



Youth Guarantee country by country

Slovakia
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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 Slovakia. It contains extracts from:

- The country report drawn by the Commission for Slovakia 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 assessment made by the Commission the previous year.

Slovakia presented a [Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan](#) in February 2014, revised in April 2014.

Slovakia is eligible for the Youth Employment Initiative.

Commission's assessment

From the 2020 country report (EN - SK):

“Labour market performance continued to improve amid continuous employment growth. Employment levels increased further by about 30,000 people between Q3-2018 and Q3-2019, corresponding to an average growth of 2.3%. The employment rate (for people aged 20-64) peaked at 73.3%, which is 0.8 pps more than one year before and above the Europe 2020 target of 72%. This improvement in the employment rate can be partially explained by the continuous decline in working age population, which started in 2012 and amounted to 4.1% in the past six years. In Q32019, unemployment levels stood at 157,000, which is around 40% of the levels reached in 2013 at the start of the recovery, and the unemployment rate fell further to 5.7% (0.4 pp less than one year before).”

“In spite of overall positive labour market outcomes, some groups face disadvantages and east-west disparities remain marked. The unemployment of low-skilled people is among the highest in the EU, at 29.8 % in 2018 (13.3 % in the EU). The situation is particularly serious for lowskilled youth (43.5 % v 21.1 % in the EU). Large regional disparities persist, with Eastern regions presenting a comparatively worse situation across all labour market and social indicators. The situation is especially critical for marginalised Roma communities”

“In 2018, the share of young people neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET) continued to approach the EU average. In the age group 15-29, the share of NEETs was 14.6% compared to the EU average of 12.9%. The Youth Guarantee could help these groups, but its delivery is largely project-based and implemented through the traditional active labour market policies system, therefore without systemic coordination with social policy measures. For instance, jobseekers classified as uncooperative by the public employment system are subject to deregistration, which hampers further follow-up and complicates the outreach towards NEETs.”

“Long-term unemployment is dropping, but it remains high in particular for young people and in Eastern regions. As a proportion of the active population, the number of long-term unemployed decreased by 0.9 pps year-on-year to 3 % in Q32019, which is still above the EU average of 2.5 %. Long-term unemployment remains a challenge for young people: this rate is still well above the EU average (6.6% compared to 3.3%), accentuating regional disparities (2.1% in West Slovakia as opposed to 10% in East Slovakia). The incidence of unemployment and long-term unemployment continues to be particularly high among the Roma population.”

“The labour market situation of women is gradually improving, but the employment and wage gender gaps remain significant. The labour market participation of younger women continues to be low, constrained by the take-up of family obligations (encouraged by long paid maternity leaves (30)), lack of childcare facilities, in particular for children under 3 years of age, and low uptake of flexible work arrangements.”

“Students’ performance in basic skills has remained low and pronounced educational inequalities persist. Further policy measures and resources may be

needed following the evaluation of the implementation of the first action plan (2018-19) and the analysis of the recommendation on strengthening young people's skills of the OECD Skills Strategy for Slovakia (OECD, 2020)."

"Digital skills are improving but businesses still lack qualified experts in key industrial sectors. Although according to the Digital Economy and Society Index, 59% of adults have at least basic digital skills, the latest IT fitness test indicates gaps in digital competences among young people in particular in the use of office software such as text or spreadsheet editors."

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

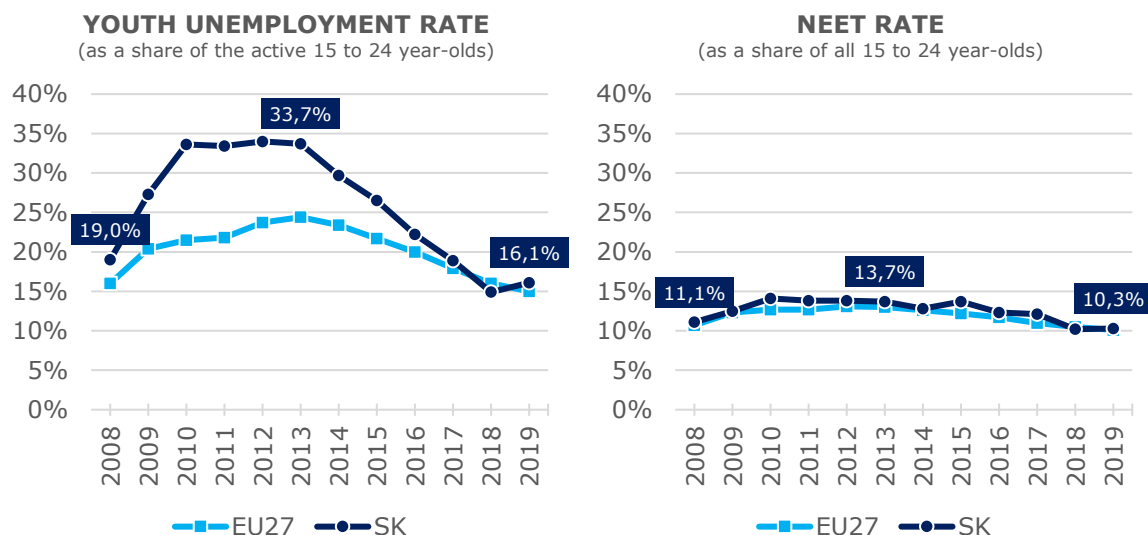
EMCO's assessment

Conclusions of the Employment Committee's multilateral surveillance review on youth employment, October 2019:

Youth Guarantee implementation in Slovakia continues to advance and there are significant improvements in youth unemployment, even though regional disparities persist and the levels of unemployment among low-skilled youth still remain above average, as does the NEETs rate. Partnerships are developing and the participation of youth organisations is starting to improve. Close coordination between national, regional and local authorities would be essential for effective and personalised guidance services. Online services have been set up which bring together job seekers and employers, and also provide information on labour market needs and forecasts. Nevertheless, the rate of early school leavers is still high, with few exits into education from the Youth Guarantee, which indicates a lack of cooperation and coordination with education systems. Also, there is a decrease in coverage rates, mainly due to inactive NEETs outside the Youth Guarantee, which calls for better outreach to inactive NEETs. A more strategic approach for implementing the Youth Guarantee is recommended. There are some concerns that too many project-based measures rely on ESF funding, which may impact future long-term sustainability. There are above-average recycling rates, which casts doubts on the effectiveness of measures. An evaluation of Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) funded measures would be important to help improve the design of the measures. Traineeships are carried out under legislation which defines all necessary conditions for quality performance. However, the learning component might need to be strengthened.

Youth Guarantee monitoring – Key data¹

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



Source: Eurostat, LFS (une_rt_a, edat_ifse_20)

2. Youth Guarantee delivery

Slovakia presented a Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan in January 2014, which was approved by the government in February 2014 and subsequently updated in line with the national reform programme in April 2014.

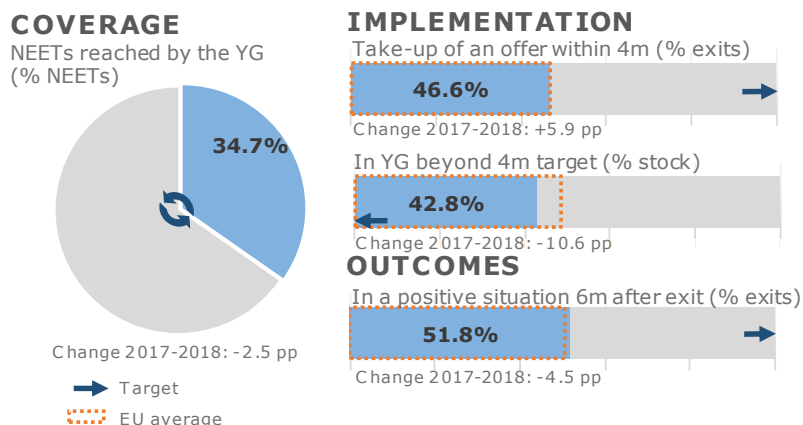
The YG in Slovakia is available to young people aged under 30, and especially targets those affected by long-term unemployment. There are special provisions for young disabled persons. Strengthening activities in the area of outreach was identified as a key challenge in the Commission's 3-year assessment of the YG and the YEI².

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>).

² <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=16299&langId=en>

YG monitoring data 2017-18



Source: DG EMPL, YG monitoring database, data extracted 09 December 2019.
NEETs data were extracted from Eurostat, Labour Force Survey on 21 June 2019.

On average during 2018, more than two in five (42.8%) of those registered in the Slovakian YG scheme had been waiting for an offer for more than 4 months, below the EU average of 48.6%. The result represents a significant improvement compared to 2017 (53.4%) that is attributed to the provision of additional PES counsellors from mid-2017 and a new focus on individualised support/counselling.

Approaching half (46.6%) of those leaving the scheme in 2018 took up an offer within 4 months of registration, also an improvement compared to 2017 (40.7%) and on a par with the EU average of 46.7%.

The YG scheme in Slovakia covered just over a third (34.7%) of NEETs aged under 25, slightly down on 2017 (37.2%) and significantly fewer than in 2016 (49.5%). The YG scheme does not seem to address the increasingly important inactive part of the NEET population.

Follow-up data show that just over half (51.8%) of those leaving the YG in 2018 were known to be in employment, education or training 6 months later, fewer than in 2017 (56.3%). Outcomes are sustained over time, as longer-term follow-up data for previous years show similar results, with a slight increase in positive situations 18 months after exit.

Previous year

From the 2019 country report (EN - SK):

"Strong economic growth has led to significant labour market improvements but structural challenges persist. The unemployment rate reached a new historical low of 6.1 % in Q4-2018 (seasonally adjusted). Supported by the creation of around 50 000 new jobs compared to Q3-2017, the employment rate (20-64) increased to 72.5 % in Q3-2018 and wages continued to grow at a fast pace."

"The share of young people neither in employment nor in education and training is decreasing albeit from a high level. In 2017, the rate (age group 15-29) was 16 %, above the EU average of 13.4%. The rate for the age group 15-24 decreased to 11 % in Q2-2018, slightly above the EU average of 10.5 %. Youth unemployment (age 15-24) decreased at a faster pace (by 4 pps year-on-year) and was 14.2 % in Q4-2018, now below the EU average. The Youth Employment Initiative contributed to the positive trend. By end of October 2018, it provided activities for more than 48 000 young people, with two thirds thereof then continuing in other educational, training or employment activities. Therefore, continued investment in this area remains important."

"A dual vocational education and training scheme was introduced in 2015. It aimed at making vocational education and training more relevant to the needs of companies and more attractive to learners. However, while the scheme attracted a significant attention of employers, the interest of young learners remained moderate. An additional 2018 amendment lifted remuneration ceiling for learners' productive work, while recognising only remuneration up to 100 % of minimum wage as tax deductible. It abolished the disincentives for schools to enter dual vocational education and training by ensuring full per capita funding for participating institutions. Finally, it harmonised curricula for dual learners and nondual learners receiving the same qualification. These changes have led to a quadruple increase in new enrolments of apprentices, from 422 in the school year 2015/2016 to 1 615 in the school year 2018/2019."

"Despite improvements in vocational education and training, challenges remain. The attractiveness of vocational education and training is increasing (see Box 3.3.1) but there is scope for improving the quality of teaching, in the guidance of counsellors and in a higher level of internationalisation. Teaching institutions could engage more with local businesses, form innovation partnerships, and support the diffusion of state-of-the-art technologies to boost relevant skill levels. Promoting career options within smart specialisation areas requires employers to invest in the training of young people and in up-skilling and re-skilling the existing workforce. Targeted support for reforming vocational education and training in the catching-up region of Prešov was launched in January 2018."

"On the back of strong economic growth, poverty has further declined but strong regional disparities persist. [...] Poverty is considerably higher in a number of districts in Southern and Eastern Slovakia, most notably those with a large number of people living in marginalised Roma communities, with a high proportion of small municipalities with prevalingly elderly population, with a high proportion of poor youth or with high levels of in-work poverty (see Graph 3.3.4). This suggests the need for dedicated investment, including in food and basic material assistance."

"Demand for housing is fuelled by a positive economic climate, but also a lack of alternative housing options. Slovakia ranks very high in EU in the share of young people (aged 25-34) still living with their parents (57 % v the EU average of 28 %; Eurostat, 2019) and in the high number of persons sharing rooms. Slovaks also leave their parents' house at the age of 31 on average, putting them among the latest in the EU. The thin rental market means that young people often struggle to move to rented accommodation as an intermediate step towards home ownership."

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

Links to further information

Youth Guarantee Knowledge Centre – Including promising examples from Slovakia

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1327&langId=en>

Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=16480&langId=en>

Where to register for the Youth Guarantee?

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1218&langId=en>

Youth Wiki Slovakia

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/overview-slovakia>