



Frequently Asked Questions about the Youth Guarantee

Q & A

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Key Features of the Youth Guarantee

1. What is "guaranteed" in the Youth Guarantee?

Member States have committed to ensure that, within 4 months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed, people under 25 should receive a good-quality offer of employment, further education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship.

As such, the Youth Guarantee is not a jobs guarantee, but seeks to activate young people within the shortest possible time, thus keeping them in touch with the labour market, or ensuring further education.

2. Is the Youth Guarantee a relief measure, a long-term preventive reform, or both?

The Youth Guarantee can only be delivered successfully and sustainably if Member States plan both measures to relieve the current unacceptably high levels of youth unemployment and inactivity (e.g. through activation measures for young people that are currently unemployed or inactive) AND preventive measures that minimize the risk of future generations becoming unemployed or inactive (for example: increasing the number of offers of apprenticeship places by partnering with businesses, early career guidance in schools etc.).

3. Why does the Commission consider the Youth Guarantee a structural reform? Are other reforms required aside from the Youth Guarantee that can help tackle youth unemployment?

The Commission considers that setting up Youth Guarantee schemes is a forward-looking and fundamental structural reform in the medium and long term. It will help public institutions work better (together) and improve the functioning of the economy (increasing skill matching and productivity).

In order to deliver a Youth Guarantee, a number of reforms might be needed depending on specific conditions in each Member State, for example: (1) investing in partnership approaches; (2) building the capacity of public and private employment services, including through the provision of specialised youth services, (3) reforming VET and apprenticeship systems, (4) encouraging labour demand for young people (e.g.: through targeted hiring subsidies, reducing labour taxation, promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment, conversion of informal or undeclared work into regular employment)

While the Youth Guarantee focuses on measures that aim to ease young people's school-to-work transition and ensure their sustainable integration into the labour market, it should be complemented by other structural reforms that further support young people's inclusion on the labour market, such as reforms in labour market regulation/institutions to make them

more employment-friendly and measures to eliminate labour market segmentation (e.g. when young people are over-represented in temporary and part-time work and have few chances of transition into more permanent jobs).

4. How can regions contribute to the Youth Guarantee?

Member States have committed to design national Youth Guarantee schemes and to submit national Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans (YGIPs) to the Commission by December 2013 and by spring 2014 respectively.

The Youth Guarantee is an outcome-based structural reform, that is to say, the outcome for young people is of critical importance. The means of implementation may vary both within and across Member States. The Council Recommendation specifically states that "The Youth Guarantee should [...] be geared to national, regional and local circumstances". For example, some regions may design a region-specific set of measures to contribute to the implementation of the national Youth Guarantee scheme, which takes into account specificities of the local labour market. Where relevant, region-specific measures should be clearly outlined in Member States' national Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans (YGIPs).

Finally, Member States might choose to adopt a gradual approach to implementing their national Youth Guarantee scheme, by first fully implementing the Youth Guarantee in one region, before it being gradually rolled out and fully implemented across all regions.

The Offers under a Youth Guarantee Scheme

5. What are the four possible types of 'offers' under the Youth Guarantee?

This list of offers available under the Youth Guarantee is an ambitious one: a good-quality offer of a job, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship. These four measures offer the best chances to swiftly activate young people, strengthen their employability and ultimately ensure their sustainable integration into the labour market. The four types of offer are ends in themselves, whereas early intervention and activation measures, such as outreach strategies, services including personalised guidance and individual action planning (as outlined in the Council recommendation 10) are means to that end, i.e. they ensure that a personalised, good-quality offer is made to the young person within the outlined 4-month period and the young person is able to accept that offer.

The offer may be unsubsidised and offered directly without an involvement of a third party agent such as the Public Employment Services or other Youth Guarantee providers (such as Youth services) Reception of an offer does not automatically mean its acceptance.

6. What qualifies as a 'good-quality offer' under the Youth Guarantee? ¹

First of all, it is essential to distinguish between the various services that can take place before the provision of an offer (such as counselling, guidance, individual action planning) and the Youth Guarantee offer in itself.

In a nutshell, in general, an offer is of good quality if the person who benefits from it does not return to unemployment or inactivity thereafter; a "good-quality" offer can therefore be measured by its outcome (so called outcome-based approach).

Transition rates of sustainable integration into the labour market should therefore be a guiding principle for including employment/continued education/apprenticeship or traineeship programmes in the proposed offers under the Youth Guarantee. This excludes any activation measures (such as rehabilitation workshops, visits to a company, short term language classes) to be counted as a good-quality offer under the Youth Guarantee (these could of course *lead* to an offer and therefore be part of early activation and intervention measures in the first 4 months). The same applies to any occupation that would have as an immediate effect the reduction of statistics for youth unemployment in the short term, and whose outcomes in terms of sustainable integration into the labour market are observed to be low. As regards offers of continued education more specifically, one would expect that a good quality offer is one that leads to a recognised qualification.

For further information see the Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the Proposal for Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee, p.18: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=9222&langId=en>

6.1 What guidance is available on (quality) "employment offers"?

An employment offer is defined as "a voluntary but conditional promise, submitted for acceptance by an offeror (e.g. employer) to the participant, as long as it clearly indicates the offeror's willingness to enter into an agreement under specific terms with the participant and that it is made in a manner that a reasonable person would understand its acceptance will result in a binding agreement. Once the participant accepts it becomes an agreement which legally commits both parties"². The Commission note on Guidance on evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative spells out characteristics to be taken into account when analysing the quality of employment offers:

¹ The Commission refers here to the guidance on good-quality offer given for subsidised offers under the Youth Employment Initiative, which can also prove helpful for other subsidised offers – e.g. under ESF or national programmes - or non-subsidised offers. See pages 8 -14 of the Commission note on Guidance on evaluation of the YEI: <http://portal.empl.ec/Management/evaluation/evaluation/esf/Documents/ESF%20Monitoring%20and%20evaluation%20guidance/YEI%20Evaluation%20Guidance%20July%202014.pdf>

² Commission note on Guidance on evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative, available at <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=13458&langId=en>

- "– duration of the contract: fixed duration or open-ended contract,
- part-time/full-time contract,
- voluntary/involuntary part-time
- remuneration level,
- level and type of qualification required,
- availability of additional job-related training.

Given the differences in the wage-setting systems for young workers regarding minimum wages, it is difficult to set unique criteria. However one should consider as good offers those that respect national or sectoral wage agreements. Though temporary contracts may serve as stepping stones into sustainable employment, open-ended contracts employment offers can be considered of superior quality. Part-time job offers can also be a suitable way to access the labour market and reconcile with family needs, but if part-time is involuntary a full-time job can be considered of higher quality and offering prospects as sustainable jobs. A specific country/regional context may be taken into account."³

Self-employment can be a valid offer under Youth Guarantee, if appropriate and if it is likely to lead to sustainable integration into the labour market. The Council Recommendation mentions incentives for self-employment and start-ups among the measures that can make the Youth Guarantee schemes a success (see Council recommendation 14 on entrepreneurship education and Council recommendation 19 on start-up support services).

6.2 What is meant by (quality) "continued education"?

In the context of the Youth Guarantee, an offer of "continued education" covers in particular pathways to continue/re-enter formal education and training, such as for example "quality training programmes leading to a recognised vocational qualification"⁴ or second-chance education programmes for early school-leavers and low-skilled young people (see recommendation 11).

Entrepreneurship courses could be considered an offer of continued education, provided they are of high quality and improve the individual's sustainable integration into the labour market (in practical terms, this means, for example, that such a course would target only young people who have a real interest in becoming an entrepreneur, would lead to a recognised qualification, and that self-employment prospects would be good, etc.)

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=13458&langId=en>

⁴ See Council Recommendation, recital 5

At European level, the Common Principles for Quality Assurance in Education and Training⁵, the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQUAVET)⁶, Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area⁷, and provide a framework for Member States policies and activities on quality assurance, which ultimately ensure that education and training meet certain quality requirements (content of programmes, curricula, assessment and validation of learning outcomes, etc.).

6.3 What is meant by (quality) apprenticeships?

The definition used by the European Commission in the scope the European Alliance for Apprenticeships comes from a recent EU-wide study and uses a broad sense of the term ("apprenticeship-type schemes"): *"Those forms of Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET) that formally combine and alternate company based training (periods of practical work experience at a workplace) with school-based education (periods of theoretical/practical education followed in a school or training centre), and whose successful completion leads to nationally recognised IVET certification degrees"*. Most often, there is a contractual relationship between the employer and the apprentice.⁸

The Council Declaration on the European Alliance for Apprenticeships, adopted 15 October 2013, provides guiding principles.⁹ Amongst these, the following refer to the characteristics of apprenticeship offers:

- adequate integration of the apprenticeship schemes into the formal education and training system through a system of recognised qualifications and competences which may allow access to higher education and life-long learning.
- qualifications and competences gained and the learning process of apprenticeships are of high quality with defined standards for learning outcomes and quality assurance, in line with the Recommendation on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET, and that the apprenticeship model is recognised as a valuable learning tool, transferable across borders, opening up the route to progress within national qualifications frameworks and aspiration to high-skilled jobs.

⁵ Included in Annex III to the recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF)

⁶ EQAVET - the European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training
<http://www.eqavet.eu/gns/policy-context/european-quality-assurance-reference-framework.aspx>

⁷ <http://www.engq.eu/index.php/home/esg/>

⁸ European Commission (2012), Apprenticeship supply in the Member States of the European Union. Final Report, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=6633&visible=1>

⁹ Available at: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/139011.pdf

- a strong work-based high-quality learning and training component, which should complement the specific on-the-job skills with broader, transversal and transferable skills, ensuring that participants can adapt to change after finishing the apprenticeship.

- adequate remuneration and social protection of apprentices,

For more information on apprenticeships, see this separate list of FAQs: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/alliance/faq-eafa_en.pdf

6.4 What is meant by (quality) traineeships?

Traineeships vary in type, focus, duration, and range from short term work placements to longer term schemes linked to education. They can be an element on all levels of education (including university), part of active labour market policies (as first work placement) or offered as "open market traineeships". A definition on traineeships used at EU level is: "*a limited period of work practice, whether paid or not, which includes a learning and training component, undertaken in order to gain practical and professional experience with a view to improving employability and facilitating transition to regular employment*"¹⁰

Among the set of qualitative attributes for traineeships recommended by the Quality Framework for Traineeships (QFT), adopted on 10 March 2014¹¹, is a written traineeship agreement that indicates the educational objectives, the working conditions, whether an allowance or compensation is provided to the trainee by the traineeship provider, and the rights and obligations of the parties under applicable EU and national law, as well as the duration of the traineeship.

In line with the QFT Recommendation and the Commission note on Guidance on evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative, the following dimensions can be taken into account when analysing the quality of traineeships:

- Type of the traineeship (1-5)¹²

- Learning content (satisfaction, usefulness for the transition into the labour market)

¹⁰ Council Recommendation of 10 March 2014 on a Quality Framework for Traineeships (2014/C 88/01) [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1411116781313&uri=CELEX:32014H0327\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1411116781313&uri=CELEX:32014H0327(01))

¹¹ see footnote 10

¹² One may distinguish five major – partly overlapping - types of traineeships:

- Traineeships forming an optional or compulsory part of academic and/or vocational curricula (i.e. traineeships during education);
- Traineeships which form part of mandatory professional training (e.g. law, medicine, teaching, architecture, accounting, etc.);
- Traineeships as part of active labour market policies;
- Traineeships agreed between trainee and a host organisation (business, non-profit or government) without the involvement of a third party, generally conducted after completion of studies and/or as part of a job search, known as 'post-studies' or 'open-market' traineeships;
- Transnational traineeships, which may include types 1, 2 and 4.

- Working conditions (equivalent to those of regular employees in terms of equipment, working hours, workload, treatment, etc.)
- Rights and obligations (financial compensation, illness/accident insurance)
- Duration (excessively long or repeated traineeships?)

For more information on traineeships, see this separate list of FAQs: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/alliance/faq-eafa_en.pdf

6.5 What guidance is available on the relevance of the offers to the participant's needs/situation?

Offers can also be analysed under the approach of matching the needs or situation as perceived by the participant, namely by assessing the relevance of the offer to the participant's age, labour market status, level of skills/qualifications, previous professional experience, previous unemployment/inactivity spans, household composition (joblessness), caring situation (lone parent).

Prior to the Youth Guarantee offer, personalised guidance and development of an individualised action plan, will help Member States to make an offer suitable to the individual, as recommended in the Council Recommendation 10.

6.6 What guidance is available on "Non-acceptance and early termination rates"?

Another indication of the quality of the offer is the non-acceptance of the offer or an early termination of the contract by the participant. In cases where participants receive several consecutive offers, the assessment of quality should refer to the one taken up (if any). However, if the proportion of offers not taken is high, exploring the reasons for non-take-up is necessary to make the assessment of quality of offers complete. The same applies if the proportion of offers abandoned prematurely is high.

7. Can voluntary activities be included as one of the offers in Youth Guarantee schemes?

No, voluntary activities are not one of the four offers of Youth Guarantee schemes under the Council Recommendation.

Common Objectives for voluntary activities among young people outlined in the 2002 Council Resolution¹³ define voluntary activities as all kinds of voluntary engagement. They are open to all, unpaid, undertaken under the individual's own free will, educational (non-formal learning aspect) and offer added social value.

¹³ Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the governments of the Member States regarding the framework of European cooperation in the youth field [Official Journal C 168 of 13.07.2002].

Volunteering can, of course, be an important tool in the promotion of social cohesion, as well as social inclusion and integration. Similarly, the skills and competences acquired through volunteering can be transferred into professional contexts. However, unlike traineeships, voluntary activities do not have, as their prime purpose, helping the trainee's education-to-work-transition by providing the practical experience, knowledge and skills that complete his/her theoretical education.

As such, volunteering could be used as an activation measure within the first 4 months in order to lead to an offer under the Youth Guarantee. Similarly, young people who choose, freely, to volunteer for more than 4 months could be considered to (temporarily) not want to participate in a Youth Guarantee scheme.

8. Do Member States need to invent new measures? Or can existing measures be built into a Youth Guarantee scheme?

Many existing measures have already proven to be successful. They might, however, only target a particular group of young people and be limited in time and geographical coverage. A national Youth Guarantee scheme should ensure that no young person is left behind. As such, policy-makers should ensure that existing measures and policies on youth employment fit into a coherent and comprehensive strategy rather than being a collection of individual measures.

The Youth Guarantee is an outcome-focused structural reform; accordingly sets of initiatives and reforms for delivering the Youth Guarantee should be tailored to national and regional circumstances. This means that Member States should base their actions on a comprehensive analysis of youth unemployment and inactivity (NEETs), including relevant sub-groups (ages, gender, ethnicity, type of disadvantages, geographical distribution), map all existing measures, link these measures to a comprehensive Youth Guarantee scheme (e.g. by introducing appropriate referral systems), and fill policy gaps by means of targeted reforms or new initiatives.

9. Can offers in other Member States be included in a national Youth Guarantee Scheme?

The Council Recommendation explicitly refers to promoting "*labour mobility by making young people aware of job offers, traineeships and apprenticeships and available support in different areas, regions and countries, for example through services and schemes which encourage people to move and work within the Union*" (Recommendation 18). Promoting mobility in employment, education, apprenticeships and traineeships can serve to beneficially improve the skills-set of young people, as well as tackle the geographical skills mismatch that exists in the EU.

In this regard, EURES (European Employment Services) is a valuable tool at the service of Member States to boost mobility and as a means to offer job opportunities. A proposal to develop EURES into a true pan-European job placement and recruitment network is currently in the legislative process. In this respect, a new EURES Decision was adopted in November 2012, paving the way for a true European labour market. The Commission has launched a reform of EURES to improve this network and make mobility easier. The Reform aims, in particular, to facilitate jobseekers' contact with employers looking for particular skills, to focus on sectors and occupations with skills shortages and to support targeted mobility schemes for young people.¹⁴

Implementing Youth Guarantee Schemes

10. Structural changes take time – what is the timetable for the Youth Guarantee to become fully functional and to scale up provision?

As underlined in the Council Recommendation, Member States should implement Youth Guarantee schemes as soon as possible (Recommendation 27). In rolling out the Youth Guarantee, national policy-makers need to adopt both an immediate and long-term perspective. Immediate action and fast-acting initiatives to address youth unemployment and inactivity should be accompanied by long-term structural reform (for instance, apprenticeship system reform, capacity-building of public employment services, investing in partnership approaches).

The timetable for the Youth Guarantee to become fully functional will vary according to national circumstances. In each Member State, the socio-economic context and the labour market situation have a direct impact on the number of potential users of a Youth Guarantee scheme, as well as the level and type of support these people would require, and therefore on time it will take for the scheme to be fully rolled out to all young people under the age of 25.

Similarly, the timetable for the Youth Guarantee to become fully functional will depend on a Member State's starting point in terms of the institutional and policy context and existing supporting measures for unemployed and inactive young people.

The Council Recommendation also notes that with regard to the Member States experiencing the most severe budgetary difficulties and higher rates of NEETs or of youth unemployment, gradual implementation could also be considered

¹⁴ See also <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/main.jsp?acro=eures&lang=en&catId=27&parentCategory=27>

11. What is the state of play of implementing the Youth Guarantee in different Member States?

By May 2014, the Commission had received YGIP submissions from all 28 Member States, many of them published online under the responsibility of the respective Member State¹⁵.

The Commission assessed these plans and the overall youth employment challenges in the context of the European Semester process 2014 and 2015. The Employment Committee (EMCO) – in its preparation of Council deliberations – also pursues its multilateral surveillance on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

A website is available where the relevant extracts from country-specific recommendations, Commission country reports and staff working documents, and conclusions of the thematic multilateral surveillance of the Employment Committee indicate the state of play in each country.¹⁶

As requested by the European Council, the Commission will report in 2016 in detail on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

The 4-month Period

12. Why does the Youth Guarantee establish a 4-month period for young people to receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship?

Youth unemployment and inactivity are expensive. They are expensive now in terms of benefits being paid out and also in terms of foregone earnings, but they are also expensive in the future as they lead to a number of 'scarring effects' on young people with a negative impact on both future income levels and future risk of unemployment.

The immediate economic cost of young people's unemployment or inactivity (i.e. the costs of young people being considered to be NEET) has been estimated by Eurofound to stand at €153 billion per year, or approximately 1.21% of GDP¹⁷. Accordingly, every single month that a young person is unemployed or inactive incurs substantial costs on our societies and on young people themselves. Therefore early activation measures are essential.

For further information on the costs versus the benefits of establishing a Youth Guarantee, see the Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the Proposal for Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=9222&langId=en>

¹⁵ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1090&langId=en>

¹⁶ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1161&langId=en>

¹⁷ Eurofound (2012), NEETs – Young people not in employment, education or training: Characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.
http://eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_files/pubdocs/2012/54/en/1/EF1254EN.pdf

13. How can the Youth Guarantee be provided to all young people within a 4-month period, including those who are furthest away from the labour market and are not registered with the Public Employment Services (PES)?

The Youth Guarantee applies to all young people under 25 years, including those who are not registered with the PES or who registered before the introduction of the Youth Guarantee Scheme.

In the case of inactive young people who are not registered with the PES, Member States should define a corresponding starting point for delivering the Youth Guarantee within a four-month period. In doing so, Member States are invited to involve all actors that have access to these non-registered young people (i.e. youth associations, social services, education providers etc.), as it depends on the national/regional/local circumstances and the type of NEETs. One could for example think of several starting points: schools signalling drop outs to social workers, young people signing up in a social service, etc.

Member States should therefore develop outreach strategies and introduce mechanisms to identify and activate those furthest away from the labour market. These can include, for instance, ensuring that young people have full access to information about the services and support available that encourage registration with employment services, establishing common 'focal points', developing specific interventions for young people facing multiple disadvantages, and setting up one-stop-shops in the delivery of the Youth Guarantee.

14. What happens if a young person does not want to accept an offer under the Youth Guarantee scheme?

The principle of mutual obligation goes hand-in-hand with that of a good-quality offer. This means young people should be provided with a personalised offer that meets their individual needs and addresses the specific barriers they face in gaining a strong foothold in the labour market. In turn, young people need to be empowered to take individual responsibility for the opportunity that is offered. Young people cannot be forced to accept an offer.

However, if many young people are refusing offers that are being made to them, Member States may need to consider whether the offers are of sufficient quality and are paying adequate attention to the diversity of the young people who are being targeted. For example, young people with care responsibilities might need an offer adapted to their circumstances.

15. How many offers is a young person guaranteed/eligible to receive?

Member States need to address the risk of cycles of inactivity. This means in practice that some young people might need several consecutive offers. Ideally, if the offer is of good quality we would expect the person who benefits from it to remain in employment after an offer (the sustainability element). Member States should continuously assess and improve their schemes in this regard.

The Time before Receiving an Offer

16. What should be done if a young person lacks the basic skills or requires rehabilitation before being able to take up an offer under the Youth Guarantee? How does the 4-month guarantee fit into this?

If there is a need to qualify low-skilled youth before they can be offered anything, ideally this should not take longer than 4 months. A structured full-time scheme, leading to an additional qualification, could however be considered as "continuous education" under the Youth Guarantee.

In the case of rehabilitation measures requiring more than 4 months intervention before a young person is labour market ready and able to take up an offer under the Youth Guarantee (for instance, young people who are homeless, suffer from substance abuse, or who are illiterate), they are a small minority of cases and should be dealt a case-by-case and highly personalised basis.

17. How can informal learning measures serve to implement the Youth Guarantee?

Informal learning can be offered as an activation measure in the first 4 months of a young person becoming unemployed or leaving formal education and can help lead to a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship. Informal learning could cover; for example, visits to companies to get acquainted with a specific occupation, regular attendance of activities in a youth centre or community centre etc. See also the Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:398:0001:0005:EN:PDF>

Partnership Approaches

18. What is the role of the Youth Guarantee coordinator?

Pursuant to Council Recommendation 2, all EU countries identified the relevant public authority in charge of establishing and managing the Youth Guarantee scheme and of coordinating partnerships across all levels and sectors. The Youth Guarantee coordinator is

usually an official from this authority and the main point of contact to communicate with the European Commission on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee. The list of national Youth Guarantee coordinators can be found here: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=11490&langId=en>

19. What kind of partnership should be established among public authorities for delivering the Youth Guarantee?

As stated in the Council Recommendation, Member States need to identify the relevant public authority in charge of establishing and managing the Youth Guarantee Scheme and coordinating partnerships across all levels and sectors. This could be, for instance, an inter-ministerial/multi-stakeholder body or a Task Force of youth, business, social partners and political representatives charged with the rolling design, implementation and evaluation of the Youth Guarantee.

Crucially, any partnership arrangement among public authorities charged with delivering the Youth Guarantee should either include or ensure close consultation with social partners and youth organisations.

20. How can Member States build a strong and lasting sense of commitment to a Youth Guarantee scheme?

In order to build a strong and lasting sense of commitment, Member States should communicate nationally on their Youth Guarantee scheme and inform young people of their rights and relevant actors of their duties. Likewise, Member State governments should consider expressing their formal commitment to their Youth Guarantee Scheme either through a high-level endorsement or legislative act.

Monitoring of the Youth Guarantee

21. How are national Youth Guarantee schemes monitored at EU level?

At the EU level, the European Commission monitors the implementation of the Youth Guarantee within the European Semester. The European Semester package 2014 confirmed that delivering on the objectives of a Youth Guarantee requires strategic reforms to achieve more successful transitions from school to the labour market. This is reflected in the Commission analyses of all EU Member States and the 2014 CSR proposals for 18 Member States - of which 8 specifically require more decisive action to implement of the Youth Guarantee. 12 Member States received CSRs calling for a better service to reach out to the NEETs not registered with a Public Employment Service. In the context of the European

Semester 2015, the European Commission published on 26 February 2015 country reports¹⁸ which analyze, among other issues, Member States' employment policies and the state of play of the Youth Guarantee implementation.

To underpin this work, an Indicator Framework for Monitoring the Youth Guarantee¹⁹ was developed within the Employment Committee. It comprises indicators related to three levels:

- Aggregate monitoring: Macroeconomic indicators monitoring the general situation of young people in the labour market (these include, among others, the NEETs and youth unemployment rates);
- Direct monitoring: Implementation indicators measuring the direct impact of Youth Guarantee delivery (these include, among others, the proportion of young people in the Youth Guarantee service beyond four months);
- Follow-up monitoring: Follow-up indicators assessing the sustainability of labour market integration after provision of a Youth Guarantee offer (these include, among others, indicators on the situation of young people 6, 12 and 18 months after they have received an offer).

The framework will help monitor Youth Guarantee schemes' impact on the labour market situation of young people across Europe, identifying what has worked or not. It will also allow for making the statements on the quality of the offers from the point of view of their outcomes, namely through the long-term indicators indicating the labour market status. Regular data collection should start in 2015, following a pilot exercise launched in 2014.

In addition, the newly established Network of Public Employment Services (PES) will contribute to the monitoring of the implementation of the Youth Guarantee. It will monitor the measures implemented by PES in this context, including measures dedicated to the outreach and activation of NEETs.

Financing the Youth Guarantee

22. How will the Youth Guarantee be financed?

Setting up a Youth Guarantee scheme represents a long-term structural reform and a positive investment in the future of young people and the economy. The design and implementation of a national Youth Guarantee scheme requires a firm commitment over time and national budgetary support in the medium to long-term to maximise the returns on investment. The Annual Growth Survey 2014 stresses that "particular attention should also be paid to maintaining or reinforcing the coverage and effectiveness of employment services

¹⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm

¹⁹ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/contentAdmin/BlobServlet?docId=13402&langId=en>

and active labour market policies, such as training for the unemployed and Youth Guarantee schemes"²⁰. To complement national budget allocations, Member States can draw on European Social Fund during the next multiannual financial framework for 2014-20 and on support from the dedicated Youth Employment Initiative. Different types of measures and reforms in relation of the Youth Guarantee can be supported by these sources.

In February 2015, the Commission estimated that for the entire 2014-2020 programming period, EUR 12.7 billion of EU funding will be allocated to finance the schemes, out of which EUR 6.4 billion under the Youth Employment Initiative. The Commission notes that a further EUR 11 billion aim at measures such as modernisation of employment services and self-employment measures which will also indirectly support youth unemployment. Over EUR 26 billion will be spent on education measures including life-long learning where young people are likely to be among the main beneficiaries.

23. What type of measures can be financed under the Youth Employment Initiative?

The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) is a dedicated EUR 6.4 billion initiative that aims to focus financial support on the regions and individuals hardest hit by the youth employment crisis. The YEI is frontloaded in 2014-15 to achieve early impact in regions struggling most with youth unemployment and inactivity (NUTS-2 regions where youth unemployment rates are over 25%). In the context of the Youth Guarantee, activities funded by the YEI must be directly linked to the delivery of the action for the individual person. Examples of specific activities that can be supported by the YEI to contribute to the delivery of Youth Guarantee, include financial support to encourage participation in continuous education (training vouchers, support to cover access costs/transport and training costs), financial incentives for support for job placements (for several months), traineeships and apprenticeships concerning placement/recruitment costs, subsistence/remuneration costs (including non-wage labour costs) or training costs for employers, financial support for young people setting up their own business (e.g. covering training and mentoring costs for accessing finance/preparing model) and remuneration costs (e.g. support for social security contributions).

More information on the Youth Employment Initiative is available at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=1829&furtherNews=yes>

24. What type of measures can be financed under the ESF?

The ESF can fund, in the context of the Youth Guarantee, activities linked to the delivery of the direct interventions for young persons (similar to the above mentioned measures which can be funded under the Youth Employment Initiative) and more broadly, structural reforms

²⁰ The Annual Growth Survey 2014 is available at http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/2014/ags2014_en.pdf

of systems. Examples of structural reforms include, access to information and services (set up of one-stop-shops, Public Employment Services (PES) staff training, etc.), building-up partnerships (education institutions and employers, provide learning and exchange between all partners; etc.), outreach strategies (school visits by PES, development of specialised youth services as part of PES, establishment of tracking systems for early school leavers/NEETs etc.), anticipation of future skills and labour market needs, individual action planning, developing second-chance opportunities, developing guidance on entrepreneurship and self-employment, supporting mobility, and investing in monitoring and evaluation.

Examples of Good Practice

25. Are there examples of good practice in relation to setting up and managing the Youth Guarantee, as well as on successful interventions? Where can we find them?

A number of resources are available:

Youth Guarantee (overall):

- Peer Review on the Youth Guarantee, Helsinki, 18-19 September 2014, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1070&langId=en&newsId=2068&furtherNews=yes>
- 18 small scale Youth Guarantee pilot projects (EP Preparatory Action): <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1099&langId=en>
- Background documents for the Mutual Learning Programme - Thematic Event 'Practical support for the design and implementation of Youth Guarantee Schemes', La Hulpe, 17 - 18 October 2013, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1079&eventsId=931&furtherEvents=yes>

Role of Employment Services:

- HoPES Assessment Reports and Catalogue of Measures: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=105&langId=en>

Labour market enabling measures:

- Mutual learning programme database of labour market practices <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1070&langId=en&newsId=2068&furtherNews=yes>

Including, inter alia:

- Peer Review on Youth Unemployment: How to Prevent and Tackle It, The Hague, (Netherlands), 25–26 November 2013: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1070&newsId=1989&furtherNews=yes>
- Peer Review on Emplois d’avenir: Jobs for the Future Scheme, Paris (France) 10–11 February 2014: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1070&langId=en&newsId=2028&furtherNews=yes>
- Learning Exchange on Cooperation at the Local Level in the Fight against Youth Unemployment, Dordrecht (Netherlands), 28 October 2014 <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1073&eventsId=1010&furtherEvents=yes>
- Austria: Youth Coaching <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en&practicId=9>
- Austria: Supra-Company Training Programme <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en&practicId=2>
- Belgium: Work Experience Programme for Young People <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en&practicId=24>
- Cyprus: Scheme on the Job Placement and Training of Tertiary – Education Graduates <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en&practicId=20>
- Finland: Youth Guarantee <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en&practicId=23>
- Finland: Youth Workshops <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en&practicId=15>
- France: Jobs for the Future <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en&practicId=29>

- Germany: Pre-training Programme (aimed at qualifying young people for apprenticeships)
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en&practiceId=8>
- Ireland: Youthreach
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en&practiceId=22>
- Portugal: Professional Traineeship Programme
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en&practiceId=10>
- Slovenia: Project Learning for Young Adults (PLYA)
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en&practiceId=6>
- Slovenia: Employ.Me/Promoting Employment of Disadvantaged Unemployed Persons
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en&practiceId=30>
- United Kingdom: Graduate Talent Pool
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1080&langId=en&practiceId=26>

Education and Training, Apprenticeships:

- Early school leaving: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school/early-school-leavers_en.htm, in particular: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/doc/esl-group-report_en.pdf
- Apprenticeships/traineeships/work-based learning/first work experience:
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1045&langId=en>
- Apprenticeship and Traineeship Schemes in EU27: Key Success Factors - A Guidebook for Policy Planners and Practitioners
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=11348&langId=en>
- Learning Exchange on Dual Apprenticeships: Qualifications and Labour Market Needs, Berlin (Germany), 5-6 September 2013:
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1073&eventId=929&furtherEvents=yes>
- Learning Exchange on Apprenticeship Schemes, Vienna (Austria) on 7 November 2013
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1073&eventId=941&furtherEvents=yes>
- Youth Guarantee and Lifelong Guidance: [http://ktl.iyu.fi/img/portal/23552/Borbely-Pecze and Hutchinson Youth Guarantee concept note web2.pdf?cs=1383657435](http://ktl.iyu.fi/img/portal/23552/Borbely-Pecze%20and%20Hutchinson%20Youth%20Guarantee%20concept%20note%20web2.pdf?cs=1383657435)

Contacts

For further information, the European Commission has set up a dedicated webpage (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/youthguarantee>) and a hotline (EMPL-Youth-Guarantee@ec.europa.eu), where Member State authorities can request information and guidance related to the Youth Guarantee and the Youth Employment Initiative.