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Continued Education Offers under the Youth Guarantee

Experience from the ground



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1 Introduction

In April 2013, EU Member States made a commitment to ensure young people's successful transition into work by establishing Youth Guarantee schemes. Under the Youth Guarantee, Member States ensure that within four months of leaving education or losing a job, young people under 25 can either find a good-quality job suited to their education, skills and experience; or acquire the education, skills and experience required to find a job in the future through an apprenticeship, traineeship or continued education¹. The principle of the Youth Guarantee has been reaffirmed by the European Pillar of Social Rights².

The Youth Guarantee was driven by high numbers of unemployed youth, and youth not in employment, education or training (NEET). But the Youth Guarantee is more than a measure to support young people to find a job. It aims at structural reforms in the Member States to drastically improve school-to-work transitions, and to ensure employability of young people in the long-term. Young people who leave education early and have a very low level of skills tend to have fewer chances to find employment: they would benefit from continued education to acquire solid basic skills (numeracy and literacy) as well as personal, social and study skills³.

According to the latest monitoring data, in 2016, of the 2.1 million young people that took up an offer within four months⁴:

- the vast majority (67.2 %) took up an employment opportunity;
- 13.9 % took up offers of a traineeship;
- 12 % took up offers of continued education;
- 6.9 % are reported to have taken up an apprenticeship⁵.

It is important to note that in countries where apprenticeships are a well-established form of vocational education and training – for instance, in Austria, Denmark, Germany, and others – they may be counted in the figures as continued education. Due to the diversity of measures (which include for example different types of Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP) training), some countries have difficulties tracking young people who are reintegrated into education and training. This means the actual percentage of young people returning to education is likely to be higher⁶.

However, the monitoring data show that **the Youth Guarantee's potential to upskill young people and to ensure that they gain qualifications that facilitate access to the labour market could be further exploited**. Young people with a low level of qualification (ISCED 0-2) represent around 43 % of NEETs across the EU (aged 15-24), with rates of over 50 % in **Spain, Malta and Germany**⁷. This group is much more likely to become long-term unemployed or inactive in the long term.

Promoting continued education offers to low-qualified young people is not always easy, for several reasons. The young people in question may have struggled during their time in the education and training system; they might prefer practical on-the-job learning; they are keen to earn a living and their current personal situation may not allow them to return to full-time education – especially for a longer period of time. These can be reasons why guidance counsellors do not encourage low-qualified young people to take up a continued education offer⁸.

Hence, to step up the efforts to upskill young people, more emphasis should be put on designing and implementing continued education offers that are attractive to low-skilled young people and accommodate the needs of the target group.

This paper looks at continued education offers in and across EU Member States that are part of the countries' Youth Guarantee schemes and focus on supporting young people in their transition into employment. The paper presents well-developed practices that seem to have impact to the beneficiaries and seeks to provide inspiration and ideas for policy makers on potentially transferable elements of successful youth policies.

The paper contains four main sections:

- Section 2 summarises the key messages related to continued education offers under the Youth Guarantee;
- Section 3 gives an overview of continued education offers implemented within the context of the Youth Guarantee. It describes what types of continued education policies and practices exist, and for what target groups they would best be applied;
- Section 4 provides practical hands-on guidance on how to plan, design, implement and review continued education offers, based on evidence from existing practices;
- Section 5 gives an overview of challenges and success factors related to planning, implementing and reviewing continued education offers under the Youth Guarantee.

This is one in a series of five papers concentrating on different policy measures implemented as part of the Youth Guarantee. The other four papers cover outreach, activation measures for vulnerable NEETs, employment offers and traineeship offers. Therefore, policies and practices addressing these types of intervention are not discussed in this paper. Nevertheless, there may be some overlap, which is in part due to the fact that multifaceted policies and flexible types of intervention for young people should be seen as a sign of high-quality services.



2 Key messages

- Although a significant share of young people who are NEET across Europe are low-skilled, in 2016 continued education offers represented only 12 % of all measures taken up under the Youth Guarantee⁹. The Youth Guarantee's potential to upskill young people and to ensure that they gain qualifications that facilitate access to the labour market could be further exploited.
- Stepping up efforts to upskill young people would require
 - More efficient outreach to young people with different profiles;
 - A broader range of interventions, e.g. more complex, lengthier interventions for young people in the most vulnerable situations, particularly through pathway approaches;
 - Attractive learning offers leading to skills that constitute valuable currency on the labour market;
 - Intensified support delivered by a range of partners; and
 - A focus on engaging young NEETs, including those facing multiple disadvantages.
- Recent studies show that the profiles of young people who do not continue in education and training vary, and personal aptitudes play an important role. Moreover, different risk factors can interact. Youth Guarantee schemes for continued education offers need to reflect this complexity and diversity: there are no 'one-size-fits-all' solutions.
- Prevention is better than cure: one of the most obvious ways to ensure young people acquire the skills they need to succeed in work and life is to prevent early leaving from education and training. Many Member States have measures in place. Synergies with Youth Guarantee schemes should be ensured.
- A large share of continued education offers are provided through ALMPs. According to evaluations, training programmes seem to bring the largest return in terms of human capital investment, compared to other ALMPs.
- Besides training, activation schemes that benefit young people with very low qualifications, low motivation and/or socially disadvantaged backgrounds should also include intensive guidance and mentoring programmes, as well as programmes that take into account social or health-related factors that may be at the source of a difficult labour market entry.
- VET can be a good alternative for young people at risk of exclusion who struggle in general education. VET pedagogies and work-based learning are often better suited to at-risk youth. The same effect can be achieved through a 'work-first' approach, where young people acquire skills through traineeships, which are then possibly followed up by continued education offers.
- The reintegration of low-skilled young people into regular education and training systems is supported by flexible learning pathways, e.g. through validation of non-formal and informal learning (e.g. recognising skills acquired through work experience). This may include the use of tools such as skills assessments.

- Sometimes regular vocational qualification pathways are too demanding for the target group. Preparatory measures need to be taken first. Such offers are called 'bridging programmes', or low-threshold programmes, and can include motivational programmes, extensive guidance to make the right choices, as well as preparatory courses (incl. training in basic skills (literacy, numeracy, IT skills). They can effectively support young people facing multiple disadvantages to find their way and re-acustom themselves gradually to a learning and working environment, so they are ready to take up an offer under the Youth Guarantee.
- Second chance education programmes that allow work and education to be combined can provide young people with the flexibility they need to re-engage in education. Second chance education opportunities may be delivered outside normal study hours, and may include a combination of online learning and traditional face-to-face instruction.
- Youth Guarantee monitoring data show that some young people – especially those with the most vulnerable, at-risk profiles – need more complex interventions. It takes longer than four months before they are ready and able to take up a continued education offer. Intensified support can help to better address the needs of target groups facing multiple problems and disadvantages. Examples of complex interventions and multifaceted responses include 'one-stop-shop' schemes and 'pathway approaches' that entail several steps taken over an extended period of time.
- All Youth Guarantee schemes should be carefully planned, designed, implemented and monitored. For continued education offers, this requires a collection of data and information about the relevant target groups, the development and promotion of tailored offers, and a close collaboration between several Youth Guarantee stakeholders. This should include strong partnerships between the Public Employment Services (PES) and the education and training sector, and often also the youth sector.
- These partnerships can be especially useful to
 - Support educational planning with relevant labour market information,
 - Develop evidence-based, up-to date career information and materials,
 - Provide options and additional support for young people,
 - Improve the quality of career guidance and personal counselling.
- The effectiveness of continued education schemes under the Youth Guarantee needs to be monitored and evaluated. Over time, this will help to collect more detailed data and information about what works and what doesn't. These data are a valuable source to better reach out to NEETs, upskill young people at risk, and ultimately achieve better labour market integration of young individuals.

3 Continued education offers within the context of the Youth Guarantee

3.1 What are continued education offers and how are they currently used as part of the Youth Guarantee?

Young people across Europe benefit from education programmes that help them to acquire a recognised qualification and skills that are in high demand on the labour market. This includes professional skills as well as basic and transversal skills (including IT skills and entrepreneurial skills).

A range of measures offered under the Youth Guarantee aims to bring young people with low levels of skills and qualifications back to education and training. These measures are summarised by the term 'continued education offers'¹⁰. Continued education offers may provide a young person with the chance to re-enter the regular education and training system to move on to a higher level qualification. Alternatively, ALMPs, bridging courses or second chance education programmes can also equip early school leavers and low-skilled youth with the skills and qualifications needed for their sustainable labour market integration.

Variants of continued education offers exist in all countries. However, while there is a high number of low-skilled youth across Europe, in 2016 continued education offers represented only 12 % of all measures taken up by young people under the Youth Guarantee¹¹. Hence, there is room for improvement. Experience from the first three years of the Youth Guarantee shows that stepping up the efforts to upskill young people would require:

- More efficient outreach to young people with different profiles;
- A broader range of interventions, e.g. more complex, lengthier interventions for young people in the most vulnerable situations, particularly through pathway approaches;
- Attractive learning offers leading to skills that constitute valuable currency on the labour market;
- Intensified support delivered by a range of partners;
- A greater focus on engaging young people who are NEET, including those facing multiple disadvantage¹².

The Youth Guarantee monitoring¹³ shows that the majority (around two thirds) of continued education offers are currently provided in the form of ALMP interventions, while reinsertion to the regular education and training system within the Youth Guarantee framework is less common (only about one third of the offers).

Almost all continued education offers that are part of the regular education and training system lead to recognised qualifications. In most countries, at least some of the ALMP training measures also lead to recognised qualifications. On average, the training lasts for about six months. In more than 50 % of cases, the duration of training is not fixed, but can be adapted to participants' needs. In most schemes participants benefit from some form of financial support during training (training allowances, access to unemployment or other social benefits, grants/scholarships, reimbursement of travel expenses, relocation costs etc.), which is often subsidised through EU funding. Many offers also include personal support like counselling and supported learning, as well as work-based learning¹⁴.

EU financial support for the implementation of the Youth Guarantee

The **Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)** is one of the main EU financial resources to support the implementation of the Youth Guarantee. It exclusively supports young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs), ensuring that in parts of Europe where the challenges are most acute, young people can receive targeted support.

The total budget of the YEI is EUR 8.8 billion for the period 2014–2020. This funding is being used for a variety of measures that underpin the Youth Guarantee, ranging from outreach to vulnerable groups and activation, to hiring subsidies for the employment of young NEETs.

By September 2017, preliminary information from Member States to the Commission show that the YEI had supported approximately 1.7 million young NEETs. The impact of these interventions is positive with around half of the operations financed by the YEI leading to a positive outcome - that is, a qualification or a move into education/training, or employment (including self-employment). The assessment of many Member States, therefore, is that the YEI is having a significant impact on the coverage and design of employment policy in their country¹⁵.

The YEI is complementary not only to other actions undertaken at national level, but also to actions financed by the **European Social Fund (ESF)**. The ESF can reach out beyond individuals, helping to reform employment, education and training institutions and services – reforms that are often crucial for effective implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

Over the 2014-2020 programming period, the ESF— in addition to the YEI — directly invests at least EUR 6.3 billion to support the integration of young people into the labour market across Europe. Many successful projects under the Youth Guarantee have been financed by this investment. Furthermore, the ESF also supports young people in other ways through a total of EUR 26 billion to tackle early school leaving and invest in vocational education and training.

As mentioned above, most of the continued education offers are provided through ALMP measures, which often take place outside of formal education. However general education as well as VET also play a role, with the latter being particularly attractive to those young people who prefer hands-on practical learning over a more academic approach. Additionally, some countries have also put a focus on preventive measures, hence supporting young people who are at risk of early leaving from education and training.

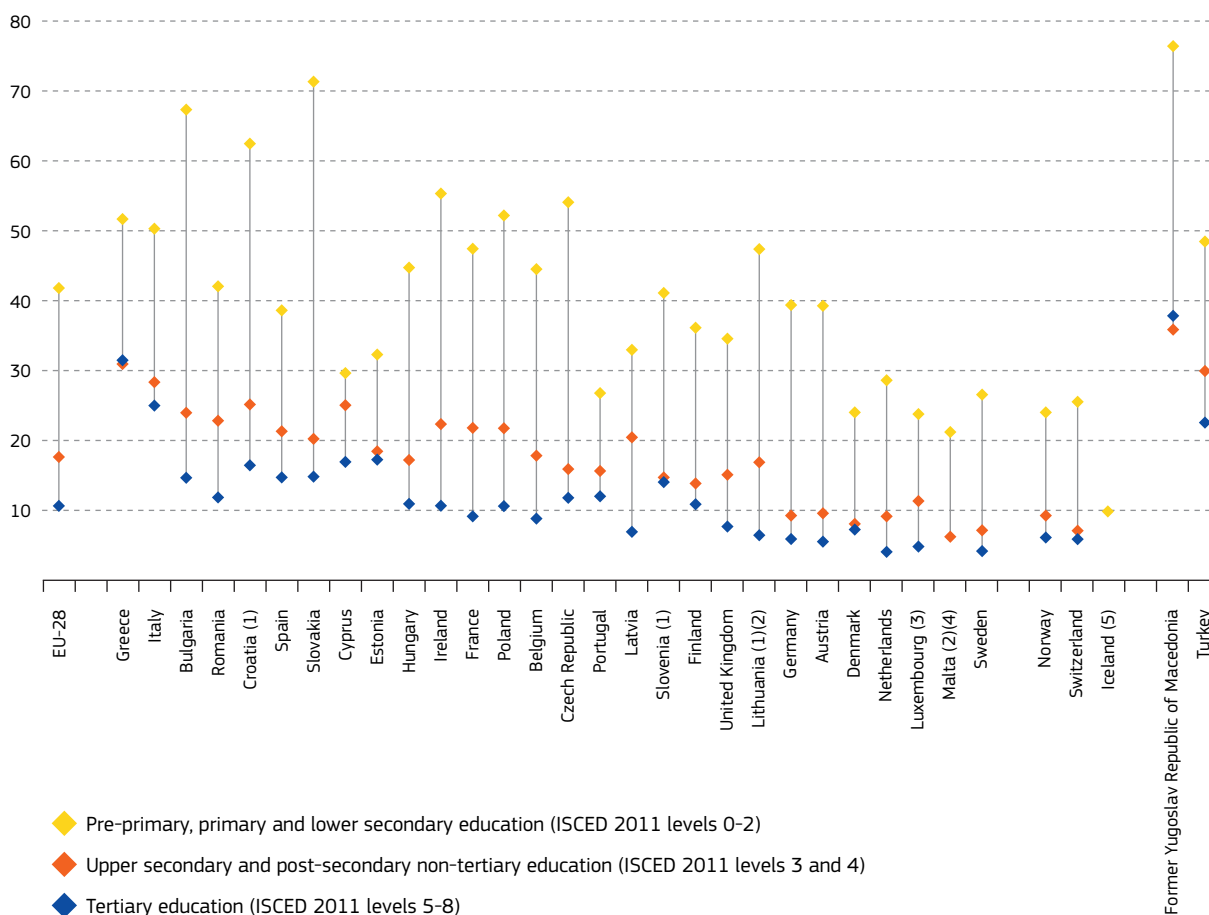
3.2 Who are the target groups of continued education offers?

The general target group of continued education offers is young people with a low level of skills, due to leaving education and training early, and whose level of qualifications does not allow them to access the labour market. This broader group includes several sub-groups of young people at risk of exclusion, for instance:

- Young people in general education and/or VET who are at risk of leaving early;
- Young people who have already left education and training early and who do not have a qualification;
- Low skilled youth (young people with a qualification below ISCED level 3);
- Young people who are NEET¹⁶.

Eurostat statistics show that the share of lower secondary education graduates among young people who are NEET is much higher than the share of upper secondary education graduates (Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. Share of young people (aged 25-29) who are NEET, by educational attainment and country, 2016



Note: ranked on the average share for all persons aged 25-29

(1) Pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education: low reliability

(2) Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education: low reliability

(3) Tertiary education: low reliability

(4) Tertiary education: not available due to a very low reliability

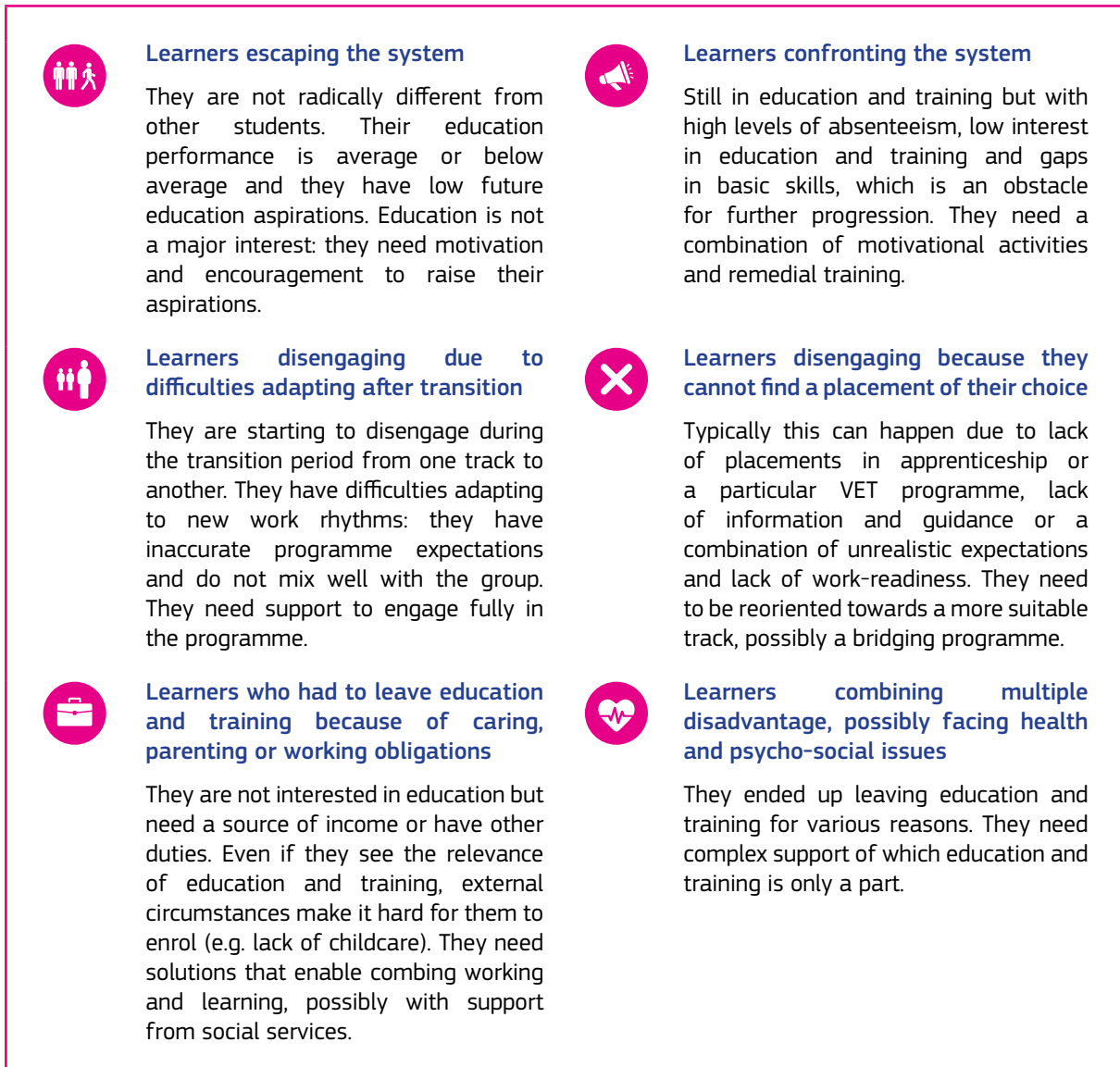
(5) Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education and tertiary education: not available due to a very low reliability

Source: Eurostat

Hence, an upper secondary qualification seems to be a protective factor which helps to avoid early leaving from education and training and social exclusion. Efforts should be made to prevent early leaving from education and training. Where it is too late, measures should be taken to re-integrate young people into education and training as soon as possible, so that the drop-out phase remains temporary.

Recent studies show that the profiles of young people who do not continue in education and training vary, and personal motivations and aptitudes play an important role. A two-volume Cedefop study from 2016¹⁷ identified six profiles of early leavers from education and training, and learners at risk of early leaving. The profiles also illustrate how different risk factors can interact and lead to early leaving from education and training and a low skills level.

Figure 2. Profiles of early leavers or learners at risk of early leaving from education & training



Source: Cedefop

The profiles show different levels of disengagement which result in various forms of reservations related to education and training. Continued education offers need to reflect on these specific characteristics, and actions need to be selected accordingly: in order to be effective in the various circumstances, policy-makers need to refine and target their responses (see Section 4.1.2)¹⁸.

Due to their disengagement, personal and social problems, these target groups can be particularly hard to reach. Some countries have had positive experiences with mobile or decentralised services to reach out to young people in their direct environment. Such measures help to reach out to young people who are at risk, so that counselling can be given and a decision on the right continued education offer can be made.

In **Lithuania** dedicated information campaigns target the hardest to reach NEETs, through the use of promotional mobile units which seek to talk to young people to try and re-engage them, including those in remote areas. In **Germany**, the Public Employment Services (PES) have established several mobile career information centres (BiZ-Mobil) that drive to different training institutions, e.g. schools, and job fairs, offering advice, information and counselling services, including to those who are living in smaller villages. In **Spain**, the region of Galicia carried out a three-month information campaign in 2015 targeting youth in rural areas. A mobile information booth in a bus provided information in 20 municipalities about opportunities available under the Youth Guarantee through collective seminars and individual assessment and guidance sessions. Staff also helped young people to register with the Youth Guarantee¹⁹.



3.3 What types of continued education offer are provided under the Youth Guarantee?

To respond to the very diverse profiles of at-risk young people, the continued education offers provided under the Youth Guarantee include a wide range of opportunities, which are discussed in this paper under five headings:

1. Preventive measures;
2. ALMP training schemes;
3. Reinsertion into the regular education and training system;
4. Bridging programmes;
5. Second chance programmes.

The next sections explain in more detail the specific types of offer under these headings, including examples from different countries.

3.3.1 Preventive measures

Prevention is better than cure: one of the most obvious ways to ensure young people acquire the skills they need to succeed in work and life is to prevent early leaving from education and training.

When young people leave education and training early, it can be for a number of reasons. They may struggle with the required learning style and pace, but language and cultural barriers, and socio-economic background can be important factors. Financial problems and poverty can drive young people to leave school and try to find a job instead. Research shows that many Member States have measures in place that aim to keep young people who are at risk of drop-out in education and training, and ensure they acquire a good level of qualifications²⁰. This includes individual (including financial) support, guidance and mentoring, collaboration with stakeholders outside of school, as well as inclusive learning environments.

Member States' strategies include the following approaches:

- **Avoiding multiple contact points, overlap in services and repetition of learning/support:** Young people can become frustrated and demotivated when they are referred from one institution to the next, and when training courses or support offers are repetitive and contain the same content (IT skills, writing a CV, interview training etc.). This can be avoided through close collaboration between schools, PES, youth work, VET-providers and other relevant actors, and by introducing case management.

An interesting approach in this regard seems to be targeted career guidance and counselling offered by PES and their partners (see also Sections 3.3.3 and 4.1.3). Helping young people to learn about their preferences and make better informed career choices through personalised coaching, information about career opportunities, or structured labour market entry programmes, can contribute to reducing drop-out. For instance, the introduction of Youth Employment Agencies and occupational counselling centres in **Germany** resulted in smoother labour market entry among affected school leavers²¹. Other countries (**Austria and Croatia**, inter alia) have the same type of vocational education centres at the PES (BIZ (BerufsInfoZentren) in AT and CISOK in HR).

A pilot project in **Norway** (run from 2013 to 2016) tested a model of cross-sectoral collaboration between the PES and upper secondary schools, with the aim to prevent young people from leaving education and training before acquiring an upper secondary qualification. 45 PES advisers from 33 PES offices were located in 28 upper secondary schools across Norway three days per week. Students were offered guidance on their aspirations and support in finding work experience opportunities, information on PES services, etc. The results were positive. In one school, the rate of early school leavers reduced from 4.8 % to 3.1 % between 2012/2013 and 2014/2015. Moreover, both parties' knowledge of each other was improved and the project helped to ensure that no young person was 'lost' between school and employment²².

- **Providing an inclusive educational environment:** Support measures need to acknowledge the different financial and psychological needs of students. It is also essential to promote inclusiveness and prevent discrimination in education and training environments. For example, as schools cannot work in isolation, a 'whole school approach' is a good measure to tackle complex challenges. Whole school approaches are based on collaborative practices in and around schools, including support to learners and teachers. This also extends to school governance, which should involve parents, local communities, and other stakeholders²³.
- **Helping learners understand the practical application of theoretical courses:** Young people who choose a vocational programme or an ALMP training expect learning to be of very practical use. They are interested in gaining skills they can use on the labour market and that are up-to-date and relevant to employers. If these expectations are not met (for instance because they have to carry out basic supportive tasks, or tasks that seem irrelevant to them), learners are more likely to leave the course early. Learners can also become demotivated if they realise that the content or equipment used in training are outdated, or if they do not see the practical application of what they learn in the vocational programme²⁴.
- **Easing the transition into the world of work:** Work-based learning has been shown to decrease the risk of early school leaving, possibly because it fosters life skills and increases motivation. For many young people who choose work-based learning or apprenticeships, this may be their first experience in the world of work. Ideally, a welcoming and supportive work environment with good learning opportunities can be very motivating and contribute to attaining a qualification. However, work-based learning can also be discouraging and lead to early leaving from education and training. This may be due to a mismatch between the learners' expectations and the reality of the profession, or to a lack of work readiness. For instance, some learners struggle to cope with tough working conditions such as long working hours, weekend shifts, hard manual labour, or high levels of pressure and stress. Others are disappointed to have to do less motivating tasks (e.g. cleaning) in the beginning of their placement²⁵. Hence, while work-based learning can help to keep young people in education and training, efforts should be made to ensure that young people's first work experience is a good one.

3.3.2 ALMP Training schemes

As shown by the Youth Guarantee monitoring data²⁶, a large share of continued education offers are provided through ALMPs. ALMPs for young people include a broad range of supply side and demand side measures.

- On the **supply side** this includes special training schemes for young people, as well as all services provided by the PES including unemployment, disability and other welfare-related benefit measures – or a combination of both.
- On the **demand side** this includes direct job creation schemes, employment subsidy schemes, and some special schemes for youth, which consist predominantly of subsidised training programmes²⁷.

A large variety of ALMP programmes is on offer. ALMP training includes diverse forms of learning, ranging from purely classroom-based training (e.g. language courses) to different types of work-based learning in companies, with varying durations (from a couple of weeks to over a year). Many of the schemes discussed in the following sections (vocational training courses in the regular system, bridging courses, second chance offers, see Sections 3.3.3 to 3.3.5) could also be offered as an ALMP, or could be supported by subsidies and/or wage-substituting measures issued by PES – especially where PES take the lead in the case management of young people.

Often ALMP training programmes take place outside of the regular (formal) education and training pathways, and have been specially designed to provide young unemployed persons with training that is strongly linked to labour market demands. The purpose of these labour market training programmes is to extend or to adapt the labour market relevant skills-set of participants, so that a faster and more stable integration into employment can be achieved.

For instance, in the Brussels region of **Belgium**, the Traineeship First scheme (previously Transition Traineeships) was initiated in May 2013. The ALMP measure targets young jobseekers and students registered at the PES, whose educational level does not exceed upper secondary education. The average age of trainees is 22 years. Participants can join a company for 3 to 6 months to gain a first professional experience and increase their skills through on-the-job training. The measure puts a particular focus on coaching and follow-up for participants. From May 2013 until the end of 2015, 1,753 traineeships were concluded, mostly in four professional areas: administration, commerce and sales support, the food industry, and security and cleaning. This measure shows some promising results: 73 % of the trainees took up an offer of employment or education after the measure, compared to 47 % among similar young unemployed people who did not take part in the programme²⁸. 12 months after the end of the traineeship the employment rate of participants still stood at 64 % (45 % in the control group).

The PICE (*Programa Integral de Cualificación y Empleo*) programme in **Spain** targets unemployed young people with different profiles. Young people who do not have qualifications or work experience are offered training that focuses on basic skills (numeracy, literacy, digital skills). The goal is to prepare them to access further education or dual training programmes. Young people with work experience but no qualifications are also offered training, but rather in vocational skills, to ensure they have skills that are recognised by the labour market. This could also entail realigning their careers towards professions that are in greater demand. The programme also includes offers for young people with qualifications, e.g. work placements, in-company training or mobility programmes²⁹. In **Slovakia**, the KOMPAS+³⁰ scheme supports the development of jobseekers' key competences, such as communication, language and IT skills through full-time or part-time training, but is not designed to lead to a qualification.

However, in some cases young people are not ready for the labour market and/or regular education. Programmes need to ensure they rediscover their motivation for learning. In **Slovenia**, Project Learning for Young Adults (PUM-O) targets young people aged 15 to 26 who have not completed primary or secondary education and are registered at the PES. It aims to bring early school leavers back to education by showing them learning can be fun, and can lead to direct results. Learning takes place in school, but through specific educational activities and in the form of project work, which enables young people to create and work in accordance with their wishes, interests and abilities. Mentors who work in the programme give advice on how the abandoned education can be continued, and they accompany the participants to other institutions and measures, where needed (e.g. arranging the status of residence in the Republic of Slovenia, learning Slovenian as a foreign language, etc.). In 2014 and 2015, 55 young people went through this programme; 42 of them (65 %) finalised the school year and went on to the next year³¹.

ALMP training programmes do not always include learning outcomes related to subjects in general education (languages, mathematics, sciences etc.), or cover all learning outcomes related to a full qualification. Therefore, they may not lead to a qualification that is pegged to the National Qualification Framework (NQF). However, under the Youth Guarantee many Member States have made an effort to ensure ALMP training programmes result in learning outcomes that are compatible with qualifications, and form a basis to build on with further education and training.

For instance, in [Austria](#), the PES (AMS) offers two types of educational measures, depending on the maturity of the young person: vocational orientation (bridging courses, but also work trials and traineeships), and vocational qualification (education and training, leading to a recognised qualification). In practice, mixed forms are common, hence bridging courses may already lead to learning outcomes that are a first step towards a qualification.

In the long-run, training programmes seem to bring the largest return in terms of human capital investment, compared to other ALMP measures. Hence it remains an important challenge for policy-makers to develop activation schemes that benefit young people with very low skills, low motivation and/or from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. Besides training, promising strategies for disadvantaged youth should also comprise intensive mentoring programmes and programmes that take into account social or health-related factors that may be the source of a difficult labour market entry³².



3.3.3 Reinsertion into the regular education and training system

This heading covers all pathways to continue or re-enter formal education and training and includes quality training programmes leading to a recognised qualification.

Courses in the regular education and training system are an obvious way to acquire a high-quality qualification. However, people who have left education before completing lower or upper secondary education can find it hard to return. They may not meet the entry requirements for available courses, or there can be a lack of lower secondary programmes for adults, which can lead to further exclusion. It can also be a warning sign that the education and training system of a country lacks flexibility and permeability, and cannot sufficiently integrate persons with a less straightforward learning biography.

To address this, in **France**, for early school leavers aged between 16 and 25, a legal right to get back into education or training has been introduced³³. Similarly, in **Finland**, an education guarantee secures every compulsory school graduate a place in further education or training (or a preparatory or rehabilitation programme). The principles for allocating study places for upper secondary and vocational studies were changed to give priority to applicants who have completed their basic education but do not hold a study place in general upper secondary and general vocational education³⁴.

In general, the VET sector can be a good alternative for young people who do not succeed in general education. It offers practical training rather than academic learning, and can be a more efficient way of progressing towards a qualification. Flexible and individual pathways that enable learners in VET to move within and across education/training and employment offer interesting options to re-integrate early leavers, especially where opportunities for the recognition of prior learning exists.

In **Finland**, increasing demands towards VET along with decreasing availability of financial resources triggered the need for a comprehensive VET reform which has been in place since 2017. The VET reform includes a fully flexible application and admission system (with enrolment based on year-round admissions) and competence-based, individual study paths for all. Objectives for competence development will be written down in a personal competence development plan, drawn up by a teacher together with the student. Moreover, the Finnish reform includes versatile learning environments and more studying at workplaces (including the use of simulators and digital learning platforms)³⁵.

Repetition of learning can be demotivating for young people. Learners who are able to re-enter education and training, but are required to start from the beginning again, can be discouraged by the need to repeat content they have already covered in earlier courses³⁶. Skills assessments and validation of non-formal and informal learning can be a helpful tool in such cases. They create more flexibility for young people who have left education and training early.

In **Denmark**, since 2015, all learners over the age of 25 who consider going back to education and training and enrolling in VET, have to go through an obligatory skills assessment. The same offer is made to younger people, if they don't come straight from lower secondary school. The skills assessment is undertaken with a view to identify relevant prior learning and recognising this in relation to the initial vocational education and training (IVET) programme the learners will be pursuing. The skills assessment process is free for the learner, and may – depending on his or her educational background and previous experience – take from half a day to 10 days. It is conducted by vocational teachers and/or guidance counsellors at a vocational school, and it consists of an appraisal of qualifications from formal learning and an assessment of skills acquired in non-formal and informal contexts. Learning outcomes from non-formal and informal learning are assessed through documentation submitted by employers, interviews and in some cases tests (written/oral as well as practical tests). The identified learning outcomes are compared against the learning objectives of the programme, and are validated in relation to this. Subsequently, an individual learning plan is elaborated which ensures that the learner can accomplish his or her programme without having to duplicate learning. Upon completion of the programme, the learners acquire a regular VET-qualification.

Making skills visible: Skills assessment and validation

Many young people who have left education and training early and with a low level of qualifications are not actually low-skilled. They may have acquired labour-market relevant skills through their personal and/or work experiences. Those skills are hardly ever documented and young people may not even be aware that they have them and that they can be of value. Making those skills visible through validation means that young people can use them for their job search. Validation can also mean that the time needed to acquire a qualification can be reduced. For instance, a young person who decides to become a cook may already have experience in preparing certain dishes and applying certain cooking techniques from previous courses or from experiences as an unqualified worker in the sector, and can thus be exempted from this part of the training.

Validating prior learning also means that learners can adapt their learning pathway as they progress, to better suit their interests and abilities. Across Europe, existing validation arrangements provide individuals with a range of opportunities to have their skills recognised (in the form of credits, reduced training time, or even in form of a full qualification), or can simply be a way of helping them to formulate a learning/career pathway for the future.

Validation arrangements often include a skills assessment, which can be a theoretical test, an interview, or even a work trial. Validation includes the identification, documentation, assessment and certification of skills from non-formal and informal learning. This may include skills acquired through hobbies and leisure activities, in private life or in non-formal education.

In **Portugal**, a new network of validation centres has recently been authorised: CQEP (*Centros para a Qualificação e Ensino Profissional* / Centres for Qualification and Vocational Training). These Centres provide credits for non-formal and informal learning which can be accumulated towards qualifications at basic and secondary level. The target group is young adults aged between 18 and 23, who have at least three years of professional or certified experience. Moreover, the Portuguese programme RETOMAR³⁷ promotes the return to education and training in the context of higher education of young NEETs who have previously dropped out of training or a study programme, and wish to start a different academic path. The objective is to combat early leaving from higher education, taking into account criteria of social inclusion and employability. Each year scholarships are given to students to motivate them to complete their studies and to prepare for labour market needs. During the academic year of 2014-2015, 196 beneficiaries were reached and 250 in 2015-2016³⁸.

In the **Netherlands**, the policy framework Drive to reduce drop-out rates (*Aanval op schooluitval*) has set a clear target: 20,000 early school leavers aged 18-23 have the opportunity to have the skills, experiences and competences they acquired through work experience validated. This initiative is targeted at young people who do not have basic qualifications but are active in the labour market³⁹.

While validation schemes usually aim to reduce training time for the learner, there are also approaches which acknowledge that some students – especially those with low skills – may take more time to learn than others and should not be rushed. In the French-speaking community of **Belgium**, Certification Per Unit (CPU) allows VET students to acquire a qualification gradually and at their own pace: a learning outcome unit related to a VET course is awarded when the student has acquired all related learning outcomes, not when the course/training time is finished. This approach enables a young person to follow their personal learning style, and can help to avoid failure and year repetition, or drop-out⁴⁰.

In the regular education and training systems, work-based learning offers particularly interesting opportunities for young people who prefer learning through a more practice-oriented approach (see also Sections 3.3.1 and 3.4).

What types of work-based learning can be identified across education and training systems in Europe?

According to the policy handbook 'Work-based learning in Europe'⁴¹, work-based learning is a fundamental aspect of vocational training, and a necessary pre-condition to help learners acquire the knowledge, skills and competences that are essential in working life. The policy handbook identifies three main models of work-based learning across Europe:

1. **Apprenticeships**⁴², which are fundamentally based on the integration of companies as training providers together with VET schools or other education/training institutes. In these programmes, learners typically alternate between learning in school and learning in the company. Apprenticeships are characterised by a high share of learning in the company (50 % or more)⁴³.
2. **School-based VET which includes on-the-job training periods in companies**. On-the-job training periods typically cover internships, work placements or traineeships that are incorporated as a compulsory or optional element in VET programmes leading to formal qualifications. They can be of varying duration but typically represent less than 50 % of the training programme duration (often around 25-30 % or less).
3. **Work-based learning that is integrated in a school-based programme** through on-site labs, workshops, kitchens, restaurants, junior or practice firms, simulations or real business/industry project assignments. The aim is to create 'real life' work environments, establish contacts and /or cooperation with real companies or clients, and develop entrepreneurship competences⁴⁴.



3.3.4 Bridging programmes

As stated in the previous section, VET can be a good alternative for young people who are at risk of exclusion, who struggle in general education. But in many countries VET and apprenticeships include high-quality education and training pathways that do not necessarily target those at risk. Hence, sometimes regular vocational qualification pathways are too demanding for the target group. Preparatory measures need to be taken first. Such offers are called 'bridging programmes', or low-threshold programmes. They can effectively support young people facing multiple disadvantages to find their way and re-accustom themselves gradually to a learning and working environment, so they are ready to take up an offer under the Youth Guarantee.

Examples of bridging programmes can include:

- **Motivating young people to re-discover their interest in learning:** Many low-skilled young people have experienced difficulties at school which has undermined their confidence in their own capacities and their interest in education and training. A tailored counselling approach as well as hands-on learning opportunities can help to build up confidence and motivation. In **Lithuania** 4,000 young NEETs aged 16-25 participated in the ESF-funded project Trust Yourself from September 2013 to November 2015. They received three or six months of social rehabilitation services and preparation for employment. Just over half - 56 % - of the participants subsequently integrated into the labour market or the educational system⁴⁵. In **Luxembourg**, the National Youth Service organises 'creative workshops' for young people not yet ready to follow a PES programme or take up an education offer, who need an intermediate step. A large proportion of participants have started a vocational training, a voluntary service or followed a PES programme once the workshop finished⁴⁶.
- **Guiding young people to make the right choices:** A well-developed guidance system can help young people to set achievable goals and make career choices that are effective in the long-run. For instance, in **Denmark**, youth guidance centres are responsible for guidance in the transition between lower and upper secondary schools. These centres organise guidance sessions at lower secondary schools in collaboration with school principals. Students develop an educational logbook either on their own or together with a youth guidance counsellor. The goal of the logbook is to enable the student to make decisions about his/her future education and career. In the penultimate and final year of lower secondary education, the logbook should include information on the planned transition to upper secondary education. The lower secondary school teacher conducts an assessment of the 'study preparedness' of each student to decide whether the student needs additional guidance. If the conclusion of the assessment is that the student is not ready for upper secondary education, s/he will take part in a bridging programme.



Preparatory courses: By immersing young people into student life, including its social aspects, it is expected that they will feel more confident in their ability to continue education. This can include ‘tasters’ which ideally lead to a first module or unit of a vocational programme which is recognised a part of the actual training. Examples include:

- In **Cyprus**, the New Modern Apprenticeship Scheme includes preparatory apprenticeships that support early school leavers to enter regular apprenticeship programmes. Quite often, preparatory courses include training to bring young people to the level of literacy and numeracy required for a certain training path⁴⁷.
 - In **Austria**, production schools support disadvantaged young people, or young people with disabilities, aged between 15 and 19 (if necessary up to 25) who need to improve their social and basic skills and who have not completed compulsory education. This programme combines social pedagogic support and work to learn basic skills, including literacy and numeracy⁴⁸.
 - In **Denmark**, in the Building Bridges to Education initiative, young people can sign up to a bridging course at the PES. Within a few days they are placed at a vocational school where they study on ‘regular’ courses. Each participant has a mentor supporting them throughout their time in the programme and beyond. The mentor helps them to select courses and short internships (on average lasting three months) at vocational schools and enterprises. On average, participants spend 15 weeks in the programme, although this can be shorter or longer, depending on their needs. After the completion of the bridging course the mentor supports young person until they enrol in mainstream education⁴⁹.
 - **Latvia** offers Youth workshops to help young NEETs with a low level of education or who do not have work experience to make an informed decision about their future education and employment choices, to develop their skills, including literacy and numeracy skills. Young people are given an opportunity to try out one, two or three different vocational programmes, spending an average of two weeks in each programme in one or more vocational education institutions. They participate in the programme full time (five times a week for at least six hours per day), supported by a monthly allowance of EUR 60 (EUR 90 for young unemployed with disabilities) during their participation. At least 60 % of the programme is composed of practical classes and the remaining 40 % of theoretical classes⁵⁰.
 - In **Belgium**, the EPICURIS⁵¹ project offers young people opportunities to discover, through ‘tasters’, different professions in the food sector.
- **Tailoring learning pathways to young people’s interests and learning styles:** A ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach cannot be used for young people who are at risk of leaving education early, or for those who have already done so. Some VET systems provide individualised educational responses, for instance by using individual learning or career plans. In **Finland** for example, the VET system has been reformed to that effect and uses individual learning plans for all students. These plans refer to the content of the learning and the way it is delivered, as well as any additional learning support. This can help to ensure that learners are following a pathway that suits their interests and learning styles, as well as helping to tackle any barriers they face⁵². In the Brussels region of Belgium, personalised instruction workshops were set up within the Public Centres for Social Action (CPAS/OCMW) to support welfare recipients under 25 to undertake skills training or resume their studies. The project combines the strengths of CPAS/OCMW advisors (proximity, knowledge of the target groups and their economic and social constraints) and Social Promotion educators (educational flexibility, knowledge of local educational and training programmes) to develop alternative learning methods⁵³.

3.3.5 Second chance programmes

Second chance programmes as part of continued education offers provide a means to return to education and acquire an upper secondary degree or a qualification.

As pointed out, a young person's chances to enter the labour market improve significantly when he or she acquires an upper secondary qualification. However the personal circumstances of young people with low skills may not allow a return to full-time education. For example, some young adults need to work due to their (family's) economic situation. Others may have children and caring responsibilities. Second chance measures are often designed and delivered in a way that accommodates those circumstances. Schemes that allow work and education to be combined can provide young people with the flexibility they need to re-engage in education. Alternatively, second chance education opportunities may be delivered outside normal study hours and may include a combination of online learning and traditional face-to-face instructions⁵⁴.

Compared to other countries, the share of unemployed participating in education or training in **Sweden** is high. Since 2017, adults aged 20-24 who have already left the formal education system and are out of work are entitled to access adult education.⁵⁵ Education contracts with the PES and the municipality encourage them to complete upper secondary education within the adult education system or at a folk high school. Studies can be combined with a job, work placement or another part-time labour market programme. Furthermore, second chance schools in Sweden can be attended in the evening, giving the possibility to work during the day. In **Latvia**, second chance education programmes of 1 to 1.5 years were initiated in 2014, with the support of VET schools for those with very low skills⁵⁶.

The traditional, classroom-based and teacher-centred approach to learning is not appropriate for all young people and lead to very negative connotations with the concept of 'school' and 'learning'. An evaluation of second chance programmes across Europe shows that 'schemes have typically achieved the most success where they emphasise their distinctiveness from mainstream schools. Most programmes have been careful to avoid negative associations with initial education, whilst at the same time ensuring that the learning opportunities are presented as a credible pathway (which might include gaining a formal qualification)⁵⁷. This is supported by evoking strong associations with the world of work. Second chance programmes are often inspired by VET pedagogies. Moreover, they often emphasise the respect shown by teachers and other education professionals towards the students and their circumstances⁵⁸. In **France**, for at-risk pupils aged 15 or more, a specific 'adapted initial training path' combining regular education with out-of-school activities is being piloted⁵⁹.

In **Luxembourg**, a Second Chance School (*École de la deuxième Chance - E2C*) was established by the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth in 2011 to give young people a second chance either to finish their school education or to gain the qualifications they need to find a job. Based on their skills and interests, learners choose a personal project to complete. Using the information gathered during the enrolment process, the educational team draws up a training plan, consisting of the courses offered by the E2C. A strong emphasis is placed on personal guidance and tutoring. All learners have a 'personal coach' to guide them during their time at the E2C. To facilitate this, the E2C aims to keep a low staff-student ratio. As of September 2017, the staff consists of 90 employees for 420 students. The E2C also has strong partnerships with companies which provide workshops and offer internships to learners. Once the training has been completed, the E2C issues the learners school reports and a diploma for completing both practical and theoretical courses⁶⁰.

For young people with complex barriers to learning (e.g. health issues, housing, etc.), some second chance measures take a holistic approach and provide support to tackle these barriers, alongside formal learning, through a multi-professional case management approach (see Section 3.4).

3.4 Complex interventions and multifaceted responses

A key feature of the Youth Guarantee is the four-month timeline, which is essential to ensure swift activation into a Youth Guarantee offer. Monitoring data show however that some young people – especially those with the most vulnerable, at-risk profiles – need more complex interventions and take longer before being ready and able to take up a continued education offer. Intensified support delivered by a range of partners can help to better address the needs of all target groups⁶¹.

Monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of continued education offers⁶² has identified success factors for continued education approaches:

- **Pursuing a partnership approach:** Facilitating greater coordination between stakeholders active in the field;
- **Pursuing a pathway approach:** Ensuring linkages and coherence between different services and a seamless service for the learner;
- **Availability of continued education offers leading to basic skills** (literacy, numeracy, digital skills);
- **Availability of continued education offers leading to a recognised qualification** which is in demand on the labour market;
- **Individualised approaches:** Ensuring that at-risk young people have learning opportunities that meet their needs, including additional support for those with multiple disadvantages; and
- **Tailored settings and pedagogies** that facilitate re-engagement.

Examples of complex interventions and multi-faceted responses that include several or all of these success factors can be identified. These include:

- **One-stop-shops:** Some young people face challenges in different areas of their lives. As a consequence, they may have to deal with multiple institutions, and this can have a detrimental effect, especially on young people who are hard to reach. One-stop-shops (also referred to as ‘case management’) work on the full range of challenges the person faces in parallel. The young person is in contact with one professional only (a ‘keyworker’ e.g. counsellor, coach or mentor) or a small multidisciplinary team in the same setting. These ‘case managers’ act as intermediaries and liaise with other services. They coordinate the responses so as to deliver tailor-made, multifaceted support.

Some countries have established specialised youth services based on the one-stop-shop principle. For instance, in **Germany**, Youth Employment Agencies address the challenge of facilitating young people’s transition from school to the labour market by combining the services of several actors: youth work, youth welfare services and career guidance counselling (PES). Ideally, they all reside in one location to facilitate seamless service delivery to meet the needs of students during the transition from school to work and the needs of young unemployed people. Specific emphasis is put on preventive measures – i.e. addressing young people while they are still in school – to make sure that school leavers are well prepared for their first step into the labour market. Those who do not succeed in finding a job or an apprenticeship are offered help through ALMPs. Intervention measures such as career guidance and job counselling are also used. Close collaboration enables the different actors to make an offer to everybody – so that no one is left behind. In **Croatia**, the CISOK youth guidance centres run by PES have a similar role⁶³.

- **Close cooperation between subsidised ALMP training, second chance programmes and regular education settings:** it is important for knowledge exchange to take place at all management as well as practitioner levels. This might include management and head-teacher or teacher exchanges; joint training and development of teachers and support staff; twinning between second chance and initial education schools, and co-location and shared management structures to ensure that cooperation is fully embedded.

- **Pathway approaches:** Managing transitions between schemes is the focus of so-called 'pathway approaches'. Pathway approaches recognise that measures are often short-lived and each transition provides a new challenge and a risk that the young person will leave education and training early. Therefore, pathway approaches cover more than one stage and ensure ongoing one-on-one coaching and mentoring can help to maintain a young person's motivation to learn. These approaches can support young people during the initial stages of a new pathway, or during transitions from one Youth Guarantee scheme to another. In **Germany**, the 'Educational chains until the completion of training' initiative helps young people to prepare for their school leaving qualification and their career entry in a targeted manner. The Federal Ministry for Education and Research, the Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs and the Federal PES have joined forces with the federal states (Laender) to interlink successful instruments. The overall aim is to place every young person interested in training into a VET programme. For this reason, the vocational orientation process begins at an early stage and is conducted in a systematic manner. Where required, young people receive individual support to achieve a qualification and integrate into the working world. Various measures of support are available across the country⁶⁴.
- **Work-based learning:** Many young people who are at risk of leaving education and training early prefer practical, hands-on training over academic learning, especially when it takes place in real or close-to-real work situations, and they can directly see the value of their tasks. Work-based learning entails learning environments and pedagogies that can appeal to at-risk youth and can play an important role in re-integrating them into education and training. Work-based learning should not be regarded as a specific measure though. It is rather a way of learning that is integrated into VET programmes across Europe in different ways (see Section 3.3.3).
- **Training leading to a qualification that is in demand by employers or another tangible learning outcome:** Young people expect training to lead to a tangible outcome that provides real currency on the labour market. This can be a qualification that is in demand with employers, but it can also be another tangible learning outcome. In **Portugal, Austria and Italy**, for example, interventions show a focus on preparation for future employment by providing courses on transversal skills (IT skills, entrepreneurial skills and language skills)⁶⁵. Many countries are reforming their VET systems to facilitate, among other things, the acquisition of skills needed on the labour market.

Moreover, closer collaboration, knowledge and data exchange between PES and education and training providers can help to achieve this goal⁶⁶.

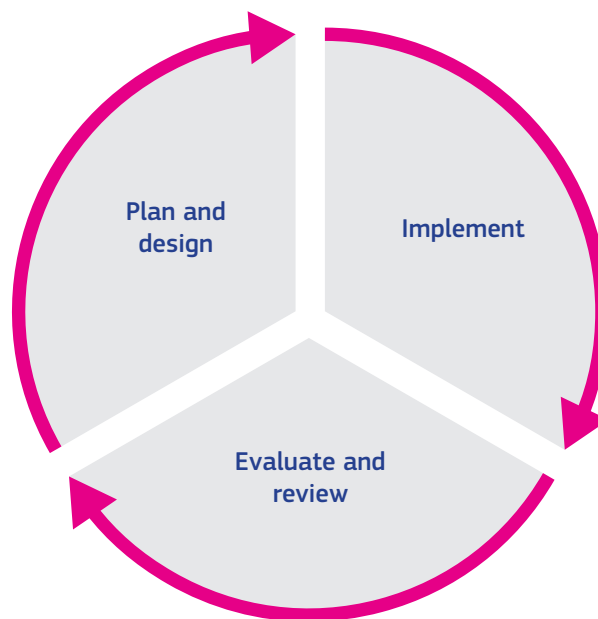
4 Planning, designing and implementing effective continued education offers

This section will discuss the implementation of effective continued education offers. It aims to provide practical ideas and inspiration to policy makers and stakeholders who are aiming to review and amend their offers. The suggested approach is based on a quality circle with three stages: *Plan and Design*, *Implement*, and *Evaluate and Review*, which can be applied (but not exclusively) in the context of Youth Guarantee delivery. The three stages are interrelated to create a continuous improvement cycle.

1. The **Plan and Design stage** can be used to define and agree objectives, priority target groups, tools and measures and the key players for continued education offers.
2. During the **Implementation stage** the concrete steps needed to put in place the agreed objectives, tools and measures will be carried out.
3. During the **Evaluate and Review stage** a framework should be set up that will help to assess whether the new initiatives have been successful and have led to sustainable change for the individual beneficiary, and to more broader impact, e.g. on youth unemployment rates.

Results from the monitoring will feed back into the first stage so that *Planning and Designing* can be refined and *Implementation* can be improved as part of the continuous cycle.

Figure 3. Quality cycle for the successful implementation of policies and practices



4.1 Stage 1: Plan and design

This first stage consists of the planning and designing of a pathway for the upskilling and re-integration of young people, using continued education offers. This can include a range of mapping and scoping activities which could be undertaken to get a better view of the priority target groups of young people who are at risk in the country or region, the current offer and the gaps in the offer, and the stakeholders involved. The mapping and scoping activities will provide important information to plan and design effective continued education offers for the identified target groups, and set up partnerships between the main stakeholders for the implementation phase.

Hence, the plan and design stage could consist of three steps:

- Step 1: Define the priority target groups by country/region,
- Step 2: Decide on the right measures for the upskilling and re-integration of your priority target groups,
- Step 3: Identify the key players.

The following sections provide suggestions of how to approach the three steps and give successful examples of how they have been addressed by countries so far.

4.1.1 Define priority target groups

As outlined in Section 3.2, within the group of low-skilled youth, different profiles can be identified. For policy makers planning and designing their policy responses, it is key to know what target groups are a priority in their context. Where national and regional research data are available, these should be used, or relevant research can be undertaken.

Taking a closer look at the target groups in a country or region is interesting in several regards:

- It reveals more clearly which groups are more vulnerable than others,
- It gives a better view of the size of specific groups and their characteristics, e.g. age cohorts, social background, etc.,
- It shows which groups are already addressed or are not yet addressed, for instance in the context of the Youth Guarantee. It might be worthwhile looking into synergies with measures developed for the target group 25+ which is the focus of the 2016 COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION 'Upskilling Pathways'⁶⁷.

Upskilling Pathways for young adults (25+)

While the Youth Guarantee addresses young people up to the age of 25, research has shown that in many countries there are groups of low-skilled people above this age limit who would benefit from participating in continued education offers⁶⁸.

The COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION 'Upskilling Pathways' addresses low-skilled adults (25+) and has the aim of helping adults to acquire a minimum level of literacy, numeracy and digital skills and/or acquire a broader set of skills by progressing towards an upper secondary qualification or equivalent (level 3 or 4 in the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) depending on national circumstances).

Upskilling Pathways target adults who are not eligible for Youth Guarantee support. They may be in employment, unemployed or economically inactive, with a need to strengthen their basic skills.

Upskilling Pathways entail three key steps:

Step 1 – Skills Assessment: This is to enable adults to identify their existing skills and any needs for upskilling. It may take the form of a 'skills audit': a statement of the individual's skills that can be the basis for planning a tailored offer of learning.

Step 2 – Tailored and flexible learning offer: The beneficiary will receive an offer of education and training meeting the needs identified by the skills assessment. The offer should aim to boost literacy, numeracy or digital skills or allow progress towards a qualification aligned to labour market needs.

Step 3 – Validation and recognition: The beneficiary will have the opportunity to have the skills she or he has acquired validated and recognised.

The different needs and characteristics of the various sub-groups should be taken into account, and when designing interventions, a 'one-size-fits-all' approach may not prove useful.

Consequently, while an individualised and diversified understanding is needed, identifying groups and clusters is a planning tool, and should not lead to 'labelling' customers or 'cementing' a certain situation. Young people can quickly grow out of a certain behaviour, and a new environment can change a lot. This means that the analysis and assessment of young people at risk needs to be updated regularly and at short intervals, in order to keep up with rapid changes⁶⁹.

4.1.2 Decide on the right measures for upskilling and re-integration of young people

To decide on the right tools and measures to facilitate the re-insertion of young people into the education and training system, some Member States find it important to examine the current landscape and to take stock of existing measures that can be used to capitalise and build on.

Within the target group of low-skilled youth, young peoples' profiles will show different levels of disengagement which result in different forms of reservations related to education and training. Continued education offers should reflect this in order to be effective. The table below gives a summary of the profiles introduced in Section 3.2, and a brief overview of what types of continued education offers would be suitable for each target group.

Risk Profile	Profile	Characteristics	Policy Response
 Increasing Risk	Learners escaping the system, and Learners confronting the system	<p>Learners who are still in education and training but start to disengage out of a lack of aspiration and/or interest</p> <p>Learners who are still in education and training but show a high level of absenteeism, truancy, and rebellious behaviour</p>	<p>Preventive measures, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective guidance systems to support young people to make the right choices • Early warning systems to prevent early leaving • Tailoring learning pathways to young people's interests and learning styles, and motivating them for further learning • Setting up partnerships with actors outside of the education system (e.g. youth work and NGOs) to involve the entire community in the prevention of early leaving from education and training
	Learners disengaging due to difficulties to adapt after transition (e.g. from school to VET)	Learners who have difficulties to adapt to the new learning environment, e.g. due to a mix of wrong expectations and personal issues in integrating with the new learning group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective guidance systems to support young people in making the right choices • Early warning systems to prevent early leaving • Preparatory programmes (including 'tasters') • Tailoring learning pathways to young people's interests and learning styles, and motivating them for further learning • Fostering inclusive and supportive work-based learning environments
	Learners disengaging because they cannot find a placement	Young people who are trying to find a place in a course or a VET placement, but struggle to find something - due to a lack of available places, lack of information, or a combination of mismatched expectations and lack of work readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALMP training schemes adapted to young people's interests and learning styles • ALMPs to support employers in providing more placements • Tailoring learning pathways to young people's interests and learning styles
	Young people who left education and training because of caring, parenting or working obligations	Young parents, young people who have to care for family members, or young people who have to work to sustain their family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridging programmes • Second chance programmes • Flexible learning pathways • Financial support
	Young people who left education and training and suffer multiple disadvantages, possibly facing health and psycho-social issues	Young people with multiple and complex problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridging programmes • Second chance programmes • ALMP training schemes adapted to young people's interests and learning styles • Comprehensive support addressing complex needs (case management)

Given the diversity of profiles of young people with low skills, it is important to note that continued education policies and practice are one possible option to support them in their transition to the labour market. Another option would be to support young people in developing their skills through work experience. However this should not just consist in a job as an unqualified worker, but should rather be a training scheme that combines work and training. For instance, traineeships are a widely used way for young people to gain valuable skills needed on the labour market⁷⁰.

The decision of whether to 'work first or to train first' should be based on certain principles and observations on what works for whom. As discussed earlier, some young people have to work to make a living and provide for themselves or their family. Others are simply keen to get out of the school environment.

Examples show that no matter whether an intervention starts with work or training, both options should eventually lead to upskilling and improving a young person's chances on the labour market.



Work first or train first: A question of either/or, or can both aspects be combined?⁷¹

The Directorate of Labour and Welfare (PES) in **Norway** developed a pathway approach to reintegrate low-skilled young people and adults that offered both options – work first and train first.

The starting point for the intervention was a high share of unemployment and social benefit recipients, and high rates of early leavers from upper secondary school. The intervention had two main goals: increase completion and reduce early leaving from education and training; and get young people back to school, or into work. Depending on the beneficiaries' needs, two pathways were offered.

1. 'Train first' pathway:

The train first pathway started with an alternance scheme (a combination of learning in school and training at the workplace). Students who chose this pathway went to school one day a week, and were in supervised work-practice for the rest of the week. Members of the project team were placed partly in school and partly in an industrial park, to provide support to the young people, and work closely with school staff and employers.

2. 'Work first' pathway:

In the work first pathway, low-skilled young people were offered work practice by an employer as part of a subsidised ALMP scheme. During the work practice period the employer focused on relevant work skills (including basic skills), to demonstrate the relevance of these skills for a worker in order to do his/her work. The aim was to increase the awareness of how relevant training is for certain job profiles, especially for getting a permanent job offer and moving on in their career. The objective was to motivate youth to go back to school.

At the end of the project, a majority of participants was in full-time or part-time education. Some had a regular job, and a few in ALMP schemes. Early leaving from education and training was reduced.

Another option is to develop training offers that embed training in basic skills in more practical training. For instance, in Folk High Schools in **Poland**, training to improve literacy and numeracy is embedded in cooking and sewing classes, as participants are required to read and understand recipes, or take and calculate measurements.

A decision on the right measures for an individual has to be made on a case-by-case basis. The existing skills levels of the individual should determine what kind of an intervention would be offered to him or her. In particular, this analysis should make it possible to determine whether upskilling (and what type) would be needed to enhance a young person's employability.

Another aspect that should be discussed at this stage are quality criteria for the planned measures. It is important to agree these early on, to have a clear basis for benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation (stage 3).

What are the indicators for a 'good quality offer' under the Youth Guarantee?

The legal basis of the Youth Guarantee (COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 22 April 2013) recommends that young people receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, and apprenticeship or a traineeship. However, it does not include a common definition of a 'good-quality offer' that would apply to all four types of offers.

The European Commission has been applying an outcome-based approach to quality, whereby an offer can be considered of good quality if it matches the participant's profile, the demands of the labour market and if the person who benefits from it is integrated in the labour market in a sustainable way (i.e. does not return to unemployment or inactivity afterwards). This last aspect is partly measured in the context of the data collection on Youth Guarantee schemes⁷², where quality aspects of Youth Guarantee offers are indirectly captured by the follow-up indicators, showing the situation of young people 6, 12 and 18 months after leaving the Youth Guarantee register.

During its December 2017 multilateral surveillance review on the Youth Guarantee (and building on this guidance), the Employment Committee has considered in particular whether continued education offers:

- Match the profile and the individual needs of the young person⁷³,
- Are part of an education/training programme that follows approved learning outcome standards,
- Are part of an education/training programme whose content is subject to quality assurance mechanisms,
- Are part of an education/training programme related to skills or occupations that are in demand on the labour market,
- Lead to the validation of competences through standardised assessment, a qualification which is included in the NQF and serves either for labour market entry or further education/training,
- Ensure young people's sustainable integration in the labour market.

Hence, these indicators can serve as a guideline to define quality criteria for Youth Guarantee measures.

4.1.3 Identify the key players and areas of collaboration

The planning and designing phase should include a stakeholder mapping to determine which stakeholders would be affected by the planned initiative(s) and how they should be involved. Close collaboration and partnerships between the education and training sector and the labour market can help to avoid mismatches between education offers and current and future labour market needs. This may include local and regional partnerships with all types of organisations that are involved in young people's lives.

For example, in **Italy**, close cooperation between public and private partners (the Italian Chambers of Commerce and Google) in the project *Crescere in Digitale*⁷⁴ allows businesses in the digital economy to be supported through training and traineeships for young people. The programme offers 50 hours of free online training to young people who are registered under the Youth Guarantee, an online test where graduates are selected for a traineeship, local job matching to match graduates with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and a six-month paid traineeship for each selected young person⁷⁵.

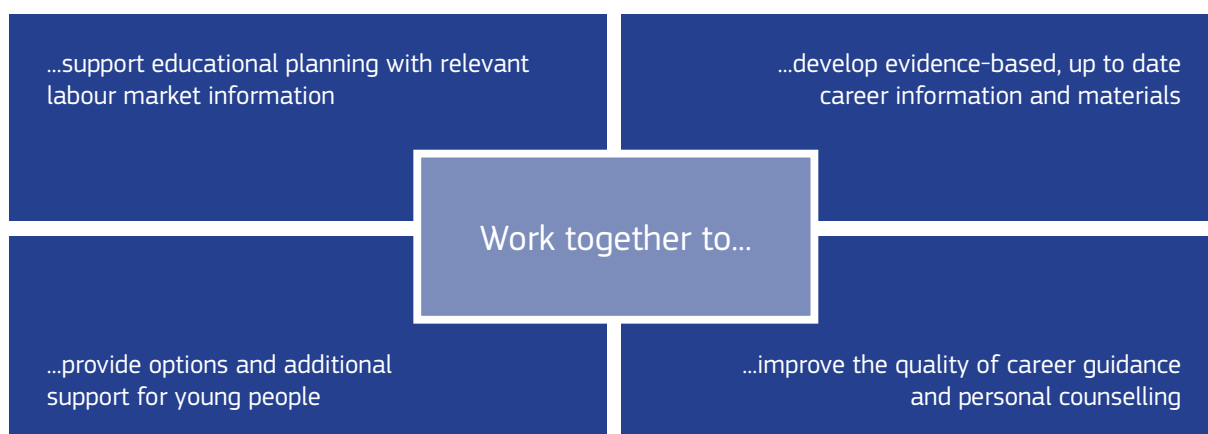
In many countries, the PES has a leading role in coordinating and/or delivering activities under the Youth Guarantee. This means they coordinate activities with employers, schools, VET providers, youth work/youth organisations, social work, NGOs and social partners.

Collaboration between PES and education stakeholders is an integral part of the Youth Guarantee Recommendation (Recommendations 5 and 10), yet partnerships often remain a challenge in Youth Guarantee implementation. In many countries where AMLP training is prevalent, there could be a bigger focus on re-integration into the regular education system; offers do not always lead to a qualification and there are challenges in data exchange between education stakeholders and Youth Guarantee providers.

The European Network of PES (PES Network) has published a position paper with a proposal for enhanced cooperation between PES and the education sector for better school-work transitions⁷⁶. In this paper, the PES Network provides suggestions for what should happen on a broader basis to ensure a seamless service for young people. It suggests paving the way for institutional settings that support collaboration between PES, the education sector and other partner institutions. There should be (preferably formalised) collaboration agreements between PES, the education sector and other partners at all levels (including non-formal learning settings). Institutional arrangements could include the exchange of core data between partners to prevent early leaving from education and training (upper secondary school, apprenticeship or higher education).

In the position paper, four areas of collaboration are outlined, as shown in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4. Areas of collaboration between PES and Youth Guarantee stakeholders



In particular, the PES suggest the following measures:

- **Evidence-based, up-to-date career information and materials:** PES and employers are seldom involved in career guidance for young people in general education who face the challenge of deciding on a career pathway. The risk of young people leaving education and training early and remaining low-skilled increases when career choices are ill-matched to a young person's aptitudes and attitudes, or to the demands of the labour market. Students, parents, teachers and counsellors/coaches should have easy access to evidence-based and up-to-date career information and materials. These materials should be developed in cooperation with all partners, including PES.

In **Germany**, a project called Education & Business Partnerships was funded by the Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCI) in the federal state of Baden-Württemberg. The project involves setting up educational partnerships between schools and companies. Areas of cooperation include: companies advising school pupils on the completion of job applications, offering practical skills tests and simulated job interviews, organisation of joint events for apprentices and school pupils, e.g. IT courses or working together on tasks in the companies' training centres.

Several years into the delivery of the project, a new approach was introduced by CCIs, namely the creation of Apprenticeship Ambassadors (*Ausbildungsbotschafter*). The ambassador role is taken on by apprentices, who visit schools and provide information on the trade that they are in, their occupational profile and what it is like to be an apprentice. Their overall goal is to inspire young people to take on an apprenticeship themselves. They are supported in their mission by the CCIs, which provide training to the apprentices on their ambassador role and coordinate the programme of school visits⁷⁷.

- **Career guidance and personal counselling:** PES have knowledge about the challenges certain groups are facing in the labour market (e.g. based on gender, disability or ethnicity) and this knowledge should be mobilised for the further development of career guidance. PES can support institutions working with youth at risk with personal counselling to test and identify professional interests, aptitudes and attitudes. Many PES also offer online tools and information on certain professions and what training is required to get there.

In **Finland**, the Ministry for Education and Culture developed the ‘Young Adults’ Skills Programme’ (NAO) which was based on a ‘learning network’ between PES, around 60 VET providers and third sector organisations. In collaboration with local PES, VET providers developed new outreach strategies to encourage young adults to start a NAO course and offer new supportive methods, including enhancing young people’s confidence through orientation courses focusing on learning methods and skills needed in the workplace. The Ministry of Education supported local VET providers in their work, organised 11 national workshops and shared the results and good practices between VET providers and other project partners. Between 2013 and 2017, about 14,100 young adults without qualifications started a NAO course (against a target of 16,000). 11,800 of these completed parts of vocational programmes (they acquired one or several units that can be accumulated towards a qualification). Out of these 11,800 students, 3,200 obtained a full qualification⁷⁸.

- **Specific offers and additional support for young people:** Special attention should be paid to young people who need a second chance to complete upper secondary education (ISCED level 4). PES have long-standing experience in supporting individuals who have left education and training early, e.g. through ALMP schemes. Two-thirds of PES across Europe explicitly have a ‘train first’ approach rather than a ‘work first’ approach for young people who are NEET and those at risk of early leaving from education and training. In most PES, the success of these approaches is monitored continuously on an empirical basis⁷⁹. (See also Chapter 3.3.5 above.)

Denmark introduced Building Bridges to Education (see Section 3.3.4), a policy measure based on strong cooperation between local PES offices and schools which aims to prepare disadvantaged young people academically, socially and personally to be able to start and complete vocational education. Mentoring, short internships in VET schools and private enterprises are proposed to young people. An evaluation against a control group has shown significant positive results, including in the young person’s return to education and likelihood of completing his/her course⁸⁰.

- **Support educational planning with relevant labour market information:** PES have the capacity to provide relevant labour market information at a national and regional level. Some PES provide forecasts on economic development in general as well as on employment, unemployment and occupational changes. However, PES are currently rarely involved in educational planning. PES could make these data available, as they would be a valuable source in a dialogue on the development of effective educational offers. In the field of continued education offers, it is especially relevant to provide beneficiaries with offers that are tailored to the needs of the labour market.

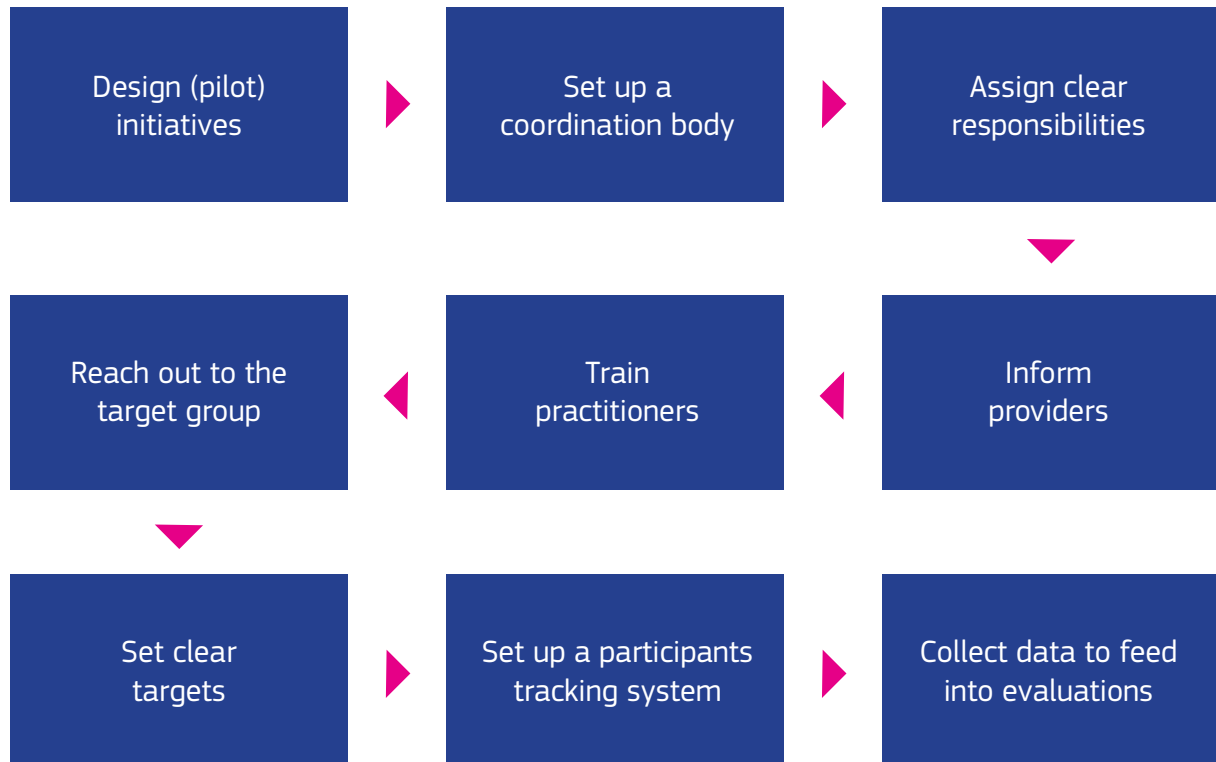
Some countries have already put in place multi-stakeholder networks to ensure the education system is based on an analysis of skills needs. For example, in **Spain**, the Ministry of Social Affairs is working with the Ministry of Education in this regard. In **Ireland**, a new skills strategy has been put in place involving a range of stakeholders at regional level (PES, employers, community organisations, school authorities) that aims to align the education system with the needs of the local labour market⁸¹.

4.2 Stage 2: Implement

In the implementation stage, the results from the scoping activities undertaken during the 'Plan and Design' stage will be put into action. This includes putting into place the measures identified for the priority target groups through appropriate (pilot) measures, as well as building on agreements made between key stakeholders. It also includes information campaigns for education and training providers and practitioners.

Figure 5 below shows the suggested sequence of steps for the implementation phase.

Figure 5. Sequence of steps for the implementation phase



Source: ICF

All of these steps include a variety of activities:

1. **Design pilot initiatives:** It can be useful to launch pilot initiatives and evaluate these before rolling out measures on a broader basis.
2. **Set up a coordination body:** Under the Youth Guarantee, Member States have had positive experiences with setting up coordinating bodies that organise exchange and collaboration between different stakeholders. With regard to continued education offers, these are in particular PES, the education and training sector, and youth and social work organisations.
3. **Assign clear responsibilities:** If key players enhance their collaboration, and work together closely with clearly assigned responsibilities that are transparent to beneficiaries, it may be easier to ensure a seamless service and avoid duplication for young people.
4. **Inform providers:** Member States have found that systematic efforts to inform education and training providers on new initiatives and their requirements are important. For example, PES and governmental agencies can assign experts who visit providers and discuss how to best carry out the newly developed continued education offers, and/or make amendments to their existing schemes.
5. **Train practitioners and build multi-disciplinary teams:** Education and training practitioners may benefit from specialised training which helps them to understand the specific educational, cultural and practical needs of young people from different backgrounds, including for example those facing multiple disadvantages, young people with social and health issues, or with challenging behaviour, or young people from a minority group. This can include building multi-disciplinary teams. Such teams can be set up within one institution or across institutions, to include teaching staff, social workers, psychologists, youth workers, PES counsellors and others.
6. **Reach out to the target group:** In parallel to the information campaign for providers, another campaign could be launched that promotes the (pilot) measures to the target group. This can be part of a broader campaign that aims to reach young NEETs or those at risk of early leaving from education and training. Specific mobile and decentralised services can also be used. In addition, all stakeholders should use their regular channels to promote the (new) initiatives.
7. **Set clear targets and benchmarks that can be used for evaluation:** Measures and initiatives should be evaluated as to whether they really make a change (see Section 4.3). This is easier when clear targets and benchmarks are set: how many young people should benefit from the initiatives, what are they expected to achieve individually, at what cost, what impact is expected on youth unemployment rates, etc.
8. **Set up a participant tracking system to collect information about the next steps of the pathway:** Young people's steps throughout their pathway should be monitored (see Section 4.3). Relevant data should be exchanged between the Youth Guarantee stakeholders.
9. **Collect data to feed into the evaluation of the initiatives:** The data gathered from the different steps of the pathway approach should be shared between institutions and compiled centrally, to ensure they are useful for the evaluation and review of the pathway approach.

4.3 Stage 3: Evaluate and review

The final stage is to design monitoring, evaluation and feedback which will feed into the continuous improvement of the design and implementation. This will help to make the continued education offers sustainable.

Based on steps 8 and 9 of the implementation phase, in the evaluation phase, clear quantitative and qualitative targets should be set, and feedback and data coming out of monitoring and evaluation activities should be prepared and edited in a way that helps policy makers and practitioners to improve their interventions, based on evidence.

Monitoring and evaluation can be differentiated as follows:

- **Monitoring** means data collection and exchange concerning the target groups of continued education offers. Data can be collected through internal and external observations, feedback, surveys, dialogue and reflection and interpretation of the various data and observations. This includes early warning systems in place in schools or at VET providers, to detect the early signs of learners at risk of early leaving. It also includes data exchange and monitoring of target groups (such as size and prevalence). In **Finland**, the Youth Act was amended in 2011 to include procedures for handling the exchange of contact information on young people between educational institutions, social services and PES. A two-year pilot was conducted in 11 municipalities with the purpose of using a single system shared by different stakeholders. In **France**, an Inter-Ministerial System for the exchange of information allows (by the cross-checking of data) to identify young people who have left initial education without any qualifications⁸².

For instance, in **Ireland**, data on post-programme outcomes are available from a database that records all the interactions of clients with the PES – the Jobseekers Longitudinal Dataset (JLD). The JLD will be the basis for more systematic counter-factual evaluations that will, where possible, capture age-differentiated impacts and inform analysis of the cost-effectiveness of the measures under the Youth Guarantee scheme⁸³.

PES data on short-term and long-term demands on the labour market should also feed into the monitoring. Moreover, monitoring can also include graduate tracking systems, hence following up on further career steps of graduates once they leave the measure. This can provide valuable data on the long-term effects of continued education offers on the employability and the further career pathways of graduates.

- **Evaluation** aims to measure whether or not a certain initiative or measure makes a difference and leads to change. This would include an overall analysis of continued education offers as to their effectiveness, efficiency and impact. Evaluations should use relevant indicators, which can be quantitative (number and type of persons trained, numbers of persons finalising the measure, budget, staff) or qualitative (change in learner's behaviour, experiences).

Both monitoring data as well as evaluation feedback should be used by providers and/or the coordinating body to inform the re-design and further implementation of continued education offers.

In **Spain**, a Monitoring and Evaluation Delegate Commission for the Spanish Youth Guarantee Scheme was established by a Royal Decree 152. Within the Commission, three technical Working Groups are responsible for: 1) developing a national Youth Guarantee Information System and a registration database of all young people enrolled in Youth Guarantee schemes, 2) identifying and promoting good practices and pilot projects; and 3) designing Youth Guarantee indicators. Similarly, a single registration and information system (a platform) has been created to collect data regarding the Youth Guarantee – registrations (number and profile) as well as the number, type and quality of offers made – with the aim of coordinating the work of all involved stakeholders, avoiding duplication and blurring of responsibilities, and boosting commitment. Moreover, once fully operational, the platform should allow for an analysis of what works better, for which categories of young people. Specifically, it will enable analyses to be carried out to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the specific mix of measures offered by the regions and the Chambers of Commerce⁸⁴.

5 Challenges and Success factors

The challenges and success factors related to planning, implementing and reviewing continued education offers under the Youth Guarantee are summarised here below.

Challenges	Success factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Youth Guarantee's potential to upskill young people and to ensure that they gain qualifications that facilitate access to the labour market could be further exploited. • Young people who are low skilled are not a homogeneous group. There is a need to understand the profile of the cohort and provide services to meet their varying needs. • Some young people face complex disadvantages that need multi-faceted responses. • In some cases, four months is not enough for young people to get ready to take up a continued education offer. • Young people with low skills have often had negative experiences with education and have little interest in returning. They are more inclined to take up a job offer, even if this is only a short-term solution. • Preparing young people for continued education and training requires collaboration between institutions. Data sharing and referral structures are not always established. • In some countries, there is not enough dialogue and collaboration between the PES and the education and training sector. • In some countries, education and training systems are not flexible enough to re-integrate learners who have dropped out. Validation of non-formal and informal learning can help in this regard. • So far, data and evidence on the effectiveness of continued education offers are scarce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyses of the local/regional target groups and tailored intervention measures. • ALMP measures with a view to long-term return-on-investment. • Bridging programmes that prepare young people for education and training – including teaching basic skills (literacy, numeracy and IT skills). • Second chance offers that are designed to meet young people's needs and circumstances (e.g. need to combine work and training). • Pathway approaches with several steps that are implemented by multiple providers, but are based on dialogue and data exchange. • Formalised cooperation and clear responsibilities between education, employment and youth stakeholders. • Improved partnerships between PES and the education and training sector, especially in view of exchanging knowledge and data. • Improved local and regional partnerships between all types of organisations that are involved in young people's lives. • Monitoring and tracking data on where young people go next (after leaving a measure). • Data from evaluations that include an analysis of the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of continued education offers. • Evaluations using relevant indicators, which can be quantitative (number and type of persons trained, numbers of persons finalising the measure, budget, staff) or qualitative (change in learner's behaviour, experiences). • Providers and/or coordinating bodies that use monitoring and evaluation data to inform the review and further implementation of continued education offers.

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End notes

- 1 COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on establishing a Youth Guarantee, (2013/C 120/01) Page 1
- 2 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/european-pillar-social-rights_en Page 1
- 3 Cf. the 2018 Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning https://ec.europa.eu/education/initiatives/key-competences-framework-review-2017_en Page 1
- 4 European Commission, 2018: Data collection for monitoring of Youth Guarantee schemes: 2016. Note: The distribution by type of offer has to be viewed bearing in mind the limitations of the data. Some countries have difficulties to monitor particular types of offer. For example, it may not be possible to track young people returning to the regular education system, apprenticeships may be recorded as a form of employment offer and, in others, traineeships form part of the regular education system and are therefore recorded as education offers. Page 1
- 5 European Commission, 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on, p. 8 Page 1
- 6 Cf. Ibid. Page 1
- 7 European Commission, 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on, p. 107 Page 1
- 8 European Commission, 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on, p. 104 Page 1
- 9 However, this figure should be interpreted with caution, taking into account the challenges associated with categorising offers, especially apprenticeships and continued education offers. Page 3
- 10 The term ‘continued education’ should not be confused with continuing training, which is often used in relation to adult professionals who undertake additional training to achieve a higher level of qualification, and is therefore rather used in the context of lifelong learning. Page 5
- 11 European Commission, 2018: Data collection for monitoring of Youth Guarantee schemes: 2016 Page 5
- 12 European Commission, 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on. Page 5
- 13 European Commission, 2018: Data collection for monitoring of Youth Guarantee schemes: 2016 Page 5
- 14 European Commission, 2018: Data collection for monitoring of Youth Guarantee schemes: 2016, p. 40 Page 5
- 15 European Commission 2017: Commission Staff Working Document. Strategic report 2017 on the implementation of the European Structural and Investment Funds. Page 6
- 16 The diversity of NEETs population is discussed in detail in another publication in this series: Effective outreach to NEETs – Experience from the ground. Page 7
- 17 Cedefop 2016: Leaving education early: putting vocational education and training centre stage. Volume I: Investigating causes and extent. Volume II: evaluating policy impact Page 8
- 18 Cedefop 2016, Leaving education early: putting vocational education and training centre stage. Volume II, Executive Summary Page 9
- 19 For all examples see European Commission, 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on. Page 9
- 20 Cedefop 2016: Leaving education early: putting vocational education and training centre stage. Volume I: Investigating causes and extent. Volume II: evaluating policy impact Page 10
- 21 Ibid, p. 19 Page 10
- 22 European Commission, 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on, p. 43 Page 11

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24	Cedefop 2015: Vocational pedagogies and benefits for learners: practices and challenges in Europe	Page 11
25	Cedefop 2015: Vocational pedagogies and benefits for learners: practices and challenges in Europe	Page 11
26	European Commission, 2018: Data collection for monitoring of Youth Guarantee schemes: 2016	Page 12
27	Ibid., p. 40	Page 12
28	Cf. the 'Traineeship First' (previously 'Transition Traineeships') measure in the Youth Guarantee Promising Practices database	Page 12
29	Cf. Cedefop website: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/spain-pice-programme-youth-employment	Page 12
30	Funded through the YEI, the ESF and the state budget. Cf. European Commission, 2018, Youth Guarantee Promising Practices database	Page 12
31	Cf. Project website: http://www.ric-nm.si/en/completed-national-projects/project-learning-for-young-adults/	Page 12
32	IZA (Caliendo, Schmiedl) 2015: Youth Unemployment and Active Labor Market Policies in Europe.	Page 13
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34	Cf. Website of the Finnish National Agency for Education https://www.oph.fi/english/education_development/current_reforms/education_guarantee	Page 14
35	http://minedu.fi/en/reform-of-vocational-upper-secondary-education;#amisreformi	Page 14
36	Cf. Cedefop http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/early-leaving-education-and-training	Page 14
37	Financed through the YEI.	Page 16
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39	European Commission; Cedefop; ICF International (2014). European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2014. Thematic report: validation and early school leavers. http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2014/87238.pdf	Page 16
40	Cedefop 2017: VET toolkit for tackling early leaving	Page 16
41	European Commission 2013: Work-based learning in Europe. Practices and Policy Pointers	Page 17
42	Apprenticeships are a specific type of offer under the Youth Guarantee and will not be discussed at length in this paper.	Page 17
43	The COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships stipulates that 'A substantial part of the learning experience, meaning at least half of the apprenticeship duration, should be carried out in a workplace.'	Page 17
44	European Commission 2013: Work-based learning in Europe. Practices and Policy Pointers. pp. 5-6	Page 17
45	Cf. European Commission, 2018, Youth Guarantee Promising Practices database	Page 18
46	European Commission, 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on. p. 44	Page 18
47	European Commission, 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on. p. 44	Page 19

48	European Commission 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on. p. 44, and Cf. Youth Guarantee Promising Practices database, http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1327&langId=en	Page 19
49	Cf. European Commission, 2018, Youth Guarantee Promising Practices database	Page 19
50	Cf. Ibid.	Page 19
51	Financed through the ESF, European Regional Development Fund (ERDF / FEDER) and the YEI. Further information on http://www.formation-epicuris.be/formation.php	Page 19
52	Cf. Cedefop 2017: VET toolkit for tackling early leaving	Page 19
53	Cf. European Commission, 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on. p. 44	Page 19
54	Ibid	Page 20
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56	Both examples: European Commission, 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on.	Page 20
57	European Commission 2013: Preventing Early School Leaving in Europe – Lessons Learned from Second Chance Education. p. 3	Page 20
58	Cf. Cedefop 2017: VET toolkit for tackling early leaving	Page 20
59	European Commission, 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on.	Page 20
60	Cf. European Commission, 2018, Youth Guarantee Promising Practices database	Page 20
61	European Commission, 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on.	Page 21
62	European Commission, 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on.	Page 21
63	European Commission, 2018, Youth Guarantee Promising Practices database	Page 21
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66	European Network of Public Employment Services 2018: Position paper – Proposal for a structured cooperation between Public Employment Services (PES) and the education sector for better school-to-work transitions	Page 22
67	For more information, see http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1224	Page 24
68	Moreover, many Member States have extended the age limit for Youth Guarantee services to 29, as unemployment rates in the age group 25-29 are equally high as for younger people, and action is required.	Page 25
69	Cf. European Network of PES 2016: Sustainable activation of young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs). PES Network practitioner’s toolkit.	Page 25
70	The option of offering traineeships as Youth Guarantee measures is discussed in another paper in this series.	Page 27
71	Directorate of Labour and Welfare, Norway, Presentation at PES to PES dialogue event, June 2013 in Lithuania	Page 28
72	Youth Guarantee Indicator Framework Database	Page 29
73	E.g. the offer is aligned to the young person’s qualifications and it addresses or takes into account the specific barriers s/he faces (behavioural, social, educational...).	Page 29
74	Implemented under the national YEI.	Page 30
75	European Commission 2017: Commission Staff Working Document. Strategic report 2017 on the implementation of the European Structural and Investment Funds.	Page 30

76	European Network of Public Employment Services 2018: Position paper – Proposal for a structured cooperation between Public Employment Services (PES) and the education sector for better school-to-work transitions	Page 30
77	Cf. European Commission, 2018, Youth Guarantee Promising Practices database, and EPALE: https://ec.europa.eu/epale/en/blog/whats-new-young-adults-skills-programme-finland	Page 31
78	Cf. European Commission, 2018, Youth Guarantee Promising Practices database.	Page 32
79	European Network of Public Employment Services 2018: Position paper – Proposal for a structured cooperation between Public Employment Services (PES) and the education sector for better school-to-work transitions	Page 32
80	Cf. European Commission, 2018, Youth Guarantee Promising Practices database	Page 32
81	European Commission, 2016: Commission Staff Working Document: The Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative three years on.	Page 32
82	Ibid.	Page 35
83	Ibid.	Page 35
84	Ibid.	Page 35

Since its launch in 2013, the **Youth Guarantee** has supported millions of young people across the European Union to find a job, a traineeship, an apprenticeship or to continue in education. Yet despite this, too many young Europeans are still without work. Across the EU, more effort is needed so that all young people can benefit from quality offers under the Youth Guarantee.

This report is one in a series of **five reports** on Youth Guarantee delivery, presenting existing practices from the ground from the first five years of its implementation. It outlines lessons learnt, challenges and success factors, aiming to inspire and help all actors involved in delivering the Youth Guarantee.

The report **Continued Education offers under the Youth Guarantee** looks at the role of education and training in developing the relevant skills of young people, and thus supporting them in their transition into employment.

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