976	29 438
CR03 participants gaining a qualification upon leaving	3 139	59 335	62 474	3 139	59 335	62 474
CR04 participants in employment, including self-employment, upon leaving	1 083	148 711	149 794	1 083	148 711	149 794
CR05 disadvantaged participants engaged in job searching, education/ training, gaining a qualification, or in employment, including self-employment, upon leaving	1 132	71 495	72 627	1 132	71 495	72 627
Share of total in %	23%	27%	27%	23%	27%	27%
Total number of immediate results	4 826	262 182	267 008	4 826	262 182	267 008

Source: SFC2014, based on AIR 2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

Table 19. Common Result Indicators Investment Priority 8.ii, ESF / YEI, by Operational Programme (2)

OP / Fund / Indicator	OP Youth Employment			Total ESF	Total YEI	Total
	ESF	YEI	Total			
CR06 participants in employment, including self-employment, 6 months after leaving	1 794	122 978	124 772	1 794	122 978	124 772
CR07 participants with an improved labour market situation 6 months after leaving	0	0	0	0	0	0
CR08 participants above 54 years of age in employment, including self-employment, six months after leaving	0	0	0	0	0	0
CR09 disadvantaged participants in employment, including self-employment, 6 months after leaving	525	33 498	34 023	525	33,498	34 023
Total number of long-term results	2 319	156 476	158 795	2 319	156 476	158 795

Source: SFC2014, based on AIR 2018, data extracted on 06.09.19.

HOW TO OBTAIN EU PUBLICATIONS

Free publications:

- one copy:
via EU Bookshop (<http://bookshop.europa.eu>);
- more than one copy or posters/maps:
from the European Union's representations
(http://ec.europa.eu/represent_en.htm);
from the delegations in non-EU countries
(http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/index_en.htm);
by contacting the Europe Direct service
(http://europa.eu/europedirect/index_en.htm) or calling 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11
(freephone number from anywhere in the EU) (*).

(* The information given is free, as are most calls (though some operators, phone boxes or hotels may charge you).

Priced publications:

- via EU Bookshop (<http://bookshop.europa.eu>).

Priced subscriptions:

- via one of the sales agents of the Publications Office of the European Union
(http://publications.europa.eu/others/agents/index_en.htm).



Publications Office

doi:[number]