Youth Guarantee country by country

Ireland
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# Table of contents

- Introduction and context ................................................................. 3
- Commission’s assessment ................................................................. 4
- EMCO’s assessment ........................................................................... 5
- Youth Guarantee monitoring – Key data ........................................... 6
- Previous year ..................................................................................... 8
- Links to further information ............................................................... 9
Introduction and context

The Youth Guarantee has become a reality across the EU. It has facilitated structural reforms and innovation in policy design across EU Member States.

This document provides extracts from official Commission documents on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee in Ireland. It contains extracts from:

- The country report drawn by the Commission for Ireland in the context of the European Semester;
- The conclusions of the thematic multilateral surveillance review of the Employment Committee (EMCO);
- Results from the data collection on Youth Guarantee schemes.

A section at the end of the document is devoted to the assessments made by the Commission the previous year.

Ireland presented a Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan on 20 December 2013.

Ireland is eligible for the Youth Employment Initiative.
Commission's assessment

From the 2019 country report (EN):

"Labour market conditions continue to improve overall, but some groups are not fully benefitting from it. Job creation during the recovery has taken place across most sectors of the economy (Graph 4.3.1). In 2018, construction and accommodation and food services contributed most to the growth in employment, reflecting the strength of domestic activity. Unemployment kept on falling (5.4 % in the fourth quarter of 2018), as did youth unemployment (12.5 % in the fourth quarter of 2018)."

"Policy measures to tackle long-term unemployment are having a positive impact. ... Longterm unemployment among youth remains high in the Border, Midland and Western region (5.2 % vs 4.2 % in the EU), indicating a need for further targeted efforts."

"The rapidly rising number of homeless people as a result of rent increases and insufficient social housing merits urgent action. Insufficient levels of investment and construction over the last decade, including social housing, have led to a huge shortage of adequate accommodation for those most at risk. The bulk of the challenge is concentrated in the major urban areas and it is affecting different groups, notably single parents, single men, the elderly, people with disabilities and an increasing number of families and youth."

"A growing number of young people leaving state care are also increasingly exposed to homelessness with an 8 % annual rise in the number of 18-24 year olds living in emergency accommodation. Temple Street Children’s University Hospital reported discharging 29 % more children up to the age of 16 with ‘no fixed address’ in 2018 compared to 2017."

For further youth-related matters please refer to the country report.
EMCO's assessment

Conclusions of the Employment Committee’s multilateral surveillance review on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, October 2019:

Ireland has made further progress in the implementation of the Youth Guarantee. Thanks to the reforms implemented in the past, PES are now more focused on activation services and the Further Education and Training sector is now more labour market oriented. According to the YG monitoring framework, Ireland performs very well in terms of delivering sustainable outcomes. Partnerships are well structured at both national and local level and the monitoring system is well developed.

However, some challenges remain. Since the focus remains on job seekers, inactive NEETs are not benefiting from the Youth Guarantee. It will therefore be key to scale up existing measures and closely monitor the measures that Ireland is planning to develop in order to improve outreach and reduce early school leaving. Additional measures should be considered to reach out to those furthest away from the labour market. Efforts are also needed to reduce the time span within which offers are made.

In 2018 Ireland launched a new comprehensive work-based training program, the Youth Employment Support Scheme, which is mostly aligned with the Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships. Some further improvements could, however, be considered in terms of written agreements.
Youth Guarantee monitoring – Key data¹

1. Main trends in young people's labour market performance

![Graph showing youth unemployment rate and NEET rate](source: Eurostat, LFS (une_rt_a, lfsi_neet_a))

2. Youth Guarantee delivery

Ireland presented a Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan in December 2013. The intervention and activation process governing the Youth Guarantee will essentially be a tailored version of the Pathways to Work activation model which was launched in 2011 and updated in 2013.

The YG scheme was introduced in January 2014 and targets two distinct groups: early school leavers aged under 18 and unemployed youth aged 18-24. Only the latter group is covered by the monitoring data. The public employment service (PES) is in charge of establishing and managing the Youth Guarantee scheme; other government departments are responsible for specific aspects.

Further information is available in the national YG implementation plan.

¹ The information below is taken from the country fiche related to the Youth Guarantee Data collection (full results can be found on [http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1143&langId=en#YGIF](http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1143&langId=en#YGIF)).
On average during 2018, approaching three fifths (57.1%) of those registered in the YG scheme at any point during the year had been waiting for an offer for more than 4 months, well above the EU average of 48.6%.

More than two fifths (45.1%) of those leaving the scheme in 2018 took up an offer within 4 months of registration, a result that is close to the EU average of 46.7%.

Compared to 2017, the proportion of the NEET population covered by the Irish YG has fallen by 7.0 pp to 30.9%. This reflects the shifting structure of the NEET population as youth unemployment continues to decline and the proportion of NEETs that are inactive increase. The monitoring data, and therefore the indicators, do not take into account support provided for NEETs that do not register as unemployed and thus tend to understate the Irish efforts to support young NEETs generally.

Follow-up data show that two thirds (67.9%) of those leaving the YG in 2018 were known to be in a positive situation 6 months later, well above the EU average of 50.3%.
Previous year
From the 2018 country report (EN):

"The improvements of the labour market were felt by most groups, but long-term unemployment remains a challenge. The positive developments in the labour market continued in 2017 in line with the robust economic expansion, while wage growth remained moderate (see Section 1). Employment (20-64) grew in the third quarter of 2017 by 1.5 pp compared to the same quarter in the previous year, reaching 73.2% with 60 000 new jobs created. Unemployment fell to 6.7% in 2017, from 8.4% a year earlier, while youth unemployment fell below the EU average, to 14.7%. As a proportion of total unemployment, long-term unemployment was at 42.2% in Q3-2017, inching down below the EU average of 44.4%. Very-long-term unemployment (over two years) amounted to 28.9% of all unemployment in the same quarter, in comparison with the EU average of 27.7%.

"The attractiveness of vocational education and training (VET) compared to academic education remains a challenge. The rate of participation in VET in Ireland is below that of other EU countries, due to the fact that it takes place for the most part at post-secondary education level. Adult participation in lifelong learning remained low in 2016, at 6.4%, well below the EU average of 10.8%. The employability of recent VET graduates is visibly improving and getting closer to the EU average. In 2016 the employability rate of those with secondary education was 86.7% compared to the EU average of 82.8%. This makes Ireland one of the EU countries with the widest disparities in the employment rates of people with different skill levels (Eurostat, 2017).

"New types of apprenticeship schemes are being introduced and promoted by relevant actors. A key measure is to provide 50 000 upskilling and reskilling places in higher education by 2021. These will fill identified skills gaps in the economy and support an increase in lifelong learning (DES, 2017) (45). At the lower skills end, ongoing preparations for the implementation of the Upskilling Pathways Recommendation should benefit the reintegration of the inactive population."

"Ireland is continuously improving its performance and lowering early school leaving rates, but disparities remain at local level. The percentage of early school leavers fell to 6.3% of young people aged 18-24 in 2016, well below the Europe 2020 national target of 8% and the EU average of 10.7%. Ireland has made significant progress, effectively halving its rate since 2009. No major gap is visible between native- and foreign-born students. There is, however, a persistent gap between girls (4.6%) and boys (7.8%). The 2017 national reform programme highlights the renewed ‘Delivering equality of opportunity in schools’ initiative (Department of Education and Skills (DES), 2017a) in disadvantaged areas. The proportion of 15-24 year-olds not in employment, education or training is 13.0%, slightly above the EU average of 11.5% in 2016, indicating there is still potential to do more to reduce early school leaving."

For further youth-related matters please refer to the country report.
Links to further information

Youth Guarantee Knowledge centre – Including promising examples from Ireland
http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1327&langId=en

Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan

Where to register for the Youth Guarantee?

Youth Wiki Ireland