

**Ministry of Labour and Social Policy**  
**Ministry of Infrastructure and Development**

**Updated**  
***Youth Guarantee***  
**Implementation Plan in Poland**

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## Introduction

This comprehensive support programme for youth on the labour market is an updated version of “The *Youth Guarantee* Implementation Plan in Poland” of April 2014.

In the third quarter of 2013, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development developed “The *Youth Guarantee* Implementation Plan in Poland”, thus joining the initiative to establish the *Youth Guarantee*. Its implementation in some areas began in January 2014, using the national financial resources.

The work on amendments to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions had been carried out at the same time and the amendments entered into force on 27 May 2014.

On 17 December 2014, the European Commission approved the Operational Programme Knowledge Education Development (OP KED), providing financial support from the European Social Fund and from the *Youth Employment Initiative*, for the *Youth Guarantee* implementation.

Those two developments (in particular) prompted the updating and further specification of the Plan and their result is the presentation of “Updated *Youth Guarantee* Implementation Plan in Poland”.

The actions included in the “Updated *Youth Guarantee* Implementation Plan in Poland” are not subject to substantial changes. However, they were specified in more detail, in view of new legal and financial conditions. The diagnosis constituting the basis for joining the implementation of the *Youth Guarantee* in 2014, was updated and extended with the selected aspects of the situation of young people up to 30 years of age.

The upper age limit for the participants of the *Youth Guarantee* in Poland was increased from 25 to 29 years. The decision is motivated by the wish to provide high quality support to a larger group of young people entering the labour market and to create uniform target groups and uniform scope of support from the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative, i.e. under the priority axis I of the Operational Programme Knowledge Education Development.

## 1. Context and rationale of the *Youth Guarantee* implementation in Poland.

In response to an increasingly higher level of unemployment of the young people in Europe, the European Commission has undertaken actions aimed at supporting young people in taking up employment. In December 2012, at the EU level, the **Youth Employment Package** was developed. A part of the Package is an initiative of establishing **Youth Guarantee**<sup>1</sup>, namely a postulate for the EU Member States concerning providing to the young people aged below 25, who are not in employment, education or training, a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. The Council adopted the Recommendation on establishing the *Youth Guarantee* (2013 C 120/01) on 22 April 2013, and obliged all member states to its implementation.

As a supplement for the *Youth Guarantee* implementation, during the European Council summit, on 7-8 February 2013, a decision was made to implement the *Youth Employment Initiative*, which is targeted at regions where the level of unemployment of people aged from 15 to 24 exceeds 25%. In Poland, EUR 550 million were allocated for the YEI implementation.

In June 2013, the European Commission transferred, to the Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee and to the Committee of the Regions, the following Communication: ***Working together for Europe's young people. A call to action on youth unemployment.***<sup>2</sup> The Communication calls upon the European Union (EU) institutions, Member States (MS), the social partners and civil society to immediately start work in partnership for employment of youth in the areas designated by the Commission.

The above initiatives of the European Commission, aimed at practical implementation of actions for a possibly quick reversal of the adverse trend in youth employment in the EU, including in Poland, were taken into account by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, when preparing the ***Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan in Poland.***

Member States with regions where the youth unemployment rate exceeded 25% were obliged to prepare the *Youth Guarantee* implementation plan by December 2013. **The study presenting this plan for Poland was submitted to the European Commission on 23 December 2013.**

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<sup>1</sup> Communication from the Commission: *Proposal for a Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee* (COM(2012) 729).

<sup>2</sup> COM(2013) 447 final.

## 1.1. Young people on the labour market – diagnosis.

In Poland, like throughout the European Union, the position of the youth on the labour market is definitely more difficult than in the case of people from older age groups. It can be seen in a low level of professional activity, as well as relatively low employment and high unemployment of the youth.

Only one third of all Poles aged below 25 are professionally active, though it is determined largely by continuation of education and supplementation of qualifications in the case of almost 90% of professionally inactive young people. In the face of difficulties in getting a job, a considerable part of young people decide to obtain higher education to increase the possibilities of finding the right job. This is fostered by the dynamic growth of higher education. In the 2012/2013 academic year, almost 1.7 million persons studied at 450 higher education institutions, while in the 1990/1991 academic year the number only slightly exceeded 400,000. Although the number of students has been falling systematically in recent years, mainly due to demographic changes, it remains high, and gross enrolment ratios are still high.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, approx. 5.5% of professionally inactive young people remained inactive due to family obligations and duties related to running a house, and subsequent 2% for reasons of disease and disability. It means that only actually approx. 2% of people aged 15-24 (namely approx. 60,000 people) were professionally inactive because they were discouraged by ineffective job-seeking or were searching for it, but were not ready to take it up.

At the end of 2013, fewer than one in four persons aged 15-24 worked, and the unemployment rate in this group exceeded 27%. After over 1.5 year of the *Youth Guarantee* implementation, the employment rate of persons aged 15-24 increased by 1.8 percentage points to 26.1% at the end of second quarter of 2015<sup>4</sup>, and the harmonised unemployment rate fell to 19.0%, i.e. by over 8 percentage points.

Basically, attention should be focused on these people who remain unemployed or professionally inactive for reasons other than education, family obligations or disease, which means a group of approx. 88,000 professionally inactive people and approx. 400,000 unemployed aged 15-24.<sup>5</sup> These data come from the Labour Force Survey in Poland (Badanie Aktywności Ekonomicznej Ludności – BAEL) carried out by the Central Statistical Office (GUS). However, the same survey is the basis to calculate the NEET (*not in education, employment or training*) ratio, which covers a slightly broader group of people. The NEET

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<sup>3</sup>The gross enrolment ratio in the 2012/2013 school year reached 51.8%. Over the last 20 years, it has grown four times.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Central Statistical Office (GUS), LFS.

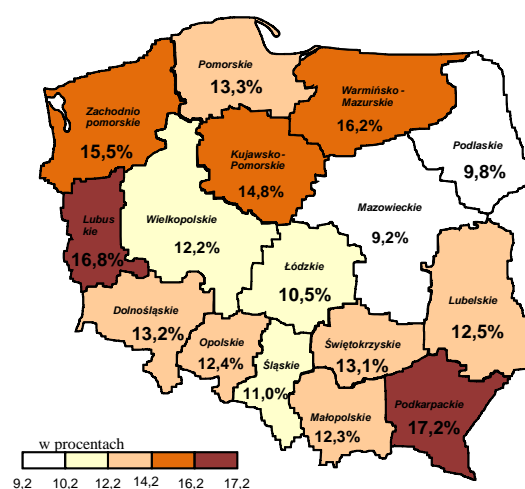
<sup>5</sup> Source: Central Statistical Office (GUS), LFS.

ratio for people aged 15-17 in Poland recorded a very low value – only 0.6% in 2012<sup>6</sup> (5 times lower than for the whole EU). It results, first of all, from the compulsory education until 18 in Poland. For this reason, the percentage of the youth that does not continue education in Poland is only 5.7% (as compared to 12.8% in the EU).

In subsequent age groups, the NEET ratio records higher and higher values. According to the Eurostat data for 2012, in the group aged 18-24 in Poland, the NEET ratio amounted to 15.9%. In the entire group aged 15-24 the NEET ratio in 2012 stood at 11.8%, i.e. was about 1.5 percentage point lower than in the EU). From the analyses conducted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, on the basis of the data of the Central Statistical Office, it seems that 2013 ratios were less optimistic. In the group aged 15-17, the NEET ratio amounted to 0.7%, in the group aged 18-24 to 16.7%, and in the whole group covered by our support, namely aged 15-24, it amounted to 12.5%.

In this way, the size of the population aged 15-24 in the NEET group in Poland was estimated at approx. 560,000 people at the end of 2013, including approx. 8,000 people aged 15-17. It should be emphasized that at the level of voivodships the actual problem of NEET is reflected much better by percentage ratios, rather than number of the group classified into this category in individual voivodships, because, in this case, the size of population in a given age group has an impact and hence the highest number of the youth qualified into NEET was recorded in voivodships with the largest population, i.e. Śląskie, Mazowieckie, Małopolskie and Wielkopolskie Voivodships. On the other hand, the NEET ratio in the group aged 15-24 shows a completely different distribution. The highest values in 2013 were recorded in the following voivodships: Podkarpackie (17.2%), Lubuskie 16.8%), Warmińsko-Mazurskie (16.2%), and Zachodniopomorskie (15.5%). The lowest value was recorded in Mazowieckie (9.2%) and a little higher in Podlaskie (9.8%).

NEET RATE FOR AGE GROUP 15 -24 IN REGIONS (2013)



<sup>6</sup> Source: as above.

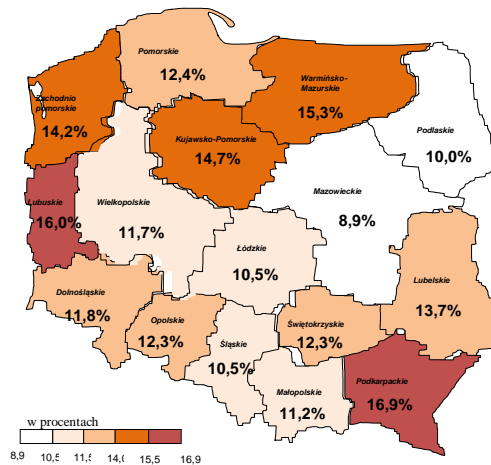
As indicated above, the NEET group aged 15-24 in 2013 included approx. 560,000 people, of which 407,000 were the unemployed, in accordance with BAEL definitions. From this group, less than 270,000 people declared registration in labour offices, namely approx. 66% of the unemployed according to BAEL. These data differ, for methodological reasons, from the actual number of young people who at that time were included in the unemployed records kept by labour offices. In 2013, the average number of the unemployed registered in labour offices aged 18-24 amounted to approx. 410,000 people, namely it was over 142,000 lower than indicated by the respondents in BAEL. Apart from methodological reasons, on the one hand, differences resulted from the fact that some of the unemployed according to BAEL did not declare registration in a labour office. On the other hand, it may be an effect of the registered unemployed working illegally.

Counteracting the NEET phenomenon is one of more serious challenges for the education system and labour market. The OECD survey results presented in the strategy "Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives" indicate that in the case of young people (16-24 years) in education and/or in employment, competences increase with age, whereas in the case of people with NEET group - their regression takes place. Lack of practical abilities and work experience is the most frequently raised argument in the context of youth unemployment.

Despite low percentage of the youth, who do not continue education (5.7%), some of the people classified into the NEET group are not registered in labour offices and remain excluded from the labour market, above all, because of unfinished formal education, and hence lack of vocational qualifications. Often, these people are not interested in being employed, because they do not see such a need or do not feel like training and supplementing their education. It may be a group which is very difficult and reluctant towards activation. Hence the initiative to reach them using specific methods and cover them with activities executed under projects co-funded from ESF funds. This group may include even ca. 150,000 people, if the NEET community is decreased by those registered in labour offices.

Taking those data as a starting point for the *Youth Guarantee* implementation, it should be noted that already at the end of 2014, the NEET ratio declined by 0.2 percentage point to 12.0%, and further decrease of the ratio is expected at the end of 2015. The highest NEET ratios were recorded in the following voivodships: Podkarpackie (16.9%), Lubuskie (16.0%), Warmińsko-Mazurskie (15.3%), and Zachodniopomorskie (14.2%). The lowest value was recorded in Mazowieckie (8.9%) and a little higher in Podlaskie (10.0%) voivodships.

NEET RATE FOR AGE GROUP 15-24 IN REGIONS (2014)



The second, much more numerous group are unemployed people registered in labour offices, aged 18-24, who today, pursuant to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions, are recognized as being in a special situation on the labour market. It is worth noticing that part of the registered unemployed continue education, in the extramural form, since extramural education does not exclude the possibility to obtain the status of the unemployed. For this reason, a decision was made that the *Youth Guarantee* should cover all unemployed young people registered in labour offices, rather than only those from the NEET group (including not in education). Therefore, all the people from this age group registered in labour offices will be able to benefit from services and instruments stipulated in the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions. It should be reminded that in 2013 the average number of people aged 18-24 registered in labour offices was 410,000. Upon the launch of the Youth Guarantee implementation, there were 401,000 unemployed from this age group in the registers of poviats labour offices; and they accounted for 18.6% of all unemployed. It should be stressed that at the end of August 2015, the number of the unemployed under 25 years of age amounted to 223,500 (a decrease by 44.3%), and young unemployed accounted for only 14.3% of all unemployed persons.

Special help for young people, which results from low professional activity and low employment rate, as well as high unemployment in this group, is also a consequence of considerable effects of the economic crisis on the labour market, experienced in particular by the young. In 2009, given the overall growth in unemployment by over 28%, the number of young unemployed increased by nearly 40% and the share of the young in the number of the registered increased to 22.5%. Although in the next years the situation began to stabilize, the share of the young unemployed has remained high. At the end of 2013, they accounted for 18.6% of the total number of registered unemployed. It means that, although this share was significantly lower than 15 years ago, when every third unemployed was aged below 25, but still every fifth registered is a young person. In addition, the situation with regard to this ratio is characterized by high regional diversity. The share of



young unemployed among the registered was particularly high in Małopolskie voivodship, where, at the end of 2013, it was 23.3%, whereas it was the lowest in Dolnośląskie voivodship – 15.0%, which means that the range of the ratio amounted to 8.3 percentage points at that time. Within 1.5 years of the *Youth Guarantee* implementation, the unemployment rate among young people fell to 19.8%, while the regional disproportions decreased to 5.8 percentage points. The youth unemployment rate recorded in Małopolskie voivodeship amounted to 16.8% and in Dolnośląskie voivodship to 11.0%.

Currently, the young registering in a labour office remain unemployed on average for more than 8 months. It is a nearly 5 months less than for the other unemployed, but still a long period. In the group of young unemployed, 5.9% have university degree, and subsequent 27.1% have post-secondary and secondary vocational education. On the other hand, almost 30% of young unemployed do not have vocational qualifications and in spite of a high demand for employees to perform simple works, the young are not willing to take up such work in exchange for low remuneration. Therefore, it is necessary to equip these people in vocational qualifications which make it possible to get a job by vocational training, apprenticeship for adults or traineeships, which will additionally ensure work experience.

Among reasons of high youth unemployment, two are listed most often, i.e. lack of work experience and the mismatch of qualifications to the labour market needs.<sup>7</sup> Every second unemployed aged below 25 does not have any work experience and every fourth has an experience of below 1 year. Even in the 25-34 age group, every third unemployed has no work experience. Given a high share of people without vocational qualifications, it has a serious impact on job opportunities, particularly when the expectations of employers are high. It involves also another serious problem, which is an insufficient number of job offers, and poor cooperation between the education system and employment. From research conducted on order of the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development under the Study of Human Capital in Poland it seems that only approx. 8% of positions offered by employers are meant particularly for young people, aged below 30. At the same time, the most often formulated requirement is having a six-month work experience, specific professional and soft competences, as well as being available and creative.

Another observed phenomenon was the delay in entering the labour market by young people, which resulted in the extension of the age group of persons targeted by the *Youth Guarantee*. The data on the situation of persons aged below 30 show that, at the end of January 2015, the number of the unemployed aged up to 30 and registered at labour offices amounted to 605,700, but already at the end of August 2015, it dropped to 443,600, which marks a decline by 26.8%. An important factors is also a decrease of the share of persons below 30 years of age in the overall number of the unemployed by 3.2 percentage points,

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<sup>7</sup> "Młodzi 2011" (Young People of 2011) ed. M. Boni, Chancellery of the Prime Minister, Warsaw, 2011, p. 137.

from 31.6% at the end of January 2015, to 28.4% at the end of August 2015. It should be noted that within eight months of 2015, 339,700 persons aged up to 30 years took up employment, and 185,800 persons from this age group were covered by active programmes, while 187,300 did not confirm their readiness to take up employment, which points to high mobility in this population. Young people find it difficult to find a job quickly also due to expectations related to work, including often high pay expectations and low mobility arising from high costs or purchase or rental of a flat, and also from insufficiently developed transport infrastructure. The goal of the *Youth Guarantee* implementation in Poland is to confront the difficulties by designing actions aiming at improving the situation of the youth on the labour market. This is a problem of particular importance due to significant effects of youth unemployment and not only concerning life situation of this group, but also reflected in the level of development of the society and demographic changes. High youth unemployment rate and uncertain professional situation cause more and more frequent material dependence on parents and extend decisions on starting a family. This, in turn, affects low total fertility rates in Poland and progressing ageing of the society. Extreme behaviours are possible, in the form of violating the law, addictions or escalations of dissatisfaction of the youth in street demonstrations, experienced in some EU countries. Therefore, it is in the interest of the whole society that the young find jobs, as a result of which they earn income, contribute to growth in consumption, generate GDP growth and start and extend families.

Despite a significant decline, the youth unemployment rate remains high and is diversified in territorial terms. In 2013, in as much as 11 voivodships the unemployment rate exceeded 25%. Therefore, a decision was made not to restrict aid under the *Guarantee* solely to those voivodships to which support is granted under the *Youth Employment Initiative* and a marked reduction in the diversity of the youth unemployment rate to 23.4 percentage points (17.7 in Mazowieckie voivodship and 41.1% in Podkarpackie voivodship) at the end of 2014.

To counteract the problems experienced on the labour market by the young, it is necessary to use to a broader extent of services and instruments as stipulated in the Act of 20 April 2004 on the Promotion of Employment and Labour Market Institutions (Journal of Laws of 2015, item 149, as amended) and to search for new solutions which will improve the situation of the youth.

We assume that in the years 2014 - 2021 people from the NEET group not registered in labour offices will be covered, first of all, by aid of the Voluntary Labour Corps (VLC) and activated under calls for proposals planned at the central and regional level. It is planned that the standard aid under OHP throughout the analysed period will cover approximately 560,000 people, namely annually on average this aid will be granted to approx. 70,000 people and apart from this 1,800 NEETs annually will take part in the projects implemented by VLC from the ESF funds (together 14,600 people in the years 2014-2021). In addition, within the central calls for proposals, aid will be granted to 23,600 people from NEET

(approx. 3,000 annually on average) and under regional calls for proposals aid will be granted to 70,500 people from NEET (8,800 annually on average).

At this point, we should remember that a considerable part of people belonging formally to the NEET group are not registered in labour offices, which enables presuming that these are professionally inactive people, e.g. as a result of a choice concerning performance of family obligations, but also due to illness or disability.

At the same time, it should be mentioned that support with regard to vocational activation will be granted firstly to people who express the desire to such activation. However, it should be borne in mind that a large part of the unemployed (it is estimated that even 30%) are registered in labour offices solely for the purpose of acquiring the right to health insurance. This group comprises both people working illegally, but also people drawing funds from other sources and not interested in taking up employment, education or any form of vocational activation.

Analysing the scale of demand for activation actions carried out by labour offices, it is also necessary to remember that, thanks to the introduction of service profiling, it is not necessary to ensure full profile of activation to every unemployed registered in the labour offices. Introduction of profiling enabled the labour offices to better match the forms of aid to the needs of a specific person and, as a result, help more effectively in the return to the labour market. It also improves the effectiveness of labour offices' activities.

In addition, a certain number of people register in labour offices without expecting assistance and search for the job independently, which is connected with the fact that on average labour offices receive only about 1 per 8 announcement about vacancies. Nonetheless, if registered people do not receive a proposal of non-subsidized employment, which is taken up by approximately 37% of young people, they have a chance to receive subsidized support. In 2013, support was granted to approx. 156,000 young people, that is every fifth unemployed aged below 25 unregistered throughout the whole period. In subsequent years, as a result of higher funds, the number of activated young unemployed people should grow further.

We estimate that, thanks to the funds of the Labour Fund and of the European Social Fund in the period 2014-2021, through labour offices it will be possible to activate more than 1.67 million young unemployed people, which, annually on average, will enable granting support to approx. 209,000 unemployed people aged 18-29. The National Programme Work for Youth provides for support in the form of subsidized employment for additional almost 107,000 of the unemployed aged up to 29 years, in the years 2016-2018. In addition, nearly 11,000 young people will receive aid under contracting of activation to employment agencies (annually the assistance will be granted to more than 1,300 young people). It is worth adding that already today the young are one of major groups of addressees of activation activities carried out by employment agencies, which is confirmed by the fact that

if their share from among the registered unemployed in 2013 was less than 19%, their share in the number of activated accounted for 32.7%. The young unemployed accounted for more than half of work practice participants, 45% of participants of apprenticeship for adults, 27% of training participants or 20% of subsidized works.

In addition, due to the fact that the labour market in recent years has been receiving, on average, approx. 450,000 graduates of universities annually, and owing to the fact that a group, which often is already 25 years (ca. 70% of university graduates) and other graduates may encounter difficulties with entering the labour market smoothly, despite having greater development potential, the decision was made to propose to this group, under *Youth Guarantee*, the possibility to obtain a loan for starting business, paid by Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (BGK). Additionally, it is justified by the fact that already today among the unemployed graduates registered in labour offices ca. 30% are university graduates. Within this aid it is planned to grant loans on average for approx. 730 people annually.

To sum up, we assume that together in the years 2014-2021 the aid will be granted to nearly 2.4 million young people, of which:

- 1,670,000 under actions carried out by poviats labour offices;
- 106,800 under the National Programme Work for Youth;
- 10,900 under contracting the services to employment agencies;
- 587,600 people under actions carried out by Voluntary Labour Corps;
- 23,600 under central call for proposals;
- 70,500 under regional call for proposals;
- 5,900 under loans paid out by BGK.

## **1.2. Limiting youth unemployment within the labour market policy in Poland.**

As it has been mentioned above, limiting youth unemployment has been for years one of major priorities of the labour market policy in Poland. Youth unemployment reduction was an objective of the Polish Government both before the period of economic slowdown (in the period 2003-2008), and in the subsequent years, in response to significant deterioration of the situation of young people on the labour market, caused by the world crisis.

Even before its amendment in May 2014, the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions of 20 April 2004 identified people aged below 25 as one of social groups in **special situation on the labour market**, and consequently eligible for special aid. As a result, public employment services had an obligation to prepare for them an "individual action plan". Preparation of a customized plan enabled a better selection of activation or educational tools aimed at finding a job or improving qualifications by young person. The amended Act extended the definition

of young people in a special situation on the labour market to include persons aged up to 30 years<sup>8</sup> and reduced the maximum time limit for granting support for the unemployed people under 25 from 6 months to 4 months from the date of registration in a labour office. Actions carried out under the national labour market policy are consistent with the Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on a *Youth Guarantee* (2013/C 120/01). Therefore, after the entry into force of this provision – which took place the 2nd quarter of 2014 – support addressed to the unemployed youth by labour offices is legitimized by law, and hence, *Youth Guarantee* is established permanently in Polish regulations. It will be, on the one hand, a reply to the call of the Commission included in the Communication of the European Commission *Working together for Europe's Young People. A call to action on youth unemployment* (COM (2013) 447), and, on the other hand, continuation of activities worked out in national programmes implemented for the youth in Poland.

Owing to a difficult situation of the youth on the labour market, caused by the crisis, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy started in 2012 the implementation of the programme "**Youth on the Labour Market**", which contains a number of actions aimed at vocational activation for people aged below 30. These actions supplement standard services offered to the people unemployed and job-seeking through employment agencies.

In addition, under the aforementioned programme, a pilot project "**Your Career – Your Choice**" was launched, aiming at checking new solutions in the labour market policy addressed to the unemployed aged below 30. This project made an attempt of breaking barriers making it possible for young people to enter the labour market, through support in two areas:

- education – by offering the opportunity to make use of the following vouchers: training, for professional training or post-secondary training and postgraduate education and, as a result, acquire desired skills;
- employment – creating an opportunity to get work experience in the form of work practice combined with later employment (work practice voucher) or subsidized employment (voucher for the employer for employing a university-level school graduate) and increase in professional mobility (subsidy for settlement).

Experiences from the implementation of pilot projects were used when drafting, – in the amended Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions, of the new instruments of support targeted at the youth. After the effective date of the Act amendment, these instruments are provided on the general terms by all labour offices.

In addition, multi-directional actions were taken for the reinforcement of the quality of trainings for the unemployed, among others, expansion of resources of the databases

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<sup>8</sup> And introduced an obligation to develop an Individual Action Plan for all interested unemployed in line with Article 34a of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions (Journal of Laws of 2015, as amended).

of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, containing standards for competencies required by employers.

The actions of **Volunteer Labour Corps** (VLC) were intensified, addressed to the youth classified into the NEET group (aged 15-24)<sup>9</sup>, namely to people that are simultaneously not employed, are not students and do not increase their qualifications during courses or training. In 2012, VLC were caring for more than 36,530 young people at risk of exclusion from the social life. VLC participants had the possibility to supplement general education at the level of primary school or secondary school with simultaneous training for a specific job. Together, in the reporting period, the number of participants amounted to 16,673, including 5,409 people completed successfully this type of education, and educational effectiveness of participants in the third class junior high school amounted to 85.7%. Apprenticeship and employment were carried out on the basis of individual agreements between the employer and VLC's tutee on the terms concerning juvenile employees.<sup>10</sup> In 2012, 33,943 participants were employed on the above terms. In this regard, main tasks were focused on obtaining relevant employers ensuring employment and proper apprenticeship of the youth.

Apprenticeship of juvenile employees most often takes place in basic vocational schools. In 2012, approx. 51% of students of these schools participated in apprenticeship as juvenile employees.

In June 2013, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego concluded a written agreement for the implementation of a pilot programme "First business - Start-up support" in three voivodships: Mazowieckie, Małopolskie and Świętokrzyskie, aimed at helping in establishment of new companies and new jobs, executed in the form of preferential loans. After the amendment of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions of 20 April 2004 and introduction of a new labour market instrument in the form of a loan for business activity and for creation of a job for an unemployed person, in June 2014 an agreement was concluded between the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the President of Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego on cooperation in implementing a loan programme entitled "First business – Start-up support" in the entire country.

As it stems from the above, *Youth Guarantee* supplements the previously conducted and planned actions for young people in Poland.

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<sup>9</sup> According to Eurostat, the NEET ratio for Poland amounted to 15.5% in 2011, and in EU -27 – 16.7%.

<sup>10</sup> A juvenile is person who is at least 16 years old but not older than 18 years old. Juvenile employees are covered by increased protection in the process of work by the *Labour Code*. A juvenile may only be employed for professional training and there are 2 forms of such employment: (1) employment combined with professional education or (2) employment connected with training for a specific job.

The *Youth Guarantee* does not replace the labour market policy with regard to limiting unemployment and actions for growth in youth employment in Poland, on the contrary, it focuses on actions influencing directly the ability to employ young people aged 15-29.

Actions under the *Youth Guarantee* implementation are consistent with an outlined context, creating, however, **value added** towards the executed labour market policy with regard to counteracting youth unemployment. Additional intervention from the national resources, as well as from ESF and YEI funds, allows to intensify actions, and thereby increase final effects of support for young people.

### **1.3. Key institutional entities in the field of youth employment and NEET.**

Key institutions performing actions supporting young people in entering the labour market include:

#### **A. Poviat and voivodship labour offices**

Employment offices are the basic institutions involved in supporting the unemployed people in the return to the labour market across the whole country. Their responsibilities include also research and analysis of the local labour market. Employment offices are local government units, subordinate to the Voivodship Marshal (voivodeship labour offices – WUP) or Poviat Starost (poviat labour offices – PUP).

The unemployed aged below 30, as people in a special situation on the labour market, are one of major beneficiaries of support offered by public employment services, which is proven by the fact that whereas the young people aged up to 25 account for 18.2% of the unemployed, among the total number of activated people, their share is higher and reaches nearly 33%.

In the years 2009-2013, every year labour offices covered with activation activities on average more than 200,000 people aged below 25. They accounted for 35.8% of all activated unemployed over this period. Thanks to pressure on activation of the unemployed, in 2009 nearly 268,000 people aged below 25, and a year over 294,000 people were activated.

Work practice and training enjoy the greatest interest of young people in labour offices. In 2013, 100,000 young participants accounted for 51.4% of all interns and young training participants (23,000 people aged below 25) accounted for 27.1% of all people using this form of support. In the same year nearly 8,600 young people (people aged below 25 accounted for 28.8% from among all persons using this form) started business thanks to support in the form of funds obtained by poviat labour offices.

## B. Voluntary Labour Corps

Voluntary Labour Corps (VLC) are a state budgetary unit supervised by the minister competent for labour. This unit performs tasks with regard to employment and counteracting of marginalization and social exclusion of the youth, and tasks regarding their education and upbringing. The primary goal of VLC's activities is to offer the youth conditions for proper social and professional development – with particular focus on activities addressed to the youth discriminated and requiring assistance from the state institutions. The most important tasks implemented in this respect by VLC comprise support for the education system by social, occupational and economic activation, taking actions aimed at increasing vocational qualifications or requalification, support for initiatives aimed at counteracting unemployment and upbringing in the process of work, including organisation of employment as well as development of international cooperation of the youth.

Impacts of Volunteer Labour Corps are targeted at people aged 15-25, who belong largely to the NEET category. The first group of addressees of VLC's activities is minor youth, neglected, with reduced life opportunities, from communities that are socially ill-adapted, largely pathological, sometimes criminogenic, from dysfunctional families, incomplete, impoverished, seeking institutional support and care, requiring educational impacts and professional education that determines an independent start in adult life.

The second group are graduates of high schools and universities - educated youth with some vocational qualifications, however, unable to find on their own place on the labour market and, at the same time, endangered with unemployment. For this youth, VLC envisages labour market actions, implemented by the coordinated vocational counselling system, job placement and vocational training, being a response to local demand of the youth community for specific labour market services.

VLC's activities are implemented by the VLC Main Headquarters and its subordinate 16 Regional Headquarters along with 49 Youth Education and Job Centres, 7 Education and Upbringing centres and 34 supraregional vocational training centres. Direct support is provided by approximately 800 basic units, which can be divided into:

- units providing care and upbringing, in the number of 214, including: 7 education and upbringing centres, 31 education and training centres, 162 labour squads and 14 community labour squads. The units educate almost 35,000 young people.
- units that implement tasks for the labour market, forming a network of nearly 500 entities, including: youth education and labour centres, mobile vocational information centres, youth job recruitment offices, job clubs, youth career centres, job agencies and vocational training centres and their subsidiaries.



### C. Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego

Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (BGK) is a state financial institution specializing in the services for the public finance sector. The mission of BGK is efficient and cost-effective implementation of activities ordered by the State, supplemented by the development of own activities for selected market segments, where the bank might use its natural advantages.

Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego was included in the actions supporting the youth entering the labour market through involvement in the execution of the programme tested from 2013 in the form of a pilot project entitled "First business – Start-up support", which, after the entry into force of the amended Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions, was extended to the entire Poland starting from 2014. The programme's essence is supporting, with preferential loans, young people who start business activity. The task of BGK is the programme management. Financial intermediaries appointed by BGK are responsible for acceptance and examination of applications and for granting loans.

## **2. Concept of the *Youth Guarantee* implementation in Poland.**

### **2.1. Definition of *Youth Guarantee* in Poland.**

According to the Council Recommendation (on establishing a *Youth Guarantee*) *Youth Guarantee* ensures that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education."<sup>11</sup>

According to the definition, the *Youth Guarantee* applies to all young people aged below 25. The *Youth Guarantee* with the use of funds of the *Youth Employment Initiative* is implemented in NUTS-2 regions (voivodships) where the youth unemployment rate at the end of 2012 exceeded 25% according to Eurostat, i.e. in the following voivodships: Dolnośląskie, Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Lubelskie, Lubuskie, Łódzkie, Małopolskie, Podkarpackie, Świętokrzyskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie and Zachodniopomorskie.

**Every Member State may further specify the definition of *Youth Guarantee* in line with its situation. Therefore, in view of the data presented in the diagnosis and concerning the situation of youth on the labour market:**

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<sup>11</sup> COM(2012) 729.

In Poland, the *Youth Guarantee* is addressed to persons aged from 15 to 29 - especially from the so-called NEET (not in employment, education or training) group.<sup>12</sup>

Addressees of *Youth Guarantee* in Poland include 4 subgroups, to the needs of which the *Guarantee* offer will be adjusted:

- a) People aged 15-17 ending education prematurely - people defaulting on schooling obligation (until 16 years of age) or education obligation (until 18 years of age).
- b) Young people aged 18-29 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) – including persons requiring special support, i.e. distant from the labour market, from disadvantaged backgrounds, from rural areas.
- c) People aged 18-29 who are registered as the unemployed – including also the registered students of part-time and extramural studies.
- d) Unemployed youth and job-seeking graduates of schools and universities within 48 months from the day of graduating from school or obtaining a vocational title, aged 18-29 - with regard to support for youth entrepreneurship.

Under the *Youth Guarantee* the (above) listed groups of young people will receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship or other form of assistance leading to vocational activation or starting business activity within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

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In the case of support provided by poviats labour offices, a starting point for obtaining support under *Youth Guarantee*, i.e. a period of four months, for persons under the age of 25 is calculated from the **date of registration of the young person in the poviat labour office as an unemployed** (or a job-seeker in the case of a disabled person not in employment) and for persons aged above 25 from the date of joining the project.

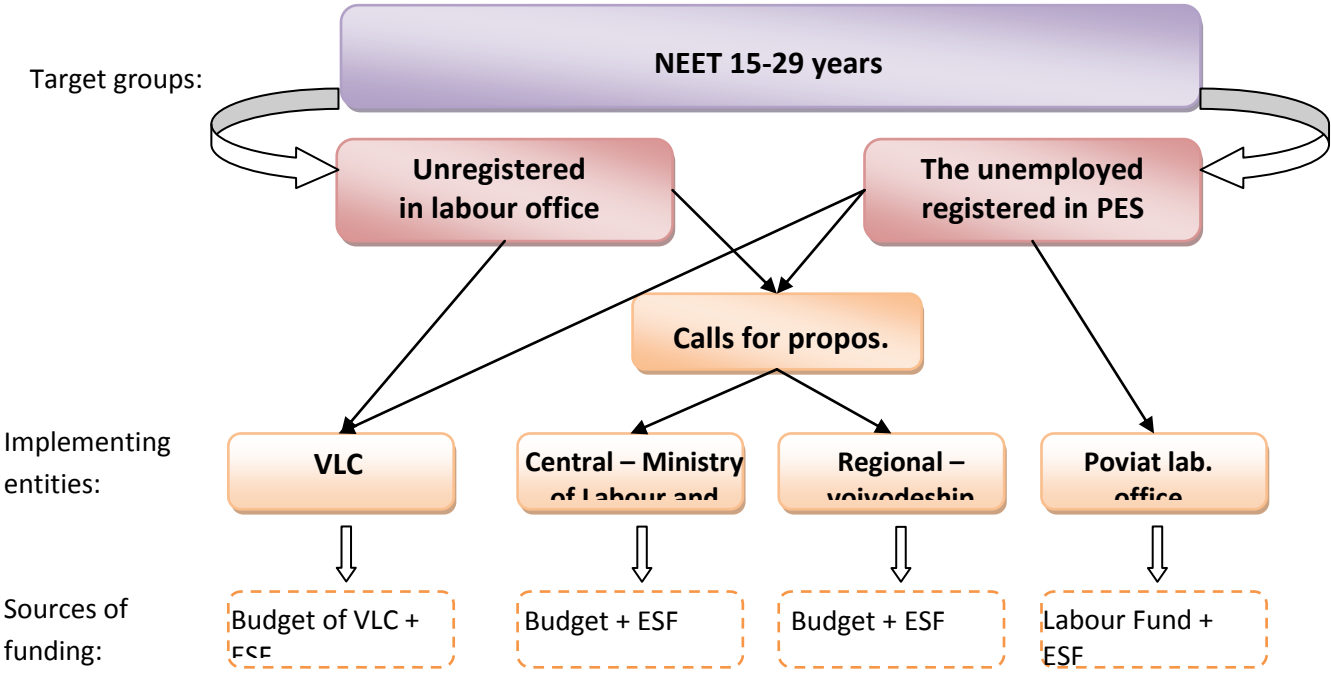
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<sup>12</sup> A young person aged 15-29 who jointly meets the three conditions, not in work (i.e. unemployed or professionally passive), not in education (i.e. not participating in formal, full-time education), not in training (i.e. not participating in out-of-school activities with the aim of acquiring, supplementing or improvement of professional or general skills or qualifications necessary to perform work; the process of assessing whether a given person is not in education and thus may be classified into the NEET category should include verification of whether the said person took part in such form of activation, financed from public funds, within the last 4 weeks).

In case of projects selected by way of call for proposals organized under the *Youth Guarantee*, the start pointing is the day when a given person joins the project.

In the case of people **aged 15 to 24** from the **NEET** group (not in employment, education or training), eligible for support by VLC, the period of four months begins from the date when they join the project.

**Support scheme for young people aged 15-29 who are not in employment, education or training:**



**Logic of intervention conducted to improve the situation on the labour market with emphasis on the needs of young people:**

➤ With regard to **people aged 15-17 who prematurely give up education**, neglect the schooling obligation or education obligation, are at risk of social exclusion, have problems with finding their place on the labour market and with becoming independent, actions are undertaken primarily in Volunteer Labour Corps. They focus on granting support leading to taking up education or training, or acquisition of vocational qualifications by participating in vocational qualification courses and acquiring elementary social competences.

➤ In relation to the other group, namely **NEETs aged 18-29**, the scope of support is standard or thorough/comprehensive.

Standard support is addressed to the youth not in education and employment who require support with regard to vocational activation on the labour market (provided from state funds).

Standard support consists in diagnosing the professional and personal situation of a young person (i.e. diagnosis of knowledge, skills and potential, as well as the family situation of the participant) aimed at designing the forms of support adequate for the existing needs of the said young person. If, the conducted diagnosis establishes that it is sufficient to offer a young person a good quality offer of employment or other form of aid leading to employment, self-employment or vocational activation, the so-called standard intervention is applied which covers:

- job placement services and agency in organisation of traineeships and apprenticeships;
- career counselling and vocational information (individual and in groups);
- learning of active job-seeking (activation classes, workshops on job-seeking skills, individual consultations).

Thorough/comprehensive support, i.e. covering all forms of aid that are provided to improve the situation of a given person on the labour market or find a job (provided from state and EU funds). This support is addressed to people in a particularly difficult situation who face a number of difficulties related to entering or maintaining their position on the labour market. The difficulties may be related to e.g. the lack of vocational qualifications and work experience or the fact that the qualifications do not match the needs of the labour market (including graduates of vocational secondary schools, vocational high schools, etc.) or the lack of work experience.

The implemented actions focus mainly on enabling getting a profession, changing a profession or improving vocational qualifications, obtaining work experience and finding a job leading to independence of a young person. Therefore, the forms of support in this area include vocational training, traineeships at employers, elements of support for employment as well as services of career counselling and job placement. Additionally, trainings in active job-seeking (activation classes, training in the job-seeking skills, access to information and electronic databases used to obtain the job-seeking skills).

The actions in this field are thus also an answer to the problem of unemployment not only in the case of low qualified young people who gave up education prematurely, but also an increasing group of school graduates who have difficulties with finding their first job.

Under the proposed actions, support is provided also in rural areas and in small towns.

➤ Support for the group of **people aged 18-29 registered as the unemployed** covers the full scope of available labour market instruments and services. The type of support required in individual cases is determined as a result of aid profiling.

For young people with the highest chances for employment, career counselling and job placement, as well as assistance in active job-seeking are offered, which give a young person an opportunity to enter the labour market smoothly and find a job enabling him or her to use their skills and competences. The most active people can use vouchers. This type of intervention is financed from national funds.

Entering the labour market by improving the level of competences and skills, and acquiring necessary experience, is supported, above all, by traineeships and trainings. In addition, those persons will be able to use the possibility of subsidised further education (among others, postgraduate studies, scholarship for continuation of education), which translates into a further increase in their competences, and hence the opportunities to find a job. This comprehensive offer consisting of a number of forms of support is financed from state and European funds.

Apart from support from VLC or labour offices, the young unemployed aged 18-29 may participate in activation projects implemented by entities selected by way of a call for proposals at the central or regional level.

Entrepreneurship development was identified as an opportunity for some young unemployed, in particular those with appropriate competences. This goal is supported by funds allocated for starting a business activity, and a loan programme implemented in cooperation with BGK. Under the programme, graduates aged below 29 years, within 48 months from completion of school education or studies, may use loans for starting a business and for creation of a job for an unemployed person.

In response to the needs of the unemployed persons most distant from labour market, the activities of labour offices and social assistance institutions are to be integrated.

➤ Inclusion of the group of **job-seeking graduates of schools and universities aged 18-29 in the period of 48 months from the time of completing a school or obtaining an occupational title**, in the *Youth Guarantee* implementation with regard to supporting entrepreneurship results from noticing the shifting of the average age of education completion<sup>13</sup>. As a result, more and more often graduates of university-level schools are people aged above 25. Allowing them to use the preferential loan scheme is also a measure aimed at preventing an excessive exodus of the young, highly educated people abroad (prevention of "brain drain").

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<sup>13</sup> According to the OECD statistics, in 2011 an average age of Polish graduates of universities (level 5A in ISCED classification) upon the completion of education amounted to nearly 26 years. Source: *Education at a Glance 2013. OECD Indicators*.

## **2.2. Partner approach in the *Youth Guarantee* implementation.**

According to the Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a *Youth Guarantee* (2013/C 120/01), particular emphasis will be put on establishing partnerships for the support of young people.

The issues of complexity and the extent of partnership in the processes of preparing and implementing *Youth Guarantee* in Poland result from the specific local and decentralized model of public employment services, requiring introduction of the relevant legal regulations to allow for implementation of the *Guarantee*: As a result, four strategic partners in the *Youth Guarantee* implementation may be identified, namely:

- (i) voivodship and poviats labour offices (which do not report to the minister of labour);
- (ii) Voluntary Labour Corps (VLC);
- (iii) Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (BGK);
- (iv) organisational units of various type, including non-public units, selected in central and regional calls for proposals.

Every strategic partner, through its organisational units and establishments, cooperates with a dense network of: social and economic institutions, non-governmental organisations, foundations, associations, etc. The indispensability of creating new legal regulations implies broad consultations and arrangements at the stage of drafting and then proceeding with the assumed changes. It means involvement of social partners at every stage of designing and implementing activities for the *Youth Guarantee* implementation in Poland.

In Poland, the following forms of cooperation are assumed for the fullest possible *Youth Guarantee* implementation:

- a) Partnership of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and decentralised labour offices - it should be emphasized that voivodship and poviats labour offices, as local government units, are not subordinate to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. Their involvement in the *Youth Guarantee* implementation is the effect of statutory inclusion of labour offices in support for young people on the local/regional labour market.
- b) Involvement of social partners in the organisation of central and regional calls for proposals – the criteria for project selection in central and regional calls for proposals were developed within the framework of the OP KED Monitoring Committee, whose members include representatives of social partners. Furthermore, the preparation of calls for proposals at both regional and central level was accompanied by numerous meetings with labour market stakeholders. Every voivodeship developed an analysis of the situation of young people on the labour market in cooperation with the stakeholders.

- c) Partnership of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy with Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego - within the framework of implementation of the loan programme for young people and partnership of BGK with local financial operators.
- d) Partnerships of VLC units with entities at the local level – they function in multiple areas, with participation of local government partners and social partners with which VLC have concluded agreements on cooperation. These agreements are concluded – in line with the organisational structure of VLC – at the central, voivodship and local level. Agreements at the central level, concluded by the VLC General Commander are to develop framework rules of cooperation between institutions, specify the areas of cooperation and mutual obligations. Pursuant to centrally concluded agreements, the Voluntary Labour Corps cooperate with the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and with the Ministry of Justice; with the Police, common courts, Polish institutions acting for education and employment of youth on the labour market, non-governmental organisations, including the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association, the National Defence League, the Children Friends’ Society, the Society for Promoting Physical Culture, the Folk Sport Teams, various types of entities operating in the field of social assistance and other institutions, whose activities cover projects for youth – the Polish Craft Association and the Vocational Training Centres. It is worth mentioning also the cooperation of Voluntary Labour Corps with churches of various denominations that play a special role in the process of recruiting beneficiaries at the local level. In addition, in the context of the *Youth Guarantee* implementation, it is necessary to mention the recently concluded agreements with Voluntary Fire Services of the Republic of Poland and with the Rural Youth Union, whose goals are to increase the effectiveness in reaching to rural youth in a particularly difficult situation. These agreements translate into specific actions at the regional and local level, where, with the participation of local governments, programmes are created and tasks are carried out jointly, including assistance in recruitment, reaching people who need support the most.
- e) Partnership of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education – cooperation in encouraging closer cooperation of public employment services with the Academic Entrepreneurship Incubators and monitoring of university graduates’ careers.
- f) Partnership of poviats labour offices with social assistance centres – pursuant to the provisions of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions, labour offices should cooperate with social assistance centres in terms of referring the unemployed to participate in a social contract, individual independence programme, local social assistance programme, and to participate in individual social employment programme. In addition, the partnership between labour offices and

social assistance centres includes the exchange of information between these institutions in order to optimise the assistance granted to their clients.

- g) Involvement of social partners within the framework of labour market councils of central, voivodship and poviast level – the councils are consultative and advisory bodies of the minister competent for labour, marshal and staroste, respectively, with regard to the labour market policy. The functioning of the labour market councils is regulated by the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions. Pursuant to the Act, the labour market policy, implemented by public authorities, is based on dialogue and cooperation with social partners and non-governmental organisations. Labour market councils are one of the forms of such cooperation at the central, voivodship and poviast level. Active cooperation with partners within the labour market councils is assumed in terms of activation measures for young people.
- h) Partnerships of organisations and institutions at the local and regional level – active participation of partnerships operating at the local level is assumed in the *Youth Guarantee* implementation in Poland. Projects selected in central and regional calls for proposals may be implemented, apart from individual entities, also by partnership comprising public authorities, public employment services, schools, youth organisations, training institutions, private employment services, social partners and employers. In addition, the OP KED provides support for creation of partnership and for their actions aimed at improving the situation of young people on the labour market.
- i) Inviting the representatives of youth (youth organisations) to the *Youth Guarantee* Monitoring Board.

It is also worth noting that during the work on the concept of the *Youth Guarantee* implementation in Poland, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, as the institution coordinating the initiative, consulted it with social partners interested in actions for young people. On 12 December 2013, the main assumptions for the *Youth Guarantee* Implementation Plan in Poland were approved by representatives of social partners at the National Employment Council. The action plan suggested by the Ministry was assessed positively by trade unions (All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions) as well as unions associating employers (Lewiatan Confederation, Polish Craft Association). The actions proposed in the plan and presented almost in their final form gained support of social partners also during the plan presentation at the meeting of the Team for Europe 2020 Strategy on 17 December 2013. They were assessed positively by representatives of, among others, NSZZ *Solidarność*, All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions (OPZZ), Polish Craft Association and the Employers of the Republic of Poland.



**Taking into account the above presented partnership approach, the division of activities between the *Youth Guarantee* implementing entities is as follows:**

At the central level, the Youth Guarantee is implemented by:

- the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy – substantive and financial issues concerning the Labour Fund, and management of the funds allocated for central calls for proposals.
- the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development – organisational and financial issues, concerning the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative;
- Main Headquarters of Volunteer Labour Corps – issues concerning *Youth Guarantee* implementation by the Volunteer Labour Corps units;
- Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (BGK) – implementation of the loan programme.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy:

- specifies priorities, taking into account their complementary nature with respect to objectives related to youth employment, defined in government strategic and programme documents;
- identifies the framework scope of actions to be implemented under the *Youth Guarantee*;
- exercises substantive supervision over the *Youth Guarantee* implementation;
- conducts reporting based on public statistics of the *Youth Guarantee* implementation;
- supervises the Voluntary Labour Corps in terms of actions taken for young people under OP KED, including their financing;
- cooperates with BGK with regard to funding of loans for youth;
- plays the role of the intermediary body for actions implemented by BGK and Voluntary Labour Corps and announces calls for proposals at the central level;
- develops – in the partnership – the rules of the central call for proposals and guidelines for calls for proposals at the regional level.

The Ministry of Infrastructure and Development:

- manages the OP KED comprising Axis I Young people on the labour market, which is financed from the ESF and the *Youth Employment Initiative*, which contributes to implementing the *Youth Guarantee*, and secures European funds for implementation of those actions;
- determines the principles and monitors the correctness of disbursement of funds allocated for the *Youth Guarantee* implementation from the European Social Fund and the *Youth Initiative Employment*;

- conducts reporting on the use of funds from the *Youth Employment Initiative* and the European Social Fund.

The Main Headquarters of Voluntary Labour Corps:

- The Main Headquarters of VLC manages the whole of actions related to implementation of Youth Guarantee by VLC in Poland; it coordinates and supervises regional units;
- The Main Headquarters of VLC is a project initiator for undertakings for the *Youth Guarantee* implementation by VLC units.

Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego:

- provides funds for supporting starting of business activities under the *Youth Guarantee*, taking into account the conclusions and experience from the programme "First Business - Start-up support".

At the regional/local level, the *Youth Guarantee* is implemented by:

- 1) Voivodeship labour offices (VLO).
- 2) Poviats labour offices (PLO).
- 3) Organisational structures of Voluntary Labour Corps (VLC).
- 4) Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (BGK) through designated Financial Intermediaries.
- 5) Labour market partners, including social partners, employment agencies, non-governmental organisations, social economy entities, training institutions, social dialogue institutions, gminas and employers designated to implement *Youth Guarantee*.

Voivodeship labour offices:

- cooperate with poviat labour offices and social partners in their area, as well as with MLSP and MID in the area of implementation of the *Youth Guarantee*;
- set priorities and objectives of programmes under the *Youth Guarantee*, according to the needs of regional labour markets;
- in partnership, set principles of regional calls for proposals;
- collect and examine applications from entities implementing individual projects under the *Youth Guarantee*, also in the form of regional calls for proposals;
- use the EURES system for effective implementation of the *Youth Guarantee*.

Poviat labour offices:

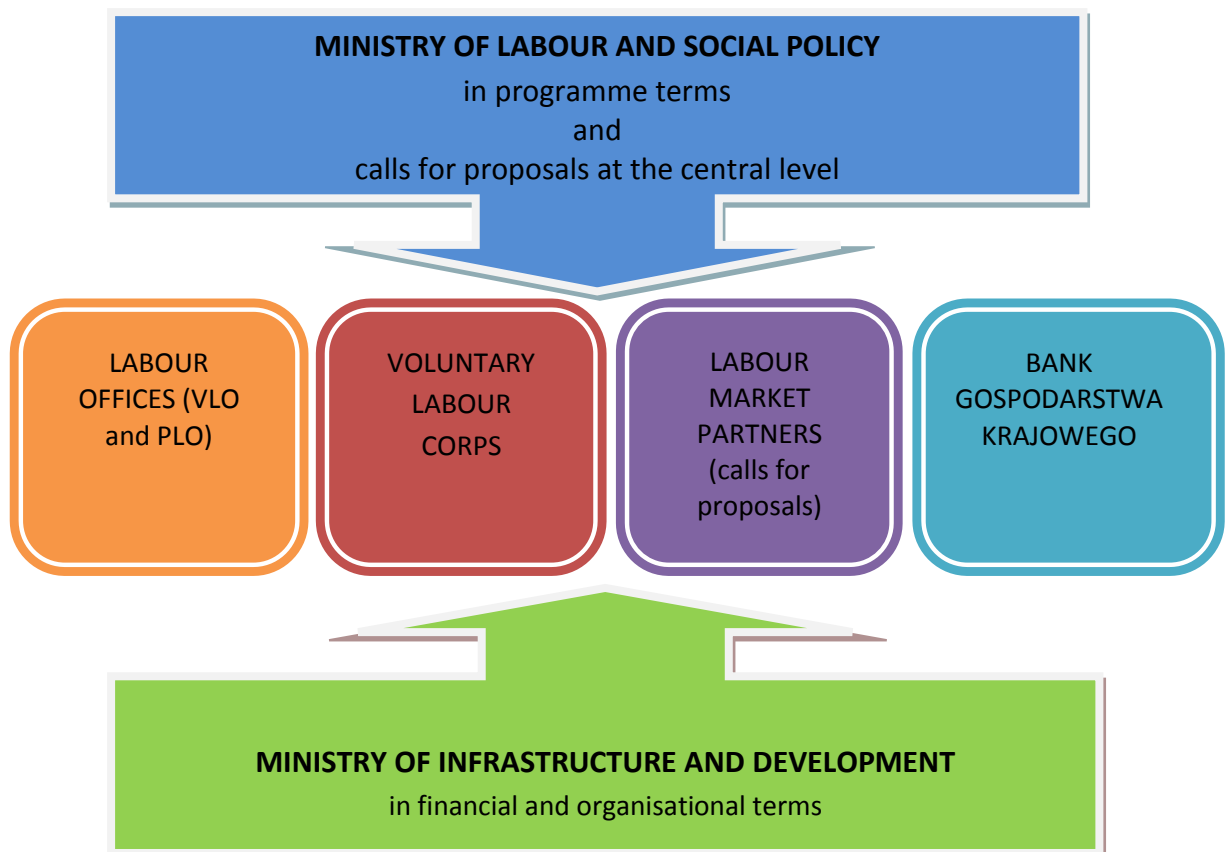
- perform actions for vocational activation of the young, pursuant to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions, under the *Youth Guarantee*.

### Voluntary Labour Corps:

- Voivodship Headquarters of VLC coordinate the implementation of projects under the *Youth Guarantee* in their subordinate units in the relevant voivodships, in line with the guidelines of the Main Headquarters of VLC.
- VLC design actions for vocational activation of young NEETs, under the *Youth Guarantee*.
- They carry out actions addressed directly to youth and organised by the personnel employed in local VLC organisational units.

### Labour market partners (“collective partner”):

- implement the *Youth Guarantee* in the open **call for proposals procedure** and participate in partner dialogue within the *Youth Guarantee* Monitoring Team.



### **2.3. Reaching target groups.**

An important element in the implementation of *Youth Guarantee* in Poland is to reach, with the offer of activation, all persons aged from 15 to 29 who are not in employment, education and training. This is a challenge particularly in the case of young people most distant from the labour market, from disadvantaged communities, in the case of whom contact with public employment services and educational and training institutions is very limited. To this end, in February 2015 the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy created an official website of the *Youth Guarantee* ([www.gdm.praca.gov.pl](http://www.gdm.praca.gov.pl)), where young addressees of the *Guarantee* may find comprehensive information about the support offered. In addition, cooperation with youth organisations and youth structures of social partners under the *Youth Guarantee* Monitoring Board also contributes to reaching target groups to a greater extent.

Individual entities implementing the *Youth Guarantee* use their own mechanisms of reaching to young NEETs:

➤ Within the framework of VLC actions:

The Voluntary Labour Corps have many years of experience in reaching the young from the NEET group, and have also the infrastructure necessary for this purpose. The key role is played here by the network of more than 700 VLC organisational units (for care and upbringing, training and providing labour market services), distributed across the whole country and cooperating with the majority of social partners and labour market partners in a given area. These units are most often located in small towns where they closely interact with the local community.

With a developed, effective system of reaching the young people by cooperation with schools, boards of education, churches of different denominations (parish communities) and other institutions (psychological and pedagogical clinics, education teams, etc.), as well as in cooperation with local governments and their specialised units (gmina, municipal and poviatic social assistance centres, poviatic family assistance centres, etc.), they offer support to young people from dysfunctional and poor families, from neglected and criminogenic communities. The VLC, through direct correspondence as well as in cooperation with the mass media, establish contact both with young people neglecting the school obligation or the education obligation and people with difficulties in finding their place on the labour market, offering them specific assistance (in completion of school education, finding employment, etc.). Organisational units of VLC are often contacted by young people (on their own initiative) who have received contact details of VLC from their peers or friends who earlier used the assistance of VLC.

The units designated to implementation of projects under the *Youth Guarantee*, in cooperation with local partners, conduct the recruitment process according to the standards developed in the Main Headquarters of VLC, according to which:

- recruitment takes place in line with the principles of equal access and equal treatment of all people interested in participation in the project, with respect for the principles of voluntary and free nature of the support granted;
- participants are recruited in a successive manner, on the basis of free call, referral from other VLC units and in cooperation with local governments, schools, psychological and pedagogical clinics, the Police, court-appointed probation officers, social assistance centres, non-governmental organisations and other social partners of VLC with which the contact is established to obtain information about the family and material status of candidates;
- effectively reaching extensive groups of potential beneficiaries is possible as a result of the project promotion in the local community, among institutions acting for potential addressees of the *Youth Guarantee* programme: schools (lower secondary schools, upper secondary schools and higher education institutions), psychological and pedagogical clinics, continuous education centres, institutions delivering trainings and courses, libraries, institutions acting for family and the youth (e.g. social assistance centres, family assistance centres, foundations and associations), probation officers, etc. Information about the possibility to use services under the projects is disseminated by employees of all VLC units. What is important, these actions concerns not only young people who are currently outside the labour market, but also those who may be at risk of social exclusion in the future;
- extensive promotional campaign provides all the parties concerned with necessary information about the project – through announcements in the national, regional and local mass media, posters, information leaflets, meetings, seminars, conferences, fairs, job exchanges, etc., and through the Employment Services Centre for Information and Consultation "Zielona Linia" and the web portal *Electronic Youth Activation Centre* (ECAM) created under the project "VLC as an implementer of the labour market services", which provides information, in an attractive form, to the youth about projects initiated under the *Youth Guarantee* and includes an information base about current vocational training and traineeships proposed under the projects nationwide. Under ECAM, young people may use the services of the information centre operating at one access number, from a website that will contain information about the possibilities to supplement general and vocational education, subjects and dates of vocational trainings delivered in VLC units, places of provision of labour market services – vocational counselling and job placement, as well as access to the database with offers of jobs, traineeships and apprenticeships. The ECAM has accounts in social media (FB, Twitter, YouTube) which ensures and the VLC actions are promoted among numerous groups of young people.

In order to reach the persons who are in the most dire need, the tasks of voivodship VLC commanders and heads of education and upbringing centres include:

- Ongoing collection and updating of information on the youth giving up education prematurely, neglecting the school obligation or the education obligation, at risk of social exclusion;
- Quantitative and qualitative examination of the demand for employees with regard to updated competences and professional skills and preparation of the training offer under the *Youth Guarantee* - on the basis of cooperation with partners operating on local markets – employer organisations, craft entities, Vocational Training Centres, employers (the task is performed also by the Directors of Vocational Training Centres of VLC);
- Ongoing collection and updating of information as well as preparation of lists of VLC graduates aged under 25, who are eligible for the group of youth requiring support under the *Youth Guarantee* implementation;
- Ongoing preparation of the lists of young people aged above 15 to be covered by *Youth Guarantee*, from among those who use the VLC community centres, emergency intervention points, prevention and social intervention centres as well as probation officer centres of work with the youth.

➤ Within the framework of actions of labour offices:

Labour offices, conducting vocational activation of the young, try to reach the members of this group in a manner typical also for other groups of the unemployed, i.e. through information materials, leaflets, posters, information in the local mass media or websites. However, labour offices also establish cooperation with various partners to reach to wide groups of young people. This includes cooperation with Academic Career Centres, educational institutions, social assistance centres and upbringing institutions.

➤ Under projects selected by way of call for proposals:

The people distant from the labour market are also the addressees of projects selected in the calls for proposals at the central and regional level. In this case, the assumption is that the project implementing entities reach young people in need of support at the local level. The method of reaching described in the application for co-financing may be subject to assessment by the institution that verifies a project. It should be adapted to the target group of support. It may include e.g. cooperation with a broad group of local government institutions, non-governmental organisations, schools, court-appointed probation officers, sports unions and other institutions and involving them in the process of recruitment.

➤ Under the BGK loan programme:

According to the guidelines adopted by BGK, all mass media constitute the communication channel used for promotional activities. Through the communication channel, the information (voice, announcement, article, slogan, figure or film) reaches the recipients. Official and unofficial communication channels are used in order to reach potential participants of the loan programme. Official channels are mainly related to various types of advertising (press, TV, radio). Unofficial channels include the mouth-to-mouth information, circulating among clients.

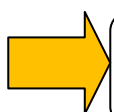
## **2.4. Support for the youth at risk of exclusion.**

Support for the youth at risk of social exclusion is provided to the greatest extent by Voluntary Labour Corps (VLC).

The VLC actions are targeted at the NEET youth – young people aged 15-24 years not in employment, education or training. The VLC offer is available to all parties interested who meet statutory conditions for receiving support from VLC and are eligible for support under the *Youth Guarantee*. In the first place, support is granted to people who are in the most dire need of professional assistance, in a difficult financial situation due to community conditions. It is assumed that these are, first of all, people not registered in poviats labour offices (status of the unemployed does not exclude from receiving support).

The support from VLC is targeted, above all, at young people who are – due to family and community conditions – in the most difficult life situation, and in particular at people from single parent families, unemployed, dysfunctional families and families at risk of social pathologies. Specific actions for vocational activation of the youth are diversified, depending on the status of a specific person, his or her life situation, community, education and material status. The above means that in many cases a sufficient form of assistance are services in the form of career counselling or providing information about the labour market. However, people in a particularly unfavourable situation (e.g. without vocational qualifications) require a more thorough, longer and more comprehensive support, which comprises vocational training supplemented with a six-month job placement. VLC actions targeted at the NEET youth focus on two main areas.

**a) Area 1. Social and vocational activation of the young aged 15-17 who neglect their school obligation or education obligation**



Social and vocational activation of young people aged 15-17 who fail to fulfil their school or education obligation

Project objective:

Providing support to the NEET youth leading to them taking up education or training, or acquiring vocational qualifications by participating in vocational qualification courses and acquiring elementary social competences.

Target groups:

Youth aged 15-17, neglecting their school obligation or education obligation, at risk of social exclusion, who have problems with finding their place on the labour market and becoming independent.

Direction of support:

In the first place, the diagnosis of knowledge, skills and potential of a participant is to be performed to select the appropriate forms of support – career counselling ending with developing Individual Action Plans.

Since the target group are the low qualified young people, the offered trainings start from supplementation of basic school skills along with additional support in teaching and specialised counselling and specialist services, depending on individual situation of a participant (e.g. consultations with a psychologist, addiction specialist). The training cycle includes language courses and computer literacy trainings which are to supplement the deficit language and digital skills of participants. Training participants are provided with all training materials, as well as travel to/from the training venue and meals during the training. The project activities also include the tasks in the area of vocational education, implemented through participation in vocational qualification courses. In addition, young people have an opportunity to acquire new skills in the field of practical functioning on the labour market – activation classes, training in job-seeking skills, access to information and electronic databases aimed at obtaining the job-seeking skills (for that purpose, the VLC portal, i.e. Electronic Youth Activation Centre is used). Support is also to be translated into an improvement of life opportunities of people who, so far, for economic reasons, have been excluded from normal social life.

Support for the people aged 15-17 is, at the same time, a response to the phenomenon of low level of knowledge of young people about entrepreneurship and opportunity to start one's own businesses. The available information shows that formation of entrepreneurial attitudes should begin in primary school. Graduates should have knowledge and skills in the area of running own businesses in market and administrative conditions, promotion of their own ideas and management of funds. During the economic slowdown and the lack of sufficient number of jobs, a great opportunity for the youth entering the labour market may be a decision on starting own businesses. The project includes an entrepreneurship course for the youth. It is attended by a group of



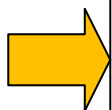
people selected on the basis of individual action plans who have entrepreneurial attitudes and interest in starting self-employment in the future.

Examples of actions:

- career counselling;
- pedagogical and psychological support (including care of educators);
- trainings – workshops to catch up with school subjects, entrepreneurship courses, language courses, computer courses (including in the ECDL or equivalent standard);
- qualification vocational courses (along with scholarships for course participants);
- instruction in active job seeking (activation classes, workshops on job-seeking skills, individual consultations, access to information and electronic databases in order to obtain job-seeking skills and other);
- accompanying support during project implementation in the form of co-financing of the costs of board, travel, accident insurance, necessary medical examinations and educational materials.

The above proposals are only examples of possible actions. VLC may extend the areas and methods of action. It is estimated that unit cost of support will vary depending on the support path adopted for a specific person.

**b) Area II. Vocational activation of youth aged 18-24 who are not in employment, without vocational qualifications and work experience or whose vocational qualifications do not meet the requirements of the labour market, with a special focus on people living in rural areas and smaller towns**



Vocational activation of youth aged 18-24 who are not in employment, without vocational qualifications and work experience or whose vocational qualifications do not meet the requirements of the labour market, with a special focus on people living in rural areas and smaller towns

Project objective:

Covering the young from the NEET group with support leading to employment, provided to a necessary degree in cooperation with training institutions and employers, including actions allowing, as necessary, to acquire or upgrade skills/qualifications in a given profession or for retraining combined with traineeship at one employer's or other forms of assistance leading to vocational and social activation.

### Target group:

Unemployed youth aged 18-24, whose material and community limitations and the lack of vocational qualifications, insufficient vocational qualifications or vocational qualifications not adjusted to the needs of the labour market, and the lack of work experience and knowledge about effective job-seeking methods hinder independent acquisition of skills allowing to enter the labour market and ensuring a successful life start.

**Group 1** youth not in education and employment who require support with regard to vocational activation on the labour market and social integration – standard intervention

**Group 2** people in particularly unfavourable situation with completed education at least at the level of a primary school, without vocational qualifications and work experience, and people who have a profession or qualifications in the profession (including graduates of secondary vocational schools, vocational high schools, etc.), including people from rural areas and smaller towns – in-depth intervention.

### Direction of support:

#### **STANDARD INTERVENTION**

It is assumed that, in the case of many people, standard support is sufficient for their activation. The professional and personal situation of a project participant is diagnosed (i.e. diagnosis of knowledge, skills and potential as well as diagnosis of the family situation of the participant) in order to design the forms of support adequate for the needs of the said young person. If the conducted diagnosis establishes that it is sufficient to offer a young person a good quality offer of employment or other form of aid leading to vocational activation, the so-called standard intervention is applied which covers:

- job placement services;
- career counselling and vocational information (individual and in groups);
- learning of active job-seeking (activation classes, workshops on job-seeking skills, individual consultations).

#### **IN-DEPTH INTERVENTION**

For people in a particularly unfavourable situation, a more comprehensive support is planned, i.e. the so-called in-depth intervention.

With regard to the youth adult classified to **Group 2**, the proposed solutions focus mostly on the possibility to acquire an occupation, change occupation or increase the vocational qualifications, gain work experience and take up employment, which lead to self-dependence of a young person. Therefore, the forms of support in this area include vocational training, traineeships at employers, elements of support for employment as well as career counselling and job placement services. Additionally, trainings in active job-seeking

(activation classes, training in the job-seeking skills, access to information and electronic databases used to obtain the job-seeking skills).

Actions in this area are thus also an answer to the problem of unemployment not only in the case of low qualified young people who gave up education prematurely, but also an increasing group of school graduates who have difficulties with finding their first job. Employers point to the lack of work experience among graduates, the lack of many practical skills, necessary for specific jobs, and the lack of the so-called soft competences (i.e. emotional and social competences). These reasons are rooted largely in the vocational education system that – according to available scientific research – is poorly connected with the functioning of the business sphere. Not only is it a serious obstacle for the development of modern, knowledge-based economy, weakens its productivity and competitiveness, but first of all it hinders flexible response to changes on the labour market. Vocational education educates excessive number of pupils in surplus occupations, but does not respond sufficiently to the demand for specialists in deficit occupations. All these factors result in a highly unfavourable situation, where many young people with formal vocational qualifications cannot find jobs in the learned occupation and beyond it.

In-depth intervention provides the beneficiaries with the possibility to participate in classes related to soft competences and in courses: language, digital skills, B category driving licenses (if such skills area useful for implementation of tasks in a specific profession, in accordance with the professional development path adopted for a given person).

During traineeship, project participants receive financial support in the form of grants and care of a qualified employee (instructor) appointed by the employer, who performs the function of the traineeship coordinator. Furthermore, the employer who will employ a project participant after the end of the traineeship will receive an one-off bonus for employing the person for the declared 6 months.

The project includes, among others, additional social support in the form of reimbursement of all or part of costs of travel to the place where project classes take place, funding the costs of board during project classes, accidents insurance for the time of participation in the project, ensuring care over children or dependants for a period of participation in the project. The costs of necessary medical and psychological examinations and educational materials are also covered. Project participants may have the costs of external examinations confirming professional licenses covered.

Under the proposed actions, support is provided also in rural areas and in small towns. Due to the specific nature of this youth group, the above actions are supplemented with additional elements of support in the form of:

- **Individualisation of support**, consisting in supporting the young person throughout the whole period of participation in the project by the same employee – tutor. The role of

tutor is fulfilled by a qualified and experienced VLC staff with experience in the work with young people and in provision of labour market services;

- **Support for geographic mobility** of job-seeking youth – to this end the VLC use their logistics base. The support is provided to young people who are ready to take up vocational training, traineeship, and, as a result, a job outside their place of permanent residence;
- **activities of Mobile Vocational Information Centres (MCIZ)** equipped with minibuses enabling transport of career counsellors, methodical materials and equipment necessary for classes for young people inhabiting small towns and rural area.

The youth have an opportunity of vocational training in trades that are adequate to the specific nature of smaller towns: occupations related to agriculture, agritourism, nutrition techniques and catering services, gardening, landscaping, operation of devices of renewable energy systems; or other specific trades, where, in the given area, larger companies or employers ready to employ young people run their businesses.

#### Examples of actions:

- career counselling;
- pedagogical and psychological support (including care of educators);
- vocational training (including retraining or upgrading courses), along with the cost of medical examinations and the cost of qualification exam in an external institution;
- training in skills sought after by employers, including soft competences and languages, digital skills and e.g. B cat. driving license course (along with the cost of medical examinations and the cost of qualification exam in an external institution);
- 6-month traineeships (along with grant for the participants and bonuses to remuneration for coordinators from the employing company);
- support for employment (in the form of one-off bonus for employer for maintenance of employment of a participant for 6 months);
- instruction in active job seeking (activation classes, workshops on job-seeking skills, individual consultations, access to information and electronic databases in order to obtain job-seeking skills and other);
- job placement services and agency in organisation of traineeships;
- accompanying support during project implementation in the form of co-financing of the costs of board, travel, accident insurance, reimbursement of the cost of care over children or dependants during the project participation.

#### Forms of support dedicated to people living in rural areas and small towns:

- individual support from a supervisor/tutor;
- support for geographic mobility;

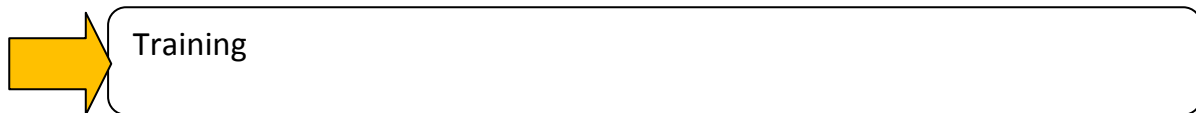
- support provided depending on the needs identified in an individual diagnosis – psychological, pedagogical or other specialist consultation;
- social skills training (self-presentation, communication, etc.).

The above forms are only examples of actual actions. VLC may extend the areas and methods of action. It is estimated that unit cost of support will vary depending on the support path adopted for a specific person. The average cost of activation can be estimated at PLN 5,500.

## 2.5. Actions supporting integration on the labour market.

Powiat labour offices (PLO) are institutions supporting young people in job-seeking on local labour markets. As part of the *Youth Guarantee* implementation, the young unemployed receive, within four months from the moment of registration in PLO, support in the form of vocational activation measures as specified in the Act of 20 April 2004 on employment promotion and labour market institutions. These include:

### a) Offer of support for the young – labour market instruments (available even before 27 May 2014).

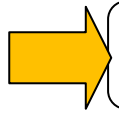


In the framework of trainings, all unemployed may apply for referral to free courses, delivered by a training institution commissioned by a labour office. Such persons may indicate a suitable offer on the free market and – after submitting an application – may receive financing of the training course cost to the amount of 300% of the average remuneration. If the training takes place outside the place of residence, the costs of travel and accommodation are also covered. During the training, the unemployed person receives a grant in the amount of 120% of unemployment benefit throughout the training duration, and 20% of the benefit for training completion, if during the training he/she finds a job.



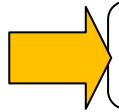
The aim of a work practice is to acquire practical skills to work without establishing an employment relationship with the employer. During the work practice, the unemployed person is entitled to a grant of 120% of the benefit.

In the case of unemployed persons up to 25 years of age and persons up to 27 years of age, the work practice after studies is longer and may last up to 12 months, while in other cases – up to 6 months;



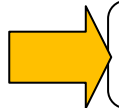
### Apprenticeship for adults

Apprenticeship for adults combines practice in occupation (80% of the time) with theoretical classes (20% of the time). This instrument is implemented without establishing an employment relationship with employer, according to the programme covering acquisition of practical skills and theoretical knowledge, and ends with an exam. During the apprenticeship, the unemployed person is entitled to a grant in the amount of 120% of the benefit.



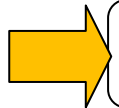
### Co-financing of the costs of examinations and costs related to obtaining a license

All the unemployed, including young people, may apply for financing of the costs of examinations allowing to obtain certificates, diplomas, professional authorisations and licenses – in the amount up to 100% of the average remuneration. The costs of travel for such examinations may also be financed.



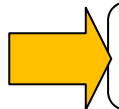
### Training loans

The unemployed may apply for a loan for financing the training costs up to the amount of 400% of the average remuneration. The loan is interest-free, and the period of its repayment is 18 months.



### Co-financing of postgraduate studies

The unemployed university graduates can obtain the funding of the costs of postgraduate studies in the amount up to 300% of the average remuneration. The unemployed participants of such studies receive a scholarship amounting to 20% of the benefit, also if they take up employment during the studies, until the completion of the programme.



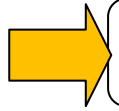
### Grant for continuing education

If the unemployed person does not have vocational qualifications, he or she may receive a grant for continuation of education in the amount of 100% of the benefit, provided that he or she fulfils the following conditions:

- he/she continues education in an upper secondary school for adults or starts a part-time studies at a higher education institution within 12 months from the day of registering in the labour office;

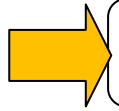
- the income per person in the family entitles to social benefits. The income does not include the amount of obtained grant.

The grant is given upon request of the unemployed person and is paid for the period of 12 months from the day of starting education, and after this period, in justified cases, it may be continued until completion of education.



### Intervention works

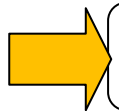
This means employment of the unemployed person under an employment contract (for up to 12 or 18 months), as a result of the agreement concluded between the poviát labour office and the employer. When referring the unemployed person to intervention works, the labour office must take into consideration, among others, his/her health and types of previously performed work.



### Employment on the terms of public works

This is employment of the unemployed person (up to 6 months) as a result of an agreement concluded between the poviát employment office and the organiser of public works or the employer indicated by the organiser.

The unemployed person is referred to perform work unrelated to the learned occupation. The work is performed in public utility institutions and organisations operating in the field of culture, education, sports and tourism, health care and social assistance.

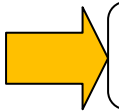


### Special programmes

The unemployed people in need of non-standard support may participate in a special programme.

The idea of special programmes is to enable funding of non-standard solutions, necessary in the process of helping a person find employment.

Special programmes allow for flexible approach to vocational activation process thanks to using specific elements supporting employment which should be adjusted to individual needs of persons covered by the special programme.



### Subsidies for starting business activity

The unemployed people, in particular the young with entrepreneurial characteristics, may apply for non-repayable funds for starting business activity, or for establishing or acceding a social cooperative.

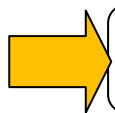
The unemployed person may receive up to 600% of the average remuneration for starting business activity, costs of legal assistance, consultancy and advisory services related to starting an economic activity.

If the unemployed person starts an activity on the terms specified for social cooperatives, he or she may receive up to 400% of the average remuneration per one founding member.

For accession to the existing social cooperative, the unemployed person may receive up to 300% of the average remuneration per one member acceding the cooperative.

**b) New support instruments introduced by the amendment of 27 May 2014 to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions.**

The reform of the labour market in 2014 created additional opportunities to implement the *Youth Guarantee* through poviats labour offices. The concept of the labour market reform included in the amendments to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions provided for a number of solutions addressed to the young unemployed and supporting the fast finding of employment. Apart from providing individual care of "customer advisors" for the young people, new labour market instruments for early intervention and vocational activation of youth were introduced, such as:



Voucher: training, work practice, employment, settlement.

A **training voucher** is a form of support that constitutes a guarantee of referring the unemployed person to a training of his/her choice and covering the cost incurred in relation to taking up the training.

The voucher offers the possibility to fund, in the amount of up to 100% of the average remuneration, the costs of one or several trainings, including costs of vocational qualification course and course giving a professional license, costs of necessary medical or psychological examinations and costs of travel to trainings and accommodation, if the classes are held outside the place of residence - in the form of a lump sum.

A **work practice voucher** is a form of support which constitutes a guarantee of referring the unemployed person to a work practice at an employer of his/her choice for a period of 6 months, if the employer undertakes to employ the unemployed person for 6 months after the end of the work practice.

The employer who will employ an unemployed person for 6 months will receive a bonus of PLN 1500.



The work practice voucher offers a possibility to finance the costs of travel to and from the place of work practice – as a lump sum, and the costs of necessary medical or psychological examinations.

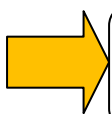
An **employment voucher** is a form of support addressed to the unemployed aged up to 30, which is a guarantee for the employer to receive reimbursement, for the period of 12 months, of a part of costs of remuneration, including social insurance contributions, in the amount of the unemployment benefit, in connection with employment of the unemployed person to whom the poviast labour office granted the voucher.

The employer has an obligation to further employ the unemployed person referred for the period of at least 6 months after the reimbursement period.

A **settlement voucher** is a form of support for the unemployed people who start employment, other gainful work or business activity outside the place of their residence.

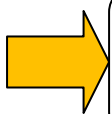
In order to obtain the financial support in the amount of up to double average remuneration for work, allocated for covering the costs of residence related to taking up work, the following three conditions have to be met:

- the undertaken form of employment is subject to social insurance and for its performance a person obtains gross monthly pay or monthly revenue, in the amount of at least minimum remuneration for work;
- the activated person is employed or conducts business activity for the period of at least 6 months; and
- distance from the place of their previous residence to the town/city, where the unemployed person is going to live in connection with taking up a new job is at least 80 km or the time of travel to this town/city and return to the place of their previous residence exceeds at least 3 hours a day.



Commissioning activation measures for young people classified as "long-term unemployed" to external entities

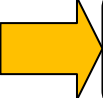
Under the instrument, the unemployed people can be referred for activation through private employment agencies. The expansion of the catalogue of institutions supporting the youth who enter the labour market and involvement of private entities in activation activities constitute also the implementation of the proposals from the *Youth Guarantee*.



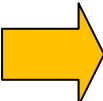
Cooperation between Information and Professional Career Planning Centres and Academic Career Centres in preparing vocational information

Professional Career Information and Planning Centres cooperate with the Academic Career Centre in preparing, updating and disseminating vocational information with local

and regional range, and prepare vocational information at the central level on commission of the minister competent for labour.

 Trilateral training agreements concluded by a starost with an employer and a training institution

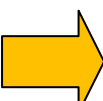
The agreements cover in particular skills and professional competencies required by the employer from the candidates for the job. The requirements are included in the programme of the training funded by the labour office from the Labour Fund.

 A loan to start business activity for which unemployed students of the final year as well as school and university graduates looking for a job can apply

The special role of this tool in the *Youth Guarantee* implementation results from the fact that it is mainly the young people that can apply for a loan for starting business activity. The instrument is addressed to the following groups:

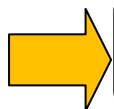
- 1) job-seeking graduates of schools and universities within a period of 48 months from the date of graduation or the date of obtaining a diploma;
- 2) the unemployed registered in poviats labour offices;
- 3) students of the final year at higher education institutions.

The loan for starting economic activity may constitute up to 100% of the costs of undertaking (it is granted up to 20 times the average remuneration), with interest on preferential terms.

 Teleworking grant

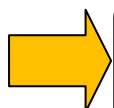
On the basis of the agreement concluded with the poviats labour office, the employer or the entrepreneur may receive from the Labour Fund a grant in the amount of 6 times the minimum gross remuneration for creation of a job for an unemployed parent or an unemployed person taking care of dependant, who, in the period of 3 years before the registration in the labour office as an unemployed person, resigned from employment or other paid work due to the necessity of bringing up the child or taking care over the dependant.

The employer guarantees in the agreement to keep the employment for 12 months, full time, or for 18 months, part time – in the case of failure to fulfil this condition the grant would have to be repaid with statutory interest, charged from the date of its receipt.



### Activation benefit

The benefit paid to the employer for 12 (in the amount of 1/2 of the minimum remuneration) or 18 months (in the amount of 1/3 of the minimum remuneration) for employing an unemployed parent or an unemployed person taking care of a dependant, who, in the period of 3 years before the registration in the labour office as the unemployed, resigned from employment or other paid work due to the necessity of bringing up the child or taking care of the dependant. The employer guarantees to further employ the unemployed person, referred to his/her company, for another 6 or 9 months. If the employer dismisses the employee earlier, he/she must return the total amount of the benefit along with statutory interest.

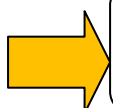


### Reimbursement of insurance contributions for the unemployed aged up to 30 who are taking up their first job

This is a tool implementing the postulate included in the *Youth Guarantee* programme of increasing the demand for work of the young people. The reimbursement covers up to 6 months and the reimbursed amount for a month cannot exceed a half of the minimum remuneration for work defined in separate regulations. The employer has an obligation to further employ the referred person for the period of 6 months, otherwise the employer has to return the aid.

### **c) Subsidised employment under the National Programme Jobs for Youth.**

The amendment to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions adopted on 25 September 2015 introduced a new instrument for supporting the employment of youth through reimbursement of the costs incurred by employers in relation to hiring an unemployed person aged up to 30. For employing a young worker for 12 months, the employer will receive a monthly reimbursement in the amount equal to the lowest salary. For another 12 months, the employer will have to keep such employee in employment.



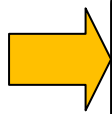
### Reimbursement of the costs related to employing an unemployed person aged up to 30 for 12 months

The programme will function in the years 2016-2018. In 2016, PLN 700 million were allocated under the National Programme Jobs for Youth for reimbursement of the costs

related to employing an unemployed person aged up to 30, which means that 30,000 persons will have their employment subsidised. By the end of 2018 the total number of persons covered by the Programme will exceed 106,000.

**d) Instruments facilitating transition of the youth from education to employment.**

Measures of support for integration on the labour market include also a set of actions used to increase education quality and facilitating the entry to the labour market for graduates of schools and universities.



More extensive use of services rendered by Academic Career Centres that provide students and university graduates with assistance in entering the labour market

It should be emphasized that, pursuant to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions, the poviastaroste may conclude, with a higher education institution or a student organisation, an agreement enabling funding from the Labour Fund of a part of costs of equipment for a newly open academic career centre, in the amount not exceeding fifteen times the average remuneration.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy pays special attention to highlighting the role performed by the Academic Career Centres that, by providing help to students and graduates in entering the labour market, have become an interface between two economy spheres, i.e. education and the labour market.

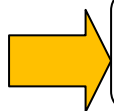
Therefore, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy cooperates with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and the Ombudsman for Graduate Affairs in the area of development of Academic Career Centres, i.e.:

- In 2012, the Minister of Labour called upon the Voivodship Marshals to intensify the cooperation of their subordinate voivodship labour offices with Academic Career Centres. The key role in this cooperation is to be played by the Centres of Professional Career Information and Planning, Regional Labour Market Observatories and Employment Agencies.
- In September 2012, the heads of both ministries sent an open letter to the rectors of Polish universities with a request for support for Academic Career Centres in fulfilling their obligations resulting from their aforementioned statutory tasks, and with regard to implementation and promotion of the programme "Your Career – Your Choice".
- In December 2012, the Congress of Academic Career Centres and university units responsible for "Monitoring professional careers of the graduates – good practices" was held. It was organised by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, the University of Warsaw and the Ombudsman for Graduate Affairs. The aim of this

Congress was to exchange good practices and discuss problems with implementing the system for monitoring the careers of graduates. The second edition of the Congress of Academic Career Centres was held in December 2013.

- The Minister of Labour and Social Policy also participated, along with the Minister of Science and Higher Education, in the third Congress of Academic Career Centres which was held on 3 December 2014. The congress activities included the presentation of the report on the career centres. The representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy took part also in the fourth Congress of Academic Career Centres held on 14 October 2015.

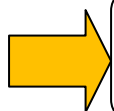
It is also necessary to note that the amendment to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions of May 2014 includes a provision concerning cooperation of the Academic Career Centres and the Professional Career Information and Planning Centres with regard to preparing, updating and disseminating vocational information with local and regional range, and preparation of vocational information at the central level on commission of the minister competent for labour.



Establishing and running a national traineeship and apprenticeship database

Actions targeted at the young are supported by projects offering to all people interested in taking up or changing a job the possibility of easier access to job offers submitted to poviats labour offices and made available by the minister competent for labour, using the web database of job offers, integrated with the European job agency system EURES.

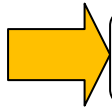
In order to ensure to the interested people, i.e. in particular students, juvenile employees and graduates as defined by the Act on graduates' apprenticeships, the access to information about the possibilities of traineeships or apprenticeships, and to facilitate the dissemination of information by employers about the offers of traineeship or apprenticeship for young persons, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy created, in cooperation with the Main Headquarters of Voluntary Labour Corps, a national database of traineeships and apprenticeships. The database was then integrated with the central database of job offers, thus constituting a register of job offers, traineeships and apprenticeships, available in the entire country on the website of public employment services.



Job placement by organising job fairs and using modern forms of communication to provide information to the youth

Actions for the youth are also supported by labour offices or other entities, through organisation of job fairs, which are one form of assistance within the framework of job placement services. In addition, actions for the youth are supported by dissemination of information targeted at the young, using various forms of communication, including

helpline or websites run by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy or Voluntary Labour Corps.

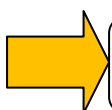


### Modernisation of the vocational and continuing education system

To adjust the offer of education to the needs of the labour market and expectations of employers, and to provide top quality education, the Act of 19 August 2011 amending the Act on the education system and some other acts (Journal of Laws No 205, item 1206) introduced a modernisation of the vocational and continuing education system. Its implementation at secondary schools providing vocational education started upon the beginning of the school year 2012/2013.

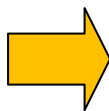
First, a new classification of professions of vocational education was introduced. The classification covers 200 professions, in the scope of which 252 qualifications in the profession were included. In each profession, one, two or three qualifications were distinguished. Substantial change was also introduced to the structure of core curricula of vocational education, which is described in the learning outcome language. New core curricula of vocational education are, at the same time, a standard of exam requirements for individual qualifications. In vocational secondary schools special emphasis was placed on practical training that, within three years of education, accounts for over 60% of the whole time allocated for vocational education. Practical learning of a profession takes place also at the employers' premises, in practical education centres or in school workshops.

A possibility was also introduced to obtain or supplement vocational qualifications in non-school forms, including vocational qualification courses. A vocational qualification course is delivered according to curriculum that takes account of the core curricula in professions of one qualification. Completion of this course allows to take an exam that confirms qualifications in the profession, in the scope of a given qualification, and is conducted by the regional examination committee. A person who completed a vocational qualification course and passed the exam confirming qualifications in the profession with regard to a given qualification, receives a certificate confirming qualifications in the profession.



### Strengthening the practical component of studies

On 1 October 2014, significant amendments to the Act on higher education entered into force. Apart from such changes as abolition of the fee for the second faculty of studies, introduction of a possibility of studying several institutions, dual studies offered with employers, or changes concerning commercialisation of research results, the practical education component of studies was strengthened as well. An obligation was introduced for the students of all practical fields of study to go on three-month long apprenticeship.



## Monitoring university graduates' professional careers

As part of the reform of higher education, in order to better adjust the curricula to the needs of the labour market, in 2011, an obligation was introduced for higher education institutions to monitor professional careers of their graduates. This monitoring should be carried out in particular after three and five years from the date of graduation. Currently, the method and methodology of conducting monitoring is within the scope of autonomy of a university, allowing universities to develop their own monitoring of professional careers of their graduates, adjusted to the specific nature of education at a given university. As part of comprehensive amendments to the Act on higher education which entered into force on 1 October 2014, provisions were introduced allowing to create a national monitoring system of professional careers of graduates, on the basis of available data about graduates from the existing Higher Education Information System and depersonalized individual data transferred by the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS), recorded on the accounts of the insured and payers of premiums.

### **2.6. Calls for proposals**

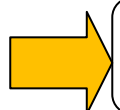
For greater effectiveness of the *Youth Guarantee* implementation, by extension of the access to support for the young, the funds of the ESF and the Youth Employment Initiative will also be used under the Axis I Young people on the labour market of the Operational Programme Knowledge Education Development (OP KED), including in particular with the use of calls for proposals in which the labour market partners also participate.

Calls for proposals at the central and regional level under Axis I of OP KED Young people on the labour market will be launched with regard to actions contributing to the *Youth Guarantee* implementation.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Operational Programme Knowledge Education Development, calls for proposals concern persons aged 15-29.

The rules are defined by the institutions acting as the Intermediate Body, i.e. Voivodeship Labour Offices and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in the dialogue with the labour market partners. The rules agreed with partners are further specified at the regional level, in order to take into account the priorities of the local labour market. A starting point for the work of teams and determination of the rules of calls for proposals are the following assumptions.

#### **a) Calls for proposals at the central level under OP KED:**



The projects under the call for proposals procedure carried out by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy under OP KED

A call for proposals of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, at the Intermediate Body, is carried out under Action 1.3 *Support for young people in a particularly difficult situation* of the Priority Axis I of OP KED *Young people on the labour market*.

A call for proposals aimed at selection and support of partnerships performing actions aimed at improvement in the young people's situation on the labour market, under Action 2.4 *Modernisation of public and non-public employment services and their better adjustment to the labour market needs* of the Priority Axis II of OP KED *Effective public policies for the labour market, economy and education*, should be treated differently.

Objective of the call for proposals under Action 1.3 OP KED:

The implemented actions consist in supporting individual and comprehensive educational and vocational activation of young persons (unemployed, professionally passive and job seekers, including in particular persons not registered in labour offices) taking into account labour market instruments and services to be implemented under Axis I of OP KED *Young people on the labour market*.

The objective of the call for proposals is to increase employability of young persons up to 29 years of age not in employment, in particular those not in education or training (the so-called NEET youth).

Target groups:

The projects are addressed to young persons, including with disabilities, aged 15-29 and not in employment, not in education or training (NEET youth), from the following target groups:

- youth from foster care leaving the foster care (up to a year after leaving foster care):
  - persons covered by foster care and aged over 15 years, who after the end of their stay in foster care institutions, returned to their biological families;
  - persons covered by foster care and aged over 18 years, who established their own household;
  - persons covered by foster care and aged over 18 years, who are becoming self-dependent and have difficulties in finding a job after the end of their stay in foster care institutions;
- mothers leaving foster care (up to a year after leaving foster care);
- young people leaving youth care centres and youth sociotherapy centres (up to a year after leaving)'
- young people leaving special school and upbringing centres and special care centres (up to a year after leaving) – special school and upbringing centres and special care centres are intended for children and youth;



- mothers staying in single mother homes;
- young persons leaving prisons or pre-trial detention centres (up to a year after leaving).

The call for proposals is targeted primarily at vocationally passive persons, and people covered by support are not required to have the status of the unemployed person, i.e. they do not have to be registered as the unemployed in a poviast labour office.

The moment of starting for 4 months is counted from the day when the person joins the project.

Additional points are to be granted to projects using the effects of innovative projects and/or international cooperation, implemented under the Human Capital Operational Programme 2007-2013.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, under Axis II of OP KED Effective public policies for the labour market, economy and education, a call for proposals was announced to select partnerships the aim of which will be to develop recommendations for better adjustment of the scope and accuracy of activation offer for young persons in the most difficult situation on the labour market. The recommendations will define the most efficient methods of reaching to such young people.

In accordance with the principle of partnership, a detailed scope of the call for proposals is determined within especially appointed team, which will include, e.g. representatives of social partners, non-governmental organisations, scientific communities or local governments.

Entities entitled to take part in calls for proposals and submit proposals for projects:

- 1) Pursuant to Article 6 of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions, labour market institutions include:
  - public employment services,
  - Voluntary Labour Corps,
  - employment agencies,
  - training institutions,
  - social dialogue institutions;
  - local partnership institutions.
- 2) Organisational units of the system of family support, foster care and adoption, pursuant to the Act of 9 June 2011 on family support and the foster care system (Journal of Laws of 2015, item 332);
- 3) Youth care centres;
- 4) Youth sociotherapy centres;

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<sup>14</sup> The possibility to grant additional points to projects using the effects of innovative projects and/or supranational cooperation between HC OP and EQUAL by applying the bonus criterion.

- 5) Special school and upbringing centres;
- 6) Special care centres;
- 7) Single mothers' homes;
- 8) Central Board of Prison Service.

For the purpose of joint project implementation, partnerships may be created.

Budget of the call for proposals and unit costs of projects:

It is estimated that the amount allocated for funding of projects under calls for proposals at the central level under Axis I OP KED will be EUR 75 million (i.e. approx. PLN 313.7 million). This will allow to provide support to approx. 23,600 people aged 15-29.

Under the first call for proposals, the average cost of support per person amounts to approx. PLN 17,350, which means that approx. 2,800 people may be covered by the support.

**Call for proposals under Action 2.4 OP KED**

The call for proposals allows to provide support to partnership which will develop recommendations for improvement of the situation of young people on the labour market.

To ensure that the support granted to young persons at both the central and the regional level is the most effective, i.e. leads to employment of the activated person or continuing of his/her education, it is necessary to appropriately diagnose the needs and potential of the activated person, while at the same time reliably analyse the needs and potential of local employers.

Appropriate recommendations must thus be developed to allow to reach to young people in the most difficult life and professional situation, who are not in the registers of PES; proposals for actions addressed to those people must be formulated and criteria for project selection, reflecting the needs of local and regional employers and possibilities and potential of activated persons, must be developed.

It is assumed under the call for proposals that one partnership in each voivodeship will receive funding, and each partnership will develop at least one set of recommendations, to be used by labour market institutions when providing support to young persons in the most difficult situation on the labour market in a given voivodeship. The recommendations should take into account several perspectives, e.g. the perspective of labour market institutions, regional institutions caring for youth or the perspective of employers.

The above can be achieved only with involvement of various stakeholders operating locally and regionally on the labour market. Therefore, in line with the assumptions of the call for proposals, the recommendations are to be developed by a partnership consisting in total of at least:

- entities dealing with the issues concerning youth;
- labour market institutions;

- social assistance and integration institutions;
- entities functioning within the education system;
- employers/employer organisations.

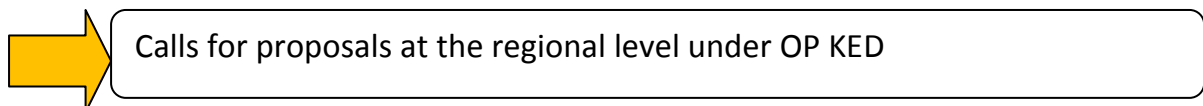
This call for proposals is related to calls for proposals announced under Axis I of OP KED *Young people on the labour market* for projects aimed at supporting young people. The relevant recommendations are to enable reaching to the higher possible number of people from the target group of Axis I OP KED, who are in the most difficult situation on the labour market, in particular those not in employment, education or training (i.e. NEET) and not registered at poviát labour offices, and formulating the criteria in calls for proposals for activation of the said target group.

Entities entitled to take part in calls for proposals and submit proposals for projects:

- local government units or their organisational units;
- national associations or unions of local government units;
- non-governmental organisations, social economy entities;
- federations or unions of non-governmental organisations and social economy entities;
- social partners in line with the definition in OP KED.<sup>15</sup>

The amount allocated for project co-financing is approx. PLN 8 million.

**b) Calls for proposals at the regional level under OP KED**



Apart from calls for proposals at the central level, the voivodship labour offices, to ensure possibly quick support to the young, in accordance with the assumptions adopted for *Youth Guarantee* implementation, organise regional calls for proposals under Axis I OP KED *Young people on the labour market*.

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<sup>15</sup> Pursuant to the definition in OP KED, social partners are representative organisations of employers and employees within the meaning of the Act on Tripartite Commission for the Social and Economic Issues and voivodship commissions of social dialogue (Journal of Laws of 2001 No 100, item 1080, as amended) and sectoral and regional organisations of employers and employees within the meaning of the Act on employer organisation (Journal of Laws of 1991, No 55, item 235, as amended), the Act on crafts (Journal of Laws of 2002, No 112, item 979, as amended) and the Act of 23 May 1991 on trade unions (Journal of Laws of 2014 item 167, as amended).

### Objective of calls for proposals:

Providing young people aged 15-29 with personalised and comprehensive assistance, adequate to their situation and needs and aimed at improving their situation on the labour market or their vocational activation.

### Target groups:

Projects will be targeted at people from the NEET category, aged up to 30, including in particular young people who are vocationally passive and not registered as the unemployed. The moment of starting for 4 months will be counted from the day when the person joins the project.

### Direction of support:

Support addressed to young people under regional calls for proposals is targeted at, among others:

- developing an individual action plan which will constitute an individual plan of steps to be taken in order to improve the situation of a given person on the labour market;
- career counselling with regard to choosing a profession corresponding to skills and potential, help in planning professional career and direct assistance in finding a job;
- high quality trainings, professional courses or post-graduate studies for young people aimed at obtaining necessary qualifications to perform a given profession or upgrade the competences;
- traineeships and apprenticeships at employers' to obtain necessary work experience, the lack of which constitutes a significant barrier to finding a job;
- grants for starting one's own business activity, as well as consulting and trainings aimed at obtaining necessary knowledge to run a company, and covering the costs of social insurance for 12 months.

The projects may also include actions addressed directly to employers to encourage them to employ young people. An employer who decides to employ a young person may obtain reimbursement of a part of the costs of employing such person and will receive funds for equipping the work place for such a person.

If a young person finds a job in another town/city and wants to take up the job, additional support will be granted in the form of i.a. covering the cost of commuting or preliminary settlement in a new place of residence, including through financing of the cost of commuting and providing funds for settlement,

### Entities entitled to take part in calls for proposals and submit proposals for projects:

The proposals may be submitted by labour market institutions pursuant to Article 6 of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions, i.e. public employment services, Voluntary Labour Corps, employment agencies, training institutions, social dialogue

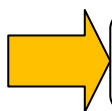
institutions (trade unions or associations of trade unions, employers' organisations, organisations of the unemployed, non-government organisations, if their statutory tasks include implementation of tasks in the area of employment promotion, mitigation of the results of unemployment or vocational activation) or local partnership institutions. For the purpose of joint project implementation, partnerships may be created.

#### Budget of the call for proposals and unit costs of projects:

Depending on the scope of the granted support, the unit cost of participant taking part in the project will vary. The number of activated persons will be derived from the amount allocated for such calls for proposals and average unit cost of participation in the projects.

Assuming that approx. PLN 1,237 million would be allocated for such calls for proposals, by 2021 approximately 70,500 young people would have participated in the projects

### **2.7. Support for youth entrepreneurship.**



Loans granted via Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego

Subsidies for starting business activity offered by labour offices are the main tool for supporting entrepreneurship among young people. Nevertheless, within the expansion of the offer regarding the youth entrepreneurship, in the second half of 2013 a pilot programme "First business – Start-up support" was initiated. It consists in granting loans through Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (BGK) to young unemployed people so they can start business and covers people up to the age of 29.

The participants of the programme could also use an additional loan intended for creating a job for an unemployed person, including for an unemployed person referred by a poviata labour office. Agreements with BGK were concluded under the programme.

The pilot programme was implemented in Małopolskie, Świętokrzyskie and Mazowieckie voivodships from mid June 2013. It functioned on the basis of the funds (PLN 21.5 million) from privatisation used for funding tasks of the minister competent for labour to tackle unemployment.

The amendment to the Act of 20 April 2004 on employment promotion and labour market institutions introduced a new labour market instrument in the form of a loan for starting business activity and for creation of a job for an unemployed person, including an unemployed person referred by a poviata labour office. In 2014, an agreement was concluded between the Minister of Labour and Social Policy and the President of Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego on cooperation in implementing a loan programme entitled

“First Business – Start-up Support II”, consisting in granting preferential loans for starting business activity and loans for creating jobs for the unemployed, including the unemployed referred by poviats labour offices and for provision of advisory and training services addressed to persons who received the loan for starting business activity. The programme covers the entire country. The resources of the Labour Fund in the amount of PLN 143 million were allocated for the programme “First Business –Start-up Support II”. The amount may be increased by 2021, depending on the needs and use.

Characteristics of loans for starting business activity under the programme "First Business – Start-up Support II":

- ➔ Preferential interest, at 0.25 of the rediscount rate of Narodowy Bank Polski
- ➔ The amount up to 20 times the average salary
- ➔ Long repayment period – up
- ➔ A possibility to receive an annual grace period
- ➔ No fees and commissions for granting and servicing loans

Characteristics of a loan for creating a job for an unemployed person (supplementary loan), including an unemployed person referred by a poviats labour office:

- ➔ Value of the loan: up to 6 times the average salary
- ➔ Interest: at 0.25 of the rediscount rate of Narodowy Bank Polski
- ➔ Monthly repayments in due dates resulting from the schedule of the loan for starting business activity
- ➔ Settlement of the loan on the basis of the paid invoices concerning the expenses
- ➔ Granted after the first year of operations undertaken by the borrower
- ➔ A possibility to remit the due amount of the loan for creating a job, if the job created for an unemployed person was maintained for minimum 1 year, and the loan has been repaid according to the schedule

Under *the Youth Guarantee* loans are granted for starting business activity on conditions defined in the amended Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions.

Under *the Youth Guarantee*, people who can apply for a loan for starting business activity are unemployed young people and school and universities graduates aged 18-29, looking for a job in the period of 48 months from the time of finishing school or obtaining a professional title. The loan can be granted to people not running a business in the period of 12 months prior to submission of the application for a loan as well as the unemployed and not performing any other paid job.

The loan for starting business activity is granted in the amount up to 20 times the average remuneration, with interest on preferential terms. The interest rate of the loan amounts annually to 0.25 of the rediscount rate on bills of exchange of Narodowy Bank Polski. The loan repayment period is 7 years, with the possibility of a 12-month grace period for its repayment.

Support in the form of loans for starting business activity is considered to be *de minimis* aid and is granted in accordance with the conditions for acceptability of this aid.

## **2.8. Support for professional mobility of the youth.**

### ➤ Support for internal mobility:

Support for internal mobility, after the entry into force of the amendment to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions in May 2014, is granted in the form of instruments described in Chapter 2.5.:

- settlement voucher,
- teleworking grant.

### ➤ Support for mobility within the European Union:

Access to job offers from within the European Union / European Economic Area countries is provided by the European EURES job mobility portal. The job offer exchange process on the website is developed. The reform of this tool is an important European initiative. The common EURES IT platform run by the European Commission is to present all the job offers of labour offices of the European Union, of accredited entities and CVs of persons interested in working abroad. The platform is also to include information on traineeships and apprenticeships available in the European Union.

Voivodship and poviats labour offices disseminate information on the possibilities of traineeships and apprenticeships abroad in the EU for university and secondary school graduates under the selected programmes of the European Commission and job and traineeship offers received from partners – EURES advisors from within the EU/EEA.

Abroad traineeship programmes for the Polish youth are continued (among others, the project "Traineeships in Austria for the Best" in cooperation of EURES from Dolnośląskie Voivodship Labour Office with Austria and Austrian employers and vocational schools educating in the hotel and catering sector).

Information meetings are also organised (e.g. "After work about work", "Safe departure – Safe return"), as well as consultation points, informational and workshop meetings, job fairs and exchanges, also in a virtual form. During the aforementioned events the discussions are held on, among others, the possibility which mobility provides on the European labour market, using the EURES portal, the principles of recognising vocational qualifications, writing curriculum vitae and covering letters, information about coordination of social security systems, etc. During job fairs, job offers will be made available and employers from the EU/EEA countries will conduct recruitment interviews with selected candidates.

The organisation of European job fairs, European information and recruitment days, European entrepreneurship, job and education fairs, European job and information fairs, etc. is continued. Employers from Poland and from the EU/EEA countries, the EU network representatives and representatives of training institutions supporting entrepreneurship, institutions dealing with, among others, the rights of employees, social protection, institutions involved in the issues of professional and geographic mobility are invited to participate in such events. During the fairs, a range of services provided by EURES network is presented, interviews with candidates interested in working abroad and consultations are organised, consultation on working and living conditions in the selected EU/EEA countries, methods of searching for employment and drawing up application documents, starting one's own businesses are held.

As a part of providing career counselling, group counselling, activation classes, meetings organised by other organisations and meetings with people concerned, information is provided about EURES network services, etc., also using the modern communication tools (e.g. SKYPE, e-mail, YouTube, chat).

The above actions are performed mainly by voivodship labour offices and are available to everyone interested in starting work abroad.



### **3. Financing of the *Youth Guarantee*.**

#### **3.1. The *Youth Employment Initiative* as financial support for the implementation of the *Youth Guarantee*.**

At the beginning of 2013, the European Commission supplemented its proposal concerning the Youth Guarantee with ***the Youth Employment Initiative***.<sup>16</sup> It is a financial supplement for the *Youth Guarantee* project and strengthens the support already provided by the EU structural funds. The *Initiative* was addressed to regions where the unemployment rate of people aged between 15 and 24 exceeded 25% at the end of 2012. It provided support in the amount of EUR 6 billion in the years 2014-2020.

This amount will consist of equal shares of the resources of the European Social Fund (ESF) allocated especially for this purpose, as well as of a special allocation for this initiative from the resources for economic, social and territorial cohesion. The funds are addressed to the regions (NUTS 2 level) with a level of unemployment of people aged between 15 and 24 exceeded 25% in December 2012. The funds may also be addressed for activation measures for persons aged 25-29. The *Initiative* also envisaged the possibility of allocating 10% of funds for supporting young people in NUTS-3 subregions, recording a particularly high unemployment rate among the youth, and being in non-eligible regions.

From among 270 European classification units distinguished for statistical purposes at the NUTS2 level, in 92 the unemployment rate among young people (age category from 15 to 24) exceeded 25% in 2012. The largest number of regions covered by the support is in Spain, Greece and Italy.

#### **3.2. The amount of funds by source in Poland.**

The *Youth Guarantee* is implemented both from national funds and the European Union budget, under the European Social Fund and the *Youth Employment Initiative*.

Actions for young people are implemented in the labour offices from the resources of the Labour Fund allocated for activation of the unemployed (it is estimated that annually it will be an average amount of about PLN 1.8 billion) and by Voluntary Labour Corps from the budget funds for the implementation of statutory tasks (it is estimated that annually it will be average amount of about PLN 52 million).

The resources from the EU budget for the implementation of *the Youth Guarantee* with regard to young people under 29 come from Operational Programme Knowledge Education Development in the 2014-2020 programming period as part of which young people in all voivodships will be supported, also under actions implemented under OP KED by the

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<sup>16</sup> Communication from the Commission: Youth Employment Initiative (COM (2013) 144) along with the accompanying documents constituting proposals for amendments of the proposals of the Commission concerning Council Regulations No 1081/2006 and 1083/2006 (COM (2013) 145 and COM ((2013) 146).

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, both the persons covered by *the Initiative*, and those who are not the beneficiaries of the funds under *the Initiative*. For such actions, the amount of EUR 2.035 billion has been planned, including EUR 550 million from *the Initiative*. It was assumed that actions carried out by the Voluntary Labour Corps and consisting in standard support are funded from the Labour Fund and the state budget. In-depth and comprehensive actions are additionally funded from OP KED and *the Youth Employment Initiative*.

The issue of funding of individual actions is presented in detail in Tables 4 and 5 in the final part of the document.

#### **4. Monitoring and evaluation system of the *Youth Guarantee* implementation in Poland.**

The primary purpose of the implementation of actions defined in *the Youth Guarantee* is to improve the situation of young people on the labour market, both those registered in labour offices as unemployed and those professionally inactive that could return to the market.

The monitoring process is coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, with significant involvement of all partners implementing the *Guarantee*. Partners have an obligation to provide credible and exhaustive data in the scope and on dates specified by the national coordinator of the implementation of the *Youth Guarantee*. From among partners: Voluntary Labour Corps deliver data on the projects they implement, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development provides information on the activities conducted from the ESF funds along with their evaluation, including the calls for proposals organised under OP KED, and Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego provides information about loans. The Minister of Labour and Social Policy as the coordinator collects and consolidates all the data provided by entities having an obligation to obtain them. They serve as the basis for monitoring the ongoing changes and preparing the analysis of the progress in implementation.

The monitoring covers both the analysis of changes of major macroeconomic indicators describing the situation of people from the NEET group on the labour market, and the analysis of other undertakings concerning participants of actions defined in *the Youth Guarantee*. The results with regard to the status of participants in a specified period after completion of actions are examined.

Information obtained from the monitoring of key indices and the analysis of data on the effectiveness of the conducted activities enable successive verification of the justified character and directions of undertaken activities and will enable possible changes in this respect.

## **Key indicators monitoring the results of the Youth Guarantee :**

### **I. On the basis of the Labour Force Survey:**

- Economic activity rate of people aged 15-24 and 25-29;
- Employment rate of people aged 15-24 and 25-29;
- Unemployment rate of people aged 15-24 and 25-29;
- NEET ratio of people aged 15-24 and 25-29;
- Percentage of the unemployed aged 15+24 and 25-29 according to LFS in the total number of people in a given age group;

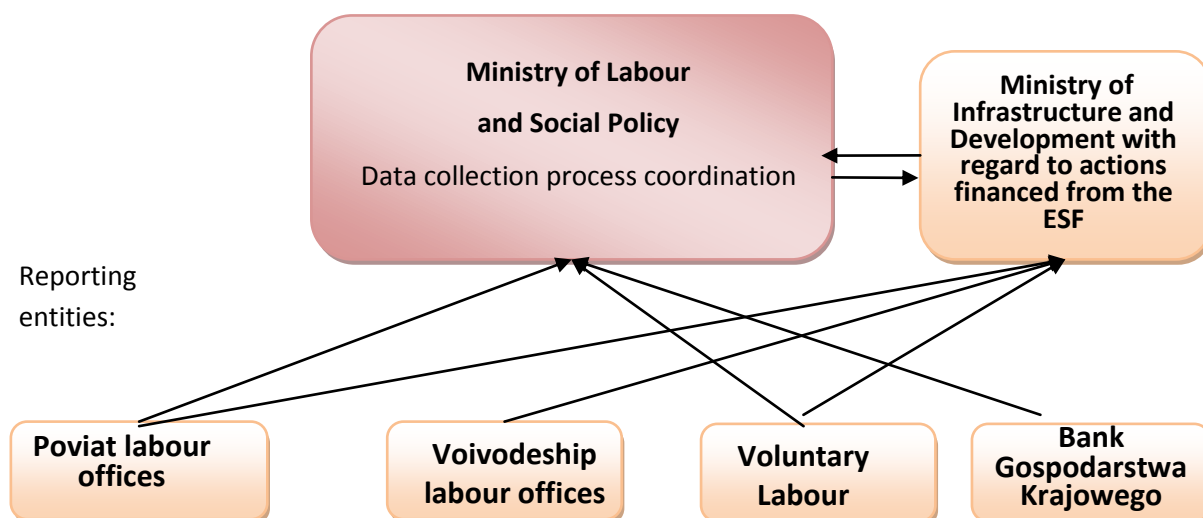
### **II. On the basis of registered unemployment statistics:**

- Percentage of people aged up to 25 and percentage of people aged 25-29 in the total number of registered unemployed;
- Percentage of people aged up to 25 and percentage of people aged 25-29 covered by active labour market programmes in the total number of participants of active forms;
- Percentage change in the number of the unemployed aged up to 25 and percentage change in the number of the unemployed aged 25-29 in relation to the change in the total number of the unemployed;
- Average duration of unemployment of people aged up to 25 and people aged 25-29.

The above data are analysed first of all at the national level, but taking into account the regional differences. In addition, the Ministry of Development and Infrastructure in cooperation with the Central Statistical Office prepares a research work entitled "Expanding the Labour Force Survey (selected indicators of "Europe 2020" and the NEET ratio at the level of NTS 2 voivodships, basic aggregations from the labour market to NTS 3 subregions, voivodship cities, groups of NTS 3 subregions)" which is to be implemented under the Operational Programme Technical Assistance 2007-2013. An estimation of population of young people belonging to the NEET category in individual voivodships is planned within the framework of research. Research work results will be known by the end of 2015.

The planned actions should eventually contribute to improvement of unfavourable values of the aforementioned indicators describing the situation of young people on the labour market, although the economic situation may have a significant impact on the achieved results. Recent data and forecasts are quite optimistic. While in 2012, in subsequent quarters, the GDP growth was increasingly lower, in the subsequent year the rate of economic growth clearly improved quarter by quarter. In the first quarter of 2013, the GDP growth amounted only to 0.5%, and in the fourth quarter it was already 2.7%.

### Data collection scheme for monitoring:



Due to the fact that the entities involved in the actions were not appointed only for the implementation of the Plan of the *Youth Guarantee*, but for years have been performing various kinds of services on the labour market, separate statistics of the project participants are kept.

#### The data collected concern:

- ✓ status of a person before being covered by the *Youth Guarantee*:
  - an unemployed person (including an unemployed person registered or not registered at a labour office), including a long-term unemployed person,<sup>17</sup>
  - a professionally inactive person, including a professionally inactive person not in education or training,
  - a working person,
- ✓ sex;
- ✓ age;
- ✓ education according to ISCED levels (primary, lower secondary, upper secondary, post-secondary, tertiary);
- ✓ the date of registration / submission of the project;
- ✓ the date of profiling in the case of the registered unemployed;
- ✓ the date of presentation and type of proposed assistance;

<sup>17</sup> The definition of “the long-term unemployed” varies depending on age: (1) youth (below 25 years) – persons continuously unemployed for the period of more than 6 months (> 6 months), (2) adults (25 years or more) – persons unemployed continuously for the period of more than 12 months (> 12 months).

- ✓ unemployment time from the moment of registering/joining the project until receiving a proposal of being covered by the *Youth Guarantee* programme;
- ✓ reasons for not presenting the proposal of assistance within 4 months from applying for the project/registering in the labour office;
- ✓ the date of admission /refusal to cover with the support and interruption of activities;
- ✓ the offered forms/form of support (with the specification of non-subsidised and subsidised job offers, traineeship, apprenticeship of adults and trainings, etc.);
- ✓ the period of participation in the activities of the project;
- ✓ the date of completing the activities;
- ✓ the date of deregistration from the register and the reason of deregistration of the unemployed and the reason of deregistration in the case of the registered unemployed;

For the purposes of **the monitoring of projects co-funded from the ESF** (in particular *the Youth Employment Initiative* addressed to persons aged below 30, pursuant to the provisions of the Regulation No 1304/2013 of 17 December 2013), the following data are collected:

- ✓ the date of starting and completing the participation in the project;
- ✓ the situation of the household from which the participant comes: a person living in a household of without persons employed (including dependent children<sup>18</sup>), a person living in a household consisting of one adult person and dependent children;<sup>19</sup>
- ✓ being a member of a national minority, a migrant or a person of foreign origin;
- ✓ disability;
- ✓ homelessness and vulnerability;
- ✓ status (situation) of the person upon the completion of participation in the project:
  - job-seeker,
  - person employed,
  - person in education or training,
  - person with qualifications,
  - person with competences,
  - person who received a job offer,<sup>20</sup>
  - person who received an offer of continuing education,

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<sup>18</sup> Dependent children are persons aged below 17 and persons aged 17-24 that are economically dependent on parents.

<sup>19</sup> As above.

<sup>20</sup> The data on receiving an offer (of a job, traineeship, etc.) are monitored only in projects implemented under YEI.

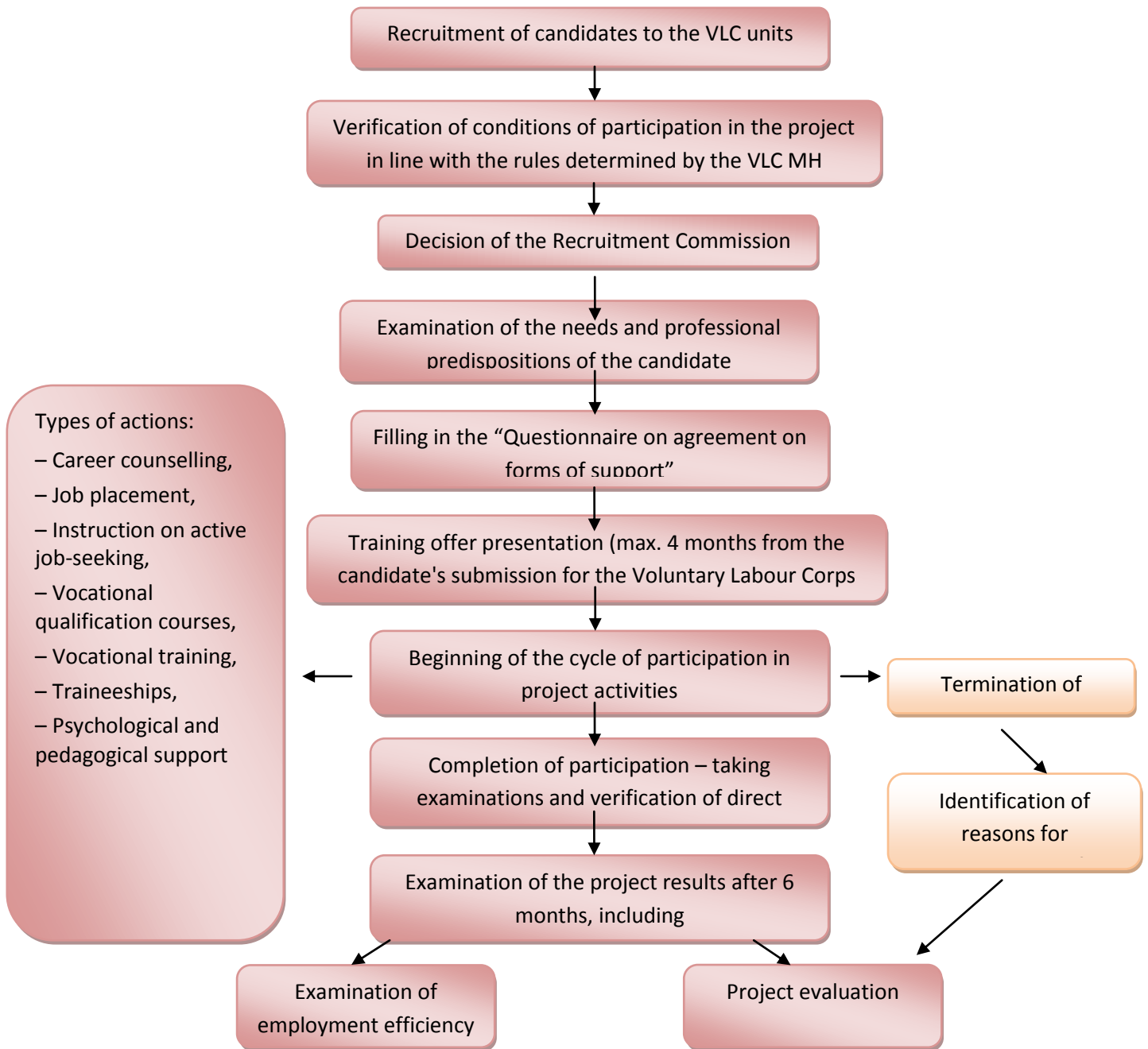
- person who received an offer of apprenticeship,
- person who received an offer of a traineeship.

Monitoring of ***the Youth Employment Initiative*** implementation in Poland, as well as the support of young people under OP KED, should be carried out in accordance with the principles of ESF monitoring specified in the Community regulations, Guidance Document of the European Commission on monitoring and evaluation of the European Social Fund in the period of 2014-2020, as well as the guidelines of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development on monitoring of physical progress of operational programmes for the years 2014-2020 which regulate the horizontal issues related to monitoring of *the Initiative* and of projects co-funded by the ESF.

The implementation of the support of young people under *the Initiative* is monitored using common output indicators listed in the Regulation of the European Commission No 1304/2013 on the ESF and defined in the Guidance Document of the European Commission on monitoring and evaluation of the ESF 2014-2020. In addition, the implementation of *the Youth Employment Initiative* entails the obligation to monitor additional indicators defined in Annex II to the aforementioned Regulation on the ESF, pertaining to people aged under 30, supported under the *Initiative*.

Pursuant to Article 50 of the Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Chapter IV of Regulation (EU) No 1304/2013, Member States implementing the *Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)*, incorporated into *the Youth Guarantee*, have an obligation to report, among others, on the indicators showing the situation of people covered by the support under YEI in deferred time perspective (for instance in 6 months after the completion of participation in the support). The values of the said indicators are determined by means of evaluation studies or administrative data. The Managing Authority of OP KED estimates the values of indicators specified for *the Youth Employment Initiative* every year (i.e. number of persons participating in continuing education, training programmes leading to obtaining qualifications, apprenticeship or traineeship six months after leaving of the Programme, the number of people working 6 months after leaving the programme and the number of people running their own business six months after leaving programme). Common key indicators for other young people supported under the programme (i.e. the number of people aged below 30, working, together with those running their own business six months after leaving the programme and the number of people in unfavourable social situation, working, together with those running their own business, six months after leaving the programme) are estimated four times throughout the whole programming period. In addition, twice in the programming period, the Managing Authority of OP KED will perform thematic evaluation whose subject will be both the effectiveness and relevance of received support as well as the assessment of the quality of jobs and offers obtained as a result of vocational activation of young people supported under the *Initiative*.

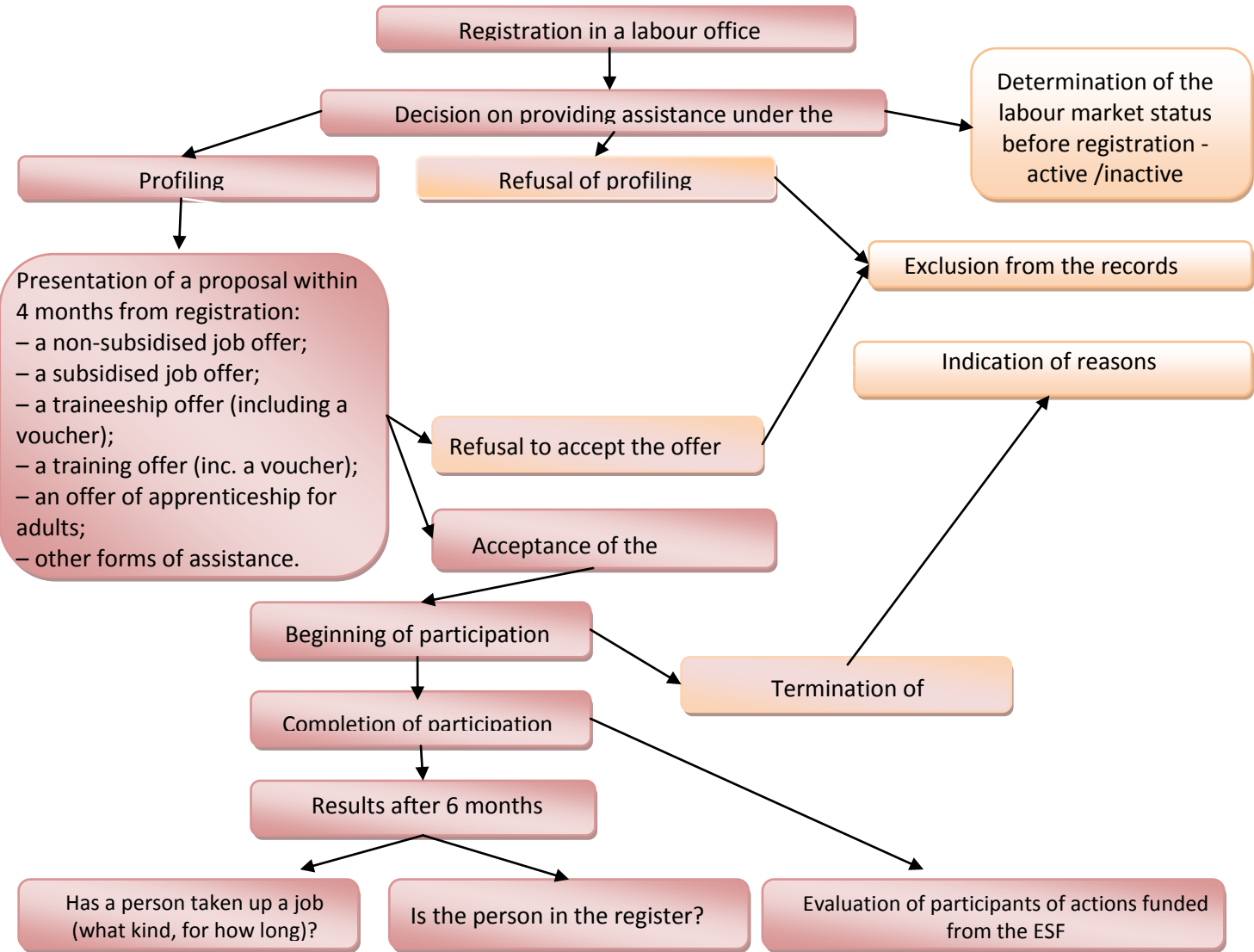
**Monitoring scheme for the support granted to participants of the projects of Voluntary Labour Corps from the NEET group implemented under the *Youth Guarantee*:**



Monitoring of the project and of participants in the case of projects implemented by Voluntary Labour Corps is strictly related to organisational structure of Voluntary Labour Corps. Coordinators of local projects implemented by Voluntary Labour Corps under the *Youth Guarantee* and tutors of groups constituting the management personnel of the projects under the *Guarantee* - apart from indicators specified in the application for co-financing and - in the case of ESF projects - common indicators specified in the Regulation No 1304/2013 – conduct ongoing monitoring of implementation of individual project tasks, including classes with young people, attendance during courses (the list of attendance),

progress of the participants and the quality of provided training services. For instance, in the case of long absence of the participant from classes, a phone or direct contact is established with the persons concerned (e.g. home visits in order to motivate the participants to continue participation in the forms of support). In addition, voivodship coordinators control, on an ongoing basis, whether the project in field units is implemented in accordance with the schedule and whether the payments are made in accordance with the preliminary expenses schedules. All irregularities and doubts are immediately notified to the Main Headquarters of Voluntary Labour Corps where the programmes of corrective measures are initiated. The monitoring of the project uses such tools as: report from the control proceedings, control protocol, attendance lists, school registers, control sheets from training classes, monitoring tables, reporting part of the payment application.

**Scheme for monitoring of the process of supporting the unemployed aged 18-29 registered in labour offices:**



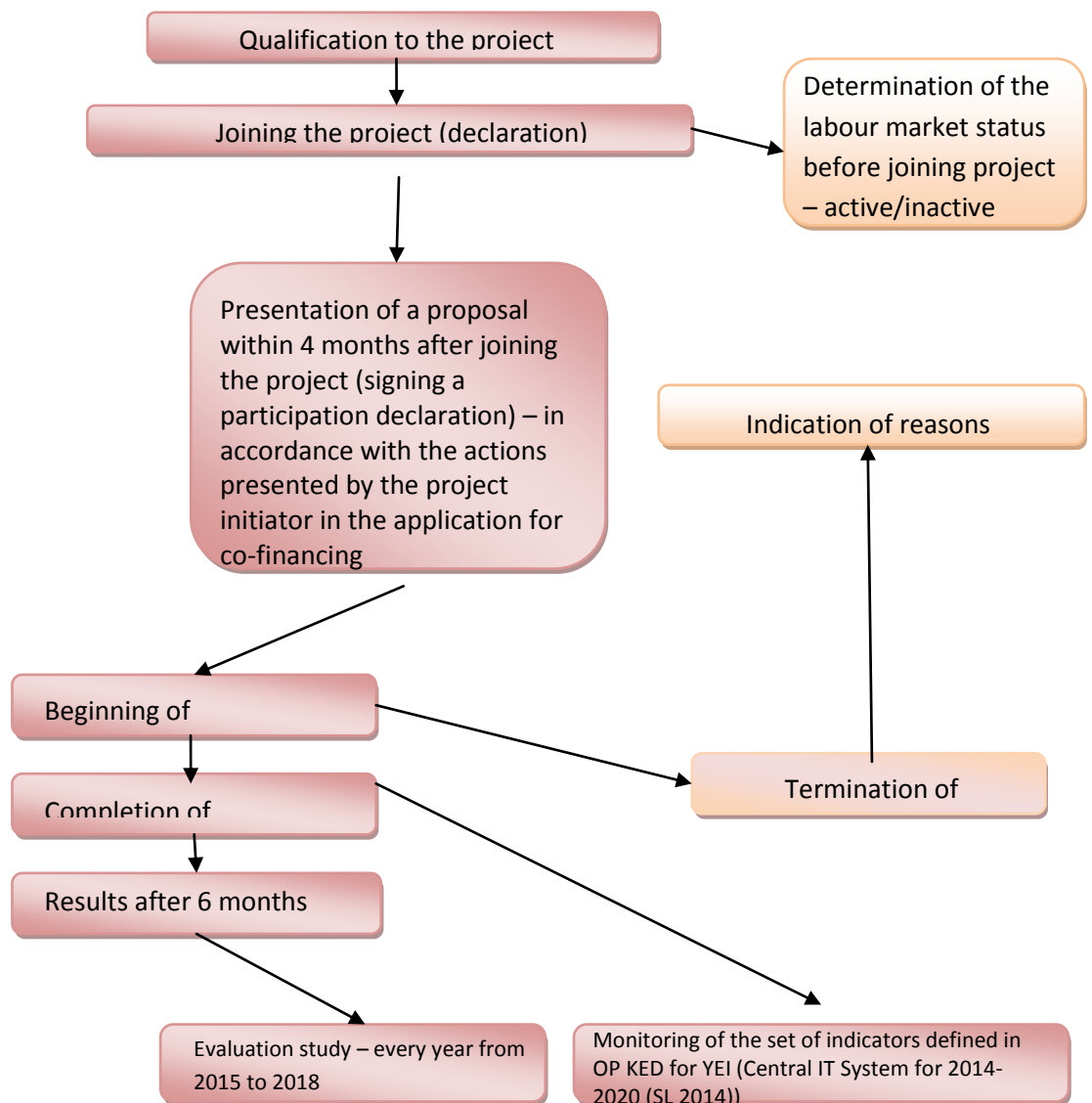


Macroeconomic indicators are to be reviewed and monitoring of the participants of actions is to take place once a year e.g. in the second quarter after the end of the reporting year.

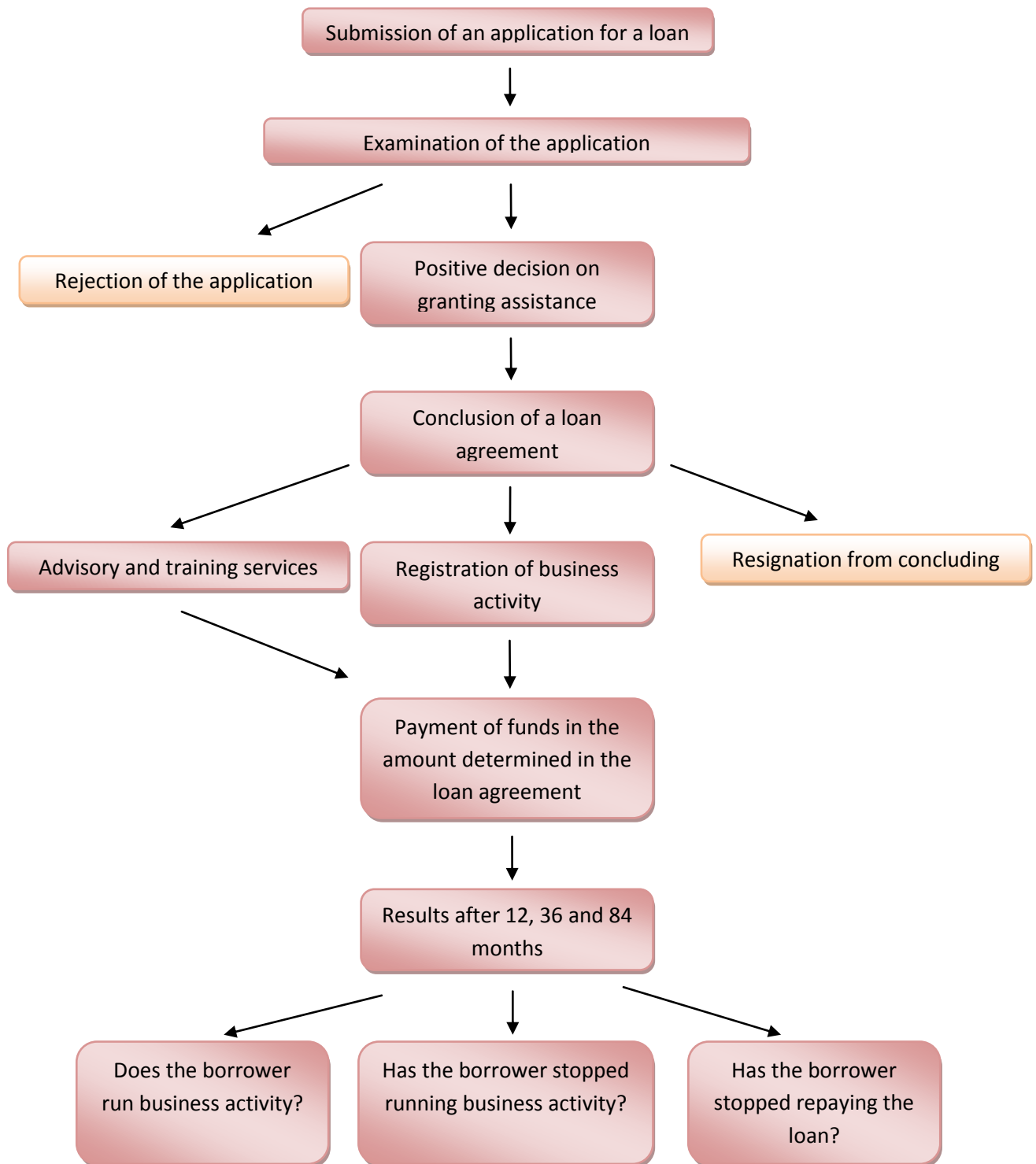
In addition, it is checked after 6 months from completion of actions whether a person is still registered as the unemployed or whether in the meantime he or she was excluded after finding a job (subsidised or non-subsidised) or started his/her own business and for how long the person was excluded due to taking up a job/starting a business until re-registration at the labour office. On the basis of these data two indicators are determined:

- percentage of persons who after the end of actions are not registered in a labour office (presumption of employment);
- percentage of persons who started to work within 6 months after the end of action.

**Scheme for monitoring of the process of supporting people from the NEET group in the form of calls for proposals at the central and regional level:**



**Monitoring scheme of support in the form of a loan  
for starting business activity (BGK):**



The monitoring of the loan programme is assumed. The results are to be verified:

- after 12 months. Termination of running business activity before the end of the required period of 12 months results in the obligation to repay the granted loan along with the statutory interest charged from the date of receiving the loan.
- after 36 months. Termination of running business activity in the period from 12 to 36 months of running business activity will result in an increase in interest on the outstanding amount. Further repayment of the loan will be made along with interest equal to the reference rate.
- after 84 months. This is a maximum period during which the repayment of the granted loan should be made.

### **What does the European Union envisage with regard to the monitoring of *the Youth Guarantee*?**

At the European level, the European Commission conducts regular annual monitoring of progress in the *Youth Guarantee* implementation. After the preliminary examination of the *Guarantee* implementation in autumn 2014 and development of the methodology of data collection, the data on progress in the *Youth Guarantee* implementation are collected annually starting from 2015. The presentation of official data for 2014 is planned for January 2016.

### **Involvement of youth representatives in monitoring of the *Guarantee* in Poland**

On 24 July 2015, the Minister of Labour and Social Policy signed Order No 26 establishing the *Youth Guarantee* Monitoring Board and thus formalising the cooperation of the Ministry with youth organisations and youth structures of social partners. The tasks of the Board include issuing opinions on actions implemented under the *Guarantee* and reports on its implementation, and proposing new solutions. In addition, the Board is to disseminate and promote actions under the *Youth Guarantee*. The first meeting of the Board was held on 16 September 2015.

## **5. Tabular representation of the *Youth Guarantee* implementation system.**

Tables:

1. Main organisations which will support and implement the *Youth Guarantee* system.
2. Key reforms and initiatives to ensure early intervention and activation.
3. Key reforms and initiatives to enable integration on the labour market.
4. Estimated plan of funding the *Youth Guarantee* implementation in Poland.
5. A detailed list of actions within the framework of the *Youth Guarantee* implementation in Poland, taking into account the allocated funds and the assumed number of participants.

**Table 1: Main organisations which will support and implement the *Youth Guarantee* system.**

Name of organisation	Type of organisation	Responsibility level	Role in the implementation of the <i>Youth Guarantee</i> programme	Ensuring a successful partnership
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	Public institution	National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– determines priorities, taking into consideration their complementary nature towards the objectives related to youth employment, included in government strategic and programme documents;</li> <li>– identifies the framework scope of actions to be implemented under the <i>Youth Guarantee</i>;</li> <li>– exercises substantive supervision over the <i>Youth Guarantee</i> implementation;</li> <li>– conducts reporting based on public statistics of the <i>Youth Guarantee</i> implementation;</li> <li>– supervises implementation of actions carried out by BGK and VLC under the <i>Youth Guarantee</i>;</li> <li>– carries out actions related to implementation of projects from calls for proposals at the central level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functioning of the working group, Monitoring Committee under OP KED.</li> <li>• Playing a role of the coordinator of public employment services by the minister competent for labour.</li> <li>• Functioning of the Labour Market Council created by social partners, representatives of non-governmental organisations and the scientific community.</li> <li>• Establishment and functioning of the <i>Youth Guarantee</i> Monitoring Team comprising the representatives of social partners and youth organisations.</li> <li>• Cooperation with BGK with regard to funding loans for youth</li> </ul>
Ministry of Infrastructure and Development	Public institution	National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– manages funds under the <i>Youth Employment Initiative</i>;</li> <li>– complies with the principles of appropriate disbursement of funds allocated for implementation of <i>Youth Guarantee</i> from the European Social Fund (ESF);</li> <li>– programmes types of support for people from the NEET category, aged 15-29, in consultation with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy;</li> <li>– conducts reporting on the use of funds from the <i>Youth Employment Initiative</i>.</li> </ul>	<p>Members of the OP KED Monitoring Committee include the representatives of non-governmental organisations, social and economic partners, as well as youth organisations. This ensures their real impact on the scope of support granted from the resources of the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative. In addition, the OP KED provides support for creation of partnerships and for their actions aimed at improving the situation of young people on the labour market.</p>
Main Headquarters of Voluntary Labour Corps	State budget unit	National	<p>Voluntary Labour Corps (VLC) are a state unit specialised in activities for youth, in particular those at risk of social exclusion and the unemployed aged up to 25. VLC perform tasks of the state with regard to employment as well as counteracting social marginalisation and social exclusion of youth, as well as the tasks related to education and upbringing of youth.</p> <p>The Main Headquarters of Voluntary Labour Corps manages all actions related to the implementation the Youth Guarantee in Poland by VLC.</p> <p>The Main Headquarters of Voluntary Labour Corps coordinates and supervises regional units.</p>	<p>The centralised structure of VLC, with almost 800 organisational units, ensures effective and efficient coordination of actions implemented under the <i>Youth Guarantee</i>. The objective is also achieved by partner cooperation with many institutions and organisations operating in local communities (local governments, social assistance centres, schools, psychological and pedagogical services, non-governmental organisations, etc.), as well as with employers and their associations.</p>

			It designs actions for vocational activation of young NEETs, under the <i>Youth Guarantee</i> .	
BGK	Bank	National	It administers the funds for supporting starting business activity under the <i>Youth Guarantee</i> , using conclusions of the "First business - Start-up support" pilot programme, consisting in granting loans by Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego to unemployed youth for starting business activity.	The Minister of Labour and Social Policy concluded a cooperation agreement with BGK on funding loans for youth.
VLO	Local government unit (regional level)	Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– In addition to the conducted labour market policy for youth, they manage the <i>Youth Guarantee</i> implementation within their area;</li> <li>– They set priorities and objectives of programmes under the <i>Youth Guarantee</i>, according to the needs of regional labour markets;</li> <li>– They collect and examine applications from entities implementing individual projects under the <i>Youth Guarantee</i>;</li> <li>– They use the EURES system for effective implementation of the <i>Youth Guarantee</i>;</li> <li>– They prepare and conduct regional calls for proposals.</li> </ul>	Voivodship labour offices, as organisational units of voivodeship governments, inter alia, programme, perform, coordinate programmes, projects, actions for the labour market that are funded e.g. from the Labour Fund, the ESF. They cooperate, inter alia, both with the minister competent for labour and with poviats labour offices within a voivodship. VLOs prepare in partnership the rules for organisation of calls for proposals at the regional level.
Voivodship Headquarters of VLC	Public institutions	Regional	Voivodship Headquarters of VLC coordinate the implementation of projects under the <i>Youth Guarantee</i> in their subordinate units in the relevant voivodships, in line with the guidelines of the Main Headquarters of VLC.	The experience of cooperation with many institutions and organisations operating in regional and local communities (local governments, social assistance centres, schools, psychological and pedagogical services, non-governmental organisations, etc.) as well as with employers and their associations.
PLO	A local government unit (local level)	Local	Supplement the actions for vocational activation of the young, pursuant to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions, with the offer under the <i>Youth Guarantee</i> .	Statutory cooperation of poviats labour offices with employers, employment agencies, social assistance services.
VLC units providing the following services: job placement, career counselling and vocational information, vocational training, education and upbringing.	Public institutions	Local	Actions addressed directly to youth are organised by personnel employed in local organisational units of VLC (e.g. in youth career centres, mobile centres of vocational information, vocational training centres, job placement offices, education and upbringing centres, selected care units).	The experience of cooperation of Voluntary Labour Corps units with local entities that play a special role in the process of recruiting beneficiaries at the local level. In addition, in the context of the <i>Youth Guarantee</i> implementation, it is necessary to mention the recently concluded agreements with Voluntary Fire Services of the Republic of Poland and with the Rural Youth Union, whose goals are to increase the effectiveness in reaching to rural youth in a particularly difficult situation. These agreements translate into specific actions at the regional and local level, where, with the participation of local governments, programmes are created and tasks are carried out jointly, including assistance in recruitment, reaching people who need support the most.
Entities	– Non-public		Each entity selected in the call for proposals as a leader of the project	The use of the potential of the partnership (experience of various

selected under calls for proposals, having legal personality.	institutions, – Employment agencies, – Non-governmental organisations, – Social economy entities, – Training institutions, – Social dialogue institutions, – Employer organisations, – Craft chambers, – Higher education institutions, – Academic Career Centres, – Business environment institutions, – Agricultural advisory centres.	National, Regional, Local	(leading role) will initiate and implement projects supporting unemployed youth under 29 in returning or entering the labour market.	institutions, broader range of impact and greater possibilities than in the case of single entities) allows to increase the chances of success in the call for proposals for specific projects.
Supreme Labour Market Council	Advisory body to the minister of labour	National	Expressing opinions, submitting proposed solutions.	Cooperation with the team on preparing a central call for proposals. Promoting actions under the <i>Youth Guarantee</i> in their communities.
Voivodship Labour Market Councils	Advisory body to the voivodship marshal	Regional	Expressing opinions, submitting proposed solutions.	Cooperation with labour offices in preparing regional calls for proposals. Promoting actions under the <i>Youth Guarantee</i> in their communities.
Poviat Labour Market Councils	Advisory body of the staroste	Local	Expressing opinions, submitting proposed solutions.	Promoting the <i>Youth Guarantee</i> among council members' communities (employers, trade unions, non-governmental organisations and others)

**Table 2: Key reforms and initiatives to ensure early intervention and activation.**

Name of the reform /initiative	Main objectives	Target group, including number of people covered (if available)	Scope	Name and role of organisation at leading and cooperating partners.	Implementation schedule	Implementation cost, if applicable Source of funding
<b>Planned reforms</b>						
1) Amendment to the Act of 20 April 2004 on employment promotion and labour market institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Shortening the period for granting support for an unemployed person aged up to 25 from 6 months to 4 months.</li> <li>– Building legal framework for implementation of, inter alia, the Youth Guarantee.</li> </ul>	Unemployed persons aged up to 25 (apart from improvement in support for all unemployed).	National	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	Q2 of 2014, entry into force of the amended Act	
<b>Planned initiatives</b>						
2) Activation measures for young persons carried out by PLO using labour market services and instruments (existing and new ones).	Activation offer within 4 months	Youth aged 18-25 registered in labour offices (in the case of actions financed from OP KED – aged 18-29)	Local	Poviats labour offices	From the beginning of 2014	LF OP KED, including Initiative
3) Calls for proposals at the central level.	Selection of entities providing vocational and social activation for groups most distant from the labour market, in a special life situation.	Young people aged 15-29, including from the NEET group, also not registered as unemployed in labour offices.	National	The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy as an intermediate body and the institution announcing the call for proposals.	First half of 2015	OP KED Budget
4) Launch of calls for proposals at the regional level.	Selection of entities providing vocational and social activation of youth in line with the needs of regional labour markets.	Youth aged 15-29, in particular registered in labour offices as the unemployed.	Regional	VLO	First half of 2015	(OP KED, including the Initiative) LF
5) Initiatives of Voluntary Labour Corps, also as part of the activities of the Electronic Youth Activation Centre of the VLC (ECAM): a) Social and vocational activation of	(a) Covering youth from the NEET group who neglect school obligation or educational obligation with support leading to taking up education, training or work under an employment contract in order to be professionally prepared and	(a) Youth aged 15-17, neglecting their school obligation or education obligation (not continuing education after lower secondary school), who have problems with finding their place on the labour market	Local	Main Headquarters of Voluntary Labour Corps, Voivodeship Headquarters of Voluntary Labour	From the beginning of 2014	Budget OP KED, including Initiative

<p>young people aged 15-17 from the NEET group who fail to fulfil their school or education obligation</p> <p>b) Vocational activation of youth aged 18-24 who are not in employment, without vocational qualifications and work experience or whose vocational qualifications do not meet the requirements of the labour market, with a special focus on people living in rural areas and smaller towns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- short-term intervention</li> <li>- in-depth intervention</li> </ul>	<p>acquire elementary social competences.</p> <p>(b) and (c) Covering the young adults from the NEET group with varied support leading to employment, provided to a necessary degree in cooperation with training institutions and employers, including actions allowing, as necessary, to acquire or upgrade skills/qualifications in a given profession or for retraining combined with traineeship at an employer's. Special support will be provided for young people from rural areas and smaller towns who do not have vocational qualifications or have completely inadequate vocational qualifications to meet the needs of the local labour market.</p>	<p>and becoming self-dependent.</p> <p>(b) Youth aged 18-25, not in employment, whose material and community limitations and the lack of vocational qualifications, insufficient vocational qualifications or vocational qualifications not adjusted to the needs of the labour market, and the lack of work experience and knowledge about effective job-seeking methods hinder independent acquisition of skills allowing to enter the labour market and ensuring a successful life start (with a particular focus on persons living in rural areas).</p>		<p>Corps Local organisational units of VLC</p>		
<p>6) Support for youth entrepreneurship by granting loans for starting business activity (BGK)</p>	<p>Providing access to low interest loans (granted on convenient conditions of repayment and security) to start business activity by young resourceful persons entering the labour market</p>	<p>Young people aged 18-29</p>	<p>National</p>	<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy  BGK</p>	<p>2014</p>	<p>LF</p>
<p>7) Creation of traineeship and apprenticeship database</p>	<p>Providing all interested persons with access to information about opportunities of traineeship or apprenticeship and facilitating the dissemination of information by employers about the offered traineeships or apprenticeships</p>	<p>All persons interested in traineeship or apprenticeship, including pupils, students, juvenile employees, graduates, within the meaning of the Act on post-graduate traineeship</p>	<p>National</p>	<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy VLC</p>	<p>2014</p>	<p>LF</p>



**Table 3: Key reforms and initiatives to enable integration on the labour market.**

Name of the reform /initiative	Main objectives	Target group, including number of people covered (if available)	Scope	Name and role of organisation at leading and cooperating partners.	Implementation schedule	Implementation cost, if applicable
<b>Planned reforms</b>						
1) Amendment of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	1. Increase in activation offers 2. Increase in geographic mobility	Under the <i>Youth Guarantee</i> : Unemployed people aged up to 25 (including persons aged up to 29 in the case of the loan programme implemented in cooperation with BGK and activation measures financed from OP KED)	National	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	Q2 of 2014	
<b>Planned initiatives</b>						
2) <b>Profiling</b> assistance addressed to the unemployed, depending on the needs of the unemployed person	Increasing the effectiveness of assistance granted to customers of labour offices by introducing individual forms of assistance	All registered unemployed	Regional, local	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy PLO	Q2 of 2014	LF
3) Implementing actions addressed to the unemployed under separate labour market services, by <b>individual customer advisors</b>	Increasing the effectiveness of assistance granted to customers of labour offices	All registered unemployed	Regional, local	VLO PLO	Q2 of 2014	LF
4) <b>Commissioning</b> the services for the unemployed classified as distant from the labour market to <b>external entities</b>	Increasing the effectiveness of assistance granted to customers of labour offices Increasing the effectiveness of the activation system for selected groups of the unemployed	All registered unemployed	Regional, local	VLO PLO	Q2 of 2014	LF
5) Training voucher	Activation of youth by upgrading conditions for upgrading qualifications (e.g. covering the costs of the course, transport and accommodation).	Persons aged up to 29, registered in a labour office as the unemployed or disabled job-seekers not in employment	Regional, local	VLO PLO	Q2 of 2014	LF
6) Work practice voucher	Increase in job-seeking activity	Persons aged up to 29, registered in a labour office as the unemployed	Regional, local	VLO PLO	Q2 of 2014	LF
7) Employment voucher	Providing a professional start to a graduate of a higher education institution	Graduates of higher education institutions aged up to 29, registered in a labour office at the unemployed	Regional, local	VLO PLO	Q2 of 2014	LF

		or disabled job-seekers not in employment				
8) Settlement voucher	Support for geographic mobility within the country	Unemployed persons aged up to 29, taking up their first job.	Regional, local	VLO PLO	Q2 of 2014	LF
9) Reconciling family life and work	Support for job creation and return of the unemployed youth to employment.	Unemployed persons aged up to 29, returning to the labour market after a break related to bringing up a child	Regional, local	VLO PLO	Q2 of 2014	LF
10) Loan for starting business activity  Loan for creating a job for an unemployed person	Vocational activation involving loans under the "First business - Start-up support" programme.	Job-seekers – graduates of schools and universities within 48 months after receiving a diploma, – the unemployed; – students of the final year of university studies.	National, Regional, local	PLO, BGK	Q2 of 2014	LF
11) Reimbursement of costs incurred by an employer during the period of 6 months for social insurance contributions for the unemployed referred to work.	Stimulating the demand side of the labour market to employ young people	Concerns the unemployed aged up to 29 who take up a job for the first time.	Local	PLO	Q2 of 2014	LF
12) Trilateral training agreements.	Reduction in disproportions between supply and demand with regard to qualifications of the unemployed youth by matching the training offer to the employers' needs.	The unemployed aged up to 29	Local	Staroste, employer, training institution.	Q2 of 2014	LF

<p>13) Social and vocational activation of youth from the NEET group at risk of unemployment and social exclusion.</p>	<p>a) Supporting the youth aged 15-17 <b>prematurely leaving school education</b> in resuming the education, by means of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- trainings,</li> <li>- consulting and additional didactic support (encouraging youth to continue or resume education),</li> <li>- assistance for youth from risk groups in acquiring relevant qualifications,</li> <li>- language courses, digital skills trainings,</li> <li>- education at a workplace and training preparing for a profession</li> </ul> <p>b) Supporting young adults in taking up jobs, inter alia, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- retraining or professional development courses along with traineeships and a possibility that the employer will hire the trainee,</li> <li>- vocational trainings along with a practical profession training module,</li> <li>- group and individual career counselling</li> </ul>	<p>Youth aged <b>15–17</b> from inefficient communities in terms of upbringing, dysfunctional families, at risk of social exclusion, and requiring educational support as well as apprenticeships.</p> <p>Youth aged <b>18-24</b> who have no vocational qualifications, are professionally and socially passive, at risk of social exclusion and marginalisation, or have vocational qualifications which do not meet the requirements of the labour market.</p>	<p>National, regional and local.</p>	<p>Main Headquarters of Voluntary Labour Corps Voivodeship Headquarters of Voluntary Labour Corps Local organisational units of VLC (e.g. youth career centres, mobile vocational information centres, vocational training centres, job placement points, education and upbringing centres, selected care units)</p> <p>Employers</p> <p>PLO</p>	<p>Years: 2014-2020.</p>	<p>Budget OP KED, including Initiative</p>
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**Table 4: Estimated plan of financing the *Youth Guarantee* implementation in Poland.**

Actions	Total engaged funds (3+6+7+8+9+10+11)	Actions of PLO financed from the Labour Fund and European fund (projects not selected in calls for proposals)			Labour Fund – commissioning activation to employment agencies (VLO)	VLC budget funds allocated for implementation of the <i>Guarantee</i>	Funds under OP KED at the disposal of VLC	Budget - central calls for proposals (OP KED)	Budget - regional calls for proposals (OP KED)	Loans from BGK (LF)*
		Total	of which: ESF (OP KED + YEI)	of which: Programme Jobs for Youth						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>Amount of funds in PLN</b>										
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,324,116,606</b>	<b>14,740,480,000</b>	<b>6,570,620,000</b>	<b>2,800,000,000</b>	<b>120,000,000</b>	<b>24,640,000</b>	<b>418,270,000</b>	<b>313,702,501</b>	<b>1,237,024,105</b>	<b>470,000,000</b>
2014	1,501,610,202	1,000,000,000	0	0	15,000,000	3,080,000	108,525,418	30,489,240	284,515,544	60,000,000
2015	2,059,627,722	1,604,759,000	900,000,000	0	15,000,000	3,080,000	94,383,638	35,000,261	247,404,823	60,000,000
2016	2,643,965,798	2,344,878,000	900,000,000	700,000,000	15,000,000	3,080,000	39,458,027	45,477,121	136,072,650	60,000,000
2017	2,819,069,992	2,516,087,000	870,000,000	1,050,000,000	15,000,000	3,080,000	41,267,606	47,562,736	136,072,650	60,000,000
2018	2,858,142,791	2,551,273,000	850,000,000	1,050,000,000	15,000,000	3,080,000	43,073,281	49,643,860	136,072,650	60,000,000
2019	1,860,446,616	1,537,303,000	830,000,000	0	15,000,000	3,080,000	44,886,754	51,733,968	148,442,894	60,000,000
2020	1,901,192,485	1,574,199,000	800,000,000	0	15,000,000	3,080,000	46,675,276	53,795,315	148,442,894	60,000,000
2021	1,680,061,000	1,611,981,000	750,000,000	0	15,000,000	3,080,000				50,000,000
2022			670,620,000							
<b>Average cost of activation in PLN</b>										
<b>Total</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
2014	x	6,548	0	0	11,000	44	28,580	13,290	17,540	
2015	x	6,711	10,374	0	11,000	44	28,580	13,290	17,540	70,000

2016	x	9,806	10,374	26,238	11,000	44	28,580	13,290	17,540	70,000
2017	x	12,101	10,374	26,990	11,000	44	28,580	13,290	17,540	70,000
2018	x	12,270	10,374	25,456	11,000	44	28,580	13,290	17,540	70,000
2019	x	7,393	10,374	0	11,000	44	28,580	13,290	17,540	70,000
2020	x	7,571	10,374	0	11,000	44	28,580	13,290	17,540	70,000
2021	x	7,753	10,374	0	11,000	44				70,000
2022	x		10,374	0						
	<b>Participants</b>									
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,462,873</b>	<b>1,670,595</b>	<b>633,374</b>	<b>106,750</b>	<b>10,909</b>	<b>560,000</b>	<b>14,635</b>	<b>23,608</b>	<b>70,519</b>	<b>5,857</b>
2014	246,394	152,718		0	1,364	70,000	3,797	2,295	16,220	
2015	331,379	239,117	86,755	0	1,364	70,000	3,302	2,634	14,105	857
2016	350,554	239,127	86,755	26,650	1,364	70,000	1,381	3,421	7,755	857
2017	331,823	207,924	83,864	38,900	1,364	70,000	1,444	3,580	7,755	857
2018	334,346	207,928	81,936	41,200	1,364	70,000	1,507	3,735	7,755	857
2019	294,078	207,927	80,008		1,364	70,000	1,571	3,895	8,465	857
2020	294,292	207,927	77,116		1,364	70,000	1,633	4,048	8,463	857
2021	280,006	207,928	72,296		1,364	70,000				714
2022			64,644							

The number of participants was estimated using the assumptions concerning indirect costs: 25% of the allocation in column 8 and 9, 9% of the allocation in column 11.

\* In the context of the information included in chapter 3.2. and stating that actions for youth performed by VLC within the statutory activity will require an average annual involvement of budget funds in the amount of PLN 75 million, it should be noted that the amounts provided in the above table do not include care and upbringing actions of VLC. In terms of services of the labour market, they include only cost related to services provided for youth from the NEET group which constitute approx. 10% of the total number of youth benefiting from the support provided by VLC units in this respect.

\*\* The specified amounts refer to the involvement of allocations, while expenses will be incurred until the end of the programming period.

\*\*\* Funds have been approximately assigned to individual years of the programme implementation, while their actual amount will be higher since a part of the loan capital will be successively repaid, thereby increasing the remaining available amount. It is assumed that it will allow for activation of participants in accordance with the values adopted in the table.

**Table 5: A detailed list of actions within the framework of the *Youth Guarantee* implementation in Poland, taking into account the allocated funds and the assumed number of participants.**

Actions	Implementing entity	Entities authorised to participate	Direction of support	Purpose - implementation of the guarantee	Source of financing	Territorial scope	Amount of funds in PLN	Average cost of activation in PLN	Target group	Number of participants	
<b>I. Calls for proposals</b>											
1.	Calls for proposals for support for activation of young people in a particularly difficult situation on the labour market	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	Labour market institutions in line with Article 6 of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions, and organisational units of family support and foster care system, youth care centres, youth sociotherapy	Support for individual and comprehensive vocational and education activation of young people	Providing youth with individual and comprehensive support	OP KED – ESF	Whole country	313,702,501.00	13,290	NEETs aged 15-29	23,608

			centres, special school and upbringing centres, single mothers' homes and Central Board of Prison Service								
2.	Calls for proposals at the regional level	VLO	Labour market institutions in line with Article 6 of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Support for individual and comprehensive vocational and educational activation of young people	Providing youth with individual and comprehensive support	OP KED – ESF	Whole country	1,237,024,106.00	17,540	NEETs aged 15-29	70,519

<b>II Labour market instruments - educational</b>											
1.	Training	PLO	x	Pursuant to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Acquisition of professional and general competences	LF/ESF	Whole country	800,000,000.00	3,000.00	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	266,668

2.	Work practice	PLO	x	Pursuant to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Acquisition of practical skills and work experience	LF/ESF	Whole country	5,000,000,000.00	7,000.00	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	714,286
3.	Apprenticeship for adults	PLO	x	Pursuant to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Acquisition of qualifications or skills and work experience	LF/ESF	Whole country	30,000,000.00	17,000.00	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	1,765
4.	Co-financing of the costs of examinations and costs related to obtaining a license	PLO	x	Pursuant to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Obtaining rights, licences, qualifications or other certificates confirming acquisition of competences	LF/ESF	Whole country	100,000,000.00	3,000.00	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	33,333
5.	Training loans	PLO	x	Pursuant to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Acquisition of professional and general competences	LF/ESF	Whole country	90,000,000.00	3,000.00	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	30,000
6.	Co-financing of postgraduate studies	PLO	x	Pursuant to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Acquisition of professional and general competences	LF/ESF	Whole country	50,000,000.00	3,068.00	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	16,297



7.	Grant for continuing education	PLO	x	Pursuant to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Acquisition of qualifications	LF/ESF	Whole country	70,000,000.00	5,000.00	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	14,000
<b>II Labour market instruments - subsidised employment</b>											
<b>I</b>											
1.	Intervention works	PLO	x	Pursuant to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Taking up employment	LF/ESF	Whole country	700,000,000.00	5,900	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	118,644
2.	Public works	PLO	x	Pursuant to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Taking up employment	LF	Whole country	700,000,000.00	7,000	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	100,000
<b>I</b>	<b>Subsidies for starting business activity</b>	PLO	x	Pursuant to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Taking up employment	LF/ESF	Whole country	2,550,480,000.00	18,500	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	137,864
<b>V</b>	<b>New instruments introduced by amendments to the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions in the years 2014-2015</b>										
1.	Training voucher	PLO	x	In line with the amendment of the Act on employment promotion and labour	Acquisition of professional and general competences	LF/ESF	Whole country	75,000,000.00	4,000	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	18,750

				market institutions							
2.	Work practice voucher	PLO	x	In line with the amendment of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Acquisition of practical skills to perform work and of work experience	LF/ESF	Whole country	150,000,000.00	9,000	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	16,667
3.	Employment voucher	PLO	x	In line with the amendment of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Taking up employment	LF/ESF	Whole country	75,000,000.00	13,000	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	5,769
4.	Settlement voucher	PLO	x	In line with the amendment of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Taking up employment	LF/ESF	Whole country	100,000,000.00	6,000	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	16,667
5.	Trilateral training agreements	PLO	x	In line with the amendment of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Acquisition of professional competences and taking up a job	LF/ESF	Whole country	100,000,000.00	3,000	The unemployed aged up to 29, the long-term unemployed registered in PLO	33,333

6.	Teleworking grant	PLO	x	In line with the amendment of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Taking up employment	LF/ESF	Whole country	580,000,000.00	11,500	The unemployed aged up to 29, the long-term unemployed registered in PLO	50,435
7.	Activation benefit	PLO	x	In line with the amendment of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Taking up employment	LF/ESF	Whole country	580,000,000.00	9,000	The unemployed aged up to 29, the long-term unemployed registered in PLO	64,444
8.	Reimbursement of social insurance contributions	PLO	x	In line with the amendment of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Taking up employment	LF/ESF	Whole country	190,000,000.00	6,000	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	31,667
9.	Commissioning activation measures to external entities	VLO	Employment agencies	In line with the amendment of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Taking up employment	LF/ESF	Whole country	120,000,000.00	11,000	The unemployed aged up to 29, the long-term unemployed registered in PLO	10,909

10.	Loan for starting business activity	BGK	x	In line with the amendment of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Taking up employment	LF/ESF	Whole country	470,000,000.00	70,000	Job-seeking school and university graduates within 48 months from receiving of a diploma, the unemployed registered in PLO, students of the final year	5,857
11.	Reimbursement of the costs related to employing an unemployed person aged up to 30 for 12 months	PLO	x	In line with the amendment of the Act on employment promotion and labour market institutions	Taking up employment	LF	Whole country	2,800,000,000.00	26,230	The unemployed aged up to 29, registered in PLO	106,750
<b>V</b>	<b>Supporting youth at risk of social exclusion</b>										
<b>I</b>											
1.	Social and vocational activation of persons neglecting school obligation or education obligation	VLC	x	Diagnosis of knowledge, skills and potential of the participant to select the relevant forms of support, consultancy, trainings, courses, etc.	Taking up education, training or acquisition of vocational qualifications	VLC/ESF budget	Whole country	65,799,750.00	12,185	NEETs aged 15-17	5,400

2.	Vocational activation	VLC	x		Acquisition of or upgrading qualifications, retraining, obtaining work experience	VLC/ESF budget	Whole country	334,280,250.00	15,476	Youth aged 18-24 not in employment, without vocational qualifications and work experience, or having qualifications that do not meet the requirements of the labour market, with a particular focus on persons living in rural areas and smaller towns	21,600
3.	Supporting employment and preventing unemployment among youth	VLC	x	Job placement, counselling and vocational information, active job-seeking courses, etc.	Finding a job, shaping individual professional career, acquisition of skills related to operating on the labour market	VLC budget	Whole country	24,640,000.00	44	Youth aged 15-24 not in employment or education	560,000
<b>V Other support actions</b>											
<b>II</b>											
1.	More extensive cooperation with Academic Career Centres	Information and Professional Career Planning Centre	Academic Career Centres	Cooperation in preparing, updating and disseminating vocational information with local and regional reach	Supporting youth in entering the labour market	local government budget/ LF	Whole country	x	x	University students and graduates	x

2.	Establishing and running a national traineeship and apprenticeship database	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (software), VLC (maintenance)	x	Dissemination of information addressed to youth by using different forms of communication, including a helpline and websites operated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy or VLC	Providing access to information about opportunities of traineeship or apprenticeship	LF/ESF	Whole country	x	x	Interested persons	x
3	Maintaining internet websites	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, VLC	x	Access to information for the interested parties	Dissemination of information						
4.	Organisation of job fairs	VLO, PLO, VLC, other entities	Employers	Access to information about the labour market	Providing access to information	LF/budget	Whole country	x	x	Interested persons	x
5.	Modernisation of the vocational and continuing education system	Ministry of National Education	x	Focus on cooperation with partners and practical education	Improving the quality of vocational education and its better adjustment to the needs of the labour market	Budget	Whole country	x	x	Pupils/students	x

6.	Strengthening the practical component of studies	Ministry of Science and Higher Education	Employers	Providing an increased offer of practical acquisition of skills by students by means of obligatory apprenticeships or dual studies	Improving the quality of education and facilitating the entry to the labour market	Budget	Whole country	x	x	Students	x
7.	Monitoring university graduates' professional careers	Ministry of Science and Higher Education	x	Creating a monitoring system	Adjustment of education programmes to the needs of the labour market	Budget	Whole country	x	x	Pupils, students, graduates, universities, decision-makers	x