



European Economic and Social Committee

Impact study on the Implementation of EU policies for youth employment: **a civil society perspective**



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European Economic and Social Committee

EESC Labour Market Observatory

- set up in 2007
- linked to the Section on social affairs, employment and citizenship
- 33 members from Employers', Workers' and Various interests group



LMO-Objectives

- identify and analyse labour market **trends and challenges**,
- collect examples of **best practices**,
- **stimulate discussion** among institutional, socio-professional stakeholders, civil society organisations and academia.

LMO-Activities

- public events, impact studies, opinions



LMO-Themes for 2013 – 2015

- **Skills and mobility** – CEDEFOP, Thessaloniki, Dec. 2013
- **Diversity** within enterprises – Berlin, Feb. 2014
- EU policies for **youth employment**, Brussels, April 2014
- Reconciliation of **work and family life and social investment**, Brussels, Sept. 2014
- Support for business **start-ups** to foster growth and job creation, Nov. 2014
- Tackling **long-term unemployment**, Jan. 2015



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Aim: to show the views of social partners and organised civil society on:

- National policies to fight youth unemployment
- good practices and difficulties in the countries
- civil society's involvement on policies for youth employment and ongoing reforms



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Methodology:

- Countries visited: Austria, Croatia, Finland, Greece, Italy and Slovakia
- focus on social partners and civil society views

Tools:

questionnaire, interviews in Brussels and in countries, desk research, public hearing



Tools - 1

Questionnaire

- Education and training
- Traineeships
- Apprenticeships
- Youth Guarantee
- Labour law, mobility, support to young people



TOOLS 1 Replies received

- **Italy:** employers (CNA, Confcommercio, ABI), trade unions (CGIL, UIL, UGL, CIDA) and youth organisation FNG;
- **Finland:** trade unions and youth organisation
- **Greece:** youth organisation
- **Croatia:** employers and youth organisation
- **Slovakia:** employers, trade unions and Institute of Employment
- **Austria:** employers, trade unions and youth organisation



Tools 2 Interviews on the ground

- Carried out by 3 EESC-members + secretariat + interpreters

With representatives of

- Umbrella trade unions
- Umbrella employers' organisations
- Youth organisations and
- Public authorities

All the main social partners and youth organisations took part in the meetings.



Tools 3

- **Meetings in Brussels** with Permanent Representations, European Commission, Think Tanks
- **Desk research**
- **Public hearing**, LMO, 1.4.2014, Brussels with European Social Partners, Think Tanks, European Commission, MEPs, Eurofound

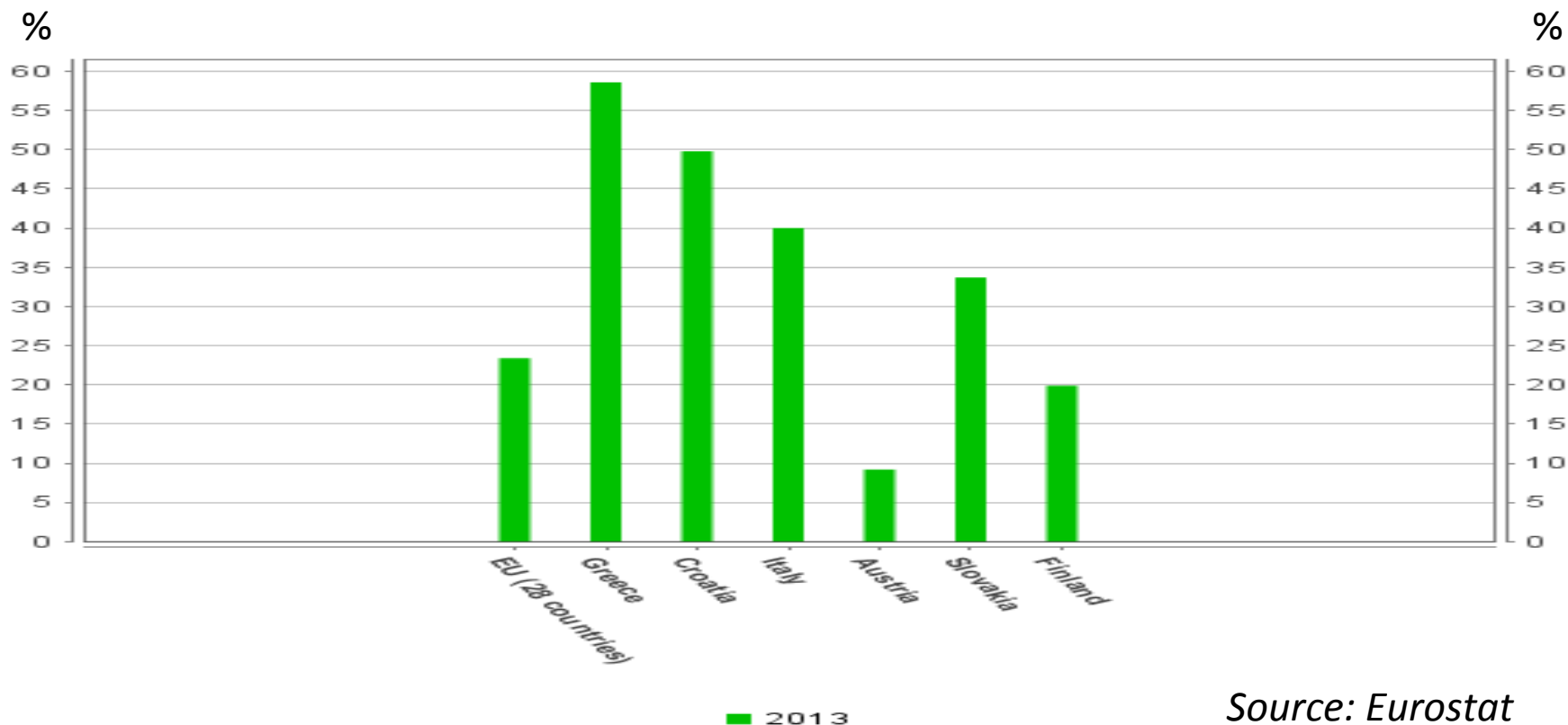


Youth Unemployment in 2013, age 15 – 24

European Union (28 countries):	23,4 %
Greece	58,6 %
Croatia	49.8 %
Italy	40 %
Austria	9,2 %
Slovakia	33.7 %
Finland	19.9



Youth unemployment in 2013, age 15-24



Source: Eurostat



NEETs – Rate of 15-24 years old, 2013

European Union (28 countries)	13 %
Greece	20,6 %
Croatia	18,6 %
Italy	22,2 %
Austria	7,1 %
Slovakia	13,7 %
Finland	9,3 %

Source: Eurostat



MAIN FINDINGS

1. Need for a tailor made approach

To take into account:

- the national possibilities and resources
- the education system
- the individual situation of a young person
 - highly qualified or not
 - long-term unemployed or just temporarily
 - mobile or not



2. Close Link between education and labour market is vital I

- **Finland:** high percentage of higher degree students start working and gaining practical work experience
- **Slovakia:** high rate of university degrees, mainly in social sciences. But skills acquired are not relevant to the labour market needs + no practical experience
- **Italy:** education is too separate from the world of work, but reforms are underway. Unemployment of highly skilled shows mismatches of skills available and companies needs



2. Close Link between education and labour market is vital II

- **Austria:** about 40% of 15 years old start an apprenticeship with 4 days spent in an enterprise, one day at school
- **Croatia** reintroduced the dual apprenticeship system in 1995. About 30% of the students undergo apprenticeships.
- **Greece:** no links between the education system and the labour market, apprenticeships is unknown. Employers' involvement in education system is regarded with mistrust.



3. Importance of career guidance and counselling

- **Finland:** career counselling is part of the schooling system
- **Austria:** career guidance on voluntary basis
- **Other countries:** lack and/or bad quality of the counselling services offered.



4. Apprenticeship system

General agreement: good tool

- to fight skills mismatches and
- to facilitate the entry into the labour market

Further development is needed together with social partners

- **Austria:** apprenticeships are well known, but should be more attractive
- **other countries:** very different forms of apprenticeships
 - **Croatia and Slovakia:** unclear contractual status & obligations
 - **Greece:** just recently non-systematically introduced without appropriate legal framework



Italy

- lack of clarity and inconsistencies in the legislations of the various Italian regions
- professional apprenticeship:
 - Employers: rigid rules and high costs
 - Trade unions: more obligations for employers regarding stabilisation and learning content
- “first level apprenticeship” for younger population (15-18) should be more widely used according to the Italian Youth Guarantee implementation plan



5. Quality framework for traineeships

- **Supportive**

- Trade Unions (Fin, SK)
- Youth organisation (GR)
- Employers (HR)

- **Not ambitious enough**

- Trade unions (AT, I) “QFT should include traineeships being part of curricula “

- **Critical:**

- Employers (AT, I) “possible crowding-out-effect because of red tape”



6. The Youth guarantee

- **Added value**
 - less in Fin and AT
 - potential structural effects if implemented properly in the other MS
- **Features:** age limit up to 29/30 years
 - (I, TU Fin, Youth Organisation GR)
- **Prioritisation:** specific to each country.
 - **NEETs, most vulnerable:** I (TU & Employers) **Fin** (TU & YO)
 - **Education system – reforms:** **SK** (all)
 - **Regions with high unemployment:** **GR** (Gov)



Role of social partners and civil society: vital for the success of the YG

- **Finland, Austria and Croatia:** stakeholders are involved in all phases of the youth guarantee
- **Slovakia:** social partners are involved in an advisory body, their involvement should be higher in the implementation phase
- **Greece:** only formal consultation
- **Italy:** rather formal consultation (information);
 - only one trade union was involved in the design phase,
 - all trade unions and employer organisations are called on, committed and ready to contribute to the implementation phase



Knowledge about mobility and EURES must be improved

- **Croatia:** few information about mobility and EURES
- **Greece:** Erasmus is popular, but studies abroad are too expensive for Greek families
- **Italy:** EURES is underused, projects in border regions
- **Finland, Austria:** EURES is widely used, reform will improve matching (Empl-AT) too far reaching (AT-TU)
- **Slovakia:** mobility is popular in border regions (Empl), not popular at all (TU)



Crucial role of public employment services

- Mistrust in the services provided (SK, I)
- Sufficient financial and human resources needed
- Activation of unemployed instead of pure administration



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Thank you !