



LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION OF YOUTH GUARANTEES:

Emerging Lessons from European Experiences

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**THE LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION OF YOUTH
GUARANTEES:
EMERGING LESSONS FROM EUROPEAN
EXPERIENCES**

October 2014

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
INTRODUCTION: ABOUT THIS STUDY	11
Context and rationale for this study	11
Questions and hypotheses	14
Methodology	14
PART 1 YOUTH GUARANTEES IN EUROPE: FROM NATIONAL COMMITMENTS TO LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION	17
A European stimulus	17
The Youth Guarantee: national progress and eligibility	18
Youth Guarantees within the realm of ALMP and Welfare-to-Work.....	20
PART 2 CASE STUDIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL	23
Pioneering national efforts	23
Key features of the youth guarantees	28
National level factors affecting implementation of youth guarantees.....	30
PART 3 CASE STUDIES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL	34
Description of the case study areas	34
Relevance of interventions to the local labour market.....	37
Early intervention.....	38
Providing opportunities for outreach	39
Drawing on and working with other organisations	41
The balance of options	46
PART 4 LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	49
REFERENCES	54
APPENDIX: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	57

Tables

Table 1. Countries eligible for YEI funding	18
Table 2. Design and delivery of the Youth Guarantee: ideal-type and actual features	21
Table 3. Instruments selected by country.....	25
Table 4. PES structure in case study countries	32

Table 5. An overview of local case study areas	35
Large conurbations.....	35
Rural areas.....	36
Table 6. Balance of services provided in the PETRA project (Vantaa, Finland), year 2012	46
Table 7. Professional activation of people under 25 in Ostrów Mazowiecka.....	47
Table 8. Guidance Meetings per Target Group in Ballymum (January – July 2014) ..	48

Figures

Figure 1. Youth Unemployment in the European Union: January 2000 to February 2014	14
Figure 2. Young people not in education employment or training (NEETs), European Union (various years).....	15
Figure 3. Youth unemployment rates, EU member States (December 2013).....	18
Figure 4. Countries Eligible for YEI Funding	22
Figure 5. The Six Implementation Axes of the Youth Guarantee.....	23
Figure 6. Shaping local youth guarantees- a framework for analysis	27
Figure 7. Activities within the Swedish Youth Guarantee (national data, February 2014, 38 400 participants).....	30
Figure 8. The Skive Model – A sense of shared responsibility	50

Boxes

Box 1. The Youth Guarantee in Finland	23
Box 2. Other National Examples	27
Box 3. IBO - individual vocational on-the-job training scheme, Flanders, Belgium ..	29
Box 4. Reaching out to the most vulnerable: the case of Tvedestrand (Norway), a small office in a small town.....	40
Box 5. Building local networks: The PETRA project (Vantaa, Finland)	44

ABBREVIATIONS

ALMPs	Active Labour Market Policies
AMS	<i>Arbejdsmarkedsstyrelsen</i> (National Labour Market Authority, Denmark)
BA	<i>Bundesagentur für Arbeit</i> (Public Employment Service, Germany)
EESC	European Economic and Social Committee
ELY	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (Finland)
HoPES	Heads of PES
IBO	<i>Individuele beroepsopleiding in de onderneming</i> – individual vocational training on the job or individual in-company training) (Flanders)
NAV	<i>Nye arbeids- og velferdsetaten</i> Labour and Welfare Administration (Norway)
NEET	Not in Education Employment or Training
NRP	National Reform Programme
PUP	<i>Powiatowy urząd pracy</i> (Poviat Labour Office, Poland)
SGB II	<i>Sozialgesetzbuch II</i> – Social Code II (Germany)
SGB III	<i>Sozialgesetzbuch III</i> – Social Code III (Germany)
UU	Youth Guidance Centre (Denmark)
VDAB	<i>Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling</i> Public Employment and Vocational Training Service (Flanders)
YEI	Youth Employment Initiative (European Union)
YP	Young person
WIJ	Job Experience for Youth (Flanders)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2012, European policy-makers have called for urgent action to respond to rising levels of youth unemployment and to help young people not in education employment or training to make the transition into work. They have called for the adoption of a Youth Guarantee, a scheme which seeks to ensure that all young people aged under 25 receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. Many Member States of the European Union have taken steps to turn the European call into reality both at the national and local level, especially since EU funding is targeted on regions where youth unemployment exceeds 25 per cent.

These efforts at the European scale are not the first in the realm of youth guarantees: similar measures have been used in numerous OECD countries since the early 1980s to combat youth unemployment and foster school-to-work transitions. Youth Guarantees can be effective in achieving the primary objective of keeping young people connected to the labour market or to continued education thereby preventing them from drifting into long-term unemployment. However, little is known about the local implementation and impact of such schemes.

This report looks at measures akin to the European vision of the Youth Guarantee that have been used in seven countries: Belgium (Flanders), Denmark, Germany, Finland, Norway, Poland and Sweden, and seeks to understand the involvement of the local level in their implementation. In each of those countries, two contrasting localities (a remote area versus a large conurbation) were selected to conduct qualitative research. An additional country, Ireland, was included at a later stage of the project - the case of Ireland differs from the seven others as only one locality (the district of Ballymun in Dublin) was examined, as it is a pilot programme for the national roll out in the country. Based on the premise that the key actor in delivering youth guarantees is the Public Employment Service (PES), data was collected through interviews with national and local PES staff to compare and contrast actual experience and outcomes for beneficiaries. Attention was paid to the framework conditions (both national and local) under which youth guarantees can be effective and to the reasons why certain local areas implement the guarantees differently to others.

The study highlights the importance of framing youth guarantees within a multi-scalar governance system. Indeed, institutional reforms made at the national level provide opportunities or constraints when seeking to develop local delivery models. This is illustrated by Norway and Finland where the recent re-organisation of the PES infrastructure has contributed to redefining the approaches that may be funded as part of the youth guarantee. The political commitment of national governments and a wide societal “buy-in” are undoubtedly important drivers, as exemplified by Finland where the government has established a national working group based on the Public-Private-People-Partnership (PPPP)

model. This broad-based alliance includes 6 different Ministries, the social partners, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities as well as youth representatives.

While all the options offered within the youth guarantee draw from the classic activation “catalogue”, countries tend to display clear preferences. Norway and Denmark have chosen to focus on the educational route, while Germany has focused particularly on apprenticeships, and Sweden has emphasised the provision of wage subsidies to employers for their most disadvantaged youth. Poland has focused in part on simply boosting demand where youth unemployment is high, even among graduates, and Flanders uses in particular a scheme known as “IBO” to provide flexible on-the-job training opportunities leading to employment.

These orientations are unsurprisingly reflected at the local level in each country. However, when types of local labour market are contrasted, significant variations emerge in terms of the way that these schemes are implemented. For example, the case of Stockholm suggests that larger cities can build on their assets when establishing schemes to help youth, drawing on a broader business network and a well-developed public transport network to facilitate accessibility to jobs and opportunities. In contrast, remote areas often struggle to offer the right opportunities, either because of the lack of jobs or of further education and vocational establishments. The PES often seeks to tackle these hurdles, notably through the use of mobility grants, as in the town of Sotkamo in Finland.

In well-performing local labour markets, the PES can help most people quickly through its traditional services such as career guidance and job counselling, freeing up some capacity to focus a greater amount of attention on the young people that are the most vulnerable and remote from the labour market. PES staff may take part in special youth projects run by municipalities or voluntary sector organisations to help such groups. In remote localities (e.g. in the Norwegian town of Tvedestrand or in Ljusdal, Sweden), PES staff reported that they do home visits, almost acting as youth workers.

Differences in implementation are also reflected in the different types of partnership that emerge at the local level. Where the PES was able to concentrate on the most vulnerable job seekers and NEETs, the main partners appeared to be either schools (as in Rosenheim or Kristiansand) or youth guidance centres (in the case of Skive). Where low youth unemployment coexisted with a lack of opportunities, as in the case of Tvedestrand, the main partners were social and health practitioners. In Ostrów Mazowiecka, (Poland) where there was a strong mismatch between supply and demand (a combination of high youth unemployment with an existing local employer base and vacancies), employers were seen as the main partner by PES agents.

In sum, local labour market conditions seem to have some influence on what the Public Employment Services offer to local unemployed youth and on the partnerships which are formed to implement the youth guarantee on the ground.

Lessons and recommendations

The work undertaken for this study raises a number of issues for consideration. Some relate to national features and policy design while other relate to local implementation and coordination:

- *Giving local areas flexibility in policy design and delivery*

A key finding is the importance of local areas having the flexibility to tailor national programmes to local level contexts. For example, a “work-first” activation focus may not always deliver the most sustainable results when there are only poor quality jobs with no progression prospects available in the community and/or individuals have significant skills deficits. Additionally, effective coordination with partners requires that local level actors have the flexibility to adjust programmes, targets, etc. as needed (as opposed to just coming together to share information about programmes). It is also worth noting that even within local areas, flexibility in programme delivery to individuals is important, as there is no “one size fits all” approach to working with youth.

- *Deepening and broadening local partnerships*

Effective implementation of youth guarantees requires strong partnerships. Holistic approaches that follow young people from education/training, to finding employment, to sustaining employment are more effective than single shot interventions. A “pathways” approach requires the coordination of schools, training institutions, public employment services, employers, etc. to ensure that services are aligned and that young people are guided from one stage to the next. Strong partnerships are also needed to engender the type of trusting relationships required to share often sensitive data about young people between organizations.

Many local respondents identified just one partner for the delivery of their youth guarantees, suggesting considerable room to broaden the types of partners involved. Partnerships with local trade unions seem to be one of the most underdeveloped types of partnerships, despite the role they can play in ensuring quality of traineeships and apprenticeships. It is also noticeable that youth organisations are rarely consulted when it comes to shaping or reporting on youth guarantees either at the national or local level.

- *Ensuring sufficient human and financial resources*

Lighter touch services appear to do little for the youth most at risk of long term labour market exclusion; the type of support they need is more intensive. PES staff members need small caseloads in order to work more closely with such youth, and adequate budgets must be available to get them the services and supports they need in order to be set up for labour market success (training, wage subsidies, etc.).

- *Establishing the right timing of intervention*

The success of a youth guarantee scheme depends on the timing of its interventions. The European Youth Guarantee has put an explicit focus on early intervention and rapid activation of the guarantee once a young person leaves education, training or employment. Local areas are using a variety of methods for early intervention, all of which require new types of partnerships between PES and schools. Joint work with schools varies from providing information sessions in the classroom (approach used in Ghent, Flanders) to more intensive actions, as seen in Rosenheim (Germany) where the PES offers individual sessions to prepare youngsters well ahead of the actual recruitment sessions and also provides customised vocational training for NEETs and potential school drop-outs.

Likewise, most respondents mentioned that their youth guarantee opportunities occurred within the four month framework expected by the European Union. However, this is not systematic and additional efforts to improve the swiftness of the intervention need to be made. This is particularly true in large conurbations where PES caseloads are generally higher and where personal advisers need time to build a good rapport with their clients to assess their needs effectively.

- *Developing a pathway approach to delivery*

Holistic approaches that follow young people from education/training, to finding employment, to sustaining employment are more effective than single shot interventions. A “pathways” approach cannot be delivered by any single organisation, and rather requires the coordination of schools, training institutions, public employment services, employers, etc. to ensure that services are aligned and that young people are guided from one stage to the next. Having the data to identify the young people in need of services is a prerequisite for this coordinated approach. Again, strong partnerships are needed to engender the type of trusting relationships required to share this often sensitive data between organizations.

Follow-up support once a young person has been placed into education/training or employment is another important aspect. Youth measures generally tend to focus on the “point of entry” and often stop once the young person has been placed into education or employment. Youth guarantee schemes generally follow a similar pattern. This can be problematic, given that labour market churning and recycling are major risks with youth activation policies (Martin et al., 2001).

- *Establishing the right scale for policy learning and transfer*

There are currently many attempts to share experience around youth guarantees in the international policy community. The profile of young people affected by unemployment differs across local areas, and a model that works well in one may not give the same good results in another. Policy sharing should be promoted between local areas that have similar local labour market contexts—regardless of variation in national contexts.

- *Tackling the ongoing lack of reliable data and indicators*

Difficulties collecting data and indicators were obvious both at the national and local level, in terms of target population, services, and outcomes. In many case study areas, no

organization had specific responsibility for identifying NEETs (Denmark's Youth Guidance Centres are one notable exception). Additionally, not all the local PES offices interviewed were able to report on the number of young people currently registered for active labour market interventions. Obtaining data on the proportions of young people directed to each option (education, training, employment, etc.) often proved even more difficult. Finally, PES staff are rarely able to report on those who obtained secure employment as a result of taking part in a youth activation scheme.

- *Ensuring the quality of placements*

Local PES staff acknowledged that internships and work placements have not always been of the highest standards. While measures are taken to ensure quality (control visits, blacklisting, etc.), it is not always possible for PES staff to systematically monitor placements. This problem could be alleviated at the national level with the creation of specific auditing teams tasked with ensuring that quality meets agreed standards. Special compliance or accreditation frameworks which reward business for people management already exist (e.g. the *Investors in People* award in Britain) and similar bodies could be set up to monitor youth guarantees (for similar recommendations, see also Simmons *et al.* 2014).

- *Providing mobility grants*

While some localities indicated they are using mobility grants, they are quite rare, as offers tend to concentrate on the local labour market. Mobility grants might be helpful to compensate for the lack of opportunities in depressed local labour markets or significant local mismatches in terms of offer and demand of apprenticeships and traineeships. However, they would require strong PES inter-regional cooperation to support the young person's move. In addition adequate attention needs to be paid to ensuring that young people are fully aware of the jobs on offer locally and appropriate training, so that they are given a choice as to whether to stay or leave.

- *Guarantee of opportunity or guarantee of outcome?*

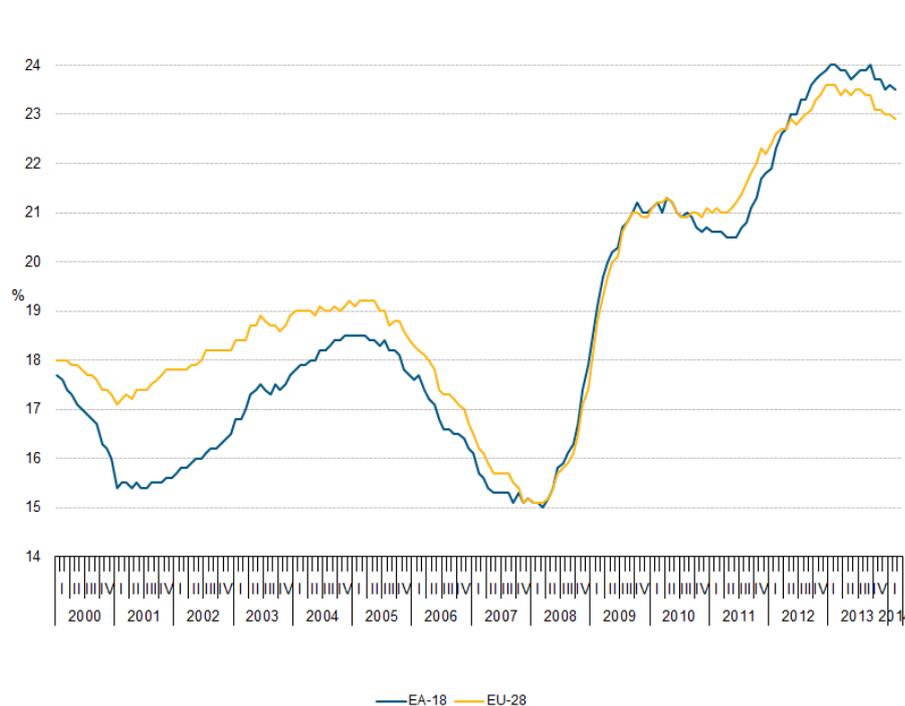
Finally, when designing youth guarantee schemes, European and national policy makers may need to consider the distinction between a guarantee of opportunity (offering of a service) and a guarantee of outcome. The latter is obviously bolder since it implies securing sustainable and rewarding employment. As the local case studies have shown, even if the PES makes a wide range of offers available, it cannot ensure that all unemployed young people are placed in a stable and lasting job, training or educational path. As a result, the notion of guarantee may mislead the public and lead to disappointment and frustration. Likewise, it could be useful to clarify the 'contractual relationship', or the balance of rights and responsibilities, for participants in the scheme. Where the right to a job, training or internship placement is tied to individual 'responsible behaviour', which has clear implications for the implementation of the scheme.

INTRODUCTION: ABOUT THIS STUDY

Context and rationale for this study

In 2012, the OECD had a youth unemployment rate of 16.3%.¹ In the European Union, the youth unemployment rate reached a new historic high of 23.5% in February 2013, more than twice as high as the adult rate, with some 5.7 million young people affected. Approximately one third of these young people had been out of work for over than 12 months. Young people who have only completed lower secondary education (early leavers from education and training) bear the highest risk of unemployment. In 2012, 30.3% of low-skilled youth were unemployed (compared an overall youth unemployment rate of 22.8%).

Figure 1. Youth Unemployment in the European Union: January 2000 to February 2014

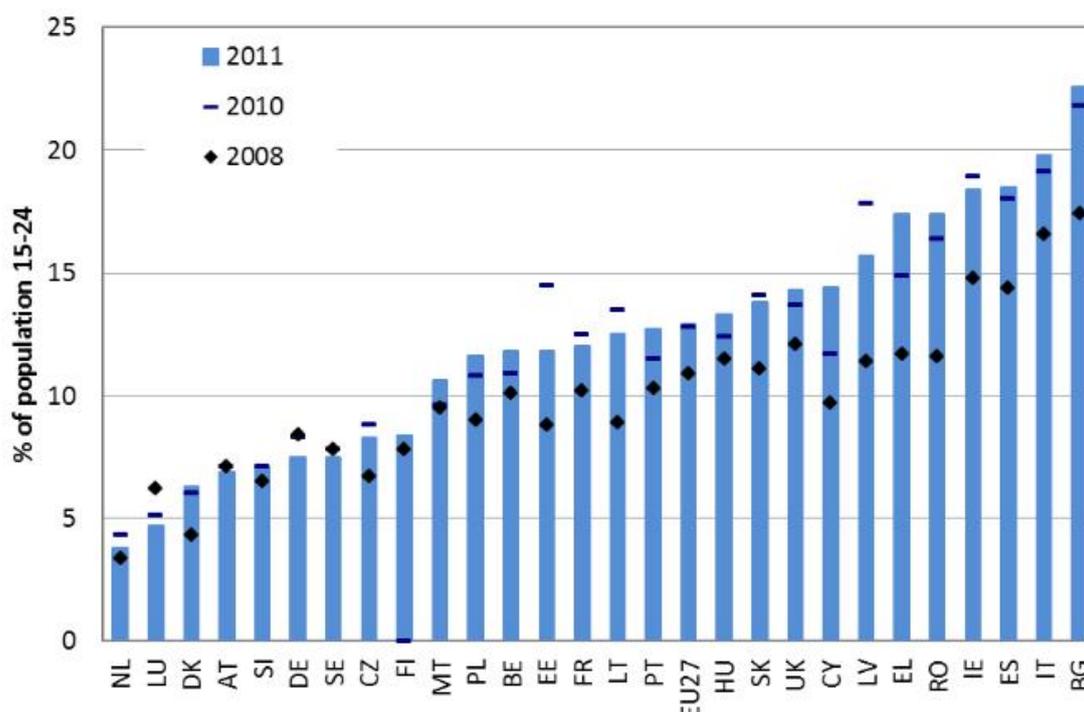


¹ Unless otherwise specified, the youth unemployment rate refers to young people aged between 15-24 available for and seeking work as a share of the labour force of the same age; OECD (2013), "Youth unemployment rate", *Employment and Labour Markets: Key Tables from OECD*, No. 2 doi: [10.1787/unemp-yth-table-2013-1-en](https://doi.org/10.1787/unemp-yth-table-2013-1-en)

Source: Eurostat; http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/File:Youth_unemployment_rates,_EU-28_and_EA-17,_seasonally_adjusted,_January_2000_-_February_2014.png

In 2012, there were 7.5 million NEETs (Not in Education Employment or Training) across the EU, representing 12.9 % of young Europeans between 15 and 24.² This was estimated to represent an annual loss of 153 billion euros (in terms of excess welfare transfers, foregone earnings and unpaid taxes), the equivalent of 1.21% of the EU’s GDP.³

Figure 2. Young people not in education employment or training (NEETs), European Union (various years)



Source: Eurostat, LFS

In the context of an ongoing economic crisis and significant austerity measures, European policy-makers have thus called for urgent action on youth employment, notably via the implementation of the Youth Guarantee⁴, through which EU Member States commit to

² For those aged 25–29, this figure stood at almost 20% in 2010, amounting to 6.5 million young people.

³ See Mascherini, M. et al. (2012) *NEETs- Young People not in education, employment or training: characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe*, Dublin; European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

⁴ Please note that the term “European Youth Guarantee” is used in this report to refer specifically to the Youth Guarantee as *recommended and agreed* by the Council of the EU (see <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF>) while “youth guarantee(s)” more generally is used to refer to *actual national schemes*. In other words, the European Youth Guarantee is a recommendation for action but not a scheme as such.

ensuring that *all* young people aged under 25 receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. As will be explained in greater detail below, the Youth Guarantee is not a scheme as such but represents a comprehensive approach to address youth unemployment and inactivity and to improve school-to-work transitions through prevention, outreach and partnership. In order to establish the readiness of Member States to deliver the European Youth Guarantee, several organisations (notably the ILO, the Eurofound and the OECD's DELSA division) have already started examining cross-national experiences of Youth Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs).

Using macroeconomic and national data, the emerging literature has shown that youth guarantees can be effective in achieving the primary objective of keeping young people connected to the labour market or to continued education thereby preventing them from drifting into long-term unemployment (see for example European Commission, 2011, 2012; Eurofound, 2012; ILO, 2013). However, little is known about the implementation and impact of youth guarantees at the local level. It is especially critical to address this knowledge gap because starting in 2014, the EU is making 6 billion euros available via the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) to those regions and localities with youth unemployment rates of over 25% (see Chapter 1 for more details).

This study identifies countries which have recently implemented measures akin to the European recommendation for the Youth Guarantee, even if they are labelled differently (among the case study countries included in this report, only two – Finland and Sweden – actually use the word “guarantee” for their measures). The main criterion for selection was that instruments (generally implemented through the Public Employment Service) depart from traditional passive (or “semi-active”) services such as labour market information, career guidance, counselling and job search assistance. The youth guarantee schemes go a step further on the activation route offering young job seekers genuine opportunities to build their human capital through work experience (e.g. subsidised employment, apprenticeships, work placements with a community or non-profit organisation) or the acquisition of additional skills via continued education or a traineeship. What all these schemes have in common is that they guarantee (mostly through legislation) that support from the PES will be offered within a specific timeframe (generally three or four months).

Seven countries with relevant youth activation policy instruments were identified: Belgium (Flanders), Denmark, Germany, Finland, Norway, Poland and Sweden. In each of those countries, two contrasting localities (a remote area versus a large conurbation) were selected to conduct qualitative research.⁵ At a later stage of the project, Ireland was included with one specific case study locality (Ballymun in Dublin) where a Youth Guarantee pilot has been rolled-out since October 2013. Early lessons from its implementation could therefore also be included into this report.

⁵ See Chapter 3 for a comprehensive descriptive table of local case studies.

Questions and hypotheses

This study seeks to identify the framework conditions (both national and local) that influence the implementation of youth guarantees. The guiding hypothesis behind this study is that both the local nature of the labour market (volume and type of employment vacancies, educational, training infrastructure and opportunities, skills levels and gaps, etc.) and local governance mechanisms and processes (competition, cooperation, partnership and interaction between local labour actors) can contribute to variations in local outcomes. The national government framework for youth guarantees also plays a strong role in determining the degree to which programmes and initiatives can be adapted to local conditions.

This project is part of a broader dialogue on youth guarantees at the supra-national level, where there is strong interest in how the experience of North-Western EU Member States could inform similar schemes in Southern and Central Eastern Europe. Arguably there may also a role for the sharing of good practice between localities and regions within Europe, particularly between those with similar local labour market characteristics.

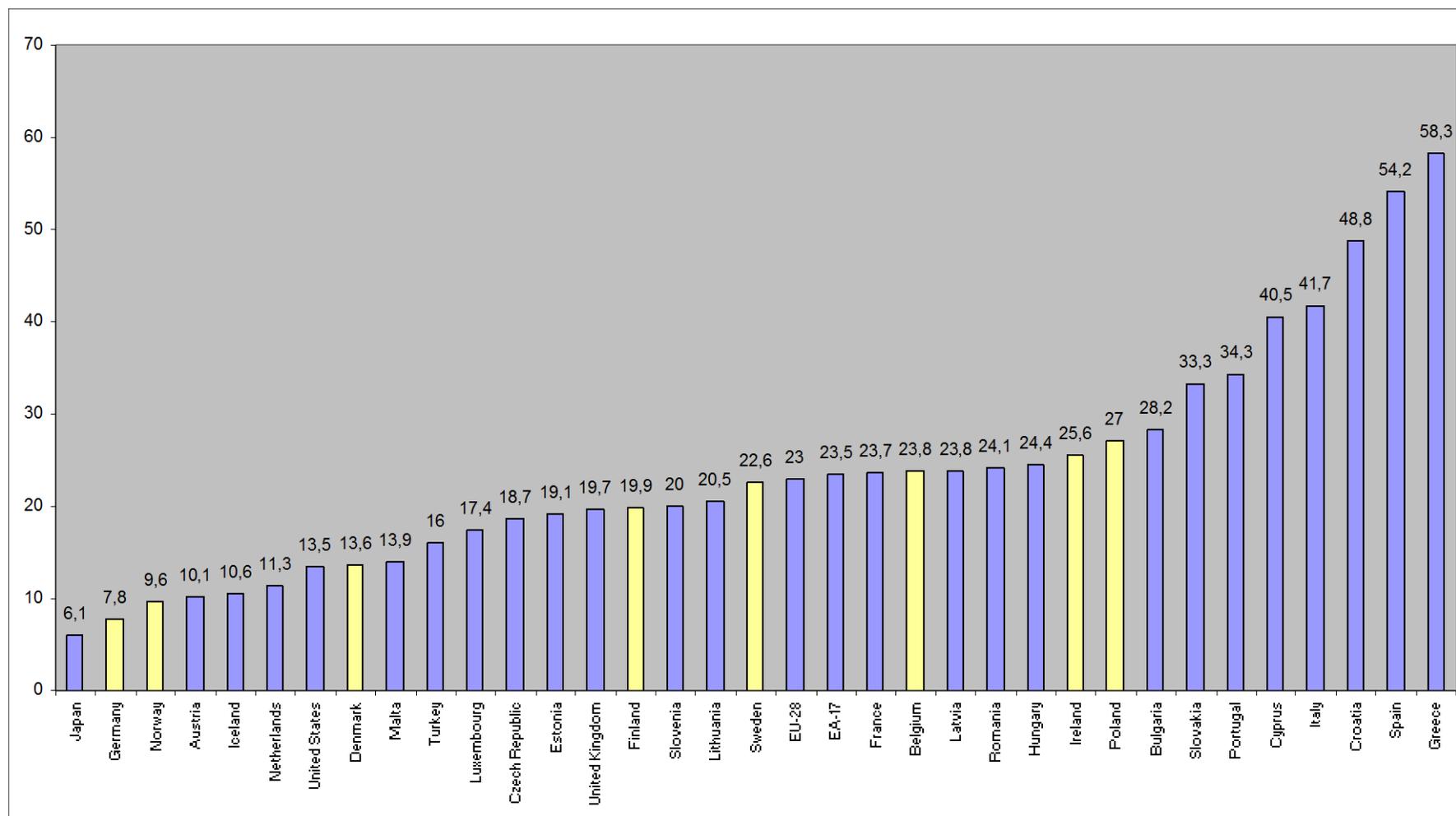
Methodology

The research was completed in two stages. The first consisted of national level data collection, which included a review of policy and research documents (national reform programmes, youth employment reports, etc.) and semi-structured interviews with Ministerial representatives. These interviews were designed to gather information on the overall institutional and policy background and to select the most relevant instruments and case study areas. It should be noted that among the eight participating countries, only Ireland, Poland and Sweden display high enough levels of youth unemployment (25 percent or over) at the national or regional level to actually qualify for EU funding criteria (see Figure 3).⁶ Moreover, Sweden is the case study with the highest ratio of youth unemployment to unemployment in general (it is three times higher, see Table 5).

The second stage focused on local case studies, which consisted of a desk review of relevant research and documents and semi-structured phone interviews with local PES representatives. Topics covered include local labour market characteristics, cooperation and relationships between stakeholders and of course operational aspects regarding the delivery, strengths and weaknesses of the scheme. In total, 23 interviews were conducted (see Appendix for interview schedule).

⁶ Please also note that while Belgium is also eligible as a Member State country, none of the Flemish regions are since their youth unemployment rates are below the threshold figure.

Figure 3. Youth unemployment rates, EU member States (December 2013)



Note: Countries highlighted in the figure represent the eight case study countries.
 Source: Eurostat, LFS

The report starts with a general discussion of the conceptual and operational features underpinning the European Youth Guarantee as defined at the EU level (Part 1). It then turns to national framework conditions and features (Part 2) and to the local dimension with an overview of the main instruments and processes identified through the research (Part 3). Finally some lessons and recommendations are drawn (Part 4). Examining the youth guarantee first from a European and national perspective should help to elucidate where and why localities follow or depart from such frameworks.

PART 1
YOUTH GUARANTEES IN EUROPE:
FROM NATIONAL COMMITMENTS TO LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION

A European stimulus

Youth unemployment has traditionally a major policy concern in OECD countries. The economic downturn has led to an even stronger focus on this category of the population, particularly in the European Union. In December 2012, the European Commission launched the “Youth Employment Package”, a raft of measures to prompt EU and member state action to improve youth employment prospects. Particularly noteworthy was the Commission’s proposal to Member States to establish a Youth Guarantee, which was officially adopted on 22 April 2013 in the EU Council’s recommendation. The EU adopted the “Youth Employment Initiative” (YEI), a package of €6 billion which is divided between €3 billion from a new EU dedicated budget line and €3 billion from the ESF. In addition, eligible Member States will be able to draw on approx. €71 billion from the ESF between 2014 and 2020. The ESF provides approx. €10 billion a year and 62% of the measures are available for projects that can benefit young people (European Commission 2013a).⁷ The funding must be co-financed by the respective participating countries.

At the Berlin Youth Summit of July 2013, the European Heads of PES (HoPES) network, the HoPES network – in accordance with its PES 2020 vision – committed to implementing all the necessary adjustments to facilitate the delivery of youth guarantees. It acknowledged the need to restructure the PES four key functions, namely through (1) establishing transparency of supply and demand in the labour market and defining determinants of unemployment; (2) providing a comprehensive range of advisory services on labour market issues for jobseekers and employers; (3) organising efficient placement of jobs and training; and (4) ensuring efficient allocation of active labour market policy measures.

The broad consensus on the need to urgently address youth unemployment is not surprising. From a social and economic perspective, risks for unemployed young people are manifold, including social exclusion, poverty and health problems. If these issues become recurrent and permanent, we risk “losing” a whole generation of workers. At the beginning of their working lives, young people generally earn lower wages and are more likely to be in temporary employment contracts and experience longer unemployment spells than adult workers. When such labour market experiences have lasting consequences into adulthood, they are known as scarring effects. The literature shows that prolonged exposure to

⁷ For a comprehensive overview of the European Commission’s DG Employment Social Affairs and Inclusion policies on youth employment, see <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1036>

unemployment is associated with higher future unemployment and lower wages (Arulapalam *et al.*, 2001; Scarpatta *et al.*, 2010, p.16).

The Youth Guarantee: national progress and eligibility

In the Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee⁸, EU Member States committed to ensuring that *all* young people aged under 25 receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. This is an outcome-oriented approach leaving Member States the flexibility to decide how they deliver the guarantee "in accordance with national, regional and local circumstances".⁹

National governments have responded in a number of ways, as will be shown in greater detail in Part 2 of this report. By early December 2013, only 9 out of 28 EU member countries had submitted Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans (YGIPs). This had increased to 17 Member States by January 2014 and by mid-May 2014, the Commission had received all YGIP submissions, some of them published online under the responsibility of the respective Member State.

Table 1. Countries eligible for YEI funding

Member State	Regions eligible for extra funding under the Youth Employment Initiative	Youth Employment Initiative specific allocation (€ million)*
Austria	No	-
Belgium	Yes	39.64
Bulgaria	Yes	51.56
Croatia	Yes	61.82
Cyprus	Yes	10.81
Czech Republic	Yes	12.71
Denmark	No	-
Estonia	No	-
Finland	No	-
France	Yes	289.76
Germany	No	-
Greece	Yes	160.24
Hungary	Yes	46.49

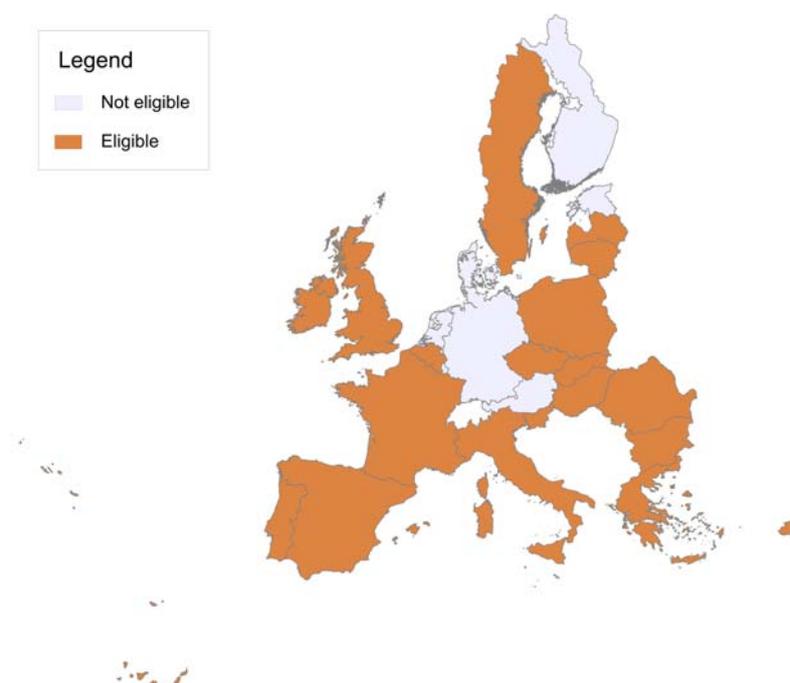
⁸ Please note that the term "Youth Guarantee" is used in this report to refer specifically to the Youth Guarantee as agreed by the Council of the EU <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF>.

⁹ Recital 1 Council Recommendation

Ireland	Yes	63.66
Italy	Yes	530.18
Latvia	Yes	27.1
Lithuania	Yes	29.69
Luxemburg	No	-
Malta	No	-
Poland	Yes	235.83
Portugal	Yes	150.2
Romania	Yes	99.02
Slovakia	Yes	67.43
Slovenia	Yes	8.61
Spain	Yes	881.44
Sweden	Yes	41.26
The Netherlands	No	-
United Kingdom	Yes	192.54

Source: Note: *Member States have to match these amounts by at least the same amounts from their European Social Fund allocation. Source: European Commission (2014), page 6.

Figure 4. Countries Eligible for YEI Funding

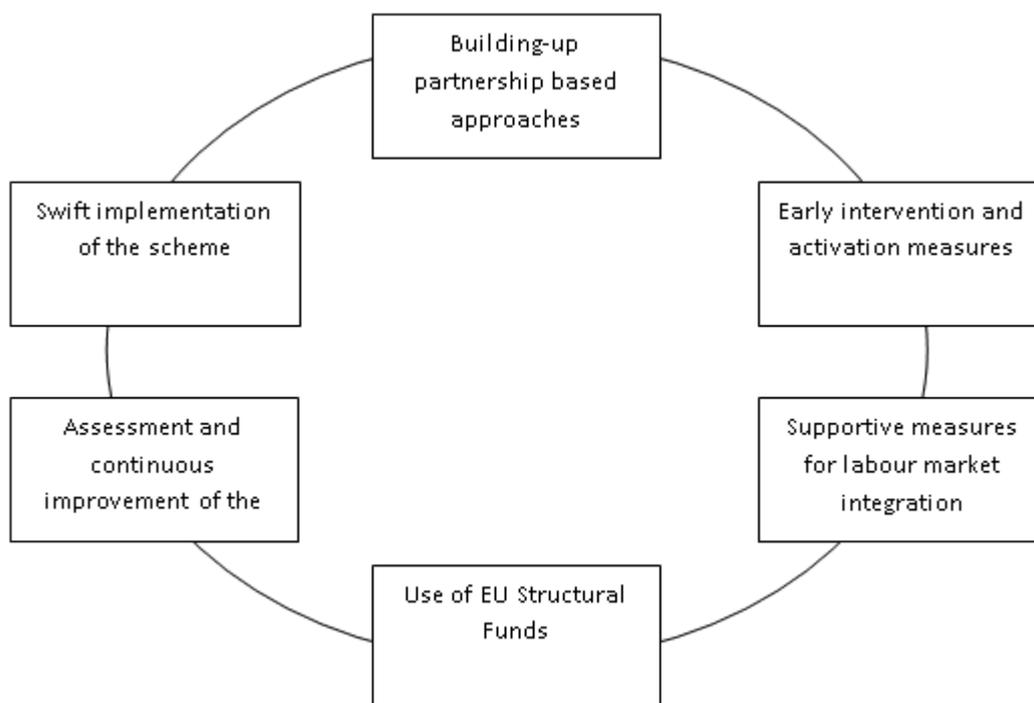


Note: EU-27 only. Croatia is also eligible for YEI funding but is not shown on this map. Norway, one of the case study countries, is also not shown on this map as it is not part of the EU.

Youth Guarantees within the realm of ALMP and Welfare-to-Work

Within the European policy context, the objective of the Youth Guarantee is “to ensure that young people up to age 25 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of leaving school or becoming unemployed” (European Commission, 2012; European Council, 2012). Six axes have been defined with regard to the process of implementation (see Figure 4).

Figure 5. The Six Implementation Axes of the Youth Guarantee



Source: based on European Commission (2012, p.11) and European Council (2012, p.3)

The efforts described in Table 1 are not the first in the realm of youth guarantees: similar measures have been used in numerous OECD countries since the early 1980s to combat youth unemployment and foster school-to-work transitions. However, the idea of a “guarantee” is new for some countries, where youth were previously unable to access support through the unemployment system because they had not previously contributed to the system (i.e., through employment). A “guarantee” also raises the issue of conditionality in ALMPs. The evaluation literature on active labour market and welfare-to-work policies shows that there are various models (from universal to liberal) with different approaches to rights and responsibilities (see OECD 2005, OECD 2006, OECD 2013, Martin et al, 2001, Lodemel and Trickey, 2001; Serrano Pascual, 2007, Barbier, 2011). Finally, the Youth Guarantee includes a focus on early intervention, which may be a departure for public employment services that traditionally have focused their services only on the currently unemployed. This means that acting as a coordinator, the PES works in partnership with organisations such as educational providers, social and youth services, as well as more typical partners such as employers, private agencies, social partners, etc.) much more so than it does generally.

Table 2 below summarises the types of programme features found in the 8 countries examined, in comparisons to the new Youth Guarantee recommended by the EU Council.

Table 2. Design and delivery of youth guarantees: the Programme Youth Guarantee compared

	Features of youth guarantees in the 8 countries studied	The European Youth Guarantee
The offer	Full range of options available (individual counselling, career advice, vocational guidance, training, apprenticeships, continued education, internships, work trials, job subsidies). Possibility to combine measures.	The Youth Guarantee as defined at EU level only refers to four possible outcomes for young people: good-quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship. However other measures e.g. counselling, guidance, may support a young person's pathway to being ready to accept a good quality offer.
Entitlements and target groups	Universality principle: based on a comprehensive understanding of “youth” and hence open to a wide diversity of groups (including NEETs, potential school drop-outs, graduates - even up to the age of 30).	All young people under the age of 25 years who are unemployed or have left formal education
Conditionality	Young people free to refuse an offer they don't want without being sanctioned	Principle of mutual obligation. Offers should be "good-quality".
Temporal dimension/Time scale	Focused on “path” as opposed to “entry”. Hence early to follow up interventions are implemented. The guarantee is activated within a very short time (a few weeks) following registration with the PES.	Within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.
Geographical coverage	Full territorial coverage (not just in selected pilot localities)	Full territorial coverage
Funding	Significant levels of national funding (irrespective of ESF entitlements)	EU funding is available (notably YEI and ESF) but must be complemented by national funding.
Delivery actors	Broad-based partnerships (including youth groups and representatives) ideally coordinated by either a State or not-for-profit organisation, e.g. the PES.	Broad-based partnerships between, for example, public and private employment services, education and training institutions, career guidance services, youth services, business and social partners.
Other institutional and operational features	Attempts to embed the youth guarantee in national legislation and to develop effective monitoring tools.	-

Source: Author's own elaboration

A few aspects of this table merit further explanation. In terms of the “offer”, the ability to provide a wide range of quality options beyond traditional job search assistance (i.e. help with preparing CVs and interviews) is undoubtedly an important aspect. Of course, these options are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In fact, “combined measures” (for example classroom instruction combined with on-the-job training) may prove particularly fruitful. Additionally, while in practice most countries tend to limit the guarantee to young people aged between 18 and 24 (the standard category of beneficiaries), some countries extend eligibility by

organising early interventions for school pupils or for school leavers up to age 30. In addition, a maximum level of unconditionality would mean that young people would not be compelled to accept the first offer provided, or risk facing sanctions. Finally, more comprehensive guarantees focus not just on short-term placement and entry in the labour market. Rather, they include a focus on fostering stable trajectories and paths, as labour market churning and recycling are major risks with youth activation policies (Martin et al., 2001).

PART 2 CASE STUDIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Pioneering national efforts

At the national level, the Nordic European countries tend to be regarded as pioneers since they first introduced youth guarantees in the 1980s and 1990s. According to the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2012, p.1), Sweden introduced its first youth guarantee in 1984, followed by Norway in 1993¹⁰ and Denmark and Finland in 1996. As some difficulties were encountered in the implementation of youth guarantee schemes and in maintaining them through the recession of the early 1990s, they were periodically revised during the last decade. Sweden implemented a new job guarantee scheme for young people in 2007 while the Finnish “Social Guarantee” scheme introduced in 2005 was substantially revised and renamed “Youth Guarantee” in 2013 (see box below).

Box 1. The Youth Guarantee in Finland

Finland has been experimenting with provisions similar to a youth guarantee since the 1990s. The current model has its roots in 2005, when the employment administration set a target that a service to improve the employability of a young job-seeker should be provided within three months of registering as unemployed. This operating model was called a Social Guarantee. The youth guarantee that came into force in January 2013 is an extended version of the Social Guarantee.

The current youth guarantee combines an employment and education guarantee. According to the definition, every young person under 25 and recent graduates under 30 will be offered a job, a work trial, a study place, a workshop place or rehabilitation, within three months after registering as unemployed. Every person completing basic education will be guaranteed a place in upper secondary school, vocational education, apprenticeship training, a workshop, rehabilitation or a place in some other form of study. An employment plan is drafted together with young jobseekers, agreeing on the measures that the PES office will offer within three months of unemployment. The preparation of the plan has to start within two weeks of registering as an unemployed jobseeker. In 2011, Finland managed to offer a successful intervention within 3 months of registration to 83.5% of applicants.

The youth guarantee is delivered through five main axes: i) Education guarantee ii) Skills Program for Young Adults; iii) Employment and Economic Development services for youth; iv) Rehabilitative services including municipal social and health services, and v) other individual services for young people (youth outreach work and youth workshop activities).

The reforms put in place more training opportunities including more study places in vocational education; regional re-distribution of study places according to the changes in the age groups; changes of acceptance criteria for vocational education and training; and higher training compensation (800 € per month) for employers for apprenticeships. Additional resources have been allocated within the PES to support/increase career counselling opportunities; wage subsidies (the so called Chance card); active job seeking; training and language

¹⁰ One of our Norwegian interviewees, however, argued that the very first youth guarantee initiative could be traced back to 1979.

courses and counselling for young immigrants. Local youth work networks are being strengthened to increase municipal responsibility in counselling school graduates and to widen outreach youth work and youth workshops.

From the outset a broad partnership was set up to define the new model, known as the Private-Public-People-Partnership. A National Youth Guarantee Working Group brought together five ministries, the Finnish National Board of Education, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, trade unions, employers' associations, labour market organisations and a youth organisation, to review the Social Guarantee and provide recommendations on a new provision. Twenty-one recommendations have been developed to define the new provisions. The Working Group decides on the allocation of funds and steers the implementation process. The Ministry of Employment and the Economy has the overall co-ordination responsibility in the implementation of the guarantee. The Ministry of Education and Culture has the responsibility to co-ordinate the Educational guarantee and the Skills Program for Young Adults.

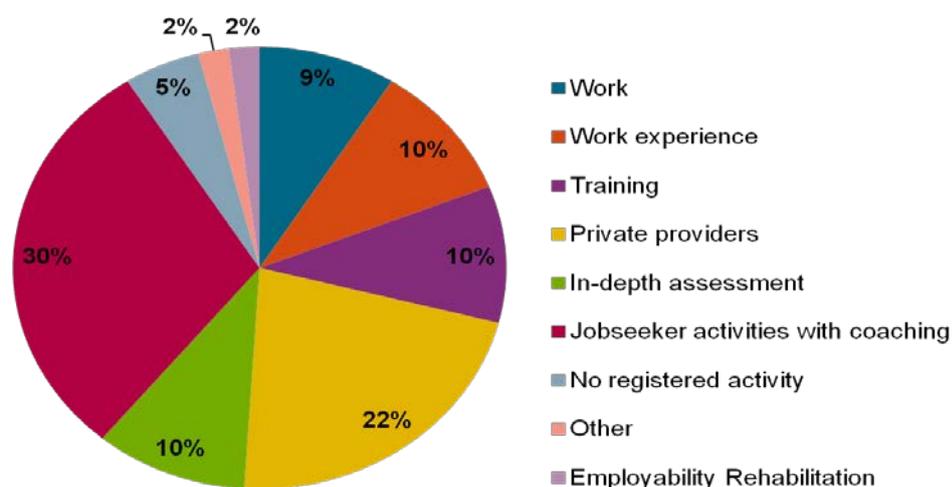
The youth guarantee is implemented across administrative borders through cross-sectoral partnerships at the regional and local level and with a strong vertical co-ordination across governance levels. At the municipal level, each municipality has to form a youth guidance and service network to monitor youth unemployment and co-ordinate local youth employment programmes accordingly. It is not a must for this network to include Youth Guarantee in their agenda, however, most of the networks have done so (some 80% in 2013). The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities disseminates information on good practices and promotes opportunities for local authorities to implement the Youth Guarantee. At regional level, the regional ELY-Centres are responsible for creating a co-operation network for guidance and counselling services operating in the region, which are tasked with coordinating the provision of guidance services and monitoring the availability and quality of services. Youth guarantee coordinators located in ELY-Centres and PES offices operate as a link between the national and regional level.

A national media campaign was designed to spread information on the new provisions and encourage parents and youth to contact PES offices to request and benefit from the services. The media campaign helps to involve various stakeholder including employers.

Source : http://www.nuorisotakuu.fi/en/youth_guarantee

In Sweden, unemployed people under the age of 25 are given a guarantee that they will be offered a placement or a job within three months of the registration. Swedish policies also include reduced employer taxes for those hiring young people, and a special subsidy targeted at young people with a minimum of six months on any social benefit. This latter is part of a “newstart job” policy, introduced in 2007, and aimed at easing the entry (or re-entry in case of sickness) into the labour market (Swedish Ministry of Employment, 2007). The Swedish government announced that it intended to use ca. 1100 million SEK or 130 million euros for youth guarantee measures in the period 2012–2015 (Swedish Ministry of Employment, 2012). The Swedish focus on taking up employment clearly appears on Figure 6 with most activities geared towards work-first (only 10% goes on training).

Figure 6. Activities within the Swedish Youth Guarantee (national data, February 2014, 38 400 participants)



Source: Arbetsförmedlingen, Stockholm

The different types of initiative examined out in the broader set of countries covered are summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Instruments selected by country

Country	Name of instrument(s)	Description
Denmark	Youth Package	Created in 1992. Focus on education towards a diploma within 3 months (revised version in force since 2012 and from January 2014: additional support through mentoring). Young people are divided in 4 target groups according to their educational level.
Finland	Youth Guarantee	In 2013 revised version of the former “Social Guarantee” in place since 2005 Broad set of options (see Box 1)
Flanders	IBO and <i>Loopbaanakoord</i>	Focus on early school leavers without qualification or job experience. Provision of various measures (apprenticeships, training, etc.)
Germany	Guidance and placement	Focus on job matching Some special “preparatory” schemes (towards apprenticeships) for NEETs.
Ireland	The Ballymun Youth Guarantee (BYG)	Focus on a disadvantaged area. Combination of guidance and training with work placements with 3 target groups

		(groups defined according to levels of qualifications and work experience). Strong communication and advisory work to encourage employer engagement and source opportunities.
Norway	Combination of work experience and training	Focus on getting young people back in education
Poland	“Your Career Your Choice” Intervention works	System of vouchers (for internships or vocational training courses). Subsidised employment
Sweden	Job Guarantee	The “Youth Guarantee” was introduced in 2007 to replace the former Community programmes. It was revised in 2011 (name changed to “Job Guarantee”) with a new focus on job matching, profiling and additional instruments for those identified as needing extra support. After 3 months: youth guarantee with all the ALMP options with an important focus on job subsidies for employers.

While all the countries provide the full range of the classic activation “catalogue”, countries tend to display clear preferences. For example, Norway and Denmark have chosen to focus on the educational route and do not have a specific instrument named “guarantee”. More than an instrument per se, the guarantee is seen as an objective to reach and for that Norwegians and Danes seek to combine measures, for example by integrating work experience with training. Unemployment in Norway is relatively low (especially for young people with ISCED level 5/6) and young job seekers with education and skills experience fewer difficulties finding work. There is a national preference for encouraging young people to stay in compulsory education until the age of 19, and youth activation is clearly geared towards seeking to reintegrate early schools leavers or pupils about to drop out into education instead of directing them into the labour market (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2012). In Denmark, 635 million kroner were earmarked for the Youth Package as part of the country’s 2013 budget, to help roughly 7,000 young people find work through apprenticeships and increased job rotations in private businesses. Moreover, under the new Cash Benefits Reform introduced in January 2014, the Danish PES has to provide additional mentoring support, notably to tackle the problem of “revolving doors” with youth people entering educational programmes without finding employment at the end and thus coming back to the job centre.

Flanders has a similar focus with the aforementioned *Loopbaanakkoord*, an agreement on careers signed between the Flemish government and the social partners. This agreement, which was signed in 2012, strengthened the commitment to tackle early school leaving, including a new strategy for preventing early school drop outs and also an ambitious plan to offer a qualification or job experience to all young people leaving school without a certificate. The VDAB (the Flemish PES) seeks to develop an approach to realise this goal, starting with the school leavers of 2012 and adapting the Youth Employment Plan if necessary, using

existing tools and instruments offering qualification or job experience. In the 13 largest cities of Flanders (including Ghent – one of our case studies) special projects known as WIJ (Job Experience for Youth) offer apprenticeships, guidance, training, on the job training, coaching for a 6 month period. These projects are ESF funded. All instruments based on apprenticeships and training can be used to provide for a formal qualification recognised by employers. In addition, VDAB also offers an option known as OKOT-trajectories (*onderwijskwalificerende opleidingstrajecten* / education qualifying training trajectories). While these are not exclusively designed for youngsters, they are available to those all jobseekers seeking an opportunity to gain an official degree or diploma which are essential for specific professions such as nursing. OKOT is used in the whole of Flanders but there are differences between the provinces: the educational trajectories which are chosen depend on the supply and demand on the labour market.

Germany, like Austria and Denmark, has an “occupational labour market”: there is a strong vocational system in place which absorbs over 30% of young people aged over 18. There is therefore a greater emphasis on apprenticeships. Pre-apprenticeship courses are also available to support youngsters who experience greater difficulty entering the employment and training system. Relevant tools include the so-called *Berufsvorbereitende Bildungsmassnahmen*, the *Ausbildungsbegleitende Hilfen* and the *Einstiegsqualifizierung*, all of which are regulated by the SGB III (respectively sections 51ff, 75 and 54a of the SGB III).

Poland has focused in part on simply boosting demand where youth unemployment is high, even among graduates.

Box 2. Other National Examples

While not included as full case study countries, the examples of Austria, France and Ireland are worth mentioning. Under the influence of EU recommendations, these three countries were among the first to take clear steps to strengthen their youth guarantee in their 2013 National Reform Programmes (NRPs).

In **Austria**, the state invests 600 million euros a year on measures relating to a training guarantee for young people. The offer's main features have already been in place for some time: all young people under the age of 18, who are unable to find vocational training within three months, are entitled to inter-company vocational training organised by the state. Austria makes around 10,000 places available for this every year. The offer was recently complemented with youth coaches for young people nearing the end of their formal education as well as for NEETs. The entire programme has helped Austria to achieve an extremely low youth unemployment rate, although some would argue that it has increased the reliance of business on the public sector for training their future employees (see e.g. Friedrich Eberts Stiftung (2013, p.7).

In parallel to the European recommendation, in October 2013, the **French** government launched its own youth guarantee, the so-called “*Garantie Jeunes*” (not to be confused with the “*Garantie Jeunesse*”, the latter term being used by the French to refer to the European Youth Guarantee). While this distinction is somewhat confusing because of the apparent overlap, the two Guarantees actually appear to reinforce each other. The French *Garantie Jeunes* was rolled out as a pilot across 10 regions (the so-called *départements*)¹¹, and a second wave is scheduled to start in the autumn of 2014. In 2013, youth unemployment in France stood at 26.2%, with a higher

¹¹ The 10 *départements* including in the first wave are the Metropolitan area of Marseille Provence Métropole, the Metropolitan Area of Est ensemble, the Réunion, Vaucluse, Lot-et-Garonne, the Allier-Puy-de-Dôme, Finistère, Eure, Aude and the Vosges. The second wave will include the following 10 départements: Essonne, Pas-de-Calais, Seine-Maritime, Dordogne, Ille-et-Vilaine, Savoie, Oise, Aisne, Creuse and Isère.

rate for females without a diploma. In addition, a recent poll conducted by Deloitte found that in 2013, 27% of graduates wanted to work outside of France, compared to 15% in 2012. This has resulted in the national government taking action in tackling youth unemployment. The pilot scheme does not target all young people aged under 25 but those currently not in education or from poorer backgrounds. It is expected that 10,000 young people will qualify for the first wave of the scheme. Compared to other national schemes, the French scheme is quite innovative in that it offers a monthly allowance of €450 paid to the young person. Recipients are expected to actively look for work through local initiatives, but the grant also allows them to gain a sense of financial autonomy reflecting ongoing national concerns with finding the right financial instrument to tackle persistent youth poverty. The French *Garantie Jeunes* thus combines a dual approach consisting of providing not only a guaranteed income but also tailored support to help youngsters get into employment (known in France under the term “*accompagnement*”).

The youth guarantee is not administered by Pôle Emploi (the French PES) but by the network of over 400 *missions locales* which are local welfare offices in existence since 1981 to help disaffected young people access work and training opportunities. Partnerships are formed with Pôle Emploi (the French PES), the regional and local authorities and voluntary organisations through special committees in charge of selecting the recipients most likely to benefit from the youth guarantee.¹² Some *départements* with high youth unemployment such as the Seine-Saint-Denis in the North-east of Paris have not been selected in the French scheme as they are not considered as priority areas under YEI funding criteria (the region Ile-de-France is below the 25% threshold).

Finally, the Irish implementation of the Youth Guarantee has received much scrutiny because it represents a new concept in this country which is being tested through a pilot project benefiting from European funding. The Irish economy has been heavily hit by the 2008/2009 global financial crisis with employment contracting by an astonishing 16% in just over 3 years. Since 2012, the Irish youth unemployment rate has approximated 30% with 65,000 young people being out of work. Around half of these unemployed youth have been registered for more than 12 months. In addition, Ireland also has the 4th highest rate of young people “not in education, employment or training” in the EU at 18.4% (National Youth Council of Ireland, 2013). Many are choosing to emigrate from the country in search of work. The Irish government has initiated a far reaching re-organisation of service delivery in the Public Employment and re-training services to avoid long-term unemployment. Part of this reform includes measures to scale up its youth guarantee (OECD, 2014) which started as a pilot scheme in Ballymun, Dublin. The area has been selected as one of the first Youth Guarantee Schemes to proceed in the EU. Funding of €302,000 will be provided for the Ballymun Youth Guarantee Scheme, with €250,000 from the European Commission and €52,000 from the Government (Irish Department of Social Protection, 2013). This first pilot scheme was launched in October 2013, with the operational phase running from January to December 2014. It includes elements of assessment, guidance, education and training with a particular focus on providing a work placement opportunity with local employers. Its success is thus extremely important for the future extension of the youth guarantee in Ireland. Some organizations expressed concerns that the government’s targets (both in terms of delivering within the four months deadline and meeting the number of required placements) would not be met. Groups such as Youth Work Ireland – a federation of youth services across the State – estimated only half of the places needed for young people would be available in 2014 (O’Brien, 12 November 2013). However, according to our research, the Ballymun pilot appears to have progressed rather well. Some of the outcomes are discussed in Part 3.

Key features of the youth guarantees

Early intervention

As argued above, early intervention is one of the six axes highlighted in the European Youth Guarantee initiative. Early activation entails a highly preventive approach since support starts even before contact with the world of work. This is probably one of the most interesting features, since it differs from activation measures restricted to those individuals registered for unemployment benefits. The idea is to identify young people who are at risk of

¹² Over 2014, the DREES (Directory for Research Studies Evaluation and Statistics) of the French Ministry of Social Affairs and Health will conduct both a quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the French youth guarantee scheme.

leaving school early and becoming NEETs. The Council Recommendation encourages the development of partnerships between public and private employment services, education and training institutions, career guidance services and specialised youth services (non-governmental organisations, youth centres and associations) to help the smooth the transition from unemployment, inactivity or education into work. The informants interviewed at national level for this study all stressed the fact that effective early intervention rests upon a strong partnership working between the PES and schools, which is a relatively novel approach. Some examples of local initiatives are provided in Part 3.

Engaging employers

All those interviewed for this study tended to agree that since the start of the recession, employers have reduced their job and apprenticeship offers. Instruments to engage employers via youth guarantees are very diverse, showing once again, some national preferences. Norway or Germany are not keen on using wage subsidies, even in the public sector, in contrast to e.g. Denmark, Sweden or Poland. With high numbers of well-educated unemployed youth and a lack of job vacancies, Poland appears to be the only country to strongly rely on job subsidies for the private sector (a measure known as “intervention works”) to encourage job creation. Flanders uses a scheme known as “IBO” to provide on-the-job training leading to employment (see Box 3). Sweden also significantly uses wage subsidies, but for its most disadvantaged youth.

Box 3. IBO - individual vocational on-the-job training scheme, Flanders, Belgium

The *Individuele beroepsopleiding in de onderneming* – IBO (individual vocational on-the-job training) is a flexible training scheme which takes place entirely within the workplace. It is always related to a specific vacancy offered by an employer. The IBO generally lasts over a period of 1 month up to 6 months and up to maximum 12 months for specific target groups. Employers who take on trainees on an IBO commit themselves to hire them by the end of the training period. While in the past, the general rule was to offer permanent contracts, a recent amendment has made it possible to sign up fixed-term employment contracts for a duration amounting at least to the training period.

The VDAB (the Flemish PES) can advise an employer to use an IBO and propose a job seeker who will receive in-company training for the future job. Often employers offer vacancies with IBOs and in some instances, they already have their own candidate. The VDAB makes a gap-analysis of the skills needed for the job and the skills of the job seeker and proposes a customized training contract. There are at least three follow-up moments where the VDAB consults with both the employer and the job seeker.

The employer pays a productivity bonus, which is the difference between the wage he normally would have paid and the unemployment benefit the job seeker receives. During the IBO, the trainee is still registered as a jobseeker and thus continues to receive his benefit. The productivity bonus (the difference between the replacement income and the normal wage) is progressive: 100% in the last month, 95%, 90%, 85%, 80% and 75% in the preceding months.

In 2012, the VDAB had a target of 13 500 IBOs for the whole of Flanders. The target was not met since the number of vacancies (and hence IBOs attached to those vacancies) was lower than expected due to the economic crisis. It is also important to note that not all IBOs lead to a job: 17.9% were discontinued before the end of the training period. Both employers and job seekers can stop an IBO due to a lack of skills, medical reasons or simply mismatched expectations. In some rare instances (approximately 5%), the IBO is stopped before the agreed end period because the job seeker has found a normal contract, sometimes with the same employer.

While the IBO is not a specific measure for young people, it is actually a popular scheme for this category of

job seekers. In 2012, 6 454 beneficiaries of the total 11 882 IBO signed up in Flanders were aged under 25; 2 711 were still in their waiting period before receiving benefits. For 3.249 young job seekers the IBO started before 3 month unemployment spell; for 1 311 young job seekers, the unemployment spell was between 3 and 6 months showing that IBO is well integrated into the Flemish Youth Employment Plan. 2 071 young job seekers starting an IBO hadn't completed upper secondary education.

Using innovative instruments such as voucher schemes

Some countries have introduced some striking innovations with systems that attempt to foster competition on the supply side (for example between training institutions). Poland is using vouchers for internships, vocational training courses and post-graduates studies in selected Poviats Labour Offices (a project implemented since June 2012 and envisaged to last until the end of 2013). The coupons are provided as part of a pilot project entitled “*Your Career – Your Choice*” launched as part of the aforementioned *Youth on the Labour Market Programme*. The aim of is to develop and test new labour market instruments addressed to the unemployed under 30 years of age. Within this pilot project the young unemployed are offered the assistance of a tutor who - on the basis of an individual plan - determines the activities which need to be taken in order to facilitate the entry on the labour market of the particular young jobseeker. Finland is using a card system (the *Sanssi* card – *Sanssi* meaning “chance”) which signals to employers that holders of this card are entitled to a wage subsidy of 670 euros a month to compensate for their employment costs.

From an operational perspective, such voucher-based services can facilitate administrative and payment procedures but some lack of clarity remains as to their perception by beneficiaries. On the one hand, vouchers for vulnerable people are often perceived as stigmatizing (as food vouchers for example). On the other hand, they materialize an entitlement making them akin to acquiring other ordinary services such as transport. In this sense, they can contribute to a wider societal perception of training, education and other activation schemes for youngsters as ordinary public services.

National level factors affecting implementation of youth guarantees

Multi-scalar governance and the role of national authorities

Multi-scalar governance plays a major role for the delivery of youth guarantees: policy is generally designed at central/national level and the multiplicity of decision-making layers renders the delivery rather complex. The German Länder, for example, follow their own policies on education, a framework which obviously has some incidence on the educational and vocational side of the Youth Guarantee. In Belgium, the federal level is in charge of providing job subsidies while the Flemish level decides for training and counselling.

In some countries, the design of youth guarantee measures is strongly embedded within the national legislative framework. To stay with the German example, the Social Code III known as *Sozialgesetzbuch III* (in place since 1997) provides a reference framework for ALMPs. The German code gives all employable youngsters the right to an offer of employment or apprenticeship as soon as they register with the PES but there does not appear to be any specific guarantee that an offer will be made within a fixed period. However, standards for operational practice with the PES stipulate that an offer should be made within

20 days and data from the HoPES 2011 questionnaire¹³ indicate that this target was achieved in 71% of cases (European Job Mobility Laboratory, 2013, p.5). Data provided for this study by German PES officials indicated that in among 1.6 million youngsters aged under 25 who had registered as unemployed between July 2010 and June 2011, only 1.3% had not received any intensive support and were still unemployed after 4 months and 20.6% had not yet enrolled in an active measure.¹⁴ Poland has closely followed the German framework towards youth support in its Legislation Act 2004 whose reformed version came into effect in 2014.¹⁵

Institutional reforms made at the national level provide opportunities or constraints when seeking to develop local delivery models. This is in fact the case of Nordic countries such as Norway or Finland where the recent re-organisation of the PES infrastructure has contributed to redefining the approaches that may be funded as part of youth guarantee. Finland for example has decided to exclude internships from the youth guarantee since some employers were found to use them abusively without guaranteeing long-term quality employment paths to the beneficiaries.

The political commitment of national governments and a wide societal “buy-in” are undoubtedly important drivers. The Finnish government (a broad coalition of six political parties) has stated that the youth guarantee is a key priority and will be implemented throughout its term of office, i.e. until 2015. In September 2011, it established a National Working Group based on the Public-Private-People-Partnership (PPPP) model, where young adults are themselves central actors, responsible for their own future (Finnish Ministry for Education and Culture, 2012). Young people have hence been able to contribute to the design of the Guarantee, an approach which is unique to Finland. The National Working Group comprises 6 different Ministries (Employment and the Economy, Education and Culture, Social Affairs and Health, Finance, Defence, Interior) as well as the social partners (e.g. Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland, Confederation of Finnish Industries, Federation of Finnish Enterprises) and the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities. This broad-based alliance with the inclusion of youth representatives helps to explain why this country is often regarded as a model for other countries to follow (see Box 1 for a detailed overview of the Finnish Youth Guarantee). While less comprehensive than the Finnish agreement in terms of stakeholder involvement, a similar commitment towards young people can be found in Flanders with the adoption in February 2012 of the *Loopbaanakkoord*, an agreement on careers signed between the Flemish government and the social partners.

¹³ The PES crisis-response questionnaire was introduced as an extension of the European Commission’s more general monitoring of Member States economic and social policy responses which started as a joint exercise with OECD in 2009. The reports are analysed and disseminated by the Brussels based European Job Mobility Laboratory (Mobility Lab). See bibliography.

¹⁴ Bundesagentur für Arbeit, *EU-Jugendgarantie: was bedeutet das für die BA?*, unpublished internal document, April 2013, p.15 (mimeo).

¹⁵ Since the reform was just coming through at the time of writing, we were not able to assess its implications for youth employment.

National funding levels

The above national programmes include significant funding which make their local delivery possible. For example, further to the latest revision of its youth guarantee programme in January 2013, Finland commits a yearly amount of 60 million euros for the youth guarantee and a further 79 million euros until 2016 for a skills programme for young adults holding no qualifications. The youth guarantee entitled young people to a training place after completing their formal education – either in the upper secondary school or as vocational training. The state guarantees all inhabitants under the age of 25 and all university graduates under the age of 30 a job, internship or advanced or further training within three months of becoming unemployed. Within this, there are sub-programmes tailored exactly to specific target groups.

PES organisation and infrastructure

In all the case study countries, the PES holds the central operational responsibility when it comes to implementation of youth activation policies. The separation with benefits services is now commonplace and prior registration with the PES is a pre-requisite to draw unemployment benefits. Another shared feature is for PES agencies to rely on special advisors undertaking individual case management for jobless youth. Their main remit is to draw Individual Action Plans (IAPs) with the young persons. However, as will be shown in Part 3, the services and availability of such advisors differ at the local level, since local labour market conditions often determine their caseloads.

The spatial and scalar organisation of the PES also has some incidence and depends on what is decided at the national level. PES offices are generally divided between regional and local level agencies. For example, in Poland, the institutional framework is more recent than in the other case study countries. Since 2000, the PES in Poland has been delivered both by territorial self-governments through 16 voivodeship labour offices (WUP) and 340 Poviats labour offices (PUP) as well as by state administration bodies, namely the Minister responsible for labour and social policies, 16 voivodes, and the Voluntary Work Corps (Ochotnicze Hufce Pracy, OHP). Each body is autonomous with no hierarchical relationship with any other (Kaluzna, 2009).

As already mentioned, in some case study countries, the PES has recently undergone significant restructuring. For example, since January 2013, Finland has decreased the number of local agencies and reinforced the regional level as this is seen as the most appropriate for gathering labour market intelligence.

Table 4 provides an overview of the number of delivery units in each case study country.

Table 4. PES structure in case study countries

Country	Name of PES	Territorial units
Belgium (Flanders)	VDAB	5 provinces 13 regional offices
Denmark	AMS	4 Employment regions 91 local job centres
Finland	TE Toimisto	15 regional offices

		104 local offices
Germany	Bundesagentur für Arbeit (BA)	10 regional offices 156 local BA agencies with a network of 600 related service providers and 304 job centres
Ireland	Intreo	44 local centres (with additional centres expected by the end of 2014)
Norway	NAV	19 regional offices 456 local offices
Poland	PUP Powiat labour office (<i>Powiatowy urząd pracy</i>)	19 regional offices 340 local offices
Sweden	Arbetsförmedlingen	11 regional offices 320 local offices

Another important implication of this infrastructure is that it does not always coincide with that of the partner organisations (especially local authorities). For example in Sweden, there are 11 PES regional offices but 21 authority districts. Again scale matters. When local partners have different spatial frame of reference in mind, collaboration can be more difficult.

PART 3

CASE STUDIES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Description of the case study areas

As mentioned in Part 1, two case study areas were selected in each country. While attention was paid to drawing a contrast between large conurbations and more sparsely populated rural areas, it must be stressed that there are differences in size and structure so that some countries have large or small “delivery” units. There are of course striking differences when it comes to urban areas. For example, the PES office of the Berlin-Brandenburg case study deals with a city-region of 6 million inhabitants which contrasts with a city such as Kristiansand in Norway that has just under 90,000 inhabitants (see Table 5). In the remote case study areas, the population ranges from 6,000 to 60,000. Many of these localities tend to be old declining industrial areas which have lost traditional blue-collar jobs, even more so since 2008 as in the case of Skive in Denmark. Some are re-orienting their activities towards tourism (e.g. Leper, Skive, Sotkamo, Ljusdal) which means that there is an added seasonal dimension to the local labour market. Moreover, they tend to experience demographic challenges with an ageing and declining population as young people who are “job ready” are quite likely to leave the area in search of opportunities in the larger cities.

Moreover, the larger urban case study areas tended to experience higher youth unemployment than the more remote and sparsely populated ones. In Flanders for example, the rural case study (Leper) displayed a youth unemployment rate of 13.2% in 2013. This is well below the Flemish rate of 17.7% or that of Ghent, the urban case study where it reached 25.5%. Similar trends are visible for the other case studies although, of course, this does not mean that all rural/remote areas always display low levels of youth unemployment, this being more likely to be the outcome of the sampling of case studies. Youth unemployment rates in Poznan or Stockholm are half the national average (see Table 5). It would thus be wrong to suggest that youth unemployment is always high in large conurbations. However, overwhelmingly, the respondents in the larger urban areas stated that the under 25s represented an important portion of their beneficiaries. In some cases, the PES even set up dedicated units for young people, as for example in Copenhagen which has a special job centre providing for young people only. Unsurprisingly, a recurrent topic also concerned migrant youth, which was much less of an issue for concern in remote case study areas.

A recurrent feature is that large conurbations have a higher proportion of university graduates since they are university towns or cities, and graduates are more likely to stay there upon completion of their degrees. Urban job centres also have young people not in education employment or training but this group is more easily identified and targeted in remote or smaller areas than in larger conurbations which have very mixed client groups. The challenge

in large cities is thus for job centre staff to get to know youngsters and build a trust-based relationship with them to be able to offer the right option(s).

Table 5. An overview of local case study areas (showing a. urban areas and b. rural areas)

a. Large conurbations

Name of locality	Population	Unemployment rate % *		Youth unemployment rate % *		Description
		Local	Nat.	Local	Nat.	
Berlin (Germany)	6 million (region)	11.7	6.9	12.4	6.1	One among 11 German metropolitan regions with 2 capital cities (Berlin and Potsdam + 14 districts). There is a shortage of apprenticeships.
Copenhagen (Denmark)	559,500	7,5	5,8 (7.1)*	3,3	4,5 (13)*	Capital city. Many migrant workers on the local labour market. Various categories of young people registered with the PES. Severe urban disparities: 7 neighbourhoods are classed as ghettos with many young people living there.
Ghent (Flanders)	248,200	12.3	7.5	25.5	17.7	Capital and largest city of the East Flanders province (second largest city in Flanders). Similarities with Antwerp: it is a university city, which displays significant discrepancies between highly-qualified and low-educated, e.g. migrant workers. Some industrial activity (automotive, steel). There is a significant mismatch with some bottleneck vacancies (e.g. in the care sector).
Kristiansand (Norway)	89,770	3.2	2.6 (3.5)*	4.0	3.2 (9.1)*	4 th most populated city (after Oslo, Bergen and Stavanger). Kristiansand is the municipality and county capital of Vest-Agder in southern Norway (50% of the county's population lives in the City). It has some "big city" problems on a smaller scale.
Poznan (Poland)	552,735	4.1	13.4	9.1	18.6	5 th largest city, located in the west of Poland on the Warta. Labour market mismatch (too many over-qualified jobseekers and a majority of employers looking for workers with vocational qualifications).
Stockholm (Sweden)	851,150	7.1	8.5	9.6	17 (24.2)*	Capital city with 11 job centres. Two districts (Spanga-Tensta and Farsta in the South) have more jobless youth.
Vantaa (Finland)	208,098	10.5	8.2	10,6**	19.9	City and Municipality. One of 4 cities to make up the inner core of the Helsinki metropolitan area which totals a population of 1.4 million; Vantaa is the 4 th most populated city. Labour market: shortage of health care staff (nurses, dentists), social workers, catering personnel, sales assistants, telemarketing assistants, cleaners, teachers, accountants, engineers.

Note: * unemployment and youth unemployment rates as a percentage of the labour force: local/national rates, figures are yearly averages for 2013. Youth unemployment rates show the percentage of unemployed young people aged 15-24 as part of the economically active people of the same age bracket. In the case of Denmark, Norway and Sweden, national statistics used for Eurostat's EU Labour Force Survey have been added in brackets. Nordic countries have two sets of statistics and only record regional and local unemployment figures on the basis of individuals registered as jobseekers with the PES. However many jobseekers and young people especially do not register with the jobcentre but are looking for employment (including young people registered as students). These individuals are accounted for in the second set of statistics produced by national statistical agencies and are those which are those used for international comparisons. Also note that in Germany apprentices are registered as being in employment which partly explains the low youth unemployment figures in that country. ** In Finland, the indicator used for the local level is the youth unemployment ratio (i.e. registered unemployed youth as part of the total population age 15-24 including the economically inactive)

b. Rural areas

Name of locality	Population	Overall unemployment rate % *		Youth unemployment rate % *		Description
		Local	Nat.	Local	Nat.	
Ieper (Flanders)	35,000	6.4	7.5	13.2	17.7	Municipality located in West Flanders (also known as Ypres in French). It occupied a strategic position and was a major battlefield during World War I. Today it is known as the "city of peace".
Ljusdal (Sweden)	19,500	11	8.5	26.5	17 (24.2)*	Municipality located in Gävleborg County, in the North of Sweden.
Ostrów Mazowiecka (Poland)	23,500 (town) 74,683 (poviat)	17.8	13.4	24	18.6	Municipality (Poviat) located in the Mazovia province (centre-east of Poland), 100 kms North-east of Warsaw. There are many medium-sized factories in the food processing and medical engineering sectors (e.g. Kruger). There are not many young people dropping out of school locally and there is an important mismatch (not enough jobs available).
Rosenheim (Germany)	60,700	3	6.9	2.5	6.1	Small city located in Eastern Bavaria with unemployment well below the national average. There is a shortage of young people to fill out apprenticeship offers.
Skive (Denmark)	47,000 (district)	4.5	5,8 (7.1)*	3.6	4.5 (13)*	Municipality located in Jutland (north-west of Denmark). There is an important demographic challenge with a declining population. Young people leave the area to go to university. There used to be any small industrial workplaces. Since 2008, approx. 20% of manufacturing jobs have been lost. There is a lack of vacancies and a high proportion of unskilled workers. There is some tourism (summer houses) but no big attraction.
Sotkamo (Finland)	10,700	12	8.2	9,3**	19.9	Rural municipality located in the north of the country. There is some touristic activity; almost 2/3 of local jobs are service sector jobs (cleaning, catering, etc.). There is also some mining activity attracting older male workers. The municipality is a shortage of colleges and training providers.
Tvedestrand (Norway)	6,000	3.2	2.6 (3.5)*	3.4	3.2 (9.1)*	Small town situated on the coastline near Arendal with an unemployment rate slightly above the national average. Many commuters because house prices are lower. The oil industry is one of the main employers. There are also jobs in retail and construction. The local wooden manufacturing sector has been severely hit by the crisis with significant redundancies among companies producing small boats (day cruisers) and recruitment frozen in the production of wooden kitchens, doors, windows, etc.

Note : * unemployment and youth unemployment rates as a percentage of the labour force: local/national rates, figures are yearly averages for 2013. For further information, see notes on table above.

When examining the difficulties encountered by young people when looking for training or work opportunities, opportunities were reported to have decreased since the advent of the recession. The only exceptions were Rosenheim, a town of 60,000 inhabitants located in the economically flourishing German region of Upper Bavaria and the two Norwegian

localities.¹⁶ A striking point is that irrespective of the nature of labour markets, the two sectors which are identified as potential employment providers are tourism/hospitality and the construction sector. The sector of mechanical and electronic engineering was also mentioned. For example, Leper (the Flemish remote case study area) is highly dependent on PIKANOL, a Spanish manufacturer of high-teach weaving machines which employs 2,000 local people and when that major employer experiences difficulties, the whole local economy is affected. In Rosenheim, the difficulty is less to find employers offering apprenticeships than finding potential recruits, a situation which is diametrically opposed to that of Berlin where employers are more and more reluctant to provide apprenticeships.

Relevance of interventions to the local labour market

One aspect of the youth guarantee is of course to match provision with local demand by directing young people towards training and apprenticeships in sectors experiencing labour and skills shortages. In the *Powiat* (district) of Ostrów Mazowiecka (located in the North-east of Poland, 100 km from Warsaw), young people are not only enrolled in services-related vocational training courses such as hotel, catering or hairdressing but also in mechanical, agribusiness logistics and IT engineering. This reflects the fact that Ostrów has become an important industrial centre which houses many manufacturing SMEs (both domestic and foreign). These companies include e.g. ALPLA (plastic packaging), SCHNEIDER (agricultural machines and car chassis), FORTE (furniture), KRUGER (food concentrates and supplements) or NP PHARMA (cosmetics and pharmaceuticals). In Leper, the VDAB has set up its own vocational training centre which provides skills in metalworking (mainly for PIKANOL) and in health care since the hospital is the second largest employer

In less dynamic areas, the upsurge in demand due to seasonal factors such as the tourism season can also orient the measures chosen by the PES. This was mentioned in Skive (Denmark) and also in Leper where interestingly, the celebration of the centenary of World War 1 in 2014 and the expected influx of British visitors led to the development of special training courses for upcoming jobs.

In addition, when contrasting types of local labour markets, there is no doubt that big cities benefit from the attractiveness of their urban core; they are clearly advantaged in they can rely on the city's "assets" including the location of business headquarters and a well-developed public transport network. The PES representative of the Stockholm city centre area (which comprises four central districts) argues that

"Many people from districts in Stockholm like to come to the city centre to look for a job (...) the advantage for us is that we have a very good location, it's very easy to reach the job centre because there are metros of course and it's very easy to take the metro from anywhere and go to our job centre" (Stockholm PES official)

¹⁶ These local situations are of course unsurprising and happen to match the national variations described in Part 1 where we saw that Germany and Norway had lower youth unemployment than the other five countries.

The Stockholm jobcentre is able to work with several multinational companies and advanced producer services, such as Universum, a company specialised in employer branding. This employer recruited several interns under the Swedish “Job Guarantee” because it was looking for young people with fluent English language skills and knowledge of digital media.¹⁷

In contrast, rural and remote areas often struggle to offer the right opportunities, either because of the lack of jobs or of further education and vocational establishments. Of course, the PES can under its youth guarantee provide some means to tackle these hurdles, notably via mobility grants. Sotkamo in Finland is quite exemplary. Young people are encouraged to take up training courses in Kajaani, a city located approx. 50 km to the East of Sotkamo. Help is provided with meeting the cost of the public bus network but in addition, the colleges provide overnight accommodation so that trainees can avoid daily commutes.

Some large metropolitan labour markets like Berlin or Vantaa are experiencing specific difficulties due to their geographical spread. Vantaa, Finland’s fourth main city with a population of just over 200,000 is divided in smaller suburbs without one official city centre. Mobility is not a huge problem but the travelling times between the cities in the area can take a long time by public transport. Some of the young people are not keen on travelling because of the cost of travel cards.

Early intervention

As mentioned above, some localities made it an important feature of their youth guarantees to offer early intervention, through preventive and preparatory measures in secondary schools. This occurs through special information sessions to prepare pupils for the labour market. For example, the Flemish labour office of Ghent provides a special learning material toolkit for teachers that can be used with pupils to prepare them for the labour market. This is described in the following terms:

“We offer the learning material. A teacher who teaches English or Dutch or another language, it’s not easy to relate to the labour market, to know how to prepare a résumé, how to apply for a job, which people can help doing that. We have two hours of material that they can use for free. That’s the reason why we developed it. Ideally we train groups of teachers preparing for those kinds of lessons. Sometimes they ask very specific questions and we send one of our councillors. We are always looking for excellent partnerships. In that sense we pro-actively go to the schools, give information” (Ghent, Belgium)

The intensified cooperation between the PES and schools occurs notably through regular visits from PES staff in the classroom or classroom visits on PES premises to prepare young people for the recruitment on apprenticeships. In Rosenheim, following a reform in April 2012, PES staff have started to visit schools already three years before the end of the curriculum to inform them about careers and training opportunities. Individual sessions are offered to prepare youngsters for their interviews one year prior to the actual recruitment session.

¹⁷ Presentation made by the Director of Universum during the OECD-LEED Forum on Local Development and Partnerships, Stockholm City Centre, 25th April 2014.

The second strand of early intervention is the provision of customised vocational training for NEETs (or potential school drop-outs) which may be combined with work experience. In Rosenheim where around 800 young people under 25 registered as unemployed, the PES offers this type of preparatory vocational training measures. The objective is to help youngsters get familiar with the working environment, to try out specific vocational routes. Other professionals (e.g. social workers) also take part in this provision. Some measures are offered in PES-run training centres, others take place directly within companies. The scheme lasts for one year.

“If someone drops out of school – and that includes a few with a migration background who also have language difficulties – we can offer some preparatory vocational training measures. They come out of the school and enrol on those programmes from Monday to Friday to try out various fields of activity: wooden work, metal, electrical engineering, etc. These courses are offered by the job centre. We have approximately 120 places each year. We have two centres covering the area, one located in the east and one in the west. And this works well, it is actually sufficient. This training is conducted in groups. And then we have something similar conducted directly on the job which is even better. We call it the entry-level qualification (Einstiegsqualifikation). The individual is looked after within the company. They don’t have a formal training agreement but for a whole year, they have a sort of instruction in each field and if it works out well, they can subsequently be enrolled on an apprenticeship. The important thing is that people get to know each other in the company and then say “ok, it works out well or not”. But we don’t have many such “qualifications” This year we had 50. With this measure, the youngsters are on their own, whereas with the first one, they’re in groups with the support of social workers. So there are other advantages”. (Rosenheim, Germany)

As in Rosenheim, the *Bundesagentur für Arbeit* in Berlin-Brandenburg puts a strong emphasis on early intervention, notably in its regional future programme “Together for the Region” (*Zukunftsprogramm Gemeinsam für die Region*). The programme was launched in 2012 with the objective to reduce the Berlin unemployment rate by 3.4 percentage points (down from 13.3% to 9.9%) and by 1.1% (down from 9.8% to 8.7%) in Brandenburg.

In Kristiansand (Norway), which has around 500 job seekers under 25, the local NAV office offers placements with private sector employers to prepare young people for an apprenticeship for a duration of up to one year, as in the German localities. The placement starts from the time the student drops out school and until the school year ends. Potential drop outs are identified by the school advisers and referred to NAV. Placements are found either by NAV or by the individual. It is essential that the referral occurs through the school, otherwise NAV will not fund the placement.

Providing opportunities for outreach

In well performing local labour markets, the PES can help most people quickly through career guidance and job counselling, freeing up some capacity to focus a greater amount of attention on the young people that are the most vulnerable and remote from the labour market. In particular this can be beneficial in allowing PES workers to have smaller case loads, while also taking part in special youth projects and outreach schemes run by municipalities or voluntary sector organisations. In Rosenheim (Germany), the PES plays an active role in a

project run by a local NGO in cooperation with the municipality's social services. The project known as "*Junge Arbeit*" (Young Work) offers a combination of measures to disaffected homeless youth including their own independent accommodation and a woodwork training scheme.¹⁸ In Tvedestrand (Norway), a PES youth adviser was hired to provide specialist outreach help. This person, employed on a part-time basis, visits young people in their home early in the morning to literally get them out of bed and motivate them to attend their training or work activity (see Box 3). In Ljusdal (Sweden), also a remote town, the PES staff also do home visits. In contrast in Stockholm, their counterparts do not see such outreach activities as a priority. Challenges with home visits were also noted—as they are typically not part of PES functions and rather fall within the remit of youth social workers; such arrangements can create a duplication of effort and challenge the usual role division.

Box 4. Reaching out to the most vulnerable: the case of Tvedestrand (Norway), a small office in a small town

Tvedestrand is a remote and picturesque town of 6,000 inhabitants located in the Aust-Agder county on the West Coast of Norway. It has a small NAV (Public Employment Service) office with a team of 15 staff, two of whom are dedicated to helping young people. Youngsters who are "job ready" or willing to continue their education tend to leave the town. The local unemployment rate is relatively low compared to many OECD areas (3.3%, but slightly higher than the national rate of 2.6%). There are not many jobs available since the local activity centres around the oil industry which requires highly skilled workers. Many workers employed in other sectors commute to nearby cities such as Arendal or Kristiansand. This means that the local youth who are registered as unemployed are among the least mobile and far from ready to take up employment. Since they tend to experience quite severe difficulties (psychological problems, substance abuse, etc.), the NAV office has a stronger "social role" compared to those situated in larger urban settings such as Oslo. This PES office takes an "integrated" approach to the service provided to their client. The youngster only has one contact person who is able to deal with the whole range of issues they may encounter (benefits, housing, family, health, training and employment, etc.). The two special youth advisers have a relatively light caseload (approx. 60 youngsters) which gives them the opportunity to get to know the young people outside the NAV office with visits paid to the location of their training activity (at the school or on the employer's premises).

Visits are also conducted at the youngster's home. In 2012, a combination of local and state funding was used to hire a special outreach worker on a temporary one year contract. Her remit was to conduct outreach work for a maximum of 15 young clients most of whom were living on their own to motivate them to get into – and stick to – a training activity. When the youth worker's contract ended, it was decided that one of the two permanent NAV advisers would continue these successful outreach activities on which she now spends 50% of her working time.

This example highlights the opportunity for PES staff to offer individualised interventions with a constant and daily follow-up. The immersion of PES staff in the youngster's daily routine and the resulting action (i.e. calling upon the local network of social services providers) is probably the most innovative aspect of this approach. Such interventions are successful because they are implemented on a small scale. It is unlikely that this could be conducted on a larger scale without significant additional PES resources, particularly for the recruitment of specialist staff.

As already mentioned, in Copenhagen, there is one dedicated youth job centre (out of 5 local job centres) with 320 staff catering for all the city's jobseekers aged below 30 (except for graduates who go to the careers centre). The decision to restructure and merge several job

¹⁸ See <http://www.junge-arbeit-rosenheim.de/>

centres in that single centre in January 2013 is said to have increased contacts with unemployed youth from deprived neighbourhoods.

“We see that young people without an education, they live out there and if we can get them to come to one address, it’s much easier for us to handle instead of us being in 15 different places as we were before. We couldn’t get contact with these people before so our contact rate is much higher. We talk to young people living in the deprived areas more often than we did ten years ago” (PES official, Copenhagen).

However, Copenhagen has not done any extensive outreach activities for several years, and even if the job centre is more easily identified by potential clients, there is still a need for traditional outreach. Two mobile youth advisers based at the youth job centre have been assigned with the task of going into the deprived areas to approach the hardest to reach.

Drawing on and working with other organisations

Of course, the PES does not stand alone when implementing youth guarantee schemes. Those localities which also benefit from the existence of youth guidance organisations have an advantage in implementing such policies. This is because the PES does not always have the capacity (and indeed responsibility) to follow individual pathways. In Finland, the so-called “Service and guidance network” plays a key role; 93 percent of the municipalities have such agencies but a significant territorial coverage does not necessarily mean that all localities are managing well. While some are already quite experienced, many of them were reported to be in a learning stage and part of the 2013 reform of the Finnish youth guarantee is to help them develop their capacity. In Denmark, the Youth Guidance Centres (UUs) play an equivalent function. The Danish legislation stipulates that these centres must follow young people until they reach the age of 25 and schools must inform them about youngsters dropping out of schools. They are thus key sources of information for the PES. Unfortunately these organisations do not exist in every country, and when they do, their remit is not always as clear as in Denmark.

Having one specific job centre or PES team delivering youth services appears to make it easier to work with other local organisations and employers. Returning to example of the youth job centre in Copenhagen, the advantage is that it is more easily identified, not only by young people, but also by local partners:

“With this structure the companies now know where to go. We have huge partnerships with big companies. They know that if they come here, they can get specialised help if they need employees. It’s much easier now. And some of the young people here have severe problems in other areas like social or debt problems, and sometimes you need to work with other departments in Copenhagen. With the structure we had before it was very blurred but now if you have a young person under 30, the social services department they know that they have to come here. So the collaboration is much smoother now.” (PES official, Copenhagen).

Similar remarks were also made in Kristiansand (Norway) which only has one large job centre for the whole city and within it, an entire department staffed by 25 people to service young people. In fact, one of the challenges faced by local PES staff is to be able to transfer information about actual and potential clients from and to their partner organisations. This

need is particularly obvious when there is no obligation for young people to register with the job centre. Even when the payment of benefits is tied to registration, some young people may decide to forego their entitlement. The respondents felt that unless information is shared (for example about youth dropping out of schools or having specific health problems), their efforts are considerably diminished. Collecting data and information about individuals does not seem to be the most acute problem since information systems and monitoring tools have substantially been improved in recent years. The major issue is about the ability to use and share the information since national legislation often puts some restrictions on this (i.e. through data protection). In some cases, creative solutions are found to bypass the legislation and build trust between partners in order to facilitate the transfer of information. Individual commitment is paramount but not always sufficient. Once again, in Denmark, recent municipal reforms have brought together smaller municipalities to increase their capacity to deliver services.

As seen in Box 2, the Ballymun pilot Youth Guarantee was one of the first of its kind to receive approval from the European Commission. It is a partnership of all of the key stakeholders - public employment services, education and training providers, local authority, local development and youth organisations, employer and trade union representatives led by the Department of Social Protection - who have come together to design and implement an activation approach tailored to meet the needs of young unemployed people in what is one of the country's most severely disadvantaged areas. A particular focus is involving and building links with employers, not just to maximise take up of existing incentives and supports, such as JobsPlus and JobBridge, but to generate new innovative work placement and experience opportunities, such as job shadowing, job sampling and blended education, training and work experience options. It also seeks to ensure that the guidance and training elements of the youth guarantee scheme are tailored to the needs of the labour market. There is an intensive employer engagement process which has received the full support of the Irish Business and Employers Confederation and Dublin Chamber of Commerce, both of which are represented on the National Steering Group which is overseeing the implementation of the pilot.

The relationship between partnership models and the nature of the local labour market

One of the most interesting findings is the relationship between the type of local labour market and the incidence of specific partnerships. When asked who they considered to be their main partners, the answers given by respondents tended to be influenced by whether local vacancies existed, perhaps even more so than the level of youth unemployment. Only one labour market – Ostrów Mazowiecka in Poland – displayed strong mismatches (a combination of high youth unemployment with an existing local employer base and job vacancies). In that locality, employers were seen as the main partner by PES agents. When the youth unemployment rate was low and local vacancies and apprenticeships existed, the PES concentrated on the most vulnerable job seekers and NEETs and as a result, the main partners appeared to be either the schools (as in Rosenheim or Kristiansand) or, as in Skive, the youth guidance centres which are run by the municipalities in Denmark. Where low youth unemployment coexisted with a lack of opportunities as in the case of Tvedestrand, the main partners were social and health practitioners. Of course, such responses from Rosenheim or Kristiansand are not surprising given that, as we have seen, their activities are geared at the educational side of activation. In Ghent, where the local labour market picture is more

complex with a combination of measures and target groups, it may at first surprising that the main partner

“... would be the schools. We have all kinds of collaborations with the schools and it's not looking like we're going in another direction. More and more there's the idea of starting our services in the schools”. (PES official, Ghent)

This response also points to deliberate actions from the PES in seeking to develop new partnerships. But the lack of internal PES resources can represent a major hurdle for developing such partnerships.

“We do information sessions but there are people saying that it could even be more than that. We could go to schools one day in a week, prepare them for the labour market, how to write a résumé. But we need the people to do it” (PES official, Ghent)

Box 5. Building local networks: The PETRA project (Vantaa, Finland)

The PETRA project targets all unemployed residents of Vantaa aged between 17 and 24. It draws on funding from the European Social Fund and the local authority. PETRA started in 2010 and was originally scheduled to last for 3.5 years but new ESF funding allowed it to be extended until the end of 2014. PETRA is run by a project manager and 11 advisers. Two of these advisers are qualified as public health care nurses.

The customers are sent to PETRA via the PES which in Finland are known as Employment and Economic Development Offices (the so-called 'TE-offices'). Preliminary interviews and evaluation of the need for the service takes place at the TE offices. A young person gets a personal employment plan and the TE-office books an appointment at PETRA.

The project is designed as a one stop service allowing young people to get help in all the areas of life under the same roof. It provides help with CVs, job applications, financial problems, housing, etc. Each PETRA adviser has a caseload of 60 to 80 clients with whom they meet for approximately an hour every two to three weeks; the young person always meets the same advisor to obtain personal guidance. In addition to the one-on-one meetings, every week, a two hour job seeking club takes place, as well as a life management group, a youth start up group and group activities that are outsourced. PETRA activities are publicized on social media such as Facebook so as to reach young people more effectively.

The public health care nurses provide life management and health care services. If the young person is unable to hold a job, PETRA may not be the right place for him/her. In this case, the advisers offer help in life management and counsel him/her to the right service when necessary.

PETRA is based on a tight co-operation with businesses and education institutes. By cooperating with businesses new job opportunities are identified that are not advertised on TE-offices website. Several recruitment events are organized each year to gather over 200 businesses and educational institutes and up to 400 unemployed young people under the same roof. PETRA arranges individual recruitment on behalf of businesses and performs the preliminary interviews. Employers can receive a wage subsidy of up to 700 euros a month for hiring a young person.

The PETRA project includes a youth guarantee with the aim to provide counselling within 3 months, either towards work, education, internships, apprenticeships, workshops or other services such as health, mental health or to labour force service centre. Several PETRA customers continue to rehabilitations. One significant youth guarantee destination is the skills programmes (known as NAO) for young adults. Two NAO events are organized each year where all of the local institutes offering skills programmes meet the young people.

A noticeable change has occurred since the early days of the scheme. At the beginning, participation was voluntary and the majority of young people did not show up. To increase participation, the payment of benefits was made conditional on attendance of the meetings. Moreover, the visits at public health care offices were not obligatory for everyone, but the scheme was soon redesigned on the grounds that life management was one of the biggest reasons for longer unemployment spells. In the revised version of PETRA, all the young people have to go through basic health checks. The managers of PETRA have noticed some positive outcomes with shorter unemployment spells and more recipients taking advantage of the scheme than at the beginning.

Since 2010, 4 000 jobless youth have used the PETRA scheme, 35% of which were females and 12% non-Finnish or Swedish speaking; 1 000 obtained a job and 450 a traineeship.

For more details, see the following websites:

http://www.vantaa.fi/work_and_business_services/_en/_en_petra_employment_and_education_for_the_young

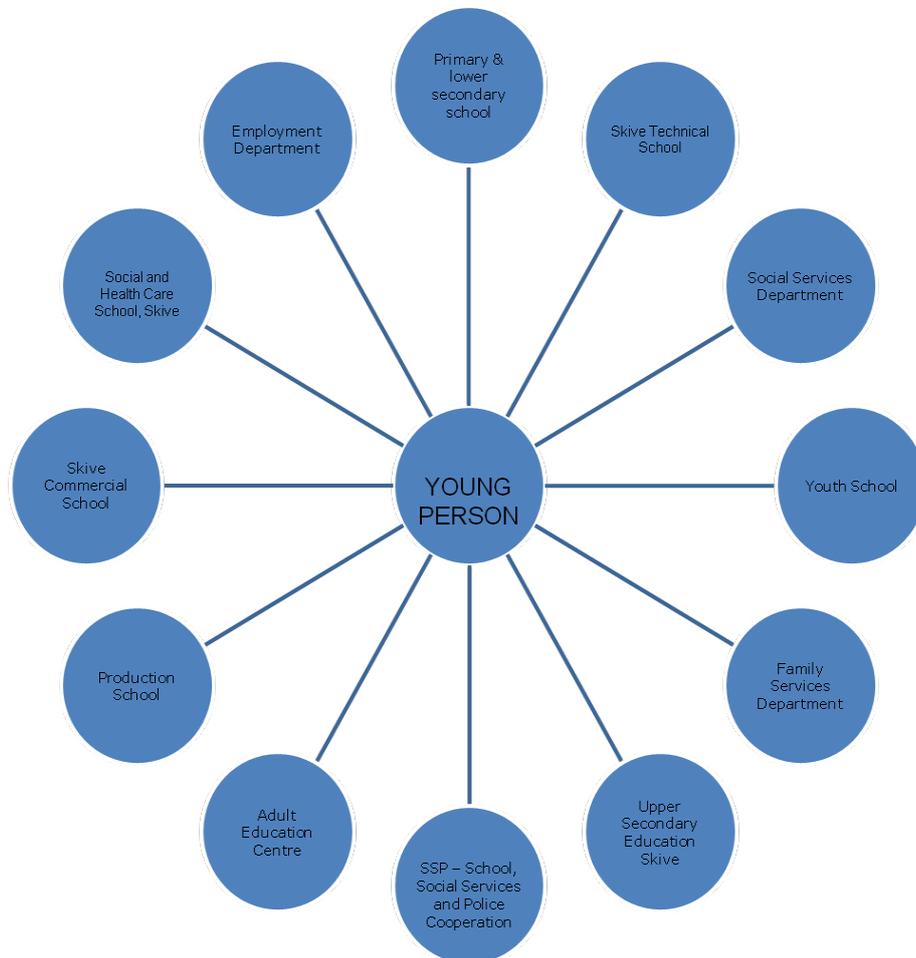
<https://www.facebook.com/petraprojekti>

Large cities appeared to have a greater capacity to create broad based alliances and platforms that can include the social partners and last through time: the example of Ghent at

Work shows that youth concerns can be incorporated in the City’s employment strategy. Equal efforts are made in smaller labour markets, with regular meeting of steering groups (even if less visible). In Skive, there is a steering group since 2007 which has employers on board and raises their awareness, but there is no formal commitment from employers to take on local youth (see Figure 7). The idea is to put the young person at the centre of service provision to highlight the sense of shared responsibility between partners.

Overall, despite this variation in the types of partnerships formed, some patterns emerged across the case studies. In particular, trade unions, youth organisations, and private recruitment agencies tended not to be involved in the design and implementation of youth guarantee schemes. Additionally, in working with employers, local PES staff acknowledged that internships and work placements have not always been of the highest standards.

Figure 7. The Skive Model – A sense of shared responsibility



Source: Skive job centre internal document

The balance of options

An important aspect of the study consisted of asking PES local offices to provide figures of the number of under 25s registered unemployed who benefited from a youth guarantee scheme and how the intervention was split between the various options on offer (see interview schedule in Appendix). Not all respondents of the 14 localities were able to provide data, and we therefore only present some partial evidence. Nonetheless, interesting lessons can be drawn from these examples. Table 6 shows towards which options the customers from the PETRA project described above were counselled.

Table 6. Balance of services provided in the PETRA project (Vantaa, Finland), year 2012

Action	Number of people	Action	Number of people
Work	377	Others (referrals, etc.):	
Traineeship	176	Mental health services	115
Salary support	13	Intoxicant abuse counselling	51
Apprenticeships	6	Health care services	164
Education (vocational)	87	Social and welfare services	138
Employment policy training	68	National Pensions Institute	59
Special education institute	17	Financial and debt counselling	15
Labour Force Service Center	28	Rehabilitation examinations	5
Rehabilitation course	8	Rehabilitation client work team	3
Rehabilitation work activity	11	Huolinnuori (to be contacted through outreach work)**	16
Training for work	34	Making contact with those who have dropped out of the system	41
Support person	29		
Kipinä (One stop shop providing guidance)*	31	No longer in need of Petra's services	203
Youth start-up group	24		
		Total	1719

Source: Petra project team, mimeo

* Kipinä literally means "spark". Kipinä is a one stop shop providing guidance for those young who do not have a place in school (secondary level) and do not have vocational education. kipinä also provides guidance for those young who are unemployed.

** Huolinnuori refers to a young that someone (official in this case) is worried about. For example, an official such as a counselor in PETRA or a school counselor may be worried about a young who "disappears" and does not respond to any contact attempts. This youngster can be contacted by an outreach youth work officer.

In Ostrów Mazowiecka, the PES reported that in 2012, 65 percent of young people aged under 25 were “activated” (873 out of 1350 on the register). Table 7 shows which options were used (please note that since some measures were combined, the total amount exceeds 100%). It is striking that traineeships were the most popular (64% benefited from such measures) and while help with setting up a business was among the lowest, still 30% of young people were able to access such funds.

Table 7. Professional activation of people under 25 in Ostrów Mazowiecka

Type of professional activation	All	Under 25	Percent
Traineeship	409	262	64%
Intervention works	185	34	18%
Public works	4	2	50%
Courses	147	48	32%
Funds for business activity	131	40	30%
Equipment or upgrading of work station	87	24	27%
Careers guidance	946	423	45%
Total activated	1909	873	
Total registered	5303	1350	

Source: PES Ostrów Mazowiecka, mimeo

In Ballymun, between the start of the Youth Guarantee pilot’s operational phase in January 2014 and mid July 2014, almost 3,000 guidance meetings had been conducted and 369 young people had received either an educational/training or an employment offer. Out of these, 228 young people (62%) had been referred to an educational or training scheme while 141 (38%) had been directed towards employment/work schemes. The highest numbers of meetings and referrals were recorded with Target Group 2, reflecting the fact that in Ballymun, this group was the most significant among the 3 relevant categories identified by the Department for Social Protection.

Table 8. Guidance Meetings per Target Group in Ballymum (January – July 2014)

Target Group		Number of meetings
1	Young people with no formal second level educational qualifications and no work experience	419
2	Young People with a Leaving Certificate or equivalent and little or no work history	749
3	Young People with above Leaving Certificate educational attainment and/or good work history.	318
TOTAL		2972
OF WHICH TOTAL OFFERS MADE		369
IN EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING SCHEMES		228
IN EMPLOYMENT /WORK SCHEMES		141

Source: Department of Social Protection, Ballymun Youth Guarantee Weekly Throughput Report, 11 July 2014, mimeo.

PART 4

LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The work undertaken for this study brings up a number of issues worth taking into account in the design of future youth labour market guarantee schemes. Some relate to national features and policy design while other relate to local implementation and coordination. Below is a list of such issues:

- *Giving local areas flexibility in policy design and delivery*

A key finding that emerges from this study is the importance of local areas having the flexibility to tailor national programmes to local level contexts. For example, a “work-first” activation focus may not always deliver the most sustainable results when there are only poor quality jobs with no progression prospects available in the community and/or individuals have significant skills deficits. Additionally, as discussed further below, partnerships are critical to the success of youth guarantees. Effective coordination with partners requires that local level actor have the flexibility to adjust programmes, targets, etc. as needed (as opposed to just coming together to share information about programmes).

It is also worth noting that even within local areas, flexibility in programme delivery is important, as there is no “one size fits all” approach to working with youth. Even if a focus on education makes sense for a local area broadly, some young people may find a vocational or apprenticeship route better suited to their aspirations. This thus requires providing a greater set of options under the youth guarantee to mirror the diversity of individual aspirations. Indeed, the European Youth Guarantee seeks to ensure that 4 different types of good-quality offers - employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship – are offered to young people within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

- *Deepening and broadening local partnerships and ensuring consistent pathways for young people*

As discussed earlier, holistic approaches that follow young people from education/training, to finding employment, to sustaining employment are more effective than single shot interventions. A “pathways” approach cannot be delivered by any single organization, and rather requires the coordination of schools, training institutions, public employment services, employers, etc. to ensure that services are aligned and that young people are guided from one stage to the next. Having the data to identify the young people in need of services is a prerequisite for this coordinated approach. Again, strong partnerships are needed to engender the type of trusting relationships required to share this often sensitive data between organizations.

Many local respondents identified just one partner for the delivery of their youth guarantees, which suggests a narrow approach to implementation. Thus, in addition to deepening existing partnerships, broadening the types of partners involved through genuine joint work may be a means to expand the number and quality of options available.

Follow-up support once a young person has been placed into education/training or employment is another important aspect of the pathways approach. In terms of follow-up, youth measures generally tend to focus on the “point of entry”, i.e. to the school-to-work transition, or possibly the back-to-school route. They often stop once the young person has been placed into education or employment. Youth guarantee schemes generally follow a similar pattern. This can be problematic, given that labour market churning and recycling are major risks with youth activation policies (Martin et al., 2001). The official institutional literature on youth guarantees provides little information about guaranteeing the stability of the educational or employment paths. However lessons can be learned from some countries such as Flanders which are taking this temporal lifetime perspective into account.

- *Deepening and broadening local partnerships*

Except for Finland, it is noticeable that youth organisations are rarely consulted when it comes to shaping or reporting on youth guarantees either at the national or local level. Locally, there are some cases of collaborative approaches from which lessons could be learned. For example, in Denmark, youth guidance centres, although they do not directly represent the voice of young people, work in close cooperation with local PES offices. Their involvement appears useful in terms of adding specific expertise which can then benefit implementation.

- *Ensuring sufficient human and financial resources*

Lighter touch services are likely to do little for the youth most at risk of long term labour market exclusion; the type of support they need is more intensive. PES staff members need small caseloads in order to work more closely with such youth, and adequate budgets must be available to get them the services and supports they need in order to be set up for labour market success (training, wage subsidies, etc.) While there is ample evidence emerging from this study that useful structural reforms have been put in place to facilitate the delivery process, a focus on process alone will not suffice if not matched by adequate funding to provide this more intensive support.

- *Establishing the right timing of intervention*

The success of a youth guarantee scheme depends on the timing of its interventions. The European Youth Guarantee has put an explicit focus on early intervention and rapid activation of the guarantee once a young person leaves education, training or employment. Local areas are using a variety of methods for early intervention, all of which require new types of partnerships between PES and schools. Likewise, most respondents mentioned that their youth guarantee opportunities occurred within the four month framework expected by the European Union (in some instances much earlier – within a few weeks). However, the services offered to young people do not always correspond to the four types identified at EU

level (employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship). Furthermore, this is not systematic and additional efforts to improve the swiftness of the intervention need to be made. This is particularly true in large conurbations where PES caseloads are generally higher and where personal advisers need time to build a good rapport with their clients to assess their needs effectively

- *Establishing the right scale for policy learning and transfer*

There are currently many attempts to share experience around youth guarantees in the international policy community, notably with a view to identify best practices which could be adopted by countries experiencing high rates of youth unemployment. Profiles of the young populations differ across local areas, and a model that works well in one may not give the same good results in another. Policy sharing should be promoted between local areas that have similar local labour market contexts—regardless of variation in national contexts.

- *Tackling the ongoing lack of reliable data and indicators*

Difficulties collecting data and indicators was obvious both at the national and local level, in terms of target population, services, and outcomes. In many case study areas, no organization had specific responsibility for identifying NEETs (Denmark's Youth Guidance Centres, discussed earlier in the report, are one notable exception). Additionally, not all the local PES offices interviewed were able to report on the number of young people currently registered for active labour market interventions. Obtaining data on the proportions of young people directed to each option (education, training, employment, etc.) often proved even more difficult. Finally, PES staff are rarely able to report on those who obtained secure employment as a result of taking part in a youth activation scheme.

In agreement with the HoPES network which underlined the necessity of developing specific databases on the under 25s registered with their services, we would highlight the priority for countries to liaise with each other to reach commonly agreed procedures for data collection and analysis. Some authorities (Finland for instance) have acknowledged the need to strengthen their databases and are investigating the options but according to a senior official, there are still difficulties knowing exactly what to measure. Developing national youth data sets that could be disaggregated by local area could help alleviate these challenges.

- *Ensuring the quality of placements*

Local PES staff acknowledged that internships and work placements have not always been of the highest standards. Quality is a factor highlighted in the definition of what constitutes a European Youth Guarantee. In its 2012 Youth Employment Package and in its 2014 Quality Framework on Traineeships¹⁹, the EU recommended that the European social partners be consulted to guard against traineeships being exploited by companies as simply a source of cheap labour. While measures are taken to ensure quality (control visits, blacklisting, etc.), it is not always possible for PES staff to systematically monitor placements. This problem could be alleviated at the national level with the creation of specific auditing

¹⁹ See http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/141424.pdf

teams tasked with ensuring that quality meets agreed standards. Special compliance or accreditation frameworks which reward business for people management already exist (e.g. the *Investors in People* award in Britain) and similar bodies could be set up to monitor youth guarantees (for similar recommendations, see also Simmons *et al.* 2014).

Partnerships with local trade unions seem to be one of the most underdeveloped types of partnerships. In this respect, it is easier at the local level to identify bad practice. Yet, apart from Ghent, which consults with trade unions as part of its platform “Ghent at work”, it seems that little work is conducted in partnerships with unions to assess how the traineeships are being run.

- *Providing mobility grants*

While some localities indicated they are using mobility grants, they are quite rare as offers tend to concentrate on the local labour market. Mobility grants might be helpful to compensate the lack of opportunities in depressed local labour markets. However, they would require strong PES inter-regional cooperation to support the young person’s move. The case of Sotkamo in Finland described in Part 3 was quite exemplary from that point of view. The German example showed that even when the national model is successful overall (here a model known as an “occupational labour market” with a strong vocational training component), there can be significant local mismatches in terms of offer and demand of apprenticeships and traineeships. Again, in such cases, mobility grants can provide an appropriate response. However this would need to be balanced by efforts to ensure that there is sufficient understanding of the opportunities present in the local labour market (through job profiling etc), and appropriate training so that young people have a real choice as to whether to stay or leave.

- *Guarantee of opportunity or guarantee of outcome?*

Finally, when designing youth guarantee schemes, European and national policy makers may need to consider the distinction between a guarantee of opportunity (offering of a service) and a guarantee of outcome. The latter – as reflected in the Youth Guarantee at EU level - is obviously bolder since it implies securing sustainable and rewarding employment. As the local case studies have shown, even if the PES makes a wide range of offers/services available, it cannot ensure that all unemployed young people are placed in a stable and lasting job, training or educational path. As a result, the notion of guarantee may mislead the public and lead to disappointment and frustration. The fact that there are many disparities in interpretations of what constitutes a guarantee scheme is not conducive to effective implementation. Likewise, it could be useful to clarify the “contractual relationship”, or the balance of rights and responsibilities, for participants in the scheme. If the right to a job, training or internship placement is tied to individual “responsible behaviour”, this has clear implications for the implementation of the scheme.

Areas for further research

This OECD LEED study was conducted in an attempt to highlight some of the existing possibilities and obstacles to the implementation of Youth Guarantees (or measures akin to

the Youth Guarantee as defined at EU level) and to inform the wider policy community on the basis of actual local experience. We have seen that in all types of local labour market, actors have significant toolboxes at their disposal to ensure that an offer is effectively made within the 4 month timeframe. However, the tools extracted from the box differ according to both national government priorities and the type of local labour market.

The study was undertaken within a short time frame and was essentially based on qualitative interview-based evidence. Further light may be cast through research using a wider territorial coverage (including countries from Southern and Central Eastern Europe, where youth unemployment is particularly high, but also from outside the European Union) and the wider community of stakeholders (local partners, employers and young people themselves), not just Ministerial and PES officials. When evaluating outcomes, it would also be particularly useful to explore young people's perceptions of, and satisfaction, with their experience on youth guarantee schemes.

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APPENDIX: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1) Genesis and context (through interviews at the national level)

- Date of creation. Totally new or did/does it replace a previous instrument?
- Rationale for introducing this policy.
- Context: youth and social exclusion at the national level, youth unemployment, educational attainment (with a special focus on before and after 2008)
- Overview of government school-to-work and youth welfare-to-work policies in the past 20 years (with a special focus on before and after 2008)
- Impetus for the Youth Guarantee (YG) (Ministry, job centre administration, etc.)
- Were there any consultation? With whom? Is there a tradition of consultation with other actors to design such policy interventions? If so, which ones?
- If already implemented, has there been any modification since the original design (for example, widening or restricting the target groups, including new options, etc?)?

2) Design and delivery mechanisms (both national and local interviews)

- Age group covered (18-25; 20-29, etc.)
- Specific target groups: graduates and non-graduates, young immigrants, NEETs, young entrepreneurs, disabled youth, or available to all young people?
- Is the YG optional or compulsory?
- Features of the YG / options and activities offered: job placement, apprenticeship, career advice and vocational guidance, educational training place, and any other specific feature.
- Types of jobs on offer (public, private, voluntary sector)
- Selection criteria (how beneficiaries are matched with specific options)
- Time aspects: when does it come into effect (after a certain number of months of unemployment for example) and duration of the placement for beneficiaries (time limit)
- Institutional innovation for the delivery, e.g. specific advisers or training for advisers at jobs centres, creation of outreach centres, use of social media, etc.
- Actors: 100% public, voluntary sector organisation, PPPs.
- Role of social partners and youth organisations
- Local and regional partnership models: just one size-fits-all or models with differing combinations of actors including some outsourcing of services? What are the respective advantages?
- Multilevel governance and decision-making processes
- Funding and costs (overall budget, split between options, spending per placement, subsidy to employers and educational establishments, co-financing, innovation funds, etc.)

3) Local implementation (through interviews at the local level)

- Geographical coverage: where is the YG implemented (all over the country or just in some selected localities? And if just in selected localities, for what reason?)
- Local labour market information about the areas of implementation (quantitative and qualitative about offer and demand)/nature of the labour market (buoyant/depressed), types of employers and jobs available, educational and training offer, etc.
- Cooperation and power relationships in local delivery partnerships: signs of tensions and conflicts.

4) Evidence and outcomes (through interviews at the national level)

- Evaluation mechanisms and tools in place: internal/external (academic, consultancy) or both?
- Availability of evaluation outcomes (any report available?)
- Indicators used (completion of vocational education, labour market attachment, reduction of unemployment spells, etc.)
- If evidence available: participation and level of take up by YP (percentage of young jobseekers who have benefited)
- Young people who have benefited the most (gender differences, graduates versus non graduates, short-term versus long-term unemployed, etc.). Any creaming or displacement effects?
- Which options have been used the most (reflection of young people's demand or top-down directives)?
- Any signs of local variations in the scheme's performance (has it achieved better outcomes in buoyant labour markets?).

5) Future perspectives (both national and local interviews)

- Mainstreaming practices
- Weaknesses and areas for improvement

ABOUT THE OECD

The OECD is a multi-disciplinary inter-governmental organisation of 34 member countries which engages in its work an increasing number of non-members from all regions of the world. The Organisation's core mission today is to help governments work together towards a stronger, cleaner, fairer global economy. Through its network of 250 specialised committees and working groups, the OECD provides a setting where governments compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practice, and co-ordinate domestic and international policies.

ABOUT LEED

The OECD Programme on Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) has advised governments and communities since 1982 on how to respond to economic change and tackle complex problems in a fast-changing world. Its mission is to contribute to the creation of more and better quality jobs through more effective policy implementation, innovative practices, stronger capacities and integrated strategies at the local level. LEED draws on a comparative analysis of experience from the five continents in fostering economic growth, employment and inclusion.