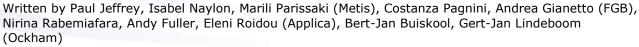


Study for the Evaluation of ESF Support to Youth Employment (Contract VC/2018/0715)

Annex 7: Synthesis of 2nd YEI evaluations







EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Annex 7

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1 Background

The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) was launched in 2013 to complement other national and ESF provision by providing support to young people living in regions with high youth unemployment rates. While ESF/ERDF funding may support institutions and systems involved in the implementation of YEI or the Youth Guarantee, YEI is directly targeted at young people.

The initial budget for YEI in 2014-2015 amounted to EUR 6.4 billion but given the continuing high levels of youth unemployment, it was increased by EUR 2.4 billion for the 2017-2020 period, so raising the budget to EUR 8.8 billion for the whole period. In order to mobilise YEI measures quickly, it was decided that resources should be committed in 2014-2015. In addition, the initial pre-financing amount (1% of the total allocation), which is transferred after the adoption of the Operational Programme, was exceptionally increased to 30% of the special YEI budget line in 2015.

This report is based on an in-depth review of the second national evaluations of the YEI (these are mandatory and had to be submitted by the 20 eligible Member States by 31 December 2018) and presents a synthesis of the key findings. It is a follow-up to the review of the first YEI national evaluations (due in December 2015) carried out by Ecorys/PPMI¹ in 2016 and which included an annex with summary tables on the key points from the evaluations (as well as key evaluation findings for 9 countries²).

While the first evaluation studies on YEI largely focused on implementation, it is expected that six years after the launch of the initiative, more findings on its effective impact should be available.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7931, June 2016.

² Belgium, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

2 Legal basis

The regulatory framework of the 2014-2020 programming period for ESI funds places strong emphasis on the need to assess the effectiveness of the programmes supported. For the first time, Member States are required to measure the impact of operations co-funded by the ESF/YEI and their contribution towards achieving the objectives pursued as well as in the light of the Europe 2020 goals. Indeed, according to Article 56 (3) of the CPR, "During the programming period, the managing authority shall ensure that evaluations, including evaluations to assess effectiveness, efficiency and impact, are carried out for each programme on the basis of the evaluation plan [...]. At least once during the programming period, an evaluation should assess how support from the ESI Funds has contributed to the objectives for each priority".

Moreover, according to Article 19 (6) of the ESF Regulation, "At least twice during the programming period, an evaluation should assess the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of joint support from the ESF and the specific allocation for YEI including for the implementation of the Youth Guarantee".

In addition, according to the ESF regulation, the AIR submitted in 2016 and 2017 and the Progress Report to be submitted in 2019 should present the main findings of evaluations as well as "[...] set out and assess the quality of employment offers received by YEI participants, including disadvantaged persons, those from marginalised communities and those leaving education without qualifications. The reports shall also set out and assess their progress in continuing education, finding sustainable and decent jobs, or moving into apprenticeships or quality traineeships" (Article 19(4) of the ESF Regulation). Hence, although the Regulation does not explicitly impose a requirement that an assessment of the quality of employment offers, progress in continuing education, finding sustainable and decent jobs, or moving into apprenticeships or quality traineeships have to be covered by the evaluations, these aspects should, nevertheless, be included.

3 Coverage of the report

20 Member States are eligible for YEI funding. Out of the 37 Operational Programmes through which YEI is operationalised (i.e. 18 national Operational Programmes plus 2 regional Operational Programmes in Belgium, 15 regional Operational Programmes in France and 2 regional Operational Programmes in the UK), an evaluation report was submitted for 21 of these³ (see table below) since October 2018.

The present report is a synthesis of the various evaluation findings. However, care in interpreting the results is needed as these studies do not systematically cover the same reference period.

For instance some evaluations cover the period up to end-2017 (such as in Hungary, Ireland and France), others examine the available data up to mid-2018 (such as in Greece and Sweden), or up to end-2018 (such as Czech Republic, the UK and Cyprus), while in Portugal the study only covers the period from September 2013 to March 2016. This said, the reference period for counterfactual impact evaluations (where they have been carried out) also differs (e.g. participants entering the programme between July 2015-June 2016 for Poland, December 2016 to June 2018 for Italy, 2015-2017 for Bulgaria).

In addition, it should be noted that for Ireland, the report submitted consists of the mid-term evaluation of the Operational Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL), which is the programme through which YEI funding is channelled (through priority axis 4). For Ireland, therefore, the evaluation is not limited to YEI programmes.

As most YEI programmes are still ongoing, and the Managing Authorities have the choice to report data only once the programmes are finished, the findings summarised in the present report should not be considered final. Indeed, two YEI evaluation reports indicate that the final version will be submitted in the course of 2019 or at the beginning of 2020 (Hungary⁴ and UK-England⁵).

Table 1.	List of second	national YEI	evaluations ar	nalvsedi	(Art. 19	(6)	ESF)
I UDIC II	List of second	Hadional ILI	C V G I G G G G G G G	iai, sca	/ 1/ CI + /	· • /	

MS	OP name	Title of evaluation	Authors	Date of publica- tion	Comments
BE	OP ESF of the Brussels- Capital Region: Investment for growth and jobs	Ongoing evaluation of YEI and Youth Guarantee	IDEA Consult	December 2018	-
BG	OP Human Resources Developmen t	Evaluation of YEI measures under priority axis 1 of OP Human resources development 2014- 2020	Sigma Metrics	February 2019	-
CZ	OP Employment	Evaluation of the YEI in the Czech Republic	Evaluation Unit of the	December 2018	Ex-post evaluation is planned (will use

³ In France, the YEI evaluation covers the national YEI programme (Operational Programme for the implementation of YEI in mainland France and outermost regions) as well as 12 regional YEI Operational Programmes. It seems that no 2nd evaluation will be carried out for Operational Programme Wallonie-Bruxelles. The final evaluation report of the Operational Programme will include a specific section on the evaluation of YEI (as confirmed at the Monitoring Committee of June 2019).

⁴ Hungary's second YEI evaluation was submitted in a preliminary form at the end of 2018. The final version of the evaluation report was submitted on 10 January 2020.

⁵ It is not known if the report is ready yet.

MS	OP name	name Title of evaluation		Date of publica-	Comments		
			Authors	tion			
			Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs		administrative data from the information system, which are not yet available due to the ongoing development of the system).		
IE	ESF OP 2014-2020	PEIL OP Mid-term evaluation – Final Report	Fitzpatrick Associates Economic Consultants	December 2018	Final mid-term evaluation of OP PEIL		
EL	OP Human Resources Developmen t, Education and Lifelong Learning	Evaluation of the YEI 2014-2020	Premium Consulting	December 2018	-		
ES	OP Youth Employment ESF	2nd evaluation of the YEI (Priority axis 5)	Fresno and Universidad Complutens e de Madrid	December 2018	The 2019 evaluation of the Youth Employment OP focuses on Priority Axis 1 and Priority Axis 8, but also includes results for Priority Axis 5 (these are reflected below)		
FR	OP for the implementat ion of YEI in mainland France and outermost regions + 12 regional YEI OPs	2nd evaluation of the YEI	Quadrant Conseil and KPMG	January 2019	-		
HR	OP Efficient Human Resources ESF	Evaluation of the YEI 2018	Ipsos	March 2019	A first preliminary version was submitted in January 2019		
IT	OP Youth Employment	2nd Evaluation Report of the Youth Guarantee and the National OP Youth Employment	ANPAL	January 2019	-		
CY	OP Employment , Human Capital and Social Cohesion	2nd evaluation of the YEI	Enoros Consulting	December 2018	-		
LT	OP for EU Structural Funds Investments	Evaluation of the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of EU investments and YEI, including the implementation of Youth Guarantee	BGI Consulting	May 2018	-		
LV	OP Growth and Employment	Final evaluation on the implementation, effectiveness,	Ernst & Young	March 2019	-		

MS	OP name	Title of evaluation	Authors	Date of publica- tion	Comments
		efficiency and impact of the ESF and YEI support (including the Youth Guarantee)			
HU	OP Economic Developmen t and Innovation	Evaluation of the YEI	Equinox Consulting	December 2018	Final report submitted on 10 January 2020 (with results on quality of job offers)
PL	OP Knowledge Education Growth	Evaluation of the effects of the YEI - 2nd thematic report	Instytut Badań Strukturalny ch (IBS)	November 2018	Final report expected in April 2020
PT	OP Social Inclusion and Employment	Final evaluation of the YEI in Portugal	CESOP Universidade Católica Portuguesa	January 2018	-
RO	OP Human Capital	Evaluation of the YEI implemented through Priority Axis 1 of Human Capital OP 2014-2020	Ministry of European Funds	June 2019	-
SI	OP for the Implementat ion of the EU Cohesion Policy	Evaluation of the YEI programme 'First-challenge 2015' in Slovenia: the second phase	Deloitte	December 2018	-
SK	OP Human Resources	2nd evaluation report on the implementation of YEI 2018	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family	December 2018	Report submitted in April 2019
SE	OP Investments in growth and jobs ESF	Evaluation of the YEI 2018	STRATEGIRÅ DET	December 2018	-
UK	OP Scotland ESF (incl. YEI)	Evaluation of YEI in South West Scotland	Ekos Consultants	December 2018	-
UK	OP England ESF	Impact evaluation of the YEI in England	Ecorys	December 2018	Final report expected in 2019
BE	ESF OP Wallonie Bruxelles 2020.eu	YEI evaluation will be in Programme.	ncluded in the fi	nal evaluation	n of the Operational

Sources: SFC2014 and Evaluation Helpdesk

4 Types and methods of evaluation

Most of the evaluations examined consist of a combination of various types:

- 11 evaluations are result-oriented (i.e. aimed at assessing the effect or impact of the programme);
- 17 evaluations are process/implementation oriented and
- 16 evaluations are monitoring oriented (i.e. aimed at assessing progress towards achieving the targets or policy objectives).

Of these, only two were reported as purely impact evaluations, two as purely process/implementation oriented evaluations, while one was exclusively focusing on monitoring aspects.

Among the 11 impact evaluations carried out, a counterfactual analysis (CIE) was undertaken in 9 evaluations (in Bulgaria, France, Spain, Italy, Latvia, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia and Sweden), and a theory-based approach (TBE) in 5 evaluations (in Belgium-Brussels capital region Operational Programme, France, Cyprus, Portugal, Sweden, and UK-England). In France and Sweden, both TBIE and CIE methods were used. All CIE studies were based on propensity score matching (either alone or in combination with difference-in-difference), but Hungary also used a regression discontinuity design.

A certain number of evaluations provide information on the unit cost per participant, but only Croatia and Latvia carried out a more in-depth analysis of cost effectiveness in terms of results (see below).

Cost-benefit analysis (CBA), in the true sense, does not seem to have been carried out in any of the evaluations submitted up to now, but it is expected that the final version of the YEI report for UK-England should include findings on CBA which will estimate the economic and social impact of the YEI.

Table 2. Methods and tools used for the 2nd YEI evaluations

MS	OP name	Type of evaluation	Evalua-tion method	Tools used
BE	OP ESF of the Brussels- Capital Region: Investment for growth and jobs	Impact Implementatio n Monitoring	TBIE Qualitative Quantitative	 Desk research of documents and administrative data Quantitative analysis of monitoring and financial data In-depth interviews with various stakeholders Theory-based impact evaluation
BG	OP Human Resources Development	Impact Implementatio n Monitoring	CIE Qualitative Quantitative	 Desk research and analysis of documents Analysis of monitoring data and collection and processing of secondary data (incl. unemployment register, data from the National Statistical Institute) In-depth interviews and focus groups with participants, employers and stakeholders Surveys of participants and employers Statistical analysis (incl. regression analysis) SIBILA 2.0 macroeconomic model developed by the Ministry of Finance Counterfactual impact analysis (using propensity score matching and difference in difference).
CZ	OP Employment	Monitoring	Qualitative Quantitative	 Desk research of OP documentation Analysis of monitoring data 45 in-depth interviews with key stakeholders 4 focus groups with beneficiaries 4 surveys of samples of beneficiaries

MS	OP name	Type of evaluation	Evalua-tion method	Tools used
IE	ESF OP 2014- 2020	Implementatio n Monitoring	Qualitative Quantitative	 Desk research Analysis of monitoring data Consultations with the MA, IBs, the Steering Group Members, and other stakeholders
EL	OP Human Resources Development, Education and Lifelong Learning	Implementatio n Monitoring	Qualitative Quantitative	 Desk research (incl. OP, AIR, national legislation, external studies) Quantitative research (questionnaires sent to participants in particular on quality of job offers and progress in continuing education, finding sustainable and decent jobs or moving into apprenticeships or quality traineeships) Qualitative surveys (focus group discussions and interviews with various stakeholders)
ES	OP Youth Employment ESF	Impact Implementatio n Monitoring	CIE Qualitative Quantitative	 Desk research Analysis of monitoring data Focus groups with intermediate bodies and other key stakeholders In-depth interviews with intermediate bodies and other key stakeholders Surveys with key stakeholders including beneficiaries Case analysis Counterfactual impact evaluation (propensity score matching)
FR	OP for the implementation of YEI in mainland France and outermost regions + 12 regional YEI OPs	Impact	CIE TBIE Qualitative Quantitative	 Surveys of participants 6 months after exit Interviews of stakeholders (for the casestudies) Counterfactual impact analysis (difference-indifference) CIE of 3 national measures (propensity score matching for Accompagnement renforcé and Parcours autonomie, difference-in-difference for Garantie Jeunes) CIE for 3 regional measures (propensity score matching)
HR	ESF OP Efficient Human Resources	Impact Implementatio n	CIE Qualitative Quantitative	 Analysis of documents Analysis of monitoring data Interviews with stakeholders Online/telephone surveys of participants and employers Counterfactual analysis (Propensity score matching).
IT	OP Youth Employment	Impact Monitoring	CIE Qualitative Quantitative	 Desk analysis Analysis of monitoring and financial data CATI and CAWI surveys of participants (12,000) and non-participants (8,000) carried out between May and September 2017 Participant satisfaction survey of 28,000 individuals (7.5% response rate) Multivariate analysis Counterfactual analysis (covariate matching)
CY	OP Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion	Implementatio n Monitoring	Qualitative Quantitative	 Literature review (e.g. OP documents, National action plan for youth etc.) Interviews with authorities involved in the design and implementation of YEI Survey of participants 6 months after exit Peer reviews
LT	OP for EU Structural Funds Investments	Implementatio n Monitoring	TBIE Qualitative Quantitative	 Desk research on academic literature and relevant legislation Data analysis based on monitoring data (SFMIS), social security database (SODRA),

MS	OP name	Type of evaluation	Evalua-tion method	Tools used
LV	OP Growth and Employment	Impact Implementatio n Monitoring	CIE Qualitative Quantitative	PES data, and data available on the EU funds in Lithuania website Cost effectiveness analysis Surveys of key stakeholders (projects coordinators, mentors, participants, leaders of partner organisations) Interviews with representatives of key stakeholders Case studies of similar projects in other countries Focus groups, Case studies of municipalities. Analysis of documents Case studies In-depth expert interviews Focus group discussion
	Fannamia	Immed	CIF	E-survey of participants Analysis of statistical data Econometric analysis Counterfactual evaluation (propensity score matching).
HU	Economic Development and Innovation OP	Impact Implementatio n Monitoring	CIE Qualitative Quantitative	 Econometric estimation: a probit regression model to identify the factors affecting the successful completion of the programme Counterfactual impact evaluation (regression discontinuity design, propensity score matching)
PL	OP Knowledge Education Growth	Implementatio n Monitoring	Qualitative Quantitative	 Analysis of monitoring data and data from the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development CATI survey of 1,490 beneficiaries CAWI survey of 517 project coordinators Focus groups (with beneficiaries and project coordinators) Telephone interviews with 4 representatives of Regional Labour Offices 16 in-depth interviews with employers Expert panels with representatives of institutions responsible for coordinating and implementing the OP and employer representatives
PT	OP Social Inclusion and Employment	Implementatio n	Qualitative Quantitative	 Desk research of documentation Analysis of data from the monitoring system, the National Statistics Institute, social security records, PES and Eurostat
RO	OP Human Capital	Implementatio n Monitoring	TBIE Qualitative Quantitative	 Desk research (analysis of OP documentation) In-depth interviews with relevant stakeholders Focus groups with final beneficiaries On-line survey of final beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries Statistical analysis (data from the National Institute of Statistics) Analysis of monitoring data.
SI	OP for the Implementati on of the EU Cohesion Policy	Impact Implementatio n Monitoring	CIE Qualitative Quantitative	 Analysis of monitoring data Surveys of participants and comparable non-participants Counterfactual analysis
SK	OP Human Resources	Implementatio n Monitoring	Qualitative Quantitative	Analysis of monitoring data
SE	OP	Impact	CIE	Desk research of OP documentation

MS	OP name	Type of evaluation	Evalua-tion method	Tools used
	Investments in growth and jobs ESF	Implementatio n Monitoring	TBIE Qualitative Quantitative	 Analysis of monitoring data In-depth interviews with OP beneficiaries, project managers and others not directly involved in operations (e.g. municipalities) Literature review to identify success factors in initiatives focusing on youth employment Counterfactual impact evaluation (propensity score matching)
UK	ESF England	Impact	TBIE Qualitative Quantitative	 Desk review Analysis of monitoring data (up to October 2018) and data from the National Statistical Institute ESF and YEI Leavers' Survey data (November 2018) Interviews with high-level stakeholders from the MA 10 case studies including interviews (with YEI providers, ESIF sub-committee representatives, and YEI participants) and project visits Cost-benefit analysis (still ongoing) Counterfactual impact evaluation (propensity score matching and difference-in-difference using monitoring and administrative data) (still ongoing).
UK	OP Scotland ESF (incl. YEI)	Implementatio n	Qualitative Quantitative	 Desk research of OP documentation (YEI programme, Lear Partner Operation Applications) Analysis of data from the monitoring system (financial and performance monitoring data) and socio-economic review 43 in-depth interviews with key stakeholders (local authorities, managing authority, implementing bodies, third sector organisations) 21 telephone interviews with beneficiaries On-line survey of the beneficiaries (100 responses) 2 focus groups with beneficiaries (13 people involved)

Sources: SFC2014 and Evaluation Helpdesk

Table 3. Methods used in counterfactual impact evaluations of YEI programmes

Regression discontinuity design	Propensity score matching	Covariate matching	Difference- in-difference	Propensity score matching & Difference-in-difference
Hungary	Spain Sweden Latvia	Italy	France (lot 2)	Bulgaria France (lot 3)
	Croatia France (lot 4) Hungary			(UK-England in 2019)

Sources: SFC2014 and Evaluation Helpdesk

Notes: For Slovenia (which does not appear in the table above), it is not clear how the control group was selected and which method was used to carry out the analysis (which seems to be a simple comparison). For France: for Lot 2 (general CIE of YEI), the method of double difference was used based on age (young people aged under 26 vs young people aged 26 and over) and territory (eligible vs non eligible areas). For Lot 3 (CIE of 3 national measures), propensity score matching and difference-in-difference were used, and for Lot 4 (CIE of 3 regional measures), propensity score matching was used.

Table 4. YEI evaluations by type of evaluation, methods and tools used

	Evaluation type				Evaluation method				Tools used			
	Impact	Implementa- tion	Monitoring	TBIE	CIE	CBA	QuaL + Quan	Interviews	Focus groups	Surveys of participants	Case studies	Peer reviews
BE-RBC	Х	X	Х	Х			Х	Х				
BG	Х	X	Х		PSM, DID		Х	Х	Х	Х		
CZ			Х				Х	Х	X	Х		
IE		Х	X				Х					
EL		Х	Х				Х	Х	Х	Х		
ES	Х	Х	Х		PSM		Х	Х	Х	х	Х	
FR	Х			Х	PSM, DID		Х	Х		х	Х	
HR	Х	Х			PSM		Х	Х		х		
IT	Х		Х		Covaria- te matching		Х			x		
CY		Х	х				Х	Х		х		Х
LT		Х	х	Х			Х	Х	Х		Х	
LV	Х	Х	х		PSM		Х	Х	Х	х	Х	
HU	х	х	Х		RDD, PSM		Х					
PL		Х	Х				Х	Х	Х	х		
PT		Х		Х			Х					
RO		Х	Х				Х	х	Х	Х		
SI	Х	Х	Х		Х		Х			Х		
SK		Х	Х				Х					
SE	х	Х	Х	Х	PSM		Х	х				
UK-England			Х	Х	(x)*	(x) *	Х	х		Х	Х	
UK-Scotland		х	Х				Х	Х	Х	х		

Sources: SFC2014 and Evaluation Helpdesk

 $[\]ensuremath{^{*}}$ UK-England: analysis planned in the report expected in 2019.

5 Summary of findings

The findings of the second YEI reports are summarised below based on the evaluation criteria of the Better Regulation guidelines (coherence, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency as well as EU added value of the operation).

5.1 Coherence

Analysis of the YEI evaluation reports shows that the issue of coherence is not systematically assessed in the evaluation reports examined.

In Bulgaria, Cyprus and Slovenia, the coherence of YEI funded programmes with other youth employment policies is recognised.

In **Bulgaria**, the report states that the four measures examined (Youth employment, Active, Ready for work, Training and employment for young people) are coherent with the objectives of various strategic documents (such as the Europe 2020 Strategy, the National Reform Programme, the national Employment strategy and the national plan for Youth Guarantee). In **Cyprus**, there are other operations financed by the ESF which are aimed at young unemployed and which are complementary to YEI (such as the modernisation and strengthening of the PES or projects promoting entrepreneurship). The evaluation recognises that the fact that the same authority manages both these operations as well as the YEI programme is crucial for ensuring coherence between them. And in **Slovenia**, the evaluation of the 'First Challenge 2015' programme, carried out in the Cohesion region of Eastern Slovenia, and which aims at promoting subsidised employment of young NEETs, shows that it is complementary to the other existing employment policies. In the period 2015-2016, the programme was the only one promoting employment which was targeted at young people aged 15 to 29.

In some other Member States, the evaluation reports reveal some interesting issues relating to substitution of funding, the link with the Youth Guarantee and competition between projects.

In **Croatia** for instance, it seems that the currently supported YEI measures were already in existence before but used to be financed by the national budget, the ESF or IPA (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance). Similarly, because the YEI programme had to be prepared in a very short period of time, the **Hungarian authorities** decided to use the additional funding for an operation that was already planned, as an addition. The report also stresses that in countries where large ESF resources were already devoted to youth employment before 2014, the importance of YEI funding was relatively small and implied a large administrative burden. In **France** as well, most Managing Authorities used YEI funding to support existing youth employment measures; only a minority using YEI to experiment with new measures targeted at NEETs. This raises a question over the extent to which the additionality principle was applied in practice in these cases. In **Cyprus**, apart from higher recruitment incentives in case of green and blue jobs, the real innovation lies in the targeting of NEETs.

In addition, the **Hungarian report** stressed the challenge of combining YEI and the Youth Guarantee, as the latter implies long-term planning while YEI focuses more on short-term outcomes. Similarly, the **Portuguese evaluation** stresses the need to clarify the articulation between YEI and the Youth Guarantee, in particular in terms of target groups and objectives.

In **France**, the fact that many similar projects as those supported by YEI are already financed by the ESF or national resources leads to competition among operators to attract participants, an issue also raised in the **Hungarian report** which denounces competition between beneficiaries targeting the same group.

In **Romania**, it is recognised that the complementarity of YEI with other initiatives is limited, and the lack of coordination between the various initiatives led to implementation delays.

5.2 Relevance

In **Bulgaria**, **Cyprus** and **Croatia**, the YEI strategy is considered as relevant and adequate to address the needs of young people. Similarly, in **UK-England**, the report recognises that YEI projects are successfully targeting and engaging young disadvantaged NEETs: 72% of participants were recorded as disadvantaged according to the definitions used for the YEI (the rate reaching 82% in terms of self-reported additional disadvantage, such as drugs/alcohol dependency and ex-offenders), but it is noted that more needs to be done to ensure adequate support for NEETs facing multiple barriers to access employment who are likely to be far from the labour market (e.g. those suffering from mental health problems). In **Sweden**, the YEI activities are said to have largely reached the intended target group. Whereas in **Romania**, it is considered that the intervention logic of the Operational Programme remains appropriate to tackle the specific needs of the NEETs, especially those living in rural areas (as they face specific problems due to distances between their place of residence and the training/job).

On the other hand, in **Spain**, despite the fact that the report recognises that the logic of intervention remains valid, it also stresses the need to implement support activities which are more aligned to the needs of the labour market (for instance through mixed training and employment projects, and strengthening links between businesses, apprenticeships and traineeships). In **France**, it is estimated that only about 20% of NEETs participated in YEI in 2015-2016. Measures supported mainly focus on low-qualified young people, who are already the target of many existing measures. In **Lithuania**, the report suggests that the needs of the most disadvantaged youth (such as the disabled, those with family obligations/addictions or with low levels of education) were not met as they were often involved in projects irrespective of their actual labour market needs or they were only proposed the services that were still available. Similarly, it is considered that the proposed services do not fully meet the needs of young people who are close to the labour market as they have to complete the 'Find Yourself' phase (which is mainly targeted at young people most excluded from the labour market) before being proposed an active operation.

The difficulty of identifying and reaching NEETs was also mentioned in a number of reports. In **BE-Brussels Capital region**, where 'YEI-NL guidance' managed by ESF Vlanderen is the only operation exclusively targeted at young non-registered NEETs, it is recommended to consider financing efforts to find participants (YEI in principle does not cover such activity). In **Croatia**, the report highlights the need for further steps to identify young NEETs (in particular the inactive who are currently not covered by the measures examined), and further analysis is required to assess the creaming effect and check whether or not the funds are being used for those most in need. In **Spain**, the difficulty of reaching young people with the greatest need (such as people living in jobless households, single-parent families, unaccompanied minors) is highlighted.

In **France**, the report also pointed to the fact that many traditional beneficiaries did not reply to the calls for projects because of the difficulty in reaching NEETs (in particular due to the limited resources devoted to identifying them, but also the requirement to prove NEET status as well as the distrust of potential participants in the institutions). In **Hungary**, the front-loading nature of YEI <u>and the swift results expected by its design</u> required quick operation which led to relying on beneficiaries with experience of EU funds (thereby limiting the entry of new potentially innovative measures) and which compromised reaching out to young inactive people.

In **Latvia**, the report highlights the need to further promote the participation of young people with disabilities in initial vocational education and job subsidy programmes. In addition, it states that additional efforts should be made to identify men who are NEETs since men seldom register as unemployed and additional effort should also be devoted to reach them.

In **Portugal**, the latest available data indicate that the profile of participants broadly corresponds to the overall characteristics of the NEETs (there are more women, participants tend to be older participants and with high levels of education, groups that are particularly affected by unemployment). However, the disadvantaged NEETs (such as the long-term unemployed or those living in rural areas) are underrepresented, reflecting the difficulty in reaching groups that are far from the labour market. Participants with secondary education or higher accounted for 91% of total participants in 'Internships' and 74% in 'Hiring Support'.

In many Member States the situation of young people improved during the programming period. In **Ireland** for instance, where youth employment has increased significantly since 2013 and the youth unemployment rate declined from 27% in 2013 to 14% in 2017, it is suggested to re-assess the initial targets to avoid competition for fewer numbers of participants. In **Slovenia and Scotland**, the report recommends more flexibility in responding to changes in labour market conditions. In **South West Scotland**, where the level of youth unemployment fell sharply after 2012, the level of need was not the same as planned and this had an impact on achieving targets, but it is recognised that YEI remains an appropriate policy response and that its aspirations remain relevant. In **Sweden**, despite improved economic conditions, it is considered that YEI projects met an actual need and that the YEI strategy is based on a relevant needs analysis.

5.3 Financial implementation, output and immediate result indicators

The evaluation studies report the following in terms of <u>financial targets:</u> in **Ireland**, at end-2017, the reported exchequer expenditure for YEI amounted to 136% of the milestone (and 89% of the 2023 target). High financial execution rates are also reported in **Portugal** (especially for 'Internships' with 86%) and **Bulgaria**, where by end-2018, about 62% of the total YEI budget was spent. On the other hand, in **Romania**, by end-December 2018, only about 1% of the total value of the priority axis dedicated to YEI was contracted out (about EUR 4 million) while in **Slovakia**, about a third of the YEI budget was spent by December 2018. And in the **BE-Brussels Capital Region**, in November 2018, it was estimated that the YEI budget amounted to 24% of the total funding, i.e. about a quarter of the budget was spent over the first three years. In **Spain**, the financial indicator for YEI programmes has not reached 85% of the 2018 milestone (certified expenditure for Priority Axis 5 amounted to 72% of the 2018 milestone – which is likely to be due to the delay in reporting expenditure to the Managing Authority), but the effectiveness in relation to the declared costs is reported as high for the priority axis dedicated to YEI.

In some Member States, the progress achieved in relation to physical targets is considered to be positive as the targets in terms of the number of participants have already been exceeded. This is for instance is the case in **Hungary** (in end-2017, over 40,000 young NEETs were involved in YEI, i.e. 115% of the target), in France (by end-2017, 369 000 young people aged 16 to 25 had entered a YEI operation, exceeding the initial target of 360 000). In addition, in **Croatia**, the target in terms participants in employment immediately after exit has already been reached (37% of YEI participants were employed). In Bulgaria, it is expected that the targets will be exceeded by the end of the period in particular for the 'Youth employment' and 'Training and employment for young people' programmes which started before the rest of the measures. In **Slovakia**, the 2023 target in terms of number of participants fulfilled (68 726 against 82 255) and is expected to be largely exceeded by the end of the programming period (166%). The same is generally true for result indicators except for immediate result indicators related to inactive participants and long-term result indicators on participants in self-employment and participants in further education, training programme leading to a qualification, an apprenticeship or a traineeship six months after leaving.

In other countries, YEI implementation is reported to be progressing well and that the targets are likely to be met. In Ireland for instance, at end-2017, the number of YEI participants amounted to 86% of the milestone and 63% of the final target. In Cyprus as well, YEI implementation is considered to be progressing satisfactorily, and it is reported that targets in terms of output indicators should easily be reached for each operation. In **Hungary**, by end-2017, the number of participants who had completed the programme amounted to 84% of the 2023 target, and it is expected that the objectives set in relation to the result indicator will also be achieved (8 456 people employed after 180 days, i.e. 78% of the target). In the Brussels Capital region, the target in terms of participants aged 25 to 29 who completed the programme is likely to be reached (584 vs 698); in addition 68% of the target for participants aged 25 to 29 with a positive outcome has been achieved. In Portugal, the targets related to output indicators should easily be reached or even exceeded (the achievement rates being 76% for 'Internships' and 69% for 'Hiring Support') while the values for the immediate and longer-term result indicators already rise above their targets (except for the two longer-term indicators on self-employment and participants in continuing education, training programmes leading to a gualification, apprenticeships or traineeships).

On the other hand, progress has been limited in a number of cases. This is for instance the case in **Romania** where only 3% of the target (2 041 participants out of 67 293 NEETs targeted) was achieved in end-2018. In both **England and Scotland**, the reported number of participants amounted to 37% and 45%, respectively, of the final targets though this corresponds to only 31% of funding being spent in Scotland. A similar proportion is observed in **Greece** (40%). In **Croatia**, only half of the target for the total number of YEI participants was achieved by end-2018. In **Spain**, up until end-2018, about 690 000 people had participated in activities financed by the YEI, corresponding to 91% of the milestone for that year. The output indicators under Priority Axis 5 that show greatest progress are those relating to the shares of long-term unemployed and of unemployed participants completing the YEI intervention.

As regards immediate result indicators, the highest employment rate for YEI programmes is in **Poland**, where 79% of participants who completed the project were in employment (77% for people in a difficult social situation), 20% in education and 13% in employment and education. In projects coordinated by Regional Labour Offices (RLO), about 69-75% of participants were employed after participation. Larger shares were reported for traineeships and apprenticeships especially among people with no previous work experience (as compared to those with at least 6 months experience) and those who found the internship themselves. In the Czech Republic, Italy and Sweden, about half of the participants were employed immediately after exit. 56% of participants in the Czech Republic were in employment after leaving (and a further 10% were expected to start employment within the following month) and 3% were in education (10% indicated an intention to return to education). In **Italy**, half of the participants were employed in September 2018. Job placement was higher for those with tertiary education (57%) than those with a low secondary education (43%). In Sweden, 52% of participants in the national project (Young Future) were in employment and 30% in education, and 32% of participants in regional projects were in employment while 34% were in education after exit. In UK-England, Croatia and France, about a third of participants were employed after participation. In England, 37% of the participants were employed on leaving, with a similar number unemployed and just over a quarter economically inactive. In addition, 20% of YEI leavers moved into education or training, with just under 10% gaining a qualification on leaving. The majority of respondents reported that YEI improved their soft skills (such as communication ability, self-confidence, motivation and team working).

In **Lithuania**, the evaluation assesses the "Find Yourself' (which mainly provides guidance and support services, promotion of self-confidence, jobsearch assistance, assessment of skills) and the 'New Start' (vocational training, recruitment incentives, subsidies for self-employed), which are complementary (in order to participate to 'The

New Start', participants must have completed the 'Find yourself' project first). Within 'Find Yourself', 2 groups are targeted: inactive young NEETs not registered (these are managed by the Department of Youth Affairs – DYA), and young registered NEETs (managed by the PES – LLE). Among the latter, a distinction is made between those who are prepared for the labour market and those who are not. One month after participation (to both interventions), 37% of economically inactive people were employed (without a subsidy), and the corresponding shares where 54% for the NEETs ready for the labour market and 35% for those not ready for the labour market.

In Croatia, 37% of YEI participants were employed immediately after exit and 1% were in education (targets were reached). In **France**, 31% of the participants were in employment immediately after the exit, 14% were in training and 55% remained NEETs. In **Portugal**, 70% of the unemployed YEI participants completed the intervention, 45% received an offer of employment, continued education or apprenticeship or traineeship, and 40% continued their studies or are in employment, including self-employment upon exit. In **Scotland**, 25% of participants (1 970 out of 7 924) were in a positive situation immediately after exit. Among those aged between 16 and 24, the group of inactive people achieved higher completion rates and better results than other groups (the unemployed or long-term unemployed). 80% of young people that reported a barrier to accessing employment, education or training opportunities (e.g. lack of work experience) said that YEI helped them to overcome this. In Romania, about 29% of all NEETs participants were working after the end of the programme. In addition, in **BE-Brussels Capital region**, at end-2017, a third of participants aged 25 to 29 had a positive outcome (found a job/training or resumed studying). In Bulgaria, after participation, 32% of young people were employed or taking on training. In **Slovakia**, for 31 221 unemployed participants the outcome was positive immediately after exit (accounting for 76% of the final target, and 215% for LTU).

- Education/Training: In Poland, 90% of Voluntary Labour Corps participants receiving education and vocational counselling and legal advice were in employment. In Romania, by end-2018, just under a third of NEETs participating to training activities were working (three times higher than the employment rate of people who participated in the pilot project in 2014-2015). In Latvia, the share of participants in employment immediately after exit was 25% for 'Development of skills required for work in the non-governmental sector', 13% for 'Professional continuing education' and 10% for 'Non-formal education' and 'Training of drivers'. In Ireland, results for the various measures are reported. For 'Momentum' (which funds upskilling programmes): 33% of participants were employed at end-2016, 17% were involved in further education or Job Bridge and 17% were still engaged in training or job placement. For Youthreach (which provides ongoing education for young school leavers), 10% of participants went into employment immediately after exit, 60% of participants gained a qualification, and 50% went into continued education and training. For Community training centres (which provide training and education for early school leavers), 10% were in employment, 11% were in continued education or training immediately upon exit and 21% gained a qualification. For the Defence Forces Employment Support Scheme (DFESS - which provides training to improve skills, competencies and self-development of young unemployed), 70% of participants progressed to either employment or further education.
- Work based learning or first job experience: In Bulgaria, employment rates after participation are particularly high for the 'Youth employment' (75%) and 'Training and employment' (63%) programmes. In Latvia, just under half of participants (48%) in 'First job experience' were in employment immediately after exit. Similarly, in Portugal, the share of participants in employment after participation is highest for 'Internships' (58%).

- Recruitment incentives: The employment rate achieved for participants supported by YEI-funded recruitment incentives measures is generally relatively high (at least for the evaluation studies reporting results for this type of support). In **Slovenia**, a similar rate of 80% is observed one month after the completion of the 'First challenge 2015' programme. In **Ireland**, 68% of participants in 'JobsPlus Youth' were reported to be in employment on completion (54% after 6 months). However, in **Latvia and Portugal**, the rate was much lower, with only 38% of participants in 'Job subsidies' in employment immediately after exit in the former and 19% in the latter ('Employment support').
- Support to entrepreneurship: In Poland, among the participants of Local Labour Offices projects, over 90% of those receiving subsidies for starting a business and relocation vouchers were in employment. Similarly in Ireland, for the 'Back to work enterprise allowance' (BTWEA), which is a self-employment incentive scheme aimed at long-term unemployed, a relatively large share of participants (78%) were in employment on completion. In Portugal, half of participants benefiting from this kind of support were working after exit. By contrast, in Latvia, the share of participants in 'Support for self-employment' who were working immediately after exit was only 13%.

5.4 Job offers

In **Poland**, the majority of participants (84%) received an offer of work, internship, vocational training or further education over the course of the project and 88% of the offers were accepted. In **Croatia**, 75% of participants in activities covered by Investment Priority 8.ii were offered a job after completing the operation. In **Bulgaria**, about the same share of participants received a job offer after the end of the programme. In **Portugal**, 45% of participants received an offer of employment, continued education or apprenticeship or traineeship. In **UK-England**, 63% of YEI leavers received a job offer between the start of the programme and six months after leaving. In **Greece** however, only 18% of participants received a job offer (immediately after completing the programme for most of them), about 8 participants out of ten accepting the offer. In **Slovakia**, 26 853 unemployed participants received a job offer when leaving the programme (accounting for 131% of the 2023 target).

In Bulgaria, 63% of job offers concerned permanent contracts (95% of them fulltime). In **Greece**, the corresponding share was 56% (57% of them full-time) and in Croatia, 42% (94% of them full-time). In England, 46% of participants in work 6 months after leaving were on a permanent employment contract (and a further 15% had a contract of 12 months or more). In Portugal, according to the latest available data, 44% of participants obtained an open-ended employment contract (96% of them full-time). For about 60% of the accepted job offers the possibility of professional training was guaranteed by the employer. 42% of participants who accepted a job offer 4 weeks following the completion of YEI received a net monthly salary of up to EUR 599 (24% received at most the minimum wage of EUR 530). In Romania, 43% of participants working after participation to YEI had an open-ended contract and 41% worked full-time. In Cyprus, for the 'Acquisition of work experience for young unemployed graduates' project, 39% had a full-time permanent contract. In Slovenia, a third of the participants in the 'First Challenge 2015 programme' were employed on indefinite contracts. In Italy, 21.6% of working Youth Guarantee participants had an open-ended contract. In Spain, 23.2% of all participants who were working 12 months after their participation were on a permanent contract (which is much higher than the overall share of permanent contracts among working youth -8.7%). The share of participants in Training and apprenticeship contracts (subsidised by YEI) who are in full-time temporary contracts after 18 months is much higher than for the control group (68% against 52%). While part-time temporary contracts were more frequent among participants of 'PES Training' than for the control group (26% against 18%). In Poland, 84% of the offers were in the form of an employment contract, but only 14% of these were open-ended; the vast majority (78 %) of the job offers were for full-time jobs. In **France**, 44% of the beneficiaries of 'APEC Accompagnement' who are working within one month after their exit have a sustainable job. The corresponding share is 18.9% for 'Garantie Jeunes' and 18% for 'Parcours Autonomie'. In addition, the counterfactual analysis showed that in 2014-2016, the share of precarious employment contracts was higher in the territories covered by YEI compared to those not covered. In **France** and **Czech Republic** as well, job offers were mainly full-time while in **Latvia**, only about 10% of participants were employed in full-time jobs.

Participants are generally satisfied with the job offers received. For instance, in both Croatia and Slovenia, the level of job satisfaction is around 70%. In UK-England, almost two-thirds of the participants rated the quality of the job offers as either 'very good' or 'good', and the majority of respondents entering a traineeship felt that it would improve their chances of getting a job. In **France**, the job offers broadly match the qualification levels of the participants and most find them interesting. In **Bulgaria**, the quality of the proposals is assessed as high in terms of the characteristics of jobs and compliance with the situation of young people. In Greece, just under half of the participants were highly satisfied with the job offers received. In **Portugal**, more than half of participants who accepted a job offer after 4 weeks found that it was very suitable. And less than 10% of those who remained employed changed job after 6 months. Of these 26% improved their remuneration and 16% their employment contract. In Latvia, the feedback from participants on the measures supported was positive (they contributed to improve their technical skills, their degree of motivation as well as their social skills), but this was less so for participants with basic or only general secondary education. In **Poland**, 77% of participants said that the job offer was in line with their education or professional experience, and high quality offers accounted for 41% of all jobs offered to participants. In Romania, according to data collected through surveys, 75% of participants who got a job kept it 3 months after the completion of the programme and just over half indicated to work in the field for which they were trained.

However, several reports highlight that for the majority of participants the level of the wages on offer was an issue. This is for instance the case in **Bulgaria**, where the wage is considered too low (in the large majority of cases the salary proposed was equivalent to the minimum wage). In **Croatia**, only half of the participants reported that their salary was in line with their expectations. In **Greece**, just over half of the job offers proposed a salary of EUR 300-600 a month (and 23% less than this). In **France**, the average wage offered was slightly below the minimum wage. In **Poland**, 63% of participants declared that the salary was at least similar to the remuneration proposed for similar work; and the average net remuneration received was slightly higher than the minimum net salary. And in **Cyprus**, the main reasons for drop-outs are low pay, poor working conditions and jobs not meeting requirements. In **Lithuania**, most of the jobs obtained are reported to match the competences, previous work experience and expectations of participants but the wage received was smaller than the national average.

5.5 Situation after 6 months or more

In Slovenia, Portugal and Croatia, around 70% of participants were in employment 6 months after leaving the supported programme. In **Slovenia**, 76% of beneficiaries were employed after 6 months; and 83% of participants were currently employed elsewhere than in the initial job offered and were satisfied with their job. In **Portugal**, 6 months after exit, 71% of participants were in employment but only 4% were in continuing education, training programmes leading to a qualification, apprenticeships or traineeships. In **Croatia**, 68% of YEI participants were employed and 4% in education 6 months after exit (the target values were already exceeded). In **Lithuania**, six months after the participation, 80% of NEETs ready for the labour market were employed (the corresponding share being about 55% both for those not

ready for the labour market and for the economically inactive). Transition to work was highest for measures providing subsidies under the 'New Start'.

In Spain, France and England, around half of participants were in employment 6 months after. In **Spain**, 53% of participants were in employment 6 months after the end of the YEI project and 55% after 12 months. Overall, higher levels of employment are observed for participants with higher levels of education as well as older people. The likelihood of being in employment after 12 months was higher for those who participated in activities lasting for more than a year (59%) than for those who participated in activities lasting a week or less (50%). In **France**, for the national Operational Programme, 6 months after exit, 50% of the participants were in employment, 17% were in training and a third still NEETs. In **UK-England**, 6 months after exit, just under half of respondents surveyed were in employment, and a further 16% were in education or training. Under a quarter of respondents were unemployed. Positive employment outcomes after 6 months are considerably less for disadvantaged participants (46% vs 54% for those without a disadvantage). Just under half of respondents in work 6 months after leaving were on a permanent employment contract and a further 15% had a contract lasting 12 months or more.

In **Sweden**, where long-term results are only available for participants in regional projects, the proportion of participants with registered income (i.e. an indicator that they were in employment) was 4 percentage points higher among participants than for the control group. In addition, no effect on the income level was evident 12 months after the end of the operation (except for female participants for whom wages were EUR 760 higher than for the control group). But two years after the end of the project, positive effects are evident for both income levels and the proportion with registered income.

In **Bulgaria**, completing the programme increases the chances of being in employment 6 months after exit by 37% (and by 49% after 12 months). In addition, it is estimated that in 2020, the number of employed in the economy will grow by 1.8% as a result of YEI and the unemployment rate is expected to improve by 0.9 percentage points; and these positive net effects are expected to continue up until 2023.

In **Italy**, participation in active measures is estimated to increase by almost 8 percentage points the likelihood of finding a stable job compared to non-participating. Nevertheless, these positive effects tend to disappear in the long-run.

In **Slovakia**, 29% of total participants were employed 6 months after exit (but accounting for 97% of the 2023 target) and 0.5% were in further education, training programme leading to a qualification, an apprenticeship or a traineeship (9% of the final target). If one looks only at the national projects, the effectiveness is higher: 63% of participants who completed these were not registered at the PES anymore after 3 months, 61% after 6 months, 51% after 9 months and 37% after 12 months.

In **UK-Scotland**, 6 months after leaving the programme, only about 500 participants were in employment (7% of the target) and 1,500 participants were in education or training (35% of the target).

- Education/Training: In BE-Brussels Capital region, of the four measures examined, 'European traineeships' perform best with 83% of participants in employment one year after completing the programme. In Ireland, over the 2014-2016 period, 62% of participants in Youthreach gained a qualification, 34% continued education and training and 14% were in employment 6 months after exiting the activity. In Spain, only about 50% of those participating in 'orientation' and 'education' measures (e.g. professional guidance, accompanying actions or language courses) were in employment after 12 months.
- Work based learning or first job experience: In Spain, 62% of those receiving support in the form of apprenticeship were in employment after one

year. In **Portugal**, 63% of participants who completed 'Internships' in 2014 were working 6 months after. In **Cyprus**, 6 months after exit, over half of participants in 'Acquisition of work experience for young unemployed graduates' were employed, about 5% were self-employed and the same proportion were in education, training or apprenticeships. A significant number of participants remained in the enterprise in which they were placed to gain work experience.

- Recruitment incentives: In Ireland, 54% of participants in JobsPlus Youth were in employment after 6 months (and 87% remained off the Live Register 30-36 months after they began the programme). In Croatia, the most successful operation was 'Employment subsidies' with 81% of participants employed 6 months after their exit. In Portugal, 80% of participants who completed the 'Hiring support' operation were working after 6 months. In Spain, almost 75% of those receiving 'employment' support (e.g. deduction of social contribution, support for hiring etc.) were in employment after 12 months. In the Brussels Capital region Operational Programme, 69% of participants in 'First Employment Agreement (CPE)' were in work one year after completing the programme. In Hungary, wage subsidies and support for business creation have the most impact on the probability of remaining in employment after 180 days.
- **Support to entrepreneurship**: In **Ireland**, 77% of participants in BTWEA were in employment 6 months after exit and 75% of participants did not return to welfare payments within 18 months of completing it. In **Spain**, 63% of those receiving support for self-employment were in employment after one year.

5.6 The impact of YEI

In **Bulgaria**, the report stresses that in the absence of YEI funding, the level of youth unemployment and inactivity would be significantly higher. Without YEI, it is estimated that nearly 4 000 young people would be out of the labour market, approximately 9 000 people would not receive further vocational training, 19,000 would not increase their qualification through internships, and some 26 500 would have been out of employment. According to the counterfactual impact analysis, the net effect of YEI on the share of young unemployed is however negligible (0.3% - except for young people with higher education for whom the net effect is 2.2%). YEI participants were 8% more likely to be in work at end-2018 than those in the control group. The deadweight effect is estimated at 2%, the substitution effect at 13% and the displacement effect at 12%. The chances of being in employment 6 months after exit is increased by 37% for participants (by 49% after 12 months).

In **France**, the overall counterfactual results covering the 2014-2016 period shows no net impact on employment except on the LTU rate (-2.6 percentage points difference) or on the NEET rate, but an increase in the under-employment rate and in the number of precarious jobs.

In **Spain**, one of the main elements of added value of the YEI is the injection of funds that has given a definite boost to youth employment policies.

In **Italy**, participation in active measures appears to increase by almost 8 percentage points the likelihood of finding a stable job compared to non-participating, but this positive effect tends to dissipate in the long-run as noted above. In the Southern regions, the net positive effects on the employability of participants compared to non-participants are evident sooner than in the Northern regions mainly due to the nature of the measures (recruitment subsidies).

In **Latvia**, the proportion of participants in employment after 6-12-18 months is generally higher than in the control group for most of the YEI supported measures (except 'Non-formal education' after 18 months and 'Support for self-employment' after 12 and 18 months). However, none of the supported activities is estimated to have a statistically positive impact on wages in comparison with the control group (except for disabled people participating in initial vocational education programmes).

In **Hungary**, the programme significantly contributes to the probability of being in employment after 28 days but the impact diminishes over time: if a person successfully completes an operation, they are estimated to be 15% more likely to remain in employment after one month, but only 6% more likely after six months.

In **Poland**, a counterfactual analysis carried out in 2017 (and covering participants entering YEI between July 2015 and June 2016)⁶ showed a positive impact of the granted support. The beneficiaries left the unemployment register more than the control group. On average, the positive effects were higher among those who have been unemployed for 12 months or more, the low educated and people from villages and rural areas.

In **Sweden**, the counterfactual analysis carried out for regional projects shows that 12 months after the end of the project, the share of people in employment is 6 percentage points higher among participants than in a control group. The difference is twice as large for men than for women and 13 percentage points higher for participants from abroad.

- Guidance and support for individuals: In France, participation in 'Cap avenir/métiers' (integrated pathways) in Languedoc Roussillon is estimated to increase by 9 percentage points the chances of being in employment one month after exit (the effect is particularly high for 'Cap métiers' with +12 percentage points compared to the control group). The effect in terms of training is estimated to be even higher, with participants being twice as likely to be in training after their exit than the control group (for 'Cap avenir', the impact is 4 times more). In addition, participants in 'Accompagnement renforcé' are more likely to be employed one month after their exit (63% compared to 37% for the control group), but after 6 months, the rates are similar. 'Garantie Jeunes' on the other hand is estimated to have increased the chances of being in employment by 9 percentage points 18 months after registering in the Oedipe database and by 7 percentage points 24 months after (which should correspond to the situation 6 months after exit). No significant effect was observed one year after exit. In addition, there was a significant effect on the number of hours worked during the semester (but again not over the long term). For 'Parcours autonomie' (which was assessed in Nord-Pas-de-Calais and Champagne-Ardenne), a net effect on employment (including sustainable employment) is only evident in Nord-Pas-de-Calais, with 32% of participants being in work after 6-8 months as against 28% for the control group (and 35% vs 32% after 12-16 months). The operation does not seem to have accelerated participation in continuing training but a net effect (of about 30%) is estimated again in Nord-Pas-de-Calais on access to alternate training. Participants are more likely to be in alternate training irrespective of the point at which their situation is compared with the control group. The poor performance in Champagne-Ardenne is argued to be perhaps attributable to the lower intensity and duration of support as well as the lower average unit cost per participant.
- Work based learning or first job experience: In Spain, 97% of participants in training and apprenticeship contracts were in employment 18 months after participation as compared with 60% of the control group. After 2 years, the gap narrows but remains significant: 72% of participants were in employment as against 47% of the control group. In Croatia, workplace training (SOR) is estimated to have a neutral effect on employment. In Italy, the net effect on the employment rate is positive for those participating in traineeship (+ 9.5 percentage points after 18 months). In Sweden, for the national project Ung Framtid (Young future), preliminary results indicate that while no statistically significant effect is observed on the number of unemployment days, the likelihood of leaving unemployment is estimated to be 3 percentage points

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⁶ https://www.power.gov.pl/media/43140/raport_29_08_17.pdf

higher for participants than for the control group at the end of the programme (however after 3 months there is no statistically significant difference). In **France**, participation in 'SAS apprentissage' in Nord-Pas-de-Calais was found not to reduce the drop-out rate during the first year of apprenticeship (which is 37% for both participants and the control group), but this result is encouraging as YEI participants are further away from the labour market than the control group.

- **Education/Training**: In **Spain**, for participants in training provided by the PES, 73% of were in employment 18 months after participation as compared with 47% for the control group; 24 months after, the figures were respectively 58% and 38%. In **Italy**, the net effect on the employment rate is negative for those participating in education (- 9.2 percentage points). In **France**, for 'Écoles de la 2ème chance' (second chance schools), which are supported in several regions, participants are less likely than the control group to be in employment 3, 6 or 9 months after exit (the difference is about 5-6 percentage points). The same is observed for sustainable employment (the difference ranging from 5-7 percentage points). There is no significant difference in the probability of being in training immediately after exit, but the chances of participants of being so are lower after 6 months (-3 percentage points).
- **Recruitment incentives**: In **Croatia**, YEI employment subsidies are estimated to have had the most positive net effect on employment (+27%), and a negative effect is estimated for public works. In **Slovenia**, YEI participants are 30 percentage points more likely to be employed than the control group: their employment rate is 79% while that of those not participating in the 'First Challenge 2015 programme' is 48%. The report highlights the fact that the highest added value of the programme is to provide a first work experience that enables young people to improve their employability on the labour market. The programme also makes it easier to employ people with a low education level.

5.7 Costs

In relation to efficiency, most of the evaluation studies report findings in terms of average costs. In Slovenia, the programme is considered to be cost-effective as it supported 2 985 young people for a total of EUR 670 thousand, which means that on average, the management costs for each participant amounted to EUR 224. In Hungary, according to the preliminary data, the average cost per participant was around EUR 3 000. In Cyprus, unit costs vary from EUR 300 (Guidance for NEETs) to EUR 10 000 (Providing training opportunities to Architecture and Civil Engineering NEET graduates up to 29). For 'Acquisition of work experience for young unemployed graduates', the unit cost (EUR 4 681) is similar to that of similar work experience measures. In **Portugal**, the preliminary average unit cost per participant is EUR 1 602 (EUR 4 749 for Internships and EUR 2 771 for Hiring Support; in both cases higher than the programmed unit costs). In Romania, the unit cost of training activities expressed in terms of young people who obtained a qualification is on average EUR 930 (much lower than the average cost of training projects funded in the previous programming period), while the average unit cost of skills assessment per certified person is EUR 630. In **Lithuania**, the report indicates that services provided to the group of participants prepared for the labour market were delivered most effectively while the least efficient were those proposed to unemployed people who were not ready for the job market. For 'Find yourself', the average costs are EUR 365 for inactive participants, EUR 569 for those who are close to the labour market and EUR 864 for those who are far from the labour. For 'New Start': The average costs are EUR 2 746 for participants close to the labour market, EUR 3 848 for inactive participants and EUR 4 345 for those who are far from the labour market. In UK-England, the interviews revealed that activities promoting personal development and short qualification courses were perceived as cost effective. In Greece, the unit costs are higher compared to those originally budgeted. The average cost varies from EUR 1 700 to over EUR 5 000. In **Slovakia** as well the current average cost per participant

(EUR 680) is higher than initially planned (EUR 2 230) but cost effectiveness per employed participant (EUR 4 065) is twice as high compared to what was initially planned (EUR 8 303). In Bulgaria, the average annual cost of participation (EUR 1 278) is well below the average wage (EUR 7 540 in 2017). The majority of participants were paid the statutory minimum wage by employers (less than EUR 240 a month). Most of the employers surveyed reported that the operation costs them the same as the benefit they gain, though the number of employers for whom the operation costs more than the benefit was larger than the number for whom it costs less. 'Ready to work' is estimated to be the most cost efficient operation (EUR 150 per person). In Spain, according to the intermediary bodies and direct beneficiaries, the most efficient interventions under Priority Axis 5 are reported to be contract bonuses, workshop schools as well as individualised guidance.

It is only in Croatia and Latvia that a more in-depth analysis of cost-effectiveness seems to have been carried out. In both countries, the unit cost was interpreted in relation to the net effect of the programme. In **Croatia**, average cost per participant varies from EUR 3 357 to EUR 4 879. The unit cost of YEI occupational training per participant employed after 6 months) amounts to EUR 244 000 and EUR 17 630 for YEI employment subsidies. In **Latvia**, after 6 months, cost-effectiveness in terms of participants employed (and number of days worked) is estimated to be higher for YEI participants than for the control group for all measures. 'Developing skills for work in the non-governmental sector' is estimated to be the most cost effective operation (both in terms of participants in employment and number of days worked). On the other hand, cost-effectiveness in terms of average wages (i.e. the difference between the estimated 'counterfactual' impact of the operation on the average wage and the cost of support) is lower for YEI participants than for the control group for all measures except for 'First job experience' (both after 6 and 12 months).

6 Success factors

In **BE-Brussels Capital region**, a third of the working time has to be dedicated to training in the 'First Employment Agreement' (CPE) operation, which allows young people to learn and develop specific competencies (this aspect is recognised as crucial especially since it is often not included in other similar measures). For 'European Traineeships', it is the cooperation between Actiris (the regional PES) and other partners which helped to reach low qualified young people or those living in jobless households. In addition, it is reported that the previous experience of Actiris in the management of similar measures helped to implement these.

In **Bulgaria**, the flexibility of the supported programmes and the partnership with NGOs and municipalities were assessed as crucial for the success of YEI.

In the **Czech Republic**, it is estimated that YEI has been well targeted; the measures managed by the regional authorities were able to reach in particular the most disadvantaged young people (such as those with low education level or from minorities).

In **Ireland**, the long history of some measures (like the 'Back to work enterprise allowance' – BTWEA, which has existed since 1993 with YEI funding starting in 2015, or the 'Community Training Centres' – CTC) partly explains their success. Moreover, for BTWEA, the financial benefit for participants (who retain their Jobseeker allowances) combined with initial training and mentoring support was considered a key element in the scheme's effectiveness and success. In addition, the report recognises that CTCs are effective at reaching hard-to-reach young people particularly in urban areas while for the 'Youth Employment Support Scheme', the closely-targeted and intensive nature of the operation is seen as a key aspect.

In **France**, activities to identify young 'invisible' NEETs constitute a major change, often requiring traditional employment and inclusion stakeholders to act as social workers to reach the target groups. Critical factors for a positive immediate outcome were the duration of the operation, the length of time unemployed and age; and for innovative projects they were a link with the enterprise, individualised guidance and participation in collective activities. In addition, for 'SAS apprentissage', the effectiveness of the personalised support lies mainly in the combination of an individual diagnosis and confrontation with the field of study. The implementation of the SAS has also been very favourably received by employers, who consider that this system made it possible to meet their labour needs. For some, going through the SAS gives credibility to the applications, limiting the "gap" between the requirements of employers and the motivation of young people.

In **Croatia**, financial continuity was considered as a key factor for implementation. The measures supported were already in operation before but used to be financed by the national budget, IPA or ESF. The existence of a separate fund for YEI made the issue of youth employment more important and more visible.

In **Cyprus**, where other operations funded by ESF are aimed at young unemployed and which are complementary to YEI (such as the modernisation and strengthening of PES or projects promoting entrepreneurship), the fact that it is the same authority which manages YEI and all these programmes is seen as crucial for ensuring coherence between them.

In **Lithuania**, the experience and competence level of coordinators are considered as key elements for the performance and implementation of the YEI. In addition, it is reported that publicity through the Department of Youth Affairs website or on social networks is reported as the most effective (announcements on radio, leaflets, posters in streets or public announcements during special events being almost ineffective).

In **Latvia**, it is considered that individual work with young people at high risk of unemployment is a prerequisite for a successful outcome.

In **Hungary**, successful programme completion is greatly influenced by the educational attainment level of participants.

In **Portugal**, YEI partners have developed their own communication strategies, in which local partnerships are mainly used, although they generally recognise the advantage of simultaneously having a centrally conducted national campaign. YEI implementation is based on an extensive network of partners (building on the Youth Guarantee network of around 800 partners whose mission is to identify young NEETs). In addition, many beneficiaries are from the social sector and are therefore better equipped to identify and mobilise young NEETs, particularly those who are inactive.

In **Slovenia**, the 'First Challenge' programme provides the opportunity to gain first work experience and soft business skills, it stops the vicious circle in which young people need experience to get a job, and at the same time if they do not have a job, they cannot get work experience. The 3-month trial period is considered to be a key feature of the programme.

In **Sweden**, high quality of implementation (regarding competence, low staff turnover and anchoring in the organization) and adaptation of the operation to the local context to fit the target group are estimated to have contributed to the success of the YEI operations.

In **UK-England**, the following key factors for effective delivery are recognised: use of local data and intelligence, co-location with other services supporting young people (such as in children's centres), development of partnership with Jobcentre Plus, effective governance procedures, 'wraparound' support to address personal barriers facilitated by a 'key worker'.

In **UK-Scotland**, the person-centred approach, the case management model, the outreach activity, the flexibility of provision and the involvement of employers in the design of specific operations are considered as crucial for the YEI delivery.

7 Main challenges

Delays in fully operational **monitoring systems** becoming available were also mentioned, for instance in **UK-Scotland**, **Romania** and **Portugal**. In **Ireland**, the monitoring system was not operational before 2018 (resulting in data collection issues) and the late designation of the Managing and certifying Authorities also delayed implementation. In **France**, the variety of monitoring systems at both national and regional level was an issue in particular to compile aggregates.

Problems relating to data availability were reported in many cases. For instance in the Czech Republic, the limited availability of administrative data was highlighted; and there is an issue in the representativeness of the samples used for the participant surveys. In Latvia, emigration abroad after participation may explain some of the missing data; the report also highlights the fact that data are not available for all participants due to the timing of the evaluation and stresses the low response rate to the e-survey of participants. In **Slovenia**, due to privacy rules, it was not possible to use administrative data to identify the control group for the counterfactual analysis and to reach disabled participants. In addition, in Romania, it was stressed that the PES databases were either incomplete or the information reported was often inadequate (obliging beneficiaries to carry out outreach activities which were initially not foreseen) and personal data were not always accessible due to legal provision on data protection. In **Greece**, there were delays in obtaining microdata. In **Hungary**, difficulties were encountered in contacting participants once they have left the programme. In Sweden, the quantitative analysis suffers from the lack of data for monitoring individual development. In UK-England, the report recognises limitations to assess efficiency due to lack of data and the nature of the holistic support (it is difficult to disentangle individual elements to assess their cost effectiveness). In **France**, the available data do not allow individual monitoring of participants over a reasonable period of time, the CIE therefore used 'quasi-panels'. In addition, for 'Cap avenir/métiers', the analysis of impact on the long-term was not possible due to the lack of data 6 months after participation for the control group (no survey was possible because access to personal data was refused by the National Commission for Data Protection and Liberties - CNIL), and analysis of unit costs could not be carried out due to lack of data. For 'SAS apprentissage', timely access to personal data was also difficult due to the General Data Protection Regulation, limiting the possibility to carry out ad hoc surveys. For 'Garantie Jeunes', the counterfactual findings only relate to the first cohort of participants (covering only ten areas based on volunteering); participation in the operation was much lower in the second cohort. In addition, data obtained through the participant surveys may not be fully reliable especially if the time span since exit is lengthy. In **Cyprus**, of the six supported measures, detailed results are only available for one ('Acquisition of work experience for young unemployed graduates').

Finding participants was also a challenge in some cases. For 'YEI-NL guidance' in **the Brussels Capital region** Operational Programme, difficulties of attracting young NEETs (eligibility conditions were relaxed in 2016 to allow entry to people registered at the PES but who do not really have active contacts with the PES), and to find people with a minimum level of knowledge of Dutch willing to learn the language were reported. Similarly for 'Training proposed by Bruxelles Formation', the report mentions that young people were sometimes not interested in following a training programme (or in jobs where there are shortages), many young people do not have the basic skills to follow a training course. In **Bulgaria**, the PES also notes the difficulty of finding participants. In **Hungary**, the difficulty of reaching the inactive was stressed. In **France**, the difficulty of identifying young NEETs was also indicated and the various reasons for this (small amounts were invested in the task, many projects are already financed by the ESF, the requirement to prove NEET status, distrust of participants of institutions, bad previous experiences). In **Romania**, the reluctance of young people living in rural areas to move to urban areas to follow a training was considered as a

challenge. In **Portugal**, the heterogeneity of the target group, the delay in the approval of specific legislation for the new types of operation, the large spectrum of types of operation and the complexity of the instruments necessary for their operationalisation were seen as the main challenges, along with the difficulties in identifying and attracting inactive young people. In **Poland**, difficulties were reported in recruiting and retaining participants due to the recovery on the labour market, financial issues (low internship allowance (about EUR 230), no possibility to undertake odd jobs during participation, lack of public health insurance – which was especially problematic for people with disabilities), organisational problems (long period between the recruitment and the project launch and long procedures for awarding public contracts) as well as low motivation of participants.

In some cases, **problems working with young participants** were raised. In the **Brussels Capital region** Operational Programme, the report mentions problems of discipline and difficulties of managing groups composed only of young people for 'Training proposed by Bruxelles Formation'. In **Bulgaria**, municipalities/NGOs also reported difficulties working with the most vulnerable and the lack of motivated young people. In **Hungary**, the report also highlights that it is more difficult for young people to cooperate than for the older age group because of the attitude and lifestyle of today's young people. In **France**, E2C financed by YEI had to deal with a more disadvantaged target group than the other second chance schools.

In addition, various additional challenges were also reported. For instance in **BE-Brussels Capital region**, the high costs of CPE (which subsidises jobs in the public sector for up to two years, and where the wage is fully paid by the PES) and the limited number of jobs available in public institutions were emphasized. For 'Training proposed by VDAB', difficulties of exchanging data between Actiris and VDAB and different definitions of results were highlighted.

In **Bulgaria**, employers complain about the administrative burden and the difficulty of finding mentors while for participants, the wages offered were too low. In addition, substitution and displacement effects (of up to 12-13%) were reported. In the report for **Slovenia**, the possibility of replacing regular employees with participants of 'First Challenge' was also recognised.

In **France**, most Managing Authorities used YEI to support existing youth employment policy (due to the uncertainty over the management of YEI, the limited competences of MAs, and the changes in the allocation of competences following decentralisation) by strengthening the activities, increasing the number of participants or putting a specific focus on NEETs. It was also reported that the short duration of YEI projects leaves little time to find a lasting solution to the problems of the NEETs. In addition, it was difficult to link the 'contribution analysis' and the counterfactual evaluations carried out (the former examines the global impact of YEI while the latter analyses the impact of specific measures). In **Romania** as well, it is reported that the short duration of the projects limited the capacity to support in a sustainable way young NEETs facing multiple disadvantages.

In **Croatia**, a large administrative burden and the complexity of the implementation process (in particular in terms of collecting, verifying and archiving data on participants) were the main challenges. In addition, it is worth noting that some YEI measures (on education and self-employment subsidies) have not been implemented yet.

In **Cyprus**, the main reasons for dropping out of the 'Acquisition of work experience for young unemployed graduates' operation are poor remuneration and working conditions as well as jobs not meeting requirements.

In **Lithuania**, various challenges are reported: excessive workload burden faced by coordinators (leading to lower quality in the services provided and lack of time for individual counselling), the lack of competence of some coordinators to ensure a proactive engagement to attract participants and a high quality of the implemented

activities. In addition, the fact that participants close to the labour market cannot shorten the 'Find Yourself' phase before moving to the 'New Start' phase is also seen as a problem. Cooperation with partner institutions was also considered more successful for the PES (which used existing networks) than for DYA (where new networks had to be established). Moreover, the implementation of a project with different target groups was often seen as misleading for the potential participants.

In **Hungary**, implementation was hampered by the fact that different ministries were responsible for the programme and cooperation was difficult. Beneficiaries targeting the same group compete in achieving similar outcomes instead of cooperating.

In **Romania**, it is reported that communication with potential beneficiaries during the preparation of the project applications was insufficient. In addition, the high employment target fixed for participants after 6 months (50%) discouraged many potential beneficiaries, along with the fact that the duration of the supported projects was very short, and the difficulty to identify and contact the target groups. It is also mentioned that rigid rules in the applicant guidelines (including low scores attributed to social innovation) did not encourage the development of innovative approaches.

In **Sweden**, the challenge is to address the differences in the impact of the operation (e.g. between men and women and between individuals from abroad and those from Sweden).

In **UK-Scotland**, restrictions relating to supporting those at risk of becoming NEET and the definition of NEET adopted (which implied that young people in employment were ineligible even where this was only for a few hours per week) are said to have reduced the impact of YEI. In addition, providing the necessary evidence requirements for eligibility has been challenging. Challenges include getting YEI off the ground at the same time as the Employability Pipeline and other ESF programmes. By far the main hindrance compared to other ESF and non-European funded programmes was reported to centre on restrictive eligibility rules and the administrative tasks (and time) associated with the compliance process. The lack of flexibility or freedom to respond to different and changing local circumstances and needs and local delivery capacity was also reported. YEI faced a compressed timescale for delivery which in turn led to reduced activity levels.

8 Recommendations included in the evaluations

In **BE-Brussels Capital region**, more flexibility is requested in the implementation of the 'YEI-NL guidance' pathway. In addition, the report suggests to finance the effort to find participants but also to attach less importance to quantitative outcomes.

In **Bulgaria**, it is recommended to continue developing the monitoring system in order to ensure a quick and accurate follow-up of the indicators for all target groups, to continue implementing youth active labour market policies in particular for young mothers and young disabled, to improve the quality of education and cooperation between schools and enterprises and to address the problem of quality of skills by providing training at the workplace.

In **Czech Republic**, there is a need to strengthen the information for potential participants before the start of projects, to provide a more individualised support to participants, to strengthen the role of personal advisors who can motivate them and provide tailored advice and to improve the coordination between the implementing authorities in order to avoid projects overlapping and potential competition for applicants.

In **Ireland**, planning and preparation for the design, management and delivery of the next ESF should begin as early as possible. Given the substantial reduction in the number of unemployed, the Managing Authority should request IBs/beneficiaries to reassess their objectives, target groups and numbers of planned participants, to avoid competition for participants and potentially redirect surplus resources. Consideration should be given to evaluate "clusters" of initiatives targeting the same or similar participants (e.g. BTEI and Adult Literacy).

In **Spain**, the quality of some support activities (such as guidance services provided to young unemployed as well as training programmes) should be improved, the programmes proposed should be more aligned to the needs of the labour market, coordination between the PES, YEI implementing bodies and other institutions should be improved, and the administrative burden reduced. In addition, greater efforts should be devoted to reach young people with low education, those living in rural areas and the inactive.

In **France**, it is recommended to maintain the NEETs-based approach (instead of having a general policy focusing on all young people) and to increase communication/information on this approach, to carry out detailed analysis on the situation of NEETs to better understand their characteristics/needs, to strengthen partnerships (in particular with new stakeholders to better identify the NEETs), to promote integrated actions, to support innovation, to eliminate the requirement to justify NEET status for people who are very far from the labour market and to reduce the number of common indicators. For 'SAS apprentissage' in particular, there is a need to monitor the apprentices during the first months of their apprenticeship, to plan in advance the collection of all data in order to limit selection bias and allow a longitudinal follow-up of participants/non-participants and to have complete information on the situation of the participants, not only on entry/exit but also on the various measures/steps followed.

In **Croatia**, contact information should be made compulsory in the monitoring data. Further steps are needed to identify young NEETs, and in particular the inactive (who are currently not covered by the measures examined). It is necessary to reduce the importance of the SOR operation in the future given its poor performance in the CIE analysis.

In **Cyprus**, it is necessary to examine the possibility of partnerships with private work agencies, to continuously update the mapping of data on NEETs and to introduce specific conditions to limit redundancies in enterprises during YEI support but also to adapt examples of good practice identified in other countries (such as setting up

teams of young unemployed graduates to help identify NEETs or to establish a onestop shop in each province to provide guidance for young people).

In **Lithuania**, the report emphasises the importance to widen the range of services available to meet the specific needs of particularly disadvantaged NEETs (i.e. disabled, those having family obligations, addictions or with low levels of education) and to take arrangements to use personal data.

In **Latvia**, the need to develop data storage and information systems is recognised. In addition, additional effort should be devoted to the missing NEETs, more individualised support for low educated young people should be provided under the "Know and DO!" programme, participation of young disabled in initial vocational education and job subsidy programmes should be further promoted, the range of support activities offered to young people with basic or low levels of education should be examined and cooperation between career advisers and employers strengthened.

In **Poland**, there is a need to overcome the difficulties in recruiting and retaining participants by dealing with financial issues faced by the participants, with organisational problems and with the low motivation of participants as noted above.

In **Portugal**, it is necessary to increase the focus on less qualified young people, inactive, LTU, women and other disadvantaged groups as well as those living in rural areas/Azores/Madeira/Algarve/ Alentejo, but also to accelerate implementation of Education/Qualification and Entrepreneurship measures, to strengthen the system for mobilising unregistered NEETs and to clarify the articulation between YEI and the Youth Guarantee (in terms of target groups and objectives).

In **Romania**, it is recommended to increase the duration of projects to at least 12 months (in order to allow the implementation of further activities such as accompanying and mentoring during the first months of employment), to review the methodology for formulating the targets, and to further promote social innovation in the guidelines for applicants.

In **Slovenia**, a faster responsiveness to changes in the labour market is required (youth unemployment began to decline already before the introduction the 'First Challenge' programme) and further efforts should be devoted to the promotion of green jobs.

In **Sweden**, it is recommended to consider YEI as a model for future actions for other specific target groups.

In **UK-England**, the recommendations are as follows: to ensure adequate support to NEETs with multiple barriers who are likely to be far from the labour market (e.g. those suffering from mental health problems), to find a balance between evidence requirements and the administrative burden, to address the risk that this type of support (which is not offered through mainstream measures) ends in case of Brexit or after the end of the current programme.

In **UK-Scotland**, the report stresses that evidence requirements for eligibility should take cognisance of the particular target groups and the challenges they might face. In addition, the lack of flexibility to respond to different and changing local circumstances and needs and local delivery capacity is highlighted.

9 Key points highlighted in the 2018 YEI evaluations

This section sums up the key points that were highlighted in the second round of YEI evaluation reports:

- Out of the 19 YEI evaluation reports submitted in 2018, only 9 included a
 counterfactual impact analysis to assess the effect of the YEI on the labour
 market situation of young people. Six years after the launch of the initiative,
 findings in terms of its effective impact are still not available for most of the
 Operational Programmes.
- In most cases the **YEI strategy** is reported as being a **relevant and suitable** response to the employment needs of young people and is considered to help the intended target groups, but in a number of cases, the issue of 'creaming' (in the sense of focusing on the groups which are easiest to reach and to help into employment) and the difficulty of reaching those with the greatest needs were highlighted.
- Many YEI evaluation reports highlight the fact that the situation of young people
 in their respective countries or regions improved during the programming period.
 In many countries this had implications for achieving targets set initially for
 the number of people to support when unemployment and the number of young
 NEETs was higher.
- In some Member States the following **factors** are considered to have **jeopardised the effective implementation of the YEI programmes**: difficulty of reaching those most in need, restrictive eligibility rules, lack of motivation of young participants, short duration of YEI projects, competition between service providers to attract participants (especially following the economic recovery) and the administrative burden.
- On the other hand, the **key success factors** that are reported to have contributed to the effectiveness of the programmes relate to the nature of the support, the fact that the measures supported were already existing before YEI was launched, experience in managing similar measures, good governance, partnership with relevant stakeholders and the involvement of enterprises.
- Where information is available for specific operations, the highest employment rates immediately after leaving the measures supported are for those participating in education or training measures, receiving support for entrepreneurship and assisted by recruitment incentives. Where data are available to enable a comparison to be made, the employment rates after 6 months are generally higher than immediately after completing a programme.
- Participants are generally satisfied with the job offers received (though
 not in terms of the wages paid). For the majority of the OPs for which data on
 quality of job offers are available, over a third of the job offers involved
 permanent employment contracts.
- Average costs per participant varied from just over EUR 150 in Bulgaria to almost EUR 19,000 in Ireland. In Slovakia, cost-effectiveness (cost per participant finding employment) is estimated to be twice that expected while in Latvia, after 6 months, it is estimated to be higher for YEI participants than for the control group for all measures.
- The findings of counterfactual impact evaluations show that in most cases participation in the measures supported had a positive effect on the chances of young people to find employment. It is however difficult to draw a general conclusion on the most successful measures as the situation widely varies across countries and regions and the results seem to be affected by the underlying circumstances, by differences in the jobs available as well as by the characteristics of the various measures and the way they are implemented.
- Some reports highlight the fact that there are relatively few innovative projects to support young people out of work and that the innovative aspect

- largely lies in the targeting of NEETs and ensuring their participation in programmes.
- In some cases, it was stressed that **YEI was used to fund existing measures** previously financed from national sources instead of complementing these i.e. the 'additionality' aspect of the funding provided is open to question.
- In many cases, the **individualised support** provided to the NEETs was identified as a key factor in the success of programmes.
- In some countries and regions (such as in France, Spain and UK-Scotland), it was emphasised that the **time available for preparing and designing the YEI strategy and programmes was limited** and this had affected implementation by preventing the formulation of truly innovative projects and by giving priority to funding already existing measures as well as by making it difficult to develop an effective outreach strategy. This also adversely affected the availability of data and partly explains the low number of counterfactual impact evaluations which have been carried out up to now. It is therefore recommended to launch the preparation of ESF+ for the 2021-2027 period as early as possible to avoid the repetition of such problems.

10 List of evaluations

Table 5. Summary of all evaluations and studies used in the report

MS	OP name	Title of evaluation	Source
BE	OP ESF of the	Ongoing evaluation of YEI and YG	IDEA Consult
	Brussels-Capital		
	Region: Investment		
DE	for growth and jobs	Contration of the implementation of	VET 1St was and
BE	OP ESF of the Brussels-Capital	Evaluation of the implementation of the youth employment initiative and	YEI 1 st report
	Region: Investment	youth guarantee actions of OP ESF	
	for growth and jobs	Brussels-Capital	
BE	OP Wallonia-Brussels	Evaluation of YEI implementation	AIR2017
BE	OP Wallonia-Brussels	Evaluation of the implementation of	YEI 1 st report
		the youth employment initiative	
BE	OP Brussels Capital	Evaluation on Youth Guarantee,	AIR2017
	Region	'Link' service, 'Select Actiris' service	
		and 'Ateliers de Recherche Active d'Emploi'.	
BE	OP Flanders	Active labour market policies in	CRIE-JRC
DL	or rianders	Flanders – Evaluation of the ESF	CIVIE SIVE
		'Work experience for young persons'	
		programme	
BG	OP Human Resources	Evaluation of the YEI within OP	YEI 1 st report
	Development	Human Resources Development	
	00.11	2014-2020	0: 14:
BG	OP Human Resources	Evaluation of YEI measures under	Sigma Metrics
	Development	priority axis 1 of OP Human resources development 2014-2020	
CY	OP Employment,	Evaluation of ESF and YEI	YEI 1st report
0.	Human Capital and	interventions including YG	TELL TOPOLE
	Social Cohesion	implementation	
CY	OP Employment,	2nd evaluation of the YEI	Enoros Consulting
	Human Capital and		
	Social Cohesion	5 1 11 611 1/57 1 11 6 1	
CZ	OP Employment	Evaluation of the YEI in the Czech Republic	Evaluation Unit of the
		Republic	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
CZ	OP Employment	Strategic evaluation of OP	Eval HD
DE	OP Baden-	Evaluation of IP 8.ii (Vocational	ISG GmbH
	Württemberg-ESF	training)	
DE	OP Saarland – ESF	Preparatory measures	AIR2017
DE	OP Bayern ESF	Evaluation of 'Work related youth	ISG GmbH
	OD Harris have	social work'	E
DE	OP Hamburg	Thematic Evaluation: Effectiveness and success factors of individual	Eval HD
		support programmes	
DE	OP Nordrhein-	Evaluation of vocational measures in	Eval HD
	Westfalen	Nordrhein-Westfalen	
DE	OP Nordrhein-	Evaluation study: Grundbildung mit	Office for vocational
	Westfalen	Erwerbswelterfahrung, BBB	training planning
	OD N		(BBB)
DE	OP Nordrhein-	Implementation of the ex-ante	ISG
	Westfalen	evaluation of the ESF program of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia for	
		the funding period 2014-2020; final	
		report of the ex-ante evaluation	
EE	OP Cohesion Policy	Mid-term review of My First Job	AIR2017
	Funding	(M1T)	
EL	OP Human Resources	Evaluation of YEI interventions	YEI 1 st report
	Development,		
	Education and		

MS	OP name	Title of evaluation	Source
	Lifelong Learning		
EL	OP Human Resources Development, Education and Lifelong Learning	Evaluation of the YEI 2014-2020	Premium Consulting
EL	OP Human Resources Development, Education and Lifelong Learning	First results of the Youth Employment Initiative	ECORYS, PPMI
EL	OP Human Resources Development, Education and Lifelong Learning	Evaluation of YEI	Labour Institute of the General Confederation of Greek Workers
ES	OP Youth Employment ESF	Intermediate Evaluation on PA1	AIR2017
ES	Horizontal evaluation	Implementation of the partnership agreement: 2017 report	EvalHD
ES	OP Youth Employment ESF	First Evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative	YEI 1 st report
ES	OP Youth Employment ESF	2nd evaluation of the YEI (Priority axis 5)	Fresno and Universidad Complutense de Madrid
FR	OP for the implementation of YEI in mainland France and outermost regions	Assessment of the impact of the European programme 'The youth employment Initiative' in 2015	YEI 1 st report
FR	OP for the implementation of YEI in mainland France and outermost regions + 12 regional YEI OPs	2nd evaluation of the YEI	Quadrant Conseil and KPMG
FR	OP for the implementation of YEI in mainland France and outermost regions + 12 regional YEI OPs	Survey on OP YEI (Situation of participants after 6 months)	AIR2017
FR	OP for the implementation of YEI in mainland France and outermost regions + 12 regional YEI OPs	Counterfactual evaluation of 3 national measures (Garantie Jeunes, Parcours autonomie, Accompagnement renforcé) (Lot 3)	Edater, amnyos groupe
FR	National OP Employment and Social Inclusion + OP YEI	Preparatory study on horizontal principles in OP Employment and Social Inclusion + OP YEI	AIR2017
FR	National OP Employment and Social Inclusion + OP YEI	Preparatory study on social innovation in OP Employment and Social Inclusion + OP YEI	AIR2017
FR	ROP Aquitaine	Impact evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative in Aquitaine in 2015	YEI 1 st report
FR	ROP Auvergne	Impact evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative in Auvergne in	YEI 1 st report

MS	OP name	Title of evaluation	Source
		2015	
FR	ROP Centre		AIR2017
FK	ROP Centre	6-month follow-up of participants to training (PA6 and 7)	AIRZU17
FR	ROP Centre	Impact evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative in Centre-Val de Loire in 2015	YEI 1 st report
FR	ROP Champagne- Ardenne	Impact evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative in Champagne-Ardenne in 2015	YEI 1 st report
FR	ROP Champagne- Ardenne	Assessment of the 3 YEI measures (École de la 2e chance, Actions qualifiantes, Développeurs de l'apprentissage)	AIR2017
FR	ROP Haute- Normandie	Impact evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative in Haute- Normandie in 2015	YEI 1 st report
FR	ROP Ile-de-France et Seine	Impact evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative in Seine- Saint-Denis in 2015	YEI 1 st report
FR	ROP Languedoc- Roussillon	Impact evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative in Languedoc- Roussillon in 2015	YEI 1 st report
FR	ROP Languedoc- Roussillon 2014- 2020; ROP Nord-Pas de Calais 2014-2020	Counterfactual evaluation of 3 regional measures financed by YEI in France (Lot 4)	Edater, amnyos groupe
FR	ROP Midi-Pyrénées et Garonne	Evaluation of the impact of the European Youth Employment Initiative in 2015 - Haute-Garonne	YEI 1 st report
FR	ROP Nord-Pas de Calais	Impact evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative in Nord-Pas- de-Calais in 2015	YEI 1 st report
FR	ROP Picardie	Impact evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative in Picardie in 2015	YEI 1 st report
FR	ROP Guadeloupe	Impact evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative in Guadeloupe in 2015	YEI 1 st report
FR	ROP Martinique	Impact evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative in Martinique in 2015	YEI 1 st report
HR	OP Efficient Human	Evaluation of the YEI 2018	Ipsos
HR	Resources ESF OP Efficient Human Resources ESF	Evaluation of youth employment initiative within the OP HER	YEI 1 st report
HU	OP Economic Development and Innovation	Evaluation of the YEI	Equinox Consulting
HU	OP Economic Development and Innovation	Evaluation of the YEI	YEI 1 st report
IE	ESF OP 2014-2020	Evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) in Ireland	YEI 1 st report

MS	OP name	Title of evaluation	Source
IE	ESF OP 2014-2020	PEIL OP Mid-term evaluation – Final	Fitzpatrick Associates
	F0F 0F 201 1 200	Report	Economic Consultants
IE	ESF OP 2014-2020	Kickboxing, Kindness and Going the Extra Mile (GOOD PRACTICE FOR	AIR2017
		WORKING WITH NEETS UNDER	
		SICAP)	
IE	ESF OP 2014-2020	Social Inclusion and Community	Eval HD
IE	ESF OP 2014-2020	Activation Programme (SICAP) Valuing Community Development	Eval HD
	2014 2020	Through The Social Inclusion	LVai IID
		Programme (SICAP) 2015-2017;	
	F05 00 0044 0000	Towards a Framework for Evaluation	5 1115
IE	ESF OP 2014-2020	Policy Assessment of the JobsPLus employment incentive scheme in	Eval HD
		Ireland	
IT	OP Youth	1 st Evaluation Report of the YG and	YEI 1 st report
	Employment	the National OP Youth Employment	
IT	OP Youth Employment	2nd Evaluation Report of the YG and the National OP Youth Employment	ANPAL
IT	ROP Friuli Venezia	First Extended Evaluation Report	AIR2017
	Giulia ESF	covering ESF/ERDF	
IT	ROP Friuli Venezia	The effectiveness of the interventions	AIR2017
	Giulia ESF	financed by the Employment and	
		Labour Policies Integrated Plan (PIPOL)	
IT	ROP Friuli Venezia	First thematic report – Results of the	Eval HD
	Giulia ESF	ESF co-financed "Employment and	
		Labour Policies Integrated Plan" in	
IT	ROP Lombardia ESF	Friuli Venezia Giulia in 2014-2020 First Annual Evaluation Report for	AIR2017
	Kor Lombardia Lor	years 2015 and 2016	AIRZOIT
IT	ROP Campania ESF	Annual evaluation report 2017	AIR2017
IT	ROP Basilicata ESF	Ex-ante evaluation of the Microcredit	AIR2017
IT	ROP Piemonte ESF	financial instrument The effects of training in Piemonte in	Eval HD
	Rot Fielilonice 251	2015 co-financed by the ESF 2014-	Evarib
		2020	
IT	ROP Piemonte ESF	The employment effect of vocational	Eval HD
LT	2014-2020 OP for EU Structural	training in Piemonte Evaluation of the Youth Employment	YEI 1 st report
	Funds Investments	Initiative in Lithuania	TELL TEPOTE
LT	OP for EU Structural	Evaluation of the effectiveness,	BGI Consulting
	Funds Investments	efficiency and impact of EU	
		investments and YEI, including the implementation of YG	
LT	OP Development of	Evaluation of the measures for	Eval HD
	Human Resources	promoting Youth Employment (2007-	
137	OD Coouth and	2013)	V/FI 15t
LV	OP Growth and Employment	Evaluation of YEI in Latvia	YEI 1 st report
LV	OP Growth and	Final evaluation on the	Ernst & Young
	Employment	implementation, effectiveness,	
		efficiency and impact of the ESF and	
NL	OP ESF	YEI support (including the YG) Second in-depth study ESF Active	AIR2017
142	OI LOI	Inclusion	/11/201/
PL	OP Knowledge	Evaluation of the effects of the YEI -	Instytut Badań
D'	Education Growth	2nd thematic report	Strukturalnych (IBS)
PL	OP Knowledge Education Growth	Effects of support from the Knowledge Education Growth OP in	Eval HD
	Ludcation Growth	Poland on young people	
		1 . Statia off young people	

MS	OP name	Title of evaluation	Source
PL	OP Knowledge	Research on the effects of support	AIR2017
	Education Growth	implemented for young people	
PL	OP Knowledge Education Development	Evaluation of support granted to graduates of vocational schools	AIR2017
PL	OP Knowledge Education Growth	Meta-analysis of results of 15 evaluation studies	AIR2017
PL	OP Knowledge Education Growth	Effectiveness of the main forms of professional activation implemented as part of programmes to promote employment, mitigate the effects of unemployment and professional activation	Ministry of Family, Labour, and Social Policy
PT	OP Social Inclusion and Employment	Evaluation of the Implementation, Effectiveness and Efficiency of the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) - interim report	YEI 1 st report
PT	OP Social Inclusion and Employment	Final evaluation of the YEI in Portugal	CESOP Universidade Católica Portuguesa
PT	Horizontal Evaluation	Interim Report on the Partnership Agreement	Eval HD
PT	OP Human Capital	ESF support for youth in Portugal. CIE of vocational training and traineeships (2007-2013)	Eval HD
RO	OP Human Capital	Evaluation of support under the OP Human Capital for employment of NEETs	YEI 1 st report
RO	OP Human Capital	Evaluation of the YEI implemented through Priority Axis 1 of Human Capital OP 2014-2020	Ministry of European Funds
SE	OP Investments in growth and jobs ESF	Evaluation of the YEI 2018	STRATEGIRÅDET
SI	OP for the Implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy	Evaluation of the YEI programme 'First-challenge 2015' in Slovenia: the second phase	Deloitte
SI	OP for the Implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy	Evaluation of the Project Learning of Young Adults (PLYA) Programme	Eval HD
SK	OP Human Resources	First Evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative	YEI 1 st report
SK	OP Human Resources	2nd evaluation report on the implementation of YEI 2018	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family
SK	OP Human Resources	Impact evaluation of interventions of active labour market policy.	Centre of Education of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic
UK	OP Scotland ESF (incl. YEI)	Evaluation of YEI in South West Scotland	Ekos Consultants
UK	OP Scotland ESF (incl. YEI)	Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) Evaluation Report for the 2014-2020 Scottish OP	YEI 1 st report
UK	OP England ESF	Impact evaluation of the YEI in England	Ecorys
UK	OP England ESF	YEI Process Evaluation	YEI 1 st report
UK	OP England ESF	ESF/YEI Participant Leavers' Survey 2016-2018 (first results)	AIR2017

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