

National reports 2009-2019

Rural NEET across Europe

14 countries reports



Editorial Team

Francisco Simões – francisco.simoies@iscte-iul.pt
Cis-Iscte, Portugal

Gabriela Neagu – gabi.neagu@iccv.ro
Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy – RIQL, Romania

Mariano Soler-Porta – mariano.soler@uma.es
Malaga University – UMA, Spain

Tatiana Ferreira – Tatiana.mjferreira@gmail.com
School of Education, Polytechnic Institute of Santarém – ESE-IPSantarem, Portugal

Vladislava Lendzhova – vlendzhova@swu.bg
South-West University Neofit Rilski – SWU, Bulgaria

Alena Minns – alenaminns@gmail.com
Independent expert – Slovakia

Photo by Nothing Ahead from Pexels

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged. Please cite
this publication as “National reports 2009–2019 – Rural NEET across Europe
(14 countries reports)”

ISBN: 978-989-781-408-2

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
2. BULGARY
3. CROATIA
4. GERMANY
5. HUNGARY
6. ITALY
7. MONTENEGRO
8. POLAND
9. PORTUGAL
10. ROMANIA
11. SERBIA
12. SLOVAKIA
13. SPAIN
14. TURKEY



RURAL NEETs IN **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**



2009/2019
OVERVIEW



AUTHORS

Alen Mujčinović – a.mujcinovic@ppf.unsa.ba

University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Agriculture and Food Science – UNSA, FAFS

Mirza Emirhafizović – mirza.emirhafizovic@fpn.unsa.ba

University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Political Sciences – UNSA

Aleksandra Nikolić – a.nikolic@ppf.unsa.ba

University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Agriculture and Food Science – UNSA, FAFS

Gordana Đurić – gordanadju@gmail.com

University of Banja Luka, Faculty of Agriculture

Image by Dragan Tomić from Pexels

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged. Please cite
this publication as “COST CA18213 Rural NEETs in Bosnia and Herzegovina:
2009/2019 Overview.

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. CONTEXTUALIZATION	7
2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE	10
3. DATA ANALYSIS	12
3. 1. Population and youth population	12
3. 2. Employment and Unemployment	15
• Youth employment	15
• Youth unemployment	18
3. 3. Education	21
• Population enrolled in education	21
• Early school leavers	22
3. 4. NEETs	23
• NEET rate	23
4. CONCLUSIONS	25
5. REFERENCES	27
6. IMPORTANT LINKS	29

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines in detail the situation of rural Youths Neither in Employment, nor in Education or Training (NEET) aged between 15 and 34 years old, over the last decade (2009–2019) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. To do this, the report utilised indicators of: youth population; youth employment and unemployment; education; and, NEETs distribution. The characterisation of all indicators adopted the degree of urbanisation as a central criterion, enabling proportional comparisons between rural areas, towns and suburbs, cities and the whole country. These analyses are further divided into age subgroups and, where possible, into sex groups for greater detail.

The statistical procedures adopted across the different selected dimensions involve: descriptive longitudinal analysis; using graphical displays (e.g., overlay line charts); and, the calculation of proportional absolute and relative changes between 2009 and 2013, 2013 and 2019, and finally 2009 and 2019. These time ranges were chosen to capture the indicators evolution before and after the economic crisis which hit European countries. All data was extracted from ILOSTAT explorer public datasets.

The analyses show that between 2009 and 2019 youth population in both rural and urban areas decreased. In general, a strong decline in youth population was observed within all categories, with the most significant decrease within the age group 25–29 (21.57%) and 15–19 (20.35%). Youth employment has tended to decrease overall, and the decrease is stronger within rural regions. Interestingly, youth unemployment has also tended to decrease, and a significantly higher share of unemployed youth is from rural regions. A somewhat similar trend is observed in the field of education where the number of those enrolled significantly decreased during the observed period for all education levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The ESLET rate tended to decrease, while the proportion of the female population tends to have higher ESLET levels compared to the male population. However, the ESLET rate is still below the 10% target defined by the Europe 2020 strategy. Finally, the proportion of NEETs in Bosnia and Herzegovina is higher in rural areas, while in general the tendency has been for it to decrease during the observed period.

SAŽETAK

Ovaj izvještaj opisuje položaj mladih u Bosni i Hercegovini za period 2009–2019. godina životne dobi od 15 do 34 godine u ruralnim sredinama koji nisu zaposleni, ne obrazuju se niti usavršavaju (eng. Not in Employment, nor in Education or Training – NEET). Kako bi ispunili navedeni cilj, neophodno je prikazati pokazatelje poput pokazatelja populacije mladih, nivoa/stope zaposlenosti i nezaposlenosti mladih, edukacija i pokazatelj NEET distribucije. Kao centralni kriterij za sve pokazatelje je uzet kriterij urbanizacije, omogućujući poređenje između ruralnih i urbanih regija i čitave zemlje. Detaljnije, gdje je moguće analiza uključuje različite dobne skupine i spolnu strukturu.

Primijenjena statistička procedura kroz različite posmatrane dimenzije uključuje deskriptivnu longitudinalnu analizu, korištenjem grafikona kao i preračunom apsolutnih i relativnih promjena u 2009. i 2013. godini, 2013. i 2019. godini, te na kraju između 2009. i 2019. godine. Ove vremenske serije su odabrane kako bi posmatrali promjene unutar pokazatelja prije i nakon ekonomske krize koja je pogodila europske zemlje. Svi podaci su preuzeti sa ILOSTAT baze podataka.

Analize pokazuju da populacija mladih, u ruralnim i urbanim područjima se smanjuje u periodu 2009–2019. godina. Generalno, snažan pad u populaciji mladih je zabilježen u svim posmatranim dobnim skupinama, a najveći pad je zabilježen u kategorijama mladih 25–29 (21.57%) i 15–19 (20.35%). Zaposlenost mladih ima tendenciju pada, a snažniji pad u zaposlenosti mladih je zabilježen u ruralnim regijama. Interesantno je da nezaposlenost mladih također ima tendenciju pada, a značajno je viši postotak mladih nezaposleno u ruralnim regijama. Sličan trend je zabilježen i u polju obrazovanja, gdje je broj učenika i studenata koji su upisani značajno smanjen, za sve nivoe obrazovanja. ESLET pokazatelj ima tendenciju pada, a ženska populacija ima nešto viši udio onih koji prijevremeno napuštaju obrazovanje. Međutim, ovaj pokazatelj ima vrijednosti koje su niže od 10%, a koja je definirana kao cilj od strane EU strategije za 2020. godinu. Finalno, postotak mladih u NEET kategoriji je viši u ruralnim regijama, a generalno ima tendenciju smanjenja u posmatranom periodu.

INTRODUCTION

This report proceeds three sections. It starts with an introductory contextualisation with the most relevant information about Bosnia and Herzegovina's social, economic and political situation in the last three decades and key youth policies based on a relevant literature review. A methodological note explains the database used and the statistical operations carried out. The most extensive part of the report refers to the analysis carried out, with a specific focus on young people, by degree of urbanisation and concerning four main topics: population; employment; education; and, NEETs.

The report ends with a brief conclusion which highlights the main results regarding the topics explored.



1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

Bosnia and Herzegovina is located in South-eastern Europe, in the western Balkan Peninsula. A largely mountainous country encompassing the central Dinaric Alps, it has borders with Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro and a small Adriatic Sea coastline. Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the most rural European countries (UNDP, 2013:4), with more than 50% of households situated in rural areas (BHAS, 2017).

Bosnia and Herzegovina was one of the six Republics constituting the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Following its disintegration in 1991, the majority of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina voted for independence via a referendum in 1992. War began soon after and lasted until December 1995, when the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, also known as the Dayton Agreement, was signed. According to the Dayton Agreement, the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) consists of two entities, Republika Srpska (RS) and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), with a third administrative unit, the Brčko District (BD), governed under a local administration. The FBiH is composed of 10 cantons which are further divided into 79 municipalities. RS is administratively divided into five regions and further into 62 municipalities. The territory of BD, which was subject to arbitration, became neither a possession of the FBiH nor the RS. The official languages in BiH are Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian with two scripts being used (i.e., Latin and Cyrillic). The total population is 3.3 million, with 64.92 people per sq. km of land area (WB, 2020).

The complex political situation alongside a very complicated institutional set-up continues to be a major burden for more progressive and intensive economic growth within the country. As evidence, BiH is ranked 103 out of 137 countries according to the Global Competitiveness Index in 2016 (WEF, 2020) and the overall unemployment rate is 15.7%, and 34% among youth in 2019 according to the ILO report (ILO, 2020). The negative trend of “brain drain” has been present ever since the 1990s, because of the war, but the second wave began almost ten years ago, whereby tens of thousands of the working-age population have left the country (Vracic, 2018; Čičić et al., 2019). Apart from out-migration, the rural-to-urban movements (de-ruralisation) within the country also continue. This threatens the biological sustainability of the countryside that had not been affected by forced migration during the war.



Persistent low fertility (TFR has been predominantly below 1.3 children per woman ever since 2002). This contributes to making the demographic prospects of Bosnia and Herzegovina pessimistic in all regards (Vracic, 2018; Čičić et al., 2019). All aforementioned factors, highlights the importance and necessity to improve the current socio-economic situation regarding the status of young people. The young population is a vulnerable social group, being affected by many factors; therefore special attention should be paid to the analysis of their interests, attitudes, problems and obstacles during their transition into adulthood. In particular, the category of young people Neither in Employment nor in Education or Training (NEET) is important to follow. The importance of this indicator/category of young people is widely recognised, as it is included in Sustainable Development Goals to “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” as a sole youth-specific target (Elder, 2015).

Since the State entities are competent for majority areas, there is no youth¹ policy at the State level. Consequently, Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have a national youth strategy. As for its various entities and districts, neither the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina² nor Brčko District have a youth strategy. Republika Srpska adopted the Youth Policy of the Republika Srpska for 2016–2020. Several strategies toward youth have been developed at the Cantonal and Municipality levels. The aforementioned strategy(ies) focus(es) on various domains such as: employability; active participation; healthy lifestyles; excellence; and, leisure time. Furthermore, several non-governmental organisations work to improve the position of youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Education in BiH is organised as follows: (i) Preschool education and care is intended for children from 6 months old until they start with primary education; (ii) compulsory Primary education, starts at age of 6 and lasts 9 years; (iii) Secondary education is not compulsory and it is available to everyone under equal conditions, in line with law and the ability of an individual. General secondary education lasts 4 years and vocational secondary education lasts 3 or 4 years; (iv) Higher education is organised in three cycles, Bachelor degree (180 or 240 ECTS), Master degree (60–120 ECTS), and Ph.D. degree (180 ECTS). To establish

1 The Law on Youth Organisation of the Republika Srpska (Zakon o omladinskom organizovanju Republike Srpske (Službeni glasnik RS 98/04, 119/08, 1/12) and the Youth Law of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Zakon o Mladima Federacije Bosne i Hercegovine (Službene novine Federacije BiH 36/10) defines the age limits for youth as a target group as from 16 (15) to 30. Brčko District adopted Youth Law in 2017 but not define age limit for youth category.

2 Initially Youth Strategy for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2016–2020 was drafted but never adopted.



basic principles and standards of higher education following the principles of the Bologna Declaration and Lisbon Recognition Convention, BiH adopted in 2007 the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EACEA, 2020). Several other strategic documents were developed to improve the education system in BiH, such as Strategic Development of Higher Education and Qualification Standards” (a joint EU/CoE project funded by IPA), Strategic directions for the development of higher education in the FBiH from 2012 to 2022, Strategy of educational development of RS for the period 2015–2020 and Adoption of Priorities for Higher Education Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the Period 2016–2026 (EACEA, 2020). Mobility for students is available from a wide range of programs and funds, such as Erasmus+, Erasmus Mundus, CEEPUS, MEVLANA, DAAD, FULBRIGHT, VISEGRAD FUND, MARIE SKŁODOWSKA–CURIE and numerous other opportunities as a result of multiple bilateral agreements.

Legal adulthood age is 18 (except in some cases, i.e., getting married or becoming a parent) according to the Law³, and the same rule applies to work conditions. Youth employment/unemployment is reflected in the complex political and administrative structure explained above. In 2018, 8.2% of young people aged between 15–24 years are unemployed, while 16.6% of them are inactive (BHAS, 2019). There are multiple federal/cantonal programs focused on youth employment. Some of the programs include “Opportunity for all”, co-financing programs for employment of people under 35 years old, programs for interns and also programs for additional training and obtaining different qualifications. However, consistency and transparency of funds remain a big issue. The aforementioned programs still represent the main sources of funding for the youth sector.

³ The Family Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Porodični zakon FBiH, Sl. novine FBiH, broj: 35/05 i 41/05.), The Family Law of Republika Srpska (Porodični zakon RS, Sl. glasnik RS broj: 54/02 i 41/08), Family Law of Brčko District (Porodični zakon BDBiH, Sl. glasnik BDBiH, broj: 23/07)



2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The Bosnia and Herzegovina national report uses information gathered by Alen Mujčinović, WG1 member of the Rural NEET Youth Network from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) database (ILOSTAT explorer). The main data presented and analysed in this report are from the following ILO database:

- Population Statistics: POP_2POP_SEX_AGE_NB_A and POP_2POP_SEX_AGE_GEO_NB_A;
- Employment/Unemployment Statistics: EMP_3EMP_SEX_AGE_GEO_NB_A, UNE_2UNE_SEX_AGE_GEO_NB_A, UNE_TUNE_SEX_AGE_GEO_NB_A;

Selected indicators were extracted from the different databases according to two criteria:

- Time range: the previous decade (2009–2019) to have a sufficiently long period to capture the main changes and continuities in young people's trajectories in education, training and employment. The analysis mainly covered 3 dates – 2009–2013–2019 – in order to capture the impact of the economic and financial crisis that hit Europe and that, in most countries, reached its peak in 2012/2013.
- Age group: age group range varies according to the data available in each indicator (15–24; 15–29; 15–34; and 15–39). Whenever possible, the age range also covered young adult's data (30–34 and 35–39) in order to capture the extent of crisis impact on these age groups.

In addition to a descriptive analysis, in order to compare data to see main changes and continuities in different periods, absolute and relative change were calculated considering the three main time points that were selected – 2009, 2013 and 2019. Absolute change refers to the simple difference in the indicator over two periods in time and is expressed in percentage points (pp). Relative change expresses the change of a value of an indicator in an earlier period and is expressed in percentage terms.



- Additional data used in the report – The report also includes an introductory contextualisation part with the most relevant information about Bosnia and Herzegovina's social, economic and political situation in the last three decades based on relevant sources (e.g., reports from the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, United Nations Development Program and, World Economic Forum).
- Data availability – For several observed indicators, it was not possible to find data from ILO explorer; hence, some substitute indicators were provided to give insight on a specific area (e.g., instead of the number of young people by educational attainment level, the available data was for the number of students and pupils enrolled at different educational levels, or for early school leavers where other relevant sources were used). Data was extracted from reports such as the report from the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the case of educational attainment level, and for early school leavers it was extracted the European Commission report supplemented by the Labour Force Survey report.
- Non-Eurostat data – Most of the data was extracted from ILO Database (ILOSTAT explorer) and the majority of outputs are absolute numbers that need to be converted into relative numbers (e.g., for total youth employment, only absolute values are provided and relative numbers were calculated. Specifically, to calculate the relative number of total youth employed the absolute number of total youth employed $\times 100$ / total working population of the country was used. For age groups, the absolute number of youth age 15–19 $\times 100$ / total youth employed was used. The same applies to other age groups as well as for the degree of urbanisation where data was available).



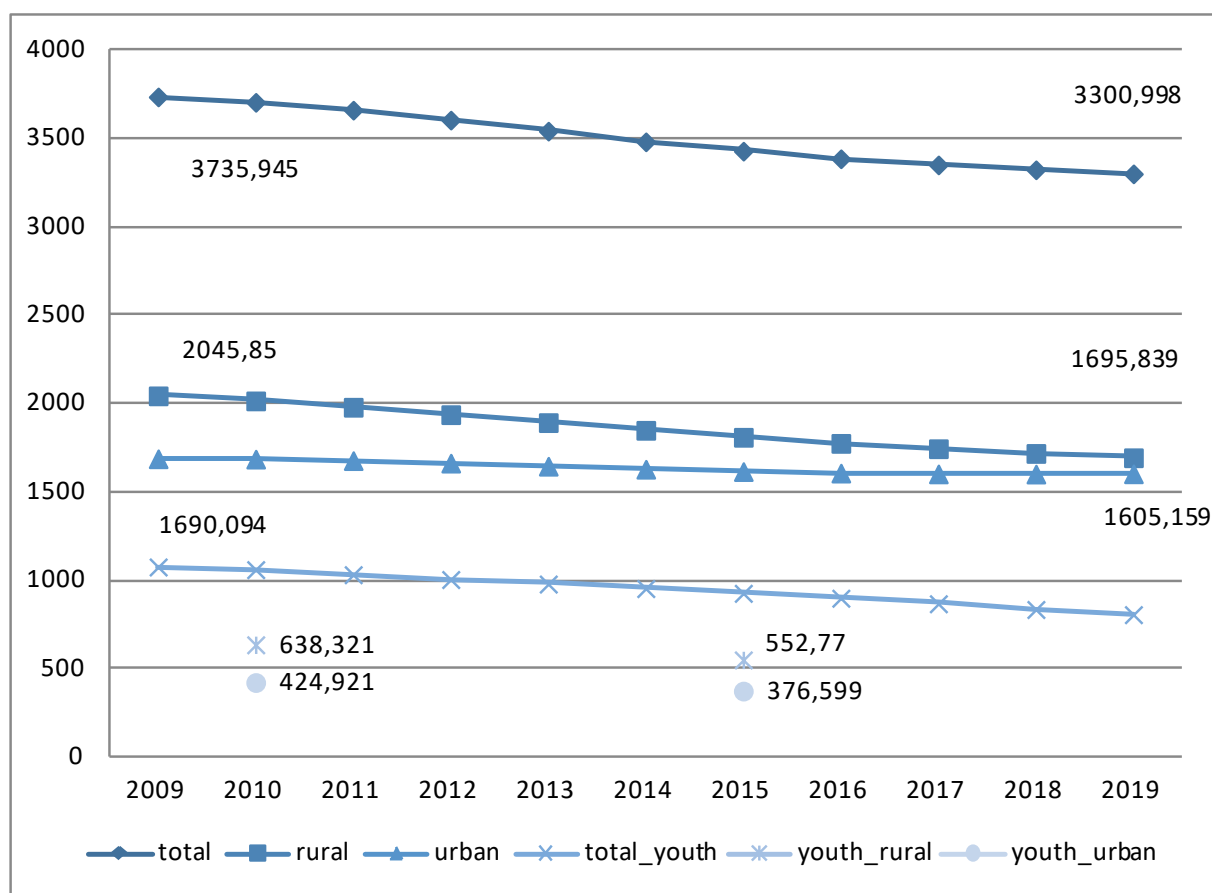
3. DATA ANALYSIS

3. 1. Population and youth population

According to the last census (conducted in 2013), the total population of Bosnia and Herzegovina was 3.53 million. However, the recent trend of migration from rural to urban areas as well as the natural decrease and prominent trend of leaving the country highly influence the number of inhabitants and its spatial distribution. Chart 1 summarises the change in population size, the number of total youth population aged 15–34 years old and for different degrees of urbanisation levels, between 2009 and 2019 in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

According to the data all observed groups decline, while the decline is stronger for the rural population. The same trend is evident for both female (518.430 in 2009, 479.110 in 2013, and 394.090 in 2019) and male groups (552.350 in 2009, 502.660 in 2013, and 414.660 in 2019). Available data for youth population by the degree of urbanisation shows that in the period 2010 – 2015, the total youth population decreased by 12.59%, in rural regions by 13.40%, and in urban regions by 11.37%. A similar trend is observed for both rural and urban regions for different age groups. Regarding the rural regions, the strongest negative trend is observed within the age group 20–24 (26.03% decline). It is followed by age group 25–29 (14.41%), age group 15–19 (8.64%), and age group 30–34 (3.55%). The situation within the urban region is almost identical, where the strongest decline is evident within the age group 20–24 (24.36%), followed by age group 25–29 (12.58%), age group 15–19 (6.26%), and age group 30–34 (2.62%).

Chart 1. Total population and youth population 2009–2019 by degree of urbanisation (in thousands)



Source: calculation is done using data from ILO modelled estimates (Population by sex and age -- UN estimates and projections, July 2019 (thousands) – Annual, POP_2POP_SEX_AGE_NB_A; Population by sex, age and rural/urban areas -- UN estimates, July 2019 (thousands) – Annual, POP_2POP_SEX_AGE_GEO_NB_A), data extracted on 12.06.2020.

*NOTE – data was extracted from ILO Database and the total young population is a sum of age groups 15–19, 20–24, 25–29, 30–34. Data for the degree of urbanisation for the youth population was available only for the year 2010 and the year 2015.

A strong decline in the youth population is evident in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the most prominent decline is observed in rural areas and within the 25–29 age group.



When we look more closely, and with a longer observed period (but without the degree of urbanisation) similar trends were observed. According to Table 1, the ratio of the youth population in the total population has been declining for almost all age groups, for the observed period. Two categories are of special focus, the age group 15–19 where decline for 2015–2019 was 22.66%, and for the period 2011–2019 was 20.35%. A similar situation is evident within the age group 25–29 where the decline for 2015–2019 was 15.20% and for 2011–2019 was 21.57%. The situation is not better within two remaining age groups, for the age group 20–24 decline for the period 2015–2019 was 9.40%, and for the period 2011–2019 was 8.82%. For the age group 30–34, the decline for the period 2015–2019 was 8.01%, while for the period 2011–2019 it was 2.68%. Small increases were evident for age group 15–19 (+2.97%) and age group 30–34 (+5.79%) for the period 2011–2015, and also for age group 20–24 (+9.40%) for the period 2015–2019.

Table 1. Ratio of youth population by age subgroups and absolute and relative change in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2011–2015, 2015–2019 and 2011–2019)

	2011	2015	2019	Absolute change 2011–2015 (Relative change 2011–2015)	Absolute change 2015–2019 (Relative change 2015–2019)	Absolute change 2011–2019 (Relative change 2011–2019)
Overall						
15 – 19	6.58%	6.77%	5.24%	0.20pp (2.97%)	-1.53pp (-22.66%)	-1.34pp (-20.35%)
20 – 24	7.26%	6.05%	6.62%	-1.21pp (-16.65%)	0.57pp (9.40%)	-0.64pp (-8.82%)
25 – 29	7.38%	6.83%	5.79%	-0.56pp (-7.52%)	-1.04pp (-15.20%)	-1.59pp (-21.57%)
30 – 34	7.04%	7.45%	6.85%	0.41pp (5.79%)	-0.60pp (-8.01%)	-0.19pp (-2.68%)

Source: calculation is done using data from ILO modelled estimates (Population by sex and age -- UN estimates and projections, July 2019 (thousands) – Annual, POP_2POP_SEX_AGE_NB_A; Population by sex, age and rural/urban areas -- UN estimates, July 2019 (thousands) – Annual, POP_2POP_SEX_AGE_GEO_NB_A), data extracted on 12.06.2020



3. 2. Employment and Unemployment

3. 2. 1. Youth employment

According to Table 2, at the State level, there has been a strong decline in youth employment between 2009 and 2019 (-23.52%). Surprisingly, for both age groups (i.e., age group 15-19 (+59.06%) and age group 20-24 (+26.26%)) they have shown a strong increase in youth employment in relative numbers at the country level. The strongest decline is evident for the age group 25-29 (-17.97%) followed by age group 30-34 (-5.76%). A similar trend is evident for the observed period 2013-2019, where an even stronger increase in employment is evident for the age group 15-19 (+128.45%), and age group 20-24 (+57.53%). Interestingly, in comparison with the period 2013-2019 and 2009-2019, during the observed period 2009-2013 decline in youth employment is evident for age groups 15-19 (-30.37%) and 20-24 (-19.85%), while in the same period increase in youth employment is evident for remaining age groups. Specifically, 30-34 (+11.30%) and 25-29 (+4.54%).

A similar trend is evident in rural and urban regions, where a stronger decline in total youth employment is evident within rural regions (28.72%), compared to the urban regions (13.77%) in the observed period 2009 and 2019. In rural regions, the age group 15-19 shows a strong increase in youth employment (35.90%), as well as age group 20-24 (35.90%). On the other hand, the age group 25-29 and the age group 30-34 show a decline in youth employment (16.45% and 14.30%). The same applies for the observed period 2013-2019 where the strongest increase in youth employment of age group 15-19 and age group 20-24 is evident. The opposite, that is a decrease for the same age groups, is observed during the period 2009-2013.

The situation regarding youth employment in urban regions shows that age group 15-19 has a remarkably strong increase in employment during the observed period 2009-2019 (+203.98%) and even stronger for the period 2013-2019 (+379.84%). At the same time, the decline is evident only within the age group 25-29 (20.87%) for the period 2009-2019. The observed period 2009-2013 shows a decline in youth employment for all age groups, except for age group 30-34 where an increase in youth employment is evident (+16.83%). A decrease in youth employment is strongest within the age group 15-19 (36.65%) followed by age group 20-24 (22.06%) and age group 25-29 (3.78%).

Table 2. Youth employment (%), absolute and relative change by age groups

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009-2013 (Relative change 2009-2013)	Absolute change 2013-2009 (Relative change 2013-2019)	Absolute change 2009-2019 (Relative change 2009-2019)
Country						
Overall	30.59%	27.40%	23.40%	-3.19pp (-10.43%)	-4.01pp (-14.62%)	-7.20pp (-23.52%)
age 15 - 19	3.67%	2.55%	5.83%	-1.11pp (-30.37%)	3.28pp (128.45%)	2.17pp (59.06%)
age 20 - 24	23.82%	19.09%	30.08%	-4.73pp (-19.85%)	10.98pp (57.53%)	6.26pp (26.26%)
age 25 - 29	34.77%	36.35%	28.53%	1.58pp (4.54%)	-7.83pp (-21.53%)	-6.25pp (-17.97%)
age 30 - 34	37.74%	42.00%	35.57%	4.26pp (11.30%)	-6.44pp (-15.33%)	-2.17pp (-5.76%)
Rural						
Overall	32.81%	28.15%	23.38%	-4.65pp (-14.19%)	-4.77pp (-16.94%)	-9.42pp (-28.72%)
age 15-19	4.74%	3.68%	6.43%	-1.05pp (-22.18%)	2.75pp (74.63%)	1.70pp (35.90%)
age 20-24	25.10%	20.89%	34.25%	-4.20pp (-16.74%)	13.36pp (63.92%)	9.15pp (36.47%)
age 25-29	33.63%	36.98%	28.00%	3.35pp (9.95%)	-8.98pp (-24.27%)	-5.63pp (-16.74%)
age 30-34	36.54%	38.44%	31.31%	1.91pp (5.22%)	-7.13pp (-18.54%)	-5.22pp (-14.30%)
Urban						
Overall	27.16%	26.47%	23.42%	-0.68pp (-2.52%)	-3.05pp (-11.54%)	-3.74pp (-13.77%)
age 15-19	1.66%	1.05%	5.04%	-0.61pp (-36.65%)	3.99pp (379.84%)	3.38pp (203.98%)
age 20-24	21.43%	16.70%	24.60%	-4.73pp (-22.06%)	7.90pp (47.31%)	3.18pp (14.82%)
age 25-29	36.91%	35.52%	29.21%	-1.40pp (-3.78%)	-6.31pp (-17.76%)	-7.70pp (-20.87%)
age 30-34	40.00%	46.73%	41.15%	6.73pp (16.83%)	-5.58pp (-11.95%)	1.15pp (2.86%)

Source: calculation is done using data from ILO modelled estimates (Youth employment by sex, age and rural/urban areas (thousands) – Annual, EMP_3EMP_SEX_AGE_GEO_NB_A), data extracted on 12.06.2020

*total_youth employment in relative numbers calculated as a ratio of total youth employed and total work population in Bosnia and Herzegovina;

**age groups employment in relative numbers calculated as a ratio of total age group x and total youth employed;

***total_youth employment in rural regions in relative numbers calculated as a ratio of total youth employed in rural regions and total work population in rural regions in Bosnia and Herzegovina;

A strong decline in youth employment in Bosnia and Herzegovina is evident, while there are some positive signs of an increase in employment of youth within the age groups 15-19 and 20-24. In both rural and urban regions the aforementioned age groups show an increase in employment and an especially high increase is evident within the age group 15-19 in urban areas.



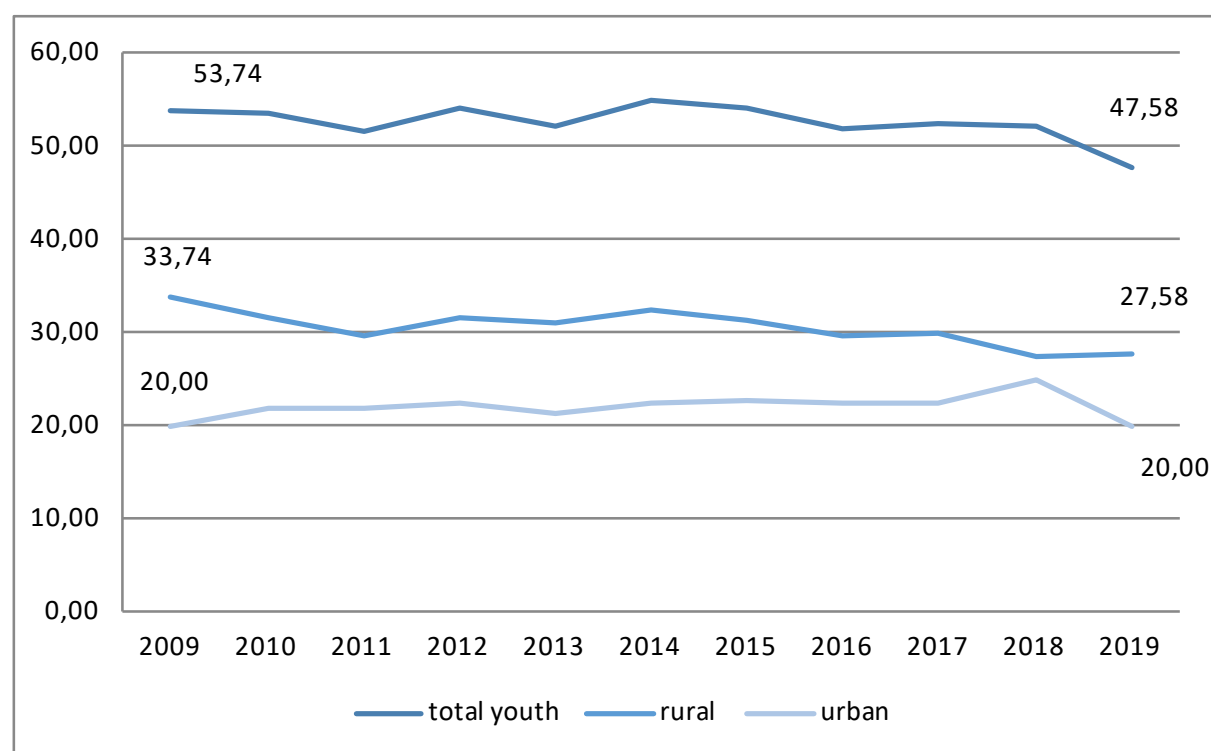
A similar trend of decline in employment is evident for both females (56,940 employed in 2009, 4,750 in 2013, and 41,680 in 2019) and male (106,720 employed in 2009, 84,830 in 2013, and 79,360 in 2019) group . It can be seen that in general, the female population is less employed overall than the male population.



3. 2. 2. Youth unemployment

A strong unemployment rate within youth categories is evident from the following chart. A decrease in the youth unemployment rate is evident, going from 53.47% in 2009, reaching a peak in 2014 (54.98%), to 47.58% in 2019. Rural regions have a higher youth unemployment rate (27.58%) comparing to the urban regions (20%). The largest portion of the unemployed youth population in rural regions was in 2009 (33.74%), and in urban regions in 2018 (24.92%).

Chart 2. Unemployment age group 15–34 years old (%) by the degree of urbanisation (2009–2019)



Source: calculation is done using data from ILO modelled estimates (Unemployment by sex, age and rural/urban areas – ILO modelled estimates, Nov. 2019 (thousands) – Annual, UNE_2UNE_SEX_AGE_GEO_NB_A; Unemployment by sex, age and rural/urban areas (thousands) – Annual, UNE_TUNE_SEX_AGE_GEO_NB_A), data extracted on 12.06.2020

*youth unemployment in relative numbers calculated as a ratio of a sum of youth unemployment within age groups 15–24 and 25–34 and total unemployment within the country;

The youth unemployment rate in Bosnia and Herzegovina is decreasing over the observed period, while overall, a higher percentage of the youth population from rural regions is unemployed.



Looking more closely, the relative change in the ten years from 2009 to 2019 show a declining trend of the youth unemployment rate (1-1.47%). The decline is a result of a decrease in the unemployment rate of age group 25-34 (-2.92%), while on the contrary, for age group 15-24 the unemployment rate increased (+3.31%). The strongest increase in the unemployment rate was evident for the age group 15-24 (+11.63%) for the observed period 2013-2019 and the age group 25-34 for the observed period 2009-2013. At the same time, the strongest decrease in youth unemployment was evident for the age group 25-34 (-8.91%) for the observed period 2013-2019, and for the age group 15-24 (-7.46%) for the observed period 2009-2013.

Within rural and urban regions, a stronger decline in youth unemployment was evident in urban regions. The total youth unemployment rate in urban regions decreased within all observed periods. The strongest decline was evident in the period 2009-2019 (-16.51%), followed by period 2013-2019 (-13.18%), and 2009-2013 (-3.84%). Age group 15-24 shows the strongest decline in the unemployment rate within the period 2009-2013 (-13.28%) and the strongest increase within the period 2013-2019 (+11.27%). Age group 25-34 shows the strongest decline in the unemployment rate within the period 2013-2019 (-6.53%) and the strongest increase within the period 2009-2013 (+9.73%).

In rural regions, the youth unemployment rate decreased within all observed periods. The strongest decline was evident in the period 2009-2019 (-6.45%), followed by 2013-2019 (-4.72%), and 2009-2013 (-1.82%). Age group 15-24 shows the strongest decline in the unemployment rate within the period 2009-2013 (-3.27%) and the strongest increase within the period 2013-2019 (+12.46%). Age group 25-34 shows the strongest decline in the unemployment rate within the period 2013-2019 (-11.48%) and the strongest increase within the period 2009-2013 (+3.21%).

Table 3. Youth unemployment (%), absolute and relative change

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Overall	53.74%	52.16%	47.58%	–1.58pp (–2.94%)	–4.58pp (–8.79%)	–6.16pp (–11.47%)
age 15 – 24	46.87%	43.38%	48.43%	–3.50pp (–7.46%)	5.05pp (11.63%)	1.55pp (3.31%)
age 25 – 34	53.13%	56.62%	51.57%	3.50pp (6.58%)	–5.05pp (–8.91%)	–1.55pp (–2.92%)
Rural						
Overall	55.29%	54.28%	51.72%	–1.01pp (–1.82%)	–2.56pp (–4.72%)	–3.57pp (–6.45%)
age 15 – 24	49.59%	47.97%	53.95%	–1.62pp (–3.27%)	5.98pp (12.46%)	4.36pp (8.78%)
age 25 – 34	50.41%	52.03%	46.05%	1.62pp (3.21%)	–5.98pp (–11.48%)	–4.36pp (–8.64%)
Urban						
Overall	51.32%	49.34%	42.84%	–1.97pp (–3.84%)	–6.50pp (–13.18%)	–8.47pp (–16.51%)
age 15 – 24	42.30%	36.68%	40.81%	–5.62pp (–13.28%)	4.14pp (11.27%)	–1.48pp (–3.50%)
age 25 – 34	57.70%	63.32%	59.19%	5.62pp (9.73%)	–4.14pp (–6.53%)	1.48pp (2.57%)

Source: calculation is done using data from ILO modelled estimates (Youth unemployment by sex, age and rural/urban areas -- ILO modelled estimates, Nov. 2019 (thousands) – Annual, UNE_2UNE_SEX_AGE_GEO_NB_A; Unemployment by sex, age and rural/urban areas (thousands) – Annual, UNE_TUNE_SEX_AGE_GEO_NB_A), data extracted on 12.06.2020

*data available only for age groups 15–24 and 25–34

In general, the unemployment rate within the age group 15–24 increases, while for the age group 25–34 it decreases. When considering the unemployment rate within rural and urban regions it is evident that the unemployment rate within the age group 15–24 decreases in rural regions, while it increases in urban regions.

A somewhat similar trend of decline in unemployment is evident for both female (42,400 unemployed in 2009, 47,500 in 2013, and 25,280 in 2019) and male (68,270 unemployed in 2009, 77,190 in 2013, and 31,660 in 2019) groups.



3. 3. Education

3. 3. 1. Population enrolled in education

A strong decline in population enrolled in education at all three levels is evident from Table 4. The number of students at ISCED 0–2 level decreased by 17.73% for the period 2009–2019. An even stronger decline is evident for ISCED 3–4 level where the number of enrolled students decreases by 23.75% for 2009–2019. A somewhat similar trend is observed for ISCED 5–8 level, where the number of enrolled students decreases by 24.18% for the 2009–2019 period.

Table 4. Number of students and pupils by education level

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
ISCED 0–2	377533	322013	310605	–55520 (–14.71%)	–11408 (–3.54%)	–66928 (–17.73%)
ISCED 3–4	148100	164609	112933	16509 (11.15%)	–51676 (–31.39%)	–35167 (–23.75%)
ISCED 5–8	105358	113290	79886	7932 (7.53%)	–33404 (–29.49%)	–25472 (–24.18%)

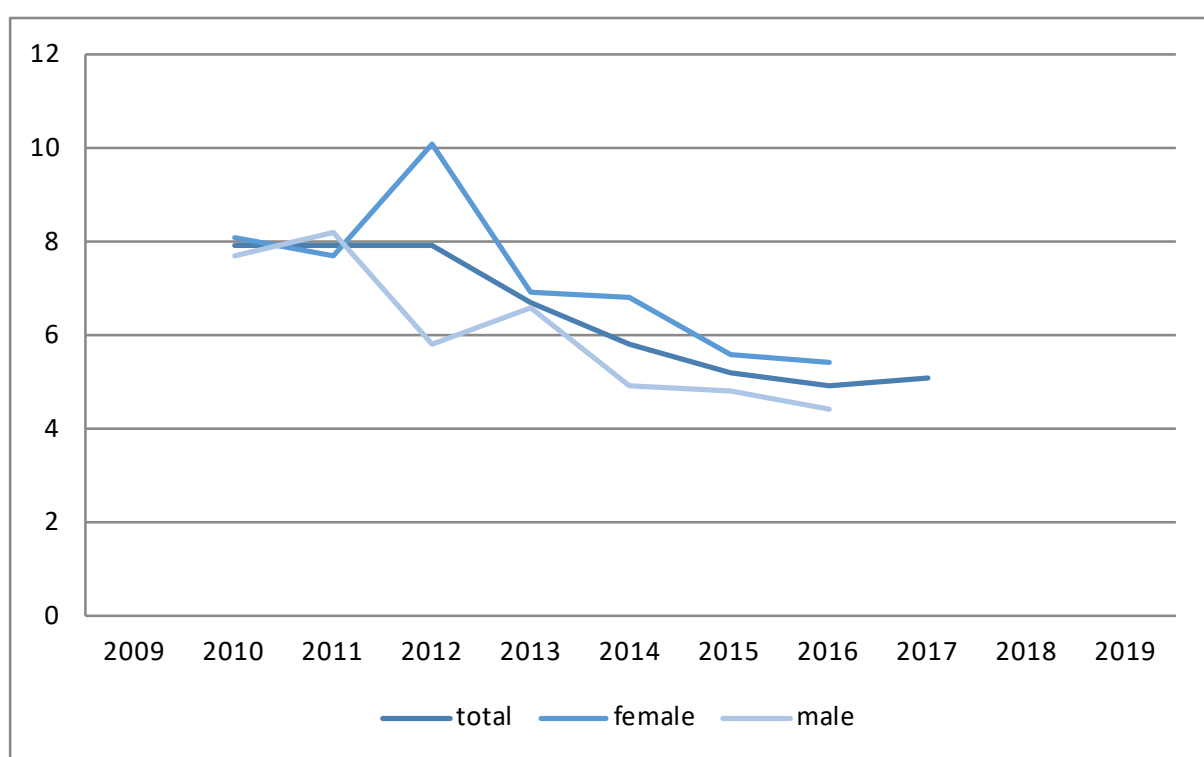
Source: BHAS (2010; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016; 2017; 2018; 2019; 2020)

The number of students and pupils by education level significantly decreased during the observed period for all education levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

3.3.2. Early school leavers

Chart 3 displays the evolution of Early School Leavers from Education and Training (ESLET) from 2009 to 2019, in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the country level, the ESLET rate declined from 7.9 to 4.9 with a similar trend observed for both female and male groups.

Table 4. Number of students and pupils by education level



Source: EC (2019), BHAS (2017)

*early school leavers rate according to some reports have different and significantly higher numbers, there is no explanation on possible methodological changes. Some other authors also emphasise this issue.

*data available only from the year 2010, until 2016 for both sex groups, and in total for 2017

ESLET rate decrease for both female and male population in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

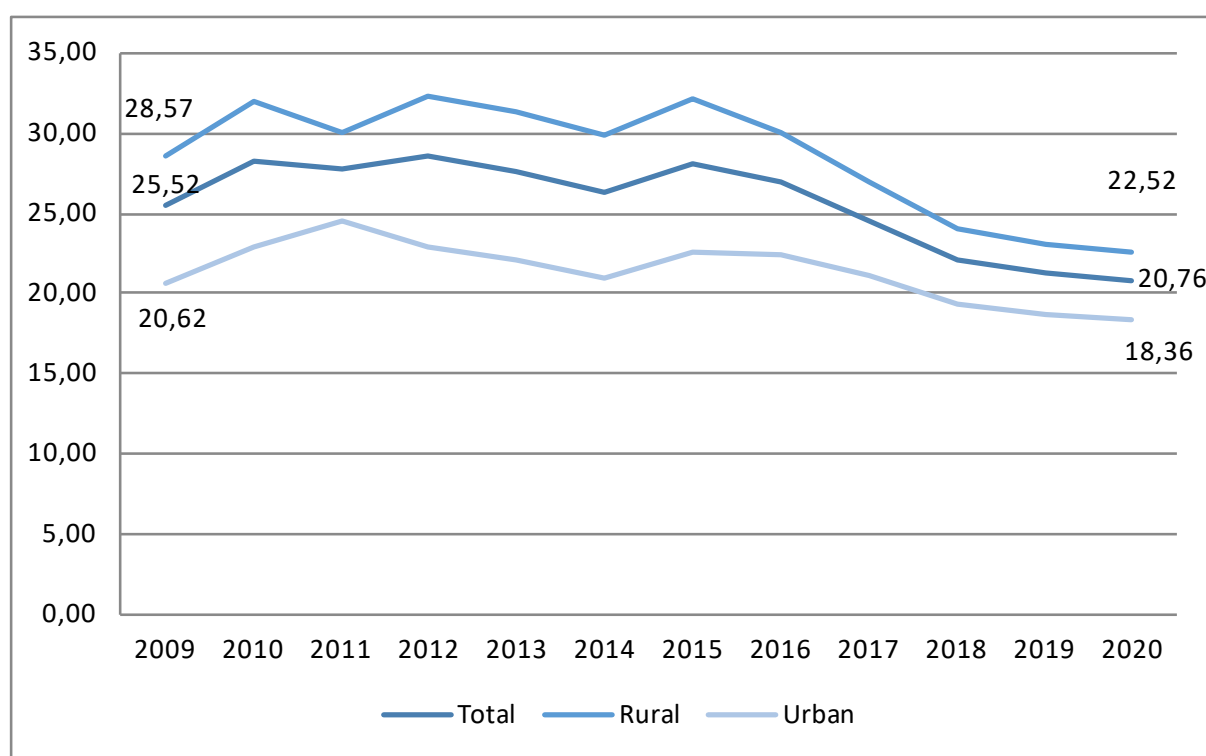


3. 4. NEET

3. 4. 1. NEET rate

The following chart displays the overall evolution of NEETs proportion across the country and degree of urbanisation levels, between 2009 and 2019. According to the chart, the NEET rate in Bosnia and Herzegovina decreased from 25.52% in 2009 to 20.76% in 2019. A somewhat similar trend is observed for both urban (20.62% in 2009 to 18.36% in 2019) and rural (28.57% in 2009 to 22.52% in 2019) regions.

Table 4. Number of students and pupils by education level



Source: calculation is done using data from ILO modelled estimates (Share of youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) by sex and rural/urban areas -- ILO modelled estimates, Nov. 2019 (%), EIP_2EET_SEX_GEO_RT_A), data extracted on 12.06.2020



NEET rate decreased overall in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the NEET rate is higher within the rural youth population.

An almost identical decrease of NEET rate is evident between females (–16.26% for the 2009–2019 period) and male (–16.04% for 2009–2019 period) groups. Data were not available for different age groups.



4. CONCLUSIONS

Youth population | Both rural and urban areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina are facing a decline in the youth population due to migration and long-term downward trends in fertility. The strongest decline was evident for age groups 25–29 and 15–19, followed by 20–24 and age group 30–34. The youth population in Bosnia and Herzegovina are facing multiple problems while the strategic orientation of the country towards youth is still missing. Youth policy development is in initial phases, and stronger outputs are not yet visible.

Youth unemployment | Unemployment among the youngest share of the population in Bosnia and Herzegovina is declining, in both rural and urban areas, but still has an enormous rate of almost 50% of the total youth population. Unemployment is higher in rural areas, where the most affected age group is 15–24, while the age group 25–34 shows signs of a decrease in the unemployment rate. A different trend is evident in urban areas regarding the unemployment rate of different age groups, where age groups 15–24 tend to decrease the unemployment rate, while the age group 25–34 increases. This can be strong evidence for policy development regarding the youth aged from 15 to 24 years in rural areas. The question remains as to the reason for the decrease of youth unemployment (youth employment also decreases)? A possible source could be migration as already mentioned in the introduction section. Furthermore, regarding youth employment, in general there is a strong decline in youth employment, but there is also a strong increase of the employment rate within the age group 15–19 in both rural and urban regions. This can be seen as a strong indicator of an increase in poverty and it should be further considered.

Educational attainment | Available data suggests that the number of students and pupils (regardless of the education level) is strongly decreasing within the observed period. Negative trends of migration, fertility rate, unemployment, poverty, etc., influence mostly groups ISCED 5–8, followed by ISCED 3–4, and ISCED 0–2.

ESLET | Available data suggests that the ELSET rate is decreasing in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where a higher share of the female population is within this category.



NEET | Share of the population who is not in education, employment nor training has decreased during the observed period in Bosnia and Herzegovina but it still retains a comparatively high rate. NEETs rates within the rural population is above the average of the total population and it can be used for further policy development. The NEET rate for different age groups and by the degree of urbanisation is missing, and this constitutes a huge obstacle for better policy development and identification of needs of different age categories.



5. REFERENCES

BHAS (2017). Census: Households and Families. Sarajevo: Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

BHAS (2019). Demography and social statistics, Labor force survey, Agency for statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Available on: http://bhas.gov.ba/data/Publikacije/Saopštenja/2019/LAB_OO_2019_Y1_O_BS.pdf, access on: 25.06.2020

Čičić, M., Trifković, M., Husić-Mehmedović, M., Efendić, A., Turulja, L. and Emirhafizović, M. (2019). Emigration study BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA. Special Editions. Volume CLXXXII. Sarajevo: Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

EACEA (2020). Key Features of the Education System, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, Eurydice. Available on: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/bosnia-and-herzegovina_en, access on: 25.06.2020

EC (2019). Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for membership of the European Union, Analytical Report. Available on: <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-bosnia-and-herzegovina-analytical-report.pdf>, access on: 24.06.2020

Elder, S. (2015). What does NEETs mean and why is the concept so easily misinterpreted?. ILO. Available on: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_343153.pdf, access: 11.06.2020.

EU (2017). Overview of the Higher Education System, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), in cooperation with National Erasmus+ Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina (NEO) and Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs) from Bosnia and Herzegovina, ISBN : 978-92-9492-382-0, doi:10.2797/689342.



EU (2020). Youth – Overview, EUROSTAT definition of young population. Available on <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth>, access: 11.06.2020.

Eurostat (2020). Early leavers from education and training. Eurostat. Available on: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Early_leavers_from_education_and_training#Overview

International Labour Organization. (2020). ILOSTAT database [database]. Available from <https://ilostat.ilo.org/data/>

Jasarevic, J. (2017). CONTRIBUTION OF NON-PROGRAMME COUNTRIES TO EU YOUTH WIKI, CHAPTER I BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: YOUTH POLICY GOVERNANCE, EKCYP Co-respondent. Available on: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47262379/Youth+Wiki+Bosnia+and+Herzegovina.pdf/f47b247f-f05d-417c-93ea-adbe7a9d610f> access: 25.06.2020.

UNDP (2013). Rural Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Myth and Reality. National Human Development Report 2013. Sarajevo: UNDP. Available on: http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/nhdr_en_web_30102013.pdf, access: 25.06.2020.

Vračić, A. (2018). The way back: brain drain and prosperity in the Western Balkans. European Council on Foreign Relations.

WB (2020) Population density (people per sq. km of land area) & Population, total, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The World Bank Data. Available on: <https://data.worldbank.org/country/bosnia-and-herzegovina>

WEF (2020). Global Competitiveness Index 2017–2018 edition, Bosnia and Herzegovina, World Economic Forum, available on: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-competitiveness-index-2017-2018/countryeconomy-profiles/#economy=BIH>, Accessed on: 25.06.2020.



6. IMPORTANT LINKS

Family Law of Brčko District (Porodični zakon BDBiH, Sl. glasnik BDBiH, broj: 23/07). Available on: <https://www.paragraf.ba/propisi/brcko/porodicni-zakon-brcko-distrikta-bih.html>

Family Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Porodični zakon FBiH, Sl. novine FBiH, broj: 35/05 i 41/05). Available on: <https://www.paragraf.ba/propisi/fbih/porodicni-zakon-federacije-bih.html>

Family Law of Republika Srpska (Porodični zakon RS, Sl. glasnik RS broj: 54/02 i 41/08). Available on: <https://www.paragraf.ba/propisi/republika-srpska/porodicni-zakon.html>

Law on Youth Organisation of the Republika Srpska (Zakon o omladinskom organizovanju, Službeni glasnik Republike Srpske broj 98/04, 119/08 i 1/12). Available on: <http://www.pm.rs.ba/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Zakon-o-omladinskom-organizovanju-RS.pdf>

Strategy toward youth of Canton Sarajevo (Strategija prema mladima Kantona Sarajevo), Ministarstvo za obrazovanje nauku i mlade Kantona Sarajevo, Institut za razvoj mladih KULT. Available on: https://mon.ks.gov.ba/sites/mon.ks.gov.ba/files/strategija_prema_mladima_kantona_sarajevo_za_period_2019.-2023._godina.pdf

Youth Law of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Zakon o mladima Federacije Bosne i Hercegovine, Službene novine Federacije BiH broj 36/10). Available on: <http://www.fbihvlada.gov.ba/bosanski/zakoni/2010/zakoni/22hrv.html>



RURAL NEETs IN BULGARIA



2009/2019
OVERVIEW



AUTHORS

Vladislava Lendzhova – vlendzhova@swu.bg
South-West University Neofit Rilski – SWU

Valentina Milenkova – vmilenkova@swu.bg
South-West University Neofit Rilski – SWU

Image by Bri Schneider from Pexels

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged. Please cite
this publication as “COST CA18213 Rural NEETs in Bulgaria: 2009/2019 Overview.

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. CONTEXTUALIZATION	7
2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE	14
3. DATA ANALYSIS	15
3. 1. Population and youth population	15
3. 2. Employment and Unemployment	18
• Youth employment	18
• Youth unemployment	20
3. 3. Education	23
• Young people by educational attainment level	23
• Early school leavers	25
3. 4. NEETs	26
• NEET rate	26
4. CONCLUSIONS	29
5. REFERENCES	30
6. IMPORTANT LINKS	31

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines in detail the situation of rural Youths Neither in Employment, nor in Education or Training (NEET) aged between 15 and 34 years old, over the last decade (2009–2019) in Bulgaria. To do this, the report utilised indicators of: youth population; youth employment and unemployment; education; and, NEETs distribution. The characterisation of all indicators adopted the degree of urbanisation as a central criterion, enabling proportional comparisons between rural areas, towns and suburbs, cities and the whole country. These analyses are further divided into age subgroups and, where possible, into sex groups for greater detail.

The statistical procedures adopted across the different selected dimensions involve: descriptive longitudinal analysis; using graphical displays (e.g., overlay line charts); and, the calculation of proportional absolute and relative changes between 2009 and 2013, 2013 and 2019, and finally 2009 and 2019. These time ranges were chosen to capture the indicators evolution before and after the economic crisis which hit

European countries. All data was extracted from Eurostat public datasets.

The analyses show that between 2009 and 2019 the rural youth population aged 15 to 24 years has been increasing in Bulgaria. Although the youth unemployment rate is higher in cities, rural areas faced more difficulties in overcoming the effects of the crisis, particularly among young adults aged over 25 years. In the field of education, however, there was an absolute and relative reduction in the proportion of young people with lower qualifications compared with young people in early school leavers in rural areas between 2009–2019, even though it still remains well above the 10% target defined by the Europe 2020 strategy. Finally, the proportion of NEETs in Bulgaria is higher in rural areas, in all age groups with available data, compared to cities and towns and suburbs, thereby revealing territorial inequalities in access to employment and education opportunities.

РЕЗЮМЕ

Този доклад описва състоянието на младежите от селските райони в България, които са извън заетостта, извън образованието или обучението. Това са т. нар. NEETs, на възраст между 15 и 34 години. Времовата рамка на изследването е между 2009 и 2019 г. В доклада са използвани индикатори като младо население, младежката заетост и безработица, образование и разпределение на NEETs. Основната характеристика на всички приети показатели и главен критерии е степента на урбанизация, която дава възможност за пропорционално сравнение между селските райони, градовете и предградията, както и градовете в сравнение с цялата страна. За по-детайлна информация, тези анализи са допълнително разделени на възрастови подгрупи, а когато е възможно на групи разделени по пол.

Приетите статистически процедури за различните избрани измерения включваха дескриптивен дългосрочен анализ, включващ графични изображения (напр. диаграми), както и изчисляване на пропорционални абсолютни и относителни променливи между 2009 и 2013, 2013 и 2019 и 2009 и 2019г. Тези времеви диапазони бяха избрани за да се улови развитието на различните показатели преди и след икономическата криза, засегнала европейските страни. Използваните данни са от базата данни в публичните регистри на Евростат.

Анализите показват, че младото население на възраст между 15 и 24г, от селските райони на България се е увеличило между 2009 и 2019г. Въпреки че равнището на младежка безработица е по-високо в градовете, селските райони са изправени пред повече трудности за преодоляване на последиците от кризата, особено сред младите възрастни над 25 години. В областта на образованието между 2009-2019 г. обаче, е налице абсолютно и относително намаляване на дела на младите хора с по-ниска квалификация, както и на младите хора преждевременно напуснали училище в селските райони, въпреки че все още остава доста над 10%, определени от стратегията за Европа 2020. И накрая, делът на NEETs в България е по-висок в селските райони, във всички възрастови групи от наличните данни, в сравнение с големите и малките градове и предградия, разкриващи териториални неравенства в достъпа до възможности за заетост и образование.

INTRODUCTION

This report proceeds in three parts. It starts with an introductory contextualisation with the most relevant information about the Bulgarian social, economic and political situation in the last decades (2009–2019), and key youth policies based on a review of relevant literature. Following this, a methodological note explains the database used and the statistical operations carried out. The most extensive part of the report refers to the analysis carried out, with a specific focus on young people, by degree of urbanisation, concerning four main topics: population; employment; education; and, NEETs.

The report concludes with a brief summary which highlights the main results.



1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

Bulgaria is situated in the Balkan peninsula of South-Eastern Europe. It has land borders with Romania to the North, Serbia and Macedonia to the West, and Greece and Turkey to the South. Its eastern border of 378 Km is formed by the Black Sea. Bulgaria is the 15th largest country in Europe at over 110,000 km² in size. Around 30% of Bulgaria's land is made up of plains, while a further 41% consists of plateaux and hills. The current population of Bulgaria is 6,948,254 as of June, 2020 (Worldometer elaboration, United Nations data, 2020).

Bulgaria is a democratic republic and the country has been part of the European Union since January 1st 2007. The youth policy in Bulgaria is a horizontal policy. Bulgaria has a unitary system of government with three government levels – central, regional and local. The structure of the public administration reflects the three-level governance, with a clear distinction between central and territorial governance, the latter of which comprises both regional and local government structures. The central administration consists of the administration of the Council of Ministers (CoM), which includes: the Chief Inspectorat; Ministries (currently 17 and varying with each government); State Agencies (currently 11 and varying over time); Executive Agencies (currently 29 and varying over time); the administrations of State Commissions (currently five and varying over time); and, numerous administrative structures created by law (currently 43 and varying over time) or by means of a decision of the Council of Ministers (currently 19 and varying over time). Territorial administrations have three levels – regional, municipal and district. Bulgaria has 28 regions and regional administrations which oversee policy coordination.

Strategic National legislation for youth. The youth policy is featured in different strategic documents. In its **Governing Program (2017–2021)**, the Bulgarian government has declared one of its main priorities as “providing a supportive and encouraging environment for the social, professional and personal realisation of young people in the country”. (Youth Wiki, 2020).

In Bulgaria, the common minimum age to enter into an employment relationship is 16 years (Article 301 (3) of the Labour Code). This requirement for the minimum age is obligatory, and a violation of this requirement leads to the contract's nullification. Exceptions are provided by the law and there are numerous clauses dealing with this.



The institution responsible for the implementation and development of youth policies is **the Bulgarian Ministry of Youth and Sports**. The institution coordinates the establishment and implementation of **the National Youth Strategy** and the corresponding (2010–2020) Annual Action Plan. There are national laws that are part of different ministries. One of the laws under the purview of the Ministry of Youth and Sport is the National Youth Act. **This Act** defines the basic principles, management and financing of the activities carried out in pursuance of the state policy on youth. It contains topics such as: youth organisations; youth volunteering; youth policies; and, other pertinent information. **The Youth Act** which is effective at present was adopted on 2.08.2013. There is not a specific time limit for the national law. State policy on youth is a purposeful and consistent activity of the state, municipalities, youth organisations and society. It aims to create favourable conditions for the full personal development of young people and their participation in social and economic life, as well as their involvement in management at the local, regional and national level through activities encouraging the development of young people in the country. The adoption of the Youth Act sets out the basic principles for the planning and management of the national youth development policy through: management of the national youth policy; clear definition of the powers of the governmental authorities; representation and participation of young people in the social and public life of the country; promotion of youth volunteering; and, defining the concepts of “youth” and “youth organisation”. **The National Youth Strategy** sets out the long-term goals and priorities of the governmental youth policy of Bulgaria for a period of 10 years. The strategy that is currently active is for the period (2010–2020).

Education. The Bulgarian Constitution gives each Bulgarian citizen the right to education. It secures compulsory education until the age of 16 and gratuitous primary and lower secondary education in Municipal and State schools. Bulgaria was one of the first countries in the EU which, apart from recognising the existence of the problem with early school leaving, to have developed special policies for reducing the number of early school leavers. It plans to achieve reduction of this share to 11% as of 2020. The Bulgarian educational system is centralised at all levels: primary, secondary and tertiary. (Milenkova, V., Kovacheva, S. 2020). One of the main consequences is that policies at regional level are fully consistent with the policies at national level. Education in Bulgaria is mainly supported by the State through the Ministry of Education and Science. The Bulgarian education system falls within the continental European tradition. Private schools are also being established and they are beginning to compete successfully with public schools. School education is free and compulsory for children from 7 to 16 years of age. The education system consists of the following levels: pre-primary education; primary education; secondary education; and,



higher education (Milenkova, V., Kovacheva, S. 2020). The modernisation of the education and training system continues while challenges of quality, labour market relevance and inclusiveness remain.

Demographic trends and rising skill shortages suggest that Bulgaria needs to invest more effectively in the skills of its current and future workforce. Education and training systems in Bulgaria are organised as follows: pre-school education (pre-primary) education in Bulgaria comprises children from the age of 3 to 6/7. Two years of pre-primary education are also compulsory. School education in Bulgaria begins at the age of 7. Six year olds may also enter school, if their physical and mental development allows for it and after their parents'/guardians' explicit consent. School education is divided into primary and secondary, general or vocational. Upper secondary general education is provided at non-specialised schools (3 or 4 courses of study) and at profiled (specialised) schools (4 or 5 years of study). The Bulgarian system of higher education is autonomous. According to the Higher Education Act, higher schools enjoy academic autonomy which includes: academic freedoms; academic self-government; and, the inviolability of the territory of the higher schools.

Adult Learning and Education (ALE) is being recognised as an instrument for human resource development in several strategy papers and national plans in Bulgaria. The main goal of ALE is aiming to improve the qualification level of the unemployed and employed persons and thereby enable them to adapt to a rapidly changing working and living environment. Dropping out of school is the signing off a school of a student under 18 before enrolling the last course of the higher education course if the same student is not enrolled in another school. Bulgaria defines early school leavers as persons aged between 18 and 24 years old with only lower secondary education or less, and no longer being in education or training.

There is also non-formal education in Bulgaria. It is the form of education not obtained in the official educational system, but rather through the method of non-formal education such as role model games, volunteering and other activities. The cross-sectoral cooperation between ministries, departments and agencies involved in defining policies and measures on education and training for young people is transpiring through inter-ministerial working groups. There is an existing national strategy called the Strategy for Reducing the Share of Early School Leavers 2013 – 2020. The main ways of achieving the policy goals of the strategy are prevention, intervention and compensation. An important milestone in the Strategy is the establishment of a coordination mechanism to tackle early school-leaving.



It involves the educational, social, health and administrative services as well as the municipalities. 206,387 children and pupils aged 5 to 18 who have dropped out of the education system, or have never been enrolled, were identified (Ministry of Education and Science 2018).

In terms of formal education, the main policy measure is to prevent Early living from education and training (ELET). One of the policy measures for formal learning for ELET is implemented by the Ministry of Education and Science, a project called “Involving in Education and Training”. Programs, projects and initiatives organised through public authority and funded by the EU Fund (the project and procedures part of the Operational Program Education and Science for Intelligence Growth) are operated by the Ministry of Education and Science.

One of these is the “educational integration of ethnic minority students and / or seeking or receiving international protection”. Nearly 3,000 children and students from ethnic minorities, including Roma, participate in educational integration activities. They work with teachers and representatives of non-profit legal entities in partnership with municipalities to ensure sustainability of the results.

Employment. The economic crisis from 2008 and the resulting slow economic recovery led to a significant increase in youth unemployment across Bulgaria. **The national youth guarantee** of Bulgaria provides that every young person aged 15 to 24 years inclusive will receive a good job offer, continuation of education, apprenticeship or internship within 4 months of being out of work or leaving the formal education system. **The National Portal for Career Guidance** was created under the Project BG051RO001-4.3.02-0001 “Career Guidance System in School Education” of the Ministry of Education and Science. It aims at creating an integrated system for realisation and employment on the acquired qualification of secondary school graduates in line with labour market requirements. The project was created under the Operational Program “Science and Education for Smart Growth” by the Ministry of Education and Science. Owing to the implementation of the Youth Guarantee in Bulgaria, nearly 100 000 young people under 25 years of age have started work during the years 2015–2019.

Bulgaria has legislatively regulated and has gained experience in implementing various measures and actions to increase the chances of employment and future labour market integration, and has begun applying these with better quality and wider scope in order to



achieve the desired effect of the Youth Guarantee. For the target group of the programs, measures and schemes a set quota is applied for young people up to 25 years of age. In order to implement the Youth Guarantee, from the beginning of 2014 programs and measures targeting young people who have proven their effectiveness (and for which the interest of the employers and young people is high) are implemented. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy **MLSP** – through the **Employment Agency** – offers services providing professional information, consulting and guidance. This aims to assist in: choosing the right profession/specialty according to the psychophysical features and personal interests of the clients; aiding in the choice of a career path; and, choice of appropriate training, including training institutions.

Contributions to youth employment benefit from the **National Program “Activation of Inactive persons”**. This is a **program for training and employment of long-term unemployed persons**. The program aims to increase the knowledge and qualification of long-term unemployed persons registered at the Labour Office by including them in vocational training upon request by an employer. The program is implemented on the territory of the whole country, with priority given to regions with unemployment above the national average for the previous year. The program subsidises the employment of full-time or part-time workers for a period of up to 12 months in the private sector. Since 2008, the Employment Agency has implemented the National Program “Activation of Inactive persons”. Its main objective is to activate and integrate inactive persons to the labour market, including discouraged and unemployed ones, by means of individual and group application of tools and services to attract and motivate them to register at the Labour Offices and to encourage them to engage in training and/or employment.

The unemployed, including disadvantaged groups within the labour market, are supported by case managers, psychologists, labour and career counsellors during their period of unemployment. This support is aimed at motivating active labour market behaviours to accelerate their access to jobs and improve employability. The experience so far shows that this is how quick transitions from unemployment to employment are made for those who want dynamic career development.

Cross-border mobility in the area of employment, entrepreneurship and professional opportunities is mainly supported by cross-border programs and projects between Bulgaria and Serbia, Macedonia, Romania, Turkey and Greece. Such programs include the pro-



gram for **“cross-border cooperation Interred-IPA”**. **Bulgaria and Serbia** finance projects related to the development of sustainable tourism, youth and the environment and these are implemented with financial support from the EU. On the Bulgarian side, the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works of the Republic of Bulgaria is determined to perform the functions of the Managing Authority within the Program. An example of a cross-border projects between the two countries is the enhancing of the entrepreneurial potential and employment prospects of young people through capacity building and networking (e.g., the Start-up Academy Bulgaria-Macedonia). The project focuses on the development of young entrepreneurship and the promotion of start-ups that can help improve the competitiveness of the regional economy. The implementation of the project activities motivates young people to start their own business ventures.

In Bulgaria, a singular State-only strategy on youth work does not exist. Youth work is legally established under the National Youth Strategy and in the Youth Act in 2010–2020. Each of the legislative documents are under the scope of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. In the text of the National Youth Strategy, youth workers are defined as: “a necessary resource for implementation of the strategy. These are the specialists, prepared to support the personal, social and economic development and stimulating the young people to fully participate in the society, in a way appropriate for their age. They (the youth workers) fulfil the duties of professional consultants for the young people, responding their needs and interests and are present at youth, therapeutic and consulting centres, schools, helping by providing advice and directing the youngsters to solve various issues. The role of youth workers is particularly important for assuring special support for personal, social and economic development and empowerment of young people in order to assure their full participation in society, in accordance with their age.”

Since 2015, the category of “youth worker” is included in the Official List of the Professions in Bulgaria. It is therefore an official profession and labour contracts for this position can be signed by employees. This is a very important step, as those youth workers who are employed and get paid for this job usually have the position of “project co-ordinator” or “specialist/expert”. These are the categories of youth work providers. In addition, there are activities undertaken by the National Youth Forum (an umbrella organisation of youth organisations in Bulgaria) in order to make the profession of youth worker more recognised, both by the government and society. One example of this, the seventh annual National Meeting of the Youth Organisations in Bulgaria, which took place in Varna from 24 to 28 June 2015, was dedicated to this matter (i.e., youth work and youth workers). There was



COST Action CA18213
Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural
NEETs social exclusion

even a Facebook campaign “I am a Youth Worker” – youth workers from all over Bulgaria were invited to upload a photo of themselves on the official Facebook page of the event so they could show who youth workers are and where they work. In Bulgaria, there are four International Youth Centres established under the initiative of the Norwegian Fund and the Council of Europe. Together the four centres created a National Network of Youth Centres in October 2016 by signing a co-operation agreement between the managers of the four Bulgarian youth centres – Vratsa, Dobrich, Plovdiv and Stara Zagora. The main goal of the network is to advocate for the recognition of youth work at national level and to work towards common quality standards. The four centres all employ youth workers. Their target is the general youth group including young people with fewer opportunities, young migrants and refugees and young people at risk of exclusion.



2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The Bulgarian national report uses information gathered by the National Reports Editorial Team of the Rural NEET Youth Network on the Eurostat platform. The main data presented and analysed in this report are from the following Eurostat database:

- Population Statistics: [yth_demo_020]
- EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS): [lfst_r_pgauwsc]; [lfst_r_ergau]; [lfst_r_ur-gau]; [edat_lfs_9913]; [edat_lfse_30]; [edat_lfse_29]

Selected indicators were extracted from the different databases according to two criteria:

- Time range: previous decade (2009–2019) in order to have a sufficiently long period of time to capture the main changes and continuities in young people trajectories in education, training and employment. The analysis mainly covered 3 dates – 2009–2013–2019 – in order to capture the impact of the economic and financial crisis that hit Europe and that, in most countries, reached its peak in 2012/2013.
- Age group: age group range varies accordingly to the data available in each indicator (15–24; 15–29; 15–34; and 15–39). Whenever possible, age range also covered young adult's data (30–34 and 35–39) in order to capture the extent of crisis impact on these age groups.

In addition to a descriptive analysis, in order to compare main data changes and continuities in different time periods, absolute and relative change were calculated considering the three main time points that were selected – 2009, 2013 and 2019. Absolute change refers to the simple difference in the indicator over two periods in time and is expressed in percentage points (pp); relative change expresses the change of a value of an indicator in an earlier period and is expressed in percentage terms.

The report also includes an introductory contextualisation part with the most relevant information about Bulgaria's social, economic and political situation in previous decades and key youth policies based on a relevant literature review and the Youth Wiki European online encyclopaedia.



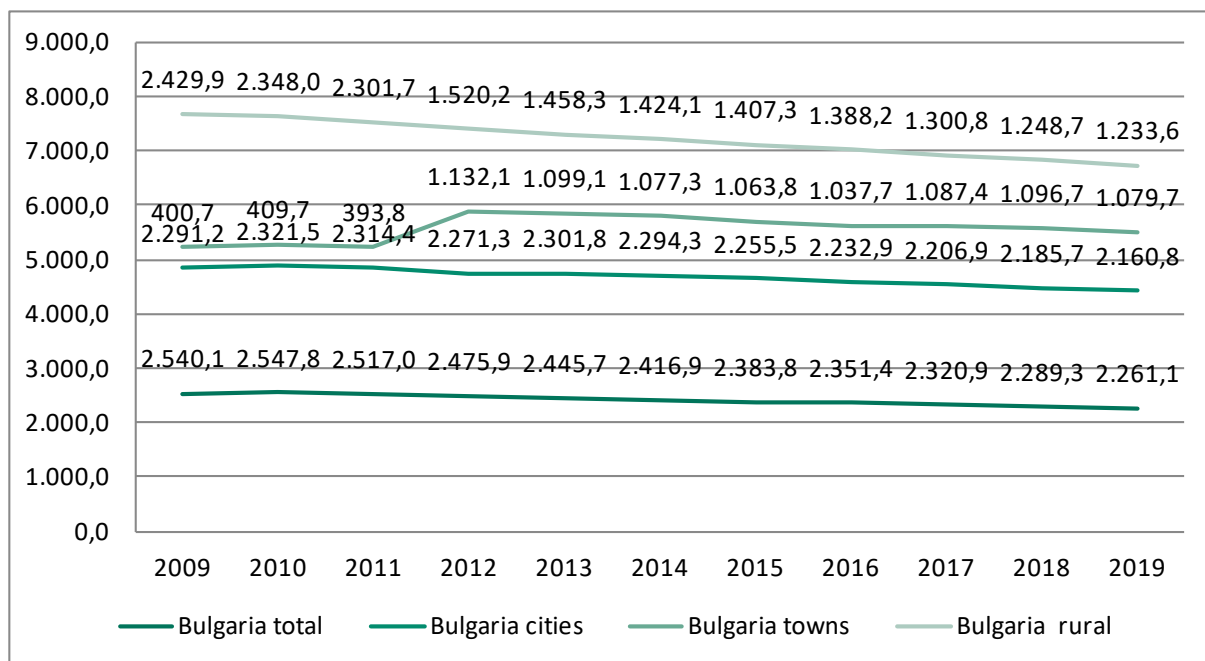
3. DATA ANALYSIS

3. 1. Population and youth population

Chart 3. 1. presents the tendencies of the Bulgarian youth population aged between 15–24 years old by degree of urbanisation for a period of 10 years (2009–2019). As reported by the chart, the total youth population is variable during the researched years. In 2009 the total of population aged between 15–24 is 2540.1 people. In 2013 the number decreased to 2445.7, and continued declining in 2019 to 2261.1.

In Bulgarian cities, the number of youths between 15–24 years' old in 2009 was 2291.2, in 2013 this number increased a little to 2301.8, while in 2019 the population from this subgroup decreased again to 2160.8 people. This trend remains in Bulgarian towns and suburbs, where in 2009 the population between 15–24 years old was 400.7, by 2013 it had more than doubled to 1099.1 while in 2019 the population from this age group decreased a little to 1079.7. In Bulgarian rural areas the youth population from the researched subgroup was 2429.9 people in 2009. Youths living in rural areas decreased to 1458.3 in 2013 and continuing decreasing in 2019 to 1233.6. It can be concluded that in Bulgarian rural areas there is a tendency of decreasing of youth population compared with Bulgarian cities and towns where the trend is toward increasing the youth population aged 15–24 years old.

Chart 3. 1. Total youth population 2009–2019 (Bulgaria) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_pgauwsc) – data extracted on 12.05.2020

Table 3. 1. indicates the ratio of youth population by age subgroups and absolute and relative change in Bulgaria. According to the results in the table the ratio of Bulgarian youth population is decreasing in the different age subgroups between 2011 and 2019. The absolute and relative change by the age subgroup of 15–19 was (–0.8pp; –18.18%) between 2011 and 2015. Between 2015 and 2019 the absolute and relative change increase was (0.1pp; 2.22%), while between 2011 and 2019 the ratio of youth population in Bulgaria decreased by (–0.7pp; –15.55%). For the whole time period of 2011–2015, 2015–2019 and 2011–2019 the absolute and relative change for the 20–25 year old subgroup was negative, while for those aged 25–29 there is a slight positive absolute and relative change in the time period of 2011 and 2015 (0.1pp; 1.47%).

Table 3. 1. Ratio of youth population by age subgroups and absolute and relative change in Bulgaria (2011–2015, 2015–2019 and 2011–2019)

	2011	2015	2019	Absolute change 2011–2015 (Relative change 2011–2015)	Absolute change 2015–2019 (Relative change 2015–2019)	Absolute change 2011–2019 (Relative change 2011–2019)
15–19	5.20%	4.40%	4.50%	–0.8pp (–18.18%)	0.1pp (2.22%)	–0.7pp (–15.55%)
20–24	6.60%	5.60%	4.40%	–1pp (–17.85%)	–1.2pp (–27.27%)	–2.2pp (–50%)
25–29	6.70%	6.80%	6.00%	0.1pp (1.47%)	–0.8pp (–13.33%)	–0.7pp (–11.66%)

Source: Eurostat: yth_demo_020 – data extracted in 13.05.20

In conclusion the absolute and relative change during the whole time period for all subgroups the ratio of youth population in Bulgaria remained negative.



3. 2. Employment and Unemployment

3. 2. 1. Youth employment

Table 3. 1. 2. indicates youth employment and absolute and relative change in Bulgaria by age groups in the period of time between 2009 and 2019. During that time the ratio remains negative in subgroups aged 15–19 at (–0.4pp; –8.33%). For youths aged 20–24 the ratio likewise remains negative (–6.8pp; –17.35%), while for the subgroups aged 25–29 and 30–34 there is slight positive absolute and relative change between 2009 and 2019 (1.9pp; 2.61%) – age 20–24; (1.3pp; 1.63%) – age 30–34.

Youth employment trends overall, and by age groups across different degree of urbanisation levels in Bulgaria, is variable. In Bulgarian cities the variation is negative (–0.6pp; –12.76%), for those aged 15–19 years old during the time period of 2009–2019. For those aged 20–24 the ratio remains negative (–11.30pp; – 32.75%). For the other two subgroups the ratio is positive.

In Bulgarian towns and suburbs there is a positive absolute and relative change of youth employment between 2009 and 2019 among all subgroups: age 20–24 (4.4pp; 9.93%), age 25–29 (0.1pp; 0.14%) and for those aged 30–34 (2.6pp; 3.34%). Comparatively, the rural areas in Bulgaria have youth employment with negative absolute and relative change for the same period of time 2009–2019 for all subgroups except those aged 15–19 years old, where the variation is positive (0.3pp; 5.36%).



Table 3. 1. 2. Youth employment (%) and absolute and relative change in Bulgaria by age groups (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
15 – 19	5.2%	3.0%	4.8%	-2.2pp (-73.33%)	1.8pp (37.5%)	-0.4pp (-8.33%)
20 – 24	46.0%	34.5%	39.2%	-11.5pp (-33.33%)	4.7pp (11.98%)	-6.8pp (-17.35%)
25 – 29	71.0%	61.4%	72.9%	-9.6pp (-15.63%)	11.5pp (15.77%)	1.9pp (2.61%)
30 – 34	78.6%	71.9%	79.9%	-6.7pp (-9.32%)	8pp (10.01%)	1.3pp (1.63%)
Cities						
15–19	5.3%	2.6%	4.7%	-2.7pp (103.85%)	2.1pp (44.68%)	-0.6pp (-12.76%)
20–24	45.8%	33.6%	34.5%	-12.2pp (-36.30%)	0.9pp (2.60%)	-11.30pp (-32.75%)
25–29	74.0%	68.0%	78.2%	-6pp (-8.82%)	10.2pp (13.04%)	4.2pp (5.37%)
30–34	82.6%	78.4%	86.2%	-4.2pp (-5.36%)	7.8pp (9.05%)	3.6pp (4.18%)
Towns and suburbs						
15–19	:	:	3.9%	()	()	()
20–24	39.9%	33.2%	44.3%	-6.7pp (-20.18%)	11.1pp (25.06%)	3.18pp (14.82%)
25–29	72.0%	59.7%	72.1%	-12.3pp (-20.60%)	12.4pp (17.20%)	0.1pp (0.14. %)
30–34	75.2%	69.7%	77.8%	-5.5pp (-7.89%)	8.1pp (10.41%)	2.6pp (3.34%)
Rural areas						
15–19	5.3%	4.1%	5.6%	-1.2pp (-29.27%)	1.5pp (26.78%)	0.3pp (5.36%)
20–24	47.2%	37.3%	45.4%	-9.9pp (-26.53%)	8.1pp (17.84%)	-1.8pp (-3.96%)
25–29	67.2%	50.3%	63.0%	-16.9pp (-33.60%)	12.7pp (20.16%)	-4.2pp (6.66%)
30–34	74.3%	60.6%	68.4%	-13.7pp (-22.61%)	7.8pp (0.11%)	-5.9pp (-8.62%)

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergrau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020



3. 2. 2. Youth unemployment

Table 3. 2. 2. shows youth unemployment in Bulgaria for different age subgroups between 2009 and 2019. Youth unemployment across Bulgaria by all age subgroups and the degree of urbanisation is variable. In the period between 2009 and 2019 for the overall country the unemployment rates are negative in all age subgroups: 15–19 (–14.2pp; –75.53%), 20–24 (–6.0pp; –80.0%), 25–29 (–2.2pp; –37.28%), 30–34 (–0.8pp; –15.38%). The same tendency retains in the Bulgarian cities where between 2009 and 2019 there is a negative absolute and relative change among all age subgroups: 20–24 (– 5.6pp; – 124.44%) 25–29 (– 3.9pp; – 121.87%) and 30–34 (–2.0pp; – 66.66%). For those aged 15–19 data is missing. For those aged 15–19 years old, data is missing for several years, for towns and suburbs and for rural areas.

In Bulgarian towns and suburbs data is missing for all age subgroups.

In rural areas youth unemployment in Bulgaria is decrease for those in age 20–24 (–3.7pp; – 29.6%), while it is increase for those in age 25–29 (0.5pp; 4.95%) and 30–34 (3.8pp; 34.23%)

Table 3. 2. 2. Youth unemployment (%) and absolute and relative change in Bulgaria

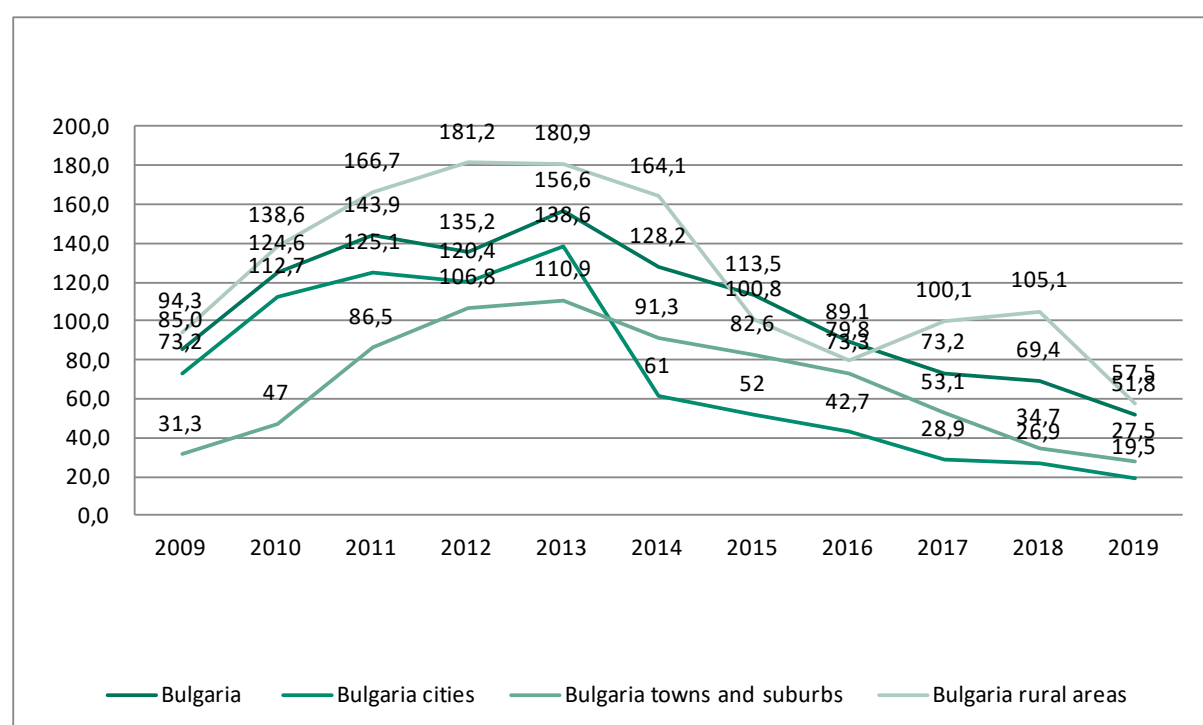
	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009-2013 (Relative change 2009-2013)	Absolute change 2013-2009 (Relative change 2013-2019)	Absolute change 2009-2019 (Relative change 2009-2019)
Country						
Overall	85.0%	156.6%	51.8%	71.6pp (45.72%)	-104.8pp(-02.31%)	-33.3pp (-64.09%)
15 – 19	33.0%	56.2%	18.8%	23.2pp (41.28%)	-37.4 pp (-198.93)	-14.2pp (-75.53%)
20 – 24	13.5%	25.4%	7.5%	11.9pp (46.85%)	-17.9pp (-2.39%)	-6pp (-80.0%)
25 – 29	8.1%	17.6%	5.9%	9.5pp (53.97%)	-11.7pp(-198.30%)	-2.2pp (-37.28%)
30 – 34	6.0%	13.2%	5.2%	7.2pp (54.54%)	-8pp (153.84%)	-0.8pp (-15.38%)
Cities						
Overall	73.2%	138.6%	19.5%	65.4pp (47.18%)	-119.1pp(-10.76%)	-53.7pp (-275.38%)
15-19	31.7%	56.3%	:	24.6pp (43.69%)	:	:
20-24	10.1%	33.6%	34.5%	11.3pp (52.80%)	-16.9pp(-375.55%)	-5.6pp (-124.44%)
25-29	7.1%	14.0%	3.2%	6.9pp (49.28%)	-10.8pp (-337.5%)	-3.9pp (-121.87%)
30-34	5.0%	10.3%	3.0%	5.3pp (51.45%)	-7.3pp (-243.33%)	-2pp (-66.66%)
Towns and suburbs						
Overall	31.3%	110.9%	27.5%	79.6pp (71.77%)	-83,4pp(-303.27%)	-3.8pp (- 13.81%)
15-19	:	:	:	:	:	:
20-24	:	29.2%	:	:	:	:
25-29	:	17.8%	8.0%	:	-9.5pp (-118.75%)	:
30-34	:	15.1%	5.0%	:	-10.1pp (-202%)	:
Rural areas						
Overall	94.3%	180.9%	57.5%	86.6pp (47.87%)	-123.4pp(-14.60%)	-37pp (-64.57%)
15-19	32.6%	54.0%	:	21.4pp (39.62%)	:	:
20-24	16.2%	29.1%	12.5%	12.9pp (44.32%)	-16.6pp (-132.8%)	-3.7pp (-29.6%)
25-29	9.6%	25.2%	10.1%	15.6pp (61.90%)	-15.1pp(-149.50%)	0.5pp (4.95%)
30-34	7.3%	18.3%	11.1%	11pp (60.10%)	-7.2pp (-64.86%)	3.8pp (34.23%)

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergrau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020

Chart 3. 2. 2. indicates unemployment across the country among youths aged 15 to 39 years old. The employment increased from 31.3% in 2009, to 110.9% in 2013, and decreased again in 2019 (19.5%).

The same tendency is observed in the Bulgarian cities for that period of time. The unemployment increasing from 73.2% in 2009, to 138.6% in 2013 and decreasing to 27.5% in 2019. In towns and suburbs and rural areas the trend is the same.

Chart 3. 2. 2. Youth Unemployment total (%) in Bulgaria (2009–2019) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergrau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020



3. 3. Education

3. 3. 1. Young people by educational attainment level

Table 3. 3. 1. indicates the Bulgarian population, aged 15 to 24 years old, by ISCED levels, during the period of 2009 and 2019 by degree of urbanisation including absolute and relative change. For those aged 15–24 that reached ISCED–2, the absolute and relative change are negative between 2009 and 2019 (–2.4pp; –4.92%). The variation is only positive for the period of 2013 and 2019 (5.8pp; 11.88%). For the next level ISCED 3–4, the absolute and relative variation is slightly increasing between 2009 and 2019 (2.2pp; 4.57%), while in the ISCED 5–8 it is decreasing again.

In Bulgarian cities the absolute and relative change remains negative for level ISCED 2 (–3.1pp, –7.83%) and ISCED 5–8 –0.8pp (–22.22%), while it increased for ISCED 3–4 3.8pp (6.70%), between 2009 and 2019.

The same tendency is found in the Bulgarian towns and suburbs among ISCED 0–2 – (0.3pp; –0.54%) and ISCED 3–4 –0.8pp (–1.95%). The data for level ISCED 5–8 is missing.

In rural areas, the trends remains negative for level ISCED 3–4 –1.3pp (–3.37%) between 2009 and 2019. It slightly increased for the two other levels for the same period of time ISCED 0–2 1.1pp (1.85%), ISCED 5–8 0.2pp (10%).

Table 3. 3. 1. Bulgarian population, aged 15–24, by ISCED levels (%) and degree of urbanisation in Bulgaria, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

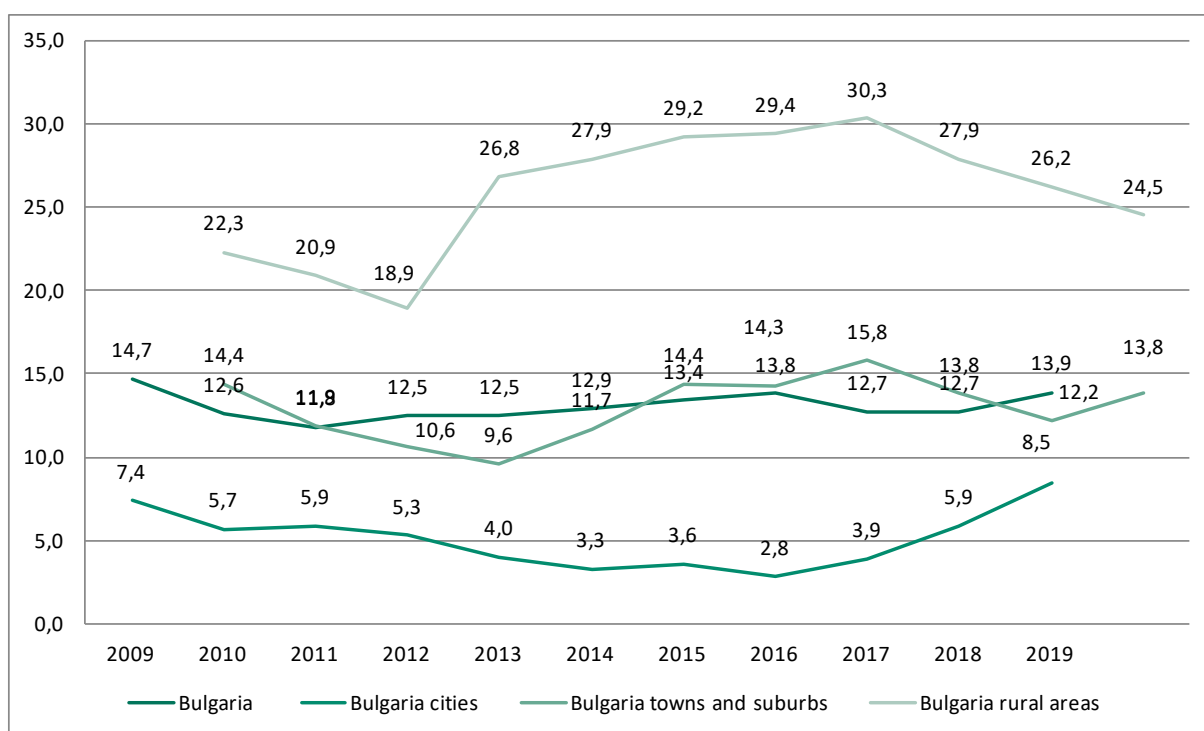
	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
ISCED 0–2	51.2%	43.0%	48.8%	–8.2pp (–19.06%)	5.8pp (11.88%)	–2.4pp (–4.92%)
ISCED 3–4	45.9%	52.6%	48.1%	6.7pp (12.73%)	–4.5 pp (–9.36%)	2.2 pp (4.57%)
ISCED 5–8	3.0%	4.4%	3.1%	1.4pp (31.82%)	–1.3pp (–41.94%)	0.1 pp (3.22%)
Cities						
ISCED 0–2	42.7%	32.1%	39.6%	–10.06 pp (–33.02)	7.5 pp (1894%)	–3.1 pp (–7.83%)
ISCED 3–4	52.9%	61.7%	56.7%	8.8 pp (14.26%)	–5 pp (–8.82)	3.8 pp (6.70%)
ISCED 5–8	4.4%	6.2%	3.6%	1.8 pp (29.03%)	–2.6 pp (–72.22%)	–0.8 pp (–22.22%)
Towns and suburbs						
ISCED 0–2	56.0%	47.3%	55.7%	–8.7 pp (–18.39%)	8.1 pp (14.54%)	–0.3 pp (–0.54%)
ISCED 3–4	41.7%	48.9%	40.9%	7.2 pp (14.72%)	–8 pp (–19.55%)	–0.8 pp (–1.95%)
ISCED 5–8	:	3.8%	3.3%	:	–0.5 pp (–15.15%)	:
Rural areas						
ISCED 0–2	58.4%	57.6%	59.5%	–0.8 pp (–1.39%)	1.9 pp (3.21%)	1.1 pp (1.85%)
ISCED 3–4	39.9%	40.3%	38.6%	0.4 pp (0.99%)	–1.7 pp (–4.40%)	–1.3 pp (–3.37%)
ISCED 5–8	1.8%	2.1%	2.0%	0.3 pp (14.28%)	–0.1 pp (–5%)	0.2 pp (10%)

Source: Eurostat (edat_ifse_9913) – data extracted in 29.04.2020

3.3.2. Early school leavers

Chart 3.3.2. describes ESLET rates by percentage in Bulgaria by degree of urbanisation between 2009 and 2019. The chart indicates that there has been a decrease in this indicator overall in the country (from 14.7% to 13.8%). However the rate has come up from 7.4% in 2009 to 8.5% in 2019% in Bulgarian cities, with similar variations in terms of direction and strength in towns and suburbs (from 12.6% to 13.8%) and in rural areas (from 22.3% to 24.5%).

Chart 3.3.2. ESLET rate (%) 2009–2019 (Bulgaria) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (edat_ifse_30) – data extracted in 20.04.2020



3. 4. NEETs

3. 4. 1. NEET rate

Table 3. 4. 1. shows the NEETs rate in percentage by age subgroups and degree of urbanisation in Bulgaria for the period between 2009 and 2019, including absolute and relative change. At the country level, the rate of NEETs in Bulgaria decreased among all age subgroups between 2009 and 2019.

In 2019, the NEETs rate in Bulgaria for those aged 15–19 (–4.1pp; –38.3%) is decreasing compared with those aged 20–24 (–7.7pp; –45.83%). The lowest rate is for NEETs aged 30–34 and it's only (–1.5pp; –7.8%). Compared with NEETs in cities, towns and suburbs and rural areas the rate remains with negative absolute and relative variation.

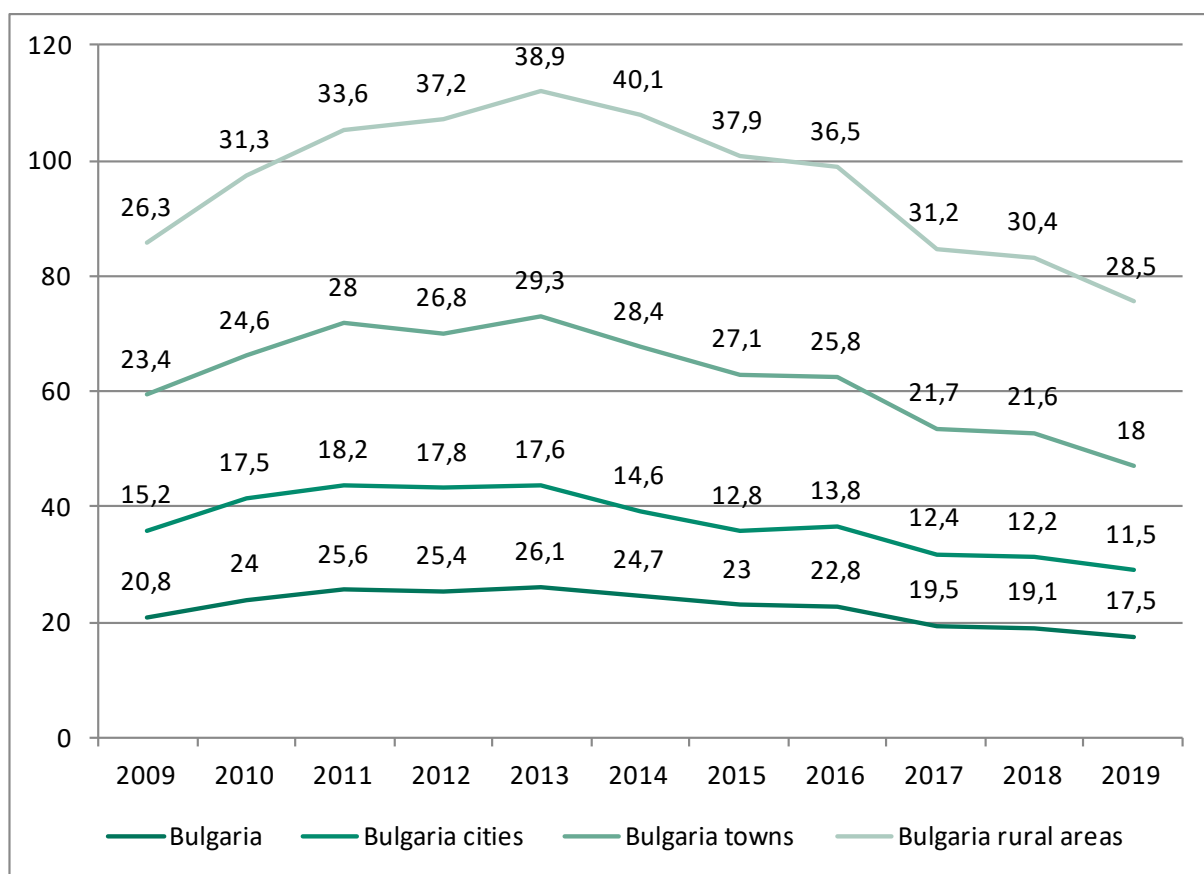
Table 3. 4. 1. NEET rate (%) by age subgroups and by degree of urbanisation in Bulgaria, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
15 – 19	14.8%	15.2%	10.7%	0.4 pp (2.63%)	-4.5 pp (-42.05%)	-4.1 pp (-38.3)
20 – 24	24.5%	26.3%	16.8%	1.8 pp (6.84%)	-9.5 pp (-56.54%)	-7.7 pp (-45.83)
25 – 29	24.0%	32.3%	21.1%	8.3 pp (25.69%)	-11.1 pp (-52.60%)	-2.9 pp (-13.74%)
30 – 34	20.7%	27.1%	19.2%	6.4 pp 23.61%)	-7.9 pp (-41.14%)	-1.5 pp (-7.8%)
Cities						
15–19	11.1%	10.0%	8.4%	-1.1 pp (-11%)	-1.6 pp (-19.04%)	-2.7 pp (-32.14%)
20–24	14.8%	13.7%	8.8%	-1.1 pp (-8.2%)	-4.9 pp (-55.68%)	-6 pp (-68.18%)
25–29	18.2%	23.0%	14.4%	4.8 pp (20.86%)	-8.6 pp (-59.72%)	-3.8 pp (26.38%)
30–34	16.3%	20.1%	12.7%	3.8 pp (18.90%)	-7.4 pp (-58.26%)	-3.6 pp (-28.34%)
Towns and suburbs						
15–19	17.0%	15.3%	8.4%	-1.7 pp (-11.11%)	-6.9 pp (-82.14%)	-8.6 pp (-102.38%)
20–24	29.5%	32.4%	17.3%	2.9 pp (8.95%)	-15.1 pp (-87.28%)	-12.2 pp (-70.52%)
25–29	25.8%	35.9%	22.2%	10.1 pp (28.13%)	-13.7 pp (-61.71%)	-3.6 pp (-162.16%)
30–34	24.0%	30.0%	21.4%	6 pp (20%)	-8.6 pp (-40.18%)	-2.6 pp (-12.14%)
Rural areas						
15–19	17.4%	21.8%	16.0%	4.4 pp (20.18%)	-5.8 pp (-36.25%)	-1.4 pp (-8.75%)
20–24	34.5%	46.0%	33.0%	11.5 pp (25%)	-13 pp (-39.39%)	-1.5 pp (-4.54%)
25–29	30.6%	46.7%	33.4%	16.1 pp (34.47%)	-13.3 pp (-39.82%)	2.8 pp (8.38%)
30–34	25.5%	38.6%	31.0%	13.1 pp (33.93%)	-6.8 pp (-21.93%)	5.5 pp (17.74%)

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted in 29.04.2020

Chart 3. 4. 2. indicates the growth of NEETs proportion in Bulgaria and all degree of urbanisation levels, between 2009 and 2019. According to the chart, the NEETs rate in Bulgaria decreased from 20.8%, in 2009, to 17.5%, in 2019. In Bulgarian cities, the rates are similar with those of the Bulgarian towns and suburbs. They decreased in cities from 15.2% to 11.5% and in towns and suburbs from 23.4% to 18.0%. With the exception of Bulgarian rural areas where the NEETs share rose from 26.3% to 28.5%.

Chart 3. 4. 2. NEETs rate (%) between 2009–2019 (Bulgaria) by degree of urbanisation and sex



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted in 29.04.2020



4. CONCLUSIONS

Youth population: Some of the biggest challenges facing Bulgaria at present and in the coming decades are related to demographic trends and the development of processes associated with these. The deepening demographic crisis and its associated unfavourable quantitative changes in demographic parameters have been characterised by a very high intensity over the past three decades. They are presently reaching the point of thresholds where permanent destabilisation can be observed in the area of natural reproduction. The youth population in Bulgaria has decreased throughout the period in consideration.

Youth unemployment: Data shows that young people are a category at risk in the Bulgarian labour market, with sustained low levels of employment and high unemployment rates.

Youth unemployment in Bulgaria is a low-skill and regional problem that mostly affects those between 15–19 years old. The unemployment rate for the 15–24 age group grew more than the unemployment rate for other age groups, but the number of unemployed aged 25–34 and 30–35 grew much more significantly. Young people aged 15–29 are a target group for employment promotion policy under national law. In 2009 the age group of 20–25 years old the rate was 46.0%, in the age group up to 25–29 years old it is 71%.

Education: Education in Bulgaria is the area where the greatest progress has been made, but there are still systemic challenges such as insufficient attention to “second chance” schools and the lack of NEETs skills matching the needs of the labour market. In this sense, what has been achieved in the field of education has not yet developed into employment. The percentage of ESLET in Bulgaria by degree of urbanisation has decreased throughout the period in consideration. The trends remains negative according to all levels of education.

NEETs: NEETs rate in Bulgaria by degree of urbanisation has decreased between 2009 and 2019. It is higher in rural areas in comparison with Bulgarian cities and towns. An interesting tendency is the lowest rate for NEETs in Bulgaria for those aged 30–34. NEETs aged 30–34 are also the most numerous age group in the country. Breaking down the share of NEETs by education shows that the apparent “breaking point” is the completion of high school: this factor alone significantly decreases the probability of having NEET status.



5. REFERENCES

European Commission (2020). Youth Wiki: Bulgaria.

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/overview-bulgaria>

Milenkova, V., Kovacheva, S. (2020) Regional insights to lifelong learning policies in support of young adults in Bulgaria, Sofia Avangard Prima.

National Youth Strategy, Bulgaria.

https://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Bulgaria_2010_National_Youth_Strategy.pdf



6. IMPORTANT LINKS

Youth Guarantee – <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079&langId=bg>

Youth wiki – Bulgarian national youth policies
<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/overview-bulgaria>

Labour Code Bulgaria – <https://www.mlsp.government.bg/eng/legislation-1>

The Youth Act – <http://mpes.government.bg/Pages/Documents/Law/default.aspx>

RURAL NEETs IN CROATIA



2009/2019
OVERVIEW

AUTHORS

Anita Busljeta Tonkovic – Anita.Busljeta.Tonkovic@pilar.hr
Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, Zagreb, Croatia

Slaven Gasparovic – slaveng@geog.pmf.hr
University of Zagreb, Faculty of Science, Department of Geography, Zagreb, Croatia

Image by Croatia Tips from Pexels

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network: Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged.
Please cite this publication as "COST CA18213 Rural NEETs in Croatia: 2009/2019 Overview.

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. CONTEXTUALIZATION	6
2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE	12
3. DATA ANALYSIS	13
3. 1. Population and youth population	13
3. 2. Employment and Unemployment	17
• Youth employment	17
• Youth unemployment	21
3. 3. Education	25
• Young people by educational attainment level	25
• Early school leavers	28
3. 4. NEETs	29
• NEET rate	29
4. CONCLUSIONS	33
5. REFERENCES	35
6. IMPORTANT LINKS	37

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the situation of rural Youths Neither in Employment, nor in Education or Training (NEET) in Croatia, aged between 15 and 34 years old, in the period from 2009 until 2019. To achieve this goal, the report utilised indicators of youth population, youth employment and unemployment, education and NEETs distribution. The characterisation of all indicators adopted the degree of urbanisation as a central criteria, enabling comparisons between rural areas, towns and suburbs, cities and the whole country. These analyses are further collapsed into age sub-groups and, when possible, in sex groups for greater detail.

The statistical procedures adopted across the different selected dimensions involved descriptive longitudinal analysis, using figures (e.g., line charts) as well as the calculation of absolute and relative changes between 2009 and 2013, 2013 and 2019 and 2009 and 2019. These time ranges were chosen to capture the indicators evolution before and after the economic crisis that hit European countries. All data was extracted from Eurostat public datasets.

The analyses show that between 2009 and 2019 rural youth population aged 15 to 24 years has been decreasing in Croatia. Youth unemployment was marked by two distinct periods, one from 2009 to 2013 (with higher rates of youth unemployment) and another from 2013 to 2019 (with the decrease in unemployment rates, with lower unemployment rates in cities and higher in towns and suburbs and rural areas). In the field of education, however, there has been a decrease of the Croatian population with lower levels of education and an increase of the proportion of those with higher educational attainment. Finally, the proportion of NEETs in Croatia is higher in rural areas compared to cities and towns and suburbs, revealing territorial inequalities in access to employment and education opportunities.

SAŽETAK

Ovo se izvješće odnosi na mlade u ruralnim prostorima u Hrvatskoj koji nisu zaposleni, niti su uključeni u sustav obrazovanja ili dodatne obuke (eng. NEET) u dobi između 15 i 34 godine, u razdoblju od 2009. do 2019. Da bi se postigao taj cilj, u izvješću su korišteni sljedeći pokazatelji: broj mladih i njihov udio u ukupnom stanovništvu, zaposlenost i nezaposlenost, stupanj postignutog obrazovanja i udio NEET populacije. Navedeni pokazatelji prikazani su kroz stupanj urbanizacije kao središnji kriterij, omogućujući usporedbu između ruralnih područja, manjih gradova i gradskih predgrađa, gradova i cijele države. Te su analize dodatno razrađene prema dobi i, kad je to moguće, prema spolu kako bi se problematika detaljnije razradila.

Izvršene statističke analize uključivale su deskriptivnu longitudinalnu analizu, koristeći dijagrame (npr. linijske), kao i izračun apsolutnih i relativnih promjena između 2009. i 2013., 2013. i 2019. te 2009. i 2019. godine. Ta su vremenska razdoblja odabrana kako bi se uočilo kretanje vrijednosti pokazatelja prije i nakon ekonomske krize koja je pogodila europske zemlje. Svi su podaci dobiveni iz javno dostupnih podataka Eurostata.

Analiza je pokazala da se između 2009. i 2019. broj mladih u dobi od 15 do 24 godine u ruralnim prostorima Hrvatske smanjuje. Podaci o nezaposlenosti mladih razlikuju se s obzirom na vremensko razdoblje. Od 2009. do 2013. godine prisutne su više stope nezaposlenosti mladih, dok od 2013. do 2019. godine stopa nezaposlenosti opada, s time da niže stope nezaposlenosti prevladavaju u gradovima dok su više stope prisutne u manjim gradovima i predgrađima i ruralnim prostorima. Što se tiče stupnja postignutog obrazovanja prisutan je pad udjela stanovništva s nižim razinama obrazovanja i porast udjela onih s višim stupnjem postignutog obrazovanja. Udio NEET populacije u Hrvatskoj veći je u ruralnim prostorima u usporedbi s gradovima te manjim gradskim naseljima i predgrađima, što otkriva teritorijalne nejednakosti u dostupnosti zaposlenja i mogućnostima obrazovanja.



1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

Croatia is a parliamentary republic in which the Prime Minister and the Head of State jointly represent executive authority at home and abroad. The structure of the government is based on the separation of legislative, executive and judicial power. The parliament wields legislative authority and exercises oversight of executive authority. Members of parliament are elected to terms of four years. Croatia has been a member of the European Union since 1st July 2013. The Republic of Croatia is a state located at the crossroads between Central, Southern and South-eastern Europe. It is bordered by Slovenia and Hungary in the north, Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in the east, and Montenegro in the south, while it shares a maritime border with Italy in the west. In terms of its surface area (56,594 km², 2011 Census) and population (4,284,889, 2011 Census), Croatia is a relatively small European state. The diversity of its natural-geographic features as well as socio-economic circumstances have crucially impacted the present-day uneven population density of Croatia's various regions. Thus, Central Croatia, which encompasses the capital city of Zagreb, has assumed the leading role as the core of Croatia's politics, economy and population. Adriatic Croatia, first and foremost the coastal belt with the primary urban centres of Split in Dalmatia and Rijeka in the Kvarner region, has become the country's secondary economic and demographic counterweight, as has the eastern portion of the Pannonian/peri-Pannonian sphere centred around Osijek, the largest city in Slavonia. Highland Croatia, parts of the coastal hinterland, most of the islands and the less developed rural areas of eastern Croatia can be counted among the peripheral areas in the country's current demographic and economic development. Today, tertiary activities, above all tourism, are playing an increasingly significant role in the structure of the Croatian economy (Opačić, 2014).

Croatia is administratively sub-divided into 20 counties and the City of Zagreb, which has the same status as a county. Each county has its own administrative seat. Moreover, Croatia has 127 cities, 429 municipalities, and 6,756 communities (2011 Census). In the European context, Croatia is a sparsely populated state with population density of only 75.71 residents per square kilometre. Rural areas such as Lika-Senj County only have 9.51 residents per square kilometre (2011 Census). The City of Zagreb has the highest population density, with 1,232.48 residents per square kilometre (2011 Census). Although both national and regional politicians regularly underscore the need for decentralisation, Croatia is by and large a centralised state. The process of systematic decentralisation in Croatia began with amendments to the



Constitution and relevant laws a decade ago, when decentralisation was launched in the administrative fields of education, healthcare and social welfare. However, decentralisation in Croatia is a process that the central government is not implementing in a cohesive manner, rather it is proceeding haphazardly, without any serious plans or strategies. Because of this, local governments have not seen any substantive benefits from decentralisation and many of them do not even want to assume decentralised functions (Đulabić, 2018).

According to the official web-site of the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy¹, young people form a heterogeneous social group which, on the one hand, is characterised by the social differentiation that corresponds to the society in which it exists, while on the other hand sharing the specific common characteristics of a discrete social group. This means that besides the specific generational traits that set young people apart as a recognisable social group, there are simultaneously intra-generational differences which are associated with varying degrees of individual and social maturity of young people, social origin, socialisation types and sub-cultural features. In Croatia, a person gains the status of legal adulthood after reaching the age of 18. However, until 21 years of age, a person is still considered a younger adult. According to Croatia's Youth Courts Act (Art. 2), a younger adult is a person who is aged eighteen or over but has not yet reached the age of twenty-one at the time of perpetration of a given act.

The contemporary generation of youth in Croatia, as in most countries in the European milieu, is maturing under general social conditions that differ considerably from those in which earlier generations came of age. This difference is primarily due to the multi-year economic crisis which has beset all fields of social life. The situation of young people in Croatia is further exacerbated by the fact that they are growing up in a transitional society with only two decades of experience in building a democratic society and political order. Young people also have the traumatic experience of war in their own territory, in which the latter's material, social and political consequences still loom (National Youth Programme for the 2014–2017 period). The universally common feature of young people is their age. However, researchers are not of one mind in determining the boundaries of youth. Consensus has been reached on setting the lower threshold at 15 years of age, which is the

1 The text that follows utilizes information available at the official web-site of the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy: <https://mdomsp.gov.hr/istaknute-teme/mladi-i-volonterstvo/mladi-9015/9015>, accessed on 26 June 2020.



case in Croatia. In the Republic of Croatia, persons aged 15 to 30 are deemed youth, and their social empowerment and protection is a fundamental constitutional principle (Ilišin and Spajić Vrkaš, 2015). The youth population in Croatia is both in absolute and relative decline: in 1953, the share of youth aged 15 to 29 in the total population was 27.7%; in 2001, there were 898,734 (20.3%) young people in the total population while according to the 2011 Census, there are 794,901 young people, or 18.6% of the total population (Ilišin and Spajić Vrkaš, 2015).

In Croatia, the highest political and administrative instance to care for the youth is the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy², more precisely the Youth Department as one of its integral components. This Ministry took advantage of Croatia's presidency of the European Council during 2020 to acknowledge young people in rural and remote areas as a priority. Within the framework of Croatia's presidency, the EU Youth Conference was held on the theme of "Opportunities for Rural Youth – How to Ensure the Sustainability of Rural Communities Across the EU". A comprehensive report (Youth Dialogue, 2020) was compiled as a result of the workshops held during the conference, and it includes the recommendations to decision-makers made by the youth. It also contains the objectives and outcomes of cycle VII of European Union Dialogue with Youth based on the EU Youth Strategy for 2019–2027.

The national body that sees to the well-being of the youth, a part of the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, is the Croatian Government's Youth Council. The Council is the Government's interdepartmental advisory body tasked with participation in the development of public policy geared towards youth. Specifically, it monitors the Ministry's work and the development of youth NGOs and NGOs for youth and submits recommendations for the development of youth policies at the national, regional and local levels. Youth Councils have also been established as advisory bodies at the regional and local levels. Their task is to promote and advocate for the rights, needs and interests of young people at their respective local and regional levels. Youth Councils give young people an opportunity to participate in official decision-making procedures and processes conducted by the relevant representative authorities. The Youth Councils Act regulates the esta-

² This section utilizes information available at the official web-site of the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy (Croatian Government's Youth Council): <https://mdomsp.gov.hr/istaknute teme/mladi-i-volonterstvo/mladi-9015/savjet-za-mlade-vlade-republike-hrvatske-9020/9020>, accessed on 15 June 2020.



establishment of the Youth Councils, their jurisdiction, election procedures and other matters of significance to their operations. This law is aimed at the participation of young people in decision-making on the administration of public affairs of interest and significance to young people, the active involvement of young people in public life and the dissemination of information and counselling in local and regional governmental units.

The educational system in the Republic of Croatia consists of: 1) early and preschool upbringing and education; 2) primary education; 3) secondary education; and, 4) higher education. Primary school upbringing and education is mandatory in Croatia and free of charge for all children aged six to fifteen, and for pupils with multiple developmental difficulties up to the age of twenty-one. For persons older than 15 who have not completed the legally-required primary schooling, there is the possibility of enrolling in primary education programmes for adults. Secondary education facilities enable the acquisition of knowledge and skills for work and ongoing education for everyone under equal conditions after the completion of primary education and upbringing. However, secondary education, although also free, is not mandatory. Primary and secondary education are regulated by the Primary and Secondary School Education and Upbringing Act. Adult education is a component of the consolidated educational system of the Republic of Croatia and encompasses the processes of teaching adults with the aim of improving their employment prospects and personal individual growth³. Participants must cover their own costs. However, in exceptional cases (most often through education organised by the Croatian Employment Bureau or NGOs and with the help of grants from European funds), participants are offered the possibility of earning qualifications or requalification free of charge. Enrolment in higher educational institutions, which in Croatia means universities, academies and colleges, is free of charge for a considerable number of students based on state matriculation rankings with the help of quotas, while some of them pay their own way. Graduate specialist and doctoral study are not free of charge, although employers may cover these costs for students.

According to the Labour Act (Art. 21), young people in Croatia can enter the job market at the age of 15 at the earliest. The Croatian Employment Bureau (HZZ) deems a young unemployed person as any individual aged 15 to 29 who is capable or partially capable of

3 This section utilises information available at the official web-site of the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy (Education and Upbringing): <https://mzo.gov.hr/odgoj-i-obrazovanje/109>, accessed on 16 June 2020.



engaging in labour and who is not employed, who is actively seeking a job or is available for work. Any individual aged 15 to 29 who is registered by the employment bureau for a period exceeding 6 months is deemed a long-term young unemployed person. Based on data from the Croatian Employment Bureau, young people seeking jobs are characterised by a lack of work experience, which makes them particularly vulnerable on the market (National Youth Programme for the 2014–2017). The National Education, Science and Technology Strategy (2014) stresses that an additional factor which makes their hiring difficult is the discrepancy between their educational and professional qualifications and the labour market's needs. Based on their own resources and the risks that they encounter, we can say that there are several sub-groups of young people who are particularly vulnerable with regards to unemployment. These include, for example, young people with lower levels of education, young mothers, disabled persons and Roma. These sub-groups of young people encounter increased risks of drastically lower income, continual extension of fixed-term employment contracts or even work without any signed contract, i.e., "off the books" employment. All of this considerably threatens the social status of young people and their lifetime opportunities, and bars access to retirement insurance and the financial advantages brought by full-time contractual employment (such as loans to purchase housing) (National Youth Programme for 2014–2017).

In order to reduce these risks, the Croatian Employment Bureau developed a career path computer application called 'Moj izbor' ('My Choice'; e-Usmjeravanje) geared towards individuals who are pondering their career choice or further education and employment. The Career Information and Counselling Centre (CISOK), established by the Croatian Employment Bureau, operates by means of an internet platform and branch offices in all major Croatian cities. CISOK's mission is to offer the wider community professional guidance services in order to succeed in selecting the right education and jobs. In Croatia, specific supports for employment, i.e., active employment policy measures, are being implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Pension System in cooperation with the Croatian Employment Bureau. These measures pertain to: 1) employment support; 2) support for further education; 3) self-employment support; 4) education and qualification; 5) public work; 6) supports to preserve jobs; and, 7) permanent seasonal labour. The first measure, Employment Support, implies support for hiring to acquire first work experience (internship) and as such it is primarily aimed at young people. The Youth Guarantee also contributes to the implementation of these measures. This is a new approach at the level of the European Union to resolve the matter of youth unemployment, which is aimed at ensuring that all



people under 30 years of age become active on the labour market as soon as possible. Rapid activation means receiving a quality job offer within a period of 4 months after leaving school or completing education or joining the ranks of the unemployed, regardless of whether the individual is registered with an employment bureau or not. The Youth Guarantee itself does not guarantee employment, rather it represents a structural reform that will allow for more active job searches by young people. The establishment of the Youth Guarantee is an attempt to prevent young people from falling prey to NEET status. In the context of the Youth Guarantee measures, in Croatia we consider NEET persons (Not in Education, Employment or Training) anyone aged 15 to 29 who do not work, who are not enrolled in the regular educational system and not in the adult education system. They can thereby be beneficiaries of the Youth Guarantee by meeting all three of the aforementioned criteria (Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan for 2019 to 2020). Implementation of the Youth Guarantee in Croatia is being supported by financing from the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) and the European Social Fund (ESF) (Bedeniković, 2017):



2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The Croatia national report uses information gathered by the National Reports Editorial Team of the Rural NEET Youth Network in the Eurostat platform. The main data presented and analysed in this report are from the following Eurostat database:

- Population Statistics: [yth_demo_O20]
- EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS): [lfst_r_pgauwsc]; [lfst_r_ergau]; [lfst_r_urgau]; [edat_lfs_9913]; [edat_lfse_30]; [edat_lfse_29]

Selected indicators were extracted from the different databases according to two criteria:

- Time range: the previous decade (2009–2019) in order to have a sufficiently long period of time to capture the main changes and continuities in young people's trajectories in education, training and employment. The analysis mainly covered 3 dates – 2009–2013–2019 – in order to capture the impact of the economic and financial crisis that hit Europe and that, in most countries, reached its peak in 2012/2013.
- Age group: age group range varies accordingly to the data available in each indicator (15–24; 15–29; 15–34; and 15–39). Whenever possible, age range also covered young adult's data (30–34 and 35–39) in order to capture the extent of crisis impact on these age groups.

Besides a descriptive analysis, in order to compare data, main changes and continuities in different time periods, absolute and relative change were calculated considering the three main time points that were selected – 2009, 2013 and 2019. Absolute change refers to the simple difference in the indicator over two periods in time and is expressed in percentage points (pp); relative change expresses the change of a value of an indicator in an earlier period and is expressed in percentage terms.



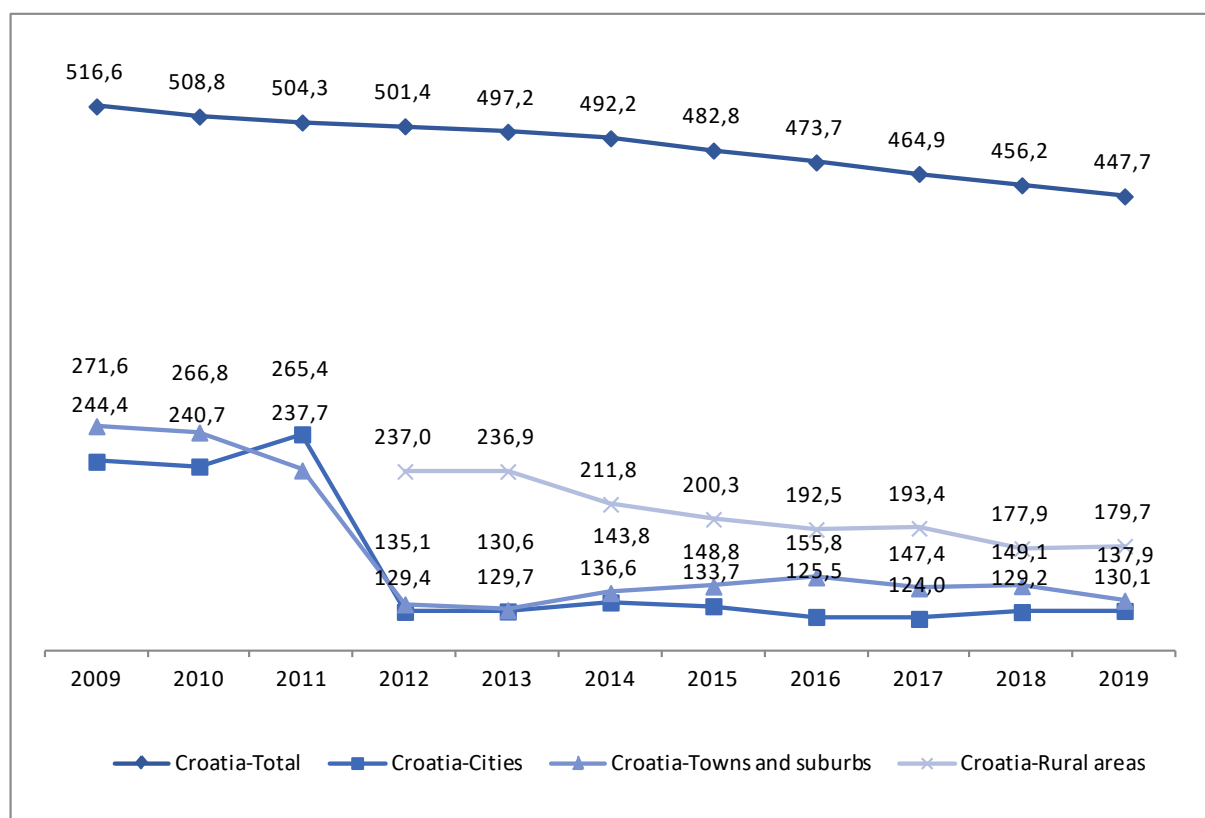
3. DATA ANALYSIS

3. 1. Population and youth population

Chart 1 shows trends in the number of young people in Croatia with due consideration for the degree of urbanisation from 2009 to 2019. It presents data on the overall number of young people, but also separately for young people in cities, towns and suburbs, and rural areas. When viewing the total number of young people in Croatia, a notable trend is the decline in their number. From 2009 to 2019, their number dropped by almost 70,000, from 516,600 in 2009, through 497,200 in 2013, to 447,700 in 2019. That trend is evident among both women (252,700 in 2009; 242,900 in 2013; 217,000 in 2019) and men (263,900 in 2009; 254,300 in 2013; 229,900 in 2019).

With regard to the degree of urbanisation, the greatest decline in the number of young people occurred in rural areas. Data in this category is absent for 2009, but a decline in the number of young people from 236,900 in 2013 to 179,700 in 2019 can be observed. Besides a general decline in Croatia's total population (and thereby also the young population), this is also a result of migration of residents from rural areas to cities and their suburbs. It is therefore worthwhile noting the decline in the number of young people in cities from 2009 to 2013 from 244,400 to 129,700 and in towns and suburbs from 271,600 in 2009 to 130,600 in 2013. However, this is a result of break in time series. But from 2013 to 2019, a slight increase in the number of young people in cities and towns and suburbs is noticeable, to 130,100 in the case of cities and 137,900 in the case of towns and suburbs.

Chart 1. Total youth population (thousands) 2009–2019 (Croatia) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_pgauwsc) – data extracted on 12.05.2020

From 2009 to 2019, the total number of the youth population (15–24 years) continuously declined in Croatia. However, there were slight increases in the young population both in cities and towns and suburbs between 2012 and 2019, while greatest increase occurred in towns and suburbs between 2012 and 2016 (with increase rate of 15.32%).

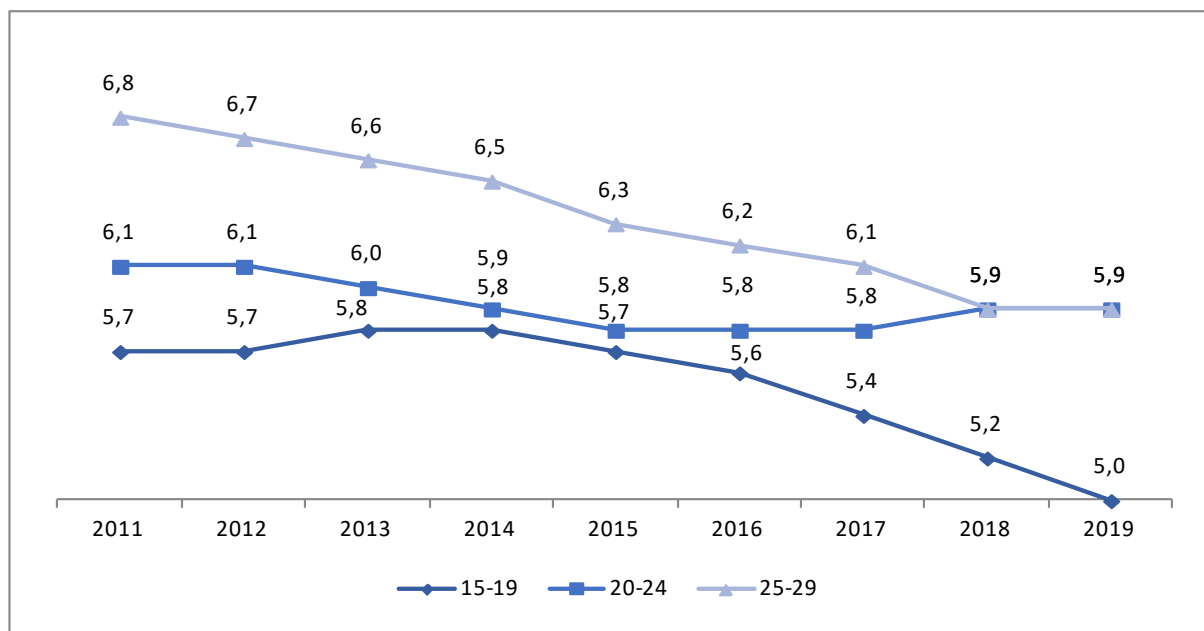
With reference to the ratio of youth population in Table 1 and Chart 2, one may observe its negative absolute and relative change in the 2011–2019 period, which reflects the inauspicious demographic situation in Croatia. In this period, the largest age groups were the 25–29 bracket (–.90 pp; –13.24%) and the only slightly smaller 15–19 bracket (–.70 pp; –12.28%). The smallest negative absolute and relative change during this period was registered in the 20–24 age group (–0.20 pp; –3.28%). The same age group registered a small but positive absolute and relative change during the 2015–2019 period (0.10 pp; –1.69%), while the remaining age groups in this period experienced a negative absolute and relative change. In the 2011–2015 period, a negative absolute and relative change was registered in the 20–24 age group (–0.30 pp; –4.92%) and the 25–29 age group (–0.50 pp; –7.35%), while the 15–19 age group did not see any changes in this period.

Tab. 1. Ratio of youth population by age sub-groups and absolute and relative change in Croatia (2011–2015, 2015–2019 and 2011–2019)

	2011	2015	2019	Absolute change 2011–2015 (Relative change 2011–2015)	Absolute change 2015–2019 (Relative change 2015–2019)	Absolute change 2011–2019 (Relative change 2011–2019)
Age groups						
15–19	5.70%	5.70%	5.00%	0 (0)	–0.70 pp (–12.28%)	–0.70 pp (–12.28%)
20–24	6.10%	5.80%	5.90%	–0.30 pp (–4.92%)	0.10 pp (–1.72%)	–0.20 pp (–3.28%)
25–29	6.80%	6.30%	5.90%	–0.50 pp (–7.35%)	–0.40 pp (–6.35%)	–0.90 pp (–13.24%)

Source: Eurostat: yth_demo_O20 – data extracted on 13.05.20

Chart 2. Ratio of youth population in the total population (%) 2009–2019 (Croatia) by age



Source: Eurostat: yth_demo_O20 – data extracted on 13.05.20

Since 2011, the youth population ratio (15–29 years) has been continuously declining in Croatia (less 1.6 p.p., from 18.6% in 2011 to 16.8% in 2019).



3. 2. Employment and Unemployment

3. 2. 1. Youth employment

When considering the trend of absolute and relative changes in youth employment at the national level during the 2009–2019 period (Tab. 2, Chart 3), slight growth (2.5 pp; 4.25%) may be observed. The values of absolute and relative changes among the age groups are relatively low. Thus, positive absolute and relative change values for the 15–19 (0.40 pp; 4.76%), 20–24 (0.70 pp; 1.58%) and 25–29 age groups (0.70 pp; 0.96%) are notable, while a negative absolute and relative change value was registered for the 30–34 age group (–0.50 pp; –0.61%). Nonetheless, considerably higher negative absolute and relative change values may be observed for young people in general, and for all age groups individually, in the period between 2009 and 2013, which may be tied to the economic crisis and recession in Croatia, which persisted for several years after 2009. Higher positive absolute and relative change values among young people at the national level (overall and among individual age groups) are apparent in the period from 2013 to 2019, after the end of the economic crisis and recession.

Youth employment trends overall, and by age groups across different degrees of urbanisation levels, vary. In Croatian cities during the 2009–2019 period, positive absolute and relative change in youth employment (2.5 pp; 4.15%) were registered. Positive absolute and relative change values were also present in individual age groups, so the values were 0.9 pp (2.43%) for the 20–24 age group, 1.8 pp (2.55%) for the 25–29 age group, and 2.8 pp (3.37%) for the 30–34 age group. No absolute nor relative change was recorded for the 15–19 age group (0.00 pp; 0.00%). As at the national level, the situation in Croatian cities is identical in terms of absolute and relative change values when observed in the 2009–2013 and 2013–2019 periods. The values for overall and individual age groups are negative in the 2009–2013 period, and positive in the 2013–2019 period. The highest positive absolute and relative change values in Croatian cities during the 2013–2019 period were recorded for the 20–24 age group (23.1 pp; 156.08%) which also experienced the highest absolute negative change in the 2009–2013 period.

In towns and suburbs, the situation was somewhat different than at the national level and the level of cities. From 2009 to 2019, the absolute and relative change values were po-



sitive overall (3.5 pp; 6.12%). Looking at individual age groups, only the 30–34 age group registered positive values in that period (1.3 pp; 1.64%), while the remaining age groups registered negative absolute and relative change values. As to values in the 2009–2013 and 2013–2019 periods, the trends are the same as at the national level and the cities level. All age groups registered negative absolute and relative change values in the 2009–2013 period, and positive values in the 2013–2019 period. The highest absolute and relative change values in the 2013–2019 period were registered in the 15–19 age group (3.00 pp; 111.11%).

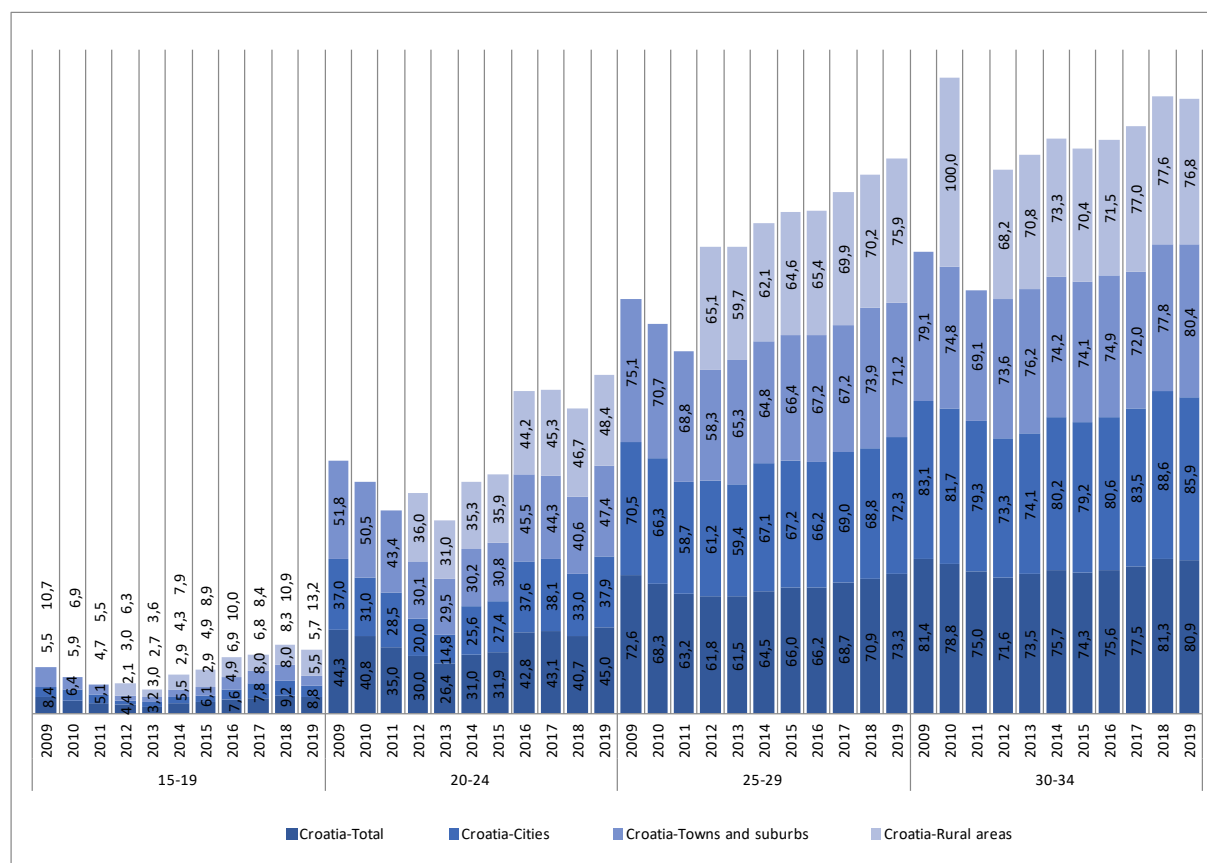
In the case of rural areas, it is noteworthy that there is no data broken down by age groups for 2009. Concerning young people in general, in the period from 2009 to 2019, the share of employed declined negligibly and the absolute and relative change is –0.60 pp (–0.98%). Regardless of the positive absolute and relative changes in the period from 2013 to 2019, the negative absolute and relative change values for the 2009–2013 period were obviously crucial, such that the values for the 2009–2019 period are negative. Given the absence of data, only absolute and relative change has been calculated for the 2013–2019 period, and it may be concluded that the highest absolute and relative change values are associated with the 15–19 age group (9.60 pp; 266.67%), just as with towns and suburbs.

Tab. 2. Youth employment (%) and absolute and relative change in Croatia by age groups (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Overall	58.80%	49.60%	61.30%	-9.20 pp (84.35%)	11.70 pp (23.59%)	2.50 pp (4.25%)
15–19	8.40%	3.20%	8.80%	-5.20 pp (38.10%)	5.60 pp (175.00%)	0.40 pp (4.76%)
20–24	44.30%	26.40%	45.00%	-17.90 pp (59.59%)	18.60 pp (70.45%)	0.70 pp (1.58%)
25–29	72.60%	61.50%	73.30%	-11.10 pp (84.71%)	11.80 pp (19.19%)	0.70 pp (0.96%)
30–34	81.40%	73.50%	80.90%	-7.90 pp (90.29%)	7.40 pp (10.07%)	-0.50 pp (-0.61%)
Cities						
Overall	60.30%	51.00%	62.80%	-9.30 pp (84.58%)	11.80 pp (23.14%)	2.50 pp (4.15%)
15–19	5.50%	3.00%	5.50%	-2.50 pp (54.55%)	2.50 pp (83.33%)	0.00 pp (0.00%)
20–24	37.00%	14.80%	37.90%	-22.20 pp (40.00%)	23.10 pp (156.08%)	0.90 pp (2.43%)
25–29	70.50%	59.40%	72.30%	-11.10 pp (84.26%)	12.90 pp (21.72%)	1.80 pp (2.55%)
30–34	83.10%	74.10%	85.90%	-9.00 pp (89.17%)	11.80 pp (15.92%)	2.80 pp (3.37%)
Towns and suburbs						
Overall	57.20%	53.90%	60.70%	-3.30 pp (94.23%)	6.80 pp (12.62%)	3.50 pp (6.12%)
15–19	10.70%	2.70%	5.70%	-8.00 pp (25.23%)	3.00 pp (111.11%)	-5.00 pp (-46.73%)
20–24	51.80%	29.50%	47.40%	-22.30 pp (56.95%)	17.90 pp (60.68%)	-4.40 pp (-8.49%)
25–29	75.10%	65.30%	71.20%	-9.80 pp (86.95%)	5.90 pp (9.04%)	-3.90 pp (-5.19%)
30–34	79.10%	76.20%	80.40%	-2.90 pp (96.33%)	4.20 pp (5.51%)	1.30 pp (1.64%)
Rural areas						
Overall	61.10%	45.70%	60.50%	-15.40 pp (74.80%)	14.80 pp (32.39%)	-0.60 pp (-0.98%)
15–19	n.d.	3.60%	13.20%	---	9.60 pp (266.67%)	---
20–24	n.d.	31.00%	48.40%	---	17.40 pp (56.13%)	---
25–29	n.d.	59.70%	75.90%	---	16.20 pp (27.14%)	---
30–34	n.d.	70.80%	76.80%	---	6.00 pp (8.47%)	---

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted on 29.04.2020

Chart 3. Youth employment (%) and absolute and relative change in Croatia by age groups (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_30) – data extracted on 20.04.2020

In the past decade, youth employment was marked by two distinct periods, one from 2009 to 2013 (with lower rates of youth employment) and another one from 2013 to 2019 (with the increase in employment rates). However, data are missing by age groups in rural areas for 2009.



3. 2. 2. Youth unemployment

The absolute and relative change values in youth unemployment at the national level in the period from 2009 to 2019 (as shown in Tab. 3, Chart 4) are negative (–3.00 pp; –23.81). Positive absolute and relative change values pertain to the 2009–2013 period, i.e., the period of economic crisis and recession, while negative absolute and relative change values may be observed in the 2013–2019 period. Examining individual age groups, negative absolute and relative change values apply to all groups in the 2009–2013 period, except for the 30–34 age group (0.70 pp; 8.75%), which would mean that for this age group, unemployment increased in the period under observation. All age groups recorded positive absolute and relative change values in the 2009–2013 period as a result of the economic crisis and recession, wherein remarkably high relative change values are notable for all age groups. By contrast, negative absolute and relative change values are notable for all age groups in the 2013–2019 period, which pertains to the period when the economic crisis and recession were left behind.

Negative absolute and relative change values in youth unemployment were recorded in Croatian cities in the 2009–2019 period (–3.50 pp; –30.17%). Herein, the lowest absolute and relative change values were recorded for the 30–34 age group (–0.20 pp; –2.27%). The remaining age groups had somewhat higher negative absolute and relative change values, so values of (–14.90 pp; –35.99%) were recorded for the 15–19 age group, (–7.50 pp; –37.13%) for the 20–24 age group, and (–3.90 pp; –28.68%) for the 25–29 age group. As at the national level, in Croatian cities there was an identical situation in absolute and relative change values when observing the 2009–2013 period and the 2013–2019 period. Overall, and broken down by individual age groups, the values are positive for the 2009–2013 period and negative for the 2013–2019 period. The greatest negative absolute and relative change values in Croatian cities in the 2013–2019 period were recorded for the 20–24 age group (–39.60 pp; –75.72%), which also experienced the highest absolute positive change in the 2009–2013 period.

In Croatian towns and suburbs, the situation is somewhat different. The overall absolute and relative change values in the 2009–2019 period were –3.00 pp (–21.90%). Negative absolute and relative change values were only also registered for the 20–24 age group (–10.70 pp; –48.42%), while the remaining age groups registered positive absolute and relative change values. As to values in the 2009–2013 period and the 2013–2019 period, the trends are the same as at the



national level and the cities level. All age groups registered positive absolute and relative change values in the 2009–2013 period, and negative values in the 2013–2019 period. The highest absolute and relative change in the 2013–2019 period was registered by the 20–24 age group (–28.30 pp; –71.28%).

In the case of rural areas, it is noteworthy that data is missing by age groups for 2009. Given this lack of data, only absolute and relative change for the 2013–2019 period was calculated for individual age groups, and it may be concluded that the highest absolute and relative change values are tied to the 15–19 age group (–54.40 pp; –70.74%).

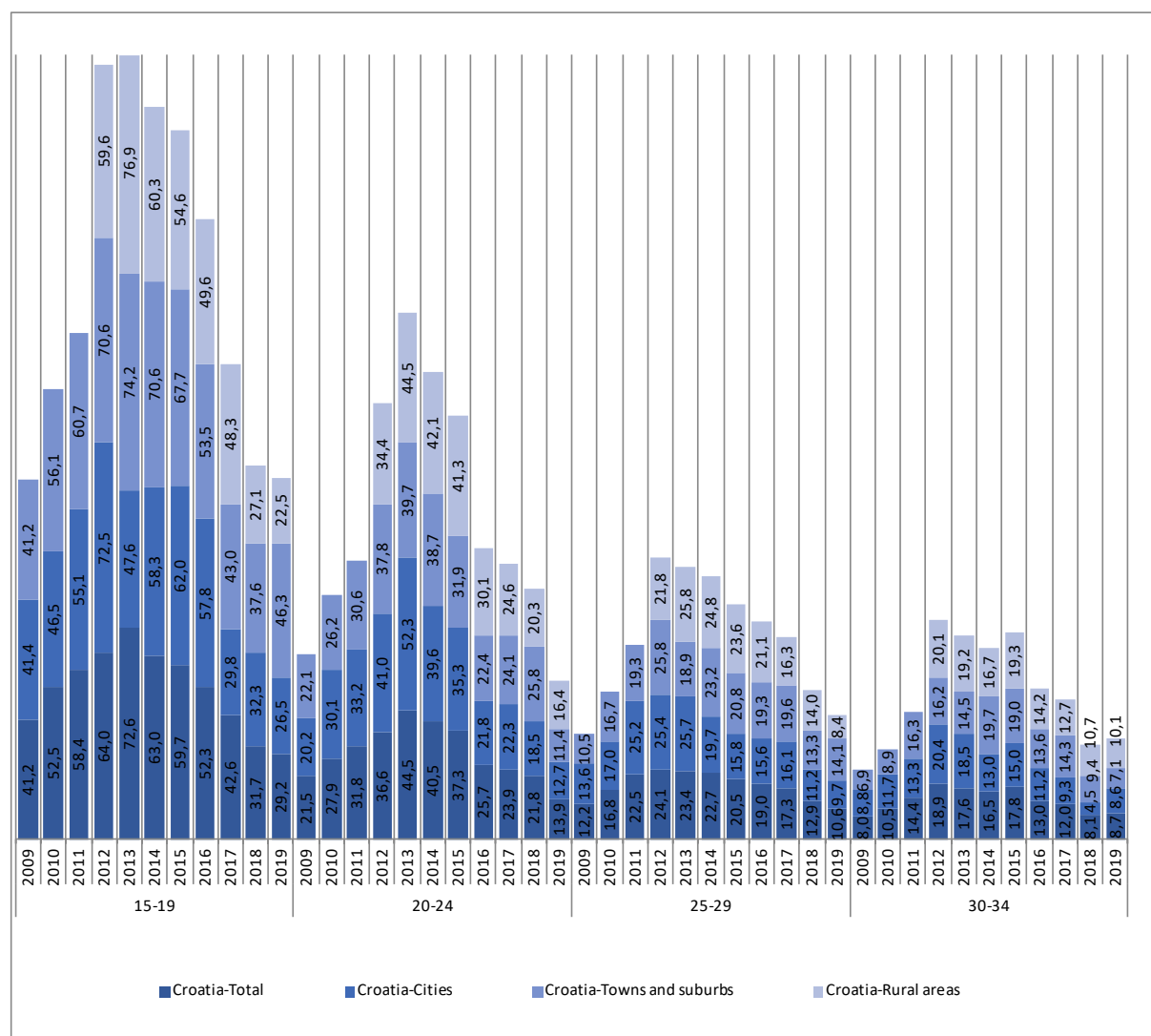


Tab. 3. Youth unemployment (%) and absolute and relative change in Croatia (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Overall	12.60%	23.50%	9.60%	10.90 pp (86.51%)	-13.90 pp (-59.15%)	-3.00 pp (-23.81%)
15–19	41.20%	72.60%	29.20%	31.40 pp (76.21%)	-43.40 pp (-59.78%)	-12.00 pp (-29.13%)
20–24	21.50%	44.50%	13.90%	23.00 pp (106.98%)	-30.60 pp (-68.76%)	-7.60 pp (-35.35%)
25–29	12.20%	23.40%	10.60%	11.20 pp (91.80%)	-12.80 pp (-54.70%)	-1.60 pp (-13.11%)
30–34	8.00%	17.60%	8.70%	9.60 pp (120.00%)	-8.90 pp (-50.57%)	0.70 pp (8.75%)
Cities						
Overall	11.60%	21.10%	8.10%	9.50 pp (81.90%)	-13.00 pp (-61.61%)	-3.50 pp (-30.17%)
15–19	41.40%	47.60%	26.50%	6.20 pp (14.98%)	-21.10 pp (-44.33%)	-14.90 pp (-35.99%)
20–24	20.20%	52.30%	12.70%	32.10 pp (158.91%)	-39.60 pp (-75.72%)	-7.50 pp (-37.13%)
25–29	13.60%	25.70%	9.70%	12.10 pp (88.97%)	-16.00 pp (-62.26%)	-3.90 pp (-28.68%)
30–34	8.80%	18.50%	8.60%	9.70 pp (110.23%)	-9.90 pp (-53.51%)	-0.20 pp (-2.27%)
Towns and suburbs						
Overall	13.70%	19.70%	10.70%	6.00 pp (43.80%)	-9.00 pp (-45.69%)	-3.00 pp (-21.90%)
15–19	41.20%	74.20%	46.30%	33.00 pp (80.10%)	-27.90 pp (-37.60%)	5.10 pp (12.38%)
20–24	22.10%	39.70%	11.40%	17.60 pp (79.64%)	-28.30 pp (-71.28%)	-10.70 pp (-48.42%)
25–29	10.50%	18.90%	14.10%	8.40 pp (80.00%)	-4.80 pp (-25.40%)	3.60 pp (34.29%)
30–34	6.90%	14.50%	7.10%	7.60 pp (110.14%)	-7.40 pp (-51.03%)	0.20 pp (2.90%)
Rural areas						
Overall	n.d.	28.10%	10.00%	---	-18.10 pp (-64.41%)	---
15–19	n.d.	76.90%	22.50%	---	-54.40 pp (-70.74%)	---
20–24	n.d.	44.50%	16.40%	---	-28.10 pp (-63.15%)	---
25–29	n.d.	25.80%	8.40%	---	-17.40 pp (-67.44%)	---
30–34	n.d.	19.20%	10.10%	---	-9.10 pp (-47.40%)	---

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergrau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020

Chart 4. Youth unemployment rates (%) 2009–2019 (Croatia) by age and degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_30) – data extracted on 20.04.2020

In the past decade youth unemployment was marked by two distinct periods, one from 2009 to 2013 (with higher rates of youth employment) and another one from 2013 to 2019 (with the decrease in unemployment rates). However, data are missing by age groups in rural areas for 2009. In 2013, youth unemployment rates were highest in rural areas, but rates were also higher in cities than in towns and suburbs (1.4 pp). In 2019, values for towns and suburbs and rural areas were above the average of Croatia, and rural areas reached a lower value than towns and suburbs (0.7 pp).



3. 3. Education

3. 3. 1. Young people by educational attainment level

Table 4 and Chart 5 describe the Croatian population aged 15 to 24 by ISCED levels between 2009 and 2019 for the country as a whole and by degree of urbanisation. The table also summarises absolute and relative change across the different ISCED levels, for three periods: 2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019. The data at the national level for these periods is variable. Even so, it may be observed that positive absolute and relative change values were registered for those who have attained ISCED levels 5–8, with the highest growth during the 2009–2019 period (3.70 pp; 154.17%). Negative absolute and relative change values can be observed for ISCED 0–2 and ISCED 3–4 in the 2009–2013 period. In the 2009–2013 period, absolute and relative change values for ISCED 0–2 are positive, but negative for ISCED 3–4, while the situation was opposite in the 2013–2019 period.

At the cities level, positive values for ISCED 5–8 are notable for all periods, and, by the same token, negative absolute and relative change values are notable for ISCED 3–4 in all periods. Variations in the data in these periods are notable for ISCED 0–2.

At the level of towns and suburbs, the situation is somewhat different. Positive absolute and relative change values are notable in the ISCED 5–8 category for all periods, and the values for the 2009–2019 period are particularly significant (4.40 pp; 231.58%). By contrast, negative values in all periods hold for the ISCED 0–2 value, and the absolute and relative change values for the 2009–2019 period are –5.50 pp (–13.68%). The values for ISCED 3–4 levels during the 2009–2013 period are negative, while the values for 2013–2019 are positive, and the values for the 2009–2019 period are small, but positive.

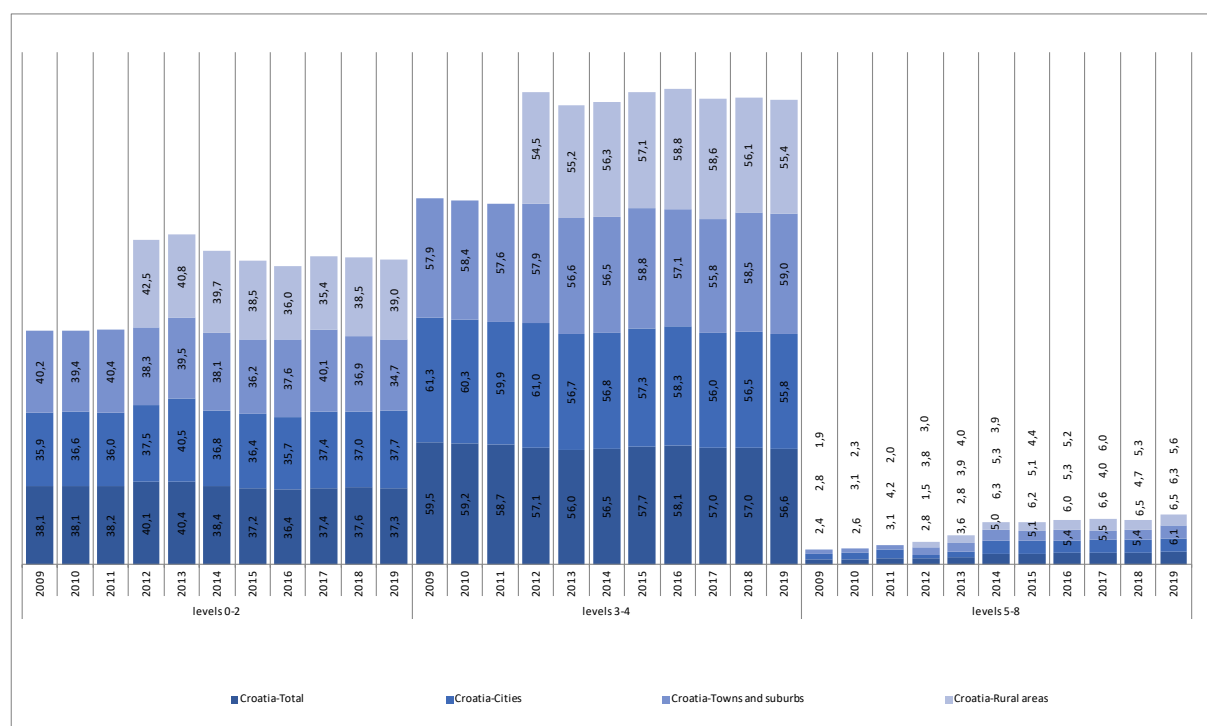
There is no data for rural areas in 2009. A positive absolute and relative change is notable for the 2013–2019 period for ISCED 5–8 and ISCED 3–4 levels, and negative for the ISCED 0–2 level.

Table 4. Croatian population aged 15–24 by ISCED levels (%) and degree of urbanisation in Croatia, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
ISCED 0–2	38.10%	40.40%	37.30%	2.30 pp (6.04%)	–3.10 pp (–7.67%)	–0.80 pp (–2.10%)
ISCED 3–4	59.50%	56.00%	56.60%	–3.50 pp (–5.88%)	0.60 pp (1.07%)	–2.90 pp (–4.87%)
ISCED 5–8	2.40%	3.60%	6.10%	1.20 pp (50.00%)	2.50 pp (69.44%)	3.70 pp (154.17%)
Cities						
ISCED 0–2	35.90%	40.50%	37.70%	4.60 pp (12.81%)	–2.80 pp (–6.91%)	1.80 pp (5.01%)
ISCED 3–4	61.30%	56.70%	55.80%	–4.60 pp (–7.50%)	–0.90 pp (–1.59%)	–5.50 pp (–8.97%)
ISCED 5–8	2.80%	2.80%	6.50%	0.00 pp (0.00%)	3.70 pp (132.14%)	3.70 pp (132.14%)
Towns and suburbs						
ISCED 0–2	40.20%	39.50%	34.70%	–0.70 pp (–1.74%)	–4.80 pp (–12.15%)	–5.50 pp (–13.68%)
ISCED 3–4	57.90%	56.60%	59.00%	–1.30 pp (–2.25%)	2.40 pp (4.24%)	1.10 pp (1.90%)
ISCED 5–8	1.90%	3.90%	6.30%	2.00 pp (105.26%)	2.40 pp (61.54%)	4.40 pp (231.58%)
Rural areas						
ISCED 0–2	n.d.	40.80%	39.00%	---	–1.80 pp (–4.41%)	---
ISCED 3–4	n.d.	55.20%	55.40%	---	0.20 pp (0.36%)	---
ISCED 5–8	n.d.	4.00%	5.60%	---	1.60 pp (40.00%)	---

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfs_9913) – data extracted in 29.04.2020

Chart 5. Young population by educational attainment level and degree of urbanisation (%) 2009-2019 (Croatia)



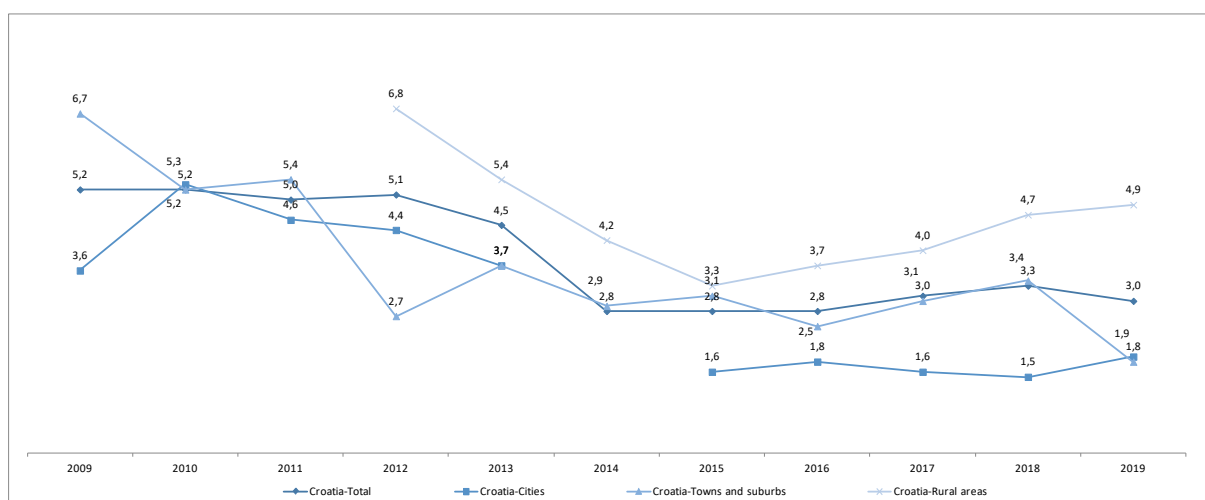
Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_9913) – data extracted in 29.04.2020

In the past decade, there has been a decrease of the Croatian population with lower levels of education and an increase of the proportion of those with higher educational attainment. The proportion of Croatian population with tertiary education (ISCED 5–8) increased 154.17% in the last decade (2009–2.40%; 2019–6.10%). This trend cuts across cities and towns and suburbs rural areas. However, data are missing by educational attainment in rural areas for 2009.

3.3.2. Early school leavers

Chart 6 displays the evolution of ESLET from 2009 to 2019 in Croatia and across different degrees of urbanisation. At the national level, a decline from 5.2% to 3.0% is notable for the 2009–2019 period, even though this decline is not constant, yet in some years slight growth is also notable. At the cities level, a decline from 3.6% to 1.9% is apparent, but it should be noted that the data for 2014 is not available. An even more significant decline is apparent for towns and suburbs, from 6.7% to 1.8%, although even here the decline is not constant over the years, rather in some years growth may be observed. For rural areas, a decline is also apparent if the first and last years (2009 and 2019) are observed, and the values are 6.8% and 4.9%, even though it is noteworthy that growth can be seen from 2015 onward.

Chart 6. Early leavers from education and training (%) 2009–2019 (Croatia) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_9913) – data extracted on 29.04.2020

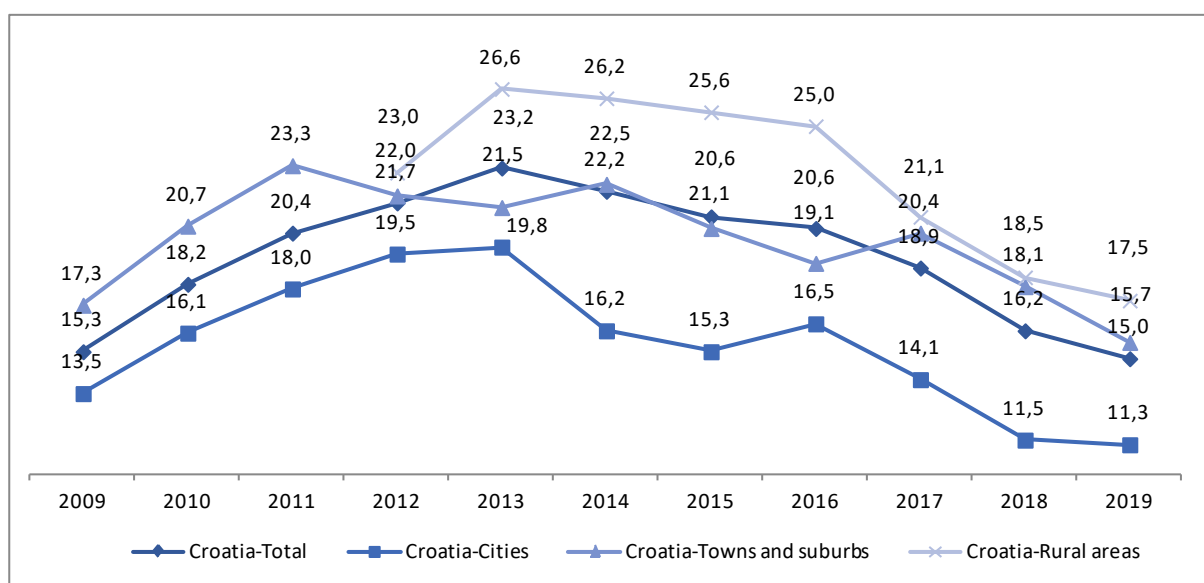
There has been a progressive and significant decrease of ESLET in Croatia from 2009 until 2014. Since 2014, there has been slight increase of ESLET in Croatia until 2018, and then again a slight decrease for 2019. In rural areas, there has been progressive decrease of ESLET from 2012 until 2015 (-51.47%), and then a progressive increase from 2015 until 2019 (48.48%).

3. 4. NEET

3. 4. 1. NEET rate

Chart 7 displays the overall evolution of the NEET ratio throughout the country and at all degrees of urbanisation between 2009 and 2019. According to the chart, the NEET rate in Croatia declined in the 2009–2019 period from 15.3% to 15.0%. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that this trend grew until 2013, and then began to decline, so the reduction is not significant. At the level of cities, the value fell from 13.5% to 11.3%, also with growth until 2013, and then a decline ensued. At the level of towns and suburbs, a decline of 17.3% to 15.7% was registered, with some growth in individual years. In rural areas, the value fell from 23.0% to 17.5%, and the highest value was registered in 2013 (26.6%). A gradation in values has been noted given the degree of urbanisation, so the lowest values were recorded in cities, and the highest in rural areas.

Chart 7. Evolution of the NEET rates (%) 2009–2019 (Croatia) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_9913) – data extracted on 29.04.2020



Table 5 and Chart 8 display the evolution of NEETs by age sub-groups for the country and for each degree of urbanisation. In 2019, the smallest share of NEET in Croatia was registered in the 15–19 age group (8.4%), and the highest in the 25–29 age group (18.8%). With regards to the degree of urbanisation, the highest share of NEET in 2019 was in rural areas for all age groups, except the 25–29 age group, whose share was the highest in towns and suburbs (22.7%). With regards to absolute and relative change, at the national level from 2009 to 2019 the 15–19 and 20–24 age groups experienced negative absolute and relative change values, while the 25–29 and 30–34 age groups registered positive absolute and relative change values. It is noteworthy that all age groups at the national level registered positive absolute and relative change values between 2009 and 2013, and negative values from 2013 to 2019.

At the cities level, all age groups registered negative absolute and relative change values in the 2009–2019 period, and the same also applies to the 2013–2019 period. During the 2009–2013 period, only the 15–19 age group registered negative absolute and relative change values, while the remaining age groups registered positive absolute and relative change values.

At the level of towns and suburbs, a decline may be seen in all age groups during the 2009–2019 period, except for the 25–29 group, which was the only one to register growth (3.5 pp; 18.23%). The situation is similar at the national level, and here all age groups are characterised by positive absolute and relative change values during the 2009–2013 period and negative values during the 2013–2019 period.

There are no data for rural areas in 2009. All age groups are characterised by a decline in absolute and relative change values in the 2013–2019 period, which complies with the values at other degrees of urbanisation and at the national level.

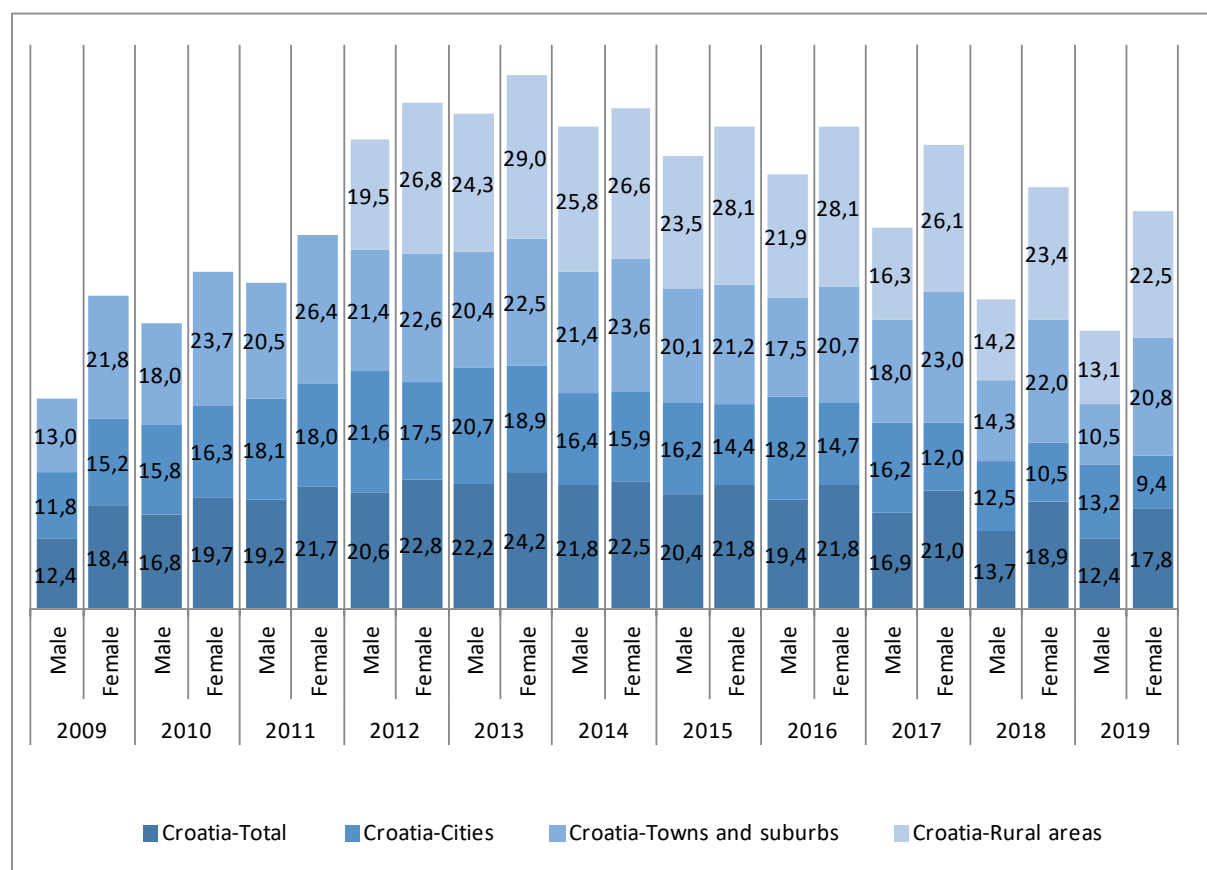


Table 5. NEET rate (%) by age sub-groups and by degree of urbanisation in Croatia, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
15–19	9.50%	11.90%	8.40%	2.40 pp (25.26%)	-3.50 pp (-29.41%)	-1.10 pp (-11.58%)
20–24	17.10%	27.20%	14.80%	10.10 pp (59.06%)	-12.40 pp (-45.59%)	-2.30 pp (-13.45%)
25–29	17.40%	27.10%	18.80%	9.70 pp (55.75%)	-8.30 pp (-30.63%)	1.40 pp (8.05%)
30–34	16.60%	25.50%	17.20%	8.90 pp (53.61%)	-8.30 pp (-32.55%)	0.60 pp (3.61%)
Cities						
15–19	7.80%	7.50%	5.60%	-0.30 pp (-3.85%)	-1.90 pp (-25.33%)	-2.20 pp (-28.21%)
20–24	13.70%	21.30%	11.50%	7.60 pp (55.47%)	-9.80 pp (-46.01%)	-2.20 pp (-16.06%)
25–29	16.10%	24.20%	16.00%	8.10 pp (50.31%)	-8.20 pp (-33.88%)	-0.10 pp (-0.62%)
30–34	14.50%	23.60%	11.30%	9.10 pp (62.76%)	-12.30 pp (-52.12%)	-3.20 pp (-22.07%)
Towns and suburbs						
15–19	10.80%	11.40%	8.80%	0.60 pp (5.56%)	-2.60 pp (-22.81%)	-2.00 pp (-18.52%)
20–24	20.10%	24.80%	11.90%	4.70 pp (23.38%)	-12.90 pp (-52.02%)	-8.20 pp (-40.80%)
25–29	19.20%	23.70%	22.70%	4.50 pp (23.44%)	-1.00 pp (-4.22%)	3.50 pp (18.23%)
30–34	14.50%	23.60%	11.30%	9.10 pp (62.76%)	-12.30 pp (-52.12%)	-3.20 pp (-22.07%)
Rural areas						
15–19	n.d.	14.60%	10.20%	---	-4.40 pp (-30.14%)	---
20–24	n.d.	31.80%	19.70%	---	-12.10 pp (-38.05%)	---
25–29	n.d.	32.50%	17.80%	---	-14.70 pp (-45.23%)	---
30–34	n.d.	28.30%	21.80%	---	-6.50 pp (-22.97%)	---

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted on 29.04.2020

Chart 8. NEET rates (%) 2009–2019 (Croatia) by sex and degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_9913) – data extracted on 29.04.2020

Between 2009 and 2013, during the economic crisis, Croatia presented higher NEET rates compared to the period between 2014 and 2019 which was marked by an economic recovery. Although there has also been a decline in NEET rates in rural areas since 2013, in 2019, compared to cities and towns and suburbs, the proportion of NEETs is higher (cities – 11.30%; towns and suburbs – 15.70% and rural – 17.50%).



4. CONCLUSIONS

Youth population | The number of young people in Croatia has been in decline over the past decade. This pertains to all youth age groups. The situation in rural areas has been particularly dire since 2013.

Youth unemployment | Youth employment has grown in the past decade. However, a decline in the number of employed was registered in the 2009–2013 period as a result of the economic crisis and recession, while growth in the number of employed was registered in the 2013–2019 period. With regard to the degree of urbanisation, slight growth in the number of employed was present in Croatian cities in the 2009–2019 period, while in towns and suburbs a decline in the number of employed was registered for the 15–19, 20–24 and 25–29 age groups. Complete data is lacking for rural areas, so all that may be observed is that general employment of young people declined in the 2009–2019 period.

Youth unemployment | During the 2009–2019 period, a decline in the number of unemployed young people was registered, both overall and among all age groups, except for the 30–34 group. The economic crisis and recession in the 2009–2013 period led to growth in the number of those unemployed, while in the 2013–2019 period a drop in the number of unemployed was registered. With regards to degree of urbanisation, a decline in the number of unemployed from 2009 to 2019 was registered both overall and in all age groups. In towns and suburbs, a decline in the number of unemployed during this period was only seen in the 20–24 group, while growth in unemployment was registered in all other age groups given that growth in unemployment was considerably higher in the 2009–2013 period than the decline in the 2013–2019 period. There are no complete data for rural areas, but based on data concerning the number of employed, it may be presumed that unemployment among young people in rural areas grew.

Educational attainment | In the 2009–2019 period, the share of young people in Croatia who have achieved ISCED 5–8 education levels has grown, while the share of the remainder is falling. Growth in the share of young people who have attained ISCED 5–8 levels was registered in this period in both cities and towns and suburbs. There are no data for rural



areas, but slight growth in the share of young people who have attained ISCED 3–4 and ISCED 5–8 has been registered, as well as a decline in ISCED 0–2, during the 2013–2019 period.

ESLET | ESLET has decreased in Croatia during the 2009–2019 period at both at the national level and across different degrees of urbanisation. Even so, this decline has not been constant over the years, rather there has been growth in some years.

NEETs | The NEETs share decreased between 2009 and 2019 at the national level and across all degrees of urbanisation. However, this difference is slight on average given that the share of NEETs in Croatia grew in 2013, but after 2013 a decline proceeded.



5. REFERENCES

Bedeniković, I. (2017). (Ne)zaposlenost mladih i NEET populacija u Hrvatskoj [Youth (Un)Employment and the NEET Population in Croatia]. *Mali Levijatan*, 4 (1), 75–90. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/187011>

Đulabić, V. (2018). Lokalna samouprava i decentralizacija u Hrvatskoj: Rezultati istraživanja i preporuke za poboljšanje politike decentralizacije (Analysis) [Local self-government and decentralization in Croatia: Research results and recommendations for improving decentralization policy (Analysis)]. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Regional Office for Croatia and Slovenia. <https://bib.irb.hr/datoteka/962156.VDulabic-Lokalna-samouprava-i-decentralizacija.pdf>

European Union Youth Strategy 2019–2027

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C:2018:456:FULL>

Ilišin, V., & Spajić Vrkaš, V. (2015). Potrebe, problemi i potencijali mladih u Hrvatskoj (Istraživački izvještaj) [Needs, problems and potential of young people in Croatia (Research report)]. Ministarstvo socijalne politike i mladih. Zagreb.

Opačić, V. T. (2014). Geografija Hrvatske [The Geography of Croatia]: In Hrvatska na prvi pogled: udžbenik hrvatske kulture. In S. D. Udier (Ed.), *Hrvatska na prvi pogled: udžbenik hrvatske kulture* [Croatia at first sight: Textbook of Croatian culture] (p.p. 8–49). FFpress.

Nacionalni program za mlade za razdoblje od 2014. do 2017. godine [National Youth Program for the period from 2014 to 2017].

<http://arhiva.mladi-eu.hr/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Nacionalni-program-za-mlade-14-17.pdf>

Nacionalni program za mlade za razdoblje od 2020. do 2024. Godine – nacrt [National Youth Program for the period from 2020 to 2024 – draft].

<https://mdomsp.gov.hr/istaknute-teme/mladi-i-volonterstvo/mladi-9015/nacionalni-program-za-mlade-9024/9024>



COST Action CA18213
Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural
NEETs social exclusion

Plan implementacije Garancije za mlade za razdoblje 2019. do 2020. godine [Implementation plan for the Youth Guarantee for the period 2019 to 2020]. Ministarstvo rada i mirovinskog sustava. <http://www.gzm.hr/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Plan-implementacije-Garancije-za-mlade-za-razdoblje-od-2019.-do-2020.-godine.pdf>

Strategija obrazovanja, znanosti i tehnologije: Nove boje znanja (2014) [Education, Science and Technology Strategy: New Colors of Knowledge]. https://www.azoo.hr/images/AZOO/Cjelovit_sadrzaj_Strategije_obrazovanja_znanosti_i_tehnologije.pdf

Youth Dialogue. Creating Opportunities for Youth. Outcomes of the 7th Cycle of EU Youth Dialogue, created at the EU Youth Conference 2020, Zagreb, Croatia. <https://mdomsp.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/Vijesti2020/Creating%20Opportunities%20for%20Youth%20-%20outcomes%20report%2027%20mar%202020.pdf>

Zakon o odgoju i obrazovanju u osnovnoj i srednjoj školi [Primary and Secondary School Education Act] http://narodnenovine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2008_07_87_2789.htm

Zakon o radu [Labour Act] <https://www.zakon.hr/z/307/Zakon-o-radu>

Zakon o savjetima mladih [Youth Councils Act]
https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2014_03_41_724.html



COST Action CA18213
Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural
NEETs social exclusion

6. IMPORTANT LINKS

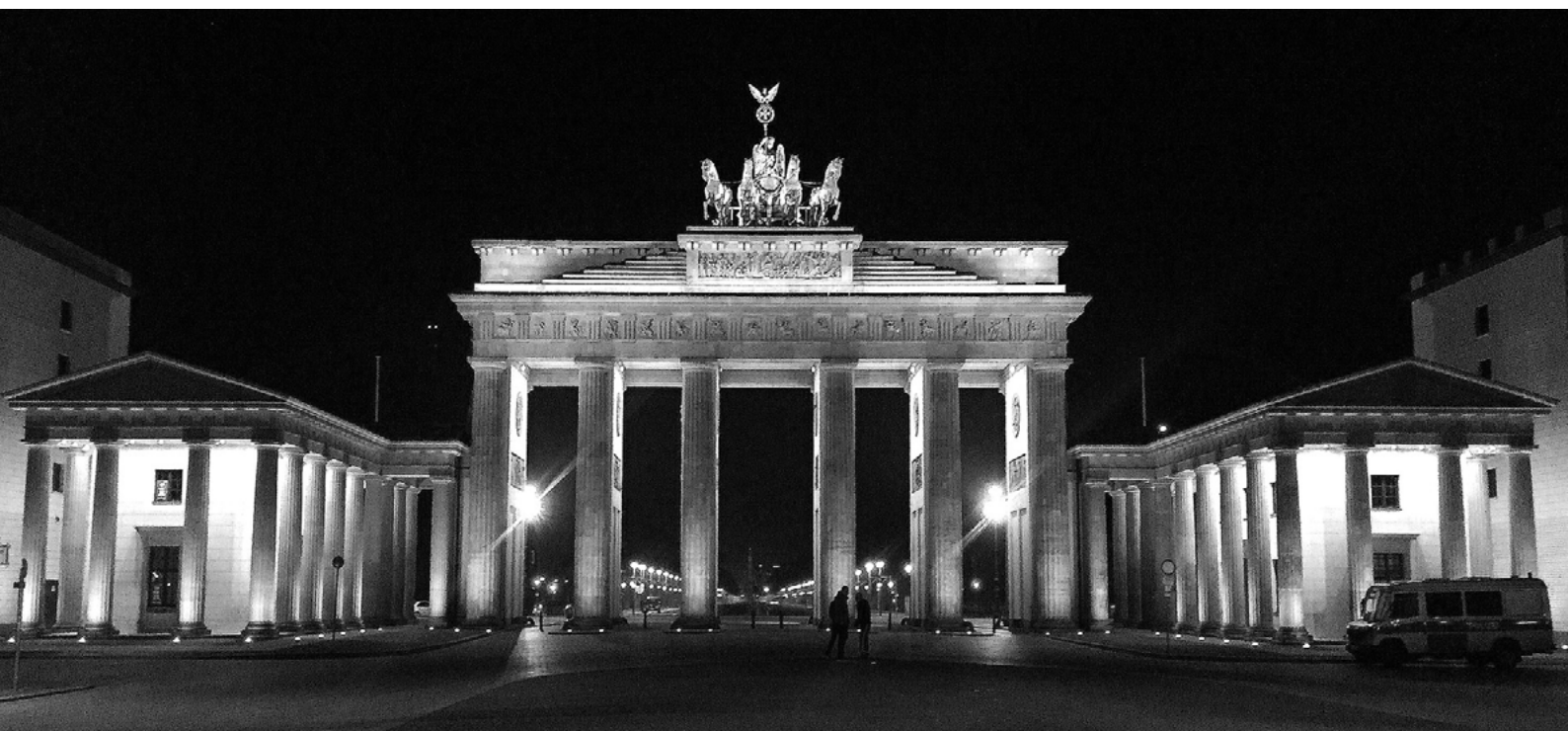
Ministarstva za demografiju, obitelj, mlade i socijalnu politiku (Mladi i odjel za mlade) [Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy (Youth and Youth Department)]
<https://mdomsp.gov.hr/istaknute-teme/mladi-i-volonterstvo/mladi-9015/9015>

Ministarstvo rada i mirovinskog sustava (Garancija za mlade) [Ministry of Labour and Pension System (Youth Guarantee)] <https://mrms.gov.hr/pristup-informacijama-16/najces-ca-pitanja-i-odgovori/garancija-za-mlade/5689>

Ministarstvo znanosti i obrazovanja (Odgoj i obrazovanje) [Ministry of Science and Education (Education)] <https://mzo.gov.hr/odgoj-i-obrazovanje/109>

Popis stanovništva, kućanstava i stanova 2011. [2011 Census]
<https://www.dzs.hr/hrv/censuses/census2011/censuslogo.htm>

RURAL NEETs IN GERMANY



2009/2019
OVERVIEW

AUTHORS

Christin Heinz-Fischer – chris.heinzfischer@web.de
Heidelberg University

Jale Tosun – jale.tosun@ipw.uni-heidelberg.de
Heidelberg University

Julia Weiss – julia.weiss@ipw.uni-heidelberg.de
Heidelberg University

Image by Saiko3P from Freepik.com

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged.
Please cite this publication as "COST CA18213 Rural NEETs in Germany:
2009/2019 Overview.

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. CONTEXTUALIZATION	7
2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE	9
3. DATA ANALYSIS	10
3. 1. Population and youth population	10
3. 2. Employment and unemployment	13
• Youth employment	13
• Youth unemployment	15
3. 3. Education	19
• Young people by educational attainment level	19
• Early school leavers	24
3. 5. NEETs	26
• Neet rate	26
4. CONCLUSIONS	31
5. REFERENCES	32
6. IMPORTANT LINKS	33

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines in detail the situation of rural Youths Neither in Employment, nor in Education or Training (NEET) aged between 15 and 34 years old, over the last decade (2009–2019) in Germany. To do this, the report utilised indicators of: youth population; youth employment and unemployment; education; and, NEETs distribution. The characterisation of all indicators adopted the degree of urbanisation as a central criterion, enabling proportional comparisons between rural areas, towns and suburbs, cities and the whole country. These analyses are further divided into age subgroups and, where possible, into sex groups for greater detail.

The statistical procedures adopted across the different selected dimensions involve: descriptive longitudinal analysis; using graphical displays (e.g., overlay line charts); and, the calculation of proportional absolute and relative changes between 2009 and 2013, 2013 and 2019, and finally 2009 and 2019. These time ranges were chosen to capture the indicators evolution before and after the economic crisis which hit European countries. All data was extracted from Eurostat public datasets.

The analyses show that the rural youth population aged 15 to 24 years significantly increased between 2009 and 2012 and then decreased slightly until 2019. The youth employment rate in Germany is generally increasing, and is at all times significantly higher in rural areas than in cities, towns and suburbs. The reverse trend applies to youth unemployment, which generally decreased in the observed period and which is at all times lowest in rural areas. A look at educational attainment levels showed a slight decline in rural areas of low educated persons between 2009 and 2019, while the proportion of rural youth with medium and high education slightly increased. At the same time, the proportion of early school leavers in rural areas after an increase until 2011, fell sharply and reached the 2009 level again by 2019. Being 9% in 2019, it remains, at least in rural areas, slightly below the 10% target defined by the Europe 2020 strategy. Finally, the proportion of NEETs in Germany is lower in rural areas in all age classes and as a whole decreased significantly from 2009 to 2019.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieser Bericht beschreibt die Situation von in ländlichen Gebieten lebenden jungen Erwachsenen (15–34 Jahre), die weder erwerbstätig noch in der allgemeinen oder beruflichen (Aus-)Bildung (NEET) sind, zwischen 2009 und 2019 in Deutschland.

Zu diesem Zweck umfasst der Bericht Indikatoren zur jugendlichen Bevölkerung, zur Jugendbeschäftigung und Jugendarbeitslosigkeit, zur Bildung und zur Verteilung der NEETs. Bei der Charakterisierung aller Indikatoren wurde der Grad der Verstädterung als zentrales Kriterium herangezogen, wodurch proportionale Vergleiche zwischen ländlichen Gebieten, Kleinstädten und Vororten, Städten und dem gesamten Land möglich sind. Diese Analysen werden dann zur weiteren Vertiefung in Altersuntergruppen und, wenn möglich, in Geschlechtergruppen unterteilt.

Die angewandten statistischen Verfahren in den verschiedenen ausgewählten Dimensionen umfassen deskriptive Längsschnittanalysen mit Hilfe grafischer Darstellungen (z.B. überlagerte Liniendiagramme) sowie die Berechnung der proportionalen absoluten und relativen Veränderungen zwischen 2009 und 2013, 2013 und 2019, sowie 2009 und 2019. Diese Zeiträume wurden gewählt, um die Entwicklung der Indikatoren vor und nach der Wirtschaftskrise, welche die europäischen Länder traf, zu erfassen. Alle Daten wurden aus öffentlichen Eurostat-Datensätzen extrahiert.

Die Analysen zeigen, dass der Anteil junger Erwachsene im ländlichen Raum im Alter von 15 bis 24 Jahren zwischen 2009 und 2012 deutlich zugenommen hat und dann bis 2019 leicht zurückgegangen ist. Die Jugendbeschäftigungsquote in Deutschland stieg generell an und ist in ländlichen Gebieten stets deutlich höher als in den Städten, Kleinstädten und Vororten. Der umgekehrte Trend gilt für die Jugendarbeitslosigkeit, die im Beobachtungszeitraum im Allgemeinen zurückging und in ländlichen Gebieten stets am niedrigsten ist. Ein Blick auf das Bildungsniveau zeigte in ländlichen Gebieten zwischen 2009 und 2019 einen leichten Rückgang der Jugendlichen mit niedrigem Bildungsniveau, während der Anteil der Jugendlichen mit mittlerer und hoher Bildung auf dem Land leicht zunahm. Gleichzeitig ging der Anteil der Schulabbrecher in ländlichen Gebieten nach einem Anstieg bis 2011 stark zurück und erreichte 2019 dann wieder das Niveau von 2009. Mit 9% im Jahr 2019 blieb dies, zumindest in ländlichen Gebieten, leicht unter dem in der EU-Strategie "Europa 2020" festgelegten Ziel von 10%. Schließlich ist der Anteil der NEETs in Deutschland in ländlichen Gebieten in allen Altersklassen geringer als in den anderen Regionen und insgesamt von 2009 bis 2019 deutlich zurückgegangen.

INTRODUCTION

This report proceeds in three sections. It begins with an introductory contextualisation with the most relevant information about German social, economic and political situation in the last two decades and key youth policies based on a relevant literature review. A methodological note explains the database used and the statistical operations undertaken. The most extensive section of the report refers to the analysis performed, with a specific focus on young people, by degree of urbanisation and concerning four main topics: population; employment; education; and, NEETs.

The report ends with a brief conclusion that highlights the main results regarding the topics explored.



1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

Germany is located in the middle of Europe and shares its borders with nine other countries. No other European country has more neighbours. With 357.582 m2 it is the fourth largest country in the European Union. At the end of 2019, the country had an estimated population of 83.2 million (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2020). Germany is a federal republic wherein political sovereignty is divided between the sixteen partly-sovereign states ("Bundesländer") and the central state.

The age of consent in Germany is 18. Youth issues are addressed by the Federal Law within the Social Codebook, Book VIII ("Sozialgesetzbuch, Achtes Buch Kinder- und Jugendhilfe"). Youth Policies are based on the Child and Youth Services Act ("Kinder- und Jugendhilfegesetz"), which came into force in 1991 and from which each federal state derives its own implementation act (Youthwiki, 2020). Thus, youth policy creation takes place at both the national and the federal level. Based on the principle of subsidiarity, at the national level the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Woman and Youth ("Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend") is only responsible for youth policies that are of supra-regional significance. The federal ministry pursued a "new youth policy" for a couple of years and this resulted in a joint youth strategy introduced in December 2019 (Youthwiki, 2020).

Furthermore, in the field of education responsibilities are shared between the national and state levels. Responsibilities are defined in the Basic Law ("Grundgesetz") and, unless otherwise stated, legislation with regard to education lies with the individual federal states. This covers the school sector, the Higher Education sector, Adult Education and Continuing Education (Eurydice, 2020). Education in Germany is universal and dominated by a large public sector, whereby private education is also offered. All children and young people living in Germany are subject to compulsory schooling. They must attend school full-time for at least nine years from the age of six. This begins with primary school, which lasts 4 years (two states are the exception here with 6 years, namely Berlin and Brandenburg). This is followed by an early division into the pathways of lower secondary education ("Hauptschule"), middle secondary education ("Realschule") and higher secondary education ("Gymnasium"). Once pupils have completed compulsory schooling, they can



take a range of courses from full-time general education and vocational schools, as well as vocational training within the dual system (Eurydice, 2020). Within the dual system, vocational training is carried out in two places of learning, namely the workplace and in vocational school ("Berufsschule"). Students who have completed upper secondary education and received a higher education entrance qualification can choose from a wide range of different tertiary education institutions. These include both general institutions of higher education such as universities, "Fachhochschulen" or colleges of art and music as well as specialised institutions such as "Verwaltungsfachhochschulen", "Berufsakademien", "Studienakademien" or "Fachakademien" (Eurydice, 2020).

In terms of employment, the legal age to enter the labour market is 15 as long as the youth has completed, or is enrolled in, secondary education (Federal Office of Justice, 2020). Germany is often singled out as a best practice case in terms of youth labour market outcomes (Tosun, 2017), perhaps most prominently due to the dual vocational system. However, youth unemployment was a primary focus of German active labour market policy (ALMP) long before the economic crisis (Franz et al., 2007, Shore & Tosun, 2019). Overall, Germany pursues an integrated three-dimensional approach to combat youth unemployment (Eichhorst & Rinne, 2015). This includes interventions to strengthen the supply side of the labour market, interventions to boost the demand for labour and interventions in ALMP. However, it should also be noted that there have been significant changes in the labour market in recent years. More precisely, "Hartz" reforms in 2005 changed the labour market to be entered by youth and e.g., introduced the "Jobcenter" as a new institution, which are of central importance for young adults (Shore & Tosun, 2019). Within the reforms, changes in the unemployment benefit schemes and responsibilities of various institutions took place. As a result, young adults now mainly come into contact with the job centre, whereby they usually do not have good experiences and are often not satisfied with its provided services (Shore & Tosun, 2019).

In addition to the three-part approach mentioned above, the focus has always been on youth policy and youth institutions to enhance youth empowerment. This was again underlined in the Federal Government's youth strategy of 2015, which was renewed most recently in 2019 (BM-FSJ, 2019). The guiding principle of this policy approach is the participation of young adults and, for example, a so-called youth check was implemented. This instrument assesses both the impact of national legislation on the life of young adults and checks if young adults were involved in the development of public projects (European Commission, 2017).



2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The German national report uses information gathered by the National Reports Editorial Team of the Rural NEET Youth Network in the Eurostat platform. The main data presented and analysed in this report are from the following Eurostat database:

- Population Statistics: [yth_demo_020]
- EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS): [lfst_r_pgauwsc]; [lfst_r_ergau]; [lfst_r_urgau]; [edat_lfs_9913]; [edat_lfse_30]; [edat_lfse_29]

Selected indicators were extracted from the different databases according to two criteria:

- Time range: the previous decade (2009–2019) in order to have a sufficiently long period of time to capture the main changes and continuities in young people trajectories in education, training and employment. The analysis mainly covered 3 dates – 2009–2013–2019 – in order to capture the impact of the economic and financial crisis that hit Europe and which, in most countries, reached its peak in 2012/2013.
- Age group: age group range varies accordingly to the data available in each indicator (15–24; 15–29; 15–34; and 15–39). Whenever possible, age range also covered young adult's data (30–34 and 35–39) in order to capture the extent of crisis impact on these age groups.

In addition to a descriptive analysis, in order to compare data main changes and continuities in different time periods, absolute and relative change were calculated considering the three main time points that were selected – 2009, 2013 and 2019. Absolute change refers to the simple difference in the indicator over two periods in time and is expressed in percentage points (pp). Relative change expresses the change of a value of an indicator in an earlier period and is expressed in percentage terms.

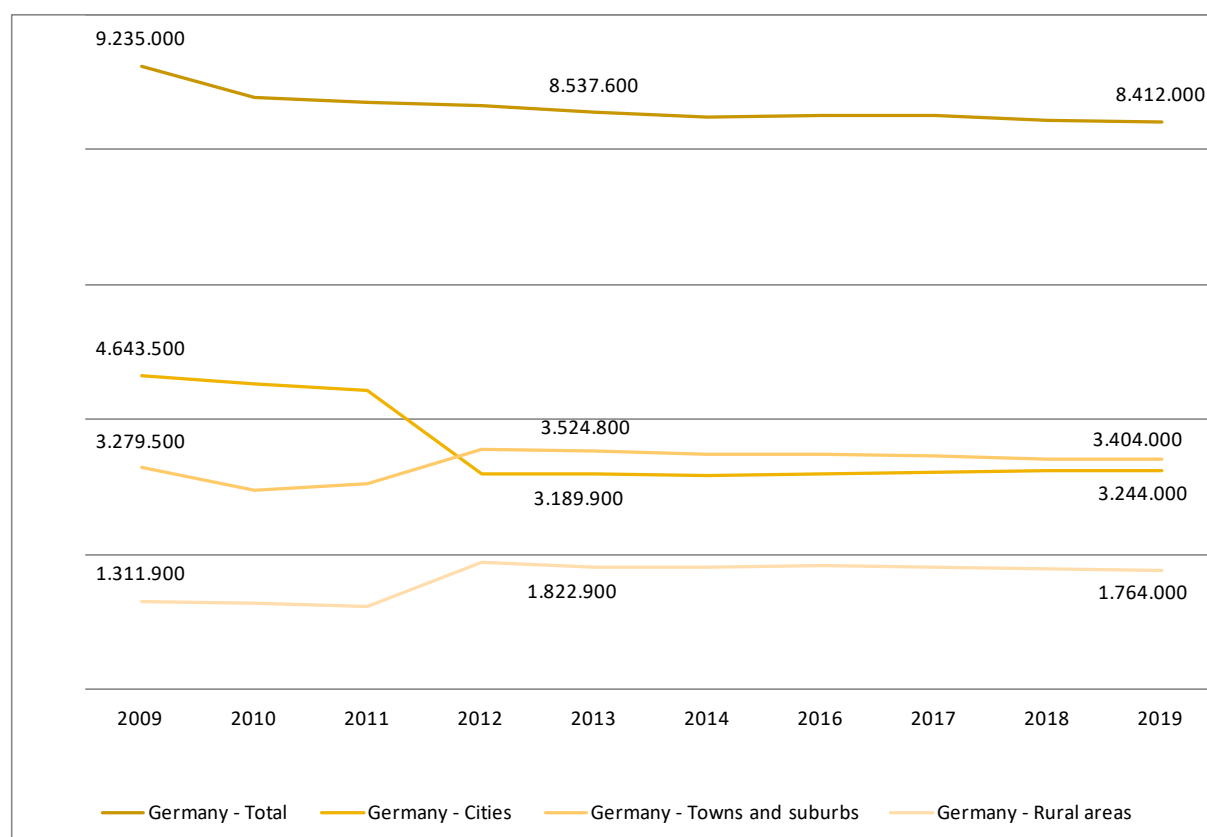


3. DATA ANALYSIS

3. 1. Population and youth population

Chart 1 summarises the evolution of the total youth population (15–24 year olds) between 2009 and 2019 in Germany both for the country and by different degrees of urbanisation. The charts shows that in general the total youth population is declining. Starting with 9.235.000 youth in 2009, that number decreased to 8.537.600 in 2013, and further declined to 8.412.000 in 2019. This trend is the same for both men (4.699.000, in 2009 (change 2009–2013: –304.000; –6.50%); 4.395.000, in 2013 (change 2013–2019: –19.000; –0.43%); 4.376.000, in 2019 (change 2009–2019: –323.000; –6.87%)) and women (4.536.000, in 2009 (change 2009–2013: –393.500; –8.68%); 4.142.500 in 2013 (change 2013–2019: –107.300; –2.59%); 4.035.200, in 2019 (change 2009–2019: –500.800; –11.04%)).

Chart 1. Total youth population (15–24 year olds) 2009–2019 (Germany) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_pgauwsc) – data extracted on 08.07.2020

However, the trend differs significantly for different degrees of urbanisation. In German cities, the number of those aged 15–24 decreased from 4.643.500 in 2009, to 3.189.900 in 2013 (–1.453.600; –31.30%) and 3.244.000 in 2019 (change 2013–2019: 54.100; 1.70%; change 2009–2019: –1.399.500; –30.14%). In the other two regions, the youth population first increased and then decreased again slightly over the same period. In towns and suburbs it increased from 3.279.500, in 2009, to 3.524.800, in 2013 (245.300; 7.48%), before decreasing slightly to 3.404.000, in 2019 (change 2013–2019: –120.800; –3.43%; change 2009–2019: 124.500; 3.80%). In rural areas, youth population increased from 1.311.900, in 2009, to 1.822.900, in 2013 (511.000; 37.95%) and afterwards declined slightly to 1.764.000 in 2019 (change 2013–2019: –58.900; –3.23%; change 2009–2019: 452.100; 34.46%). While most young adults lived in ci–

ties in 2009, this had changed by 2019, when slightly more young adults lived in towns and suburbs. The consistently lowest proportion of youth aged 15–24 live in rural areas.

From 2009 to 2019, youth population (15–24 years) declined in Germany. In cities, there was initially a sharp decline, which flattened out into a slow decline. In towns and suburbs and rural areas, on the other hand, there was an initial increase before a slow decline was also recorded.

According to Table 1, overall the ratio of youth population in Germany has been declining between 2011 and 2019. However, this trend is not the same for all age groups. While the share of 15–24 year olds and 20–24 year olds decreases over time, that of 25–29 year olds increases. The share of 20–24 year olds with relative changes of –9.84% has decreased even more than that of 15–19 year olds with –5.88%.

Table 1. Ratio of youth population by age subgroups and absolute and relative change in Germany (2011–2015, 2015–2019 and 2011–2019)

	2011	2015	2019	Absolute change 2011–2015 (Relative change 2011–2015)	Absolute change 2015–2019 (Relative change 2015–2019)	Absolute change 2011–2019 (Relative change 2011–2019)
Overall (15–29)	17,10%	17,00%	16,60%	–0,10pp (–0.58%)	–0,40pp (–2.35%)	–0,50pp (–2.92%)
15–19	5,10%	5,00%	4,80%	–0,10pp (–2.00%)	–0,20pp (–4.00%)	–0,30pp (–5.88%)
20–24	6,10%	5,60%	5,50%	–0,50pp (–8.20%)	–0,10pp (–1.79%)	–0,60pp (–9.84%)
25–29	6,00%	6,40%	6,40%	0,40pp (6.67%)	0,00 pp (0.00%)	0,40pp (6.67%)

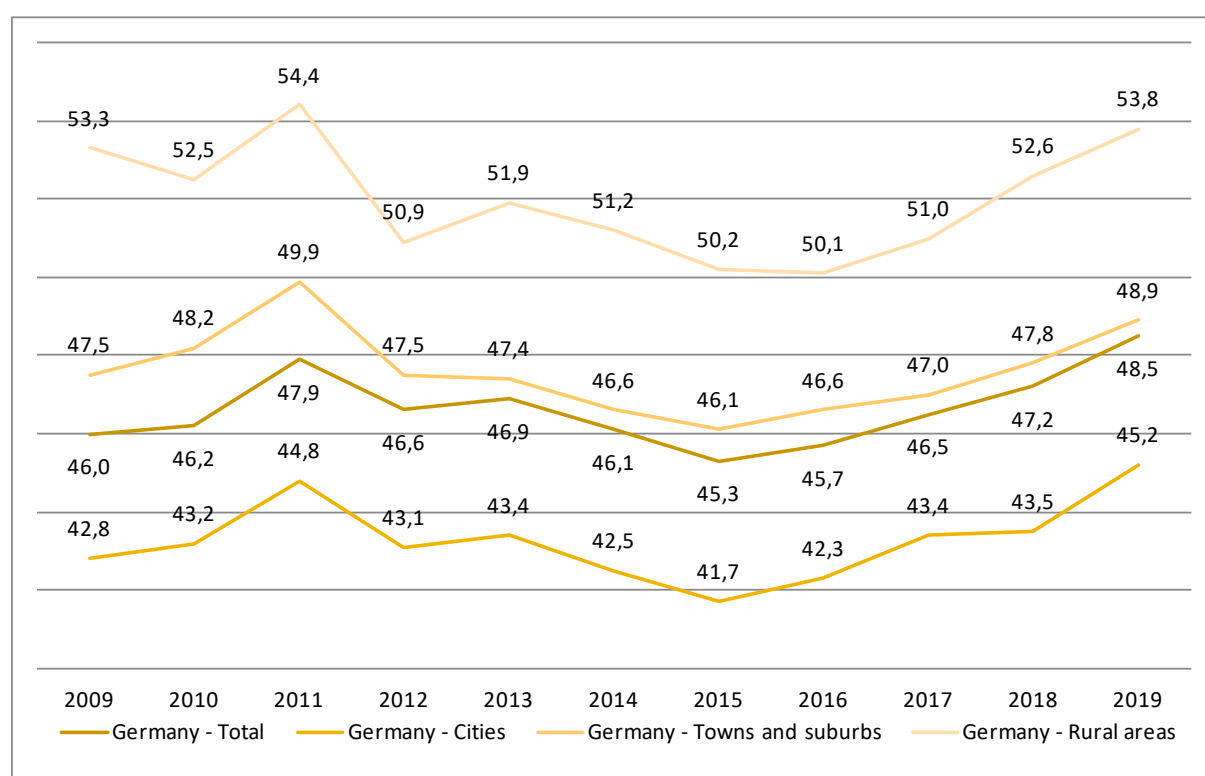
Source: Eurostat: (yth_demo_020) – data extracted in 08.07.20

Since 2011, the youth population ratio (15–29 years) has been declining in Germany. This trend is not the same for all age groups. While the share of 15–24 year olds and 20–24 year olds decreased, that of 25–29 year olds increased.

3. 2. Employment and Unemployment

3. 2. 1. Youth employment

Chart 2. Employment rate, age group 15–24 year olds (%) in Germany (2009–2019) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (fst_r_ergau) – data extracted on 08.07.2020

Chart 2 represents youth employment in Germany, between 2009 and 2019, for different subgroups of urbanisation. For all subgroups, the employment rate shows an increase from 2009 to 2011, followed by a relatively large decrease in 2012, a minimal increase in 2013 and a further decline until 2015. From 2015 the employment rate rises again until 2019. The employment rate in rural areas, e.g., with 53.8% in 2019, is at all times significantly higher than in the other regions. By contrast, the employment rate is lowest in cities with 45.2% in 2019, which is 8.6% lower than in rural areas. The employment rate in towns and suburbs is always similar to the overall average of all regions.

Table 2 allows us to consider the youth employment rate by sex. In general, the employment rate of male youth (e.g., 50.6% in 2019) is slightly higher than that of female youth (e.g., 46.1% in 2019). This trend is the same across all urban regions, with the greatest difference in rural areas. Here, 57.2% were male and 49.8% female

Table 2. Youth employment rates by degree of urbanisation and sex, age group 15–24 year olds (%)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Men	47.5%	48.4%	50.6%	0.9 pp (1.89%)	2.2 pp (4.55%)	3.1 pp (6.53%)
Women	44.4%	45.2%	46.1%	0.8 pp (1.80%)	0.9 pp (1.99%)	1.7 pp (3.83%)
Cities						
Men	43.1%	43.0%	46.0%	–0.1 pp (–0.23%)	3.0 pp (6.98%)	2.9 pp (6.73%)
Women	42.5%	43.9%	44.3%	1.4 pp (3.29%)	0.4 pp (0.91%)	1.8 pp (4.24%)
Towns and suburbs						
Men	50.0%	49.4%	51.5%	–0.6 pp (–1.20%)	2.1 pp (4.25%)	1.5 pp (3.00%)
Women	44.8%	45.1%	46.0%	0.3 pp (0.67%)	0.9 pp (2.00%)	1.2 pp (2.68%)
Rural areas						
Men	56.3%	55.3%	57.2%	–1.0 pp (–1.78%)	1.9 pp (3.44%)	0.9 pp (1.60%)
Women	50.1%	48.0%	49.8%	–2.1 pp (–4.19%)	1.8 pp (3.75%)	–0.3 pp (–0.60%)

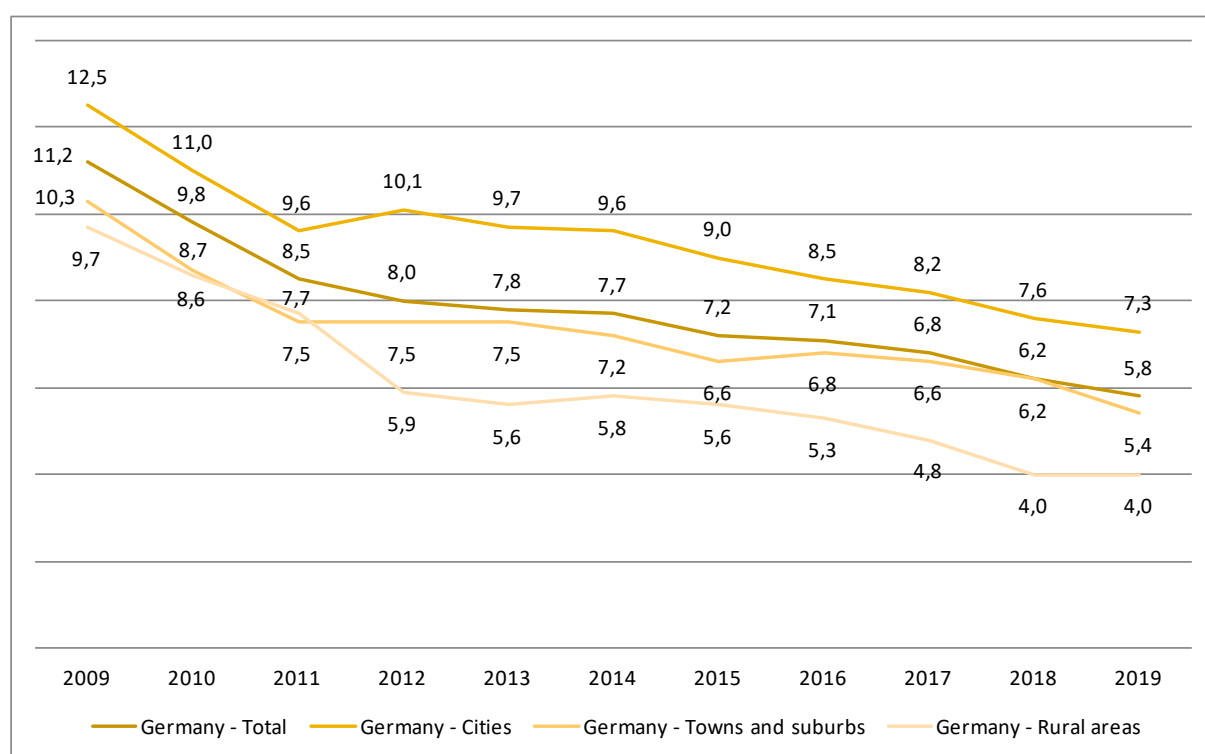
Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergrau) – data extracted in 22.07.20

In the past decade, overall youth employment increased in Germany. At all times the youth employment rates were highest in rural areas and the employment rate of male youth was slightly higher than that of female youth.

3. 2. 2. Youth unemployment

Chart 3 presents youth unemployment across the country. For those aged 15–24 years old, unemployment decreased from 11.2% in 2009 to 5.8% in 2019. The course of this development differs for the regions. In cities, the unemployment rate fell from 12.5% in 2009, to 9.6% in 2011 to increase again to 10.1% in 2012. From then on, it decreased further to 7.3% in 2019. In towns and suburbs, the rate decreased from 10.3% in 2009 to 7.5% in 2011 and remained stable for another two years. Afterwards it decreased significantly until 2015 (6.6%) and, after a brief increase to 6.8% in 2016, continued to decrease. In contrast, the unemployment rate in rural areas decreased significantly from 9.7% in 2009 to 5.9% in 2012, followed by a further flatter decline with a minimal outlier in 2014 (5.8%).

Chart 3. Youth unemployment of 15–24 years old (%) in Germany (2009–2019) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau) – data extracted on 08.07.2020



According to Table 3, across the country, unemployment among those aged 15 to 39 years old decreased from 8.90% in 2009, to 6.20% in 2013 and 4.20% in 2019. The same general trend is evident for all urban regions and age groups. The highest unemployment rate prevails in cities. The strongest decline, with 8.10% in 2009, 4.60% in 2013 and 2.80% in 2019 took place in rural regions. Overall, the highest rate was found among 15–19 year olds in cities in 2009 (14.30%), and the lowest among 30–34 year olds in rural areas in 2019 (2.50%).



Table 3. Ratio of youth unemployment by age subgroups and absolute and relative change in Germany (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Age groups						
Overall	8.90%	6.20%	4.20%	-2.70 pp (-30.34%)	-2.00 pp (-32.26%)	-4.70 pp (-52.81%)
15–19	11.40%	8.40%	7.00%	-3.00 pp (-26.32%)	-1.40 pp (-16.67%)	-4.40 pp (-38.60%)
20–24	11.10%	7.60%	5.30%	-3.50 pp (-31.53%)	-2.30 pp (-30.26%)	-5.80 pp (-52.25%)
25–29	9.30%	6.70%	4.10%	-2.60 pp (-27.96%)	-2.60 pp (-38.81%)	-5.20 pp (-55.91%)
30–34	8.10%	5.70%	3.70%	-2.40 pp (-29.63%)	-2.00 pp (-35.09%)	-4.40 pp (-54.32%)
Cities						
Age groups						
Overall	9.70%	7.50%	5.20%	-2.20 pp (-22.68%)	-2.30 pp (-30.67%)	-4.50 pp (-46.39%)
15–19	14.30%	12.50%	10.30%	-1.80 pp (-12.59%)	-2.20 pp (-17.60%)	-4.00 pp (-27.97%)
20–24	11.90%	9.00%	6.50%	-2.90 pp (-24.37%)	-2.50 pp (-27.78%)	-5.40 pp (-45.38%)
25–29	9.80%	7.30%	4.90%	-2.50 pp (-25.51%)	-2.40 pp (-32.88%)	-4.90 pp (-50.00%)
30–34	9.00%	6.90%	4.50%	-2.10 pp (-23.33%)	-2.40 pp (-34.78%)	-4.50 pp (-50.00%)
Towns and suburbs						
Age groups						
Overall	7.90%	5.80%	3.80%	-2.10 pp (-26.58%)	-2.00 pp (-34.48%)	-4.10 pp (-51.90%)
15–19	10.70%	8.00%	6.70%	-2.70 pp (-25.23%)	-1.30 pp (-16.25%)	-4.00 pp (-37.38%)
20–24	10.10%	7.30%	4.80%	-2.80 pp (-27.72%)	-2.50 pp (-34.25%)	-5.30 pp (-52.48%)
25–29	8.50%	6.70%	3.70%	-1.80 pp (-21.18%)	-3.00 pp (-44.78%)	-4.80 pp (-56.47%)
30–34	7.00%	5.10%	3.40%	-1.90 pp (-27.14%)	-1.70 pp (-33.33%)	-3.60 pp (-51.43%)
30–34						
Rural areas						
Age groups						
Overall	8.10%	4.60%	2.80%	-3.50 pp (-43.21%)	-1.80 pp (-39.13%)	-5.30 pp (-65.43%)
15–19	10.90%	5.70%	3.70%	-5.20 pp (-47.71%)	-2.00 pp (-35.09%)	-7.20 pp (-66.10%)
20–24	9.30%	5.30%	2.80%	-4.00 pp (-43.01%)	-2.50 pp (-47.17%)	-6.50 pp (-69.90%)
25–29	7.30%	4.10%	2.50%	-3.20 pp (-43.84%)	-1.6 pp (-39.02%)	-4.80 pp (-65.75%)
30–34	16.90%	12.40%	12.20%	-4.50 pp (-26.63%)	-0.20 pp (-1.61%)	-4.70 pp (-27.81%)

Table 4 allows us to consider the youth unemployment rate by sex. In 2019, 6.6% of unemployed youth were male and 4.8% were female. This basic trend remains the same across all urban regions. Over time, the unemployment rate has fallen in absolute and relative terms for both sexes. From 2009 to 2019, the unemployment rate fell by 5.9% (-47.2%) for men and 5.0% (-51.02%) for women.

Table 4. Youth unemployment rates by degree of urbanisation and sex, age group 15–24 year olds (%)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Men	12.5%	8.5%	6.6%	-4.0pp (-32.00%)	-1.9pp (-22.35%)	-5.9pp (-47.2%)
Women	9.8%	7.1%	4.8%	-2.7pp (-27.55%)	-2.3pp (-32.39%)	-5.0pp (-51.02%)
Cities						
Men	14.6%	11.2%	8.4%	-3.4pp (-23.29%)	-2.8pp (-25.00%)	-6.2pp (-42.47%)
Women	10.2%	8.2%	6.2%	-2.0pp (-19.61%)	-2.0pp (-24.39%)	-4.0pp (-39.22%)
Towns and suburbs						
Men	11.0%	7.8%	6.2%	-3.2pp (-29.09%)	-1.6pp (-20.51%)	-4.8pp (-43.64%)
Women	9.5%	7.1%	4.3%	-2.4pp (-25.26%)	-2.8pp (-39.44%)	-5.2pp (-54.74%)
Rural areas						
Men	10.0%	5.9%	4.7%	-4.1pp (-41.00%)	-1.2pp (-20.34%)	-5.3pp (-53.00%)
Women	9.2%	5.2%	3.0%	-4.0pp (-43.48%)	-2.2pp (-42.31%)	-6.2pp (-67.39%)

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau) – data extracted on 22.07.2020

From 2009 to 2019 youth unemployment overall decreased. This trend is evident for all urban regions and age groups. This trend also applies when differentiating by sex. Overall, more young men than young women were unemployed.



3. 3. Education

3. 3. 1. Young people by educational attainment level

Table 5 describes the German population, aged 15 to 24 year old, by ISCED levels, between 2009 and 2019, for the country and by degree of urbanisation. The table includes the absolute and relative changes across the different ISCED levels for 2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019. Looking at the values for the country as a whole, very different developments can be seen between the different educational attainment groups. The rate of those who have reached ISCED 0–2 level decreased from 58.00% in 2009 to 44.60% in 2013, before increasing again to 52.80% in 2019. With regards to the ISCED 3–4 group, there was an initial increase from 39.60% in 2009 to 50.90% in 2013, before it decreased again to 42.50% in 2019. By contrast, the rate of those with ISCED 5–8 education increased over the whole period from 2.4% in 2009 and 4.50% in 2013 to 4.70% in 2019.

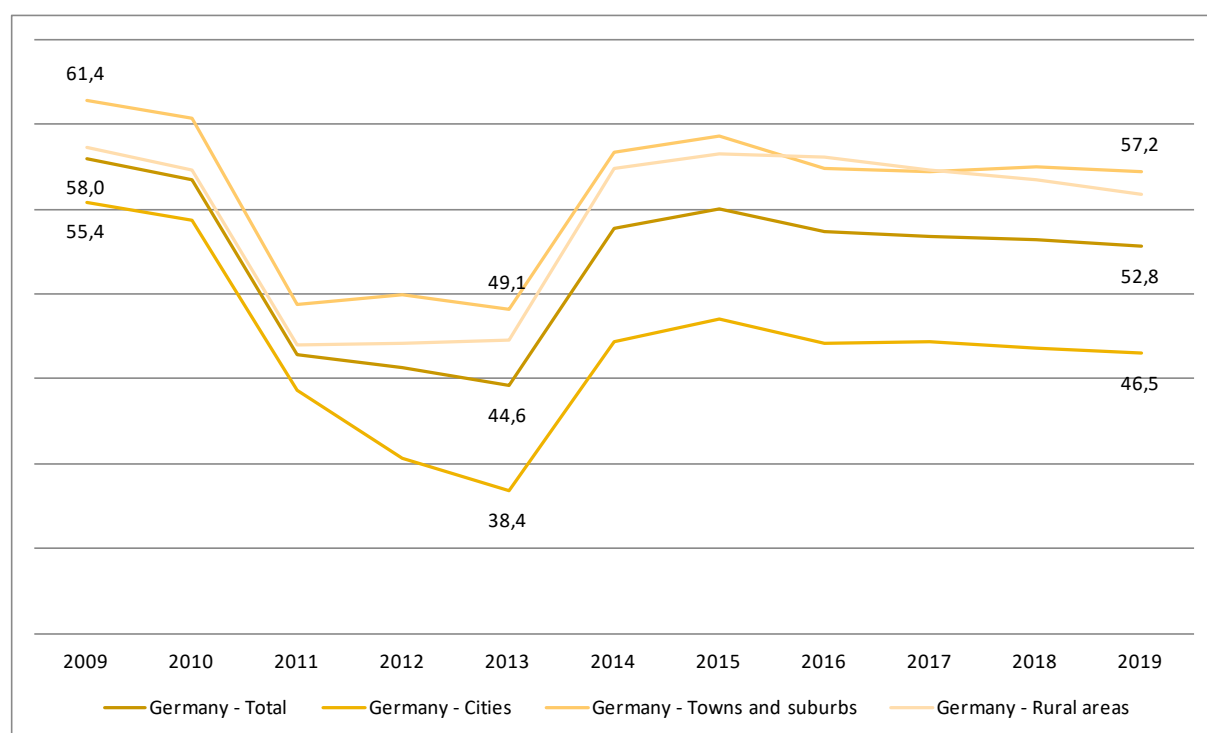
Table 5. German population, aged 15–24, by ISCED levels (%) and degree of urbanisation in Germany, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
ISCED 0–2	58.00%	44.60%	52.80%	–13.40 pp (–23.10%)	8.20 pp (18.39%)	–5.20 pp (–8.97%)
ISCED 3–4	39.60%	50.90%	42.50%	–11.30 pp (–28.54%)	–8.40 pp (–16.50%)	2.90 pp (7.32%)
ISCED 5–8	2.40%	4.50%	4.70%	2.10 pp (0.88%)	0.20 pp (4.44%)	2.30 pp (95.83%)
Cities						
ISCED 0–2	55.40%	38.40%	46.50%	–17.00 pp (–30.69%)	8.00 pp (21.09%)	–8.90 pp (–16.06%)
ISCED 3–4	41.90%	55.90%	47.40%	14.00 pp (33.41%)	–8.50 pp (–15.21%)	5.50 pp (13.13%)
ISCED 5–8	2.70%	5.80%	6.10%	3.10 pp (114.81%)	0.30 pp (5.17%)	3.40 pp (125.93%)
Towns and suburbs						
ISCED 0–2	61.40%	49.10%	57.20%	–12.3 pp (–20.03%)	8.10 pp (16.50%)	4.20 pp (6.84%)
ISCED 3–4	36.70%	47.30%	38.90%	10.60 pp (28.89%)	–8.40 pp (–17.76%)	2.20 pp (5.99%)
ISCED 5–8	2.00%	3.60%	3.80%	1.60 pp (80.00%)	0.20 pp (5.56%)	1.80 pp (90.00%)
Rural areas						
ISCED 0–2	58.60%	47.30%	55.90%	–11.30 pp (–19.28%)	8.60 pp (18.18%)	–2.70 pp (–4.61%)
ISCED 3–4	39.10%	48.70%	40.30%	9.60 pp (24.55%)	–8.40 pp (–17.25%)	1.20 pp (3.07%)
ISCED 5–8	2.30%	4.00%	3.70%	1.70 pp (73.91%)	–0.30 pp (–7.50%)	1.40 pp (60.87%)

Source: Eurostat (edat_ifse_9913) – data extracted in 08.07.2020

The differences between the urban regions becomes clearer when looking at Charts 4, 5 and 6. In all three educational attainment categories, the most significant change took place in the period from 2009 to 2013. In the case of ISCED 0-2, the number fell for all urban regions from 2009 to 2013, whereas in the case of ISCED 3-4 and 5-8, the numbers rose over the same period. In 2014 there was a sharp increase (ISCED 0-2) or decrease (ISCED 3-4 and 5-8). For all ISCED groups numbers stabilised from then on. These trends are the same for all urban regions.

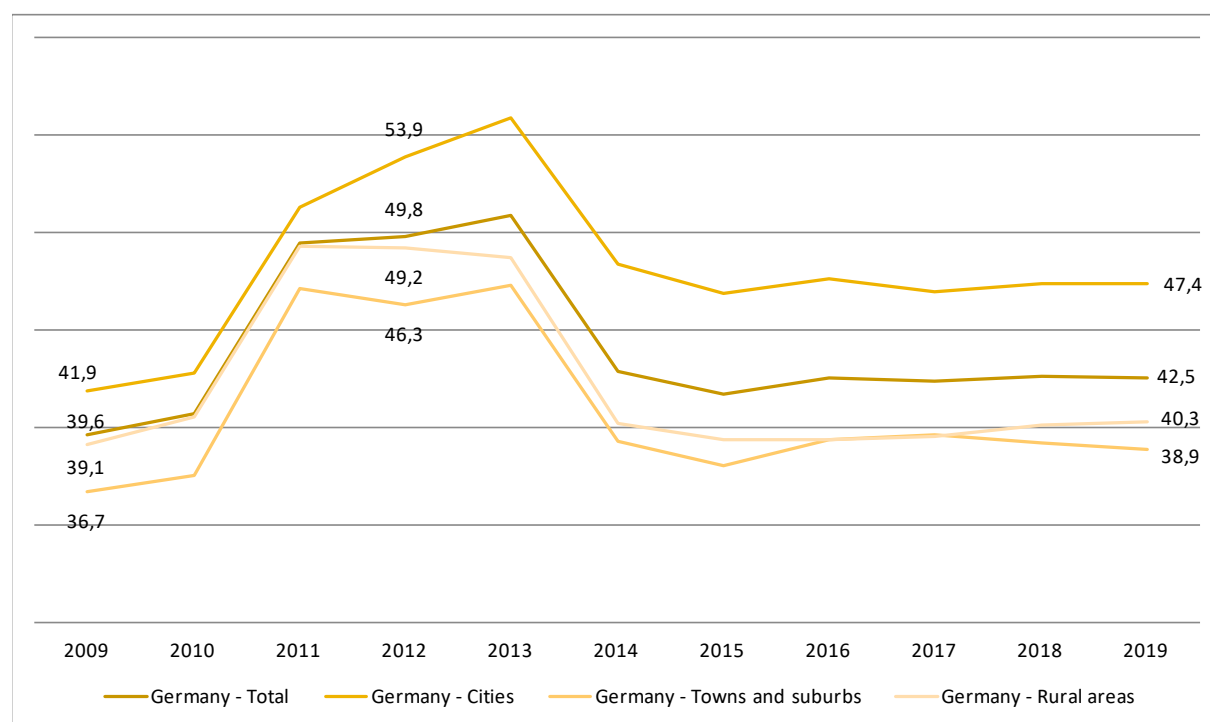
Chart 4. German population (%), aged 15-24 with ISCED level 0-2 and degree of urbanisation in Germany



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_9913) – data extracted in 08.07.2020

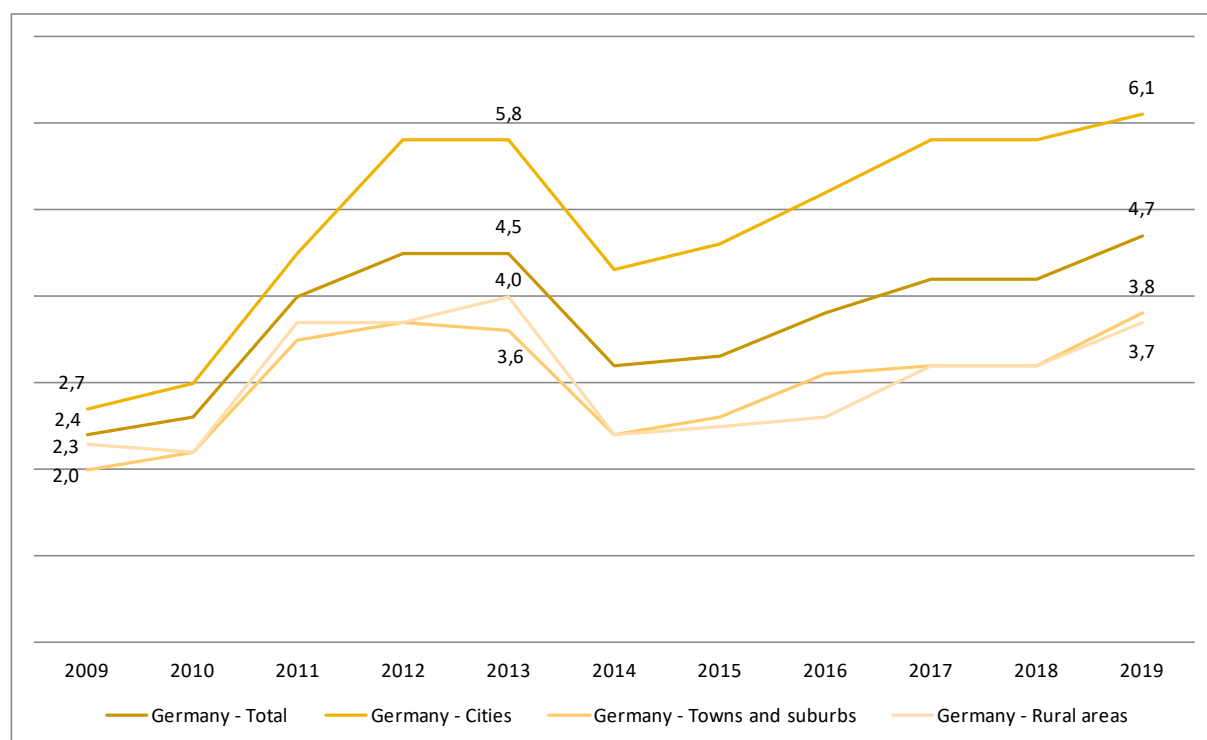


Chart 5. German population (%), aged 15–24 with ISCED level 3–4 and degree of urbanisation in Germany



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_9913) – data extracted in 08.07.2020

Chart 6. German population (%), aged 15–24 with ISCED level 5–8 and degree of urbanisation in Germany



Source: Eurostat (edat_ifse_9913) – data extracted in 08.07.2020

In the past decade, there has been a decrease of the German youth population with lower levels of educational attainment and an increase of the proportion of those with higher educational attainment. While the proportion of the less educated initially fell sharply, that of the more highly educated rose sharply. Since around 2014, the proportion of low and medium educated youth has stabilised, while the proportion of highly educated youth has been rising slightly.

3.3.2. Early school leavers

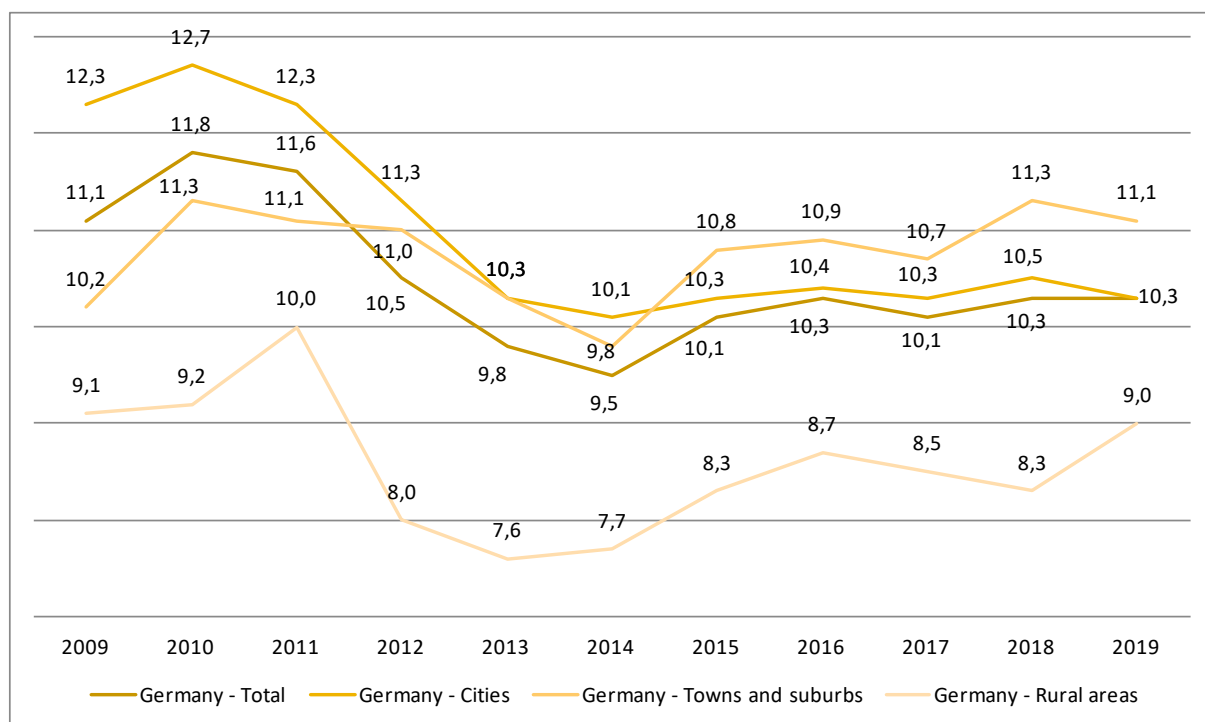
Both Table 6 and Chart 7 display the evolution of early school leavers from 2009 to 2019 in Germany and across different degrees of urbanisation. For the country as a whole, the number of early school leavers decreased from 11.10% in 2009 to 9.80% in 2013 and increased again to 10.30% in 2019. But this development is not the same for all urban regions. In cities, the number decreased from 2009 to 2013 and then remained stable. However, in towns and suburbs the number increased over time. The trend in rural areas is again the same as in the country as a whole. The greatest relative change, with -16.26% over the entire period, can be observed in the cities. The smallest relative and absolute change (-0.10 pp (1.10%)) took place in rural areas. However, if we look at Chart 7 with more data points, it becomes clear that with a peak of 10% in 2011, the change in rural areas is stronger than expected.

Table 6. Ratio of early school leavers by age group 18–24 year olds (%) and absolute and relative change in Germany (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country	11.10%	9.80%	10.30%	-1.30 pp (-11.71%)	0.50 pp (5.10%)	-0.80 pp (-7.21%)
Cities	12.30%	10.30%	10.30%	-2.00 pp (-16.26%)	0.00 pp (0.00%)	-2.00 pp (-16.26%)
Towns and suburbs	10.20%	10.30%	11.10%	0.10 pp (0.98%)	0.80 pp (7.77%)	0.90 pp (8.82%)
Rural areas	9.10%	7.60%	9.00%	-1.50 pp (-16.48%)	1.40 pp (18.42%)	-0.10 pp (-1.10%)

Source: Eurostat (edat_ifse_30) – data extracted on 08.07.2020

Chart 7. Early school leavers age group 18–24 year olds (%) in Germany (2009–2019) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_30) – data extracted on 08.07.2020

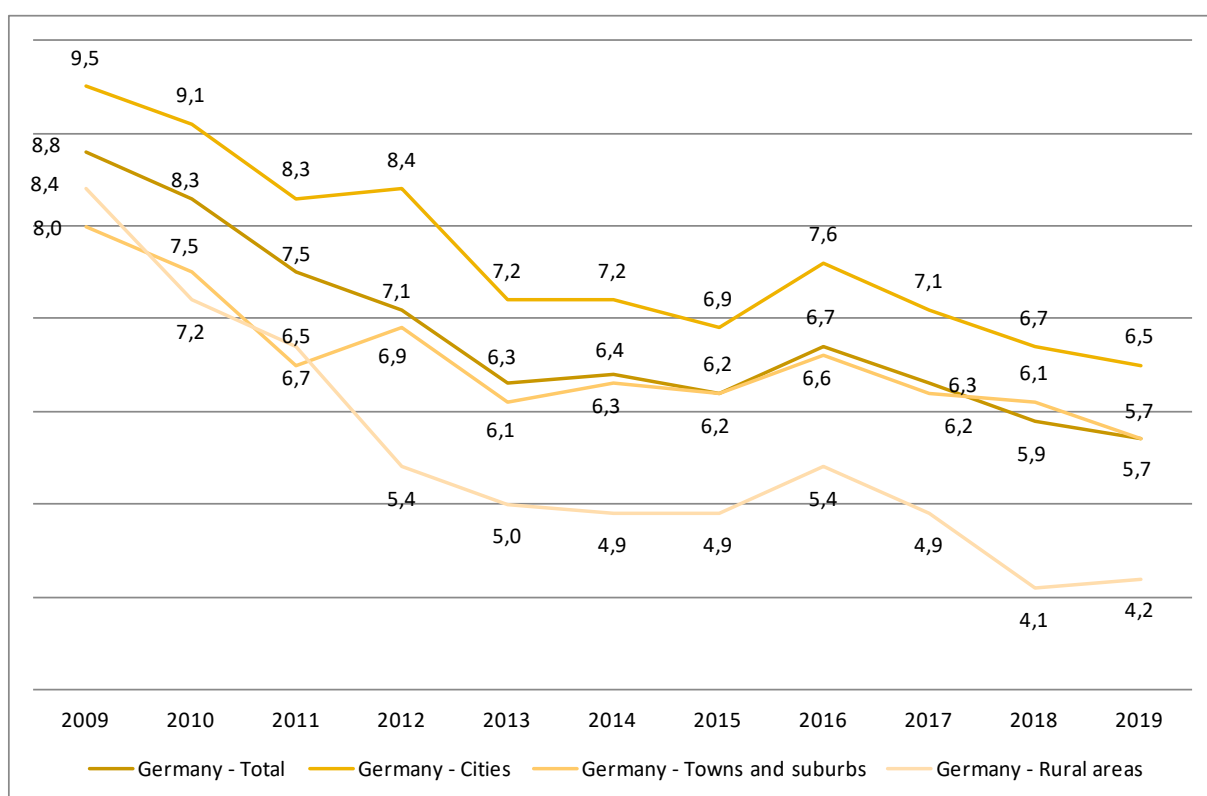
Overall, the number of early school leavers decreased from 2009 to 2019. However, the period was characterised by an initial sharp decline, which was followed by a slight increase. Overall, the decline is true for cities and rural areas, while there was an increase in towns and suburbs.

3. 4. NEETs

3. 4. 1. NEET rate

Chart 8 displays the overall evolution of NEETs proportion across the country and by degree of urbanisation between 2009 and 2019. According to the chart, the NEET rate in Germany decreased from 8.8% in 2009 to 5.7% in 2019. In cities the highest rates of NEET prevail, but the same trend as for the whole country can be found. Thus, the NEET rate in cities decreased from 9.5% in 2009 to 6.5% in 2019. Alongside, in towns and suburbs, the rate decreased from 8.0% in 2009 to 5.7% in 2019. Finally, in rural areas, the NEET share decreased from 8.4% in 2009 to 4.2% in 2019.

Chart 8. NEET rate age group 15–24 year olds (%) by degree of urbanisation in Germany



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted on 08.07.2020



Table 7 displays the evolution of NEETs further differentiated by age groups and urban regions and thus allows for a more nuanced view of the data. In 2019, the NEET rate in Germany ranged between 2.80% for those aged 15–19 years old, and 13.60% for those aged 30–34 years old. For the same year and all age subgroups, rural areas (7.60%) displayed lower NEET rates compared to cities (10.00%) and towns and suburbs (9.50%).

Table 7. NEET rate (%) by age subgroups and by degree of urbanisation in Germany, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

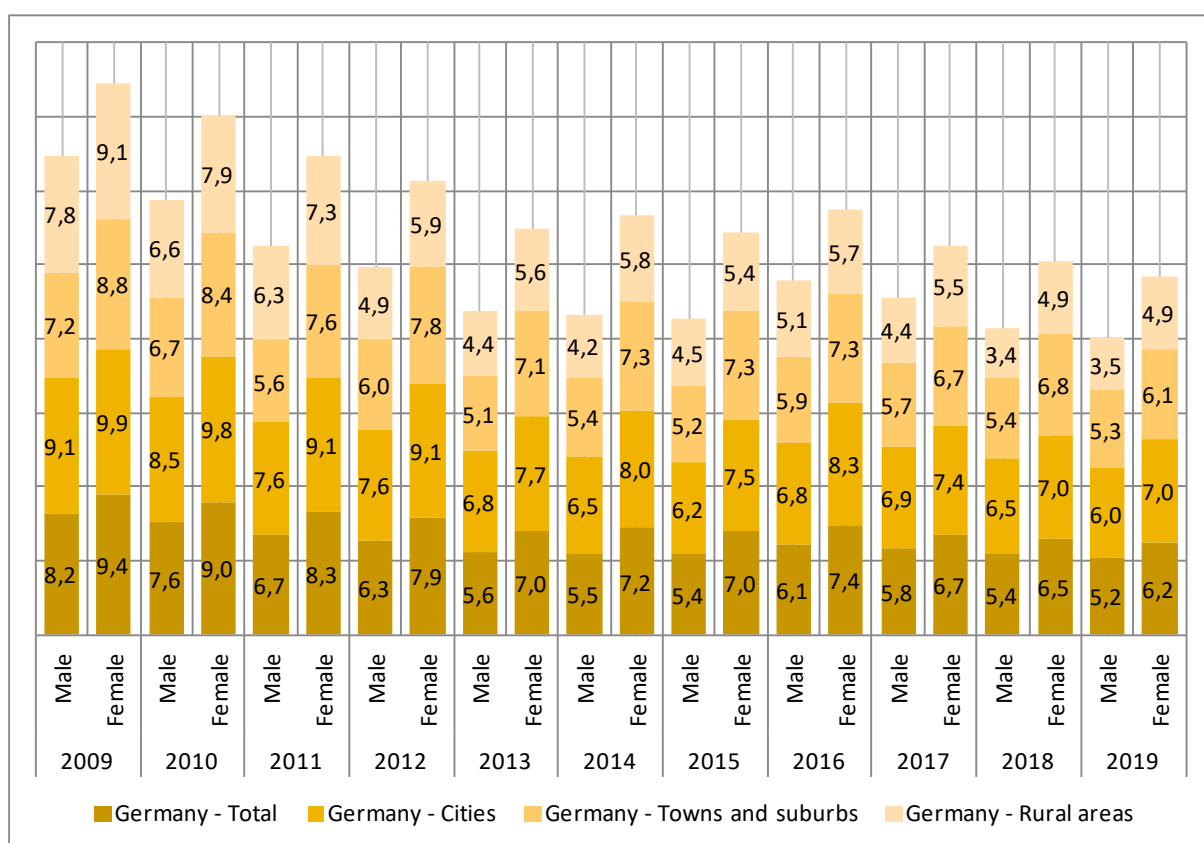
	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Age groups						
Overall	13.00%	10.40%	9.30%	-2.60 pp (-20.00%)	-1.10 pp (-20.58%)	-3.70 pp (-28.46%)
15–19	3.90%	2.60%	2.80%	-1.30 pp (-33.33%)	0.20 pp (7.69%)	-1.10 pp (-28.21%)
20–24	13.30%	9.50%	8.30%	-3.80 pp (-28.57%)	-1.20 pp (-12.63%)	-5.00 pp (-37.59%)
25–29	16.10%	13.10%	11.00%	-3.00 pp (-18.63%)	-2.10 pp (-16.03%)	-5.10 pp (-31.68%)
30–34	18.10%	15.10%	13.60%	-3.00 pp (-16.57%)	-1.50 pp (-9.93%)	-4.50 pp (-24.86%)
Cities						
Age groups						
Overall	13.80%	11.40%	10.00%	-2.40 pp (-17.39%)	-1.40 pp (-12.28%)	-3.80 pp (-27.54%)
15–19	4.40%	3.50%	3.60%	-0.90 pp (-20.45%)	0.10 pp (2.86%)	-0.80 pp (-18.18%)
20–24	13.50%	9.60%	8.40%	-3.90 pp (-28.89%)	-1.20 pp (-9.45%)	-5.10 pp (-37.78%)
25–29	16.20%	12.70%	11.00%	-3.50 pp (-21.60%)	-1.70 pp (-13.39%)	-5.20 pp (-32.10%)
30–34	18.80%	16.20%	14.00%	-2.60 pp (-13.83%)	-2.20 pp (-13.58%)	-4.80 pp (-25.53%)
Towns and suburbs						
Age groups						
Overall	12.00%	10.40%	9.50%	-1.60 pp (-13.33%)	-0.90 pp (-8.65%)	-2.50 pp (-20.83%)
15–19	3.40%	2.40%	2.60%	-1.00 pp (-29.41%)	0.20 pp (8.33%)	-0.80 pp (-23.53%)
20–24	12.90%	9.80%	8.90%	-3.10 pp (-24.03%)	-0.90 pp (-9.18%)	-4.00 pp (-31.00%)
25–29	16.00%	14.20%	11.70%	-1.80 pp (-11.25%)	-2.50 pp (-17.61%)	-4.30 pp (-26.88%)
30–34	17.30%	15.20%	13.80%	-2.10 pp (-12.14%)	-1.40 pp (-9.21%)	-3.50 pp (-20.23%)
30–34	17.30%	15.20%	13.80%	-2.10 pp (-12.14%)	-1.40 pp (-9.21%)	-3.50 pp (-20.23%)
Rural areas						
Age groups						
Overall	12.20%	8.50%	7.60%	-3.70 pp (-30.33%)	-0.90 pp (-10.59%)	-4.60 pp (-37.70%)
15–19	3.40%	1.70%	1.90%	-1.70 pp (-50.00%)	0.20 pp (11.76%)	-1.50 pp (-44.12%)
20–24	13.60%	8.50%	6.80%	-5.10 pp (-37.50%)	-1.70 pp (-20.00%)	-6.80 pp (-50.00%)
25–29	15.80%	11.70%	9.30%	-4.10 pp (-25.95%)	-2.40 pp (-20.51%)	-6.50 pp (-41.14%)
30–34	16.90%	12.40%	12.20%	-4.50 pp (-26.63%)	-0.20 pp (-1.61%)	-4.70 pp (-27.81%)

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted on 08.07.2020

The table also includes the absolute and relative variation between 2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019. NEET rates at the country level decreased from 2009–2013 (–2.60pp; –20%), as well as from 2013–2019 (–1.10pp; –28.21%). Looking at the overall change from 2009 to 2019, this trend is evident in all urban regions. In cities the overall rate decreased with –3.80pp (–27.54%), while it decreased in towns and suburbs by –2.50pp (–20.83%) and in rural areas by –4.60pp (–37.70%).

The situation of 15–19 year olds is particularly noteworthy at this point. For the 15–19 year olds, contrary to the general trend of decreasing numbers of early school leavers, the rate increased during the period 2013 to 2019 (0.20pp (7.69%)). This increase for the 15–19 year olds from 2013 to 2019 is stronger in towns and suburbs (0.20pp (8.33%)) and rural areas (0.20pp (11.76%)) than in the cities (0.10pp (2.86%)).

Chart 9. NEET rate for age group 15–24 year olds (%) by sex and degree of urbanisation, for all years from 2009–2019



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted on 08.07.2020



In Chart 9, the NEET rates for 15–24 year olds are now broken down by gender and urban region. In general, it can be seen that NEETs are more often female than male. For each gender, the share of NEETs is relatively evenly distributed by urban region.

In Germany, the total number of NEETs decreased from 2009 to 2019. The sharpest decline, as well as the overall lowest proportion of NEETs, was recorded in rural areas. In terms of sex, it is apparent that NEETs are more often female than male.



4. CONCLUSIONS

Youth population | Overall, youth population decreased over the period investigated in this report. However, it initially increased slightly in towns and suburbs and rural areas from 2009 to 2013, before decreasing until 2019. Furthermore, the general trend was not the same for all age groups. While the share of 15–24 year olds and 20–24 year olds decreased, that of 25–29 year olds increased.

Youth (un-)employment | From 2009 to 2019, overall youth employment increased in Germany. At all times the youth employment rate was highest in rural areas and more male youth than female youth were employed. At the same time youth unemployment in Germany decreased significantly for all urban regions and age groups. The strongest decline took place in rural regions. Unemployed youth were more often male than female.

Educational attainment | Overall, between 2009 and 2019 the proportion of graduates in the ISCED 0–2 category decreased, while it increased for ISCED 3–4 and ISCED 5–8. Since around 2014, the proportion of low and medium educated youth stabilised, while the proportion of highly educated youth continued to increase.

Early school leavers | Overall, the number of early school leavers in Germany decreased from 2009 to 2019. However, a look at regional differences shows that while the decline is true for cities and rural areas, while there was an increase in towns and suburbs.

NEETs | From 2009 to 2019, the NEET rate decreased significantly. The sharpest decline and overall lowest proportion of NEETs was found in rural areas. In general, NEETs were more often female than male.



5. REFERENCES

BMFSFJ (Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Woman and Youth). 2019. In gemeinsamer Verantwortung: Politik für, mit und von Jugend. Die Jugendstrategie der Bundesregierung. Berlin.

Eichhorst, Werner and Ulf Rinne. 2015. An Assessment of the Youth Employment Inventory and Implications for Germany's Development Policy. IZA Research Report No.67.

European Commission. 2017. Youth Wiki national description. Youth Policies in Germany.

Eurydice, 2020. Germany Overview. Available at: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/germany_en (Accessed: 9.7.2020).

Federal Office of Justice. 2020. Jugendarbeitsschutzgesetz (JArbSchG). Available at: http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/jarbschg/inhalts_bersicht.html (Accessed: 22.7.2020).

Franz, W., Inkmann, J., Pohlmeier, W., et al., 2000. Young and out in Germany. On youths' chances of labor market entrance in Germany. In: Blanchflower, D. and R. Freeman (eds.) Youth Employment and Joblessness in Advanced Countries. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 381–425.

Shore, J. and J. Tosun. 2019. Assessing youth labour market services: Young people's perceptions and evaluations of service delivery in Germany. Public Policy and Administration 34(1), 22–41.

Statistisches Bundesamt, 2020: Pressemitteilung Nr.223. Available at: https://www.destatis.de/DE/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2020/06/PD20_223_12411.html (Accessed: 8.7.2020).

Tosun, J. 2017. Promoting youth employment through multi-organizational governance. Public Money & Management 37(1), 39–46.

Youth Wiki, 2020. Germany – Overview. Available at: <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/overview-germany#122> (Accessed: 9.7.2020).



COST Action CA18213
Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural
NEETs social exclusion

6. IMPORTANT LINKS

<https://www.bmfsfj.de/jugendstrategie> (Youth Strategy at the National level)

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/sites/youthwiki/files/gdlgermany.pdf> (Youth Policies in Germany, Overview by the European Commission)



RURAL NEETs IN HUNGARY



2009/2019
OVERVIEW

AUTHORS

Zsombor Farkas – zsombor_farkas@yahoo.com
Eötvös Loránd University, Department of Social Work – ELTE

Andrea Rácz – racz.andrea.aniko@tatk.elte.hu
Eötvös Loránd University, Department of Social Work – ELTE

Dorottya Sik – sikdorka@gmail.com
Eötvös Loránd University, Department of Social Work – ELTE

Judit Sági – juditsagi@gmail.com
Eötvös Loránd University, Department of Social Work – ELTE

Image by GrantBarclay from Pixabay

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network: Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged.
Please cite this publication as "COST CA18213 Rural NEETs in Hungary: 2009/2019 Overview.

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. CONTEXTUALIZATION	6
2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE	9
3. DATA ANALYSIS	10
3. 1. Population and youth population	10
• Population	10
• Youth population	12
3. 2. Employment and unemployment	15
• Youth employment	15
• Youth unemployment	19
3. 3. Education	23
• Young people by educational attainment level	23
• Early school leavers	25
3. 4. Poverty and social exclusion among NEET youth in rural Hungary	27
3. 5. NEET	29
4. CONCLUSIONS	30
4. 1. General context indicators	30
4. 2. Employment	31
4. 3. Education	31
4. 4. Poverty, social exclusion	32
5. REFERENCES	33
6. IMPORTANT LINKS	34

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Hungary, NEET Youth are faced with many problems: social exclusion; lack of opportunities (e.g., education, health, infrastructure, public transport, labour market conditions); low socio-economic status; and, a lack of relationships outside the enclosed settlements.

In Hungary, the most frequent risk factors are: a socio-economically disadvantageous environment; low levels of education and schooling problems; lack of proper housing; financial problems; learning difficulties; dissatisfaction with the school; socio-emotional disorders; delinquency; health problems; homelessness; and, drug or alcohol abuse. NEET Youth are facing with this multi-dimensional difficulties, regional disparities and a lack of proper services.

The general employment statistics have been improving in Hungary since 2010. The employment rate of the 15-39-year-old population has increased from 53.0% to 62.5% between 2009 - 2019. The employment rate improved in every type of settlement/area. The improvement can be attributed to the community work in the marginalised regions micro-regions and settlements. The NEET rate shows a considerable improvement of nearly 40% between 2009 and 2019 in the urban environment for all age groups. A slight improvement can be detected in the towns and urban environment, which amounts to 25% for all age groups between 2009 and 2019. However special services and targeted programmes are required to make a difference for NEET Youth.

ÖSSZEFOGLALÓ MAGYARORSZÁG

Magyarországon a hátrányos helyzetű fiatalok több szempontból is komoly nehézségekkel, kihívásokkal kell, hogy megküzdjenek. Az oktatási egyenlőtlenségek, a regionális különbségek, az abból fakadó rossz infrastruktúra és közlekedés, a munkaerőpiaci helyzet és a szolgáltatások hiánya összességében egy nagyon sérülékeny társadalmi csoportot eredményez. Magyarországon a munkaerőpiaci statisztikák 2010 óta javuló tendenciát mutatnak. A 15–39 éves korosztály tekintetében a javulás 9 százalék 2009 és 2019 között. A munkanélküliségi ráta minden településtípus tekintetében javult. Ugyanakkor nem szabad elfelejteni, hogy ez a statisztikákban megjelenő javulás a hátrányos helyzetű kistérségekben a közmunka elterjedésének az eredménye, és nem a valós, elsődleges munkaerőpiacon való elhelyezkedés. A NEET fiatalok helyzetében a statisztikák alapján javuló tendencia figyelhető meg minden korcsoport és területi különbségek tekintetében. Ugyanakkor megfelelő, speciális, az érintett csoportot célzó szolgáltatások és programok kialakítása és megvalósítása szükséges a jövőben, a tartós és eredményes változás érdekében.



1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

Hungary is a landlocked country in East-Central Europe with a land area of 93,030 km². It has 2,106 km of borders, shared with Austria to the west, Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia to the south and southwest, Romania to the southeast, Ukraine to the northeast, and Slovakia to the north. Administratively, Hungary is divided into 19 counties, Budapest as the Capital of Hungary is independent of any county government. The official languages are Hungarian, 98.3 % of the population identify themselves Hungarian, 3.2 % Romani and 1.8% German. Distribution of religious affiliation is 54.3% Christianity (39% Catholicism, 13.8 % Protestantism, 3.3% other Christians, 0.2% Orthodox Church, 0.1% Judaism). Hungary is a unitary, parliamentary, representative and democratic republic. The Hungarian political system operates under a framework reformed in 2012 and the constitutional document is the Fundamental Law of Hungary. Amendments generally require a two-thirds majority of parliament. The fundamental principles of the constitution (as expressed in the articles guaranteeing human dignity, the separation of powers, the state structure, and the rule of law) are valid in perpetuity.

Youth, Youth Policy: The age of legal adulthood in Hungary is 18, the age of culpability is 14 and the compulsory educational age is until 16. During the democratic transition of Hungary from 1989 to 2010, there was no top-level youth strategy that overarched alternating governmental cycles. This tendency of discontinuity was broken with the adoption of the National Youth Strategy, which was passed by the Hungarian Parliament under resolution 88/2009. (X. 29.). The completion of the strategy received strong support from the government, and it was also built on a wide consensus between NGOs, experts and political parties. In 2010, the government established top-level bodies by integrating formerly independent ministries. Youth policy was moved under the umbrella of the largest single body of the administration, the Ministry of Human Capacities. (Youth Policy Review in Hungary, 2016). The current youth policy framework programme of the government was published in 2012, called “For the Future of the New Generation” (Youth Policy Review in Hungary, 2016). After the 2014 elections, no major changes were made to the basic structure of the government, but youth policy was separated from sports and moved to a newly formed State Secretariat for Family, Youth and International Affairs, where a deputy secretary of state was assigned to youth affairs. As a part of this re-organisation, the implementation of the New Generation framework programme was also taken over by the State Secretariat.



Furthermore, a consultative body was created in 2013: The Youth Expert. Its task is to advise and coordinate between the different youth policy actors. (Youth Policy Review in Hungary, 2016). The two most important umbrella youth organisations of Hungary are the National Youth Council (Nemzeti Ifjúsági Tanács), founded in 2012 and acting as an institution for supporting young people and representing youth organisations of Hungary, as well as the Hungarian Youth Conference Alliance (Magyar Ifjúsági Konferencia) (established in 1999), a forum of Hungarian youth and their organisations in Hungary (Youth Policy Review in Hungary, 2016).

"Hungary presented a Youth Guarantee (YG) Implementation Plan on 6 December 2013, which was updated in April 2014. The Youth Guarantee (YG) scheme in Hungary was formally launched on 1 January 2015 and was rolled-out progressively in three phases of implementation linked to target groups: until the end of June 2016 the Hungarian YG focused on long-term unemployed (LTU) youth, until end 2017 on those unemployed for at least 4 months, and since the beginning of 2018 the guarantee has extended to all young people. Since February 2017, registration can be performed online or via the PES. The Ministry for the National Economy has overall responsibility for the Hungarian Youth Guarantee programme, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Human Resources. The National Employment Services (PES) have primary responsibility for the implementation and coordination of the scheme."

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1161&langId=en&intPagId=3338>

Education: Education in Hungary is predominantly public, and run by the Ministry of Human Resources. Pre-school kindergarten education is compulsory and provided for all children between three and six years old, after which school attendance is also compulsory until age of sixteen. Primary education usually lasts for eight years. Secondary education includes three traditional types of schools focused on different academic levels: the Gymnasium enrolls the most gifted children and prepares students for university studies; the secondary vocational schools for intermediate students lasts four years and the technical school prepares pupils for vocational education and the world of work. The system is partly flexible and bridges exist, graduates from a vocational school can undertake a two years program to have access to vocational higher education for instance. (https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/magyarorsz%C3%A1g/organisation-education-system-and-its-structure_hu)



Employment: The legal age of entry into the labour market is 18, however, after 16 it is not compulsory to learn, so with the permission of the parents it is legal to work from the age of 16. Hence, the legal adulthood age is 18. Youth work in Hungary fits with the discontinuous traditions of youth policy. Its contemporary understanding and infrastructure were created by Mobilitás National Youth Service, and since 2013 most of the methodological support and knowledge base of youth work can be found in the New Generation Centre Non-profit Ltd. (Új Nemzedék Központ)

Since 2003 different forms of formal youth worker education have been in existence, but the prestige and recognition of the youth profession is still incomparable to other fields of education. There is no official definition of youth work in Hungary. The National Youth Strategy (Nemzeti Ifjúsági Stratégia) refers to youth work as one of the youth services that play a key role in the development of youth. Nowadays youth work in Hungary appears to have three pillars, namely three organisational modes. Certain 'grassroots' youth communities can be identified at the local small scale level. There are numerous NGOs and civil organisations (including the scouting movement and other religious youth organisations) active in the field. These are typically project-funded by the general government or (mostly) by EU grants. Finally, there is the public infrastructure, mainly connected to the New Generation Centre Public Ltd. (Új Nemzedék Központ Nonprofit Közhasznú Kft.) which serves as the methodological background to youth work, or is related to the mandatory youth activities of the municipal governments. <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/10-youth-work-hungary>

Formulation of the National Youth Guarantee in Hungary ensures that young people between the ages of 16–24 are provided with good quality offers to improve their labour market situation, including: a job opportunity (with or without wage subsidy); entrepreneurship support; first job experience; apprenticeship; traineeship; redirection to public education; further education (including second chance education); and, vocational education or training within 4 months after registered by PES serving as the only entry point.

<https://ngmszakmaiteruletek.kormany.hu/download/9/4c/c0000/Youth%20Guarantee%20Implementation%20Plan.pdf>



2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

Most of the data was gathered and analysed from the available Eurostat Database. Regarding population, youth population, education, employment, poverty and NEET in this report the database was used in order to show the situation of the NEET population. Beside these databases, in order to understand the Hungarian political circumstances and social policy regarding the topic, other background analyses and papers were detected and applied.



3. DATA ANALYSIS

3. 1. Population and youth population

3. 1. 1. Population

According to latest Eurostat data (2019) the current population of Hungary is 9.77 million. It is known that Hungary's population has been declining for four decades. This translates into a 2.57% percentage decline (260 000 inhabitants in absolute value). Demographic decline was higher among females (3.25 percent; 170 900 capitals) than among males (1.8 percent; 87 229 individuals). In spite of the tendency, the ratio of females is 52.2% of the Hungarian population.

Table 1 Hungary: Total population by sex (capital); relative (percentage) and absolute (capital) changes, 2009, 2013, 2019

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009-2013 (Relative change 2009-2013)	Absolute change 2013-2009 (Relative change 2013-2019)	Absolute change 2009-2019 (Relative change 2009-2019)
Females	5 267 925	5 192 845	5 096 935	-1.43 (-75 080)	-1.85 (-95 910)	-3.25 (-170 990)
Males	4 763 050	4 715 953	4 675 821	-0.98 (-47 097)	-0.85 (-40 132)	-1.83 (-87 229)
Total	10 030 975	9 908 798	9 772 756	--1.21 (-122 177)	-1.37 (-136 042)	-2.57 (-258 219)

Source: Eurostat, Population on 1 January by age and sex; [demo_pjan]. Extracted on 28.06.20.

The distribution of Hungary's population by degree of urbanisation was almost equal: equally one-third of Hungarians lived in cities (32.8 percent), in towns and suburbs (33.9 percent) and in rural areas (33.3 percent) in 2019. Within the analysed period, the most significant change can be seen in towns and suburbs and in rural areas between 2009 and 2013. The population of towns and suburbs increased from 20.1 percent to 32.7 percent; the relative change is 62.69 percent. Accordingly, rural areas have lost more than one-fifth (22 percent) of their population. In the whole period (between 2009 and 2019) many Hungarians moved to towns and suburbs (and abroad) mainly from rural areas: the relative increase was 68.66 percent in the case of towns and suburbs, and the relative decline was 30.91 percent in rural areas. It is necessary to note that rural areas located in disadvantaged regions of Hungary are the most affected by general demographic decline. It can be a significant reason for the disparate ratio of changes (69 percent versus -31 percent). The ratio of city population has essentially not been changed since 2009 (Table 2).

Table 2 Hungary: Distribution of Hungary's population by degree of urbanisation (percentage); relative (percentage) and absolute (percentage point) changes, 2009, 2013, 2019

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Cities	31.70	29.80	32.80	-5.99 (-1.90)	10.06 (3.00)	3.47 (1.10)
Towns and suburbs	20.10	32.70	33.90	62.69 (12.60)	3.67 (1.20)	68.66 (13.80)
Rural areas	48.20	37.60	33.30	-21.99 (-10.60)	-11.44 (-4.30)	-30.91 (-14.90)
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	–	–	–

Source: Eurostat, Population on 1 January by age and sex; [demo_pjan]. Extracted on 28.06.20.



3. 1. 2. Youth population

Most developed countries' societies, among others in the European Union, are ageing drastically. Demographic tendencies are similar in Hungary. The Hungarian population has been ageing and declining for decades. In this context, the ratio of youth population decreased (not significantly) in each of the analysed age groups between 2009 and 2013 and between 2013 and 2019. In the ten-year period (2009–2019) the most significant changes can be observed in the population aged 30–34 years (26.74 percent relative and 2.30 percentage points absolute decline) and in the sub-group aged 15–19 years (18.03 percent relative and 1.10 percentage points absolute decrease) (Table 3).

Table 3 Hungary: Ratio of youth population in the total population by age groups (percentage); relative (percentage) and absolute (percentage point) changes, 2009, 2013, 2019

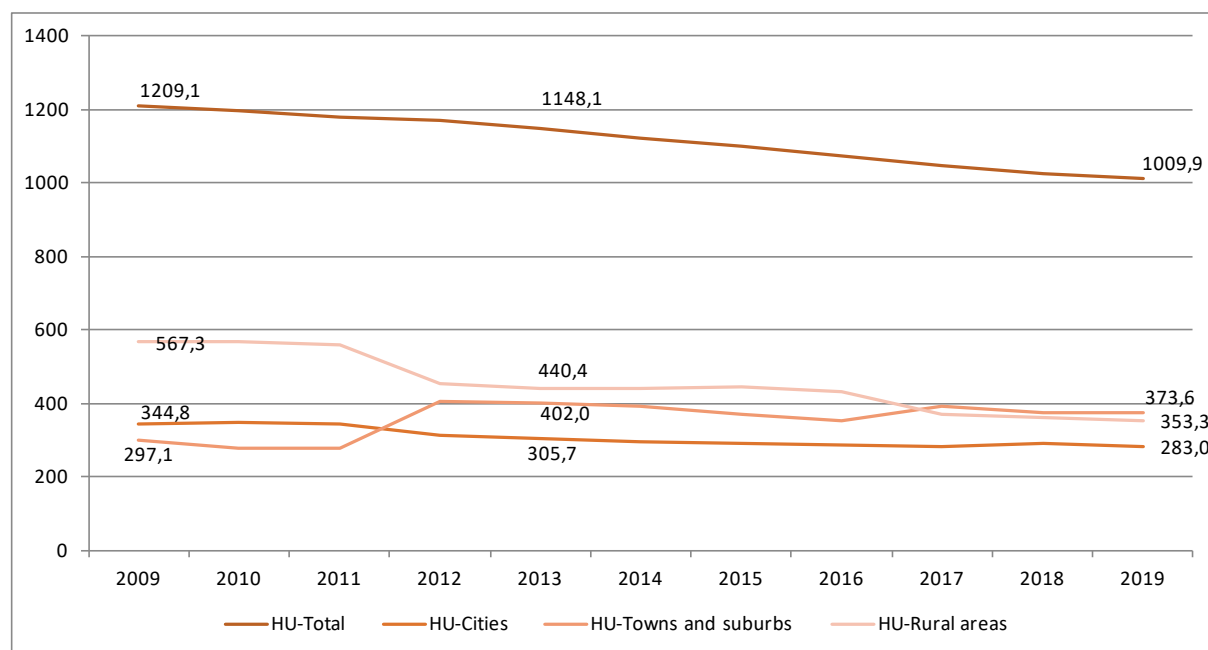
	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
15–19 years	6,10	5,70	5,00	–6.56 (–0.40)	–12.28 (–0.70)	–18.03 (–1.10)
20–24 years	6,50	6,40	5,70	– 1.54 (–0.10)	–10.94 (–0.70)	–12.31 (–0.80)
25–29 years	7,20	6,20	6,40	– 13.88 (–1.00)	3.23 (0.20)	–11.11 (–0.80)
30–34 years*	8,60	7,20	6,30	–6.98 (–0.60)	–12.50 (–0.90)	–26.74 (–2.30)

Source: Eurostat, Ratio of young people in the total population on 1 January by sex and age [yth_demo_020] Extracted on 28.06.20.

*Source: Own calculation based on: Eurostat, Population on 1 January by age and sex [demo_pjan] Extracted on 28.06.20.

As Chart 1 indicates, the youth population aged 15–24 also declined during the ten-year period analysed. According to Eurostat data, their number decreased from 1.209 million to 1.009 million between 2009 and 2019 (equivalent to a 17 percent relative decline). The tendency was similar in Hungarian cities where the measure of decline is almost the same (18 percent). The most significant demographic decrease occurred in rural areas: the 38 percent relative decline means that these parts of the country lost more than 200 000 inhabitants between 2009 and 2019. It is not surprising that most of the youth population try to move away because of poor conditions and hopelessness. The tendency is more significant in disadvantaged rural areas, especially in Northern and Eastern Hungary. As an obverse tendency, towns' and suburbs' populations aged 15–24 years increased from 297 000 to 373 000, implying a 26 percent relative growth in the ten-year period (Chart 1).

Chart 1 Hungary: Number of youth population aged 15–24 years by degree of urbanisation, 2009–2019, thousand



Source: Eurostat, Population by sex, age, country of birth, labour status and degree of urbanisation [lfst_r_pgauwsc]
Extracted on 28.06.20.

According to relevant Eurostat data, the youth population aged 15–29 years had a ratio of males (51.4%) higher than the ratio of females (48.6%) in 2019. The proportion was almost the same in 2013 (51.2% vs. 48.8%).¹ (Eurostat data is not available for 2009). Detailed data is available by age groups, but there is no data on the whole, broad age group (15–34 years). The ratio of males is a little bit higher than the ratio of females in each of the age groups and in each of the data years also (Table 4).

Table 4 Number and distribution of the youth population by age group and sex, 2009, 2013, 2019

		2009	2013	2019	2009	2013	2019
		Number			Distribution, percent		
15–19 years	Females	298 807	276 125	236 508	48,9	48,7	48,6
	Males	312 485	290 914	250 546	51,1	51,3	51,4
	Total	611 292	567 039	487 054	100,0	100,0	100,0
20–24 years	Females	318 424	305 834	272 262	49,1	48,6	48,5
	Males	330 172	323 531	289 541	50,9	51,4	51,5
	Total	648 596	629 365	561 803	100,0	100,0	100,0
25–29 years	Females	6,20	6,40	– 13.88 (–1.00)	3.23 (0.20)	–11.11 (–0.80)	
	Males	371 369	311 264	325 446	51,1	51,0	51,7
	Total	726 726	609 842	629 354	100,0	100,0	100,0
30–34 years*	Females	425 376	354 712	296 687	49,1	49,4	48,5
	Males	441 528	363 084	315 030	50,9	50,6	51,5
	Total	866 904	717 796	611 717	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Eurostat, Population on 1 January by age group and sex; [demo_pjangroup]. Extracted on 08.09.20.

¹ Source: Eurostat, Youth. Youth population on 1 January by sex, age and country of birth [lyth_demo_060] Extracted on 08.09.20.

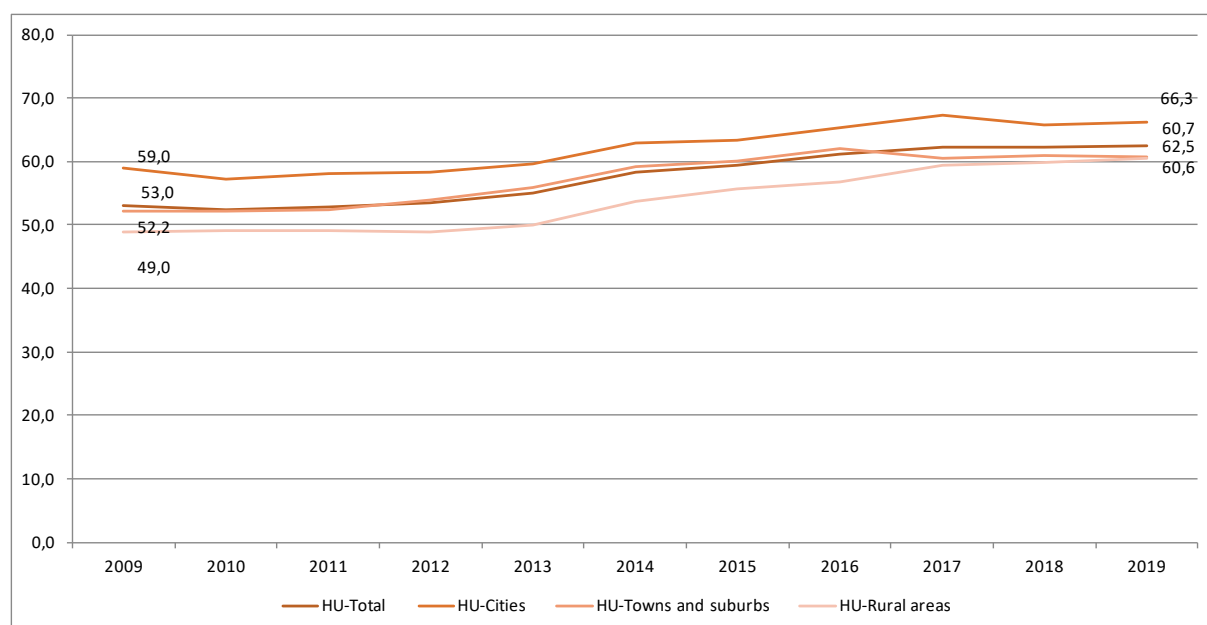


3. 2. Employment and Unemployment

3. 2. 1. Youth employment

In Hungary, overall employment statistics have been improving since approximately 2010. Positive tendencies can be seen in the youth population also. The employment rate of the population aged 15–39 years increased from 53.0 percent to 62.5 percent between 2009 and 2019. The employment rate has improved in each of the settlement/area types: in the ten-year period, the rate increased from 59.0 percent to 66.3 percent in cities (12.4 percent relative change); from 52.2 percent to 60.7 percent in towns and suburbs (16.3 percent relative change); and, from 49.0 percent to 60.6 percent in rural areas (23.7 percent relative change) (Chart 2). Therefore the relative change was the highest in rural areas. But it is necessary to note that in disadvantaged regions, micro-regions and settlements the most significant reason for improvement is the public work.

Chart 2 Hungary: Employment rate of youth population aged 15–39 years by degree of urbanisation, 2009–2019, percent



Source: Employment rates by sex, age and degree of urbanisation (%) [lfst_r_ergau] Extracted on 29.04.20.



Table 5 includes information about youth employment rate by age groups and degree of urbanisation. Detailed data indicate significant improvement in each of the age groups and in all settlement/area types, especially between 2013 and 2019 and in the ten-year period (2009–2019). In Hungary, the employment rate of the population aged 15–19 increased from 2.00 percent to 6.30 percent between 2009 and 2019; the relative change was 215.00 percent (it is the second highest value among the analysed data). The tendency is positive, but it should be emphasised that the members of this age group basically should study in secondary school. In the next age group (20–24 years) the employment rate increased from 33.40 percent to 48.40 percent, which also implies a significant relative change (44.91 percent) in the ten-year period. The ratio of employed population increased from 67.40 percent to 77.80 percent in the youth population aged 25–29 (15.43 percent relative change) and from 71.80 to 80.90 in the last age group (30–34 years) (12.67 percent relative change). The employment rate increased from 30.50 percent to 41.00 percent between 2009 and 2019, which indicates a 34.43 percent relative change (the relative increase was almost 40 percent between 2013 and 2019).

It is also important to note that the employment rates of the following two age groups (25–29 years, 30–34 years) were more than 80 percent in the final data year (2019). Regarding towns and suburbs, the significant change in the population aged 15–19 must be highlighted: the absolute increase was only 3.50 percent, but the relative change was 166.67 percent in the ten-year period. Both the relative (42.60 percent) and the absolute (14.70 percent) increases of employment rate were also remarkable in the next age group (20–24 years). In reference to rural areas it is crucial to pay attention to the youngest age group (15–19). On the one hand, the highest relative increase (272.73 percent between 2009 and 2019) can be realised in this group. On the other hand, according to latest data (2019) young people (in fact children) aged 15–19 living in rural areas have the highest employment rate (8.20 percent) compared to corresponding age groups living in cities (4.50 percent) and in towns and suburbs (5.60 percent). It also draws attention to the difficult position of young people living in disadvantaged rural regions of Hungary (Table 5).



Table 5 Hungary: Youth employment rate (percentage) by age groups and degree of urbanisation; relative (percentage) and absolute (percentage point) changes, 2009, 2013, 2019

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Age groups						
Overall (15–39)	53.00	55.00	62.50	3.77 (2.00)	13.64 (7.50)	17.92 (9.50)
15–19	2.00	2.30	6.30	15.00 (0.30)	173.91 (4.00)	215.00 (4.30)
20–24	33.40	35.70	48.40	6.89 (2.30)	35.57 (12.70)	44.91 (15.00)
25–29	67.40	69.00	77.80	2.37 (1.60)	12.75 (8.80)	15.43 (10.40)
30–34	71.80	73.50	80.90	2.37 (1.70)	10.07 (7.40)	12.67 (9.10)
Cities						
Age groups						
Overall (15–39)	59.00	59.70	66.30	1.19 (0.70)	10.05 (6.60)	12.37 (7.30)
15–19	no data	no data	4.50	–	–	–
20–24	30.50	28.90	41.00	–5.25 (–1.60)	39.67 (12.10)	34.43 (10.50)
25–29	72.70	74.10	80.40	1.93 (1.40)	8.50 (6.30)	10.59 (7.70)
30–34	76.80	77.20	86.00	0.52 (0.40)	11.40 (8.80)	11.98 (9.20)
Towns and suburbs						
Age groups						
Overall (15–39)	52.20	56.00	60.70	7.28 (3.80)	8.39 (4.70)	16.28 (8.50)
15–19	2.10	2.30	5.60	9.52 (0.20)	143.48 (3.30)	166.67 (3.50)
20–24	34.50	38.90	49.20	12.75 (4.40)	26.48 (10.30)	42.60 (14.70)
25–29	67.50	69.50	76.30	2.96 (2.00)	9.78 (6.80)	13.03 (8.80)
30–34	71.00	75.70	78.20	6.62 (4.70)	3.30 (2.50)	10.14 (7.20)
Rural areas						
Age groups						
Overall (15–39)	49.00	49.90	60.60	1.84 (0.90)	21.84 (10.70)	23.67 (11.60)
15–19	2.20	2.50	8.20	13.64 (0.30)	228.00 (5.70)	272.73 (6.00)
20–24	34.80	38.30	54.10	10.06 (3.50)	41.25 (15.80)	55.46 (19.30)
25–29	62.80	63.20	76.50	0.64 (0.40)	21.19 (13.30)	21.82 (13.70)
30–34	67.70	67.40	77.90	–0.44 (–0.30)	15.58 (10.5)	15.07 (10.2)

Source: Eurostat, Employment rates by sex, age and degree of urbanisation (%) [lfst_r_ergau] Extracted on 29.04.20.

*Checked on 28.06.20.



According to the latest data (2019), as in the total population, the male employment rate (53%) is higher than the female rate (41%) in the youth population aged of 15–29 years. (Data is not available on the total youth population aged 15–34 years.) In this broader age group, the males' employment rate was 40 percent and the females' rate was 31 percent in 2009. Between 2009 and 2019 it means a 32–33 percent improvement in the case of males and females as well. In spite of the gender gap this is a permanent characteristic of the labour market inequalities. The employment rates have been increasing since 2009 in each of the sub groups, but the disparity between males and females has not decreased. Indeed, it was less than 9 percentage points in 2009 and more than 11 percentage points in 2019. This tendency (with higher disparities) can be recognised in each of the age groups (Table 6.)

Table 6 Hungary: Youth employment rate (percentage) by age groups and sex, 2009, 2013, 2019

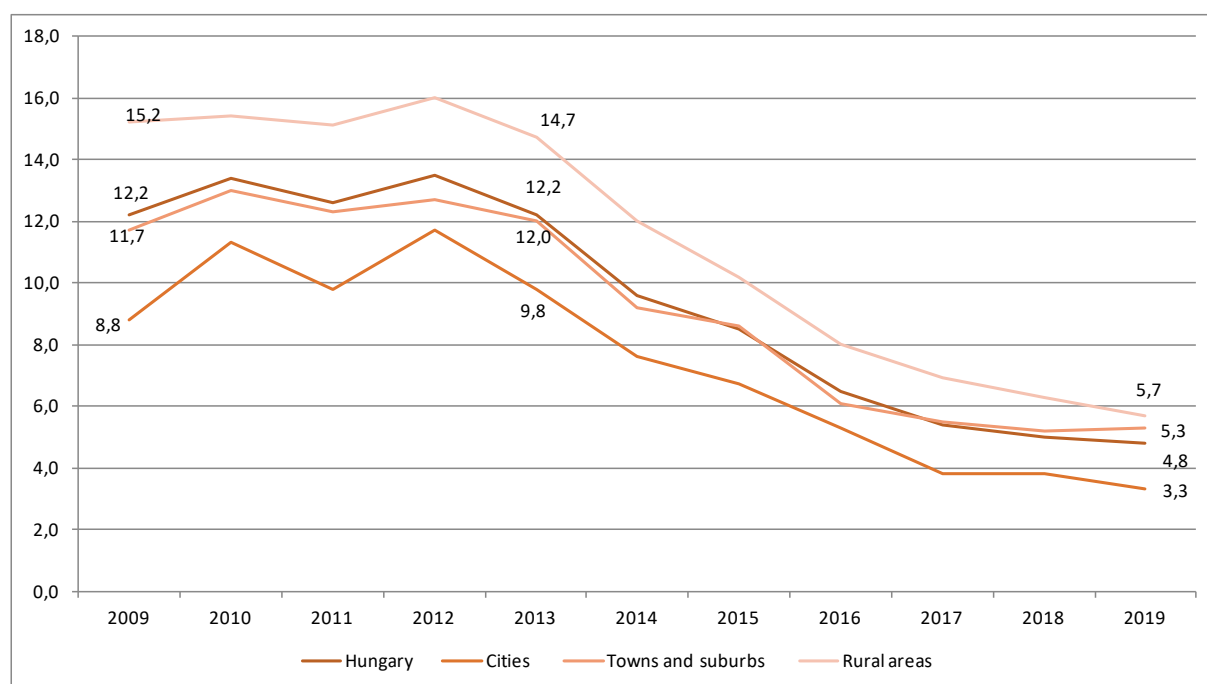
		2009	2013	2019
Age groups	Number			
15–19 years	Females	1,5	1,7	4,3
	Males	2,4	2,8	8,2
	Total	2,0	2,3	6,3
20–24 years	Females	29,7	30,6	41,5
	Males	36,6	40,5	55,5
	Total	33,2	35,6	48,6
25–29 years	Females	58,8	62,1	68,9
	Males	75,8	76,3	86,0
	Total	67,4	69,4	77,7
30–34 years*	Females	31,3	32,4	40,6
	Males	39,9	41,0	53,0
	Total	35,7	36,8	47,0

Source: Eurostat Youth, Youth employment rate by sex, age and country of birth (yth_empl_O20) Extracted on 08.09.20.

3. 2. 2. Youth unemployment

According to improving employment statistics, significant decreases can be experienced in unemployment rates. In Hungary, the unemployment rate of the youth population aged 15–39 years has decreased from 12.2 percent to 4.8 percent throughout the whole period (2009–2019). In cities, the unemployment rate reduced from 8.8 percent to 3.3 percent; the relative change was 62.5 percent between 2009 and 2019. The value of relative change was the same in rural areas (62.5 percent); the unemployment rate decreased from 15.2 percent to 5.7 percent. The unemployment rate of young people living in towns and suburbs was halved; the relative change was 54.7 percent in the analysed period (2009–2019) and the current rate is 5.3 percent (2019) (Chart 3).

Chart 3 Hungary: Unemployment rate of youth population aged 15–39 years by degree of urbanisation, 2009–2019, percent



Source: Eurostat Youth, Youth employment rate by sex, age and country of birth (yth_empl_020) Extracted on 08.09.20.



According to detailed statistics, in the first period (2009–2013) relative changes are mostly negative: unemployment rates increased in most cases. In the next period (2013–2019) and in the whole (2009–2019) periods, there were only positive tendencies: unemployment rates decreased in each of the age groups and each of the settlement/area types. In Hungary, the rate of the population aged 15–19 years declined from 49.70 percent to 23.30 percent, the rate of the next age group (20–24 years) decreased from 24.50 percent to 9.80 percent. The following two age group's unemployment rate also appreciably improved between 2009 and 2019. The highest relative decrease (70.33 percent) occurred among young people aged 30–34 years. But relative reductions are significant in the other age groups as well (53.12 percent – 61.98 percent) (Table 5).

It is known that the youngest people (aged 15–19 years) have the highest unemployment rate, and it does not depend on the type of the settlement/area. According to the latest data, in 2019 the age group's unemployment rate was 23.30 percent in Hungary, 22.80 percent in towns and suburbs and 22.40 percent in rural areas (city data is not available for this age group). Generally, we can say that unemployment rates are the lowest in cities: in 2019, 8.20 percent in the population aged 20–24 years, 3.90 percent in the next age group (20–24 years) and only 2.80 percent among young people aged 30–34 years (the last data refers to 2018, because data is not available for 2019). The unemployment rates of towns and suburbs and rural areas do not differ significantly and the values of relative declines are also similar in the ten-year period (49.30 percent – 69.30 percent) (Table 7).



Table 7 Hungary: Youth unemployment rate (percentage) by age groups and degree of urbanisation; relative (percentage) and absolute (percentage point) changes, 2009, 2013, 2019

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009-2013 (Relative change 2009-2013)	Absolute change 2013-2009 (Relative change 2013-2019)	Absolute change 2009-2019 (Relative change 2009-2019)
Country						
Age groups						
Overall (15-39)	12.20	12.20	4.80	0.00 (0.00)	-60.66 (-7.40)	-60.66 (-7.40)
15-19	49.70	52.40	23.30	5.43 (2.70)	-55.53 (-29.10)	-53.12 (-26.40)
20-24	24.50	24.30	9.80	-0.82 (-0.20)	-59.67 (-14.50)	-60.00 (-14.70)
25-29	12.10	11.90	4.60	-1.65 (-0.20)	- 61.34 (-7.30)	-61.98 (-7.50)
30-34	9.10	9.60	2.70	5.49 (0.50)	-71.88 (-6.90)	-70.33 (-6.40)
Cities						
Age groups						
Overall (15-39)	8.80	9.80	no data	11.36 (1.00)	-66.33 (-6.50)	-62.50 (-5.50)
15-19	no data	no data	8.20	-	-	-
20-24	20.10	23.30	3.90	15.92 (3.20)	-64.81 (-15.10)	-59.20 (-11.9)
25-29	8.40	8.90	80.40	5.95 (0.50)	-56.18 (-5.00)	-53.57 (-4.50)
30-34	7.30	8.90	no data (2018: 2.80)*	21.92 (1.60)	-68.54 (-6.1)*	-61.64 (-4.50)*
Towns and suburbs						
Age groups						
Overall (15-39)	11.70	12.00	5.30	2.56 (0.30)	-55.83 (-6.70)	-54.70 (-6.40)
15-19	no data	51.30	22.80	-	-55.56 (-28.50)	-
20-24	21.30	23.80	10.80	11.74 (2.50)	-54.62 (-13.00)	-49.30 (-10.50)
25-29	12.40	12.20	4.70	-1.61 (-0.20)	-61.48 (-7.50)	-62.10 (-7.70)
30-34	8.90	8.80	3.80	-1.12 (-0.10)	-56.82 (-5.00)	-57.30 (-5.10)
Rural areas						
Age groups						
Overall (15-39)	15.20	14.70	5.70	-3.29 (-0.50)	-61.22 (-9.00)	-62.50 (-9.50)
15-19	51.70	56.10	22.40	8.51 (4.40)	-60.07 (-33.70)	-56.67 (-29.30)
20-24	28.50	25.20	9.80	-11.58 (-3.30)	-61.11 (-15.40)	-65.61 (-18.70)
25-29	15.30	14.90	5.40	-2.61 (-0.40)	-63.76 (-9.50)	-64.71 (-9.90)
30-34	11.00	11.30	3.40	-2.73 (0.30)	-69.91 (-7.90)	-69.09 (-7.60)

Source: Unemployment rates by sex, age and degree of urbanisation (%) [lfst_r_urgau] Extracted on 29.04.20. *Checked on 28.06.20.



In the ten-year period (2009–2019) significant improvement can be recognised in the field of unemployment. In the youth population aged of 15–29 years the unemployment rate has decreased from 17 percent to 7 percent. This is an almost 60 percent decline between 2009 and 2019 and there are no significant differences between males and females. In 2019 the males' unemployment rate was 7.7 percent and the females' rate was 7.1 percent (18.1% vs. 16.2% in 2009). The gender gap can be realised, but it is not remarkable. Moreover, in certain age groups the males' unemployment rate is higher than the females' rate (Table 8).

Table 8 Hungary: Youth employment rate (percentage) by age groups and sex, 2009, 2013, 2019

		2009	2013	2019
Age groups				
15–19 years	Females	50,3	54,6	27,0
	Males	48,8	51,4	21,2
	Total	49,4	52,6	23,2
20–24 years	Females	22,7	25,5	8,9
	Males	26,0	23,4	10,7
	Total	24,6	24,3	9,9
25–29 years	Females	11,4	11,0	4,9
	Males	12,5	12,5	4,6
	Total	12,1	11,9	4,7
(Total) 30–34 years*	Females	16,2	17,6	7,1
	Males	18,1	17,9	7,7
	Total	17,3	17,8	7,4

Source: Eurostat, Youth. Youth unemployment rate by sex, age and country of birth [yth_empl_100] Extracted on 08.09.20

3. 3. Education

3. 3. 1. Young people by educational attainment level

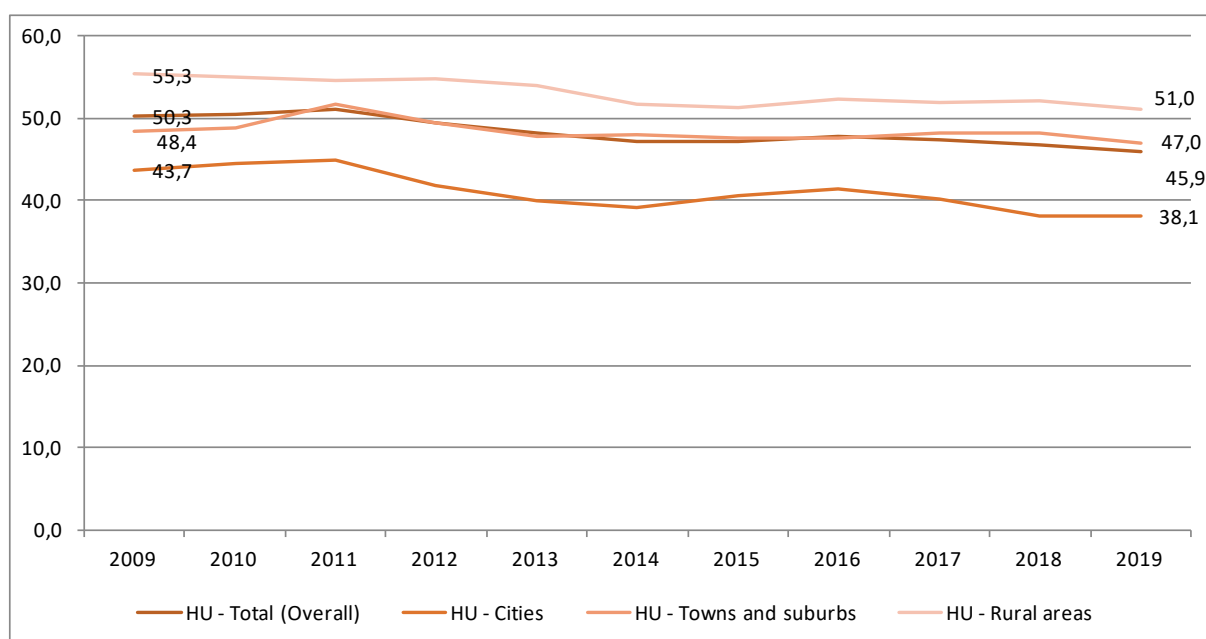
Table 9: 15–24 years old age, young people's educational attainment level related to urbanisation

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2009)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0–2)						
Overall	50,3	48,1	45,9	–4.57 (–2.20)	–4.79 (–2.20)	–9.59 (–4.40)
Cities	43,7	39,9	38,1	–9.52 (–3.80)	–4.72 (–1.80)	–14.70 (–5.60)
Towns and suburbs	48,4	47,8	47,0	–1.26 (–0.60)	–1.70 (–0.80)	–2,98 (–1.40)
Rural areas	55,3	54,0	51,0	–1.90 (–1.30)	–5.40 (–3.00)	–8.43 (–4.30)
Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4)						
Overall	46,4	47,3	50,0	+1.90 (+0.90)	+5.40 (+2.70)	+7.20 (+3.60)
Cities	52,9	54,1	56,4	–9.52 (+2.22)	+2.30 (+4.08)	+ 3.50 (+6.21)
Towns and suburbs	48,2	47,5	48,7	+1.20 (–0.6)	–1.70 (–0.8)	–2,98 (–1.4)
Rural areas	41,6	42,4	46,3	+1.89 (+0.80)	+8.42 (+3.90)	+10.15 (+4.70)
Tertiary education (levels 5–8)						
Overall	3,3	4,6	4,1	+28.26 (+1.30)	–12.20 (–0.50)	+19.51 (+0.80)
Cities	3,5	6,0	5,6	+41,67 (+2.50)	–7.14 (–0.40)	+37.50 (+2.10)
Towns and suburbs	3,5	4,7	4,2	–+25.53 (+1.20)	–11.90 (–0.50)	+16.67 (+0.70)
Rural areas	3,1	3,5	2,7	+11.43 (+0.40)	–29.63 (–0.80)	–+14.81 (–0.40)

Source: Eurostat, Employment rates by sex, age and degree of urbanisation (%) [lft_r_ergau] Extracted on 29.04.20. *Checked on 28.06.20.

The ratio who have less than primary, primary and lower secondary education degree was reduced between 2009 – 2013 to around 5%. The biggest positive changes come from the cities with its 6% whereas a moderate reduction can be observed in the towns and suburbs and in rural areas also. At the upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education level, there is a positive change: with nearly 4%, the portion of such young people was increased in this category. It's interesting that in the cities and in rural areas there is a relevant change, while in towns the changes are very moderate. In tertiary education, after a small increase, we can see a reduction in most forms of urbanisation.

Chart 4: Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education rate (%) between 2009–2019 by degree of urbanisation in the 15–24 years old age group

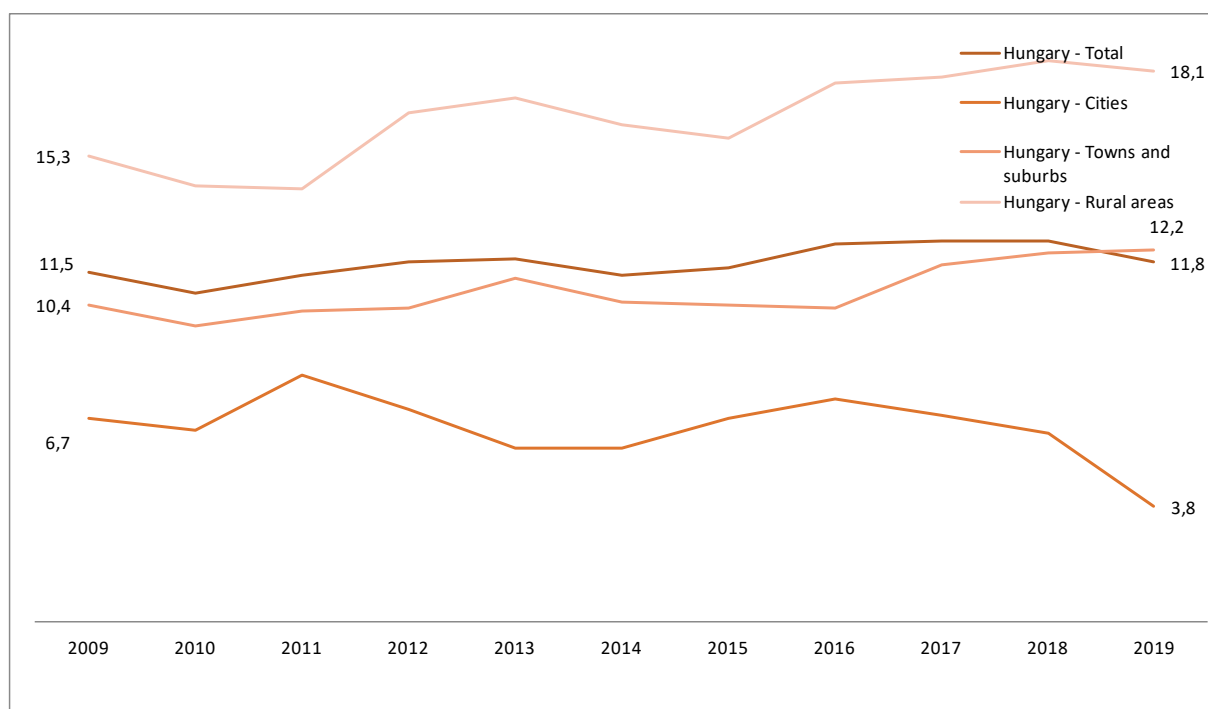


Source: Eurostat [edat_lfs_9913] – data extracted in 20.04.2020



3.3.2. Early school leavers

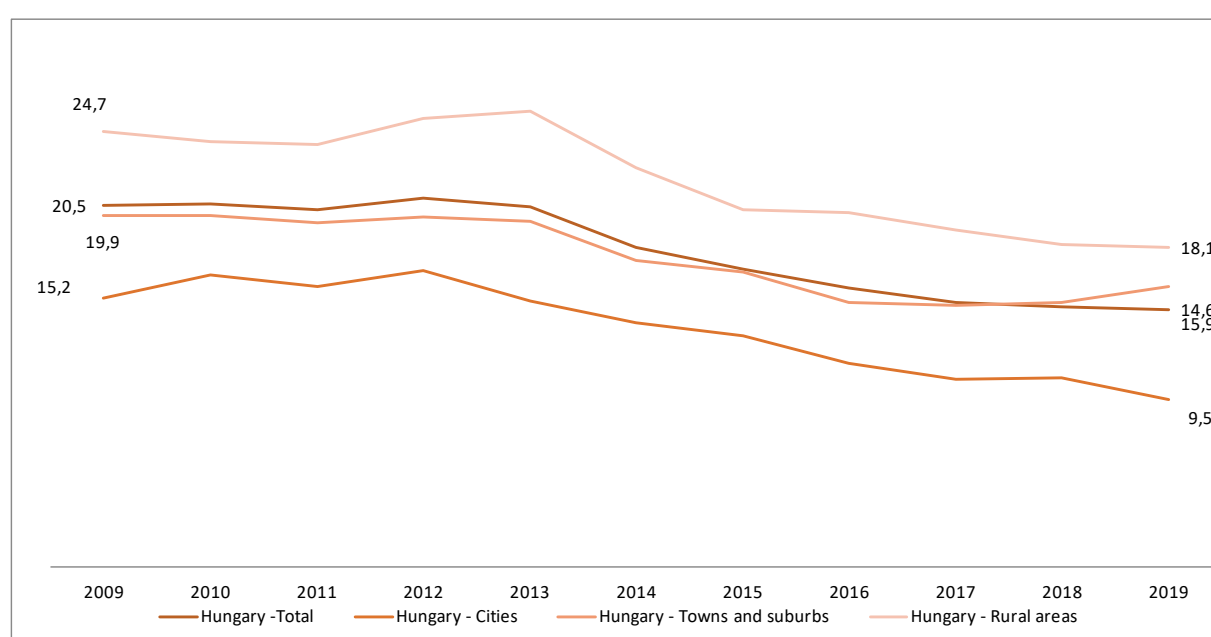
Chart 5: Early school leavers in the 18–24 years age group related to urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_9913) – data extracted on 29.04.2020

As we see from Chart 6, in the 18–24 age group in the rural areas early school rate grown from 15,3% to 18,1 %. Except for the cities, in all form of urbanisation the portion of school leavers increased. Positive changes come from the cities the percent of the early school leavers decreased from 6,7% to 3,8%. Women have a better position, but trends are the same in both sexes in the last ten years.

Chart 6: ESLET rate (%) 2009–2019 (Hu) by sex and degree of urbanisation in the 18–24 years old age group



Source: Eurostat [edat_lfse_30] – data extracted in 20.04.2020



3. 4. Poverty and social exclusion among NEET youth

in rural Hungary

In Hungary, no overall research has been done into the NEET youth category nor has it been present in the mainstream of European common thought. The research mostly focuses on the labour market situation and economic activity which may only imply the actual situation of the NEET youth (Bokányi, Szabó, 2015). Regional disparities have been making a massive difference in Hungary since 1989, and these disparities and disadvantages are increasing, which is generating a huge gap between Hungarian micro-regions and regions. The NEET youths often grow up under uncertain and difficult financial circumstances, which goes back to as far as three generations. Young people living in the urban areas, in ruined apartments, in poverty are at risk of becoming NEET. The most frequent risk factors are the socio-economically disadvantageous environments with low levels of education and schooling problems. They are accompanied by traumatic incidents of the families, learning difficulties, dissatisfaction with the school, socio-emotional disorders, delinquency, health problems, homelessness, drug or alcohol abuse, lack of support and financial needs. (Bynner and Parsons, 2002 refer to Bokányi-Szabó, 2015) Due to their situation, the NEET youth are faced with a higher risk of social exclusion. The NEET youth's risk of social exclusion is triple that of the non-NEET counter parts based on a 2016 study (Eurofound, 2016b refer to Sánta, 2017). The NEET youth who live under inappropriate dwelling conditions in an area infected with crime may get involved in delinquencies more often than their demographic counterparts from other areas. (Coles et al., 2010 refer to Sánta, 2016) The escalating drug abuse and use and dealing in the new type of designer drugs poses a risk for the young people in a desperate situation in the first place.

Employment situation: Not even the population metrics can be clearly defined as to how many young people do not register themselves at the local job centre. The absorbing effect of the public labour programme significantly improved the official statistics. However, this is misleading. The NEET group and the group of young unemployed people are not identical. However, they do overlap. (Sánta, 2017) They run a higher risk of marginalisation than the EU average. This group comprises the under 25's who get involved in the public labour programme in high numbers.



The following categories can be regarded as specifically exposed: 1, those returning to the labour market and education; 2, short-term jobless; 3, permanently jobless; 4, passive; 5, young people with disabilities; 6, family responsibilities (care, nursing); and, 7, others (Eurofound, 2016a). Since the beginning of the 1990s the labour market engagement of the young has been steadily decreasing. Young adults were on the losing side of labour market conditions arising from the recession, along with other social groups. The Central Statistics Office reports that the employment indicators were improved by 52,000 people joining the public labour scheme in 2015. This means that the more favourable figures in employment were brought about by the public labourers, with young adults under 25 making up the largest segment. In 2014, it was 30,500 people, which made up about 17 % of the total number of people working under the public labour scheme. Nearly half of them (49.2%) had only met their elementary education obligations, or not even that. (Sánta 2016c).

In Hungary more and more families are forced to disengage their children from education when they pass the age of compulsory education and direct them towards the local public labour scheme. These young people are on the labour market, however, due to their low level of education they are considerably threatened by dependence on this scheme and they are more exposed. The public labour scheme is a dangerous trap for young adults under 25. (Sánta, 2016). Since end of March 2017, people under 25 cannot enter the public labour scheme and they must be employed through the Youth Guarantee Programme instead.

Schooling: The recession of 2008 hit the rural areas much harder than the more developed regions, especially the marginalised micro-regions. The risk of poverty, social exclusion and lack of services are higher in these regions and the micro-regions of Hungary. In these regions, a high number of these young people have children at an early age or take care of a member of the family, so they fall out of both the labour market and education. The public labour scheme is quite often the only way for them to start working. Low levels of education makes young people extremely vulnerable. Mitigating against early dropping out is key, with schemes to reintegrate the drop-outs, support for the period after the school and before the first job as well as trainings are crucial. Quality vocational training and education make the transition between school and work easier for them. Vocational education and training prepares them for entry into the labour market. It is important that the practical part of education is work-based.

<https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/105be7ec-hu/index.html?itemId=/content/component/105be7ec-hu>



3. 5. NEET

Table 10 NEET rate (%)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Cities						
Age groups						
Overall	20,5	20,4	14,6	-0,49 -0,1	-39,72 -5,8	-40,41 -5,9
15–19	3,5	3,8	3,4	7,89 / 0,3	-11,76 -0,4	-2,94 -0,1
20–24	12,5	14,3	7,8	12,58 / 1,8	-83,33 -6,5	-60,25 -4,7
25–29	17,1	15,7	10,7	-8,91 -1,4	-46,72 -5	-59,81 -6,4
30–34	21,6	21,4	13,1	-0,93 -0,2	-63,35 -8,3	-64,88 -8,5
Cities						
Age groups						
Overall	19,9	19,6	15,9	-1,53 -0,3	-23,27 -3,7	-25,15 -4
15–19	5,3	7,4	6,3	28,37 / 2,1	-17,46 -1,1	15,87 / 1
20–24	19,4	22,1	15,7	12,21 / 2,7	-40,76 -6,4	-23,65 -3,7
25–29	24,9	24,6	19,2	-1,21 -0,3	-28,12 -5,4	-29,68 -5,7
30–34	27,5	23,0	20,9	-19,56 -4,5	-10,04 -2,1	-31,57 -6,6
Rural areas						
Age groups						
Overall	24,7	25,4	18,1	2,75 / 0,7	-40,33 -7,3	-36,46 -6,6
15–19	6,9	8,9	9,3	22,47 / 2	4,30 / 0,4	25,8 / 2,4
20–24	28,0	30,2	20,3	7,28 / 2,2	-48,76 -9,9	-37,93 -7,7
25–29	32,7	32,6	20,6	-0,30 -3,9	-58,25 -12	-58,73 -12,1
30–34	31,2	31,9	21,8	2,19 / 0,7	-46,33 -10,1	-43,11 -9,4

NEEDs Source: Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex, age and degree of urbanisation (NEET rates) [edat_ifse_29]



4. CONCLUSIONS

The NEET rate demonstrated a considerable improvement of nearly 40% between 2009 and 2019 in the urban environment for all age groups. A slight improvement can be detected in the towns and urban environment, which amounts to 25% for all age groups between 2009 and 2019.

4. 1. General context indicators

The NEET youths often grow up under uncertain and difficult financial circumstances, in poverty and which goes back as far as three generations. The risk of poverty and social exclusion is higher in Hungary among the Roma, single parents, elderly, families raising three or more children and families raising disabled or permanently ill children. The most frequent risk factors are socio-economically disadvantageous environments, low levels of education and schooling problems, lack of proper housing, financial problems, learning difficulties, dissatisfaction with school, socio-emotional disorders, delinquency, health problems, homelessness and drug and/or alcohol abuse.

Hungary's population has been aging and decreasing for decades. The ratio of the young decreased in every analysed age group between 2009 and 2019 and in the rural areas the relative decrease is 38%. The NEET rate shows a considerable improvement of nearly 40% between 2009 and 2019 in the urban environment for all age groups. The trend improves in the towns and urban environment.



4. 2. Employment

In Hungary, the general employment statistics have been improving since 2010. The employment rate of the 15–39 year-old population increased from 53,0% to 62,5% between 2009 – 2019. The employment rate improved in every type of settlement/area. In the ten-year period, the rate increased from 59,0% to 66,3% in the urban areas (12,4% relative change), from 52,2% to 60,7% in urban and suburban areas (16,3% relative change) and from 49,0% to 60,6% in the rural areas (23,7% relative change). The improvement can be attributed to the community work in the marginalised regions, micro-regions and settlements. Owing to the improvement of the employment statistics, the unemployment rates have decreased considerably. Unemployment rates are the lowest in cities: in 2019, 8.20 percent in the population aged 20–24 years, 3.90 percent in the next age group (20–24 years) and only 2.80 percent among young people aged 30–34 years (the last data refers to 2018, because data is not available for 2019). The unemployment rates of towns and suburbs and rural areas do not differ significantly and the values of relative declines are also similar in the ten-year period (49.30 percent – 69.30 percent)

4. 3. Education

The ratio of those who have less than primary, primary and lower secondary education certificate reduced between by about 5%. The biggest positive changes come from the cities with its 6%, and a moderate reduction can be observed in the towns and suburbs and in rural areas also. At the upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education level, there is positive change: the ratio of those young people in this category increased by nearly 4%. We can see a negative tendency in the last 10 years for the 18–24-year-old age group regarding drop-out rates. Except for the cities, in all forms of urbanisation the portion of school leavers increased. The biggest increase can be observed in rural areas. Positive changes come from the cities, because during these 10 years the number of the early school leavers fell from 6,7% to 3,8%. Women have a better position overall, but trends are the same in both sexes over the last ten years.



4. 4. Poverty, social exclusion

Deprivation of opportunities in the long term (i.e., education, health, infrastructure, public transport and labour market conditions), low socioeconomic status, lack of relationships outside the enclosed settlements, low family income, a low level of employment and education and also permanent unemployment can combine to generate a high-risk scenario for young people and their possibility of becoming NEETs. Due to their situation, the NEET youth are faced with a higher risk of social exclusion. The NEET youth's risk of social exclusion is triple that of the non-NEET counter parts based on a 2016 study. New kinds of designer drugs pose a risk for the young people in a desperate situation in the first place. Deviant behaviour is more often than not met with police proceedings in Hungary as the sole response.



5. REFERENCES

Bokányi Z., Szabó Á. (2015.) NEET-fiatalok Egy fogalom nyomában Kapocs folyóirat 2015/1.
http://www.epa.hu/02900/02943/00065/pdf/EPA02943_kapocs_2015_1_28-39.pdf

Sánta T. (2016): Youngsters Who Are Not in Employment, Education os Training Belvedere
2016. 2. Studies 121.

Sánta T. (2017): Ha tovább maradsz, beleragadsz! Neet-es fiatalok kormegoszlási arányai
Szegeden Kultúra és közösség IV. folyam VIII. évfolyam 2017/1 szám.

Youth Policy Review in Hungary, 2016

Hungary's National Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan (2016) <https://ngmszakmaiteruletek.kormany.hu/download/9/4c/c0000/Youth%20Guarantee%20Implementation%20Plan.pdf>

OECD Multilingual Summaries: Society at a Glance 2016 OECD Social Indicators Summary
in Hungarian (2016). <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/105be7ec-hu/index.html?itemId=/content/component/105be7ec-hu>

Society at glance 209-2019 (2019.) https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/society-at-a-glance_19991290

https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/magyarorsz%C3%A1g/organisation-education-system-and-its-structure_hu



6. IMPORTANT LINKS

Magyar Ifjúsági Konferencia <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1161&langId=en&intPagId=3338>

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/10-youth-work-hungary>

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1161&langId=en&intPagId=3338>

National Youth Strategy (Nemzeti Ifjúsági Stratégia)

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/13-national-youth-strategy-hungary>



RURAL NEETs IN ITALY



2009/2019
OVERVIEW



AUTHORS

Sara Alfieri – sara.alfieri@unicatt.it
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore – Milano – UCSC

Adriano Mauro Ellena – adrianomauro.ellena@unicatt.it
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore – Milano – UCSC

Image by Ichigo121212 from Pixabay

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network: Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged. Please cite this publication as "COST CA18213 Rural NEETs in Italy: 2009/2019 Overview.

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. CONTEXTUALIZATION	7
1. 1. General information	7
2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE	11
3. DATA ANALYSIS	13
3. 1. Population and youth population	13
3. 2. Employment and Unemployment	17
• Youth employment	17
• Youth unemployment	21
3. 3. Education	25
• Young people by educational attainment level	25
• Early school leavers	30
3. 4. NEETs	32
• NEET rate	32
4. CONCLUSIONS	37
5. REFERENCES	39
6. IMPORTANT LINKS	40

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document describes the Italian situation of young people aged between 15 and 34 years who do not work, do not study and are not in training (NEET), from 2009 to 2019. The report analyses the following indicators of the youth population: employment; unemployment; education; and, distribution of NEETs. The criteria adopted to analyse data are mainly the degree of urbanisation, the age group and, where possible, gender.

The statistical procedure adopted for the different dimensions selected is descriptive longitudinal analysis and calculation of absolute and relative proportional changes between 2009 and 2013, 2013 and 2019 and between 2009 and 2019. These time intervals have been chosen to capture the evolution of the indicators before and after the economic crisis that hit European countries. All data has been extracted from Eurostat public data sets.

The data analysed shows how the Italian population decreased slightly between 2009 and 2019. However, what clearly changed is the distribution: increased in rural areas and decreased in cities. Youth unemployment grew strongly from 2009 to 2014, until finally decreasing from 2014 to 2019. Between 2009 and 2019, the Italian population aged from 15 to 24 years old has become more educated. The number of young people who drop out of school early decreased sharply, although rural areas remain the ones with the highest rates thereof. Finally, the NEET rate is one of the highest in the EU and has increased overall from 2009 to 2019. The peak was reached in 2014 and then the share decreased until 2019. Rural areas have the highest rate, although with a very small difference compared to the rate of cities and the national average.

RIASSUNTO ESECUTIVO

Il presente documento descrive la situazione italiana dei giovani che non lavorano, non studiano e non sono in formazione (NEET) di età compresa tra i 15 e i 34 anni, tra il 2009 e il 2019. Il report analizza i seguenti indicatori della popolazione giovanile: occupazione, disoccupazione, istruzione e distribuzione dei NEET. Il criteri adottati per analizzare questi indicatori sono principalmente il grado di urbanizzazione, la fascia di età e, laddove possibile, il genere.

La procedura statistica adottata per le diverse dimensioni selezionate è l'analisi longitudinale descrittiva e il calcolo delle variazioni proporzionali assolute e relative tra il 2009 e il 2013, il 2013 e il 2019 e tra il 2009 e il 2019. Questi intervalli di tempo sono stati scelti per catturare l'evoluzione degli indicatori prima e dopo la crisi economica che ha colpito i paesi europei. Tutti i dati sono stati estratti da set di dati pubblici di Eurostat.

I dati analizzati mostrano come popolazione italiana sia leggermente diminuita tra il 2009 e il 2019. Ciò che si modifica nettamente è la distribuzione: aumentata nelle aree rurali e diminuita nelle città. La disoccupazione giovanile subisce una forte crescita dal 2009 al 2014, per poi decrescere dal 2014 al 2019. Tra il 2009 e il 2019, la popolazione italiana tra i 15 e i 24 anni è diventata più istruita. I giovani che abbandonano precocemente la scuola diminuiscono fortemente, anche se le zone rurali rimangono quelle con il tasso più alto. Infine, la percentuale di NEET è tra le più alte in UE ed è aumentata complessivamente dal 2009 al 2019. Il picco massimo lo si raggiunge nel 2014, per poi decrescere fino al 2019. Le aree rurali presentano il tasso più elevato, anche se con una differenza esigua rispetto al dato delle città e alla media nazionale.

INTRODUCTION

This report proceeds in three sections. It begins with an introductory contextualisation with the most relevant information about Italian social, economic and political situation and key youth policies based on a relevant literature review. A methodological note explains the database used and the statistical operations undertaken. The most extensive section of the report refers to the analysis performed, with a specific focus on young people, by degree of urbanisation and concerning four main topics: population; employment; education; NEETs.

The report ends with a brief conclusion that highlights the main results regarding the topics explored.



1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

1. 1. General information

Italy is a peninsula located in southern Europe. Since its conformation resembles a boot with the toe pointing southwest, people usually refer to it by this nickname i.e., 'the boot'. To the north, it is bounded by the Alps and borders, from west to east, with France, Switzerland, Austria, and Slovenia. However, most of the territory is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea, including numerous islands, two of which are autonomous regions (Sicily and Sardinia). Within the Italian territory, the states of Vatican City, San Marino (enclaves of the Republic), and Campione d'Italia (exclave) can be found. Italy is the third largest country in the European Union by population (after Germany and France), with a total of 60,359,546 inhabitants. (Bilancio demografico Istat <http://www.demo.istat.it/bilmens2018gen/>). It is characterised by many older people (the old-age index is 161.4), a low fertility rate (1.34), and a life expectancy of 80.6 years for men and 85.1 years for women. www.dati.istat.it

Italy is a parliamentary republic, whose Constitution was approved by the Constituent Assembly on December 22nd, 1947, which came into force on January 1st, 1948, and forms the Republic's founding legal framework. The Italian legal system is bicameral: the Parliament is composed of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Republic, each having the same powers. In the Italian political system, the President of the Council of Ministers is appointed by the President of the Republic to form the government, for which he is responsible within the Parliament. The President of the Republic is the Head of State, the guarantor of the Constitution, and representative of national unity. He is not the head of one power (legislative, executive, or judicial) but rather coordinates them all.

The administrative structure of the country includes territorial entities which, together with the State, constitute the Italian Republic. These include: 20 regions (15 with an ordinary statute and 5 with a special statute); 14 metropolitan cities; 93 provinces and 7904 municipalities (ISTAT data for the year 2020).



Italy is also a founding member of the European Union, NATO, the Council of Europe, and the OECD and is a UN and Schengen Treaty member. It is also a member of the G7 and G20.

2. Strategic National legislation for youth: Although there is no unequivocal indication as to who should be defined as “young people”, ISTAT includes in this category people between 15 and 34 years old. (<http://dati-giovani.istat.it/>). However, sociological and psychological literature prefers to use non-biological markers to define it, but rather indicators of transition, such as: the conclusion of studies; entry into the labour market and the acquisition of a relatively stable occupation; housing independence from the family of origin; and, the creation of one’s own family. Due to the low fertility rate, this segment of the population is numerically lower than its predecessors. Demographic forecasts also predict a further decline in the coming decades, both in absolute terms and concerning the elderly population. <http://www4.istat.it/it/giovani/popolazione-e-famiglie>

After the reform of Italian family law in 1975, the age of majority is acquired at 18 and one day (previously, the threshold was 21). All Italian citizens over the age of majority are automatically entered on voters’ lists in the Chamber of Deputies. By contrast, only those who have reached 25 can vote in elections for the Senate of the Republic.

Compared to other sectors, youth policies in Italy are relatively recent and have developed on multiple levels: the Central Government, Regions, and Autonomous Provinces agree on the drafting of legislation, while local authorities, the third sector, and youth organisations are actively involved in “bottom-up” planning and implementation.

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/overview-italy>

The Department for Youth Policy and Universal Civil Service forms the support structure for the President of the Council of Ministers. It exists to promote and connect government actions in order to ensure the implementation of policies in favour of youth and universal civil service as well as conscientious objection. <https://www.politichegiovaniieserviziocivile.gov.it/sx/dipartimento/competenze.aspx>. Since 2006, the National Youth Policy Fund has been funding measures aimed at promoting various measures, including: non-formal



and informal education; access of young people to the labour market, including the development of start-ups and youth entrepreneurship; social inclusion and specific measures to reach marginalised and vulnerable groups; participation and rights of young people; cultural activities, talent development; prevention and measures against addiction; and, volunteering and access to international and European programs and projects.

In 2019, the Minister put forward the following national policy priorities: social inclusion, participation; support for young people; prevention, and measures against new addictions.

3. Education: Within Italy, education is composed of multiple legal forms: public schools, charter schools and private schools. Professional training is region-specific; the other types depend on the State. The Italian school system is structured in three educational cycles: primary, which lasts five years; secondary, which includes first level secondary school, which lasts three years, and second level secondary school, which lasts five years; higher level, which includes university and specialist training, such as master and specialisation school. In addition to these cycles of education, there is also pre-school, a non-mandatory pre-school institution, characterised by play and cohabitation with classmates and preparation for the first cycle of education. Mandatory schooling is set at 16 years old. www.miur.it

After the reform introduced by the Bologna Process, the university cycle of studies is divided into three phases: degree (3 years), master's degree (2 years), Ph.D. (3 years).

Compared to other major European economies, Italy is characterised by modest education and skills, although this is growing. As a result, there is a lower incidence in professionals and technicians' employment and personnel with university degrees in these categories. <https://www.istat.it/storage/rapporti-tematici/conoscenza2018/Rapportoconoscenza2018.pdf>

4. Employment: It is possible in Italy to start working from the age of 16, but age is only one of the requirements. Beginning in 2013, the Department for Youth Policies and Universal Civil Service signed agreements with the Regions for the implementation of direct interventions. These interventions aimed to create Centres/Forms of youth aggregation, aimed at improving young people's encounters, the prevention of youth hardship, and the support



COST Action CA18213
Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural
NEETs social exclusion

of young talents (funding actions to support young people in the expression of their talent and creativity), as well as orientation and placement activities.

<https://www.politichegiovanili.gov.it/attivita/accordi-e-compartecipazioni/regioni/>

Italy is also a member of the Youth Guarantee, a program launched in 2013 to reduce youth unemployment through European funds.

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1161&langId=en&intPagId=3340>



2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

Italy

The Italian national report uses information gathered by the National Reports Editorial Team of the Rural NEET Youth Network via the Eurostat platform. The main data presented and analysed in this report are from the following Eurostat database:

- Population Statistics: [yth_demo_020]
- EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS): [lfst_r_pgauwsc]; [lfst_r_ergau]; [lfst_r_urgau]; [edat_lfs_9913]; [edat_lfse_30]; [edat_lfse_29]

Selected indicators were extracted from the different databases according to two criteria:

- Time range: the previous decade (2009–2019) in order to have a sufficiently long period of time to capture the main changes and continuities in young people trajectories in education, training and employment. The analysis mainly covered 3 dates – 2009–2013–2019 – in order to capture the impact of the economic and financial crisis that hit Europe and that, in most countries, reached its peak in 2012/2013.
- Age group: age group range varies accordingly to the data available in each indicator (15–24; 15–29; 15–34; and 15–39). Whenever possible, age range also covered young adult's data (30–34 and 35–39) in order to capture the extent of crisis impact on these age groups.

In addition to a descriptive analysis, in order to compare data main changes and continuities in different time periods, absolute and relative change were calculated according to the three main time points that were selected – 2009, 2013 and 2019. Absolute change refers to the simple difference in the indicator over two periods in time and is expressed in percent-



COST Action CA18213
Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural
NEETs social exclusion

tage points (pp). Relative change expresses the change of a value of an indicator in an earlier period and is expressed in percentage terms.

The report also includes an introductory contextualisation section with the most relevant information about the Italian social, economic and political situation as well as key youth policies based on a review of relevant literature and the Youth Wiki European online encyclopaedia.



3. DATA ANALYSIS

3. 1. Population and youth population

Table 1 presents the data describing the Italian population aged between 15 and 64, focusing on gender and urbanisation. The years taken into account are 2009, 2013, and 2019. Comparisons are also considered.

In 2009, the total population (15–64) was 38,911,800 inhabitants, of which 16,803,600 living in cities, 16,363,500 residing in towns and suburbs, and 5,744,700 residing in rural areas.

Regarding 2013, the total population was 39,171,600 inhabitants, of which 12,658,200 living in cities, 17,054,800 residing in towns and suburbs, and 9,458,600 living in rural areas.

On the other hand, in 2019, the total population was 38,427,500 inhabitants, of which 12,656,900 residents were living in cities, 16,577,300 residents living in towns and suburbs, and 9,193,300 residents living in rural areas.

Comparing the annual surveys, it is clear that in 2013 there was a 24.70% reduction in the city resident population compared to 2009 (4,145,400 fewer people). The villages and suburbs have instead undergone a slight increase of 4.20% (691,300 people). Simultaneously, the most surprising figure is recorded in rural areas, where there is a clear increase in the population of 64.60%, corresponding to a rise of 3,713,900 people. In 2019, the number of people living in the cities remained almost the same compared to 2013. On the other hand, towns and suburbs and rural areas both suffered a decrease of 2.80%. If we consider the number of inhabitants, we can say that there has been a decrease of 477,500 and 265,300 people respectively.

Overall, from 2009 to 2019, the cities' population decreased by 24.70% (4,146,700 inhabitants), while that of towns and suburbs increased by 1.30%. Again, the most salient range

comes from rural areas, where the overall increase was 60.00%, corresponding to a rise of 3,488,600 inhabitants.

With reference to gender, there are no particular differences. Both relative and absolute data seem to be very similar between males and females.

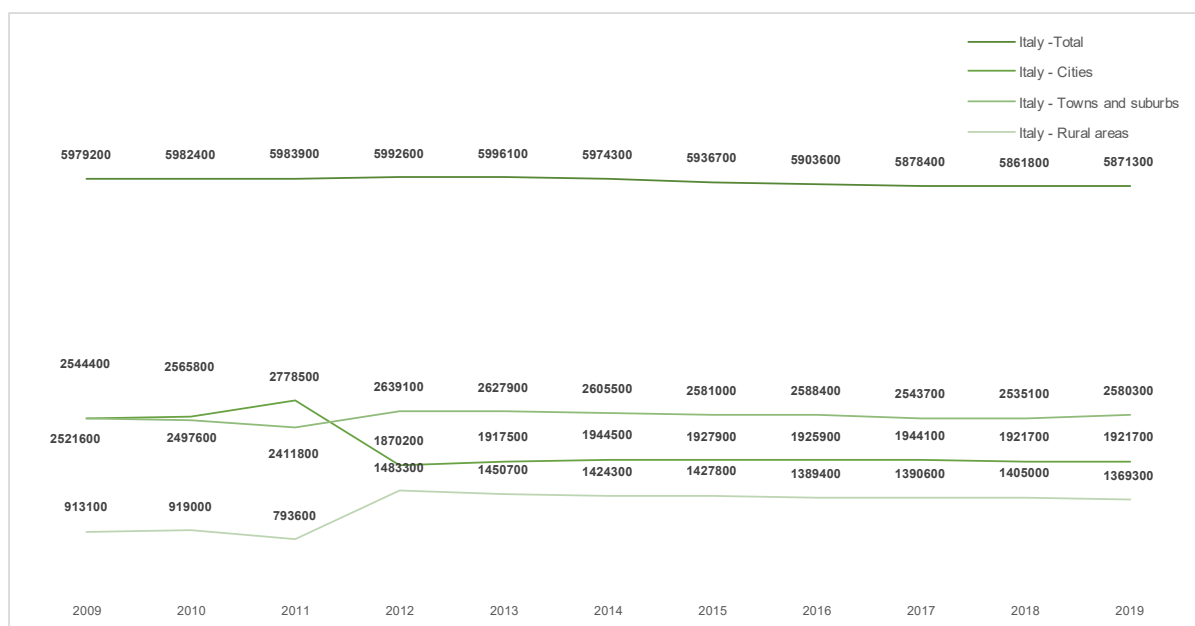
Table 1. Ratio of total population (15–64) by gender and degree of urbanisation, absolute and relative change in Italy (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2009)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Cities						
Overall	16,803.60	12,658.20	12,656.90	-4,145.40 (-24.70%)	-1.30 (0.0%)	-4,146.70 (-24.70%)
Sex						
Male	8,290.80	6,180.70	6,234.80	-2,110.10 (-25.50%)	54.10 (0.90 %)	-2,056.00 (-24.80%)
Female	8,512.80	6,477.50	6,422.10	-2,035.30 (-23.90%)	-55.40 (-0.90%)	-2,090.70 (-24.60%)
Towns and suburbs						
Overall	16,363.50	17,054.80	16,577.30	691.30 (4.20%)	-477.50 (-2.80%)	213.80 (1.30%)
Sex						
Male	8,160.20	8,507.00	8,287.90	346.80 (4.20%)	-219.10 (-2.60%)	127.70 (1.60%)
Female	8,203.40	8,574.80	8,289.40	344.40 (4.20%)	-258.40 (-3.00%)	86.00 (1.00%)
Rural areas						
Overall	5,744.70	9,458.60	9,193.30	3,713.90 (64.60%)	-265.30 (-2.80%)	3,448.60 (60.00%)
Sex						
Male	2,894.10	4,768.30	4,635.30	1,874.20 (64.80%)	-133.00 (-2.80%)	1,741.20 (60.20%)
Female	2,850.60	4,690.20	4,558.00	1,839.60 (64.50%)	-132.20 (-2.80%)	1,707.40 (59.90%)

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_pgawsc) – data extracted on 12.05.2020

The chart below highlights the evolution of the total Italian youth population aged 15–24 years old for different degrees of urbanisation, between 2009 and 2019. According to the chart, the total youth population is slightly declining. In 2009, there were 5,979,200 people aged 15–24 in Italy; that number increased to 5,996,100 by 2013, and then declined to 5,871,300 in 2019. In terms of the degree of urbanisation, in 2009, the largest number of young people resided in cities (2,544,400), followed by towns and suburbs (2,521,600), and rural areas (913,100). In 2013 the situation appeared to have changed radically. The number of young people residing in cities dropped dramatically (1,917,500) while that of those residing in rural areas increased strongly (1,450,700). On the other hand, the number of those living in towns and suburbs barely grew (2,627,900). As for 2019, the part of young people residing in cities rose slightly (1,921,700), while the number of those residing in towns and suburbs (2,580,300) and rural areas (1,369,300) decreased. These data are consistent with those of the general population.

Chart 1. Total youth population (15–24) 2009–2019 by degree of urbanisation (Italy)



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_pgauwsc) – data extracted on 12.05.2020



According to Table 2, overall, the youth population ratio in Italy has been declining between 2011 and 2019. However, the 25–29 age group seems to have a more remarkable relative change (–5.36%) than the 15–19 (–2.04%) and 20–24 age groups (1.96%).

Table 2. Ratio of youth population by age subgroups and absolute and relative change in Italy (2011–2015, 2015–2019 and 2011–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Age groups						
15–19	4.90%	4.70%	4.80%	–0.20 pp (–4.08%)	0.10 pp (2.13%)	–0.10 pp (–2.04%)
20–24	5.10%	5.10%	5.00%	0 (0)	–0.10 pp (–1.96%)	–0.10 pp (–1.96%)
25–29	5.60%	5.40%	5.30%	–0.20 pp (–3.57%)	–0.10 pp (–1.85%)	–0.30 pp (–5.36%)

Source: Eurostat: yth_demo_020 – data extracted in 13.05.20



3. 2. Employment and Unemployment

3. 2. 1. Youth employment

Below is a description of young Italians' employment indexes (15–34 years) for 2009 and 2019. The data will be described considering the degree of urbanisation and the age group, as detailed in Table 3. The age groups considered are: 15–19; 20–24; 25–29; and, 30–34. The comparison between the two years will also be considered.

2009 is characterised by an overall youth employment rate of 54.60%, which in cities becomes 54.10%, in towns and suburbs 55.06%, and in rural areas 52.80%. If we analyse the various degrees of urbanisation in the different age groups, the following can be said. In cities, the 15–19 age group's employment rate is 4.90%, in the 20–24 age group 34.3%, in the 25–29 age group 60.2% and finally in the 30–34 age group 73.00%. For towns and suburbs in the 15–19 age group, the employment rate is 5.7%, 39.4% for the 20–24 age group, 62.8% for the 25–29 age group, and 72.9% for the 30–34 age group. The employment rate in rural areas is 6.9% for the 15–19 age group, 38.0% for the 20–24 age group, 59.4% for the 25–29 age group, and 70.3% for the 30–34 age group. As is to be expected, in all three degrees of urbanisation, the highest employment rate is found in the 30–34 age group, followed by 25–29, 20–24, and 15–19, respectively. The 15–19 age group sees a higher rate in rural areas (6.90%), followed by towns and suburbs (5.70%) and cities (4.90%). The 20–24 age group has higher employment rates in villages and suburbs (39.40%), followed slightly by rural areas (38.00%) and finally, with a more massive gap, cities (34.30%). The 25–29 age group also has the highest rate in towns and suburbs (62.80%), followed by cities (60.20%) and rural areas (59.40%). As mentioned above, the 30–34 age group sees employment rates plus others with 73.00% in cities, 72.90% in towns and suburbs, and 70.30% in rural areas.

2019 is characterised by an overall youth employment rate of 48.70%, 47.50% in cities, 49.20% in towns and suburbs, and 49.60% in rural areas. If we analyse the various degrees of urbanisation in the different age groups, we find the following results. In cities, the 15–19 age group's employment rate corresponds to 2.70%; in the 20–24 age group to 27.70%; in the 25–29 age group to 53.10%; and, finally in the 30–34 age group, to 68.90%. Regarding towns and suburbs, the employment rate is 4.00% in the 15–19 age group, 34.40% in the



20–24 age group, 58.70% in the 25–29 age group, and 68.80% in the 30–34 age group. The employment rate is 4.70% in rural areas concerning the 15–19 age group, 36.90% in the 20–24 age group, 56.60% in the 25–29 age group and, 67.30% in the 30–34 age group. As in 2009, in 2019 the 30–34 age group presents the highest employment rates in all the three degrees of urbanisation.

Overall, 2019 saw a 10.81% decrease in the employment rate (with a loss of 5.90 percentage points) compared to 2009. Cities and towns and suburbs seem to be the most affected, with a decrease of 12.20% and 11.51%, corresponding to an absolute reduction of 6.60 and 6.40 percentage points, respectively. Rural areas show a decrease of 3.20 percentage points, corresponding to 6.06%. In conclusion, while in 2009 rural areas had the lowest employment rate (52.80%), in 2019 it was the cities (47.5%).

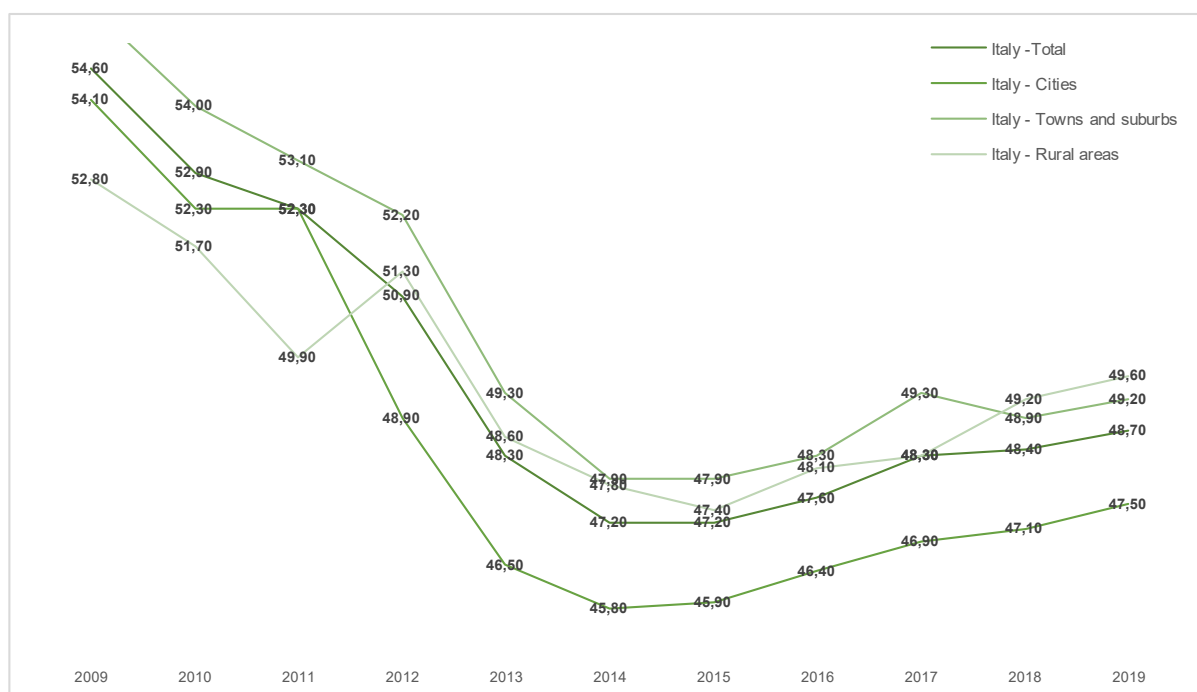
Table 3. Youth employment (%) and absolute and relative change in Italy by age subgroups and degree of urbanisation (2009–2013, 2013–2019, and 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Cities						
Age groups						
Overall	54.10%	46.50%	47.50%	-7.60 pp (-14.05%)	1.00 pp (2.15%)	-6.60 pp (-12.20%)
15–19	4.90%	1.90%	2.70%	-3.0 pp (-61.22%)	0.80 pp (42.11%)	-2.20 pp (-44.90%)
20–24	34.30%	23.80%	27.70%	-10.50 pp (-30.61%)	3.90 pp (16.39%)	-6.60 pp (-19.24%)
25–29	60.20%	50.10%	53.10%	-10.10 pp (-16.78%)	3.00 pp (5.99%)	-7.10 pp (-11.79%)
30–34	73.00%	65.70%	68.90%	-7.30 pp (-10.00%)	3.20 pp (4.87%)	-4.10 pp (-5.62%)
Towns and suburbs						
Age groups						
Overall	55.6%	49.30%	49.2%	-6.30 pp (-11.33%)	-0.10 pp (-0.20%)	-6.40 pp (-11.51%)
15–19	5.7%	2.90%	4.0%	-2.80 pp (-49.12%)	1.10 pp (37.93%)	-1.70 pp (-29.82%)
20–24	39.4%	30.90%	34.4%	-8.50 pp (-21.57%)	3.50 pp (11.33%)	-5.00 pp (-12.69%)
25–29	62.8%	53.80%	58.7%	-9.00 pp (-14.33%)	4.90 pp (9.11%)	-4.10 pp (-6.53%)
30–34	72.9%	68.20%	68.8%	-4.70 pp (-6.45 %)	0.60 pp (0.88%)	-4.10 pp (-5.62%)
Rural areas						
Age groups						
Overall	52.8%	48.60%	49.6%	-4.20 pp (-7.95 %)	1.00 pp (2.06%)	-3.20 pp (-6.06%)
15–19	6.9%	3.40%	4.7%	-3.50 pp (-50.72%)	1.30 pp (38.24%)	-2.20 pp (-31.88%)
20–24	38.0%	31.50%	36.9%	-6.50 pp (-17.11%)	5.40 pp (17.14%)	-1.10 pp (-2.89%)
25–29	59.4%	54.10%	56.6%	-5.30 pp (-8.92 %)	2.50 pp (4.62%)	-2.80 pp (-4.71%)
30–34	70.3%	65.40%	67.3%	-4.90 pp (-6.97 %)	1.90 pp (2.91%)	-3.00 pp (-4.27%)

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergrau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020

The chart below compares the trend in youth employment by degree of urbanisation from 2009 to 2019. As explained above, from 2009 to 2019 there was a decrease in the level of youth employment. The chart clearly shows a substantial decrease, reaching its lowest level in 2014 for cities (45.80%) as well as towns and suburbs (47.90%) and in 2015 for rural areas (47.40%). As a result of this peak, rates seem to be recovering, although much more slowly. In conclusion, cities have been most affected over time, both in terms of numbers and intensity.

Chart 2. Youth employment age group 15–39 years old (%) in Italy (2009–2019) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergrau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020



3. 2. 2. Youth unemployment

This section describes the ratio of youth unemployment in 2009, 2013 and 2019, taking into account both the degree of urbanisation and different age groups. Respective comparisons are also considered.

The overall unemployment rate in 2009 was 11.5%. More specifically, as can be seen from Table 4, youth unemployment is higher in rural areas (12.20%) followed by cities (11.80%) and towns and suburbs (11.00%). Taking cities into consideration, the age group that presents the highest unemployment rate is the 15–19 age group that presents a percentage of unemployed equal to 41.60% of the considered population, followed by 20–24 with a rate of 25.00%, 25–29 with 13.60% and finally the 30–34 age group with 8.60%. Furthermore, in towns and suburbs we see that the 15–19 age group has the highest levels of unemployment (39.00%), followed by the 20–24 group (20.60%), and then the 25–29 group (12.80%) and the 30–34 group (8.40%). Rural areas show a similar trend, where 37.90% of young people between 15 and 19 years old are unemployed. We also find the 20–24 group with an unemployment level of 22.30%, the 25–29 group with 13.90%, and finally the 30–34 group with 9.10%.

2013 is characterised by an overall unemployment rate of 18.60%. Unemployment is higher in cities where it reaches 19.90%, followed by rural areas with 18.9% and towns and suburbs with 17.60%.

Concerning cities, the age group with the highest unemployment rate is 15–19 (68.90%), followed by 20–24 (41.10%), 25–29 (24.20%) and finally 30–34 (16.00%). The towns and suburbs also have the 15–19 age group as that with the highest rate (61.40%), followed by 20–24 (34.90%), 25–29 (21.20%) and finally 30–34 (16.00%). Similar percentages of unemployment are also found in rural areas, where the 15–19 group reaches 61.80%, followed by 34.30% in the 20–24 group, 21.50% in the 25–29 group and finally 14.80% in the 30–34 group. This data clearly shows a significant increase in unemployment compared to 2009. If we consider the percentage points, the 15–19 age group is the most affected, with an increase of 27.30 percentage points (absolute change) in cities, 22.40 percentage points (absolute change) in towns and suburbs and 23.90 percentage points (absolute change) in rural areas. The overall increase was significant in all three degrees of urbanisation where



in cities the number of unemployed increased by 68.64%, followed by towns and suburbs which saw an increase of 60.00% and finally rural areas with an increase of 54.92%. As can be seen, it is the cities that have the highest change and, in particular, the attention is focused on the groups 25–29 and 30–34 where there is an increase of 77.94% and 86.05% (relative change) respectively, corresponding to an increase of 10.60 and 7.40 percentage points (absolute change). This means that, in cities, the number of unemployed people between 25 and 34 years old has almost doubled in just 4 years.

With regards to 2019, it shows a total unemployment rate of 15.60%. Unemployment is higher in cities where it reaches 17.10% of the youth population, followed by rural areas with 14.90% and towns and suburbs with 14.80%. Taking cities into account, the age group with the highest unemployment rate is 15–19 (56.00%), followed by 20–24 (30.30%), 25–29 (20.80%) and finally 30–34 (13.10%). Towns and suburbs also see the 15–19 age group as that with the highest rate (47.00%), followed by 20–24 (25.00%), 25–29 (15.90%) and finally 30–34 (11.80%). As far as rural areas are concerned, the age range 15–19 reaches 40.40%, followed by 23.90% in the 20–24 range, 16.30% in the 25–29 range and finally 12.90% in the 30–34 range. Compared to 2013, 2019 shows a generalised decrease in youth unemployment. However, as shown in Table 4, the pre-2013 levels do not seem to have been reached. The values are still higher than those of 2009: in cities there is an overall relative increase of 44.92%, in towns and suburbs of 34.55% and in rural areas 22.13%, corresponding to an increase of 5.30, 3.80 and 2.70 percentage points respectively (absolute change). It can be seen that cities manifests the biggest increase.

Table 4. Youth unemployment (%) and absolute and relative change in Italy by degree of urbanisation (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)

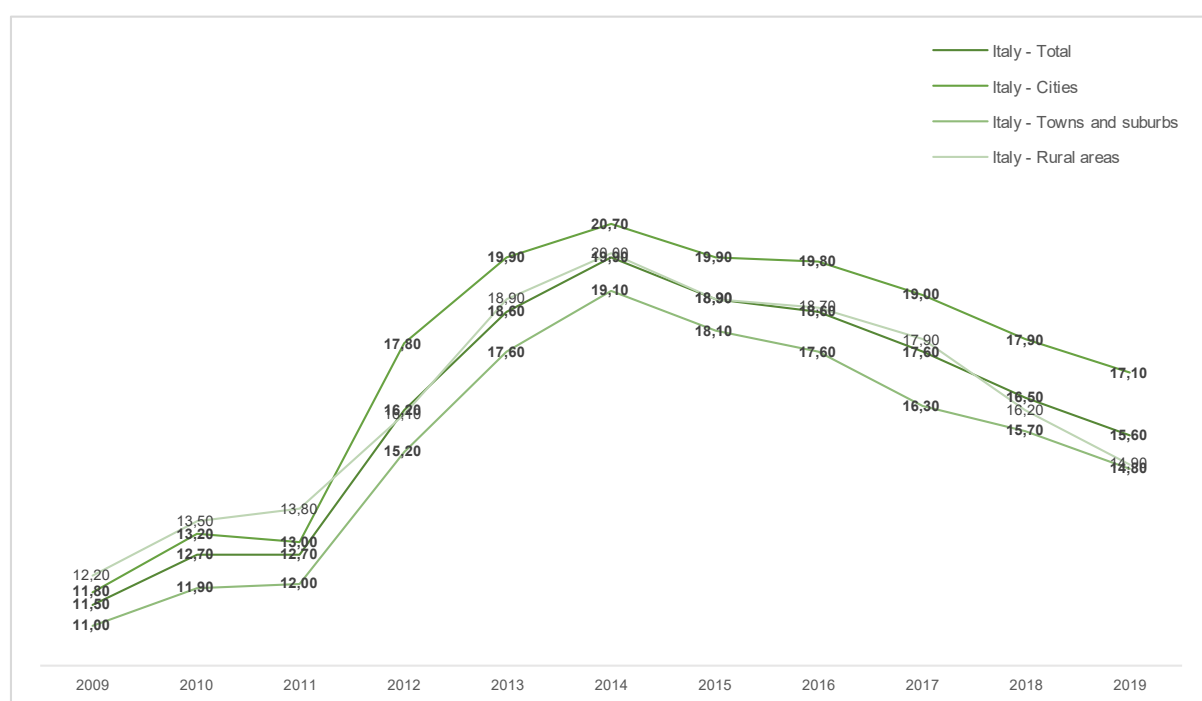
	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Cities						
Age groups						
Overall	11.80%	19.90%	17.10%	8.10 pp (68.64%)	-2.80 pp (-14.07%)	5.30 pp (44.92%)
15–19	41.60%	68.90%	56.00%	27.30 pp (65.63%)	-12.90 pp (-18.72%)	14.40 pp (34.62%)
20–24	25.00%	41.10%	30.30%	16.10 pp (64.40%)	-10.80 pp (-26.28%)	5.30 pp (21.20%)
25–29	13.60%	24.20%	20.80%	10.60 pp (77.94%)	-3.40 pp (-14.05%)	7.20 pp (52.94%)
30–34	8.60%	16.00%	13.10%	7.40 pp (86.05%)	-2.90 pp (-18.13%)	4.50 pp (52.33%)
Towns and suburbs						
Age groups						
Overall	11.00%	17.60%	14.80%	6.60 pp (60.00%)	-2.80 pp (-15.91%)	3.80 pp (34.55%)
15–19	39.00%	61.40%	47.00%	22.40 pp (57.44%)	-14.40 pp (-23.45%)	8.00 pp (20.51%)
20–24	20.60%	34.90%	25.00%	14.30 pp (69.42%)	-9.90 pp (-28.37%)	4.40 pp (21.36%)
25–29	12.80%	21.20%	15.90%	8.40 pp (65.63%)	-5.30 pp (-25.00%)	3.10 pp (24.22%)
30–34	8.40%	12.70%	11.80%	4.30 pp (51.19%)	-0.90 pp (-7.09%)	3.40 pp (40.48%)
Rural areas						
Age groups						
Overall	12.20%	18.90%	14.90%	6.70 pp (54.92%)	-4.00 pp (-21.16%)	2.70 pp (22.13%)
15–19	37.90%	61.80%	40.40%	23.90 pp (63.06%)	-21.40 pp (-34.63%)	2.50 pp (6.60%)
20–24	22.30%	34.30%	23.90%	12.00 pp (53.81%)	-10.40 pp (-30.32%)	1.60 pp (7.17%)
25–29	13.90%	21.50%	16.30%	7.60 pp (54.68%)	-5.20 pp (-24.19%)	2.40 pp (17.27%)
30–34	9.10%	14.80%	12.90%	5.70 pp (62.64%)	-1.90 pp (-12.84%)	3.80 pp (41.76%)

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergrau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020



The chart illustrated below shows the development of the youth unemployment rate from 2009 until 2019. It is interesting to note that from 2011 to 2012 there is a steep increase in youth unemployment, which reached its peak in 2014. In the following years, we can see the beginning of a very gradual decline. All three degrees of urbanisation show the same trend but, as described above, cities reach the highest levels of unemployment and see a slower decrease compared to towns and suburbs and rural areas.

Chart 3. Unemployment age group 15–39 years old (%) in Italy (2009–2019) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergrau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020



3. 3. Education

3. 3. 1. Young people by educational attainment level

This paragraph describes the Italian youth population when considering the level of education and the degree of urbanisation. Data from the years 2009, 2013 and 2019 are analysed. To carry out these analyses, young people between 15 and 24 years of age have been taken into consideration.

With regards to cities, in 2009 55.20% of young people were declared as having a 0–2 level qualification. In 2013 there is a decrease of 5.62%, with a loss of 3.10 percentage points, reaching 52.10%. In 2019, this figure continued to fall, losing a further 2.30% (relative change), corresponding to a 1.20 percentage points (absolute change), and reaching 50.90% of young people with a 0–2 level of education. Therefore, the overall change between 2009 and 2019 consists of a loss of 7.79% (relative change), corresponding to a loss of 4.30 percentage points (absolute change).

The number of young people with an education level of 3–4 in 2009 is 41.30%, rising to 43.40% in 2013 and then falling again to 43.00% in 2019. This represents an increase of 5.08% (2.10pp absolute change) between 2009 and 2013; a decrease of 0.92% (0.4pp absolute change) between 2013 and 2019; and, an overall increase in 2019 of 4.12% (1.7pp absolute change) compared to 2009. 3.5% of the youth population in 2009 had an education level of 5–8. It rose to 4.50% in 2013 and 6.10% in 2019, showing an overall increase of 74.29% (2.6pp absolute change).

On the other hand, in towns and suburbs, 53.80% of youths between 15 and 24 years of age have a 0–2 level of education in 2009. This ratio drops to 53.50% in 2013 and it drops again to 50.70% in 2019. From 2009 to 2019, there is 5.82% loss overall (3.10pp absolute change). Those with a level of education 3–4 are the 42.70% of young population in 2009, rising to 44.00% in 2013 and to 44.20% in 2019, increasing by 1.50pp (absolute change) which corresponds to 3.51% (relative change). An education level of 5–8 was possessed by 3.50% of youths in 2009. The ratio remains constant in 2013 until it increases to 45.71% (relative change) in 2019.

The situation in rural areas is quite similar. 54.8% of young people claim to have a 0–2 level of education in 2009. The number tends to decrease in the following years, reaching 51.50% in 2013, and finally 50.70% in 2019. In 2019, therefore, the total number is 4.10 pp (absolute change) lower than in 2009, and corresponding to a decrease of 7.48% (relative change). Regarding the level of education 3–4, 42.40% of young people had it in 2009, reaching 45.50% in 2013 and finally 45.30% in 2019. Only 2.80% claimed to have an education level of 5–8 in 2009. This figure increased to 3.10% in 2013 and 4.00% in 2019, representing an overall increase of 42.86% (relative change), which corresponds to an increase of 1.20pp (absolute change).

Table 5. Italian population, aged 15–24, by ISCED levels (%) and degree of urbanisation including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Cities						
Educational attainment						
ISCED 0–2	55.20%	52.10%	50.90%	–3.10 pp (–5.62%)	–1.20 pp (–2.30%)	–4.30 pp (–7.79%)
ISCED 3–4	41.30%	43.40%	43.00%	2.10 pp (5.08%)	–0.40 pp (–0.92%)	1.70 pp (4.12%)
ISCED 5–8	3.50%	4.50%	6.10%	1.00 pp (28.57%)	1.60 pp (35.56%)	2.60 pp (74.29%)
Towns and suburbs						
Educational attainment						
ISCED 0–2	53.80%	52.50%	50.70%	–1.30 pp (–2.42%)	–1.80 pp (–3.43%)	–3.10 pp (–5.76%)
ISCED 3–4	42.70%	44.00%	44.20%	1.30 pp (3.04%)	0.20 pp (0.45%)	1.50 pp (3.51%)
ISCED 5–8	3.50%	3.50%	5.10%	0 (0)	1.60 pp (45.71%)	1.60 pp (45.71%)
Rural areas						
Educational attainment						
ISCED 0–2	54.80%	51.50%	50.70%	–3.30 pp (–6.02%)	–0.80 pp (–1.55%)	–4.10 pp (–7.48%)
ISCED 3–4	42.40%	45.50%	45.30%	3.00 pp (7.08%)	–0.10 pp (–0.22%)	2.90 pp (6.84%)
ISCED 5–8	2.80%	3.10%	4.00%	0.30 pp (10.71%)	0.90 pp (29.03%)	1.20 pp (42.86%)

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_9913) – data extracted in 29.04.2020

The charts below show the trend in the education levels of young Italians from 2009 to 2019. In general, it can be said that the percentages concerning the O-2 education level tends to decrease. Conversely, concerning education levels 5-8, it seems to increase with the passing of the years, while those with levels 3-4, after a strong increase until 2012, subsequently remain rather constant. The situation does not seem to change much if different levels of urbanisation are taken into account.

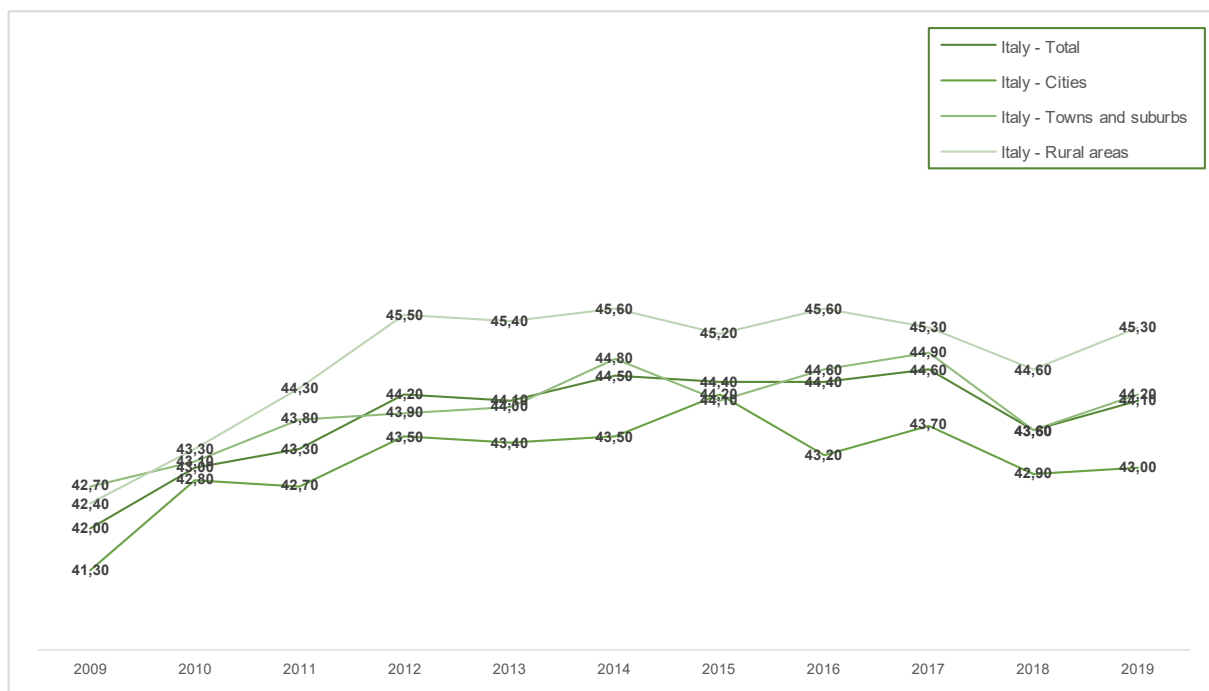
Chart 4. Italian population, aged 15-24, by ISCED level O-2 (%) and degree of urbanisation.



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_9913) – data extracted in 29.04.2020



Chart 5. Italian population, aged 15–24, by ISCED level 3–4 (%) and degree of urbanisation.



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_9913) – data extracted in 29.04.2020

Chart 6. Italian population, aged 15–24, by ISCED level 5–8(%) and degree of urbanisation.



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_9913) – data extracted in 29.04.2020

3.3.2. Early school leavers

In the following paragraph, the levels of school drop-out of young Italians between 18 and 24 years old are analysed, comparing related different degrees of urbanisation. Considering the context of cities, those who dropped out of school early total 18.90% of young Italians in 2009, 16.70% in 2013 and 13.50% in 2019. As Table 6 shows, from 2009 to 2019 there was a total loss of 5.40pp (absolute change), corresponding to a decrease of 28.57%. The situation is similar for the towns and suburbs, where 18.70% of young people dropped out of school in 2009, falling to 16.70% in 2013 and further to 12.90% in 2019, with an overall decrease of 5.80pp (absolute change) and 31.04% (relative change). In rural areas the rate was 20.60% in 2009, decreasing to 17.10% in 2013 and finally reaching 14.60% in 2019. This represents a relative decrease of 29.13% from 2009 to 2019 (absolute change: 6.00pp).

In conclusion, it can be said that the numbers of early school leavers seems to be slightly higher in rural areas than in cities and towns and suburbs, yet data between the three degrees of urbanisation seems to converge over time.

Table 6. ESLET rate (%) by degree of urbanisation, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

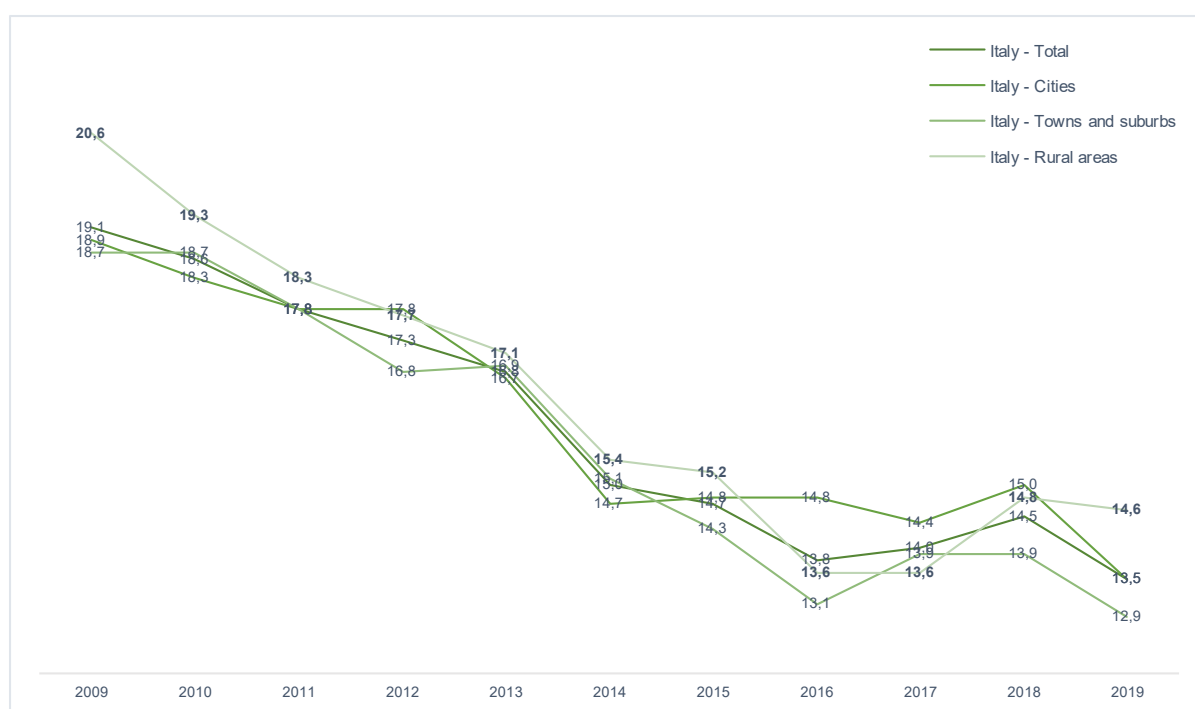
	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Cities						
Age group						
18–24	18.90%	16.70%	13.50%	-2.20 pp (-11.64%)	-3.20 pp (-19.16%)	-5.40 pp (-28.57%)
Towns and suburbs						
Age group						
18–24	18.70%	16.90%	12.90%	-1.80 pp (-9.63%)	-4.00 pp (-23.67%)	-5.80 pp (-31.02%)
Rural areas						
Age group						
18–24	20.60%	17.10%	14.60%	-3.50 pp (-16.99%)	-2.50 pp (-14.62%)	-6.00 pp (-29.13%)

Source: Eurostat: yth_demo_O20 – data extracted in 13.05.20



The chart below shows the trend in school drop-out rates by degree of urbanisation from 2009 to 2019, taking into account young Italians aged 18 to 24. In general, it can be said that the trend has a decreasing tendency. The differences between degrees of urbanisation do not seem to have particularly different trends.

Chart 7. ESLET rate (%) 2009–2019 (Italy) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_30) – data extracted in 20.04.2020



3. 4. NEETs

3. 4. 1. NEET rate

This paragraph aims to analyse the percentages of NEETs within the Italian youth population, considering the differences in degree of urbanisation levels. The years considered for these analyses are as follows: 2009, 2013 and 2019.

In 2009, the percentage of NEETs is higher in rural areas (23.20%), followed by cities (21.8%) and towns and suburbs (21.40%). Analysing rural areas in particular, the age group with the highest percentage of NEETs is 25–29 with a total of 27.10%, followed by 30–34 with 26.90%, 20–24 with 25.90% and finally 15–19 with 11.80%. Also, in cities the age group with the highest percentage is 25–29 with 25.30% of NEETs, followed by 20–24 and 30–34 both with 24.50% and finally 15–19 with 11.10%. There is a similar trend in towns and suburbs where NEETs in the 25–29 years range are 25.10%, followed by those aged 30–34 with 24.50%, 20–24 with 23.40% and finally 15 and 19 with 10.20% of NEETs.

In 2013 the highest percentage of NEETs is found in rural areas (28.20%), followed by cities (27.40%) and towns and suburbs (26.50%). An analysis of the different age groups in rural areas shows that, as in 2009, young people between 25 and 29 years old have the highest percentage with a value of 32.80%, followed by the 20–24 age group with 32.70%, the 30–34 age group with 32.00% and finally the 15–19 age group with 12.60%. The trend in cities is very similar, with the percentage of NEETs between 25 and 29 years of age at 33.60%, followed by 31.30% for those between 20 and 24 years of age and 31.00% for those between 30 and 34. Again, the 15–19 age group has the lowest percentage (11.40%). Regarding the towns and suburbs, young people between 25 and 29 years old have the highest percentage of NEETs, at 32.60%. Additionally, 31.90% of young people aged 20 and 24 are NEETs, with 28.80% for those aged 30 and 34 and finally 11.20% for those aged 15–19.

2019 also presents the highest value in rural areas (24.80%), followed by cities (24.00%) and towns and suburbs (23.10%). If we consider the different age groups in rural areas, the highest percentage (30.00%) is found in the 25–29 age group, followed by the 30–34 age



group (29.80%), the 20–24 age group (26.40%) and finally the 15–19 age group (11.30%). Regarding cities, we find a 30.90% NEETs percentage among young people aged 25–29, 26.80% among those aged 30–34, 25.70 among those aged 20–24 and 11.00% among those aged 15–19. In line with the previous conditions, towns and suburbs have 28.70% of NEETs in the 25–29 age group, 28.20% among young people in the 30–34 year old group, 24.30% among the 20–24 year old group and 10.30% among 15–19 year old group.

Overall, as exemplified in Table 7, there has been an increase in NEET percentages between 2009 and 2013 (relative change: 25.69% in cities, 23.83% in towns and suburbs and 21.55% in rural areas). Conversely, from 2013 to 2019, there has been a 12.41% decrease in cities, 12.83% in towns and suburbs, and 12.06% in rural areas (relative change). Nevertheless, this increase is not sufficient to bring the values back to 2009 levels. Differences between 2009 and 2019 remain, although less so than in 2013.

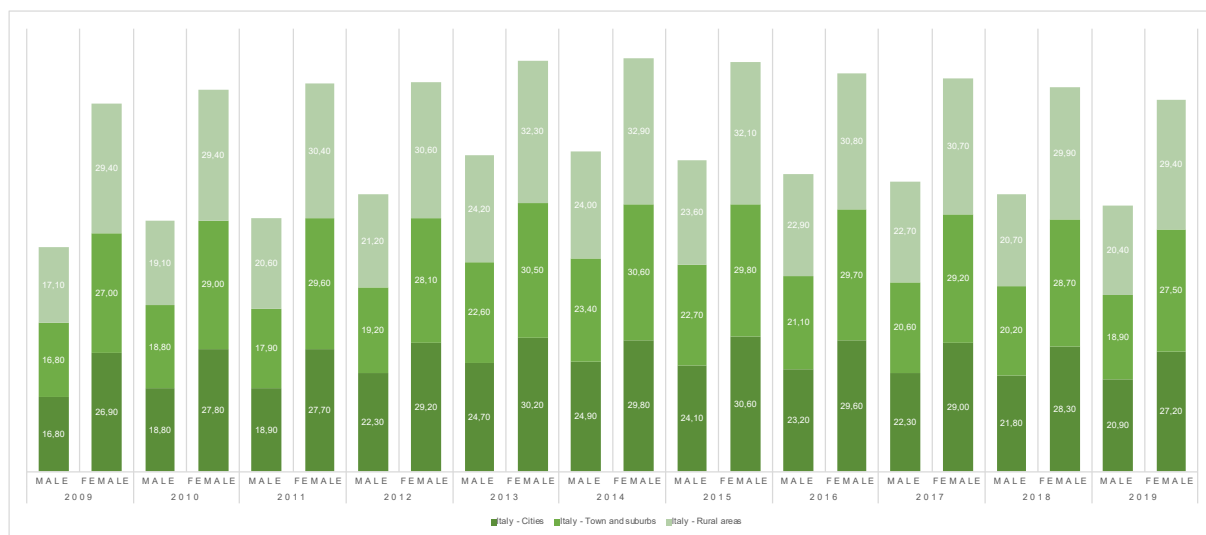
Table 7. NEET rate (%) by age subgroups and by degree of urbanisation in Italy, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Cities						
Age groups						
Overall	21.80%	27.40%	24.00%	5.60 pp (25.69%)	-3.40 pp (-12.41%)	2.20 pp (10.09%)
15–19	11.10%	11.40%	11.00%	0.30 pp (2.70%)	-0.40 pp (-3.51%)	-0.10 pp (-0.90%)
20–24	24.50%	31.30%	25.70%	6.80 pp (27.76%)	-5.60 pp (-17.89%)	1.20 pp (4.90%)
25–29	25.30%	33.60%	30.90%	8.30 pp (32.81%)	-2.70 pp (-8.04%)	5.60 pp (22.13%)
30–34	24.50%	31.00%	26.80%	6.50 pp (26.53%)	-4.20 pp (-13.55%)	2.30 pp (9.39%)
Towns and suburbs						
Age groups						
Overall	21.40%	26.50%	23.10%	5.10 pp (23.83%)	-3.40 pp (-12.83%)	1.70 pp (7.94%)
15–19	10.20%	11.20%	10.20%	1.00 pp (9.80%)	-1.00 pp (-8.93%)	0 (0)
20–24	23.40%	31.90%	24.30%	8.50 pp (36.32%)	-7.60 pp (-23.82%)	0.90 pp (3.85%)
25–29	25.10%	32.60%	28.70%	7.50 pp (29.88%)	-3.90 pp (-11.96%)	3.60 pp (14.34%)
30–34	24.50%	28.80%	28.20%	4.30 pp (17.55%)	-0.60 pp (-2.08%)	3.70 pp (15.10%)
Rural areas						
Age groups						
Overall	23.20%	28.20%	24.80%	5.00 pp (21.55%)	-3.40 pp (-12.06%)	1.60 pp (6.90%)
15–19	11.80%	12.60%	11.30%	0.80 pp (6.78%)	-1.30 pp (-10.32%)	-0.50 pp (-4.24%)
20–24	24.90%	32.70%	26.40%	7.80 pp (31.33%)	-6.30 pp (-19.27%)	1.50 pp (6.02%)
25–29	27.10%	32.80%	30.00%	5.70 pp (21.03%)	-2.80 pp (-8.54%)	2.90 pp (10.70%)
30–34	26.90%	32.00%	29.80%	5.10 pp (18.96%)	-2.20 pp (-6.88%)	2.90 pp (10.78%)

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted in 29.04.2020



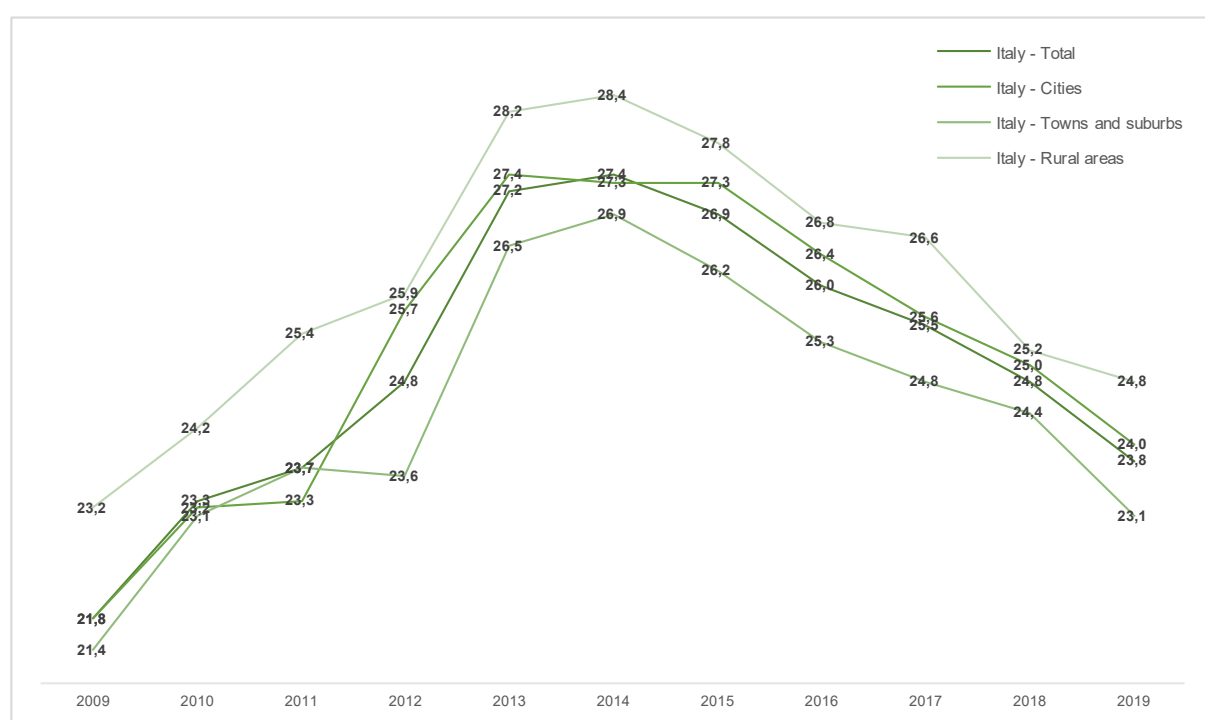
Chart 8. NEET rate (%) by sex and by degree of urbanisation in Italy (2009–2019)



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted in 29.04.2020

The chart below represents the percentages of NEETs relative to the different degrees of urbanisation from 2009 to 2019. In general, there has been an increase in NEETs percentages since 2009, culminating for cities in 2013 and in 2014 for towns and suburbs and rural areas. Following this peak, values start to decrease, although more slowly than they had increased from 2009 onwards.

Chart 9. NEET rate (%) by degree of urbanisation in Italy (2009-2019)



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted in 29.04.2020



4. CONCLUSIONS

Youth population | The Italian population has slightly decreased from 2009 to 2019. Beyond the number of inhabitants, Italy, like many Western countries with developed economies, is going through a process of “dejuvenation” (Catabiano & Rosina, 2018), i.e., an aging population due to a low birth rate. However, a notable point emerging from this data is the drastic decrease in the population living in the cities, with a corresponding increase of the population living in rural areas. From this it can be inferred that the economic crisis has also greatly affected the mobility of young Italians, who have been forced to stay/go back to their regions of origin due to the scarcity of opportunities and the high cost of cities.

Youth unemployment | Youth unemployment in Italy has risen dramatically since 2009, reaching a peak of 20% in 2014 and which then decreased significantly until 2019. The trend has been linear with regards to rural areas and towns and suburbs. A separate discussion must be made for the cities, where the rates of de-occupation remained quite high, even in 2019 (17.10%). This data confirms what was previously expressed concerning the period of difficulty experienced by cities.

Educational attainment | Between 2009 and 2019, the Italian population aged 15 to 24 years old has become more educated. The number of those with an education equivalent to ISCED-2 has decreased, while those with an education equivalent to ISCED 3-4 and ISCED 5-8 has increased.

ESLET | ESLET has strongly decreased in Italy. The trend is quite clear and linear for all three areas of urbanisation. However, from 2014 to 2018, the share slightly increased. The same thing happened for towns and suburbs and rural areas, from 2016 to 2018. In 2019, the share slightly decreased again in all the areas.

NEETs | Italy has been strongly affected by the economic crisis. The NEET rate is one of the highest in the EU and it increased overall from 2009 to 2019. The highest growth was seen between 2009 and 2014 but then decreased slightly until 2019. Concerning degrees of



COST Action CA18213
Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural
NEETs social exclusion

urbanisation, the highest rate is found in rural areas, although with a very small difference from the rate in cities and the national average. It is important to underline one thing about NEETs in the Italian context. The biggest differences are not found so much in different urban areas as in different national geographical areas. Southern regions have much higher NEET rates than the historically more industrialised northern regions (ISTAT, 2020).





5. REFERENCES

Caltabiano, M., & Rosina, A. (2018). The Dejuvenation of the Italian Population. *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 23(1), 24–40.

European Commission (2020). Youth Wiki: Italy.

Istituto Nazionale di Statistica. (2020). Istat, Popolazione residente al 1° gennaio 2020 [Istat, Resident population as of January 1, 2020].

http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCIS_POPRES1



COST Action CA18213
Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural
NEETs social exclusion

6. IMPORTANT LINKS

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/overview-italy>

<https://www.politichegiovanilieservisiocivile.gov.it/sx/dipartimento/competenze.aspx>

<https://www.politichegiovanili.gov.it/attivita/accordi-e-compartecipazioni/regioni/>

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1161&langId=en&intPagId=3340>



RURAL NEETS IN **MONTENEGRO**



2009/2019
OVERVIEW

AUTHORS

Melisa Muratović – melisa.muratovic10@gmail.com
Institute for Strategic Studies and Prognoses – ISSP

Ivan Piper – ivan.piper@yahoo.com
Institute for Strategic Studies and Prognoses – ISSP

Image by Saiko3P from Freepik.com

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network: Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged.
Please cite this publication as "COST CA18213 Rural NEETs in Montenegro: 2009/2019 Overview.

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. CONTEXTUALIZATION	6
2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE	9
3. DATA ANALYSIS	10
3. 1. Population and youth population	10
3. 2. Employment and unemployment	12
• Youth employment	12
• Youth unemployment	13
3. 3. Education	15
• Young people by educational attainment level	15
• Early school leavers	16
3. 5. NEETs	17
• Neet rate	17
4. CONCLUSIONS	20
5. REFERENCES	21
6. IMPORTANT LINKS	22

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines in detail the situation of rural Youths Neither in Employment, nor in Education or Training (NEET) aged between 15 and 34 years old, over the last decade (2009–2019) in Montenegro. To do this, the report utilised indicators of: youth population; youth employment and unemployment; education; and, NEETs distribution. The characterisation of all indicators adopted the degree of urbanisation as a central criterion, enabling proportional comparisons between rural areas, towns and suburbs, cities and the whole country. These analyses are further divided into age subgroups and, where possible, into sex groups for greater detail.

The statistical procedures adopted across the different selected dimensions involve: descriptive longitudinal analysis; using graphical displays (e.g., overlay line charts); and, the calculation of proportional absolute and relative changes between 2009 and 2013, 2013 and 2019, and finally 2009 and 2019. These time ranges were chosen to capture the indicators evolution before and after the economic crisis which hit European countries. All data was extracted from Eurostat public datasets.

The analyses show that between 2011 and 2019, the youth population aged 15 to 29 years has been decreasing in Montenegro. Youth unemployment in rural areas is more noticeable, even though the youth unemployment rate is higher in cities. In the field of education, however, there was an absolute and relative reduction in the proportion of young people with lower qualifications and young people in the category of early school leavers in rural areas between 2011–2019. Finally, the proportion of NEETs in Montenegro is higher in rural areas, compared to urban regions, thus revealing territorial inequalities in access to employment and education opportunities.

REZIME

Ovaj izvještaj daje opis o mladima u Crnoj Gori iz ruralnih područja, koji nisu zaposleni niti u sistemu obrazovanja ili obuke (NEET) starosti između 15 i 34 godine, između 2009–2019. godine. Da bi se postigao ovaj cilj, izvještaj je dao prikaz sledećih pokazatelja: populacija mladih, zaposlenosti i nezaposlenosti mladih, obrazovanja i distribucija NEET-a. Karakteristika svih pokazatelja je to što je svaki pratio klasifikaciju pod starosnim podgrupama. Takođe, analize su klasifikovane i po polnoj strukturi, stepenu urbanizacije, što omogućava poređenje između ruralnih i urbanih područja. Ovi podaci su, u većini slučajeva, bili nedostajući.

Korišćena metodologija uključuje deskriptivnu analizu, koristeći grafičke prikaze kao i izračunavanje apsolutnih i relativnih promjena između 2011–2015, 2015–2019. kao i 2011–2019. godine. Posmatrane godine su izabrane da prikažu evoluciju samih indikatora nakon ekonomske krize koja je pogodila evropske zemlje. Svi podaci su izvor EUROSTAT-a kao i ILOSTAT-a.

Analize pokazuju da se u Crnoj Gori između 2011. i 2019. godine smanjuje populacija mladih u starosti od 15 do 29 godina. Nezaposlenost mladih u ruralnim područjima je primjetnija, iako je stopa nezaposlenosti veća u gradovima. Kada je u pitanju obrazovanje, došlo je do apsolutnog i relativnog smanjenja udjela mladih sa nižim kvalifikacijama i mladih koji rano napuštaju školu, u ruralnim područjima u periodu 2011–2019. godine. Udio NEET u Crnoj Gori je veći u ruralnim područjima, u poređenju sa urbanim regionom, što pokazuje na teritorijalne nejednakosti u samom pristupu zaposlenju i mogućnostima obrazovanja.



1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

Montenegro is an independent and sovereign state, located in South-eastern Europe, on the Balkan Peninsula with territorial access to the Adriatic Sea. Montenegro borders Serbia to the east and northeast, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina to the west and northwest, Kosovo to the east, and Albania to the southeast. In the southwest, the Adriatic Sea separates it from Italy. The total extension of the territory is 13,812km², the land borders are 625 km long, while the length of the coast is 293.5 km. In the middle of 2019, there were 622,028 inhabitants in Montenegro (Monstat, 2020). Independence was declared on 3th June 2006 via withdrawal from the state union with Serbia. Hence, Montenegro is one of the youngest European countries. The national government of Montenegro consists of 17 Ministries, including the Ministry of Sports and Youth. In addition to the national government, the municipalities function as subnational administrative units. There are a total of 24 municipalities in Montenegro.

For the first time in Montenegro, Youth Law (Official Gazette of Montenegro, 025/19 and 027/19) was adopted in 2016, which regulates youth policy and youth-related work in Montenegro. It defines the activities of entities that participate in its creation and implementation and regulates issues of interest to youth activities. According to the Youth Law young people are defined as persons from 15 to 30 years of age. In order to achieve the youth policy, the National and Municipal Youth Strategies are adopted. When it comes to the history of youth policy in Montenegro, the National Youth Action Plan (NYAP) was the first strategic document of its kind, which was implemented in the period from 2006 to 2011. NYAP's evaluation highlighted the still present marginalisation of youth issues, one of them being the lack of infrastructure for quality living and adequate employment of young people. Furthermore, Montenegro is faced with internal and external migrations caused by economic insecurity and instability.

Currently, Montenegro is implementing the Youth Strategy (2017–2021) (Ministry of Education, 2016) which positions young people as an issue of importance and also as actors responsible for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of youth policy. This Strategy defines the measures for achievement of economic and social security of young people through facilitated access to the labour market and employment as well as educa-



tion. This is because unemployed youth in Montenegro are defined as a highly vulnerable group. Some of the measures defined by this Strategy include: reduction of youth inactivity; supporting the development of youth entrepreneurship; removal of barriers for accessing the labour market for all young people; establishment of an integrated and holistic youth support system for transition into decent employment. From the statistical point of view, this strategy confirmed that young people in Montenegro were quite “invisible” up until 2016, and relatively little effort has been invested into addressing young people’s needs, problems, interests and goals through research. As such, there is very little data available that is relevant for this population (Ministry of Education, 2016).

The education system of Montenegro is universal with a larger share of public schools. It consists of: preschool education (6 years); primary education (9 years); secondary education (4 years); vocational education (3 or 4 years); and, higher education. Preschool education is not a prerequisite for attending primary school. Primary education is compulsory for all children aged 6 to 15 years, lasts for nine years and is free. Primary education is divided into three cycles (from I to III grade, from IV to VI grade and from VII to IX grade). General secondary education is performed in gymnasiums, lasts for four years, and is not compulsory. Secondary vocational education (VET) is also not mandatory and is implemented during a period of two years (lower vocational education) or three to four years (higher vocational education). There is also two-year upper vocational education, functioning as a continuation of secondary vocational non-university education. In comparison with other Balkan and EU countries, a significantly larger proportion of vocational education and training (VET) students in Montenegro continue to university education after their secondary school graduation (Kaludjerovic, 2016). Reforms of education began in 2001 and are based on the “Book of Changes”. The major principle of reforms was to introduce a democratic and pluralistic concept of personal development and learning from the earliest age (Ministry of Education and Science, 2001). The reform processes formalised procedures of education and care and the institutional framework was established accordingly. Hence, in 2017, many laws were amended, introducing changes all the way from primary school to Higher Education.

Legal age for entry to labour market is 15. Between the Age 15 and 18, a “juvenile employee” has to work under special conditions defined by the Labour Law (Official Gazette of Montenegro, 74/19). Current social challenges in Montenegro include: poverty; social exclusion;



and, unemployment (especially of young people). Concerning the latter, Montenegro has implemented a comprehensive reform of the social and child protection system over the last ten years. Montenegro has no defined strategy that directly targets youth, but there are some policies and goals in certain strategies, such as the Employment and Human Resources Development National Strategy 2016–2020 (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2015), which recognises as one of its goals the improving of employment among youth. Furthermore, graduates of the policy are supported to get a paid internship with duration of nine months, and acquire work experience through the programme for Professional Training of People with Acquired Higher Education. This programme has been implemented since 2013 with the aim to supporting graduates in finding a job.



2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The Montenegrin National Report uses information gathered by the National Reports Editorial Team of the Rural NEET Youth Network in the Eurostat platform. The main data presented and analysed in this report are sourced from the following Eurostat database:

- Population Statistics: [yth_demo_020]
- EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS): [lfst_r_pgauwsc]; [lfst_r_ergau]; [lfst_r_urgau]; [edat_lfs_9913]; [edat_lfse_30]; [edat_lfse_29]

Selected indicators were extracted from the different databases according to two criteria:

- Time range: the previous decade (2009–2019) in order to have a sufficiently long period of time to capture the main changes and continuities among young people's trajectories in education, training and employment. The analysis mainly covered 3 dates – 2009–2013–2019 – in order to capture the impact of the economic and financial crisis that in Montenegro reached its peak in 2013.
- Age group: age group range varies accordingly in relation to the data available in each indicator (15–24; 15–29; 15–34; and 15–39). Whenever possible, age range also covered young adult's data (30–34 and 35–39) in order to capture the extent of crisis impact on these specific age groups.

Besides a descriptive analysis, in order to compare data main changes and continuities in different time periods, absolute and relative change were calculated by considering the 3 main time points that were selected – 2009, 2013 and 2019. Absolute change refers to the simple difference in the indicator over two periods in time and is expressed in percentage points (pp). Relative change expresses the change of a value of an indicator in an earlier period and is expressed in percentage terms.

The report also includes an introductory contextualisation part with the most relevant information concerning the Montenegrin social, economic and political situation over the last two decades and key youth policies based on a relevant literature review sourced from the Youth Wiki European online encyclopaedia.



3. DATA ANALYSIS

3. 1. Population and youth population

In Montenegro the population of citizens aged 15–24 years old was 87,200 in 2011, 45,000 of whom were male, and 42,200 were female. The population decreased to 86,300 in 2015 (44,600 were male and 41,700 were female), and then decreased again to 85,600 in 2019, when there were 44,400 males and 41,200 females. In absolute terms, the population of citizens aged between 15 and 24 years in 2019 decreased by 700 in comparison to 2015, and 1,600 in comparison to 2011. In relative terms, the population in 2019 decreased 0.81% in comparison to 2015, and 1.83% relative to 2011.

The same declining trend of population aged between 15 and 24 years is evident in both urban and rural areas in Montenegro. In Montenegrin cities, the number of those aged 15–24 years old has declined from 56,800 in 2010, to 54,700 in 2015. The number of people aged 15–24 years old living in rural areas also declined from 33,400 in 2010, to 30,500 in 2015.

The youth population ratio has been declining in Montenegro during the observed period (2011–2019), and which applies to different age classes. According to Table 1, negative absolute change is highest for the 25–29 years old group (–1.10%), whose proportion has declined by 14.86% in relative terms. The decline of the ratio of this age group has accelerated during the observed period, especially between 2015 and 2019 (–.70%; –10%). The decrease of the ratio of youth population is evident for other age groups also: the ratio of the 15–19 years old group has decreased during the same period (–.60%; –8.45%), as well as ratio of those aged 20–24 years old (–.40%; –5.79%). The ratio of the 20–24 years old group has recorded the smallest decline compared to other observed age groups: between 2011 and 2015 it decreased by 5.79%, and then remained unchanged between 2015 and 2019.



Table 1: Ratio of youth population by age subgroups and absolute and relative change in Montenegro (2011–2015, 2015–2019 and 2011–2019)

	2011	2015	2019	Absolute change 2011–2015 (Relative change 2011–2015)	Absolute change 2015–2019 (Relative change 2015–2019)	Absolute change 2011–2019 (Relative change 2011–2019)
Overall	21.40%	20.30%	19.30%	– 1.10 pp (–5.14%)	– 1 pp (–4.92%)	– 2.1 pp (9.81%)
15–19	7.10%	6.80%	6.50%	– .30 pp (–4.22%)	– .30 pp (–4.41%)	– .60 pp (–8.45%)
20–24	6.90%	6.50%	6.50%	– .40 pp (–5.79%)	0 (0)	– .40 pp (–5.79%)
25–29	7.40%	7.00%	6.30%	– .40 pp (–5.40%)	– .70 pp (–10%)	– 1.10 pp (–14.86%)

Source: Eurostat: yth_demo_O20– data extracted in 13.05.20

Youth population ratio (15–29 years) continuously declined in Montenegro, less 2.1 pp., from 21.40% in 2009 to 19.30% in 2019.



3. 2. Employment and Unemployment

3. 2. 1. Youth employment

According to Table 2, at the country level there has been a positive absolute and relative variation of youth employment between 2011 and 2019. This increase is evident in all age subgroups. Specifically, the highest relative change is registered at the 15–19 years old group, between 2011 and 2019 (66.41%). Also, for the 20–24 years old group, this increase amounted to 46.15%, 19.68% for the 25–29 years old group and 7.13% for the 30–34 years old group.

Data for the degree of urbanisation is not available for Montenegro.

Table 2: Youth employment (thousands) and absolute and relative change in Montenegro (2011–2015, 2011–2019 and 2015–2019)

	2011	2015	2019	Absolute change 2011–2015 (Relative change 2011–2015)	Absolute change 2015–2019 (Relative change 2015–2019)	Absolute change 2011–2019 (Relative change 2011–2019)
Country						
Overall	40.10%	42.2%	51.20%	2.10 pp (4.97%)	9 pp (17.57%)	11.1 pp (21.67%)
15–19	4.40%	6.00%	13.10%	1.60 pp (26.66%)	7.10 pp (54.19%)	8.70 pp (66.41%)
20–24	14.70%	18.80%	27.30%	4.10 pp (21.80%)	8.50 pp (31.13%)	12.6 pp (46.15%)
25–29	50.20%	59.80%	62.50%	9.60 pp (51.06%)	2.70 pp (4.32%)	12.30 pp (19.68%)
30–34	61.20%	66.00%	65.90%	4.80 pp (7.27%)	–0.1pp (–0.15%)	4.70 pp (7.13%)

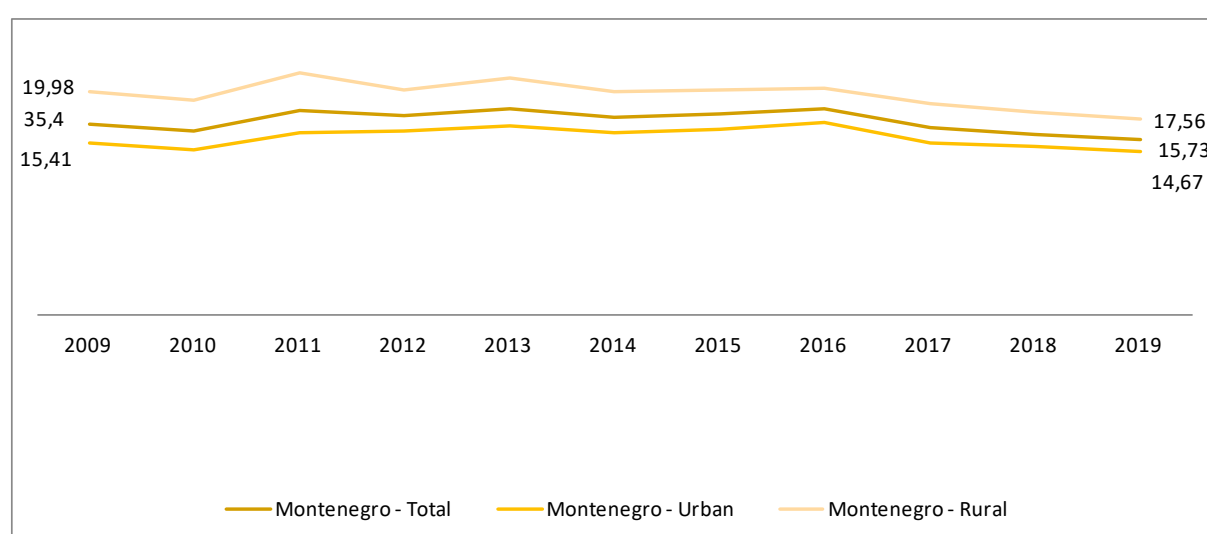
Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergrau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020

Youth employment during the period of 2011–2019 marked an increase amounted 11.1 pp i.e., 21.67%.

3. 2. 2. Youth unemployment

According to Chart 1, the unemployment rate across the country for the 15–24 years old group decreased between 2011 and 2019, with several variations and changes of observed trends.

Chart 1: Unemployment for age group 15–24 years old (%) in Montenegro (2009–2019) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat, (lfst_r_urgau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020 – ILOSTAT-Youth Labor Statistics

According to Table 3, the youth unemployment rate at the national level for those aged 15 to 24 years old has decreased from 36.6% in 2011 to 25.2% in 2019. This represents a change of 11.4 percentage points (–31.14% in relative terms). The same trend applies to both urban (–22.5%; –58.44%) and rural areas (–20.3%; –61.32%). The youth unemployment rate for the 15–24 years old group has reached its peak in 2015 for both urban and rural areas, when it amounted to 37.6% at the national level. The increase in youth unemployment rate for the 15–24 years old group between 2011 and 2015 was followed by a strong decline from 2015 to 2019, when it decreased to 32.97% at the national level. Interestingly, the highest decline is evident in rural areas, where the unemployment rate has decreased by 62.57% between 2015 and 2019.



The same trend applies to those aged 15 to 19 years old. The unemployment rate of that age group increased between 2011 and 2015 by 22.66%, and then decreased by 55.21% between 2015 and 2019. However, the unemployment rate has been in constant decline between 2011 and 2019 both for those aged 20–24 (–9.7%; –27.02%) and 25–29 (–10.1%; –33.89%) as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Youth unemployment (%) and absolute and relative change in Montenegro (2011–2015, 2015–2019 and 2011–2019)

	2011	2015	2019	Absolute change 2011–2015 (Relative change 2011–2015)	Absolute change 2015–2019 (Relative change 2015–2019)	Absolute change 2011–2019 (Relative change 2011–2019)
Country						
Overall	26.6%	25.3%	19.8%	–1.3 pp (4.88%)	–5.5pp (21.7%)	–6.8 pp (25.5%)
15–19	39.8%	48.9%	21.9%	9.1 pp (22.86%)	–27 pp (–55.21%)	–17.9 pp (–44.97%)
15–24	36.6%	37.6%	25.2%	1 pp (2.73%)	–12.4 pp (–32.97%)	–11.4 pp (–31.14%)
20–24	35.9%	34.8%	26.2%	–1.1 pp (–3.06%)	–8.6 pp (–24.71%)	–9.7 pp (–27.02%)
25–29	29.8%	23.2%	19.7%	–6.6 pp (–22.14%)	–3.5 pp (–15.08%)	–10.1 pp (–33.89%)
30–34	22.9%	18.9%	20%	–4 pp (–17.46%)	1.1 pp (5.82%)	–2.9 pp (–12.66%)
Cities						
15–24	38.5%	39.5%	16%	1 pp (2.60%)	–23.5 pp (–59.50%)	–22.5 pp (–58.44%)
Rural areas						
15–24	33.1%	34.2%	12.8%	1.1 pp (3.32%)	–21.4 pp (–62.57%)	–20.3 pp (–61.32%)

Source: Eurostat (fst_r_urgau) data extracted on 29.04.2020; ILOSTAT–Youth Labor Statistics

3. 3. Education

3. 3. 1. Young people by educational attainment level

Table 4 displays the Montenegrin population, aged 15 to 24 years old, according to ISCED levels, between 2011 and 2019 at the national level. The table also summarises the absolute and relative change across the different ISCED levels, for three time periods: 2011–2015, 2015–2019 and 2011–2019. At the national level, it is evident that there is a negative absolute and relative variation for those aged 15 to 24 years and who only reached ISCED–2 and partly by ISCED 3–4.

ISCED–2 is followed by a negative variation for the whole analysed period (–8.37%; –6.28%; –1.97%). However, ISCED 3–4 is followed by a party decrease during the 2011–2019 period (–1.50%). However, the whole analysed period for ISCED 3–4 is followed by an increase of 2.71% and 26.56% for ISCED 5–8.

Table 4: Montenegro population, aged 15–24, by ISCED levels (%), including absolute and relative change (2011–2015, 2015–2019, 2011–2019)

	2011	2015	2019	Absolute change 2011–2015 (Relative change 2011–2015)	Absolute change 2015–2019 (Relative change 2015–2019)	Absolute change 2011–2019 (Relative change 2011–2019)
Country						
ISCED 0–2	41.4%	40.60%	38.20%	– 0.80 pp (– 1.97%)	– 2.40 pp (– 6.28%)	– 3.2 pp (– 8.37%)
ISCED 3–4	53.90%	53.10%	55.40%	– 0.80 pp (– 1.50%)	2.30 pp (4.15%)	1.50 pp (2.71%)
ISCED 5–8	4.70%	6.30%	6.40%	1.60 pp (25.40%)	.10 pp (1.56%)	1.70 pp (26.56%)

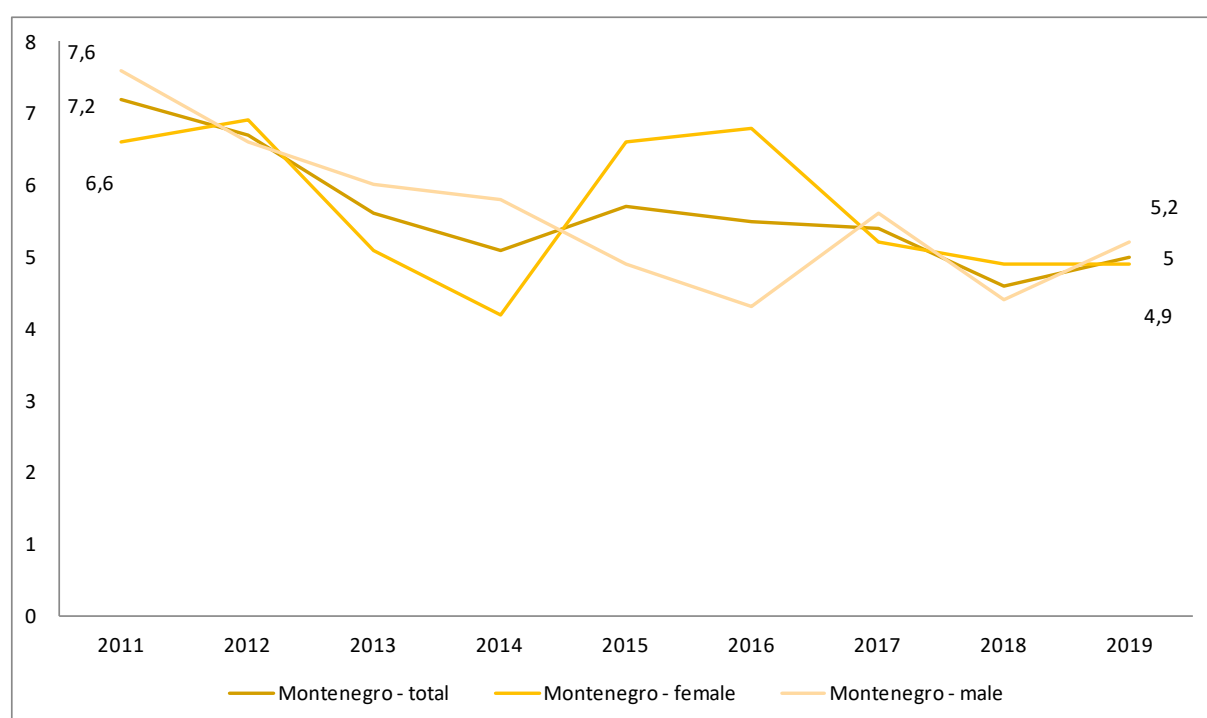
Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau) data extracted on 29.04.2020; ILOSTAT–Youth Labor Statistics

In the past decade, there has been a decrease of the Montenegrin population with lower levels of education and an increase of the proportion of those with higher educational attainment. The proportion of the Montenegrin population with tertiary education (ISCED 5–8) increased 26.56% during the period of 2011–2019.

3.3.2. Early school leavers

Chart 2 displays the evolution of ESLET from 2011 to 2019 in Montenegro. The chart shows that there has been a decrease in this indicator across the country. At the national level, the rate has fallen from 7.20% to 5.0% followed by a decrease in the total share of females from 6.60% to 4.90%, as well as males, from 7.60% to 5.20%.

Chart 2: ESLET rate (%) 2011-2019 (Montenegro) by sex



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_30) – data extracted in 20.04.2020

There has been a constant decrease of ESLET in Montenegro, during the period 2011-2019, where the total decrease of Montenegrin ESLET rate amounted to 30.55%. The decline in the male population is 31.57% while for the female population it is 25.75%.



3. 4. NEETs

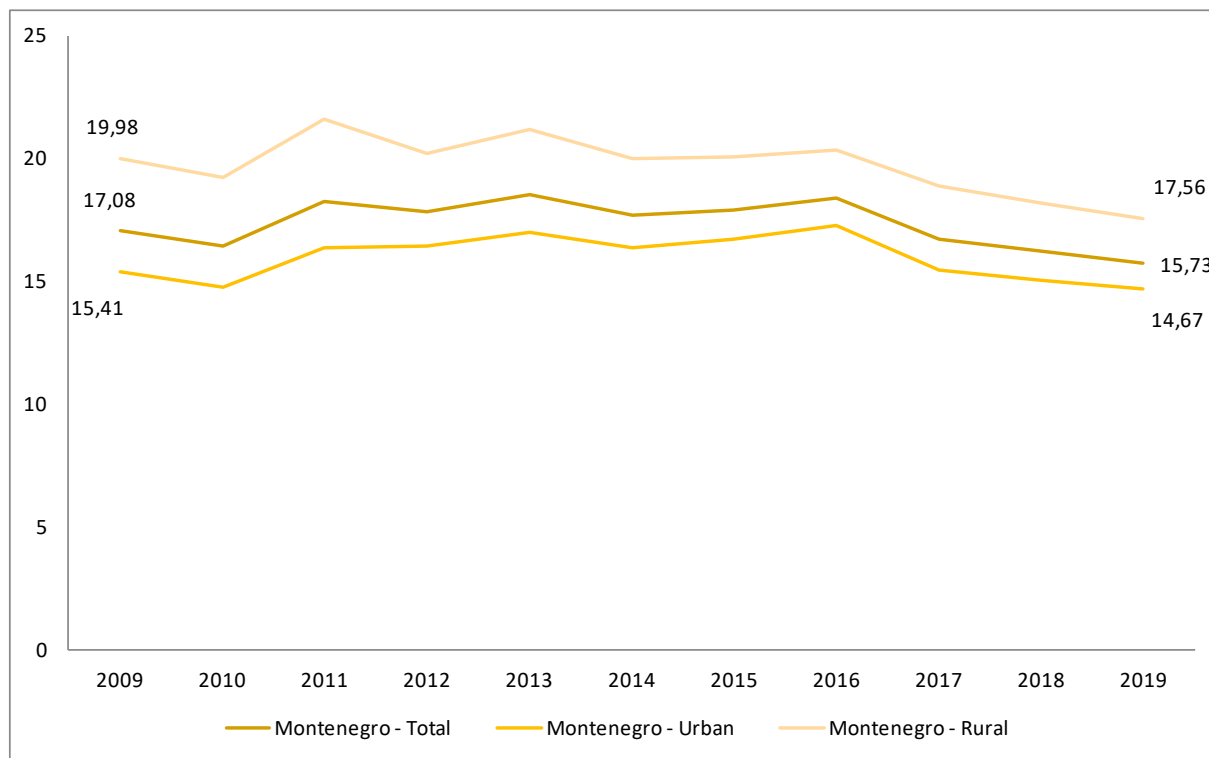
3. 4. 1. NEET rate

The NEET rate in Montenegro has come down from 27.80% in 2011, to 24.20% in 2019. The total share of NEET females in all degrees of urbanisation dropped slightly from 29.40% in 2011, to 25.20% in 2019. Concerning the total share of NEET males in all degrees of urbanisation, this fell from 26.20% in 2011, to 23.30% in 2019. (Eurostat, edat_lfse_29)

Due to lack of data for Montenegro, ILOSTAT data was used for the total share of youth NEET by rural and urban areas. As ILOSTAT defines youth as persons aged 15 to 24 years, other subgroups are not available. Hence, Chart 3 gives an overview of youth NEETs between 2009 and 2019 for NEET youth aged 15 to 24 years. The youth NEET rate in Montenegro declines from 17.08% in 2009, to 15.73% in 2019, at the national level. Alongside this, the figure for urban levels dropped down from 15.41% to 14.67%, between 2009 and 2019. Finally, in rural areas, in the same period, the youth NEETs share has fallen from 19.98% to 17.56% for this age subgroup.



Chart 3: Share of NEET youth by total, rural and urban areas 2009–2019



Source: ILOSTAT Share of youth in employment, education or training (NEET) by rural/urban

Table 5: NEET rate (%) by age subgroups in Montenegro, including absolute and relative change (2011–2015, 2015–2019, 2011–2019)

	2011	2015	2019	Absolute change 2011–2015 (Relative change 2011–2015)	Absolute change 2015–2019 (Relative change 2015–2019)	Absolute change 2011–2019 (Relative change 2011–2019)
Country						
15–19	9.60%	10.40%	9.60%	.80 pp (7.70%)	–0.80 pp (–8.33%)	0 pp (0 %)
20–24	27.20%	28.10%	25.10%	.90 pp (3.20%)	– 3.0 pp (–11.95%)	–2.10 pp (–8.36%)
25–29	36.70%	31.40%	28.60%	–5.30 pp (–16.88%)	– 2.80 pp (–9.80%)	–8.10 pp (–28.32%)
30–34	37.20%	32.30%	32.70%	–4.90 pp (–15.17%)	0.40 pp (1.22%)	–4.50 pp (–13.76%)
30–34	61.20%	66.00%	65.90%	4.80 pp (7.27%)	–0.1pp (–0.15%)	4.70 pp (7.13%)

Source: Eurostat (dat_lfse_29) – data extracted in 29.04.2020

Table 5 displays the evolution of NEETs by age subgroups for the country level. Again, Montenegro is faced with a lack of available data for the degree of urbanisation.

In 2019, the NEET rate in Montenegro ranged from 9.60% for those aged 15–19 years old, 25.10%, for those aged 20–24 years old, 28.60% for those aged 25–29 years old to 32.70% for those aged 30–34.

The table also includes the absolute and relative variation between 2011–2015, 2015–2019 and 2011–2019. At the national level, the NEETs rate decreased from 2011 to 2019 across all age subgroups, with the exception of 15–19 years old, which remains the same.

If we observe only relative changes for period 2011–2015, we can see that there was a small increase in the NEET rate for age subgroups of 15–19 (7.70%) and 20–24 (3.20%).

The Montenegrin NEET rate recorded an increase between 2011 and 2015 for age groups 15–19 and 20–24 (7.70% and 3.20% respectively). This is a direct consequence of the economic crisis during that time. Other age groups marked a constant decline, and the highest decline was recorded in the age group 25–29 (28.32%). The exception is age group 30–34 in which the NEET rate increased by 1.22% compared to 2015.



4. CONCLUSIONS

Youth population | In Montenegro, the youth population has been declining during the past decade. At the same time, the same declining trend of population aged between 15–24 years of age is evident in both urban and rural areas.

Youth unemployment | Unemployment among the youngest share of the population has decreased across Montenegro at the national level and differed according to degree of urbanisation levels, from 2011 to 2019. The youth unemployment rate for the 15–24 years old group reached its peak in 2015 for both urban and rural areas, when it amounted to 37.6% at the national level. However, total youth employment has increased sharply. Comparison between years for youth employment in terms of urbanisation is unknown, as Montenegro lacks such data. The fact that during the 2011–2019 period, the total youth employment rose sharply is very interesting, especially for the subgroup 15–19 years old where the increase was 66.41% for the estimated years.

Educational attainment | Between 2011 and 2019, the Montenegrin population aged from 15 to 24 years old has in part become more educated. The number of those with an education equivalent to ISCED–2 has decreased, while those with an education equivalent to ISCED 3–4 and ISCED 5–8 has increased. The comparison in terms of urbanisation level is not available, since Montenegro lacks such data.

ESLET | ESLET has strongly decreased in Montenegro, which fell from 7.20% in 2011 to 5.0% in 2019. This change is followed by a decrease in the total share of both females and males. Also, the comparison in terms of urbanisation level is not available, since Montenegro lacks such data.

NEETs | The NEETs share decreased between 2011 and 2019 at the national level and across all degrees of urbanisation. However, it remains higher in rural areas, when compared to urban areas. In Montenegro, NEET rates have decreased for all age groups and across all levels of urbanisation, from 2011 to 2019, with the singular exception of the 15–19 years old age group.



5. REFERENCES

Bartlett, W; Kaludjerovic, J; Mirković, M; Strugar, J., "From University to Employment: Higher Education Provision and Labour Market Needs in Montenegro", Directorate-General for Education and Culture, Brussels, 2016.

Law on Youth (Official Gazette of Montenegro, 025/19 and 027/19)

Law on Labour (Official Gazette of Montenegro, 74/19).

Law on Professional Training of People with Acquired Higher Education (Official Gazette of Montenegro, 38/12)

Monstat, "Population estimation and the basic demographic indicators, 2019 "(Procjene stanovništva i osnovni demografski pokazatelji, 2019. godina)", Monstat, Podgorica, 2020.

Ministry of Education and Science, "National Youth Action Plan (NYAP) "(Nacionalni plan akcija za mlade), Ministry of Education and Science, Podgorica, 2007.

Ministry of Education, "Youth Strategy 2017–2021"(Strategija za mlade 2017–2021), Ministry of Education, Podgorica, 2016.

Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, "Employment and Human Resources Development National Strategy 2016–2020 "(Nacionalna strategija zapošljavanja i razvoja ljudskih resursa 2016–2020), Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Podgorica, 2015.

Ministry of Education and Science, "The book of changes" (Knjiga promjena). Ministry of Education and Science, Podgorica, 2001.

Petković S., "History of Youth Work in Montenegro", 2014.



6. IMPORTANT LINKS

National Youth Action Plan (NYAP) 2007, available at:

https://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Montenegro_2007_National_Youth_Action_Plan.pdf

The National Youth Action Plan in Montenegro (NYAP 2006), is the first strategic document of its kind in Montenegro, and in this regard represented an important step in creating a multifunctional and common framework of the existing and new, previously missing, social measures in all areas important for the healthy development of youth. The Strategy was implemented in the period from 2006–2011 and provided an insight into the key problems faced by Montenegro when it comes to youth.

Youth Strategy, 2016, available at:

<http://www.un.org.me/Library/Youth-Empowerment/1a%20Youth%20Strategy%202017-2021.pdf>

The Youth Strategy (2017–2021) is a continuation of the previous strategy, which defines the measures for achievement of economic and social security of young people through facilitated access to labour market and employment as well as education.

From University to Employment: Higher Education Provision and Labour Market Needs in Montenegro, available at: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/business-and-consultancy/consulting/assets/documents/From-University-to-Employment.pdf>

This synthesis report analyses higher education (HE) provision and labour market opportunities in the Western Balkans by looking into four inter-related issues: the provision of HE, the current situation of the graduate labour market, the challenges facing graduates and employers on the labour market, and the skill mismatches that hinder graduate labour market integration. The report concludes with recommendations on measures needed to ensure the right mix of skilled graduates to support robust economic growth in the future, support graduate job searches, and to encourage employers to create more graduate jobs and take on more skilled graduates.



COST Action CA18213
Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural
NEETs social exclusion

History of Youth Work in Montenegro, available at: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47262055/montenegro.pdf/b9164413-e04d-4162-963a-9d56fdd2a42b>

The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of existing practices, strategies, initiatives and measures supporting development of youth work and non-formal education in Montenegro in the context of transition and social change.

RURAL NEETs IN POLAND



2009/2019
OVERVIEW

AUTHORS

Mateusz Smoter – mateusz.smoter@ibs.org.pl
Institute for Structural Research – IBS

Image by studiyoyo from Pixabay

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network: Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged.
Please cite this publication as "COST CA18213 Rural NEETs in Poland: 2009/2019 Overview.

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. CONTEXTUALIZATION	6
2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE	8
3. DATA ANALYSIS	9
3. 1. Population and youth population	9
3. 2. Employment and unemployment	11
• Youth employment	11
• Youth unemployment	14
3. 3. Education	17
• Young people by educational attainment level	17
• Early School Leavers from Education and Training	19
3. 4. NEETs	20
• NEET rate	20
4. CONCLUSIONS	23
5. REFERENCES	25
6. IMPORTANT LINKS	26

SUMMARY

The report outlines the evolution of the labour market situation of young people in Poland between 2009 and 2019. Particular attention was paid to describe how the situation has changed across different age subgroups and degree of urbanization. The analysis includes descriptive statistics of the selected labour market indicators (employment and unemployment rate, NEET rate) along with educational and population data extracted from the Eurostat public datasets.

The report shows that youth population in Poland has been declining over the past decade, especially in cities and rural areas. Labour market situation of young Poles worsened in the aftermath of financial and economic crisis. Since 2013 it has improved considerably. In 2019, the unemployment rate was below the pre-recession level and the lowest since the political and economic transformation. The pattern of labour market situation evolution was similar across all age subgroups and degrees of urbanisation, although those from the younger subgroups were more vulnerable to economic fluctuations. In 2019, the difference between rural and urban areas in the unemployment level was minor. The employment rate and the NEET rate, however, was clearly higher in cities which suggests that many of those living in towns and rural areas remain outside the labour force. The level of school dropouts among youth is one of the lowest in the EU and has been relatively stable over the past decade. It is slightly higher in towns and rural areas than in cities, but the difference is not significant.

PODSUMOWANIE

W raporcie opisano sytuację młodych osób w Polsce na rynku pracy w latach 2009–2019. Szczególną uwagę zwrócono na porównanie zmian zachodzących na obszarach miejskich i wiejskich oraz wśród różnych grup wieku. Raport sporządzono na podstawie analizy głównych wskaźników rynku pracy (wskaźnika zatrudnienia, stopy bezrobocia, wskaźnika NEET) oraz wybranych danych dotyczących edukacji i liczby ludności. Wszystkie dane pochodzą z ogólnodostępnych baz Eurostatu.

Raport pokazuje, że w ciągu ostatniej dekady populacja młodych osób w Polsce spadła, zwłaszcza w dużych miastach i na wsi. Sytuacja młodych osób na rynku pracy pogorszyła się w następstwie kryzysu gospodarczego, jednak od 2013 roku ulega poprawie. W 2019 roku stopa bezrobocia osiągnęła poziom sprzed recesji i była najniższa od czasu transformacji ustrojowej i gospodarczej. Trajektoria zmian była zbliżona dla wszystkich grup wieku i stopni urbanizacji, choć osoby młodsze w większym stopniu reagowały na zmiany gospodarcze. W 2019 roku stopa bezrobocia była niska zarówno na obszarach miejskich, jak i wiejskich. Poziom zatrudnienia i wskaźnik NEET były jednak wyraźnie wyższe w miastach, co sugeruje, że część młodych osób mieszkających w małych miejscowościach i na obszarach wiejskich pozostaje poza siłą roboczą. Odsetek młodych osób przedwcześnie kończących edukację znajduje się wśród najniższych w UE i utrzymuje się na stosunkowo stabilnym poziomie od dziesięciu lat. W 2019 r. był nieco wyższy na obszarach wiejskich niż miejskich, ale różnica nie była znaczna.



1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

Poland is located in Central Europe. It is bordered by seven countries – Lithuania and Russia's Kaliningrad Oblast to the North, Belarus and Ukraine to the East, Slovakia and the Czech Republic to the South, and Germany to the West. The country is populated by over 38 million people. Around 60% of the populace live in urban areas (Statistics Poland, 2020).

Poland is a unitary republic. Its territory is divided into 16 regions (voivodships); these are further divided into 380 counties (powiats), and these, in turn, into 2477 municipalities (gminas) (Statistics Poland, 2020). In general, the public management system is decentralised – a substantial part of public tasks and services have been devolved to regional and local self-governments. Local authorities are elected in general elections.

There is no singular central level authority responsible for youth policy. It is provided by different ministries (e.g., Ministry of National Education for education; Ministry of Science and Higher Education for higher education and research; Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy for employment and social issues; Ministry of Economic Development, Labour and Technology for Youth Guarantee scheme). Local governments have competencies primarily in the fields of education, social policy and culture. There is no single source of funding for activities related to youth policy. Projects and programmes are financed from national and European funds which are at the disposal of ministries, governmental agencies and local governments.

Compulsory education in Poland starts when children reach the age of six. A year later, they begin the 1st grade of the full-time compulsory primary schooling which lasts for 8 years. Afterwards, pupils start upper secondary education in a general secondary school (liceum), a technical school (technikum), a vocational school (szkoła zawodowa) or a profiled general secondary school (liceum profilowane). Overall, general secondary schools prepare students for entry into higher education and other forms of entry directly into the labour market. The latter teach occupations such as: mechanic; electronic specialist; hairdresser; baker; cook; and, accountant etc. Regarding tertiary education, Poland follows the Bologna framework which means that most programmes are divided into a three-year bachelor's degree and a two-year master's degree.



Under Polish law, the legal age of majority is attained at 18 years. This is also the age when a person can become an employee, according to the Labour Code. Juvenile employees (defined as being 15 to 18 years old) can take up employment in a form of vocational preparation or regular, paid work, but only in case of light jobs which should be accepted by the labour inspector and an occupational medical doctor.

Currently, there is no one official document or strategy focusing on young people operating in Poland. Youth-related regulations are fragmented and scattered in between different legal acts. Before accession to the EU, Poland adopted the “State Strategy for Youth for 2003–2012” which determined the directions of Polish youth policy in such areas as: education; social welfare; employment; living conditions; and, healthcare.

As far as employment issues are concerned, Poland is implementing the Youth Guarantee which is the EU’s key programme addressed to young people intending to support them in the labour market. The Youth Guarantee scheme is open to young people aged 15 to 29 from the NEET group (not in education, employment or training). It is financed from national and EU funds (mainly the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative). Youth Guarantee supplements assist with policies aimed at counteracting youth unemployment. The YG scheme is regulated in the “Youth Guarantee implementation Plan”.



2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The Polish national report uses information gathered by the National Reports Editorial Team of the Rural NEET Youth Network in the Eurostat platform. The main data presented and analysed in this report are from the following Eurostat database:

- Population Statistics: [yth_demo_O20]
- EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS): [lfst_r_pgauwsc]; [lfst_r_ergau]; [lfst_r_urgau]; [edat_lfs_9913]; [edat_lfse_30]; [edat_lfse_29]

Selected indicators were extracted from the different databases according to two criteria:

- Time range: the previous decade (2009–2019) in order to have a sufficiently long period of time to capture the main changes and continuities in trajectories of education, training and employment for young people. The analysis mainly covered 3 dates – 2009–2013–2019 – in order to capture the impact of the economic and financial crisis that hit Europe and that, in most countries, reached its peak in 2012/2013.
- Age group: age group range varies accordingly to the data available in each indicator (15–24; 15–29; 15–34; and 15–39). Whenever possible, age range also covered young adult's data (age groups 30–34 and 35–39) in order to capture the extent of crisis impact on these groups.

In addition to a descriptive analysis, in order to compare data main changes and continuities in different time periods, absolute and relative change were calculated considering the three main time points that were selected – 2009, 2013 and 2019. Absolute change refers to the simple difference in the indicator over two periods in time and is expressed in percentage points (pp). Relative change expresses the change of a value of an indicator in an earlier period and is expressed in percentage terms.

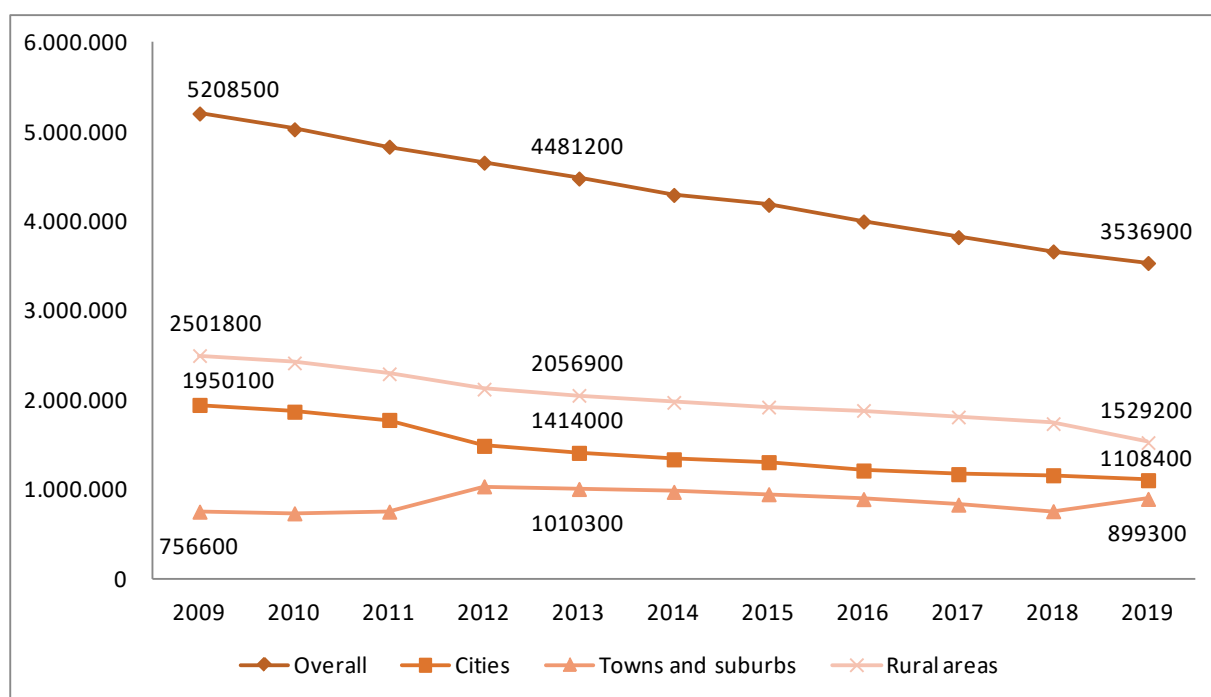
The report also includes an introductory contextualisation section with the most relevant information concerning the Polish social, economic and political situation in the last decades and key youth policies based on a relevant literature review and the Youth Wiki European online encyclopaedia.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

3.1. Population and youth population

Chart 1 illustrates the changes in the population of young Poles aged 15 to 24 between 2009 and 2019 by degree of urbanisation. It shows that the number of young people has been decreasing gradually over the past decade, from 5.2 million in 2009 to 3.5 million in 2019. The trend was similar for cities and rural areas. Conversely, small towns and suburbs experienced a slight increase in the number of young people. Table 1 shows that not only the number of young people has been decreasing, but the proportion of youth in the overall population as well. Between 2011 and 2019, the youth population ratio dropped by 6.3 pp, from 23.4% to 17.1%. The decline occurred across all age subgroups of young people.

Chart 1. Total youth population aged 15 to 24 in Poland in 2009–2019 by degree of urbanisation



Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat (lfst_r_pgauwsc). Data extracted on 12.05.2020.



Table 1. Ratio of youth population and absolute and relative change in Poland (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019) by age groups

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (relative change 2009–2019)
Overall	23.40%	20.90%	17.10%	-2.50 pp (-10.68%)	-3.80% pp (-18.18%)	-6.30% pp (-26.92%)
15–19	6.90%	5.80%	4.80%	-1.10% pp (-15.94%)	-1.00% pp (-17.24%)	-2.10% pp (-30.43%)
20–24	8.10%	7.00%	5.50%	-1.10% pp (-13.58%)	-1.50% pp (-21.43%)	-2.60% pp (-32.10%)
25–29	8.50%	8.10%	6.80%	-0.40% pp (-4.71%)	-1.30% pp (-16.05%)	-1.70% pp (-20.00%)

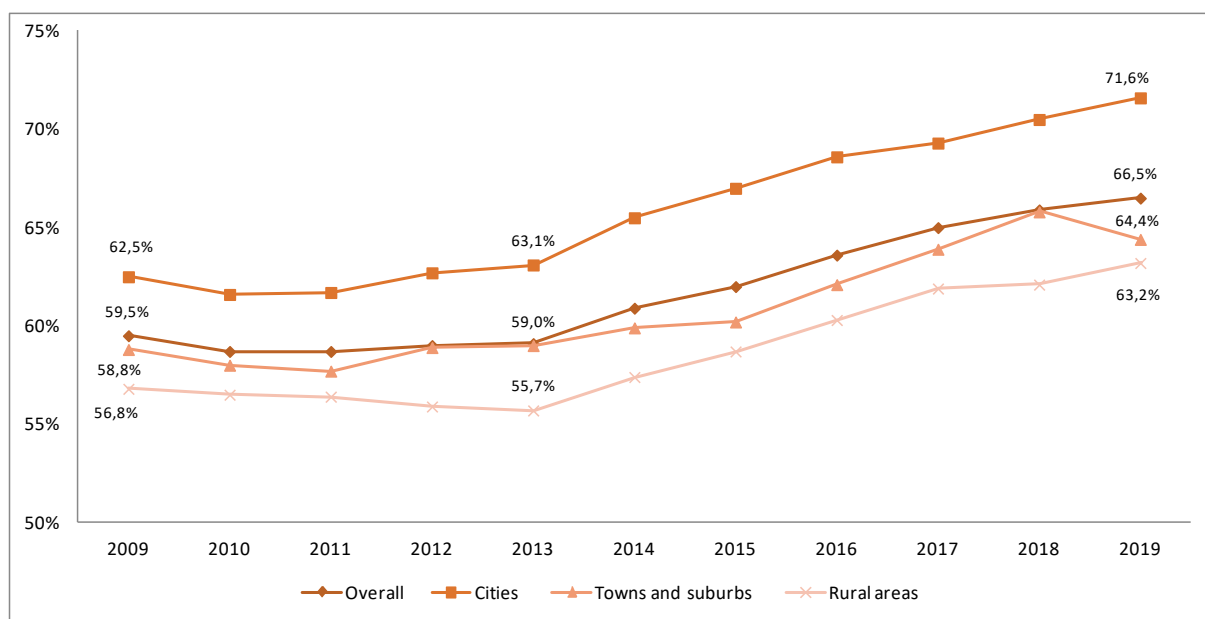
Source: Eurostat: yth_demo_020 – data extracted in 27.06.20

3. 2. Employment and Unemployment

3. 2. 1. Youth employment

Chart 2 shows the changes in the employment rate of people aged 15 to 39 between 2009 and 2019 by degree of urbanisation. Overall, the employment level increased by 7.0 pp during that period, from 59.5% to 66.5%. We can observe two distinct phases: a slight decrease in the employment rate between 2009 and 2013 from 59.5% to 59.1% caused by the financial and economic crisis followed by an improvement of the economic situation and increase in employment level up to 66.5% in 2019. The pattern of change was similar across all degrees of urbanisation.

Chart 2. Employment rate of people aged 15 to 39 between 2009 and 2019 by degree of urbanisation



Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat (lfst_r_ergau). Data extracted on 29.04.2020.



Table 2 shows that the employment level is positively associated with age. In 2019, it ranged from 4.9% among people in the 15–19 age range to 83.0% among those aged 30 to 34. All age subgroups experienced a decrease in employment levels between 2009 and 2013, followed by an increase since 2013. The labour market situation improved particularly for people aged 20 to 24 (increasing by 14.5 pp, from 41.0% in 2013 to 55.5% in 2019).

The employment rate is higher in cities (71.6%) than in towns (64.4%) and rural areas (63.2%). Between 2009 and 2019 it increased across all degrees of urbanisation – from 62.5% to 71.6% in cities, from 58.8% to 64.4% in towns and suburbs, and from 56.8% to 63.2% in rural areas.

Table 2. Youth employment rate and absolute and relative change in Poland (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019) by age groups and degree of urbanisation

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (relative change 2009–2019)
Total						
15–19	5.60%	4.20%	4.90%	-1.40 pp (-25.00%)	0.70 pp (16.67%)	-0.70 pp (-12.50%)
20–24	46.10%	41.00%	55.50%	-5.10 pp (-11.06%)	14.50 pp (35.37%)	9.40 pp (20.39%)
25–29	75.00%	73.00%	79.50%	-2.00 pp (-2.67%)	6.50 pp (8.90%)	4.50 pp (6.00%)
30–34	80.90%	78.50%	83.00%	-2.40 pp (-2.97%)	4.50 pp (5.73%)	2.10 pp (2.60%)
Cities						
15–19	4.10%	2.70%	4.00%	-1.40 pp (-34.15%)	1.30 pp (48.15%)	-0.10 pp (-2.44%)
20–24	41.80%	36.20%	52.30%	-5.60 pp (-13.40%)	16.10 pp (44.48%)	10.50 pp (25.12%)
25–29	78.20%	77.30%	84.40%	-0.90 pp (-1.15%)	7.10 pp (9.18%)	6.20 pp (7.93%)
30–34	83.50%	82.70%	87.80%	-0.80 pp (-0.96%)	5.10 pp (6.17%)	4.30 pp (5.15%)
Towns and suburbs						
15–19	3.20%	3.80%	5.60%	0.60 pp (18.75%)	1.80 pp (47.37%)	2.40 pp (75.00%)
20–24	46.60%	41.60%	55.00%	-5.00 pp (-10.73%)	13.40 pp (32.21%)	8.40 pp (18.03%)
25–29	74.80%	72.70%	77.10%	-2.10 pp (-2.81%)	4.40 pp (6.05%)	2.30 pp (3.07%)
30–34	81.90%	78.10%	80.20%	-3.80 pp (-4.64%)	2.10 pp (2.69%)	-1.70 pp (-2.08%)
Rural areas						
15–19	7.20%	5.30%	5.10%	-1.90 pp (-26.39%)	-0.20 pp (-3.77%)	-2.10 pp (-29.17%)
20–24	50.00%	44.50%	58.20%	-5.50 pp (-11.00%)	13.70 pp (30.79%)	8.20 pp (16.40%)
25–29	71.80%	69.10%	76.60%	-2.70 pp (-3.76%)	7.50 pp (10.85%)	4.80 pp (6.69%)
30–34	77.70%	74.80%	79.60%	-2.90 pp (-3.73%)	4.80 pp (6.42%)	1.90 pp (2.45%)

Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat (lfst_r_ergau). Data extracted on 29.04.2020.



3. 2. 2. Youth unemployment

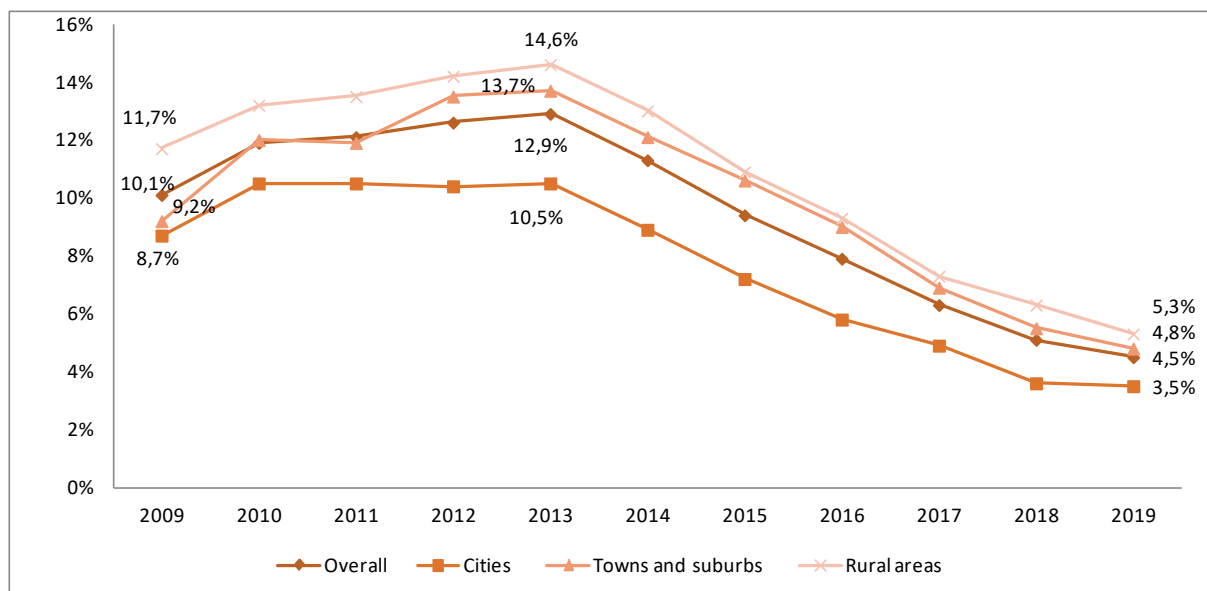
Chart 3 shows the unemployment rate of people aged 15 to 39 in Poland, between 2009 and 2019, by the degree of urbanisation. It shows that in the aftermath of the financial and economic crisis the unemployment rate increased from 9.2% in 2009 to 12.9% in 2013. Since then, the labour market situation of young people has been improving and the unemployment rate dropped to 4.5% in 2019.

Table 3 shows that unemployment is negatively associated with age. In 2019, it ranged from 19.2% among people in the 15–19 age range to 3.0% among those aged 30 to 34. All age subgroups witnessed an increase in the unemployment levels between 2009 and 2013, followed by a decrease between 2013 and 2019. People in the younger subgroups (15–19 and 20–24) were particularly vulnerable to the labour market fluctuations. They were hit hard by the recession (an increase in the unemployment rate by 9.6 pp and 6.5 pp respectively). They also experienced the greatest improvement during the recovery phase (a decrease in the unemployment rate by around 17 pp between 2013 and 2019).

In 2019, the difference in the unemployment rate between cities, towns and rural areas was minor. The lowest unemployment rate was in cities (3.5%), yet towns and rural areas were close to that number (4.8% and 5.3% respectively). Rural areas and towns have caught up with cities in recent years and managed to reduce the difference in the unemployment rate from 3.5 pp to 1.8 pp and 3.2 pp to 1.3 pp respectively between 2013 and 2019.



Chart 3. Unemployment rate of people aged 15 to 39 in Poland between 2009 and 2019 by degree of urbanisation



Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau). Data extracted on 29.04.2020.

Table 3. Youth unemployment rate and absolute and relative change in Poland (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019) by age groups and degree of urbanisation

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (relative change 2009–2019)
Total						
15–19	27.40%	37.00%	19.20%	9.60 pp (35.04%)	-17.80 pp (-48.11%)	-8.20 pp (-29.93%)
20–24	19.80%	26.30%	9.00%	6.50 pp (32.83%)	-17.30 pp (-65.78%)	-10.80 pp (-54.55%)
25–29	9.80%	13.60%	4.40%	3.80 pp (38.78%)	-9.20 pp (-67.65%)	-5.40 pp (-55.10%)
30–34	6.50%	8.70%	3.00%	2.20 pp (33.85%)	-5.70 pp (-65.52%)	-3.50 pp (-53.85%)
Cities						
15–19	31.70%	39.00%	26.00%	7.30% (23.03%)	-13.00 pp (-33.33%)	-5.70 pp (-17.98%)
20–24	17.90%	22.20%	7.00%	4.30% (24.02%)	-15.20 pp (-68.47%)	-10.90 pp (-60.89%)
25–29	8.30%	11.10%	3.50%	2.80% (33.73%)	-7.60 pp (-68.47%)	-4.80 pp (-57.83%)
30–34	6.00%	8.00%	2.30%	2.00% (33.33%)	-5.70 pp (-71.25%)	-3.70 pp (-61.67%)
Towns and suburbs						
15–19	30.50%	43.50%	.	13.00% (42.62%)	.	.
20–24	19.50%	27.50%	10.50%	8.00% (41.03%)	-17.00 pp (-61.82%)	-9.00 pp (-46.15%)
25–29	10.00%	15.20%	5.40%	5.20% (52.00%)	-9.80 pp (-64.47%)	-4.60 pp (-46.00%)
30–34	5.00%	8.90%	3.20%	3.90% (78.00%)	-5.70 pp (-64.04%)	-1.80 pp (-36.00%)
Rural areas						
15–19	25.10%	33.50%	20.60%	8.40% (33.47%)	-12.90 pp (-38.51%)	-4.50 pp (-17.93%)
20–24	21.30%	28.20%	9.70%	6.90% (32.39%)	-18.50 pp (-65.60%)	-11.60 pp (-54.46%)
25–29	11.30%	15.10%	4.80%	3.80% (33.63%)	-10.30 pp (-68.21%)	-6.50 pp (-57.52%)
30–34	7.50%	9.50%	3.70%	2.00% (26.67%)	-5.80 pp (-61.05%)	-3.80 pp (-50.67%)

Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau). Data extracted on 29.04.2020



3. 3. Education

3. 3. 1. Young people by educational attainment level

Table 4 describes young people aged 15 to 24 by educational attainment (ISCED levels) and degree of urbanisation between 2009 and 2019 in Poland. It shows that in 2019, 47% of the 15–24 year-olds held lower secondary degree level qualifications or below (ISCED 0–2), 46.2% held upper or post-secondary degree level qualifications (ISCED 3–4), and 6.8% held tertiary degree level qualifications (ISCED 5–8).

There were no considerable changes in the educational structure at the National level over the previous decade, however, some variation occurred in the case of tertiary education. Its popularity increased from 5.6% to 7.8% between 2009 and 2013 and then started decreasing and reached a level of 6.8% in 2019. It seems that as a response to the economic crisis, young people were more willing to continue education to improve their qualifications and/or postpone entry into the labour market.

In 2019, young people living in cities were around two times more likely to hold a tertiary degree (10.2%) than those living in towns (4.5%) and rural areas (5.6%). City inhabitants also noted the most remarkable improvement in this regard – the share of university degree holders increased by 36% between 2009 and 2019 (from 7.5% to 10.2%).

Table 4. Educational attainment (ISCED levels) of young people aged 15–24 in Poland and absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019) by degree of urbanisation

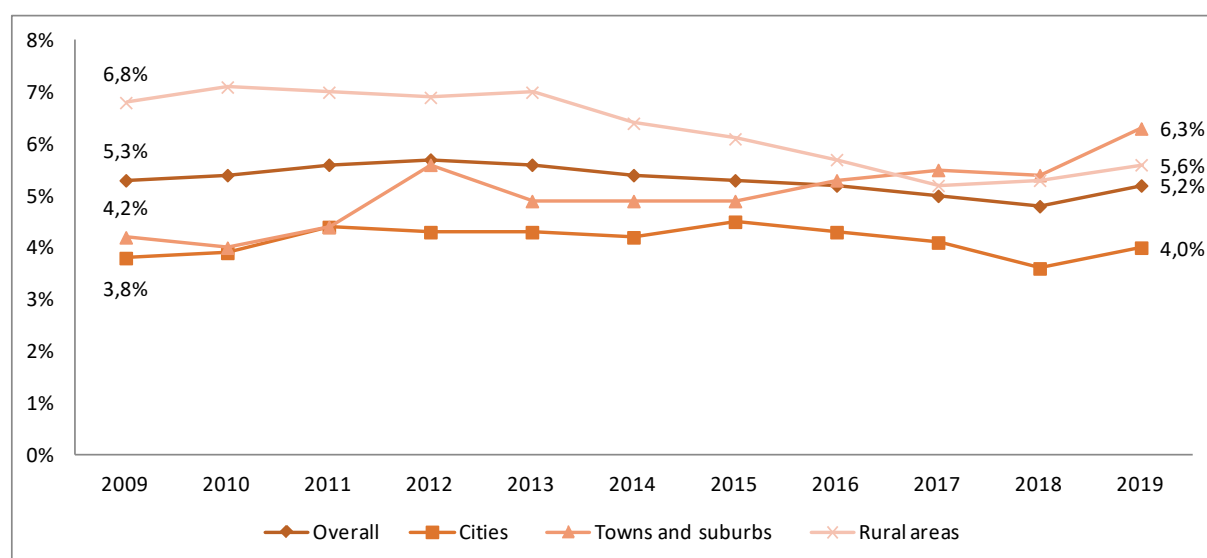
	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
ISCED 0–2	45.80%	45.30%	47.00%	–0.50 pp (–1.09%)	–1.70 pp (3.75%)	1.20 pp (2.62%)
ISCED 3–4	48.60%	46.90%	46.20%	–1.70 pp (–3.50%)	–0.70 pp (–1.49%)	–2.40 pp (–4.94%)
ISCED 5–8	5.60%	7.80%	6.80%	2.20 pp (39.29%)	–1.00 pp (–12.82%)	1.20 pp (21.43%)
Cities						
ISCED 0–2	40.50%	39.70%	42.20%	–0.80 pp (–1.98%)	2.50 pp (6.30%)	1.70 pp (4.20%)
ISCED 3–4	52.00%	49.50%	47.60%	–2.50 pp (–4.81%)	–1.90 pp (–3.84%)	–4.40 pp (–8.46%)
ISCED 5–8	7.50%	10.80%	10.20%	3.30 pp (44.00%)	–0.60 pp (–5.56%)	2.70 pp (36.00%)
Towns and suburbs						
ISCED 0–2	47.50%	47.20%	53.50%	–0.30 pp (–0.63%)	6.30 pp (13.35%)	6.00 pp (12.63%)
ISCED 3–4	48.10%	45.20%	42.00%	–2.90 pp (–6.03%)	–3.20 pp (–7.08%)	–6.10 pp (–12.68%)
ISCED 5–8	4.40%	7.70%	4.50%	3.30 pp (75.00%)	–3.20 pp (–41.56%)	0.10 pp (2.27%)
Rural areas						
ISCED 0–2	49.30%	48.30%	46.70%	–1.00 pp (–2.03%)	–1.60 pp (–3.31%)	–2.60 pp (–5.27%)
ISCED 3–4	46.10%	45.90%	47.70%	–0.20 pp (–0.43%)	1.80 pp (3.92%)	1.60 pp (3.47%)
ISCED 5–8	4.60%	5.80%	5.60%	1.20 pp (26.09%)	–0.20 pp (–3.45%)	1.00 pp (21.74%)

Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat (edat_lfs_9913). Data extracted on 29.04.2020.

3.3.2. Early School Leavers from Education and Training

Education increases one's opportunities in the labour market. Therefore, countries seek to increase educational participation and reduce early school leaving. Chart 4 displays the proportion of Early Leavers from Education and Training (ESET) between 2009 and 2019 by degree of urbanisation. In 2019, 5.3% of young Poles could be considered as early school leavers. The level of dropouts was slightly higher in towns and rural areas (6.3% and 5.6% respectively) than in cities (4.0%). The ESET rate has been relatively stable over the past ten years – it decreased overall by 0.1 pp, falling in rural areas by 1.2 pp, while increasing in towns and suburbs by 2.1 pp and in cities by 0.2 pp.

Chart 4. Early School Leavers from Education and Training in Poland between 2009 and 2019 by degree of urbanisation



Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat (edat_ifse_30). Data extracted on 20.04.2020.



3. 4. NEETs

3. 4. 1. NEET rate

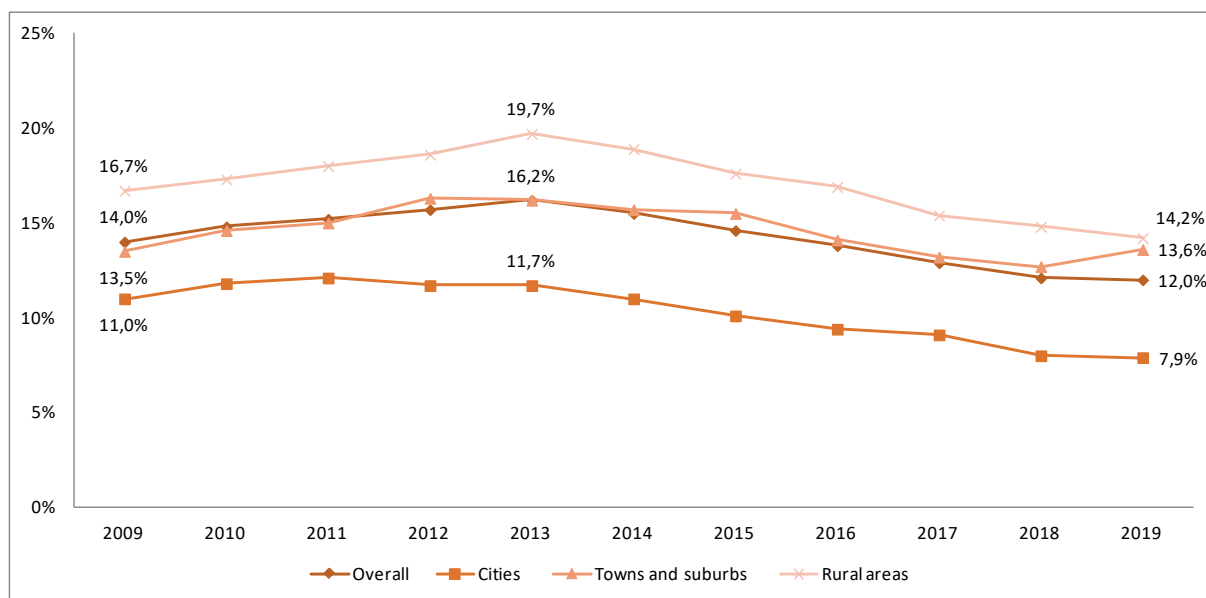
Chart 5 shows the proportion of NEETs among young people aged 15 to 29 by the degree of urbanisation over the last ten years. Between 2009 and 2013, the NEET rate increased from 14% to 16% and since then has been steadily decreasing, reaching 12.0% in 2019. This pattern was similar across all levels of urbanisation.

Table 6 shows that the NEET rate is negatively associated with age. In 2019, it varied from 2.3% in the youngest age group (15–19) to 17.7% among those aged 25 to 29. All age subgroups experienced an increase in the NEET rate between 2009 and 2013 and a decrease between 2013 to 2019.

In 2019, rural areas and towns displayed higher NEET rates than cities across all age subgroups. The difference was especially visible in the 25–29 age group, in which the NEET rate gap between cities and rural areas reached almost 11 pp (11.1% in cities vs. 21.8% in rural areas). The gap has been quite stable for ten years, which means that rural areas and small towns did not converge with cities.



Chart 5. NEET rate among young people aged 15 to 29 in Poland between 2009 and 2019 by degree of urbanisation



Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat (edat_lfse_29). Data extracted on 29.04.2020.



Table 6. NEET rate in Poland and absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019) by age subgroups and by degree of urbanisation

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Overall	15.10%	17.40%	13.40%	2.30 pp (15.23%)	-4.00 pp (-22.99%)	-1.70 pp (-11.26%)
Overall	15.10%	17.40%	13.40%	2.30 pp (15.23%)	-4.00 pp (-22.99%)	-1.70 pp (-11.26%)
15–19	3.50%	3.70%	2.30%	0.20 pp (5.71%)	-1.40 pp (-37.84%)	-1.20 pp (-34.29%)
20–24	16.10%	19.40%	13.30%	3.30 pp (20.50%)	-6.10 pp (-31.44%)	-2.80 pp (-17.39%)
25–29	20.50%	22.70%	17.70%	2.20 pp (10.73%)	-5.00 pp (-22.03%)	-2.80 pp (-13.66%)
30–34	18.30%	20.50%	16.50%	2.20 pp (12.02%)	-4.00 pp (-19.51%)	-1.80 pp (-9.84%)
Cities						
Overall	12.30%	13.10%	9.10%	0.80 pp (6.50%)	-4.00 pp (-30.53%)	-3.20 pp (-26.02%)
15–19	3.40%	3.10%	1.70%	-0.30 pp (-8.82%)	-1.40 pp (-45.16%)	-1.70 pp (-50.00%)
20–24	11.30%	11.70%	8.30%	0.40 pp (3.54%)	-3.40 pp (-29.06%)	-3.00 pp (-26.55%)
25–29	15.60%	16.50%	11.10%	0.90 pp (5.77%)	-5.40 pp (-32.73%)	-4.50 pp (-28.85%)
30–34	15.50%	16.10%	11.50%	0.60 pp (3.87%)	-4.60 pp (-28.57%)	-4.00 pp (-25.81%)
Towns and suburbs						
Overall	14.50%	17.70%	15.30%	3.20 pp (22.07%)	-2.40 pp (-13.56%)	0.80 pp (5.52%)
15–19	2.30%	3.60%	2.30%	1.30 pp (56.52%)	-1.30 pp (-36.11%)	0.00 pp (0.00%)
20–24	15.80%	19.00%	16.50%	3.20 pp (20.25%)	-2.50 pp (-13.16%)	0.70 pp (4.43%)
25–29	21.20%	23.70%	20.90%	2.50 pp (11.79%)	-2.80 pp (-11.81%)	-0.30 pp (-1.42%)
30–34	17.40%	21.00%	19.30%	3.60 pp (20.69%)	-1.70 pp (-8.10%)	1.90 pp (10.92%)
Rural areas						
Overall	17.90%	20.90%	15.80%	3.00 pp (16.76%)	-5.10 pp (-24.40%)	-2.10 pp (-11.73%)
15–19	4.00%	4.10%	2.60%	0.10 pp (2.50%)	-1.50 pp (-36.59%)	-1.40 pp (-35.00%)
20–24	20.60%	25.40%	15.50%	4.80 pp (23.30%)	-9.90 pp (-38.98%)	-5.10 pp (-24.76%)
25–29	25.30%	27.90%	21.80%	2.60 pp (10.28%)	-6.10 pp (-21.86%)	-3.50 pp (-13.83%)
30–34	21.60%	24.40%	20.00%	2.80 pp (12.96%)	-4.40 pp (-18.03%)	-1.60 pp (-7.41%)

Source: own elaboration based on Eurostat (edat_lfse_29). Data extracted on 29.04.2020.



4. CONCLUSIONS

Population. Like many European countries, Poland has a noticeably ageing demographic. The number of young people and the youth population ratio has been gradually decreasing over the past decade across all age subgroups. This is mainly due to a low birth rate and a large-scale labour emigration of younger Poles to other EU countries after joining the EU in 2004. The trend was similar for cities and rural areas. Only small towns and suburbs experienced a slight increase in the number of young people, most probably due to the migration of urban population to the suburbs within the suburbanisation processes.

Youth employment and unemployment. The youth unemployment increased during the recession period, reaching a peak in 2013. Since then it has been decreasing significantly. Currently, it is below the pre-recession level and the lowest since the political and economic transformation undergone in the immediate aftermath of communism. People from the younger subgroups were more vulnerable to labour market fluctuations. In 2019, the difference in the unemployment rate was minor across various levels of urbanisation. The employment rate, however, was clearly higher in cities which suggests that many of those living in towns and rural areas remain outside the labour force.

Early School Leavers from Education and Training. The ESLET rate in Poland is 5.3%, one of the lowest in the EU (European Union, 2019). It has been relatively stable over the past decade. The level of dropouts is slightly higher in towns and rural areas than in cities, but the difference is not considerable.

Educational attainment. In Poland, 47% of young people held a lower secondary degree or below, 46% held an upper or post-secondary degree, and 7% held a tertiary degree. There were no significant changes in the educational structure at the country level between 2009 and 2019. Young people living in cities are around two times more likely to hold a university degree than those living in towns and rural areas. Cities also witnessed the greatest improvement in education. If this trend continues the educational gap between cities and rural areas may increase in the future.



NEETs. Overall, the NEET rate decreased between 2009 and 2019 in all age groups and across all levels of urbanisation. There were two phases – an increase during the recession period with a peak in 2013, followed by a decrease during the recovery period. What is interesting is that the decline in the NEET rate was not as considerable as the decline in the unemployment rate. This is because the NEET group in Poland is composed mainly of economically inactive young people. Their labour market status is rather independent of the condition of the economy. The share of economically inactive NEETs in Poland has been stable over the past decade (Smoter, 2020). Although the NEET rate has fallen in recent years across all levels of urbanisation, young people living in small towns and rural areas are considerably more vulnerable to becoming NEET than those living in cities.



5. REFERENCES

European Union. (2019). Education and Training Monitor: Poland Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved October 14, 2020, from https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/document-library/education-and-training-monitor-2019-poland-report_en

Eurostat. (2020). Early leavers from education and training. Retrieved October 15, 2020, from https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Early_leavers_from_education_and_training#Overview

Smoter, M. (2019). Not studying or working. A challenge for public policy?. Warsaw: IBS Policy Paper 03/2019. Retrieved October 12, 2020, from https://ibs.org.pl/app/uploads/2020/01/IBS-Policy-Paper-03-2019-NEETs_final_EN.pdf

Statistics Poland. (2020). Population. Size and structure and vital statistics in Poland by territorial division. Retrieved October 14, 2020, from <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/ludnosc/ludnosc/ludnosc-stand-i-struktura-ludnosci-oraz-ruch-naturalny-w-przekroju-terytorialnym-stand-w-dniu-30-06-2020,6,28.html>



6. IMPORTANT LINKS

Youth wiki: national youth policies in Poland

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/overview-poland>

Youth Guarantee implementation plan in Poland

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=16338&langId=e>

Youth Guarantee country fiche for Poland

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1161&langId=en&intPagId=3348>

The labour code

<http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU19740240141>

Law on school education

<http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU19910950425/U/D19910425Lj.pdf>



RURAL NEETs IN PORTUGAL



2009/2019
OVERVIEW



AUTHORS

Francisco Simões – francisco.simoes@iscte-iul.pt
Cis-Iscte, Portugal

Tatiana Ferreira – Tatiana.mjferreira@gmail.com
School of Education, Polytechnic Institute of Santarém, Santarém – ESE-IPSantarem

Maria Manuel Vieira – mmfonseca@ics.ulisboa.pt
Instituto de Ciências Sociais, Universidade de Lisboa (Portugal) – ICS-Ulisboa

Image by Svetlana Shemetiuk from Pexels

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network: Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged.
Please cite this publication as “COST CA18213 Rural NEETs in Portugal: 2009/2019 Overview.

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. CONTEXTUALIZATION	7
2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE	10
3. DATA ANALYSIS	11
3. 1. Population and youth population	11
3. 2. Employment and Unemployment	14
• Youth employment	16
• Youth unemployment	16
3. 3. Education	19
• Young people by educational attainment level	19
• Early school leavers	21
3. 4. NEETs	22
• NEET rate	22
4. CONCLUSIONS	25
5. REFERENCES	27
6. IMPORTANT LINKS	28

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines in detail the situation of rural youths Neither in Employment, nor in Education or Training (NEET) aged between 15 and 34 years old, over the last decade (2009–2019) in Portugal. To do this, the report portrays indicators of: youth population; youth employment and unemployment; education; and, NEETs distribution. The characterisation of all indicators adopts the degree of urbanisation as a central criterion, thereby enabling proportional comparisons between rural areas, towns and suburbs, cities and the whole country. These analyses are further divided into age subgroups and, where possible, into sex groups for greater detail.

The statistical procedures adopted across the different selected dimensions involve: descriptive longitudinal analysis; using graphical displays (e.g., overlay line charts); and, the calculation of proportional absolute and relative changes between 2009 and 2013, 2013 and 2019, and finally 2009 and 2019. These time ranges were chosen to capture the indicators evolution before and after the economic crisis which hit European countries. All data was extracted from Eurostat public datasets.

The analyses show that between 2009 and 2019 the rural youth population aged 15 to 24 years has been increasing in Portugal. Although the youth unemployment rate is higher in cities, rural areas faced more difficulties in overcoming the effects of the crisis, particularly among young adults aged over 25 years. In the field of education, however, there was an absolute and relative reduction in the proportion of young people with lower qualifications compared with young people in early school leavers in rural areas between 2009–2019, even though it still remains well above the 10% target defined by the Europe 2020 strategy. Finally, the proportion of NEETs in Portugal is higher in rural areas, in all age groups with available data, compared to cities and towns and suburbs, thereby revealing territorial inequalities in access to employment and education opportunities.

SUMÁRIO EXECUTIVO

O presente relatório destina-se a caracterizar a situação dos jovens Nem em Emprego, Nem em Educação/Formação (NEEF), com idades compreendidas entre os 15 e os 34 anos, no período 2009/2019, em Portugal. De acordo com este objetivo, o relatório descreve indicadores de população jovem, emprego e desemprego jovem, educação e distribuição de jovens NEEF. A caracterização dos diversos indicadores é feita considerando o grau de urbanização como critério central. Esta opção permite a comparação entre zonas rurais, zonas suburbanas, cidades e o todo nacional. De modo a refinar as análises realizadas, os dados são também examinados de acordo com subgrupos etários e, sempre que possível, por sexo.

Os procedimentos estatísticos adotados para os diferentes indicadores envolvem uma análise descritiva longitudinal, usando representações gráficas (e.g. gráficos de linhas), bem como o cálculo de variações absolutas e relativas entre 2009 e 2013, 2013 e 2019 e 2009 e 2019. Estes pontos temporais foram escolhidos de modo a captar a evolução dos indicadores antes e depois da crise económica que afetou os países europeus. Todos os dados foram extraídos das bases de dados públicas do Eurostat.

As análises mostram que entre 2009 e 2019, a população jovem em meios rurais cresceu. Apesar de a taxa de desemprego jovem ser mais elevada nas cidades, as zonas rurais tiveram maior dificuldade em recuperar do impacto da crise, sobretudo entre os jovens adultos com mais de 25 anos. No domínio da educação, contudo, verificou-se uma redução absoluta e relativa da proporção de jovens com mais baixas qualificações e dos jovens em situação de abandono escolar precoce nos meios rurais entre 2009–2019, ainda que ainda se mantenha muito acima da meta de 10% definida pela Estratégia 2020. Por fim, a proporção de jovens NEEF nas áreas rurais é mais alta do que em zonas suburbanas e nas cidades, em todos os subgrupos etários com dados disponíveis, revelando desigualdades territoriais no acesso a oportunidades de emprego e educação.



INTRODUCTION

This report proceeds in three parts. It starts with an introductory contextualisation with the most relevant information about the Portuguese social, economic and political situation in the last two decades and key youth policies based on a review of relevant literature. (See: Youth Wiki European online encyclopaedia, <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/youthwiki>). Following this, a methodological note explains the database used and the statistical operations carried out. The most extensive part of the report refers to the analysis carried out, with a specific focus on young people, organised by degree of urbanisation and concerning four main topics: population; employment; education; and, NEETs. The report concludes with a brief summary which highlights the main results.



1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

Portugal is a sovereign state located in south-west Europe, on the Iberia Peninsula and spreading to two archipelagos in the northern Atlantic Ocean (Azores and Madeira). The total area of its territory is 92.090 km², and is bordered by Spain on the North and the East and by the Atlantic Ocean on the West and on the South.

In June of 2020, the country had an estimated population of 10.258.392 (INE/Pordata, 2020). In the last two decades, Portugal faced the challenge of a double aging process, with an increase of the elderly and a decrease of the proportion of young people, thus resulting in the progressive decline in population. This led to a reconfiguration of the demographic structure outcomes with a growth in life expectancy, a low fertility rate, as well as an exodus of the youth population, especially during the post-2008 economic and financial crisis (Vieira et al., 2017). During this period (2008–2014), Portugal was placed under an austerity program imposed by international creditors (the TROIKA loan program) and underwent profound political and economic changes. This had a strong impact on the patterns and dynamics of its labour market, marked by high levels of unemployment, especially among young people, and job insecurity.

The Portuguese labour market has a series of structural characteristics that distinguishes it from other European Union countries, thereby making it particularly vulnerable to conjuncture factors. Despite the extension of compulsory schooling in 2009, Portugal remains among the European countries showing lowest average educational levels of the active population. Moreover, micro, small and medium size companies compose the largest part of the productive structure in Portugal. Many of them are family-based businesses that hire less educated human resources (Ferreira & Vieira, 2018).

In terms of political governance, the state administrative structure relies on a central government, supported by a national parliament. Due to their geographical singularities, the archipelagos of The Azores and Madeira have their own regional government and parliament.

Youth governance has a centralised structure in the form of a Secretariat of State for Youth



and Sport. Since 2015, this policy-making structure has been integrated within the Ministry of Education. Previously, the sector had been under the supervision of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (European Commission, 2020). This governmental body dedicated to youth was created in 1985, marking the political acknowledgment of the importance to design and develop youth policies, beyond those dedicated exclusively to education (Ferreira et al., 2019). In 1986, Portugal joined the European Economic Community, opening the possibility to access to EEC funding and special financial packages dedicated to youth.

In Portugal, youth policy has been developed and delivered in an integrated manner, based on a youth participatory approach. This means that the solutions for youth problems are designed considering youth involvement as people with rights. This is met mostly through youth organisations and representative structures. To manage issues such as high unemployment rates, risk of poverty or school failure, inter-ministerial coordination and cross-department policy measures are usually put in place, involving departments such as Education, Social Welfare or Health, amongst others. The youth policy sector has established and strengthened itself over the years, with the first National Youth Plan launched in 2018, stemming from European priorities and in relation to the needs of Portuguese young people (European Commission, 2020).

Some sectoral policies have had a direct impact on Portuguese youths over the past decades. In terms of employment, the legal age to enter the labour market is 16 years old, as long as the youth has completed (or is enrolled in) secondary education (Código do Trabalho, artigo 68º). In the employment domain, and under the scope of the Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security, there is a public services network that implements policies in this field. Inter-ministerial collaboration is also mobilised to tackle challenges such as youth unemployment or precariousness. This coordination has been met, for instance, under the Youth Guarantee programme (Garantia Jovem), involving sectors such as employment, education, economy, youth, foreign affairs (for international mobility) and the Presidency of the Council of Ministries, which integrates the Directorate-General for Local Authorities. The creation of policies and the search for solutions for youth challenges takes place through a social dialogue with the participation of relevant social partners. This involvement transpires through the Standing Committee for Social Dialogue and other tripartite bodies. Non-governmental organisations are also active participants, contributing in various areas. For instance, the National Association of Young Entrepreneurs and



the Foundation of Youth are particularly active in the field of entrepreneurship. The Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment (CITE) acts as a national mechanism for non-discrimination in the labour market.

Education in Portugal is universal, with a large and dominant public sector, with private education also being offered. The educational system architecture is roughly divided into six levels: pre-schooling (ISCED 0); primary school (1st to 4th grade – ISCED 1); lower middle school (5th and 6th grade–ISCED 2); upper middle school (7th to 9th grade–ISCED 2); secondary education (10th to 12th grade–ISCED 3–4); and, tertiary education (ISCED 5–8) (Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo nº 237/1986). An important policy-making decision was the increase of compulsory education enrolment from 9 to 12 school years, beginning in 2009. Furthermore, in the past decade the State has put forward several legislation packages to improve equal access conditions to education and training (e.g., the National Program for School Success Promotion) or to promote modernisation, qualifications and diversification of higher education. These legislative initiatives have also ensured larger investments in education and training of young people and adults, through specific programs such as the Qualifica program. This makes available offers in the area of training and dual certification aimed at young NEET, among others, and based upon the Youth Guarantee framework (European Commission, 2020).

The main policies in the field of social inclusion for young people are framed in the Social Inclusion and Employment Operational Programme (POISE), in coordination with the Europe 2020 Strategy. This framework involves a multi-level governance and subsidiarity approach to steer tools for person-centred and flexible interventions, based on a proximity approach and with knowledge of the local realities. Therefore, successful policy deliverance relies on a clear articulation between different national plans, programs and strategies in the fields of youth employment, sports, gender equality, citizenship, health, migrations and disabilities. There is also a coordination with the National Reform Plan (PNR) in order to articulate youth social inclusion policies with the national strategy to combat poverty. In line with this approach, specific programs are run by the State to promote youth social inclusion such as the “Choices Programme” (Programa Escolhas). This program aims to promote the social inclusion of children and young people from the most vulnerable socio-economic contexts, especially descendants of immigrants, ethnic minorities (Roma communities), and Portuguese emigrants. It is based on local initiatives and utilises youth workers (European Commission, 2020).



2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The Portuguese national report uses information gathered by the National Reports Editorial Team of the Rural NEET Youth Network via the Eurostat platform. The main data presented and analysed in this report are from the following Eurostat database:

- Population Statistics: [yth_demo_020]
- EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS): [lfst_r_pgauwsc]; [lfst_r_ergau]; [lfst_r_urgau]; [edat_lfs_9913]; [edat_lfse_30]; [edat_lfse_29]

Selected indicators were extracted from the different databases according to two criteria:

- Time range: the previous decade (2009–2019) in order to have a sufficiently long period of time to capture the main changes and continuities in young people's trajectories in education, training and employment. The analysis mainly covered 3 dates – 2009–2013–2019 – in order to capture the impact of the economic and financial crisis that reached its peak in Portugal in 2013.
- Age group: the age group range varies accordingly to the data available in each indicator (15–24; 15–29; 15–34; and 15–39). Whenever possible, age range also covers young adult's data (30–34 and 35–39) in order to describe the extent of impact of the crisis on these age groups.

In addition to a descriptive analysis, and in order to compare the main data changes and continuities in different time periods, absolute and relative change were calculated by considering the 3 main time points that were selected, namely 2009, 2013 and 2019. Absolute change refers to the simple difference in the indicator over two periods in time and is expressed in percentage points (pp). Relative change expresses the change of a value of an indicator during an earlier period and it is expressed in percentage terms.

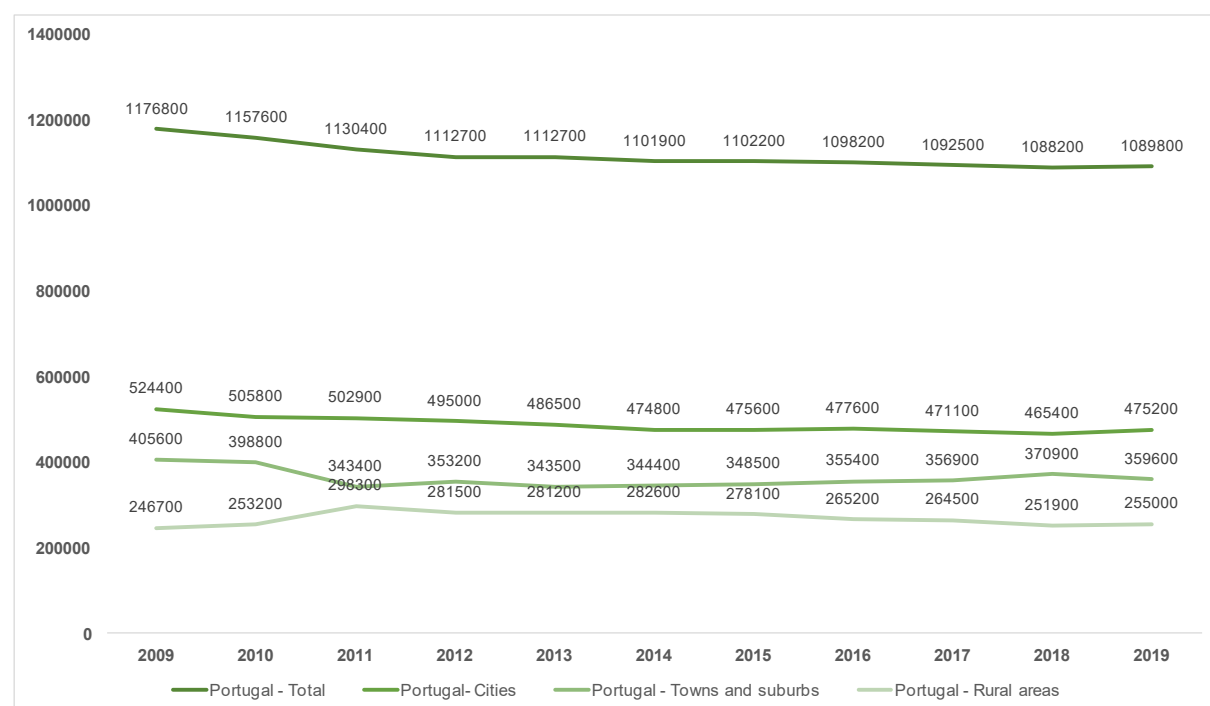


3. DATA ANALYSIS

3.1. Population and youth population

Chart 1 summarises the evolution of the total youth population of Portugal aged 15–24 years old for different degrees of urbanisation, between 2009 and 2019. According to the chart, the total youth population is declining. In 2009, 1,176.800 of the population in Portugal fitted into this age subgroup; that number had decreased to 1,112.700 by 2013, and further declined to 1,089.800 in 2019. This trend is evident among both men (598.200, in 2009; 563.600, in 2013, 554.200, in 2019) and women (578.600, in 2009, 549.00, in 2013, 535.600, in 2019).

Chart 1. Total youth population 2009–2019 (Portugal) by degree of urbanization



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_pgauwsc) – data extracted on 12.05.2020



With some variations, the trend is identical for Portuguese cities as well as for the country's towns and suburbs. In Portuguese cities, the number of those aged 15–24 years old has declined from 524.400 in 2009, to 486.500 in 2013, and decreasing again to 475.200 in 2019. In the case of towns and suburbs, there were 405.600 people in this age group in 2009. That number had come down in 2013 to 343.500. In 2019, that number had increased to 359.600, but was still far from reaching 2009 levels. In rural areas, youth population aged 15–24 years old has evolved differently. In 2009, 246.700 youths lived in rural areas, with that number increasing to 281.200 in 2013, before declining to 255.00, in 2019. Still, when comparing 2009 to 2019, rural areas have the only level of degree of urbanisation in which population aged 15–24 years old has increased.

From 2009 to 2019, youth population (15–24 years) continuously declined in Portugal, except in rural areas, where, there was an increase in the young population in this age group, with greater incidence between 2009 and 2013 (with an increase rate of 14%).

According to Table 1, the ratio of youth population has been declining in Portugal, between 2011 and 2019, across different age classes. A negative absolute and relative change is more evident for the 25–29 years old group (– 0.1 pp; 18.87%), compared to the 20–24 years old group (– 0.3 pp; – 5.77%). The proportion of those aged between 15–19 years old has remained unchanged for the same time period. It is interesting to note, however, that the decrease of the ratio of youth population in the country was more evident between 2011 and 2015, both for those aged 25–29 years old (– 0.8 pp; –14.55%) as well as for those aged 20–24 years old (– 0.2 pp; – 3.77%), with the ratio of those aged 15–19 years old also declining (– 0.1 pp; –1.87%), compared to the evolution on the same indicator between 2015 and 2019. In this period, there is even a slight positive absolute and relative change on the ratio of youths aged 15 to 19 years old (0.1 pp; 1.85%).



Table 1. Ratio of youth population by age subgroups and absolute and relative change in Portugal (2011–2015, 2015–2019 and 2011–2019)

	2011	2015	2019	Absolute change 2011–2015 (relative change 2011–2015)	Absolute change 2015–2019 (relative change 2015–2019)	Absolute change 2011–2019 (relative change 2011–2019)
15–19	5.40%	5.30%	5.40%	–10pp (–1.87%)	10 pp (1.85%)	0 (0)
20–24	5.50%	5.30%	5.20%	–20pp (–3.77%)	–10 pp (–1.92%)	–30 pp (–5.77%)
25–29	6.30%	5.50%	5.30%	–80 pp (–14.55%)	–20 pp (–3.77%)	–100 pp (–18.87%)

Source: Eurostat: yth_demo_O20 – data extracted in 13.05.20

Since 2011, the youth population ratio (15–29 years) has been continuously declining in Portugal (less 1.3 p.p., from 17.1% in 2011 to 15.9% in 2019).



3. 2. Employment and Unemployment

3. 2. 1. Youth employment

According to Table 2, at the country level, there has been a slightly negative absolute and relative variation of youth employment between 2009 and 2019 – (0.2 pp; –31%). This decline is evident in age subgroups 15–19 years old (2.5 pp; –32.89%) and 20–24 years old (– 2.2 pp; – 4.53%). Conversely, in age classes 25–29 (3.8 pp; 4.69%) and 30–34 years old (5.2 pp; 5.96%) the opposite trend is evident. This evolution across the country, for the period under analysis, has encompassed a negative absolute and relative variation of youth employment, overall and across all age subgroups, between 2009 and 2013. This has been followed by a generalised positive recovery, for the period between 2013 and 2019.

Youth employment trends overall, and by age groups across different degrees of urbanisation levels, vary. In Portuguese cities, between 2009 and 2019, there is a minor positive variation in youth employment overall (0.04 pp; .62%), which is especially remarkable across the age classes 25–29 (5.2 pp; 6.39%) and 30–34 (3.7 pp; 4.26%). By contrast, the youth employment share among youths aged 15–19 years old has decreased (– 4.9 pp; – 85.96%), with the indicator remaining almost unchanged in the 20–24 years old class (0.5 pp; 1.06%).

In towns and suburbs, between 2009 and 2019, there is a minor positive absolute and relative variation of youth employment overall (0.7 pp; 1.06%), mostly due to an increase of this indicator among those aged 25 to 29 (5.2 pp; 6.29%) and 30 to 34 years old (8.1 pp; 9.01%). This contrasts with the decrease of youth employment levels in age classes 15–19 (– 2.2 pp; – 25.00%) and 20–24 (– 4.8 pp; – 9.28%).

In turn, in rural areas, for the same period, youth employment overall has decreased (– 3.0 pp; – 5.01%). This fall in youth employment is fuelled by its reduction among those aged 20–24 years old (– 3.2 pp; – 6.85%). Conversely, across all other age classes groups, youth employment has increased, from a small increment in the 15–19 age old class (0, 2 pp; 2.08%) to larger increments in the 25–29 (5.2 pp; 6.29%) and in the 30–34 (5.4 pp; 6.41%) years old classes.

Across all degrees of urbanisation levels, for the past decade, youth employment has gone through a contraction between 2009 and 2013, followed by an increase in the subsequent period, from 2013 to 2019. However, with the exception of those aged 25 to 29 years old, the youth employment positive variation has been greater in cities as well as in towns and suburbs, when compared to rural areas.

Table 2. Youth employment (%) and absolute and relative change in Portugal by age groups (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Overall	64.00%	56.50%	63.80%	-7.5 pp (13.27%)	7.3 pp (-11.44%)	- 0.2 pp (-31%)
15 – 19	10.10%	5.80%	7.60%	-4.7 pp (81.03%)	1.8 pp (31.03%)	-2.5 pp (32.89%)
20 – 24	50.80%	37.10%	48.60%	-3.7 pp (39.12%)	11.5 pp (23.66%)	-2.2 pp (-4.53%)
25 – 29	77.30%	68.00%	81.00%	-9.3 pp (-13.67%)	13.0 pp (16.0%)	3.8 pp (4.69%)
30 – 34	82.00%	76.90%	87.20%	-5.1 pp (-0.4%)	10.3 pp (11.81%)	5.2 pp (5.96%)
Cities						
Overall	63.80%	56.00%	64.20%	-7.8 pp (-13.93%)	8.2 pp (12.77%)	0.04 pp (62%)
15–19	9.60%	4.40%	5.70%	-5.2 pp (-118.18%)	1.3 pp (22.80%)	-4.9 pp (-85.96%)
20–24	46.80%	32.40%	47.30%	-14.4 pp (-44.44%)	14.9 pp (31.50%)	0.5 pp (1.06%)
25–29	76.20%	68.90%	81.40%	-7.3 pp (-10.60%)	12.5 pp (15.36%)	5.2 pp (6.39%)
30–34	83.10%	77.80%	86.70%	-5.3 pp (-6.81%)	8.9 pp (10.27%)	3.7 pp (4.26%)
Towns and suburbs						
Overall	65.10%	58.00%	65.80%	-7.1 pp (-12.24%)	7.8 pp (11.85%)	0.7 pp (1.06%)
15–19	11.00%	7.00%	8.80%	-4.0 pp (-57.14%)	1.8 pp (20.45%)	-2.2 pp (-25.00%)
20–24	56.50%	39.60%	51.70%	-16.9 pp (-42.67%)	12.8 pp (24.76%)	-4.8 pp (-9.28%)
25–29	77.50%	66.30%	82.70%	-11.2 pp (-16.89%)	16.4 pp (19.83%)	5.2 pp (6.29%)
30–34	81.80%	76.90%	89.90%	-4.9 pp (-6.37%)	13.0 pp (14.46%)	8.1 pp (9.01%)
Rural areas						
Overall	62.80%	55.50%	59.80%	-7.3 pp (-13.27%)	4.3 pp (7.19%)	-3.0 pp (-5.01%)
15–19	9.40%	6.60%	9.60%	-2.8 pp (-40.58%)	3.0 pp (31.25%)	0.2 pp (2.08%)
20–24	49.90%	42.40%	46.70%	-7.5 pp (-17.69%)	4.3 pp (9.20%)	-3.2 pp (-6.85%)
25–29	79.50%	68.60%	77.70%	-11.2 pp (-16.89%)	16.4 pp (19.83%)	5.2 pp (6.29%)
30–34	79.80%	75.40%	84.20%	-4.4 pp (-5.84%)	8.8 pp (10.45%)	5.4 pp (6.41%)

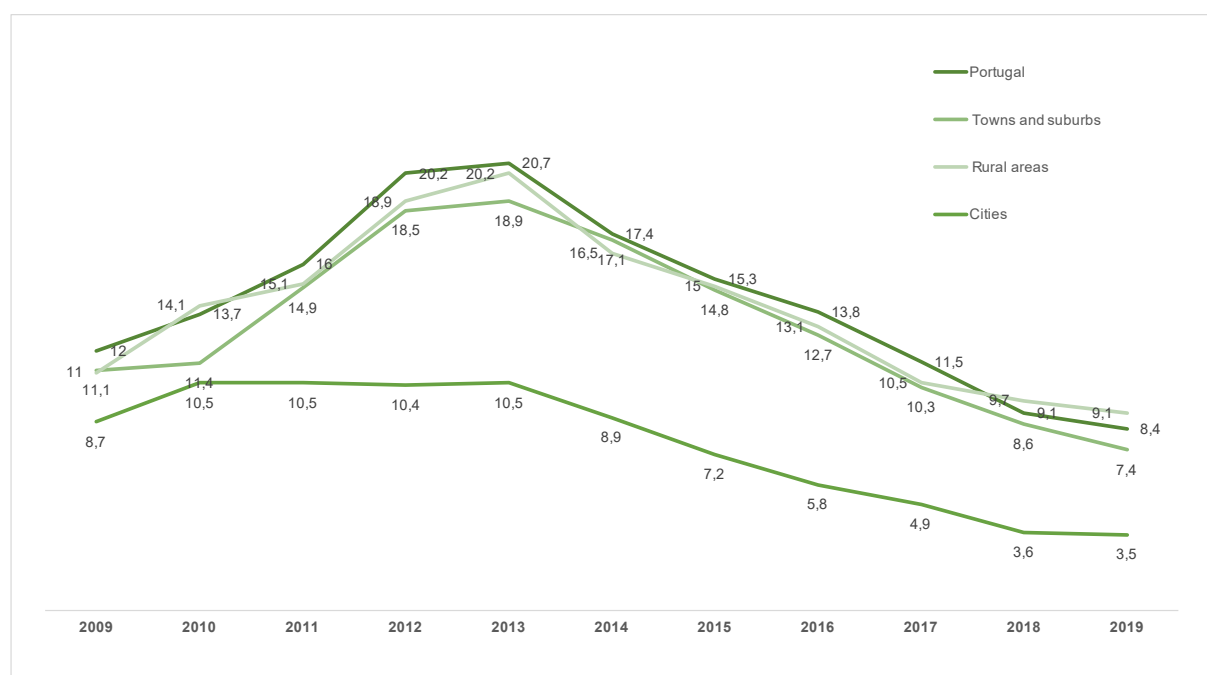
Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020

In the past decade youth employment was marked by two distinct periods, one from 2009 to 2013 – with lower rates of youth employment, and another one from 2013 to 2019 – with the progressive increase in employment rates, but with a slower growth in rural areas.

3. 2. 2. Youth unemployment

According to Chart 2, across the country, unemployment among those aged 15 to 39 years old decreased from 12.00%, in 2009, to 8.40% in 2019, reaching its peak in 2013 (20.70%). In cities, the same trend is evident, with unemployment in this age range decreasing from 13.10% in 2009 and to 8.90% in 2019. In Portuguese towns and suburbs, unemployment came down from 11.00%, in 2009, to 7.40% in 2019, reaching its highest rate in 2013 (18.90%). In rural areas, the tendency is the same, with an unemployment decrease, from 11.00% in 2009, to 9.10, in 2019, but with a remarkable peak, in 2013 (20.20%).

Chart 2. Unemployment age group 15–39 years old (%) in Portugal (2009–2019) by degree of urbanization



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020



Table 3 breaks down youth unemployment rates in Portugal, between 2009 and 2019, for different age subgroups. For those aged 15–19 years old, the data for rural areas is missing for several years.

Youth unemployment trends by age groups in Portugal and across the different degrees of urbanisation levels of the country it can likewise vary. For the country overall, between 2009 and 2019, the unemployment rates have shown an absolute as well as a relative decrease in the 20–24 (– 2.4 pp; – 14.63%), 25–29 (– 3.8 pp; – 45.78%) and 30–34 (– 4.2 pp; 71.10%) years old classes, with only a slight increase in the 15–19 years old class.

In Portuguese cities, between 2009 and 2019, there is a negative absolute and relative variation in youth unemployment across the age classes 20–24 (– 4.7 pp; – 27.01%) 25–29 (– 4.7 pp – 55.95%) and 30–34 (–3.8 pp; – 58.46%). By contrast, the youth unemployment share among youths aged 15–19 years old has increased (5.6 pp; 16.23%).

In towns and suburbs, between 2009 and 2019, there is also a remarkable negative absolute and relative variation of youth unemployment across 15–19 (– 1.9 pp; – 6.85%), 20–24 (–1.0 pp; – 55.60%), 25–29 (–5.1 pp; – 72.86%) and 30–34 years old (– 5.9 pp; 137.20%).

Finally, in rural areas, for the same period, youth unemployment has fallen among those aged 20–24 (– 3.2 pp; –19.63%), 25–29 (– 0.1 pp; – 1.00%) and 30–34 (–1.1 pp; – 15.49%). Still, the magnitude of this reduction across age levels is minor, compared to the same reduction of youth unemployment across age sub-groups in cities and towns and suburbs.

It is also important to note that the generalised absolute and relative decrease of youth unemployment by age subgroups was preceded by a widespread increment between 2009 and 2013.

Table 3. Youth unemployment (%) and absolute and relative change in Portugal (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
15 – 19	27.50%	53.20%	28.20%	25.7 pp (48.30%)	-25.0 pp (-88.65%)	0.7 pp (2.40%)
20 – 24	18.80%	34.90%	16.40%	16.1 pp (46.13%)	-18.5 pp (-112.80%)	-2.4 pp (-14.63%)
25 – 29	12.10%	21.90%	8.30%	9.8 pp (44.75%)	-13.6 pp (-163.86%)	-3.8 pp (-45.78%)
30 – 34	10.10%	16.70%	5.90%	6.7 pp (40.12%)	-10.8 pp (- 183.05%)	-4.2 pp (-71.10%)
Cities						
15–19	28.90%	57.30%	34.50%	28.4 pp (49.56%)	-22.8 pp (66.01%)	5.6 pp (16.23%)
20–24	22.10%	41.50%	17.40%	19.4 pp (46.75%)	-24.1 pp (138.51%)	-4.7 pp (- 27.01%)
25–29	13.10%	22.00%	8.40%	8.9 pp (40.45%)	-13.6 pp (161.90%)	-4.7 pp (- 55.95%)
30–34	10.30%	16.60%	6.50%	6.3 pp (37.95%)	-10.1 pp (155.38%)	-3.8 pp (- 58.46%)
Towns and suburbs						
15–19	29.60%	52.90%	27.70%	23.3 pp (44.05%)	-25.2 pp (90.98%)	-1.9 pp (-6.85%)
20–24	14.40%	31.30%	15.40%	16.9 pp (53.99%)	-15.9 v (103.24%)	-1.0 pp (-55.60%)
25–29	12.10%	22.00%	7.00%	9.9 pp (45.00%)	-15.0 pp (2.14%)	-5.1 pp (-72.86%)
30–34	10.20%	16.00%	4.30%	5.8 pp (36.25%)	-11.7 pp (2.72%)	-5.9 pp (137.20%)
Rural areas						
15–19	---	48.20%	---	---	---	---
20–24	19.50%	28.20%	16.30%	8.7 pp (30.85%)	-11.9 pp (73.01%)	-3.2 pp (-19.63%)
25–29	10.00%	21.60%	10.10%	11.6 pp (53.70%)	-11.5 pp (113.86%)	-0.1 pp (-1.00%)
30–34	9.50%	17.90%	7.10%	8.4 pp (46.92%)	-10.8 pp (152.11%)	-1.1 pp (- 15.49%)

Source: Eurostat (fst_r_urgau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020

Portugal has seen higher levels of youth unemployment in the period between 2009 and 2013, when it reached its pick, starting to decline gradually since then. Although the higher youth unemployment rates were registered in cities (reaching 22.30% in 2013, 2.1 pp higher than in rural areas), rural areas have struggle more to recover from the impact of the economic and financial crisis. In 2019, youth unemployment rate in rural areas (9.10%) was close to the values reached in 2009 (11.00%). In cities, as well as in towns and suburbs the decline was more pronounced.



3. 3. Education

3. 3. 1. Young people by educational attainment level

Table 4 describes the population in Portugal, aged 15 to 24 years old, by ISCED levels, between 2009 and 2019, for the country and by degree of urbanization. The same table also summarizes the absolute and relative change across the different ISCED levels, for three time periods: 2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019.

At the country level, it is evident a negative absolute and relative variation on those aged 15 to 24 years that only reached ISCED–2 (upper middle school), for the whole period under analysis (–17.8 pp; –38.36%), with relatively similar reductions in intermediate periods between 2009–2013 and 2013–2019. This reduction is paralleled by an increment of those in this age group reaching ISCED 3–4 – secondary and post-secondary education (12.2 pp; 28.63%) as well as ISCED 5–8 – tertiary education (6.6 pp; 60.00%).

Table 4. Population aged 15–24, by ISCED levels (%) and degree of urbanization in Portugal, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
ISCED 0–2	64.20%	55.00%	46.40%	–9.2 pp (–16.72%)	–8.6 pp (–18.53%)	–17.8 pp (–38.36%)
ISCED 3–4	30.40%	36.20%	42.60%	5.8 pp (16.02%)	6.4 pp (15.02%)	12.2 pp (28.63%)
ISCED 5–8	5.40%	8.80%	11.00%	3.8 pp (43.18%)	2.2 pp (20.00%)	6.6 pp (60.00%)
Cities						
ISCED 0–2	62.80%	54.00%	45.70%	–8.8 pp (–16.30%)	–8.3 pp (–18.16%)	–17.1 pp (37.42%)
ISCED 3–4	31.00%	36.20%	42.90%	5.2 pp (14.36%)	6.7 pp (15.62%)	11.9 pp (27.74%)
ISCED 5–8	6.20%	9.70%	11.40%	3.5 pp (36.08%)	1.7 pp (17.52%)	5.2 pp (45.61%)
Towns and suburbs						
ISCED 0–2	65.50%	55.40%	46.40%	–10.1 pp (–18.23%)	–9.0 pp (–19.40%)	–19.1 pp (–41.16%)
ISCED 3–4	29.20%	36.20%	42.30%	7.0 pp (19.34%)	6.1 pp (14.42%)	13.1 pp (30.97%)
ISCED 5–8	5.30%	8.40%	11.30%	3.1 pp (36.90%)	2.9 pp (25.66%)	6.0 pp (53.10%)
Rural areas						
ISCED 0–2	64.80%	56.00%	47.60%	–8.8 pp (– 5.71%)	–48.6 pp (–102.10%)	–17.2 pp (36.13%)
ISCED 3–4	31.40%	36.20%	42.70%	4.8 pp (13.26%)	6.5 pp (15.22%)	11.3 pp (26.46%)
ISCED 5–8	3.80%	7.80%	9.70%	4.0 pp (51.28%)	1.9 pp (19.59%)	5.9 pp (60.82%)

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfs_9913) – data extracted in 29.04.2020

In Portuguese cities, the evolution is similar with an absolute and relative decrease between 2009 and 2019 of those aged 15–24 years old reaching, only, ISCED 2 (– 17.1 pp; 37.42%) followed by an increase of those falling in the ISCED 3–4 (11.9 pp; 27.74%) and ISCED 5–8 (5.2 pp; 45.61%) levels. Alongside, in Portuguese towns and suburbs, the same trend is evident across ISCED 2 (–19.1 pp; –41.16%), ISCED 3–4 (13.1 pp; 30.97%) and ISCED 5–8 (6.0 pp; 53.10%). Rural areas follow an identical trajectory for ISCED 2 (– 17.2 pp; 36.13%) ISCED 3–4 (11.3 pp; 26.46%) and ISCED 5–8 (5.9 pp; 60.82%).

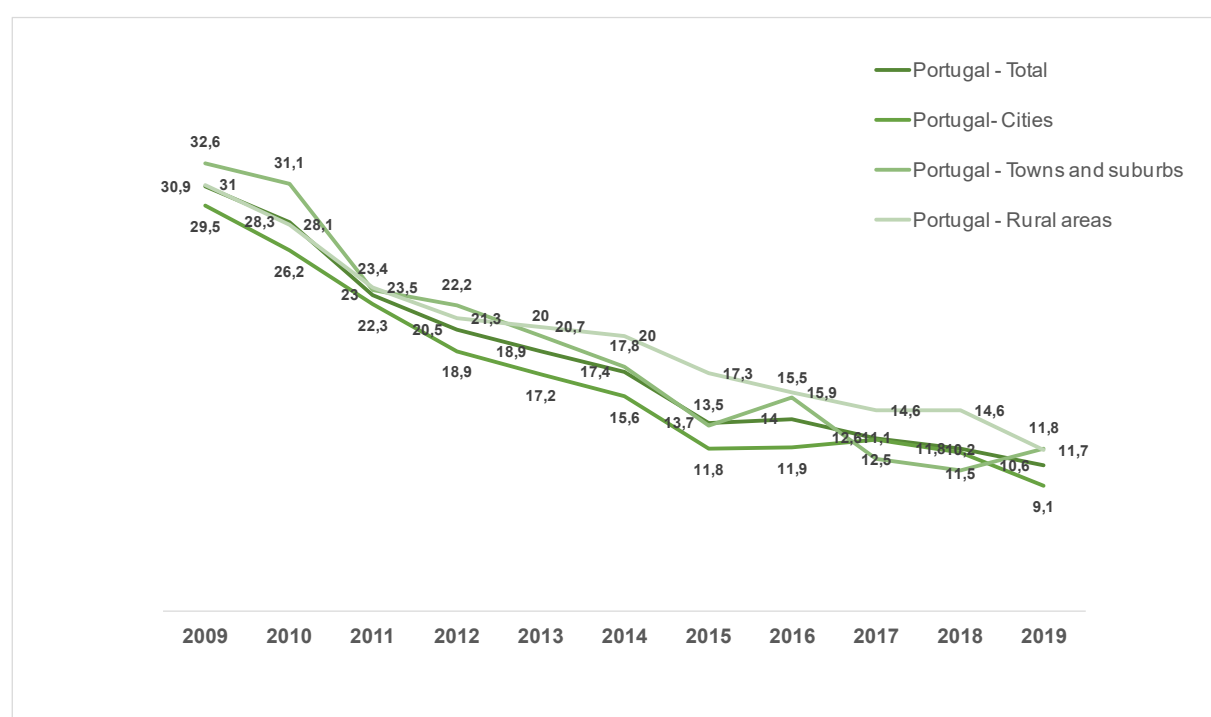
In the past decade, there has been a decrease of the population in Portugal with lower levels of education and an increase of the proportion of those with higher educational attainment. The proportion of population with tertiary education (ISCED 5–8) increased 60% in the last decade (2009–5.40%; 2019–11.00%). This trend cuts across cities, towns and suburbs, and rural areas.

3.3.2. Early school leavers

Chart 3 displays the evolution of Early School Leavers from Education and Training (ESLET) from 2009 to 2019, in Portugal and across the different degrees of urbanisation levels.

At the country level, the ESLET rate has come down from 30.90% to 10.60%, with similar variations in terms of direction and strength in cities (from 29.50% to 9.10%), towns and suburbs (from 32.60% to 11.70%) and in rural areas (from 31.00% to 11.80%).

Chart 3. ESLET rate (%) 2009–2019 (Portugal) by degree of urbanization



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_30) – data extracted in 20.04.2020

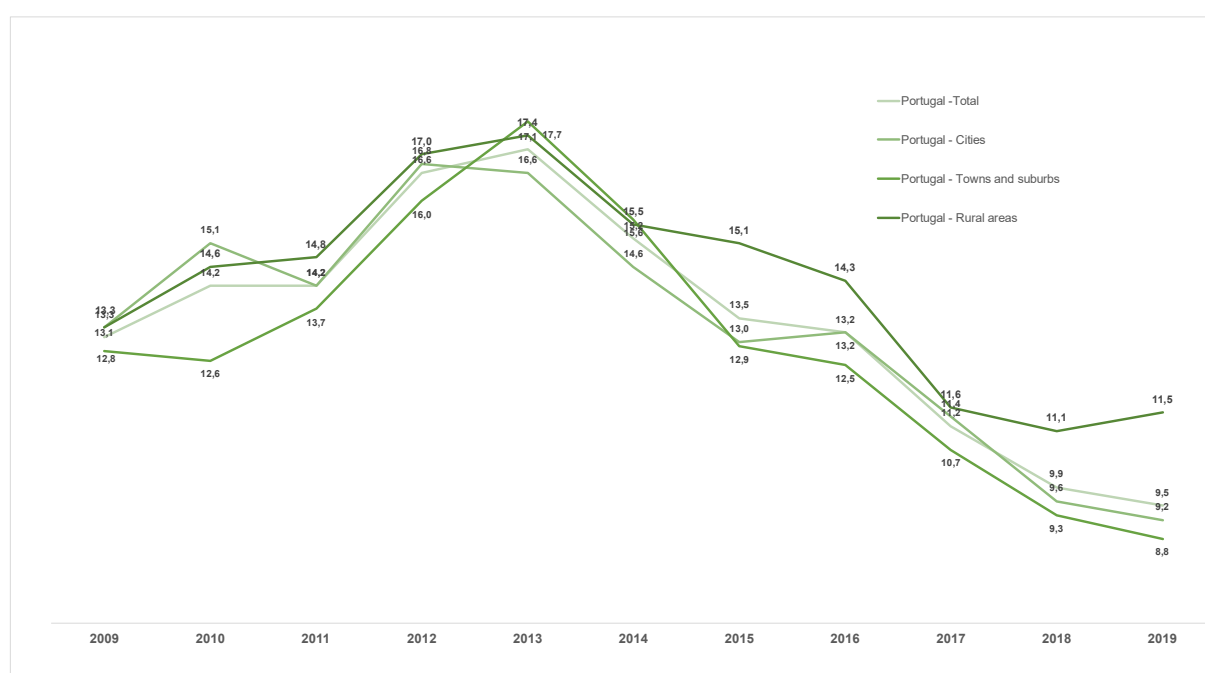
There has been progressive and significant decrease of ESLET in Portugal, for the past 10 years. In rural areas, in 2019, ESLET was still 11.80%, even though it registered a decrease of 61.90% between 2009–2019. Still, with exception of cities, ESLET rates are above the EU 2020 ESLET benchmark.

3. 4. NEETs

3. 4. 1. NEET rate

Chart 4 displays the overall evolution of NEETs proportion, aged 15 to 29 years old, across the country and all degree of urbanization levels, between 2009 and 2019. According to the chart, the NEET rate in Portugal has come down from 13.10%, in 2009, to 9.50%, in 2019. In cities, this a similar variation occurred, with the NEET share coming down from 13.30%, in 2009, to 9.20%, in 2019. Alongside, in towns and suburbs, this figure has dropped down from 12.80% to 8.80%. Finally, in rural areas, the NEETs share has fallen from 13.30% to 11.50%.

Chart 4. NEETs rate, aged 15–29 (%) 2009–2019 (Portugal) by degree of urbanization



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted in 29.04.2020



Table 5 displays the evolution of NEETs by age subgroups for the country as well as for each degree of urbanisation level. In 2019, the NEET rate in Portugal ranged between 3.40%, for those aged 15–19 years old, and 12.70%, for those aged 20–24 years old. For the same year, rural areas displayed higher NEET rates, compared to cities and towns and suburbs. This was true for those aged 20–24 (14.40% in rural areas, compared to 12.10% in cities, and 12.30% in towns and suburbs), 25–29 (15.60% in rural areas, compared to 11.20% in cities, and 9.70% in towns and suburbs), and 30–34 years old (13.30% in rural areas, compared to 10.30% in cities, and 9.20% in towns and suburbs).

The table also includes the absolute and relative variation between 2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019. At the country level, NEETs rate has decreased from 2009 to 2019, across all age subgroups. This overall trend is evident after an incremental period, between 2009 and 2013, followed by a generalised decrease from 2013–2019. The same trend is evident across cities, towns and suburbs, and rural areas. This pattern of absolute and relative variation is fairly similar across the different levels of urbanisation, for the different age classes, with the exception of those aged 20–24 years old. In this case, the NEETs absolute decrease between 2009 and 2019 is lower in towns and suburbs (– 0.1 pp; – .08%) compared to the same indicator in cities (– 5.5 pp; – 45.45%) and rural areas (– 1.4 pp; – 9.72%). A further exception is that in the 25–29 age class, between 2009 and 2019, NEETs presented a positive absolute and relative variation (2.30%; 33.97%), conversely to what is evident in cities (– 3.7 pp; – 33.04%) as well as in towns and suburbs (– 5.3 pp; – 54.63%).

Table 5. NEET rate (%) by age subgroups and by degree of urbanization in Portugal, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2009 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
15–19	6.80%	7.30%	3.40%	0,5 pp (6.66%)	– 3.9 pp (–114.71%)	– 3.2 pp (– 94.12%)
20–24	15.50%	20.60%	12.70%	4.9 pp (23.78%)	– 7.9 pp (–62.20%)	– 2.8 pp (– 22.04%)
25–29	14.60%	20.80%	11.50%	6.2 pp (29.81%)	– 9.3 pp (– 80.85%)	– 4.1 pp (– 35.65%)
30–34	14.60%	18.90%	10.60%	4.3 pp (22.75%)	– 8.3 pp (– 78.30%)	– 4.0 pp (– 37.74%)
Cities						
15–19	6.70%	6.30%	3.00%	–0,1 pp (1.59%)	– 3.3 pp (– 110.00%)	– 3.7 pp (– 123.33%)
20–24	17.60%	21.50%	12.10%	2.9 pp (13.49%)	– 9.4 pp (– 77.68%)	– 5.5 pp (– 45.45%)
25–29	14.90%	19.20%	11.20%	4.3 pp (22.40%)	– 8.0 pp (– 71.43%)	– 3.7 pp (– 33.04%)
30–34	13.30%	17.90%	10.30%	4.6 pp (25.70%)	– 7.6 pp (– 73.79%)	– 3.0 pp (– 29.12%)
Towns and suburbs						
15–19	7.60%	8.50%	3.90%	0,9 pp (10.59%)	–3.0 pp (– 76.92%)	– 3.7 pp (– 94.87%)
20–24	12.40%	20.10%	12.30%	7.70 pp (38.31%)	– 7.2 pp (– 58.54%)	– 0,1 pp (– .08%)
25–29	15.00%	22.70%	9.70%	7.7 pp (33.92%)	– 13.0 pp (– 134.02%)	– 5.3 pp (– 54.63%)
30–34	15.00%	19.00%	9.20%	4.0 pp (21.05%)	– 9.8 pp (– 106.52%)	– 5.8 pp (– 63.04%)
Rural areas						
15–19	5.70%	7.40%	---	1.7 pp (22.30%)	---	---
20–24	15.80%	19.60%	14.40%	3.8 pp (10.33%)	– 5.2 pp (– 36.11%)	– 1.4 pp (– 9.72%)
25–29	13.30%	21.70%	15.60%	7.7 pp (35.48%)	– 13.0 pp (– 85.26%)	2.3 pp (33.97%)
30–34	17.00%	20.50%	13.30%	3.5 pp (17.07%)	– 7.2 pp (– 54.14%)	– 3.7 pp (– 27.82%)

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted in 29.04.2020

Between 2009 and 2013, during the economic crisis, Portugal presented higher NEET rates compared to the period between 2014 and 2019 marked by an economic recovery. Although there has also been a gradual decline in NEET rates in rural areas, in 2019, compared to cities and towns and suburbs, the proportion of NEETs is 2 p.p. higher (cities – 9.20%; towns and suburbs – 8,8% and rural – 11.50%).



4. CONCLUSIONS

Youth population. Youth population in Portugal has been declining for the past decade. This is due to a negative natural growth, resulting in the decreasing of the youth population and the increase of the elderly population. This socio-demographic challenge is even greater, given that during the economic crisis period (2009–2013) Portugal faced a migratory exodus, and which was especially pronounced among young people. With Portugal's economic recovery in recent years, and the consequent reduction of unemployment rates, the migration balance turned positive and helped to mitigate the decline of the resident population. However, among the young population, the downward trend continued until 2019. Rural areas are an exception, as in the last decade the young population aged 15 to 24 has increased, with rates peaking during the economic crisis period.

Youth unemployment. Unemployment among the youngest share of the population has decreased across Portugal and among different degrees of urbanisation levels, from 2009 to 2019, and during two different periods. Specifically, an increase during the economic crisis years, followed by a decrease after 2013. This reduction is more evident in cities, towns and suburbs than in rural areas where the unemployment rate among those aged 15 to 39 years old remains higher as of 2019. Also, the impact of the economic crisis was harder in rural areas, translating into higher unemployment rates among youth workforce. Unemployment rates in Portugal were higher in 2009, and remained higher in 2019, notably among those aged 15–19 and 20–24, irrespective of the level of urbanisation. In Portuguese rural areas, unemployment is more problematic among those aged 25 or more, when compared with cities, towns and suburbs.

Educational attainment. In Portugal, between 2009 and 2019 the population aged 15 to 24 years old has become more educated. The number of those with an education equivalent to ISCED–2 has decreased, while those with an education equivalent to ISCED 3–4 and ISCED 5–8 has increased. This has happened across the country and the different education levels, and at a very similar pace. The increase of the compulsory education period to 12 years in total and the progressive reduction in school drop-out rates combined with the growth in the number of enrolled students in higher education explain this trend (Ferreira & Vieira, 2018). Still, it is important to note that the absolute and relative reduction of under-educated youths in rural areas is proportionally much larger for the period 2013–2019, when compared to cities and towns and suburbs.



ESLET. ESLET has strongly decreased in Portugal, both at the country level as well as across different degrees of urbanisation levels. In cities, in 2019 the ESLET rate was already below the expected target of 10.00% for the whole country in 2020. At the country level, as well as for towns and suburbs and in rural areas, the ESLET rate was still above the national target.

NEETs. Between 2009 and 2019, NEETs share has decreased throughout Portugal and across all degrees of urbanisation levels. However, it remains higher in rural areas when compared to cities as well as with towns and suburbs. NEET rates have decreased in the country for all age groups and across all levels of urbanisation, from 2009 to 2019. In Portugal, NEET rates are mainly composed of unemployed young people, so the fluctuation on NEET rates tends to follow the same pattern as the unemployment rate (Ferreira et al., 2017). As a consequence, NEET rates evolution between 2009 and 2019 has two distinct periods. The first is from 2009 to 2013, marked by a generalised increase of NEET rates for all age groups, across the entire country and all levels of urbanisation. This is followed by the opposite trend between 2013 and 2019. Even so, the proportion of NEETs is higher in rural areas, in all age classes with available data, compared to cities and towns and suburbs. This reveals territorial inequalities in access to employment and education opportunities, making young people in certain territories more vulnerable to becoming NEET.



REFERENCES

European Commission (2020). Youth Wiki: Portugal.

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/overview-portugal>

Eurostat (2020) Early leavers from education and training. Eurostat.

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Early_leavers_from_education_and_training#Overview

Ferreira, T. & Vieira, M. M. (2018) Emprego, empregabilidade e empreendedorismo: as políticas públicas para o emprego jovem – OPJ Policy Brief 2018. Lisboa: Instituto de Ciências Sociais da Universidade de Lisboa.

<https://www.opj.ics.ulisboa.pt/wp-content/uploads/ICS-Policy-Brief-2018-Observat.pdf>

Ferreira, T., Pappámikail, L. & Vieira, M. M. (2017). Jovens Neef: mudanças e continuidades no pós-crise – OPJ Policy Brief 2017. Lisboa: Instituto de Ciências Sociais da Universidade de Lisboa.

<https://www.opj.ics.ulisboa.pt/wp-content/uploads/ICS-Policy-Brief-2017-Observat.pdf>

Ferreira, V. S., Vieira, M. M. & Ferreira, T. (2019) A ciência, a(s) políticas e o estudo: notas introdutórias. In M. M. Vieira & V. S. Ferreira (Eds.), Juventude(s) do local ao nacional – que intervenção? (pp.19–40). Porto: Edições Afrontamento.

Ferreira, V. S., Vieira, M. M. & Pinho, F. (2017). Jovens: dinâmicas demográficas e participativas. In J. Ferrão & A. Delicado (Orgs.), Portugal Social em Mudança. Retratos Municipais. (pp.43–53). Lisboa: Instituto de Ciências Sociais da Universidade de Lisboa.



COST Action CA18213
Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural
NEETs social exclusion

6. IMPORTANT LINKS

National Plan for youth – <http://pnj.juventude.gov.pt/>

Youth Guarantee – <https://www.garantiajovem.pt/>

National Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan
<https://dre.pt/pesquisa/-/search/483892/details/maximized>

Youth wiki – Portuguese national youth policies
<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/overview-portugal>

RURAL NEETs IN ROMANIA



2009/2019
OVERVIEW

AUTHORS

Gabriela Neagu – gabi.neagu@iccv.ro
Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy – RIQL

Image by Dids from Pexels

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network: Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged.
Please cite this publication as "COST CA18213 Rural NEETs in Romania: 2009/2019 Overview.

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. CONTEXTUALIZATION	8
2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE	10
3. DATA ANALYSIS	11
3. 1. Population and youth population	11
3. 2. National strategies and programs for young people	12
3. 3. Rural areas	18
3. 4. Introductory socio-economic analysis	19
3. 5. Education	22
3. 6. Youth employment and unemployment	25
3. 7. NEETs in Romania	31
4. CONCLUSIONS	37
5. REFERENCES	38

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report describes a particular situation of young population in Romania: the population of NEETs, with a focus on rural NEETs.

Based on a complex methodology which uses data from different national sources (INS) and international sources (Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey-EU-LFS, OECD), this report gives an overview of the evolution and particularities of NEETs in Romania during the previous decade, namely 2009-2019.

Within the last ten years, the population of NEETs in Romania has grown rapidly, placing Romania in first place in the EU-28 in terms of the share of this population among the young population. Thus, in 2009 Romania with a NEET rate of 13.9%, occupied first places in the EU, along with Bulgaria (19.5%), Italy (17.5%), Latvia (17.5%) (Eurostat, 2020). A decade later, in Bulgaria and Latvia, the NEET rate decreased significantly to 13.7% and 7.9%, respectively, but in Romania and Italy it increased by more than 1pp: 14.7% in Romania and 18.1% in Italy. (Eurostat, 2020).

The causes for this are both individual (way of life, socio-familial origin, expectations and aspirations) and socio-economic (accessibility of the education system, development of lifelong learning, correspondence between education and labour market demand, particularities of the Romanian labour market, socio-economic policies supported by central and local authorities, etc.)

The detailed analysis of the data regarding the situation of NEETs in Romania reveals some aspects specific to our country:

- Significant differences in the distribution of young NEETs by degrees of urbanisation to the detriment of rural areas (9.3% in cities compared to 21.7% in villages in 2019);
- The majority of the population belonging to this category has a very low level of education;
- National statistics fail to communicate properly the entire population of NEETs due to a phenomenon specific to Eastern European countries, namely temporary migration for work;
- The existence of an important number of programs and measures of socio-economic, educational support that target this category of population but which are not inter-correlated and consequently have very limited effects and modest results.

REZUMAT

Raportul descrie o situație particulară a populației de tineri din România: populația de NEETs, cu accent pe NEETs din rural.

Bazat pe o metodologie complexă care utilizează date din diferite surse naționale (INS) și internaționale (Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey –EU-LFS,OECD) raportul evidențiază evoluția și particularitățile NEETs-ilor din România în ultimul deceniu: 2009–2019.

În ultimii zece ani populația de NEETs din România a crescut în mod accelerat situând România pe primele locuri în UE–28 în ceea ce privește ponderea acestei populații în rândul populației de tineri. Astfel, în 2009, România cu o rată NEET de 13,9% a fost pe primul loc în UE, alături de Bulgaria (19,5%), Italia (17,5%), Letonia (17,5%) (Eurostat, 2020). Un deceniu mai târziu, în Bulgaria și Letonia, rata NEET-urilor a scăzut semnificativ – 13,7%, respectiv 7,9%, dar în România și Italia a crescut cu peste 1pp: 14,7% și, respectiv, 18,1%. (Eurostat, 2020) Cauzele sunt atât de natură individuală (mod de viață, originea socio-familială, așteptări și aspirații) cât și de natură socio-economică: accesibilitatea sistemului de educație, dezvoltarea învățământului pe tot parcursul vieții, corespondența dintre educație și cererea pieței forței de muncă, particularitățile pieței muncii din România, politicile socio-economice susținute de către autoritățile centrale și locale etc.

Analiza detaliată a datelor privind situația NEETs-ilor din România relevă câteva aspecte specifice țării noastre:

- Diferențe importante în ceea ce privește distribuția tinerilor NEETs pe grade de urbanizare în defavoarea ruralului (9,3% în orașe față de 21,7% în sate în 2019);
- Majoritatea populației care aparține acestei categorii are un nivel foarte scăzut de educație;
- Statisticile naționale nu reușesc să surprindă întreaga populație de NEETs datorită și unui fenomen specific țărilor din Estul Europei: migrația temporară pentru muncă;
- Existența unui număr important de programe și măsuri de suport socio-economic, educațional care vizează această categorie de populație dar care nu sunt intercorelate și, în consecință, au un efect foarte limitat și rezultate modeste.

INTRODUCTION

This report proceeds in three sections. It begins with an introductory contextualisation with the most relevant information about the Romanian social, economic and political situation in the last decades (2009–2019) and key youth policies based on a relevant literature review. A methodological note explains the database used and the statistical operations undertaken. The most extensive section of the report refers to the analysis performed, with a specific focus on young people, by degree of urbanisation and concerning four main topics: population; employment; education; and, NEETs.

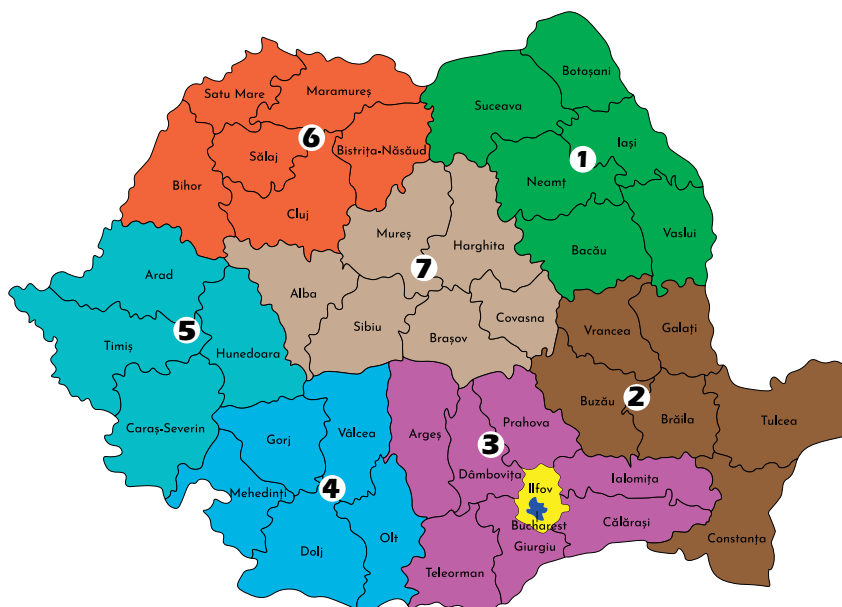
The report ends with a brief conclusion that highlights the main results regarding the topics explored.

1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

From the geographic point of view Romania (capital, Bucharest) is located in the southeast of Central Europe, both inside and outside the Carpathian Mountains, on the lower course of the Danube (1075 km) and has access to the Black Sea. The surface of the territory is 238,397 km².

Since 1989, after 45 years of a totalitarian regime, Romania is again a democratic country and since 2007 has been a member of the EU. At the end of the 1990s and in the early 2000s, the Romanian authorities adopted national legislation on regional development, taking into account EC Regulation no. 1059/2003 on the establishment of a common system of statistical classification, concerning the organisation of 8 Development Regions (Chart 1). These Regions are territorial-statistical units corresponding to the NUTS II level, according to the Eurostat classification.

Chart 1 Romanian Map – Development Regions



Legend: 1 North East Region; 2 South East Region; 3 South Muntenia Region; 4 South West Region; 5 West Region; 6 North West Region; 7 Centre Region; 8 – Bucharest–Ilfov Region



Each Development Region is organised by counties – a local territorial administrative structure – in which all public administrative institutions at the central level are represented.

In the transition from totalitarianism to democracy, national and international socio-economic crises have affected a significant part of the population and have led to the emergence of poverty, unemployment, increasing migration rates, etc. One of the most affected categories of the population is that of young people.

This national report focuses on young people, and more precisely, the NEETs population. The aims of this are: to better understand the situation of this category of populations in the national context but also in the European context; to identify together with the project partners solutions for the NEETs' problems; and, to change the dominant negative perspective of these young people into a realistic and responsible one.



2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

For this report we scrutinise a variety of statistical (secondary) data sources. These sources include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Eurostat, Labour Force Survey data analysed on a NUTS II level;
- Eurofound, ILO and OECD reports and other reports of relevance;
- National Institute of Statistics (INS) reports and other national databases.

The data we have selected cover the following criteria: age target population (15–24 years or 15–34 years); the time interval analysed (2009–2019); and degree of urbanisation (town, cities, rural areas). These criteria will be applied to all areas analysed (i.e., education, employment, unemployment, etc.) When highlighting the differences in years; and age groups, the level of urbanisation rate will be calculated in both relative and absolute rates.



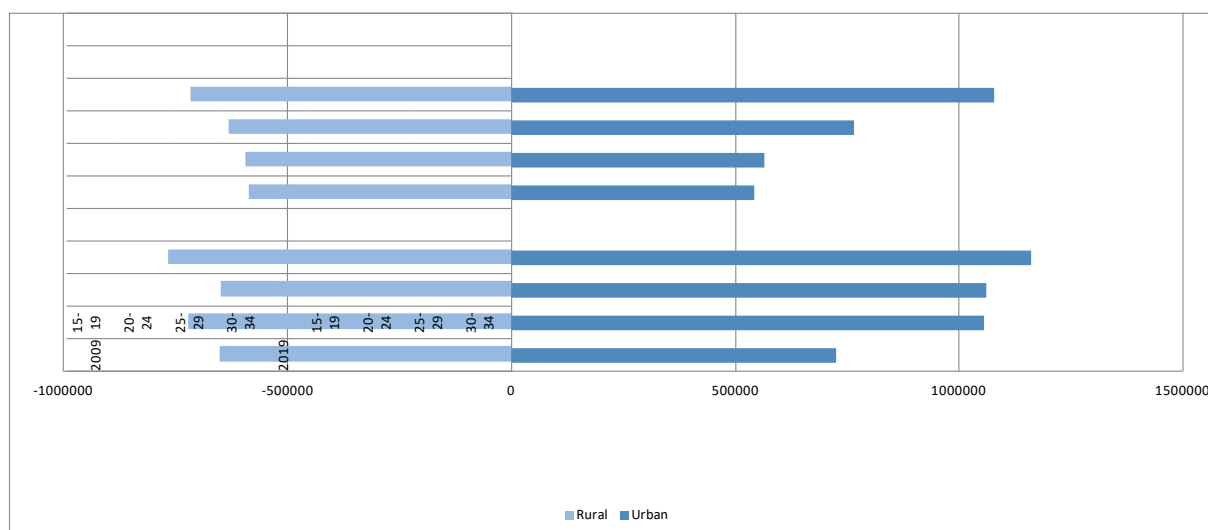
3. DATA ANALYSIS

3. 1. Population and youth population

Romania entered the democratic period in (1990) with a population of over 23 million people. However, in the last three decades its volume is significantly reduced for each age group but also by areas of residence. The data of the National Institute of Statistics (INS) shows that the total population of Romania on January 1, 2019 is 19,414,458 people (resident population) and the density of the resident population is 81.9 people/km². (INS, 2019:9). A young person is often defined as someone between the time in which he/she is likely to leave the compulsory education system and the time when they find their first job. This period has gradually increased, on the one hand because compulsory schooling has been extended and young people tend to stay longer in school and on the other hand, the labour market is constantly changing and is not very generous with its supply of jobs, especially for the young population.

In this context, the EU includes people between the ages of 15 and 34. Romania has adopted the same range as the EU so that the young population is considered to be between 15–34 years old. INS data shows that on January 1, 2019 the population aged 15–34 was 306,823 people. (INS, 2020). In this study, however, we will focus on the 15–24 or 15–29 age range: 15 is the age at which most young people in the EU complete compulsory education and are in a position to choose either to stay in the system or leave it. At the age of 24, most young people complete the highest level of education – if they have chosen to remain in the education system – and they have a job, family, etc. We also took into account the literature in the field according to which (Maguire and Thompson, 2007) the inclusion of only young people aged 16–24 is much too restrictive given that the problems faced by this category are also encountered after the age of 25 and these young people are excluded from public policy measures. Many young people in the elderly cohort – over the age of 24 – who have left the education system prematurely, are no longer in school, or in vocational training systems, but neither in the labour market. Even so, they are often not included in the NEETs category. However, these young people face the same challenges they had to face between the ages of 18–24. For these reasons, for some aspects of the analysis we will also refer to the age group 30–34 years.

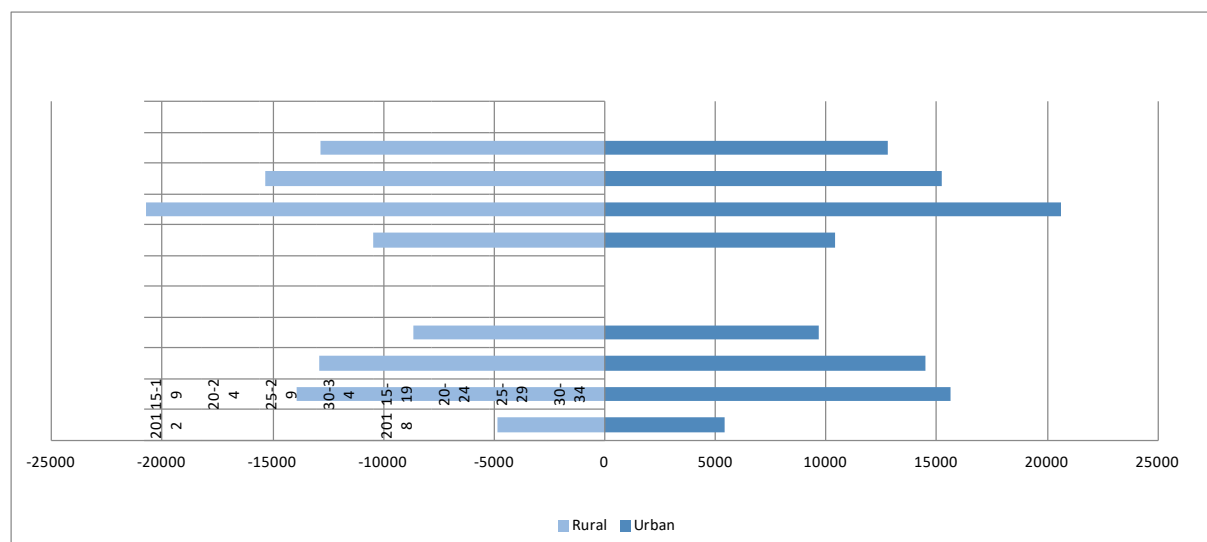
Chart 2 The evolution of the Romanian population (15–34 years) in the period 2009–2019 (number of people)



Source: INS, <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online/#/pages/tables/insse-table>, – data extracted in 25.05.20

The structure by age and residence of the Romanian population (Chart 2) reflects trends of demographic aging – namely, the reduction in absolute numbers of the population aged 15–34 – but also imbalances between the two areas of residence: the elderly population between 15–34 years is lower in rural areas in comparison with urban areas. The negative values of the natural increase are one of the causes for this, but it is equally important to increase the rate of permanent and temporary emigration specific to these age categories. Romania joined the EU in (2007) and this resulted in increased rates of emigration, especially with regards to the young and working age. In recent years, there has been an emergent phenomenon: “European commuting”. Increasing numbers of young Romanians choose to emigrate temporarily to Western European countries to obtain a job. This type of emigration proves to be very difficult to capture in national statistics and makes it difficult to identify the exact composition of NEETs in Romania.

Chart 3 Temporary emigrants by age and areas residences (number of people)



Source: INS, <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online/#/pages/tables/insse-table>, – data extracted in 25.05

INS data (Chart 3) highlights at least two important features: on the one hand, the number of young people who choose to emigrate temporarily increased for all age groups during the period 2012–2019; on the other hand, the young migrants from rural areas numerically exceeded those from an urban environment. It should be noted that the young people who emigrate in greater numbers are those in the age category 20–24 years old, whether they are from rural or urban areas. For young people in rural areas, this is the only option to have a job and earn money for themselves and their families. Young people working temporarily abroad are statistically integrated into the NEETs category, but do not belong to any of the sub-categories as defined by Eurofound (Eurofound, 2012; Eurofound 2016).

This distinct category of young people highlights another aspect related to NEETS: their respective analysis only from a static and not a dynamic perspective (Zanadrelui, 2015:11). Although statistics of different institutions are available, in practical terms these young people do not exist as such – especially those who emigrate for work and are therefore very dynamic and mobile.

Table 1. Ratio of youth population by age subgroups and absolute and relative change (%) in Romania (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (relative change 2009–2019)
Overall						
15–19	5.6%	5.5%	5.3%	–0.1pp (–1.8%)	–0.2pp (–3.77%)	–0.3pp (–5.6%)
20–24	6.8%	6.4%	5.2%	–0.4pp (–6.2%)	–1.2pp (–23%)	–1.6 pp (–30.7%)
25–29	6.5%	6.7%	5.8%	0.2 (pp (3.0%))	–0.9 (pp (–15.5%))	–0.7pp (–12%)

Source: Eurostat, 2020, [yth_demo_020], data extracted 29.09.20

The data (Eurostat, 2020) shows that young population of Romania decreased from 19% to 16.4% between 2009 and 2019.

For a country that “exports” young labour, one of the most important effects is to stimulate economic inactivity among both emigrants and among those who remain in the country and receive money from abroad. Older people – especially women in rural areas – living in households with close relatives who have emigrated (temporarily or permanently) choose not to look for a job, not to accept a lower-paying job, or even not to work. Therefore, the money sent to the country by emigrants supports the families remaining in the country and leads to an increase in the consumption of the population but also to an increase in the reserve wage (the lowest wage accepted for a work activity) and consequently to an increased rate of NEETs.



3. 2. National strategies and programs for young people

Young people have always been in the attention of the Romanian authorities from different perspectives and with different intensity. Among the institutions that target young people are: The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MMPS); the Ministry of National Education (MEN); the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MTS); and the National Agency for Employment (ANOFM). One year before Romania's accession to the EU (2006), the main legislative document was adopted, and this forms the basis for the development of policies concerning young people in Romania. It is known as Law no. 350 of 21/07/2006 the Youth Law. Currently, the legislative framework on which public institutions operate also includes Law no. 76/2002, updated by Law no. 250/2013, and Law no. 233/2010. These provide for measures to implement strategies and policies developed to protect people at risk of unemployment, ensuring a high level of employment and adaptation of labour to the requirements of the labour market. ANOFM develops free services financed from the unemployment insurance budget, in the field of information and professional counselling, labour mediation and professional training. These form the methodological norms for the application of Law no. 116/2002 on preventing and combating social marginalisation, approved by H.G. No.1149 / 2002.

In relation to public institutions and programs, the most important interventions in favour of young people can be classified as follows:

Table 2 Youth Policies and Strategies

Field	Date	Policy name
Education	2002	Milk and bread – providing a hot meal for students in compulsory education
	2004	High school money – financing the transport of students from rural areas to urban areas to continue their schooling in secondary level (ISCED 3–4)
	2005	A second chance – courses for young people who have left school early but who want to complete their level of schooling
	2012	Professional scholarship – scholarships for students who choose vocational education
Occupation	2013	National Youth Employment Plan
	2015	Subsidised jobs – payment of subsidies to employers who employ young people
Social protection	2004	Social housing – provided social housing especially for young people leaving the social protection system

Source: Author

These youth programs (Table 2) are coordinated by the central authorities. Local representatives are only meant to put them into practice and in some cases to contribute financially to their development. The programs developed in Romania in favour of young people cover the most pertinent domains – education, social protection, employment – but the big problem is that of their institutional non-correlation. The lack of integrated action reduces the positive effects of these measures and therefore they do not significantly contribute to supporting young people.

The most important program for young people, however, remains The Youth Guarantee. This is a program funded by the Romanian Government, it is another program that targets young people under 25 years of age. The main objective of the “Youth Guarantee” is to re-



duce unemployment among young people aged between 16 and 24, by facilitating quality jobs. Specifically, this program aims to ensure that young people under the age of 25, who lose their jobs or do not find one after graduation, receive a good quality offer, either for employment, for further education or entry into an apprenticeship, or internship. The offer will be received within 4 months of registration with the employment agencies. All measures under the “Youth Guarantee” scheme are supported by various forms of financial support, provided to either future employees or employers. Overall, as evidenced by the EC Assessment on the Implementation of the Youth Guarantee (May 2018), in Romania progress has been affected by significant delays, which has led to the situation where most young NEETs have not yet been identified and registered. Of those registered, two-thirds did not receive a job, education or training offer in the first four months, and most young people are never contacted after receiving a job offer to have their situation analysed.



3. 3. Rural areas

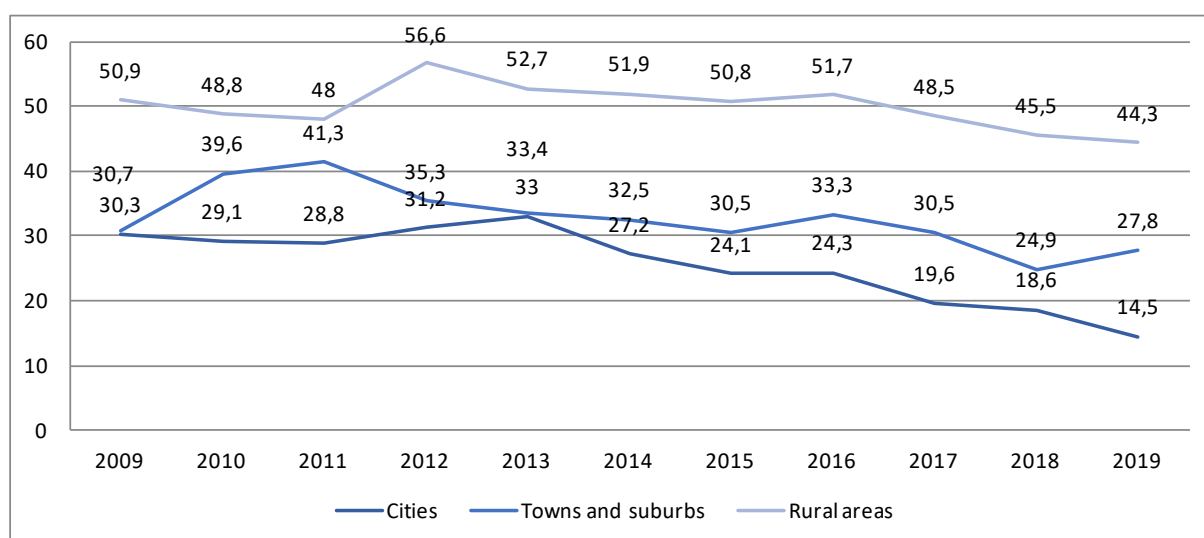
The concept of a 'rural area' is a generic one that covers distinct realities from one country to another. For Romania, the rural area has a special importance given, first of all, by its size measured both by the share in the total area of the country – 97.3% – and by the share of the rural population in Romania, this includes almost half of the population (46.7% – 2018). The rural population has grown significantly in recent decades, yet it faces poverty because the practice of subsistence or semi-subsistence agriculture (Croitoru & Mihalache, 2011) which has become a defining feature of the Romanian rural areas. Croitoru & Mihalache (2011:56) even speak of a (re)ruralisation of Romania in the "sense that the rural environment and agriculture played the role of last refuge for the segments of the population affected by the economic restructuring" stage that extended until the beginning of the 2000s.

Young people who remain in rural areas have very simple plans for the future: men work in agriculture – most often seasonal activities – and girls plan to get married. Very soon both young men and young women in rural areas come to the attention of social protection authorities: young families who do not have the resources to support themselves and raise their children, underage mothers at risk of child abandonment, young people at risk of entry in dangerous environments (human trafficking, alcohol consumption, drugs, delinquency, etc.) The factors that led to this situation are complex but mostly related to the low level of socio-economic development of the countryside, limited human and social capital of the population, but also a certain type of collective mentality.

3. 4. Introductory socio-economic analysis

The economic crisis of 2007–2008 has led to an increase in rising unemployment, the share of NEETs in the population, an increase in the rate of early school leaving by young people, an increase in emigration and, consequently, a decrease in the level of socio-economic development. The long transition process and the socio-economic crisis of 2007–2008 affected young people and the rural population most noticeably.

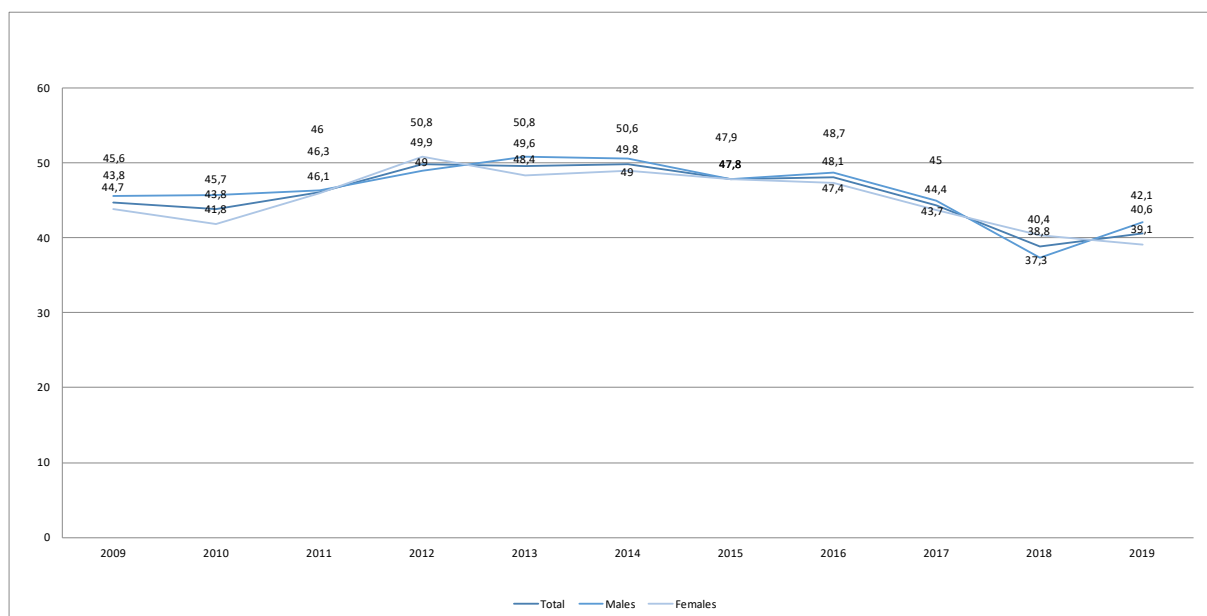
Chart 4 People at risk of poverty or social exclusion by degree of urbanisation, 15–29 years (%)



Source: Eurostat [ilc_peps13] – data extracted in 30.05

Romania's Youth Strategy 2014–2020 shows that, regardless of the method by which we choose to measure the level of poverty in Romanian society, young people are the poorest age group. (Youth Strategy 2014–2020, 2014:14). The data (Chart 4) shows that in the last decade the risk of poverty for the young population (15–29 years old) has not changed significantly regardless of their environment of residence. The analysis of the relationship between the risk of poverty and the degree of urbanisation highlights the fact that young people in rural areas have a much higher risk compared to young people in urban areas.

Chart 5 People at risk of poverty or social exclusion by age and sex (15–24 years)



Source: Eurostat, [ilc_peps01], data extracted

Regardless of the gender, young women are much more at risk of poverty compared to young men (Charts 5).

Poverty is related both to the level of education and occupation, but also to belonging to a certain socio-familial and cultural environment. In relation to the concept of 'rural', another has emerged – rurality – which is most often used in connection with the phenomena and events that take place in this environment and which allow the construction of an identity thereof. Thus, rurality refers not only to the fact that a part of the population lives in this environment, but also to the perceptions that people have about themselves, about other people they live with in the same environment, but also about their traditions, activities, opportunities. Swartz et al. (2012) argue that communities have a key role to play either in increasing opportunities and opportunities or in limiting young people's access to them. The difficulty of "taking" a young person out of the disadvantaged environment in which he lives becomes very complicated as a result of factors that are beyond administrative, educational, etc. It is also a problem of mentality at the community level: it seems natural



for young people wish to continue a “model” seen in the community, in the family of origin, etc. Perpetuating poverty can become one of the strategies adopted by young people in disadvantaged backgrounds – including rural areas – over time, even if they sometimes do so involuntarily. Young people who do not have access to places where they can find information about employment, or to people (family members, relatives, friends, acquaintances) who may have this information, are at greater risk of exclusion.

However, when we were dealing with the rural environment (especially with a rural environment marked by extreme drought as is the case in Romania), social networks also have a number of disadvantages. Thus, in a community where the normal thing is lack of employment, leaving school, social assistance status and social networks can act in a negative way. Specifically young people will copy the behaviour and attitudes of others, or will be discouraged in their efforts to leave their specific risk category. In a disadvantaged rural environment, young people can (intentionally or unintentionally) limit their educational, occupational, social, cultural, aspirations etc.



3. 5. Education

In Romania, education is free at all levels and access to all levels is guaranteed by law, for all categories of the population. The beginning of schooling takes place at the age of 6 and compulsory education lasts for 9 years: 8 years at ISCED 0–2 level and 1 year at ISCED level 3. Education in Romania practices early selection, based on national tests with very high stakes since, depending on the results obtained, students are assigned either to the academic route (theoretical secondary education, with much easier access to higher education) or to the vocational route (vocational or professional school) that sends most graduates to the labour market. In order to have access to higher education, graduates of vocational schools must complete their education with another year or 2 of school at upper secondary level and take the bacalaureate exam.



Table 3 Population by educational attainment level, age and degree of urbanisation 15–24 years (%)

		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Cities	ISCED 0–2	37.5%	38.4%	37.7%	36.8%	36.8%	37.7%	40.1%	41.1%	40.7%	40.5%	35.7%
Towns and suburbs		44.2%	48.1%	39.7%	50.3%	50.9%	51%	53.2%	52.7%	52%	50.7%	47.1%
Rural area		56.2%	58.4%	57.8%	61.9%	61.7%	60.6%	59.1%	58.9%	59.1%	57.4%	52.6%
Cities	ISCED 3–4	56.9%	54.6%	54.3%	54.5%	53%	51.9%	53.2%	53.1%	52.7%	53.6%	58.2%
Towns and suburbs		52.2%	43.7%	48%	44.5%	44.8%	43.3%	42.8%	44.1%	44.7%	46.1%	50.2%
Rural area		41.8%	39.4%	39.3%	35.7%	36%	37%	38.7%	39.2%	38.6%	40.3%	44.9%
Cities	ISCED 5–8	5.6%	7%	7.9%	8.8%	10.2%	10.4%	6.7%	5.9%	6.6%	5.9%	6.1%
Towns and suburbs		:	:	:	5.2%	4.3%	5.7%	4%	3.2%	3.3%	3.2%	2.8%
Rural area		2.1%	2.2%	2.9%	2.4%	2.2%	2.4%	2.2%	1.9%	2.3%	2.4%	2.5%

Source: Eurostat, [edat_ifs_9913] data extracted 08.09.20

Overall, the level of education of young people in Romania increased between 2009–2019 (Table 3), but with significant differences between the two areas of residence to the detriment of the rural environment. Data from the Romanian Ministry of Education (MEN, 2019) shows that the differences between urban and rural areas in terms of school participation rates at all levels of pre-university education is over 20pp to the detriment of rural areas.

Table 8. Population aged 15–24, by ISCED levels (%) and degree of urbanisation in Slovakia, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

		2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change)
Cities	ISCED 0–2	37.5%	36.8%	35.7%	0.7pp (–.9%)	–1.1pp (–3%)	–1.8pp (5%)
Towns and suburbs		44.2%	50.9%	47.1%	6.7pp (13.1%)	–3.8pp (–8.0%)	2.9pp (6.1%)
Rural area		56.2%	61.7%	52.6%	5.5pp (8.9%)	61.7%	60.6%
Cities	ISCED 3–4	–9.1pp (–17.3%)	–3.6pp (–6.8%)	54.3%	54.5%	53%	51.9%
Towns and suburbs		56.9%	53%	58.2%	–3.9pp (–7.3%)	5.2pp (8.9%)	1.3pp (2.2%)
Rural area		52.2%	44.8%	50.2%	–7.4pp (–16.5%)	5.4pp (10.7%)	–2.0pp (–3.9%)
Cities	ISCED 5–8	41.8%	36%	44.9%	–5.8pp (–16.1%)	8.9pp (19.8%)	3.1pp (6.9%)
Towns and suburbs		5.6%	10.2%	6.1%	4.6pp (45.0%)	–4.1pp (–67.2%)	0.5pp (.1%)
Rural area		:	4.3%	2.8%	()	–1.5pp (–53.5%)	()
		2.1%	2.2%	2.5%	0.1pp (4.5%)	0.3pp (12%)	0.4pp (16%)

Source: Eurostat, [edat_lfs_9913] data extracted 08.09.20

The deficient infrastructure of educational services specific to rural areas, the financial constraints faced by the population in this environment, and also a certain collective mentality unfavourable to education increases the risk of premature leaving of the education system among rural youth. Most educational institutions operating in rural Romania provide only primary and secondary education (the first 8 years of schooling) and the quality of education and learning conditions are well below those in the urban environment (Kitchen et al., 2017). The Romanian education system is one that focuses more on competition and



less (or not at all) on equality and equal opportunities in education. The studies conducted so far (Voicu, 2007) have shown that young people in rural areas and young people from disadvantaged socio-familial backgrounds are underrepresented at post-compulsory education levels.

These differences between urban and rural areas and the characteristics of the national education system are also observed at the level of absolute and relative rates. The analysis of the absolute and relative data highlights the trend that they tend to rise as the level of education increases and when it comes to rural areas. (Table 4). These differences between areas of residence and levels of education remain throughout 2009–2019 (Table 4).

3. 6. Youth employment and unemployment

A number of researchers (Furstenburg & al., 2004) consider entering the labour market one of the most important indicators of individual maturity. However, this does not mean that all young people succeed in achieving this goal, or that it occurs for all at the same time. The legal working age in Romania is 16 years old, but the chances of finding a job are very low, regardless of the age of a person.

Table 5 Youth employment (%) and absolute and relative change in Romania by age groups (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Overall						
15–19	91%	76%	8.4%	–1,5pp (–19.7%)	0.8pp (9.5%)	–0.7pp (–8.3%)
20–24	36.6%	36.3%	41.2%	–0.3pp (–0.8%)	4.9pp (12.0%)	4,6pp (11.1%)
25–29	67.4%	70.1%	75.7%	2.7pp (3.8%)	5.6pp (7.4%)	8.3pp (10.9%)
30–34	77.0%	76.6%	81.2%	–0.4pp (0.5%)	4.6 (5.6)	4.2pp (5.1%)
Cities						
Overall						
15–19	2.4%	:	:	()	()	()
20–24	29.3%	25.0%	26.3%	–4.3pp (–17.2%)	1.3pp (4.9%)	–3pp (–11.4%)
25–29	72.4%	71.3%	83.2%	–1.1pp (–1.5%)	11.9pp (14.3%)	10.8pp (12.9%)
30–34	83.7%	83.2%	90.8%	–0.5pp (–0.6%)	7.6 pp (8.3%)	7.1pp (7.8%)
Towns and suburbs						
Overall						
15–19	:	3.7%	5.4%	()	1.7pp (31.4%)	()
20–24	30.3%	33.8%	40.7%	3.5pp (10.3%)	6.9pp (16.9%)	10.4pp (25.5%)
25–29	57.8%	69.1%	71.4%	11.3pp (16.3%)	2.3pp (3.2%)	13.6pp (19.0%)
30–34	77.9%	76.0%	76.6%	–1.9pp (2.5%)	0.6pp (0.7%)	–1.3pp (–1.7%)
Rural areas						
Overall						
15–19	12.6%	13.3%	13.6%	0.7pp (5.2%)	0.3pp (2.2%)	1pp (7.3%)
20–24	41.8%	48.7%	51.5%	6.9pp (14.1%)	2.8pp (5.4%)	9.7pp (18.8%)
25–29	8.1%	6.5%	6.4%	–1.6pp (–24.6%)	–0.1pp (–1.5%)	–1.7pp (–26.5%)
30–34	6.0%	6.0%	5.0%	0/0	–1pp (–20%)	–1pp (–20%)

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergau) – data extracted on 08.09.2020



Compared to the situation at EU-28 level, in the last decade the employment rate in Romania for the age group 15–24 was at least 10pp lower (Eurostat, 2020). Also, for the period 2009–2019 the employment rate of the age category 15–34 did not fluctuate much (Table 5). The employment rate in Romania is less than half that of Norway (over 55%), UK (over 58%) or the Netherlands (over 50%) but above that of countries such as Greece, Italy and Bulgaria which record values below 30% (Eurostat, 2020).

The analysis of Eurostat (2020) data on the employment rate of young people at urbanisation level is difficult due to the fact that we do not have a complete picture: the data does not cover certain years and all types of localities (Table 5). Moreover, on the available data we observed that young people in rural areas have a higher employment rate than those in urban areas. In reality, these young people are engaged in subsistence farming and seasonal farming which is not equivalent to ensuring a decent standard of living for themselves and their families. In order to complete the analysis, we took INS data (INS, 2019: 30) regarding the employment rate among the young population. It reveals discrepancies between areas of residence – + 3.1pp in favour of those in urban areas, compared to rural areas – and between levels of education – between people with low education, only 42.6% were employed. Employment is the main source of income for the population and it is expected that people who work, regardless of age, have a higher standard of living compared to people who do not have a job. However, poverty also affects the employed population. The National Youth Strategy shows that, in Romania, there is the highest level of poverty among working young people: 30.7% of young people aged 18–24 who work are poor while in the EU-28 the value is 11.2% (National Youth Strategy, 2013:16).

At the EU level, atypical employment (temporary and part-time employment) is encouraged, especially among young people, as an opportunity for them to familiarise themselves with the labour market, to earn an income in parallel with school attendance or to gain professional experience, etc. In some EU countries (Denmark, for example, the country that proposed this employment policy measure) – atypical employment, especially among young people, has been shown to have positive effects. But the situation differs from one country to another and it is very important to determine whether this type of employment is a springboard to full professional integration or a hatch to precariousness and ultimately exclusion? (Booth et al., 2002; Blasco & Givord, 2010:75). Monitoring the situation in Romania has led researchers to conclude that most people who are employed on a part-time basis earn lower incomes and have a higher risk of poverty. (Preoteasa, 2013:142).



In conclusion, for the Romanian population, especially in the case of young people, having a job with a partial work schedule or with a fixed-term contract serves as more of a trap-door to precariousness than a springboard to professional success. Another conclusion of Romanian researchers (Preoteasa, 2013) is that, owing to dissatisfaction with the income obtained by carrying out a legal occupation, the population chooses either unemployment combined with entry into the social protection system, or the informal economy.

**Table 6 Youth unemployment (%) and absolute and relative change in Romania
(2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)**

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Overall						
15–19	32.7%	31.5%	27.9%	-1.2pp (-3.8%)	3.6pp (-12.9%)	4.8pp (-17.2%)
20–24	17.9%	22.1%	14%	4.2pp (19%)	-8.1pp (-57.8%)	-3.9pp (-27.8%)
25–29	8.4%	10.6%	5.7%	2.2pp (20.7%)	-4.9pp (-85.9%)	-2.7pp (-47.3%)
30–34	5.8%	6.8%	3.6%	1pp (14.7%)	-3.2pp (-88.8%)	-2.2pp (-61.1%)
Cities						
Overall	59.1%	:	:	()	()	()
15–19	22.2%	28%	15.2%	5.8pp (20.7%)	-12.8pp (-84.2%)	-7pp (-46.0%)
20–24	8.5%	11.9%	4%	3.4pp (28.57%)	-7.9pp (195.5%)	-4.5pp (-112.5%)
25–29	5.6%	6.7%	2.3%	1.1pp (16.41%)	-4.4pp (-191.3%)	-3.3pp (-143.4%)
30–34						
Towns and suburbs	:	53.3%	39.6%	()	-13.7pp (-34.5%)	()
Overall	:	30%	17.2%	()	-12.8pp (-74.4%)	()
15–19	:	14.3%	7%	()	-7.3pp (-104.2%)	()
20–24	:	8.3%	3.8%	()	-4.5pp (-118.4%)	()
25–29						
30–34	27.9%	23%	22.7%	-4.9pp (-21.3%)	-0.3pp (-1.3%)	-5.2pp (-22.9%)
Rural areas	15.8%	14.7%	12.1%	-1.1pp (-7.4%)	-2.6pp (-21.4%)	-3.7pp (-30.5%)
Overall	8.1%	6.5%	6.4%	-1.6pp (-24.6%)	-0.1pp (-1.5%)	-1.7pp (-265%)
15–19	6%	6%	5%	0	-1pp (-20%)	-1pp (-20%)
20–24	41.8%	48.7%	51.5%	6.9pp (14.1%)	2.8pp (5.4%)	9.7pp (18.8%)
25–29	8.1%	6.5%	6.4%	-1.6pp (-24.6%)	-0.1pp (-1.5%)	-1.7pp (-26.5%)
30–34	6.0%	6.0%	5.0%	0/0	-1pp (-20%)	-1pp (-20%)

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau) – data extracted on 1.09.20



The unemployment rate among the young population in Romania is high for the entire time interval considered (Table 6), but well below the EU-28 average. Romania also ranks better compared to other EU countries (France, for example, which has a youth unemployment rate of around 25%) and very close to countries such as the UK or the Netherlands. (Eurostat, 2020). The explanation for this situation is also specific to occupational activities in Romania: many young people are employed in subsistence agriculture or are in the category of those who emigrate temporarily.

Furthermore, in Romania, the period of time in which young people receive unemployment benefits is very short, the money received is very little and the duration of granting unemployment benefits is different depending on work experience: from 6 months for a contribution of at least 1 year to 12 months for those who have contributed for at least 10 years. In many cases, young people do not use this form of social support, which is why they do not even appear in the authorities' databases. Thus, the unemployment rate in Romania (but also among NEETs) is much higher than the official data records. Another reason explaining the unemployment rate in Romania is that once out of the social protection system (when young people do not receive unemployment allowances) they are "lost" in statistical terms.



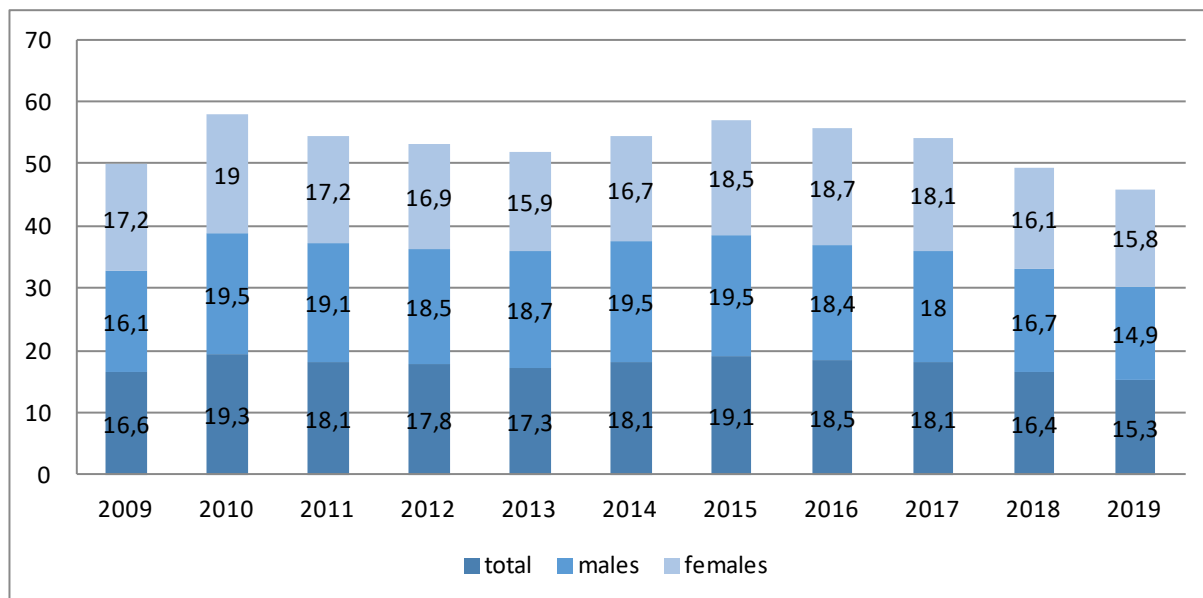
3. 7. NEETs in Romania

The educational, professional and social trajectories of young people are extremely different today. For some, leaving the education system means entering a category considered to be the most vulnerable: the NEETs category.

At the EU level, the European Commission considers NEETs as a key indicator and not only uses it in strategy papers and programs for young people – “Youth in Action”, “Europe 2020” – but calls on Member States and European organisations to develop and to understand this concept. Romania has taken over this indicator and uses it in national policy documents according to the definition and method of measurement agreed at EU level.

In general, the NEETs category is analysed according to the five major groups identified by Eurofound (Eurofound, 2012; Eurofound 2016). Within these categories, however, young people differ by gender, level of education, degree of urbanisation, etc.

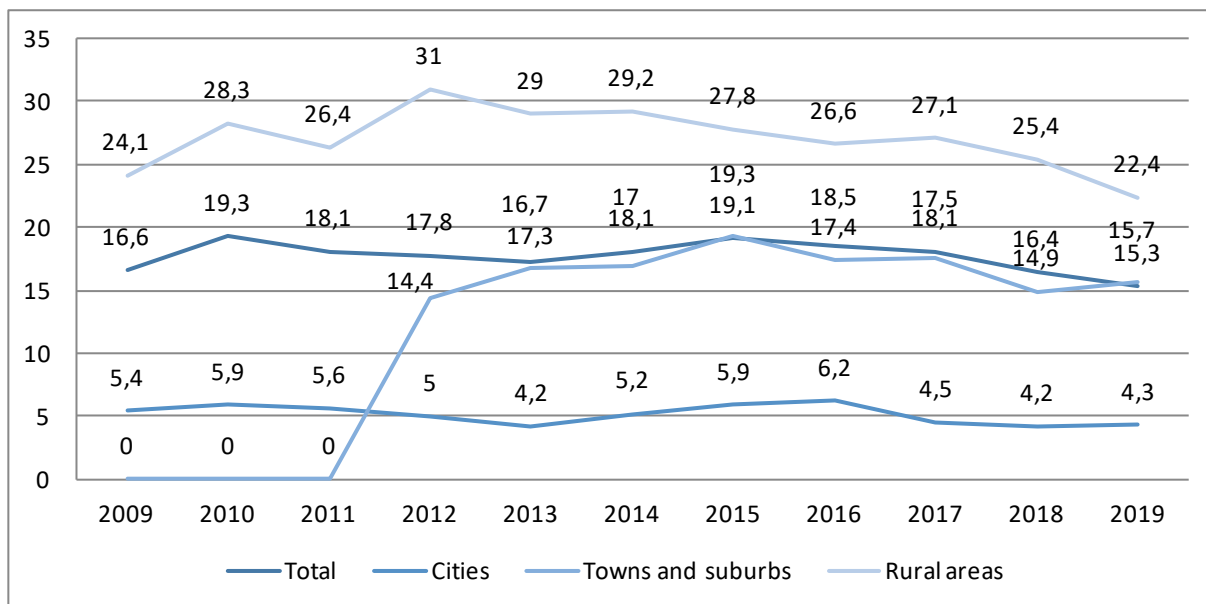
Chart 6 Early leavers from education and training by gender



Source: Eurostat, [edat_lfs_9913] data extracted 08.09.20

In Romania, the dropout rate at all levels has increased since 2007, proof that the economic crisis has played a decisive role in the educational situation of young people. Another observation revealed by the analyses of Romanian researchers is that “the highest dropout rates are recorded at the beginning classes of school cycles” (Apostu et al., 2015:33) which means that the “bifurcation points” noted by Boudon (1973) are difficult to overcome for many young Romanians and their families. Young women are more at risk of premature leaving compared to young men (Chart 6).

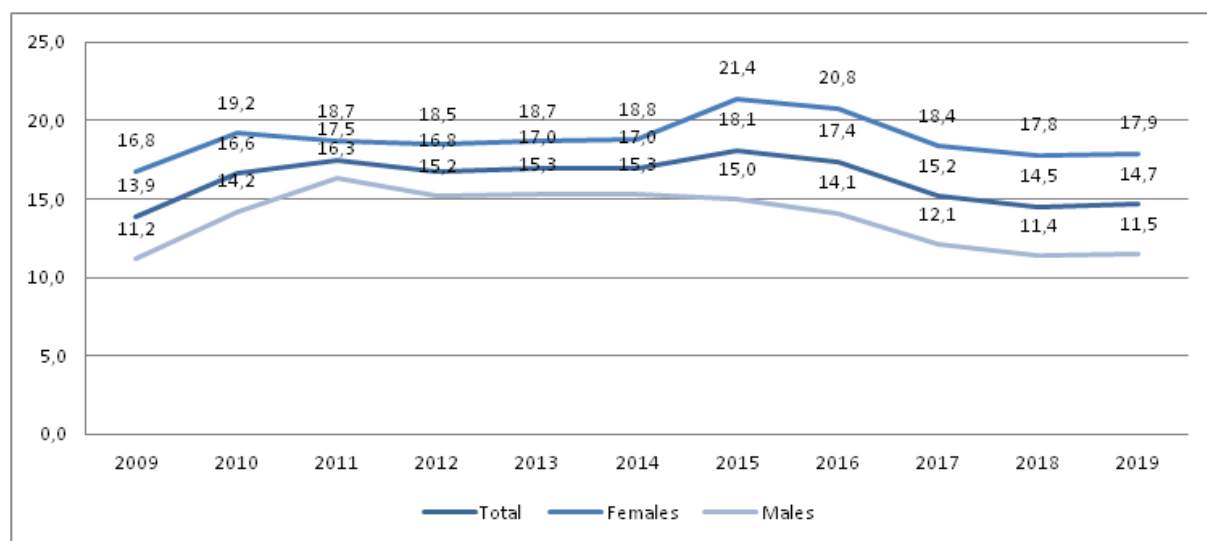
Chart 7 ESLET rate (%) 2009–2019 (Romania) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat, 2020 [edat_lfse_30], data extracted 8.10.20

High values of early school leaving throughout the whole period are observed – 2009–2019 (Chart 7). By residence it is obvious that rural youths have the biggest problems in school (about 25% of them leave school prematurely) while young people in big cities do not exceed 5%. Early school leaving is the first step to becoming NEETs.

Chart 8 NEETs by gender, 15–24 years (%)



Source: Eurostat, [yth_empl_160], data extracted 31.05.20

The analysis of data on NEETs in Romania by gender supports the idea that those who leave the education system prematurely risk falling into this category: women are more represented in this category compared to men (Chart 8). Overall, Romania has one of the highest NEET rates in the EU-28.

Table 7. NEET rate (%) by age subgroups and by degree of urbanisation in Romania, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
15–19	9.7%	10.1%	10.5%	0.4pp (3.9%)	0.4pp (3.8%)	0.8pp (7.6%)
20–24	17.3%	22.9%	18.9%	5.6 (24.4)	4pp (–21.2%)	1.6pp (8.4%)
25–29	19%	24.1%	20.8%	5.1pp (21.2%)	–3.3pp (15.86%)	1.8pp (8.6%)
30–34	17.4%	22.8%	18.6%	5.4pp (23.6%)	– 4.2pp (–22.5%)	1.2pp (6.4%)
Cities						
15–19	5%	4.4%	5.5%	–0.6pp (–13.6%)	1.1pp (20%)	0.5pp (9%)
20–24	12.6%	14.3%	10.6%	1.7pp (11.8%)	–3.7pp (34.9%)	–2pp (18.8%)
25–29	14.6%	18.4%	11.4%	3.8pp (20.6%)	–7pp (61.4%)	–3.2pp (–28.0%)
30–34	12.9%	15.8%	9%	2.9pp (18.3%)	–6.8pp (75.5%)	–3.9pp (43.3%)
Towns and suburbs						
15–19	:	10.1%	10.9%	()	0.8pp (7.3%)	()
20–24	:	27.6%	22.6%	()	–5pp (–22.1%)	()
25–29	:	26.3%	25%	()	–1.3pp (–5.2%)	()
30–34	:	23.3%	23.2%	()	–0.1pp (–0.4%)	()
Rural areas						
15–19	12%	13.4%	13%	1.4pp (10.4%)	–0.4pp (–3.0%)	1pp (7.7%)
20–24	20.6%	28.5%	22.4%	7.9pp (27.7%)	–6.1pp (–27.2%)	1.8pp (8.0%)
25–29	22.5%	29.1%	26.5%	6.6pp (22.6%)	–2.6pp (–9.8%)	4pp (15.0%)
30–34	20.6%	29.7%	25.8%	9.1pp (30.63%)	–3.9pp (–15.1%)	5.2pp (20.15%)

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted in 8.10.20

As expected, the rate of NEETs is higher in rural areas compared to urban ones. As we mentioned in rural Romania, in most schools young people can attend only 8 classes. Young people in rural areas (as well as their families) have to incur additional costs (transport costs, costs associated with living in urban areas away from their rural area of origin) if they want to continue their schooling. Also, the urban environment has many more generous job offers compared to the rural environment, but even in this case the costs that a young person from the rural area has to cover are higher. Some researchers (Simmons & Thompson, 2011) believe that it is precisely these obstructions generated by mobility that explain the increase in the rate of NEETs in rural areas. In Romania, the share of NEETs tended to increase during 2009–2019 (Table 7). By residence, we observe that for all age groups the NEETs share is higher than the national average. Although there are significant differences between EU countries in the share of NEETs, the type of NEETs and the reasons why some young people fall into this category, there are also many similarities that have allowed the identification of clusters. According to Eurofound, the distribution of countries according to the type of NEETs and their characteristics is distributed as follows:

Table 2 Youth Policies and Strategies

Type	Countries	Weight
Family responsibilities	Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Italy, Slovakia, Greece	23–44%
Long-term unemployed, discouraged young people, young people with disabilities	Germany, Austria, Denmark, Belgium, UK	8%
Long-term unemployed	Spain, Cyprus, Croatia, Portugal	18%

Source: Eurofound, 2016

Romania is part of the same cluster with Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Greece and Italy and the main feature is that young people end up in the situation of NEETs primarily for involuntary reasons (they are in the situation of caring for children or other family members in poor health, with disability or are elderly). This prevents them from actively looking for employment opportunities, returning to the training system, etc. All these causes are accentuated by the current socio-economic and societal context.



4. CONCLUSIONS

- Romania has an increased rate of young NEETs;
- The causes that lead young Romanians in the situation of becoming NEETs are multiple: some belong to the individual (belonging to a specific socio-familial environment, being disadvantaged etc.) whereas others are related to the socio-economic system as well as the educational, occupational and social policies of the country;
- The Romanian authorities responsible for young people act in different fields through measures to support this category of population. However, they do not act in an integrated way, and as such effect of the measures is diluted and the share of young people in difficulty does not decrease;
- The rural environment in Romania has always been disadvantaged and remains in the same situation today;
- Loss of human capital through internal or external emigration is not likely to support rural communities or Romanian society as a whole.



5. REFERENCES

- Apostu, O., Balica, M., Fartusnic, C., Florian, B., Horga, I., Voinea, L. (2012) Copiii care nu merg la școală, O analiză a participării la educație în învățământul primar și gimnazial, Institutul de Științe ale Educației, Editura Universitară [Children who do not go to school, An analysis of participation in education in primary and secondary education, Institute of Educational Sciences, University Publishing House]
- Blasco, S., Givord, P. (2010), Les trajectoires professionnelles en début de vie active: quel impact des contrats temporaires? *Revue Économie et Statistique* N° 431–432
- Boudon, R. (1973) L'inégalités de chances. La mobilité sociale dans les sociétés industrielles, Paris, Hachette.
- Croitoru, A.; Mihalache, F. (2011). Mediul rural românesc: evoluții și involuții. Schimbare socială și antreprenoriat, Editura Expert, București [Romanian rural environment: evolutions and involutions. Social change and entrepreneurship, Expert Publishing House, Bucharest]
- Eurofound, 2016, Exploring the diversity of NEETs, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 72p.
- Eurofound, 2012, NEETs – Young people not in employment, education or training: Characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 171p.
- Furstenberg, F.F., Kennedy, S., McLoyd, V.C., Rumbaut, R.G. & Settersten, R.A., 2004. Growing up is harder to do. *Contexts*, 3(3):33–41.
- Kicheva, T. (2016), Working attitudes and problems in the professional realization of young people in Bulgaria, *BULGARIAN JOURNAL OF BUSINESS RESEARCH*
- Kitchen, H., Fordham, E., Henderson, K., Looney, A. Maghnoy, S., Studii OCDE privind evaluarea și examinarea în domeniul educației. România 2017 [OECD.Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education: Romania 2017], <https://www.isj-cl.ro/images/Curriculum/studiu%20OECD.pdf>
- Maguire, S. & Thompson, J. (2007). Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) where is Government policy taking us now? *Youth and Policy*, 8(3):5–18.



MINISTERUL EDUCAȚIEI NAȚIONALE Raport privind starea învățământului preuniversitar din România 2017 –2018, https://www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/Raport%20privind%20starea%20C3%AEEnv%C4%83%C8%9B%C4%83m%C3%A2ntului%20preuniversitar%20din%20Rom%C3%A2nia_2017-2018_O.pdf [Ministry of National Education, Report on the state of pre-university education in Romania, 2017–2018]

Preoteasa, A.M., (2013) Ocuparea atipică între conjunctură și flexibilitate în “Profiluri teritoriale ale calității vieții”, coord. Ioan Mărginean, București, Editura Academiei Române [Atypical occupation between conjuncture and flexibility in “Territorial profiles of quality of life”, eds. Ioan Mărginean, Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House]

Simmons, R. & Thompson, R. 2011. Education and training for young people at risk of becoming NEET: findings from an ethnographic study of work-based learning programmes. *Educational Studies*, 37(4):447–450.

Swartz, S., Khalema, E., Cooper, A., De Lannoy, A. & Segal, H. 2012. Navigational Capacities for Youth Employment. A Review of Research, Policies, Frameworks and Methodologies. LMIP Working Paper 23.

Voicu, B. (2007). Cine sunt studenții de astăzi [Who are today’s students?], pp.24–26, în Mircea Comsa Claudiu Tufiş, Bogdan Voicu, Sistemul universitar românesc. Opiniile cadrelor didactice și ale studenților [Romanian university system. Opinions of teachers and students], Afir, București,

Zanardelli, M. (2015). Les NEETs dans une perspective dynamique. Analyse à partir de données administratives, *La sécurité sociale*, 2025. Numéro 3 – décembre 2015

Strategia Națională în Domeniul Tineretului, 2014–2020 [National Strategy in the Field of Youth, 2014–2020] <http://mts.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Strategie-Dezbatere-Publica-2014-2020.pdf>

National Institute of Statistics, Statistical Databases – TEMPO – time series online <https://statistici.insse.ro/shop/index.jsp?page=tempo2&lang=ro&context=20>

Eurostat, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

RURAL NEETs IN SERBIA



2009/2019
OVERVIEW

AUTHORS

Ivica Nikolić – inikolic@tfbor.bg.ac.rs
Technical faculty in Bor

Ivan Mihajlović – imihajlovic@tfbor.bg.ac.rs
University of Belgrade, Technical faculty in Bor – UB TFBor

Anđelka Stojanović – anstojanovic@tfbor.bg.ac.rs
University of Belgrade, Technical Faculty in Bor

Image by xoracio from Pixabay

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network: Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged.
Please cite this publication as "COST CA18213 Rural NEETs in Serbia: 2009/2019 Overview.

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. CONTEXTUALIZATION	7
1.1. Strategic national legislation for youth	10
1.2. Education	12
1.3. Employment	14
2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE	16
3. DATA ANALYSIS	17
3.1. Population and youth population	17
3.2. Employment and unemployment	19
• Youth employment	19
• Youth unemployment	22
3.3. Education	25
• Young people by educational attainment level	25
• Early school leavers	27
3.5. NEETs	28
• NEET rate	28
4. CONCLUSIONS	34
5. REFERENCES	35
6. IMPORTANT LINKS	37

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The situation of rural Youths Neither in Employment nor in Education or Training (NEET) aged between 15 and 34 years old, over the last decade (2010–2019) in Serbia is presented in this report. The main criterion for analysis was the degree of urbanisation, where the comparison was done between rural areas, towns and suburbs, cities, and the whole country. The data available on EUROSTAT and the national Statistical office of Serbia were used as main resources for statistical interpretation.

The statistical procedures used in the report rely on descriptive longitudinal analysis, using graphical displays (e.g. overlay line charts) as well as the calculation of proportional absolute and relative changes between observed years.

The analysis of the youth population in Serbia aged 15–24 years in total as well as the youth population for different degrees of urbanisation, for the period 2010–2019, showed a decreasing trend.

In the period 2014–2019 (which is with available data for the case of Serbia) it can be observed that the youth employment rate is increasing in all areas of urbanisation. In contrast to the employment, the level of unemployment in Serbia is constantly decreasing in the period 2014–2019. This trend is similar for all three areas of urbanisation.

The decrease in the number of early school leavers is registered in the case of entire Serbia, cities, and rural areas. The only trend of increasing of early school leavers' rate is recorded for the towns and suburbs, for the observed period 2014–2019.

In the period 2010–2019, the NEET rate is declining in Serbia for all three degrees of urbanisation. In comparison to EU countries, Serbia is still significantly above the European average, but with a tendency of reducing the gap.

РЕЗИМЕ

У овом извештају је представљена ситуација са руралним младима, који нису запослени, ни у образовању или обуци (НЕЕТ) старости између 15 и 34 године, током последње деценије (2010-2019) у Србији. Главни критеријум за анализу био је степен урбанизације, где је извршено поређење између руралних подручја, градова и предграђа, већих градова и целе земље. Подаци доступни на ЕУРОСТАТ-у и националном Заводу за статистику Србије коришћени су као главни извори за статистичку интерпретацију.

Статистичке методе које се користе у извештају ослањају се на дескриптивну лонгитудиналну анализу, користећи графичке приказе (нпр. Графиконе прекривања линија), као и израчунавање пропорционалних апсолутних и релативних промена између посматраних година.

Анализа укупне популације младих у Србији од 15 до 24 године, као и популације младих за различите степене урбанизације, за период 2010-2019, показала је тренд смањења.

У периоду 2014-2019 (што су доступни подаци за случај Србије) може се приметити да се стопа запослености младих повећава у свим областима урбанизације. За разлику од запослености, ниво незапослености у Србији се константно смањује у периоду 2014-2019. Овај тренд је сличан за сва три подручја урбанизације.

Смањење броја оних који прерано напусте школу регистровано је у случају целе Србије, већих градова и руралних подручја. Једини тренд повећања стопе раног напуштања школе забележен је у градовима и предграђима, за посматрани период 2014-2019..

У периоду 2010-2019. Стопа НЕЕТ-а у Србији опада за сва три нивоа урбанизације. У поређењу са земљама ЕУ, Србија је и даље знатно изнад европског просека, али са тенденцијом смањења овог јаза.



1. INTRODUCTION

This report consists of three main sections. In the first section, the contextualisation of the research background is given and the most important information about the economic, social and political position of youth in Serbia is given. In the second section, the methodology of research is presented, including a description of the investigated population. The third section deals with the explanation and discussion of the obtained results of research. Finally, the most important findings of this report are given in the conclusion section.



1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

Serbia is a country in south-eastern Europe, located in the heart of the Balkan Peninsula, where the vast majority of its about 7 million citizens are Serbs, and the rest belong to any of the 40 different national communities found therein. The actual number of people living in Serbia is not exact. The last assessment was done in 2018 and the number was 6 982 604. From this, 51.3% (3 580 898) are female and 48.7% (3 401 706) male. On the other hand, this is also not the final number, considering that there is strong depopulation taking place with the annual ratio of -5‰ (Statistical office of the Republic of Serbia, 2019).

Serbia is located at the heart of what was once the multi-ethnic Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Although a small country, Serbia has one of the major land routes from Western Europe to the Middle East. At its borders lie Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Croatia. Consequently, Serbia is home to a significant number of minority communities, including, but not limited to, Albanians, Hungarians, Bosnians, Croats, Montenegrins, Bulgarians, Macedonians, Romanians, and Roma (Serbia.com, 2020).

The Constitution of the Republic of Serbia stipulates that Serbia is a 'state of the Serbian people and all its citizens, based on the rule of law and social justice, the principles of civil democracy, human and minority rights and freedoms, and commitment to European principles and values'. The Serbian political system is based on the principle of separation of authority between the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government. The holder of legislative authority is the National Assembly: it is the representative body of 250 members who are elected in direct elections using a proportional electoral system, by voting from the electoral list and the distribution of parliamentary seats in proportion to the number of votes the electoral lists received. The holder of the executive authority is the Government of the Republic of Serbia, which consists of 18 ministries, two vice presidents and a prime minister. The current Government also has three ministers without portfolio. The official Serbian currency is the Dinar (RSD).

During the period after WWII Serbia, as the central part of Yugoslavia, was under a communist regime and was considered to be a semi-developed industrialised country. The



end of the 1980s brought the beginning of the economic transition from a planned to a market economy, and Serbia had a favourable position in the region. However, that position was lost due to the civil war that started in Yugoslavia, followed by economic sanctions imposed from 1992 – 1995. During the economic sanctions, being unable to export and import, most of the Serbian industrial facilities lost their marketplace position. The technology used became outdated and obsolete. Low levels of industrial production, among other things, resulted in record-breaking hyperinflation. At the final stage, during the NATO bombing of entire territory of Serbia in 1999, many of the remaining industrial facilities and infrastructure were completely destroyed.

After democratic reforms in 2000, Serbian industry has been liberalised and the process of transition started. Many large industrial factories could not survive this new era, and the process of privatisation begun. This was of course followed with the downsizing process. In many industrial regions, many people lost their jobs as part of that process. The problem was that in those industrial regions, the level of entrepreneurial activities was very low, and they were unable to absorb most of the skilled workers who were on the market. So, this process was followed with internal migration, where people started to move towards large centres, e.g., Belgrade, the capital city, and Novi Sad in the most developed region in Serbia (Vojvodina). Consequently, by far the largest of Serbia's cities is Belgrade, which has a population of more than 1.2 million. All events that happened during 90's, followed by the internal migration of people, have hindered equitable development. In 2012, Serbia's north was more developed than its south, which largely relies on agriculture. Serbia's cities have also been more developed, a consequence of which is that Serbia is still witnessing an influx of domestic migrants to its urban centres. The urban population is highly concentrated in just a handful of urban centres, namely Belgrade, Novi Sad, Nis, Subotica, and Kragujevac. Together they are home to 46% of the country's urban population.

The process of transition in Serbia is still not completed, however, after the first 10 years the first signs of economic growth were witnessed and since then exponential economic growth has followed. In 2010, Serbia almost had the highest economic growth among all the countries in the region, which amounted to 1.9% (real economic growth). Still, major economic problems in Serbia included a high unemployment rate (19.2%, measured in October 2013) and a high foreign trade deficit (\$ 6.9 billion) (Serbia.com, 2020).



In recent years, Serbia has attracted large investments from foreign companies. As an example, it can be mentioned, that FIAT company has transferred one part of its production to the city of Kragujevac in Serbia. The factory “FIAT automobili Kragujevac” is located there, in which FIAT 500 is produced. Such investment, and many others, have lead to the fact that average real economic growth in the last 10 years has been 4.45%. Estimates of the overall economic activity in the Republic of Serbia in 2019, measured by the real trends of Gross domestic product (GDP), indicate a growth of 4.0% when related to the year 2018. Serbia offers favourable tax rates, including incentives for new investors. Low tax rates, such as the tax on corporate profits, is only 10%, making it one of the lowest in Europe (Statistical office of the Republic of Serbia, 2019).

The Republic of Serbia has a strong tendency to rebuild and invest in modern industry that follows the model of the free market. The largest sector of Serbian industry is the tertiary (service) sector, constituting 63.8% of GDP. Then follows the secondary (industrial) sector with 23.5% of GDP and primary (agricultural) sector with 12.7% of GDP. More than half of the overall export-import exchange Serbia conducts is with the EU. First on the list of exported goods is corn, than sugar and after that comes the raspberries.

The real GDP growth in the fourth quarter of 2019, compared to the corresponding period of the previous year, amounted 6.2%. According to seasonally adjusted GDP data, gross domestic product increased by 1.7% in the fourth quarter of 2019, compared to the previous quarter. Observed by activities, in the fourth quarter of 2019, compared to the same quarter of the previous year, significant real growth in the gross value added was recorded in the construction sector; 48.3%, in the information and communication sector; 8.2% in the wholesale and retail trade sector. Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; transportation and storage and accommodation and food service activities amounted to 8.1%.

Net salaries and wages (taxes and contributions deducted), when 2019 is compared with 2018, increased by 10.3% in nominal terms and by 8.5% in real terms. The annual inflation rate was estimated at 1.9%.



1. 1. Strategic national legislation for youth

Young people between the ages of 15 and 29 made up 21.07% of the population in Serbia, which amounted to 1 322 201 persons according to the last organised census (Azanjac et al., 2014). According to the Constitution of Republic of Serbia, the legal age of adulthood in Serbia is 18, and the age of working ability is acquired at 15. According to Eurostat data, in 2019 there 16.6% of young people were aged 15 to 29. This number is equal to the European average, which is also 16.6% according to Eurostat. However, macro-geographic trends are indicating that Serbia is an ageing country. This is mostly the result of the fact that young people are reticent to marry, deciding not to have kids, or delaying these decisions for an older age. Although

In particular, for those young people who move to study in urban centres, a lack of job opportunities and housing, combined with urban poverty, leaves many with little choice but to return to their rural communities. Although recent studies show internal migration remains rather low, with just 16% of young people claiming to have moved from their village, town, or city, upwards of 70% of young Serbs express a desire to leave their communities and move elsewhere in Serbia (Azanjac et al., 2014).

Just as there is urban-rural migration in Serbia, there is also outward migration. Emigration and the issue of “brain drain” are viewed as compellingly acute, particularly in rural areas. More so than their urban counterparts, young people living in Serbia’s rural communities express a great desire to leave the country. Some studies have shown that as many as one in two young people between the ages of 15 and 26 would leave Serbia if given the opportunity (Pejic, 2004). As many as 500 000 young people are believed to have left Serbia since the end of communism in 1990. Many of those who have left have been among Serbia’s best and brightest. According to the Ministry of Science and Technology, in the past decade alone some 2 000 researchers left Serbia in search of professional opportunities elsewhere. Most were from IT and natural science disciplines (Azanjac et al., 2014).

Bearing this in mind, and faced with the fact that there is a decrease in the numbers of newly born in Serbia on the one hand, and increase of young educated and skilled people migrating to Western Europe on the other, in recent years Serbia has made significant strides in developing policies that are cognizant of and responsive to the concerns of Serbia’s youth.



The adoption in 2011 of a national Law on Youth (Law on Youth, 2020) represents a significant step forward in the realisation of young people's rights. Continuous monitoring of the position, attitudes and needs of young people is of particular importance bearing in mind that young people are the primary resource of innovation and the driving force of a society. Establishment of numerous associations and informal youth groups, Youth Offices, the Umbrella Youth Organisation Serbia have helped in this process. In addition, many new laws have been introduced: the main Law on Youth; the additional Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System (Law on Fundamentals of the Education System, 2020); the Law on Higher Education (Law on Higher Education, 2020); the Law on Volunteering (Law on Volunteering, 2010); and, other relevant acts and documents. These are basically the base for the development of the National Strategy for Youth for the period from 2015 to 2025 (National Strategy for Youth, 2015). The National Strategy for Youth for the period from 2015 to 2025 was created on the basis of needs and expectations of young people, specific to the Republic of Serbia, evaluation of recommendations of the previous strategies and reviews of the Council of Europe's youth policy. Within the strategy, nine general objectives are elaborated through specific objectives, expected results and planned activities for their implementation (CeSID, 2019).

However, while Serbia's youth has made demonstrable headway in the policy domain, young people continue to face significant obstacles on the road from childhood to adulthood. This review sheds light on the opportunities and challenges confronting young people in Serbia, as well as how Serbia's youth might successfully advocate for policies and reforms that overcome such obstacles.



1. 2. Education

Education is critical for the intellectual and professional development of children around the world and Serbia is no exception. However, besides the fact that the appropriate legislation covering this segment has been proclaimed, the reform of Serbia's education system has proven to be slow, as politicisation and controversy have impeded efforts to improve the education system, whether formally or informally (Azanjac et al., 2014).

As of 2006, one-year of kindergarten (preschool training for the kids of age 6–7) was established as an obligatory part of Serbia's public education system. Of course, there are kindergarten programs for kids from 1–6 years as well, which are not obligatory.

Serbia mandates eight years of primary education for all 7 – 14 year olds. This education is mandatory and parents must enrol their children in accordance with the law. Official data on primary education coverage offers impressive figures for primary school attendance and graduation (99% and 95%, respectively).

At age 15, young people begin secondary education, which generally lasts until the age of 19. This includes vocational or trade schools, which last three years; professional schools, which offer four-year programs in specific fields such as electrics, mechanics, industry, economy, nursing, etc.; grammar schools, which offer a more general high school education in preparation for university; and, art schools, which offer four year programs in the fine and applied arts, as well as music and ballet. Of those that complete primary school, 83% are said to go on to attend secondary school. Among those least likely to attend (let alone complete) primary and secondary schools are the Roma population, young girls in rural areas, and the disabled. It is thought that as many as 85% of young people with developmental disabilities do not attend school, while just 10 – 15% of the Roma complete primary education (Baucal & Stojanović, 2011).

After the high school, a number of higher education formal and non-formal educational opportunities are available, including both public and private universities. With the intro-



duction of private universities and a new array of non-formal educational institutions, attendance at tertiary educational institutions has risen since 2000. In 2006, some 229 355 students were officially enrolled in universities, a significant increase from the 182 941 who attended in 2001 (UNICEF, 2002). The number of young graduates from these institutions remains lower still, at about 3% of the total youth population (National Youth Strategy, 2008). It is thought that about 40% of university students do not complete their studies. Of those who do, many study far longer than the official length of study would suggest. For example, in 2008 most 4-year courses of study lasted 6.8 years. Six-year courses, which are still existing at faculties of medicine, took some 7.6 years to complete. Thus, on average, one year of study lasts 1.45 years (TransMONEE, 2009). While this has changed since the introduction of the Bologna reforms, the average number of years needed to complete higher education is still thought to exceed the official requirements.

One of the main problems affecting the education system is its emphasis on learning and memory to the detriment of critical thinking, problem solving and teamwork. As a consequence, there is little linkage between the education that young people receive and the needs of the labour market. Old-fashioned professional profiles and a lack of training and development skills leave young graduates poorly prepared for the job market. The lack of career guidance and professional orientation makes young people less able to make active career development decisions or to think creatively about employment opportunities. After finishing school, many young people in Serbia think that they lack even basic information on how to be competitive on the labour market.

In order to address this gap, non-formal education programs and organisations want to increase youth employability by offering retraining and extracurricular professional development programs. The civil sector is particularly active in this regard, providing various programs aimed at creating entrepreneurship, as well as offering career guidance. State institutions, such as the Workers' University, have also made efforts in the area of retraining. Unfortunately, little is known about the effectiveness of such educational initiatives, as non-formal education in Serbia is poorly regulated.



1.3. Employment

Positioning youth in the labour market and resolving youth unemployment are of critical importance to the future of every society. This should be also considered as the most important issue that has to be addressed in Serbia today. Serbia's youth has been disproportionately affected by high levels of unemployment, especially during times of previous economic crises. Both the economic crises experienced in the 1990s and the global recession of 2008 adversely affected the potential and existing job opportunities for Serbia's youth, leaving as many as one in two young people jobless or underemployed. The situation seems to be the same during the new economic crisis happening in 2020, based on the state of emergency and the closing of borders due to the COVID -19 pandemic.

Unfortunately, accurate statistics on youth unemployment are notoriously difficult to come by. According to the latest data available from the Republican Statistical Office (Statistical office of the Republic of Serbia, 2020), the total unemployment rate in Serbia, in 2019 was 10.4 %, representing a drop by 2.3 p.p. compared to 2018. Also, in 2019 the trend of increasing formal and decreasing informal employment has continued. Compared with 2018, formal employment increased by 92 700, of which 82 200 is in non-agricultural activities. Informal employment decreased by 24 600, of which 20 700 were outside agriculture. The rate of informal employment in 2019 was 18.2%, and it is 1.3 p.p. less than in 2018. The majority of the informally employed was noted in the age group 25–54 and among the self-employed people (e.g. freelancers).

Based on these statistics, compared to the previous year, employment rates of the young did not change much. The number of employed amounted to 153 800, and the employment rate was 21.5%. The youth unemployment rate amounted to 27.5% and was less than the rate in the previous year by 2.2 %. Observed by regions, the greatest youth unemployment rate, 32.8%, was recorded in the Region of Šumadija and West Serbia, while the lowest rate of 22.3% was registered in the Region of Vojvodina. The youth inactivity rate amounted to 70.4% in 2019, and it is unchanged compared to 2018. The NEET rate (representing the share of young people who do not either work or study in the total population of the young aged 15–24) amounted to 15.3%, where this rate is greater with women (by 1 %) in comparison to men. Compared to the previous year, this rate is less by 1.2%. The early school-lea-



vers rate, or the percentage of the young aged 18–24 with completed elementary school as their highest qualification, who did not continue further education, amounted to 6.6%, which is by 0.2 % more than in 2018.

In addition to these statistical facts, an important issue that has to be addressed is the fact that one of the most significant problems affecting young people in Serbia is obtaining their first job. Young people in Serbia are often confronted with a requirement that professional experience is required for most of opened positions. On the other hand, they are unable to gain professional experience without a first job, but unable to obtain a first job without prior professional experience. As a result, young people (and in particular, young graduates) often face prolonged unemployment, making getting the elusive first job more difficult.

For those young people who do find employment, most do so as a result of personal and political connections rather than public job announcements. According to the Survey on the Necessary Skills of Employees in Serbia, as many as 34% of employers acknowledge hiring on the basis of friendship or family connections, while just one in four employers' places job announcements or places ads through the National Employment Service. The preponderance of jobs obtained through connections, rather than merit, fosters professional complacency among Serbia's youth: graduates give up the job search, waiting instead for a relative or friend to come through with a job offer (Azanjac et al., 2014).

In large part because of the difficulty in entering the formal job market, many young people have had little choice but to join the informal economy. Although it is impossible to obtain precise figures about the number of young people currently working in the informal economy, apparently as many as 29% of young people work in the informal economy (Operational Program for Human Resource Development, 2012–2013).

Of those young people who do find work in Serbia's formal sector, most are well-educated Serbian males from (sub)urban areas. In addition to women and the uneducated, surveys indicate that ethnic minorities and youth who come from lower socioeconomic strata are not only the most vulnerable to transition and the effects of economic crises, but are most likely to remain in a vicious circle of poverty and unemployment (CeSID & MOS, 2007).



2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The Serbian national report uses information gathered by the National Reports Editorial Team of the Rural NEET Youth Network in the Eurostat platform. The main data presented and analysed in this report are from the following Eurostat database:

- Population Statistics: [yth_demo_020]
- EU Labor Force Survey (EU-LFS): [lfst_r_pgauwsc]; [lfst_r_ergau]; [lfst_r_urgau]; [edat_lfs_9913]; [edat_lfse_30]; [edat_lfse_29]
- Statistical office of the Republic of Serbia. (2020), Labor Force Survey in The Republic of Serbia, 2019.
- Statistical office of the Republic of Serbia. (2019). Estimated number of population in the Republic of Serbia, 2019.

Selected indicators were extracted from the different databases according to two criteria:

- Time range: the previous decade (2010–2019) in order to have a sufficiently long period of time to capture the main changes and continuities in young people's trajectories in education, training and employment. The analysis mainly covered 3 dates – 2010–2014–2019 – in order to capture the impact of the economic and financial crisis.
- Age group: age group range varies accordingly to the data available in each indicator (15–24; 15–29; 15–34; and 15–39). Whenever possible, age range also covers young adult's data (30–34 and 35–39) in order to describe the extent of crisis impact on these age groups.

Besides a descriptive analysis, in order to compare data main changes and continuities in different time periods, absolute and relative change were calculated considering the 3 main time points that were selected – 2010, 2014 and 2019. Absolute change refers to the simple difference in the indicator over two periods in time and it is expressed in percentage points (pp). Relative change expresses the change of a value of an indicator in an earlier period and it is expressed in percentage terms.

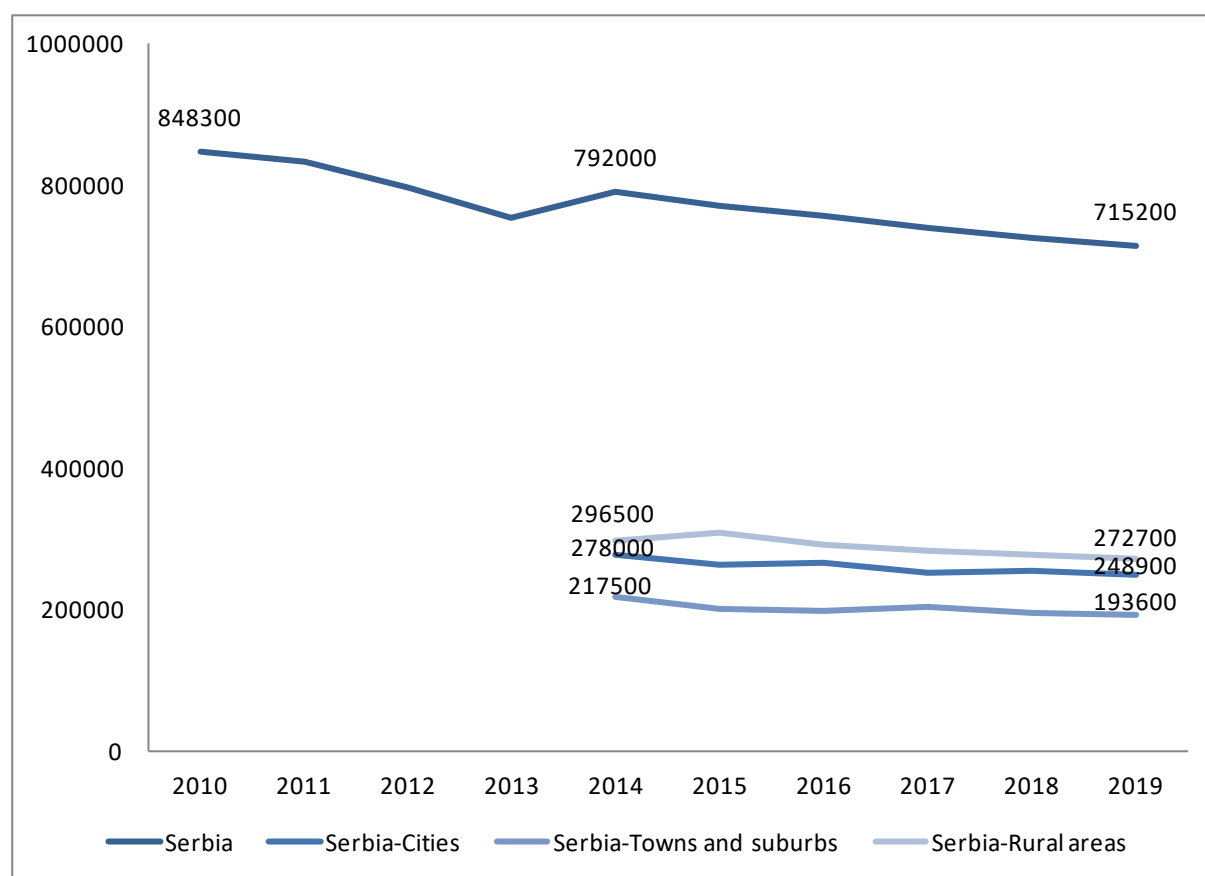


3. DATA ANALYSIS

3.1. Population and youth population

The total youth population in Serbia aged 15–24 years and populations for different degrees of urbanisation is presented in Chart 1. For the period 2010–2013, the data for the degree of urbanisation is missing, except Total. Therefore, the complete data are presented only for the period (2014–2019). Analysing the chart, it can be concluded that the youth population in Serbia decreasing. When considering the gender, the male population numbered 436 600 in 2010, 405 900 in 2014, when complete statistics began to be observed, and 368,200 in 2019. In the same years, the female statistics were 411 700 in 2010, 386 100 in 2014, and 347 000 in 2019.

Chart 1. Total youth population 2009–2019 (Serbia) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (Ifsa_pgauws) – extracted on 12.5.2020

Table 1. Ratio of youth population by age subgroups and absolute and relative change in Serbia (2010–2014, 2014–2019 and 2010–2019)

	2010	2014	2019	Absolute change 2010–2014	Absolute change 2015–2019 (Relative change 2015–2019)	Absolute change 2011–2019 (Relative change 2011–2019)
Overall (from 15 to 29 year)	19.3%	17.80%	16.60%	-1.50 (-7.80)	-1.20 (-6.74)	- 2.70 (-13.98)
15–19	5.80%	5.30%	5.10%	- .50% (-8.60%)	.20% (-3.77%)	-0.70 (-12,07%)
20–24	6.50%	5.90%	5.50%	- .60% (-9.20%)	- .40% (-6.78%)	- 1.00 % (-15.38%)
25–29	7.00%	5.50%	6.60%	- .40% (-5.70%)	- .50% (-7.587%)	- 0.90% (-12.86%)

Source: Eurostat: yth_demo_O20 – data extracted in 27.06.20

According to Table 1, the ratio of youth population has been declining in Serbia, during the period from 2010 to 2019, across different age classes. The overall youth population, in the age group from 15 to 29 years, has a decrease of -2.70 %. The change was more evident in the period 2010–2014, with -1.50%, compared to the period 2014–2019, with -1.20%. The decrease of young population, in the different age subgroups was distributed almost equally, with small differences. This way, for the period 2010–2010, the decrease of the 15–19 year group was -0.70%; for the 20–24 years group, 1.00%; and, for the 25–29 years group, -0.90%.



3. 2. Employment and Unemployment

3. 2. 1. Youth employment

According to the data presented in Table 2 and Chart 2, there is an almost constant increase of youth employment in Serbia, across all levels of urbanisation. The level of employment was analysed within the entire country, for the period 2010 to 2019. In this scope of time, the overall increase of the employment (for the entire age group of 15–39) was 12.20%. The largest increase is evidenced for the age group 25–29, and it equals 15.10%. The next one is for the group aged 30–34, with the value of 10.10%, followed by the 20–24 group, with 10.00%. Minimal increase is recorded for the 15–19 age group, with the value of 1.00%. Also, the largest percentage of employed young people in 2019 was in the age group 30–34 years, equal to 75.80%.

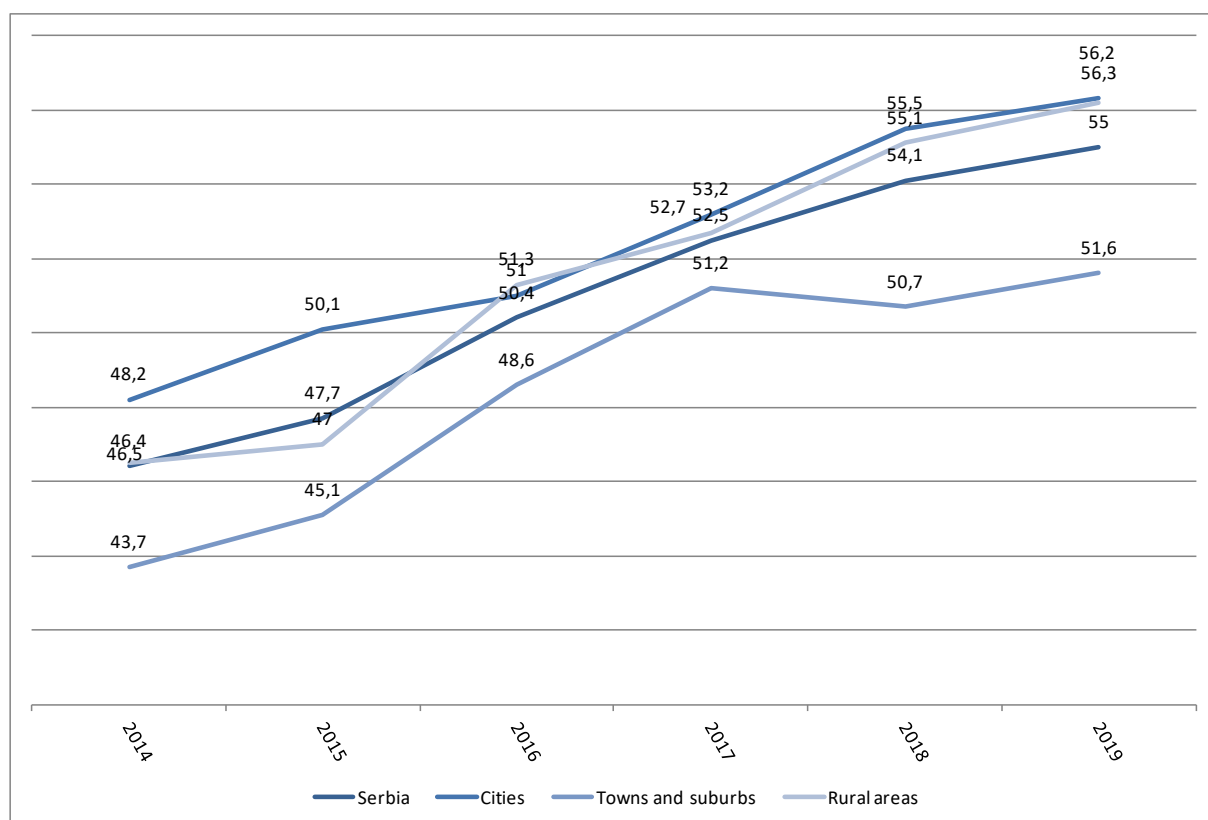
When it comes to the employment, based on the level of urbanisation, it was investigated in the time period 2014 – 2019, which was the only available data in the EUROSTAT base. Based on this data, the highest level of young employed people in Serbia was recorded in the cities, equalling 56.3% in 2019. A slightly lower percentage was in rural areas (56.2%) and the lowest level was in towns and suburbs (51.6%). The increase of the level of employment, for the period 2014 – 2019, was highest in the rural areas (9.7 %), followed by cities (8.1%) and towns and suburbs (7.79%).

Table 2. Youth employment shares in general and by all age subgroups (15–19, 20–24, 25–29; 30–34), across different levels of degree of urbanisation

	2010	2014	2019	Relative change 2010–2014 (Absolute change 2010–2014)	Relative change 2014–2019 (Absolute change 2014–2019)	Relative change 2010–2019 (Absolute change 2010–2019)
Country						
Overall (15–39)	42.80	46.40	55.00	3.60 (8.40)	8.60 (18.53)	12.20 (28.50)
15–19	4.50	4.50	5.50	0.00 (0.00)	1.00 (22.22)	1.00 (22.22)
20–24	25.70	24.80	35.70	–0.90 (–3.50)	10.90 (43.95)	10.00 (38.91)
25–29	48.40	52.50	63.50	4.10 (8.50)	11.00 (20.95)	15.10 (31.19)
30–34	65.70	65.10	75.80	–0.60 (–0.90)	10.70 (16.44)	10.10 (15.37)
Cities						
Age groups						
Overall (15–39)	a.	48.2	56.3	b.	8.1 (16.80)	c.
15–19	a.	2.5	3.0	b.	0.5 (20)	c.
20–24	a.	19.2	26.7	b.	7.5 (39.06)	c.
25–29	a.	52.6	64.4	b.	11.8 (22.43)	c.
30–34	a.	66.2	78.1	b.	11.9 (17.98)	c.
Towns and suburbs						
Age groups						
Overall (15–39)	a.	43.7	51.6	b.	7.79 (18.08)	c.
15–19	a.	3.0	4.1	b.	1.1 (36.67)	c.
20–24	a.	21.2	34.3	b.	13.1 (61.79)	c.
25–29	a.	48.9	60.9	b.	12.0 (24.54)	c.
30–34	a.	63.8	71.2	b.	7.4 (11.60)	c.
Rural areas						
Age groups						
Overall (15–39)	a.	46.5	56.2	b.	9.7 (20.86)	c.
15–19	a.	7.4	8.8	b.	1.4 (18.92)	c.
20–24	a.	33.0	44.9	b.	11.9 (36.06)	c.
25–29	a.	55.0	64.4	b.	9.4 (17.09)	c.
30–34	a.	64.6	76.3	b.	11.7 (18.11)	c.

Source: Eurostat: yth_demo_020 – data extracted in 27.06.20

Chart 2. Total youth employment 2014–2019 in Serbia by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergrau) – data extracted on 27.06.2020

In the period 2014–2019 (which is with available data for the case of Serbia) it can be observed that the youth employment rate is increasing in all areas of urbanisation. In recent years, the highest employment is among young people from cities, followed by employment of young people from rural areas.



3. 2. 2. Youth unemployment

Considering that the level of employment is increasing in Serbia, as would be expected the trend of the level of unemployment is displaying the opposite behaviour, as shown in Table 3 and Chart 3.

When observing the entire country, in the period 2010–2019 there was a slow decrease of unemployment in the period 2010 – 2014 (–1.30%), which was followed by a large decrease in the period 2014 – 2019 (–11.40%). This resulted with the large decrease in the entire time period 2010 – 2019, equal to –12.70%. When it comes to the different age subgroups, the highest decrease in unemployment is with the age group 20–24 years, equalling –20.10% for the period 2010–2019.

If comparing the unemployment rate according to the level of urbanisation, a decreasing trend is expressed in all subgroups. In 2019, the level of unemployment was highest in the towns and suburbs at 17.8 %. In rural areas it was 14.7%, while in cities it was 14.1%.

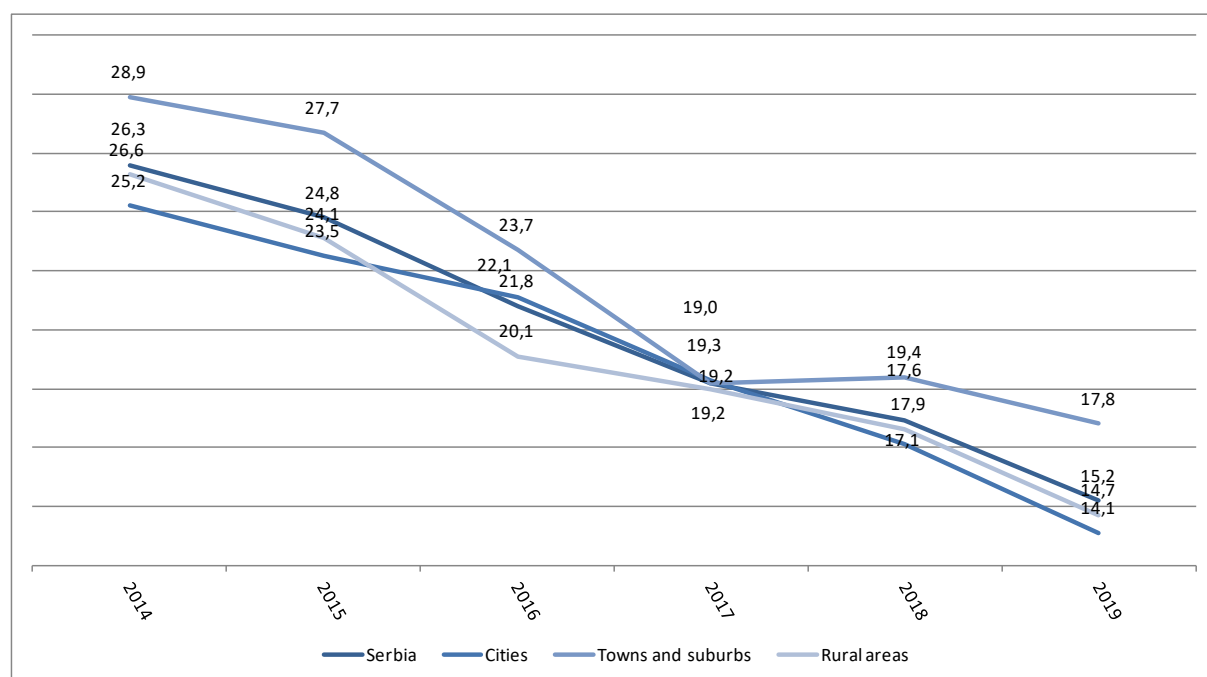
Table 3. Youth unemployment shares in general and by all age subgroups (15–19, 20–24, 25–29; 30–34), across different levels of degree of urbanisation*

	2010	2014	2019	Relative change 2010–2014 (Absolute change 2010–2014)	Relative change 2014–2019 (Absolute change 2014–2019)	Relative change 2010–2019 (Absolute change 2010–2019)
Country						
Overall (15–39)	27.9	26.6	15.2	-1.30 (-4.70)	-11.40 (-42.86)	-12.70 (-45.52)
15–19	4.50	4.50	5.50	0.00 (0.00)	1.00 (22.22)	1.00 (22.22)
20–24	25.70	24.80	35.70	-0.90 (-3.50)	10.90 (43.95)	10.00 (38.91)
25–29	48.40	52.50	63.50	4.10 (8.50)	11.00 (20.95)	15.10 (31.19)
30–34	65.70	65.10	75.80	-0.60 (-0.90)	10.70 (16.44)	10.10 (15.37)
Cities						
Age groups						
Overall (15–39)	a.	48.2	56.3	b.	8.1 (16.80)	c.
15–19	a.	2.5	3.0	b.	0.5 (20)	c.
20–24	a.	19.2	26.7	b.	7.5 (39.06)	c.
25–29	a.	52.6	64.4	b.	11.8 (22.43)	c.
30–34	a.	66.2	78.1	b.	11.9 (17.98)	c.
Towns and suburbs						
Age groups						
Overall (15–39)	a.	43.7	51.6	b.	7.79 (18.08)	c.
15–19	a.	3.0	4.1	b.	1.1 (36.67)	c.
20–24	a.	21.2	34.3	b.	13.1 (61.79)	c.
25–29	a.	48.9	60.9	b.	12.0 (24.54)	c.
30–34	a.	63.8	71.2	b.	7.4 (11.60)	c.
Rural areas						
Age groups						
Overall (15–39)	a.	46.5	56.2	b.	9.7 (20.86)	c.
15–19	a.	7.4	8.8	b.	1.4 (18.92)	c.
20–24	a.	33.0	44.9	b.	11.9 (36.06)	c.
25–29	a.	55.0	64.4	b.	9.4 (17.09)	c.
30–34	a.	64.6	76.3	b.	11.7 (18.11)	c.

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau) data extracted on 29.04.2020; ILOSTAT–Youth Labor Statistics

Notes: a. Data not available in Eurostat databases; b. and c. relative changes could not be calculated due to data missing for 2010

Chart 3. Total youth unemployment 2014–2019 in Serbia by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau) – data extracted on 27.06.2020

In contrast with the level of employment, the level of unemployment in Serbia was constantly decreasing in the period 2014–2019. This trend is similar for all three areas of urbanisation. The highest unemployment rate is among young people coming from towns and suburbs.



3. 3. Education

3. 3. 1. Young people by educational attainment level

The data describing the levels of education of young people in Serbia, in the age group 15–24, and presented in accordance to different levels of urbanisation, is given in Table 4.

Table 4. Serbia population, aged 15–24, by ISCED levels (%) and degree of urbanisation, including absolute and relative change time periods (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2010	2014	2019	Relative change 2010–2014 (Absolute change 2010–2014)	Relative change 2014–2019 (Absolute change 2014–2019)	Relative change 2010–2019 (Absolute change 2010–2019)
Country						
ISCED 0–2	46.60%	41.90%	40.90%	– 4.70% (– 10.10%)	– 1.00% (– 2.39%)	– 5.70% (– 12.23%)
ISCED 3–4	50.80%	54.00%	55.60%	3.20% (6.30%)	1.60% (2.96%)	4.80% (9.95%)
ISCED 5–8	2.60%	4.10%	3.50%	1.50% (57.70%)	–0.60% (–14.63%)	0.90% (34.62%)
Cities						
ISCED 0–2	a.	37.30%	38.80%	b.	1.50% (4.02%)	c.
ISCED 3–4	a.	57.80%	56.60%	b.	–1.20% (–2.08%)	c.
ISCED 5–8	a.	4.90%	4.60%	b.	–0.30% (–6.12%)	c.
Towns and suburbs						
ISCED 0–2	a.	41.90%	42.60%	b.	0.70% (1.67%)	c.
ISCED 3–4	a.	54.60%	54.40%	b.	–0.20% (–0.37%)	c.
ISCED 5–8	a.	3.60%	3.00%	b.	–0.60% (–16.67%)	c.
Rural areas						
ISCED 0–2	a.	46.30%	41.70%	b.	– 4.60% (– 9.94%)	c.
ISCED 3–4	a.	50.10%	55.50%	b.	5.40% (10.78%)	c.
ISCED 5–8	a.	3.70%	2.80%	b.	–0.90% (–24.32%)	c.

Source: Eurostat (edat_ifse_9913) – data extracted in 27.06.2020

Notes: a. Data not available in Eurostat databases; b. and c. relative changes could not be calculated due to data missing for 2010.



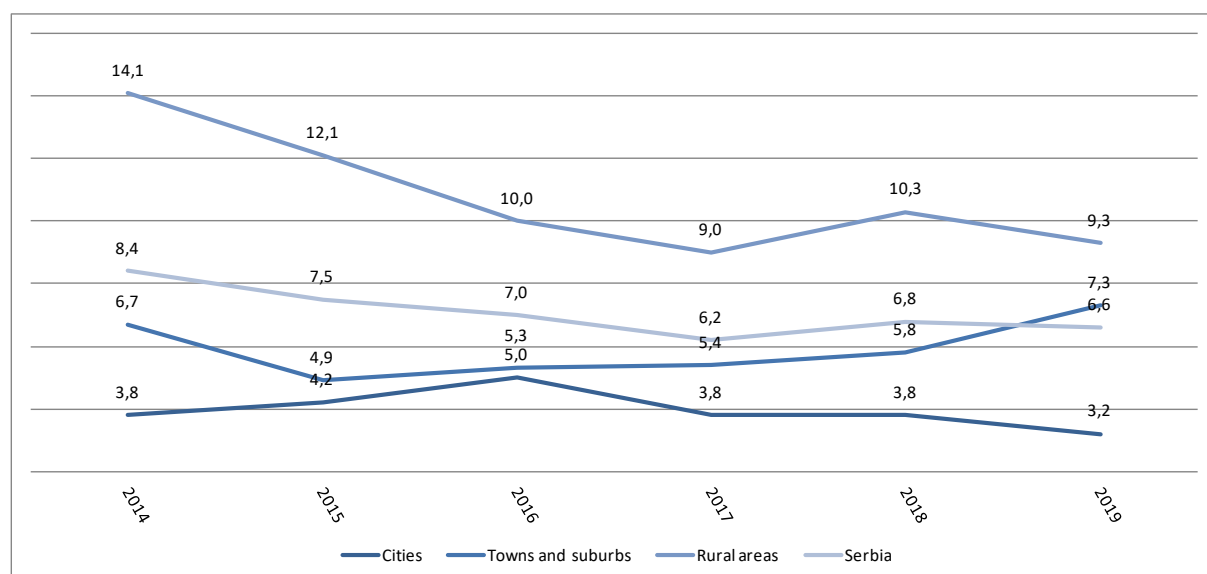
The level of education, influenced by the indicator of the level of urbanisation, was analysed in the time period 2014–2019. In this period of time, in the cities the ISCED O–2 level was recorded with an increase of 1.5%, ISCED 3–4 with a decrease of –1.20% and ISCED 5–8 with a decrease of –0.60%. Towns and suburbs had an increase of ISCED O–2 level of 0.70%, a decrease of ISCED 3–4 level of –0.20% and a decrease of ISCED 5–8 of –0.60%. The strongest relative change was observed in the rural areas where the ISCED O–2 level decreased by –4.60%, while ISCED 3–4 increased by 5.40% and ISCED 5–8 had a decrease of –0.90%.

Based on the results presented in Table 4, the following can be noted. If observing the entire country of Serbia, with the data available for the period 2010–2019, the level of the ISCED O–2 educated youth had a decrease of –5.70%. On the other hand, the level of ISCED 3–4, in the same period increased by 4.80%. Also, the education level of ISCED 5–8 has increased by 0.90%.

3.3.2. Early school leavers

The trends of early school leavers aged 18–24, in the period 2014–2019, presented by the level of urbanisation, are given in Chart 4.

Chart 4. ESLET rate (%) 2014–2019 (Serbia) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_30) – data extracted in 27.06.2020.

According to the data presented in Figure 3.3.2.1., following can be reported. The trend of ESLETs in Serbia as a whole have seen a small decrease from 8.4% in 2014 to 6.6% in 2019. This is the result of different trends expressed in different levels of urbanisation. Accordingly, the level of ESLETs in the cities has seen only a small decrease from 3.8% to 3.2%. Towns and suburbs, unfortunately, have experienced an increasing of the level from 6.7% to 7.3%. On the other hand, rural areas have evidenced the strongest decrease of ESLETs, from 14.1% in 2014 to 9.3% in 2019. Unfortunately, the level of early school leavers in rural regions is still the highest compared to towns and suburbs, the cities, and the Serbian average.

The decrease in the number of early school leavers is recorded in the case of Serbia as a whole, including cities and rural areas. The only trend of increasing is recorded for towns and suburbs, during the period 2014–2019. Furthermore, it is notable that in the rural areas the number of early school leavers is exceptionally high.

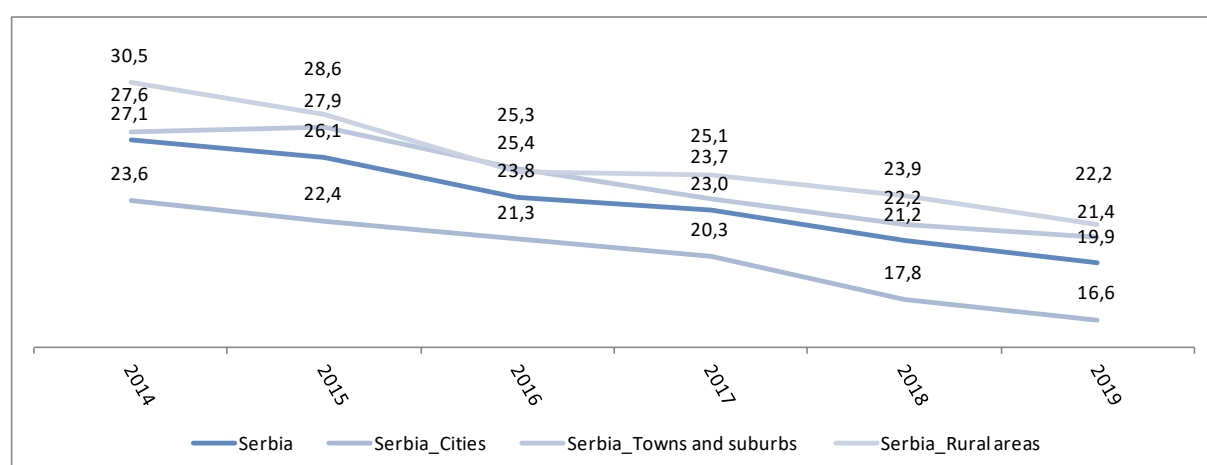


3. 4. NEETs

3. 4. 1. NEET rate

Chart 5 displays the overall evolution of the NEETs proportion in Serbia, based on the degrees of urbanisation, between 2014 and 2019. According to the chart, the NEET rate in Serbia has come down from 27.10%, in 2014, to 19.90%, in 2019. In cities, a similar variation occurred, with the NEET share coming down from 23.60% in 2014, to 16.60% in 2019. Alongside this, in towns and suburbs, this figure has dropped from 27.60% to 21.40%. Finally, in rural areas, the NEETs share has fallen from 30.50% to 22.20%.

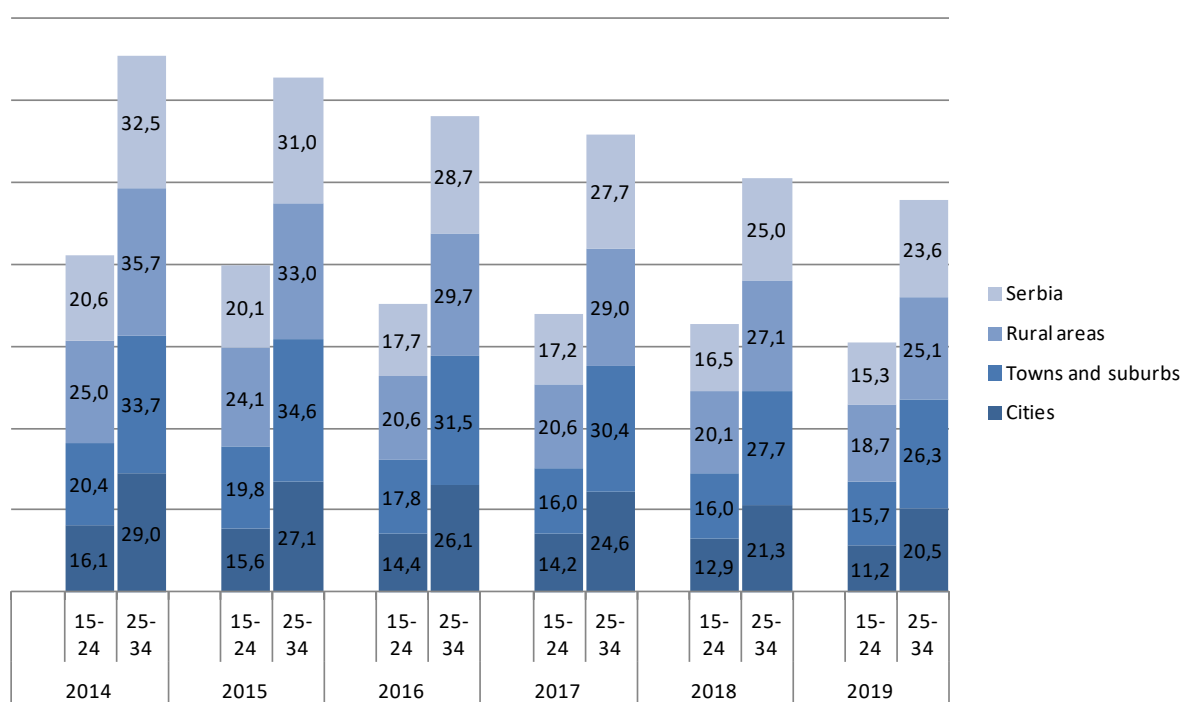
Chart 5. NEET rate by degree of urbanisation, for all years from 2014 to 2019, in %



Source: Eurostat (edat_ifse_36) – data extracted in 20.06.2020

The trend of the NEETs number decrease is evident for all the age groups, across the entire country, and for all degrees of urbanisation and which is presented in Chart 6. However young people from subgroup 25-34 are more likely to belong to the NEET population than the 15-24 age subgroup since they are less likely to be in the education system at that age.

Chart 6. NEET rate by age subgroups and degree of urbanisation, for all years from 2014 to 2019



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_36) – data extracted in 20.06.2020



NEET rate (%) by age subgroups and by degree of urbanisation in Serbia, including absolute and relative change, is given in Table 5.

Based on the results presented in the Table 5, if observing the entire country of Serbia, in 2019 the largest percentage of NEETs is evidenced in the age group 25–29 years and it equals 25.2%. It is then followed by the 30–34 age group, with 22.1%. Luckily, all the age groups are expressing a strong decrease in the period 2014–2019, with the highest relative change in the case of the 20–24 age group, which equals 10.3%.

Based on the level of urbanisation, the largest level of NEETs is evidenced in the rural region in the age group 20 – 24 at 32.1%, then in the age group 25–29, with 27.9%. Optimistically, all the groups have shown a decrease in the period 2014–2019. Hopefully they will attain the EU average in the near future if such trends continue.

Table 5. NEET rate (%) by age subgroups and by degree of urbanisation in Serbia, including absolute and relative change, for the period 2014-2019

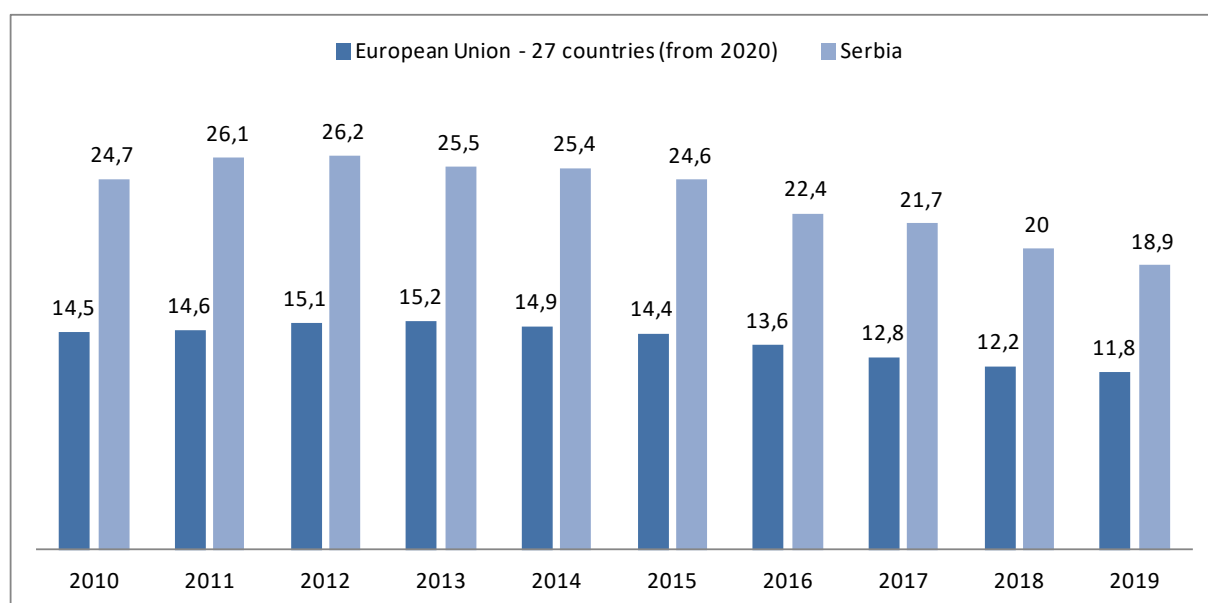
	2010	2014	2019	Relative change 2010-2014 (Absolute change 2010-2014)	Relative change 2014-2019 (Absolute change 2014-2019)	Relative change 2010-2019 (Absolute change 2010-2019)
Country						
15-19	9.5	11.5	9.4	2.0 (21.1)	-2.1 (-18.26)	-0.1 (-1.05)
20-24	30.8	28.9	20.5	-1.9 (-6.2)	-8.4 (-29.07)	-10.3 (-33.44)
25-29	34.0	33.7	25.2	-0.3 (-0.9)	-8.5 (-25.22)	-8.8 (-25.88)
30-34	31.4	31.4	22.1	0.0 (0.0)	-9.3 (-29.62)	-9.3 (-29.62)
Cities						
Age groups						
15-19	a.	8.4	5.7	b.	-2.7 (-32.14)	c.
20-24	a.	22.4	16	b.	-0.10 (-28.57)	c.
25-29	a.	29.9	22.4	b.	-7.50 (-25.08)	c.
30-34	a.	28.3	19	b.	-9.30 (-32.86)	c.
Towns and suburbs						
Age groups						
15-19	a.	10.8	10.7	b.	-0.10 (-0.93)	c.
20-24	a.	29.6	20.4	b.	-9.20 (-31.08)	c.
25-29	a.	34.7	25.5	b.	-9.20 (-26.51)	c.
30-34	a.	32.8	27	b.	-5.80 (-17.68)	c.
Rural areas						
Age groups						
15-19	a.	14.6	11.9	b.	-2.70 (-18.49)	c.
20-24	a.	34.8	32.1	b.	-2.70 (-7.76)	c.
25-29	a.	37	27.9	b.	-9.10 (-24.59)	c.
30-34	a.	34.3	22.4	b.	-11.90 (-34.69)	c.

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted in 29.04.2020

Notes: a. Data not available in Eurostat databases; b. and c. relative changes could not be calculated due to data missing for 2010

The total percentage of NEETs in Serbia, compared to the EU average, for the period 2010–2019 is presented in Chart 7.

Chart 7. Comparison of NEETs in Serbia to EU average, in %



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_36) – data extracted in 20.06.2020

In the period 2010–2019, the NEET rate is declining in Serbia for all three degrees of urbanisation. In comparison to EU countries, Serbia remains well above the European average, but with a tendency of lowering the existing gap.



If comparing the percentage of NEETs in Serbia to the NEETs average in the EU, which is 14% for the year 2019, the percentage in Serbia is larger by 5.9 %. This is of course not a good indicator for Serbia. However, the comforting fact is that the percentage of NEETs in Serbia is decreasing steadily over the years. Hence, the absolute change for the period 2010 to 2019 is -6.5, with a relative change of -24.62%. The homologous variation equals -1.3.

When analysing the difference for the urban and the rural regions, the NEETs percentage in Serbia is 3.7% larger than the EU average, for the cities as urban regions; 6.9% larger for the towns and suburbs; and, 7.2% for the rural regions. This is the evidence that the rural regions in Serbia are largely underdeveloped compared to the EU average. Also, the positive fact is that the absolute and the relative decrease for the NEETs percentage in Serbia is the highest for the rural regions (-8.3% and -27.21% respectively), compared to the towns and suburbs (-6.2% and -22.46% respectively) and cities (-7.0% and -29.66% respectively).

When it comes to comparison based on the NEETs gender, there are no significant differences. The percentage of male NEETs is 6%, compared with 5.9% for females. The most important difference is with NEETs in rural areas, where there are 6.1% male and 8.6% of female NEETs.



4. CONCLUSIONS

MonYouth population | The analysis of the total youth population in Serbia aged 15–24 years, as well as youth populations living in different areas of urbanisation, for the period 2010–2019, showed a declining trend. The reason for this is in strongly negative demographic trends in the entire population due to low birth rates. Another reason for the diminishing young population is very extensive migration towards Western Europe and the United States of America. Due to the poor social, economic, and living conditions, the most common group of people that decide to migrate are young and educated people (the so-called “brain drain”).

Youth employment and unemployment | During the period 2014–2019 (for which data is available for the case of Serbia) it can be observed that the youth employment rate is increasing in all areas of urbanisation. Consequently, the level of unemployment in Serbia is constantly decreasing in the period 2014–2019. This trend is similar for all three areas of urbanisation. Although these seems to be very good results, this should be observed in the context of the previously described decrease of the total youth population in Serbia. Namely young people leave Serbia and this way the number of employable people decreases which in turn leads to an artificial decrease in the unemployment rate.

Educational attainment | Educational attainment | The decrease in the number of early school leavers is recorded in the case of Serbia as a whole, including cities and rural areas. This trend is recorded only for the towns and suburbs, for the period 2014–2019. If observing the entire country of Serbia, the level of the ISCED 0–2 educated youth saw a decrease while the education levels of ISCED 3–4 and ISCED 5–8 increased during the same period.

NEETs | During the period 2010–2019, the NEET rate has been declining in Serbia in all three degrees of urbanisation. In comparison to EU countries, Serbia is still above the European average. Serbia is a candidate country for the European Union and as such strives to reach the European average in all segments of development. To achieve this, many strategies and plans were adopted in Serbia aiming to decrease the number of NEETs. Considering the results presented in this report, it can be concluded that the results are positive but not as yet satisfactory.



5. REFERENCES

Azanjac, T., Bradic, D., Krivokapic, Dj., Spoerri, M., & Stojic, T. (2014). Youth and Public Policy in Serbia, Open Society Foundations, Druckerei Lokay, Reinheim, Germany.

Baucal, A., & Stojanović, J. (2011). Indicators of Equal Access to Quality Education for Roma. Fund for an Open Society, Belgrade.

CeSID & MOS (Ministry for Youth and Sport) (2007), Report on the Participation of Young People in Societal Life. Retrieved from https://v-scout.org.rs/wp-content/uploads/biblioteka/istrazivanje-o-mladima/Aktivizam_mladih.pdf

CeSID. (2019). The position and the needs of youth in Serbia, field survey. Belgrade. Retrieved from <https://www.mos.gov.rs/public/documents/upload/sport/inspekcija/Polozaj%20i%20potrebe%20mladih%20u%20Republici%20Srbiji%202019.pdf>.

Law on Fundamentals of the Education System. (2020). Official Gazette of RS no. 88/2017, 27/2018 – oth. law, 10/2019, 27/2018 – oth. law and 6/2020. Retrieved from https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_osnovama_sistema_obrazovanja_i_vaspitanja.html

Law on Higher Education (2020) Official Gazette of Republic of Serbia, no. 88/2017, 73/2018, 27/2018 – oth. law, 67/2019 and 6/2020 – oth. laws. Retrieved from https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_visokom_obrazovanju.html

Law on Volunteering. (2010). Official Gazette of Republic of Serbia, No. 36/10). Retrieved from https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_volontiranju.html

Law on Youth. (2020). Official Gazette of Republic of Serbia, No. 50/11 Retrieved from https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_mladima.html

National Strategy for Youth for the period from 2015 to 2025. (2015). Official Gazette of Republic of Serbia, No. 22/15. Retrieved from <http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2015/22/1/reg>



COST Action CA18213
Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural
NEETs social exclusion

National Youth Strategy. (2008). Official Gazette of RS, no. 55/2008. Retrieved from https://www.osobesainvaliditetom.rs/attachments/O16_Nacionalna%20strategija%20za%20mlade.pdf

Operational Program for Human Resource Development, 2012–2013. Retrieved from <http://ipa4.me/en/o-programu/op-rljr>

Pejic, V. (2004). Young People in Serbia—Attitudes, Moral Values and Perspectives.

Journal for Labor and Social Affairs in Eastern Europe, 6(4), 65–78.

TransMONEE, UNICEF. (2009). Retrieved from <http://transmonee.org/>

UNICEF. (2002). A Brave New Generation Youth in Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Findings and Recommendations. UNICEF Belgrade.



6. IMPORTANT LINKS

Serbia.com. (2020). Retrieved from <http://www.serbia.com/about-serbia/>

Statistical office of the Republic of Serbia. (2020), Labor Force Survey in The Republic of Serbia, 2019. Retrieved from <https://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2020/PdfE/G20205658.pdf>

Statistical office of the Republic of Serbia. (2019). Estimated number of population in the Republic of Serbia, 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.stat.gov.rs/en-US/oblasti/stanovnistvo/procene-stanovnistva>

RURAL NEETS IN SLOVAKIA



2009/2019
OVERVIEW

AUTHORS

Alena Minns – alenaminns@gmail.com
Independent expert – N/A

Image by Pech Frantisek from Pixabay

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network: Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged.
Please cite this publication as "COST CA18213 Rural NEETs in Slovakia: 2009/2019 Overview.

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. CONTEXTUALIZATION	7
2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE	11
3. DATA ANALYSIS	12
3. 1. Population and youth population	12
• Youth population	12
3. 2. Employment and unemployment	19
• Youth employment	20
• Youth unemployment	22
3. 3. Education	27
• Young people by educational attainment level	27
• Early school leavers	29
3. 4. NEETs	32
• NEET rate	34
4. CONCLUSIONS	38
5. REFERENCES	40
6. IMPORTANT LINKS	42

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report describes the situation of rural Youths Neither in Employment, nor in Education or Training (NEET) aged between 15–34 years old, over the last decade (2009–2019) in Slovakia. To achieve this goal, the report utilised indicators of youth population, youth employment and unemployment, education and NEETs distribution and amount of ESLET in Slovakia according to different level of urbanisation (cities, towns and suburbs and towns). There are more male than females living in Slovakia. However, there are more females living in rural areas. Youth unemployment has been rising every year since 2009, peaking in 2012/2013, and after this peak it has decreased gradually leading to the lowest unemployment rate in a decade for the age category 15–39 in 2018–2019. Since the year 2010 the employment rate has been gradually increasing in all degrees of urbanisation. In last decade (2009–2019), the population aged 15–24 years old in Slovakia has become more educated. The highest increase was in last decade at level ISCED 5–8 in rural areas. ESLET has gradually increased in Slovakia nationwide. Between the years 2009–2019, there were an increased number of ESLET females in rural areas. The share of NEETs has slightly decreased in last decade in Slovakia.

ZHRNUTIE

Správa popisuje situáciu NEETov (t.j. vidieckych mladých ľudí, ktorí nepracujú, nevzdelávajú sa a ani nie sú súčasťou odbornej prípravy) vo veku 15 až 34 rokov za poslednú dekádu (2009 – 2019) na Slovensku. Správa prezentuje štatistické údaje o mládeži, a to populáciu, zamestnanosť/nezamestnanosť, úroveň vzdelania mladých, NEETov a podiel mladých ľudí, ktorí predčasne ukončili školskú dochádzku a odbornú prípravu na Slovensku podľa úrovne urbanizácie. Na Slovensku žije viac mladých mužov ako žien, avšak vo vidieckych oblastiach žije viac mladých žien. Nezamestnanosť mladých vrcholila v rokoch 2012 – 2013 a postupne sa znižovala. Od roku 2010 sa miera zamestnanosti postupne zvyšovala na všetkých úrovniach urbanizácie. V rokoch 2018 – 2019 bola vo vekovej kategórii 15 až 39 rokov najnižšia miera nezamestnanosti za poslednú dekádu.

Medzi rokmi 2009 – 2019 sa zvýšila na Slovensku úroveň vzdelania populácie vo veku 15 až 24 rokov. Najvyšší nárast bol za posledné desaťročie na úrovni vzdelania ISCED 5 – 8 vo vidieckych oblastiach. Počet NEETov sa na Slovensku za posledné desaťročie mierne znížil. Avšak množstvo mladých ľudí, ktorí predčasne ukončili školskú dochádzku a odbornú prípravu sa postupne zvýšilo na všetkých úrovniach urbanizácie. Za poslednú dekádu sa najviac zvýšil počet žien, ktoré predčasne ukončili školskú dochádzku zo vzdelávania a odbornej prípravy vo vidieckych oblastiach.

INTRODUCTION

This report contains three main parts. An introductory contextualisation part with the most relevant information about the Slovak social, economic and political situation in the last decades (2009–2019) and key youth policies based on relevant literature. A methodological note explains the database used and the statistical operations carried out. The analytical part focus on young people, by degree of urbanisation, concerning four main topics: population, employment, education and NEETs.



1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

Slovakia (Slovak Republic) is a landlocked country in Central Europe and it is a parliamentary representative democratic republic, with a multi-party system. The current government of the Slovak Republic was created on the basis of elections to the National Council of the Slovak Republic, which took place on 29th February 2020. The participation rate in election was quite high (67.47%), and was the consequence of major political turbulence.

Slovakia joined European Union in 2004 and Euro zone on the 1st January 2009.

Slovakia has been divided into a number of “Regions”, along with the capital city Bratislava. There are currently eight regions and 79 districts in Slovakia. Regions are territorial-statistical units corresponding to the NUTS II and NUTS III level, according to the Eurostat classification. The total number of all municipalities are 2.927 (Villages, Towns/suburbs and Cities). Of this amount, there are 2.749 villages – rural areas. The total number of Towns and Cities are 141 (Bačík, 2020).

According to findings from additional analyses of the Surveys in 7th Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue, 45.60% of youth in Slovakia identify themselves as living in the rural areas. The census population of The Slovak Republic, as of the 31st December 2017 stood at 5.443.120 inhabitants, of which 1.931.633 people were at the age of 30 or below. This accounted for 35.50% of the population (Slovak Statistics Office). According to the latest figures, the number of young people since 2013 has decreased by 2.85% (Youth Report, 2018). Legal adulthood in Slovakia is 18 years and according to the Act on Youth Work Support persons are youth in Slovakia from the age 0 up to age 30. Legal age for entry into the labour market is 15. Between the ages of 15 and 18 a “juvenile employee” has to work under special conditions as defined in the Labour Code.

Citizens of Slovakia are provided with universal health care, education and a comprehensive social security system. Slovakia is, in general, perceived as a high-income advanced economy that has a comprehensive social security system. Significant changes during the



past 10 years which influenced economy of Slovakia were associated with the European debt crisis, which has been taking place in the EU since the end of the year 2009. Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic crisis (which appeared after the March 2020) has also impacted upon the economy significantly.

Full entry of Slovakia to the EU brought many opportunities, which affected the youth sector, employment of youth and opportunities for development of crucial skills of youth which led to extensions of opportunities for them in labour market. One example is the implementation of National Projects financed through the European Social Fund (hereafter referred to as “ESF NP”) and the implementation of grant programs such as Erasmus+ (since January 2014) and the European Solidarity Corps program (since 2018), previously the European Voluntary Service. Youth work through EU funding was also an effective platform for the development of innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly through the activities of the ESF NP ‘KOMPRAX – Competences for Practice’ (IUVENTA, 2011–2015) and the NP of the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. The ESF NP ‘Practice to Employment’ offers a mentoring program and practical training delivered to young people younger than 29. The ESF NP ‘Graduate Practice Starts a Career’ program is aimed at creating opportunities for practical training and employment of long-term unemployed young people under 29 years old. Also, the NP ‘Successful on the labour market’ program supports self-employment and entrepreneurship of NEETs.

Education is provided free of charge in Slovakia via public schools (primary, lower secondary education and upper secondary education). Higher education and universities are free for full-time students also. The central public administration authority for education is responsible for the development of the content, goals and methods of education. The implementation of state policy on youth is undertaken via the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic (hereafter referred to as “MINEDU”). The pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education is provided by Municipalities and regional governance is responsible for upper secondary education. Compulsory school attendance in Slovakia is ten years long, starting at the age of 6 and lasting up to end of the school year in which the pupil reaches the age of 16 (according the “Educational Act”). Many disadvantaged children and children with special needs are attending special schools or classes.



In Slovakia, the number of children in pre-school education is much lower than the EU average. Early childhood care from the age of 6 months to 3 years is provided at facilities providing care for children up to 3 years of age (nurseries). Pre-primary education in Slovakia is provided at institutions called kindergartens. For 5-year-old children, attendance at kindergarten is compulsory (Eurydice, 2020). However, the offer of pre-school education does not cover to demand within society. Upper secondary education is divided into General, Vocational and Conservatories (Arts education). General secondary education is provided by four, five or eight-year Gymnasia (gymnázia) for ages 11–18 and is highly selective. The System of Vocational Education and Training has recently undergone significant changes (Eurydice, 2018/19). The Vocation Act of 1st September 2015 for Vocational Education and Training established a system of dual Education and Training. It is a model of vocational Education and training which attains the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for a profession, a group of occupations or various professional activities. MINEDU also covers Adult and Non-formal education, which is done through formal and non-formal education and informal learning.

The implementation of the state's policy towards children and youth, resulting from the Strategy of Slovak Republic for Youth for the years 2014–2020 (hereafter referred to as "Strategy") was allotted to IUVENTA – the Slovak Youth Institute as a directly managed organisation of the MINEDU. "Strategy" defines strategic objectives of the policy towards youth, and it reflects youth's needs particularly in the fields of young people's education, employment, creativity and entrepreneurship, participation, health and wellbeing, their relation to nature, global topics, social inclusion and volunteering. In 2020 IUVENTA and MINEDU started a participatory process in Slovakia of preparation of the Strategy of Slovak Republic for Youth for the years 2021–2028. However, it was cancelled by the new management of MINEDU, whom show no interest in developing youth policy. The stakeholders involved in the process are not only Youth Organisations and NGOs working with youth, but also different ministerial resorts and sectors. Important stakeholders in Youth sectors are NGOs working with Youth or national or regional umbrella organisations covering youth organisations, e.g., The Youth Council of Slovakia. Other organisations also play an important role in non-formal education, especially in the development of entrepreneurial skills acceleration and mentoring programmes (e.g., the National Business Centre and the Rural Parliament in Slovakia, which is focused upon the improvement of the quality of life in rural areas and supports rural initiatives in rural development).



Non-formal education is defined in Slovakia within the framework of the Act No. 282/2008 on Youth Work Support, which was amended in October 2019. The “Act” was amended after 11 years of its existence and the changes were based on the needs of the practice.

In 2019, the Slovak Youth Council organised “European Youth Dialog” (further to ESD), and concentrated its attention on the topics of employment, education and the lives of youth in rural areas. The main goal was to understand some aspects of employment of young people in Slovakia. The results of the survey shows how youth in Slovakia perceive opportunities for decent employment and employment conditions. The biggest problem they perceive is fairness in the labour market. They wish to have fair access to develop the skills they will need to enter into the labour market. Once they have access to the world of work, they wish to be treated fairly. Only 18% of young people agree with the statement that they face a fair approach and equal conditions in the labour market. 28% of youth believe that young people in Slovakia have equal access to good quality jobs that guarantee them fair working conditions.

Only 18% of youth in Slovakia believe that their country provides good opportunities for work in rural areas. Some of the measures which could help with youth unemployment and satisfaction of youth in rural areas are the promotion of the availability of jobs and the opportunities for employment in general. To support interesting job opportunities for young people, mentoring programmes for youth exist which will help them with employment or starting their own business. Conditions in Slovakia have gradually become better because of such systematic support and initiatives. However, it seems there should be more concentration paid to supporting conditions in rural areas. In particular, providing support incentives and a mentoring programme to help young people become involved in the agriculture sector and initiatives that help small businesses in the tourism sector. According to the ESD, youth in rural areas of Slovakia would also benefit from involvement in Traineeships programmes, engagement in the projects and/or volunteer work in Slovakia or around Europe.

One of the main problems from the point of young people in rural areas is access to good quality education with connection to the real needs of the labour market. It is also necessary to promote lifelong learning and non-formal learning by employers in order to connect formal education with the labour market. It is also important to support youth initiatives related to environmental protection and rural development.



2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The Slovak national report uses information gathered by the National Reports Editorial Team of the Rural NEET Youth Network in the Eurostat platform. The main data presented and analysed in this report are from the following Eurostat database:

- Population Statistics: [yth_demo_O20]
- EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS): [lfst_r_pgauwsc]; [lfst_r_ergau]; [lfst_r_urgau]; [edat_lfs_9913]; [edat_lfse_30]; [edat_lfse_29]

Selected indicators were extracted from the different databases according to two criteria:

- Time range: the previous decade (2009–2019) in order to have a sufficiently long period of time to capture the main changes and continuities in young people's trajectories in education, training and employment. The analysis mainly covered 3 dates – 2009–2013–2019 – in order to capture the impact of the economic and financial crisis that hit Europe and that, in most countries, reached its peak in 2012/2013.
- Age group: age group range varies accordingly to the data available in each indicator (15–24; 15–29; 15–34; and 15–39). Whenever possible, age range also covered young adult's data (30–34 and 35–39) in order to capture the extent of crisis impact on these age groups.

In addition to a descriptive analysis, in order to compare data main changes and continuities in different time periods, absolute and relative change were calculate considering the three main time points that were selected – 2009, 2013 and 2019. Absolute change refers to the simple difference in the indicator over two periods in time and is expressed in percentage points (pp); relative change expresses the change of a value of an indicator in an earlier period and is expressed in percentage terms.



3. DATA ANALYSIS

3. 1. Population and youth population

The census population of The Slovak Republic, as of the 31st December 2019 stood at 5,457.873 inhabitants, of which 2,665.350 people were male and 2,792.523 female. As of the 31st December 2009, it stood at 5,424.925 inhabitants. During the past 10 years, the number of people in Slovakia has increased by 0.60% (Slovak Statistics Office). The surface of the territory is 49,034.066.178 km². The density of population is 111.23 people/km². (People with permanent resident status per square kilometre was 30.6/km² (1.7.2019). In Rural areas the density is 60.98 people/km² (Density of population, 2019).

3. 1. 1. Youth population

For the needs of the Report, we understand Youth as a socio-demographic group of the population aged 15–34. However, in Slovakia according to the Act No. 282/2008 on youth work support, a youth in Slovakia is a person who is up to 30 years old. Therefore for some aspects of the report we will focus on the age group 15–30 age range.

Currently, there are 1,864.982 (31.12.2019) people at the age of 30 or below (0–30) living in Slovakia (Slovak Statistics Office, 2019). Young people represent 34.17% of the total population. Slovakia, unlike other European Union countries, does not face the lack of young people, yet Chart 1 indicates that the youth population in Slovakia is gradually decreasing.

As of the 31st December 2009, the population of youth (15–29 years) was 1,241.021 and (15–34 years) was 1,713.937. In 2019, youth population (15–29 years) declined to 947.400 and (15–34 years) likewise to 1,367.400. During the previous decade, the number of youth in the age category 15–29 years decreased by – 23.65%; in age category 15–34, by – 20.21%. The distribution of young people by age categories in Slovakia in the annual population count is: 4.8% (15–19); 5.4% (20–24) and, 8.2% (25–30), (Slovak Statistics Office, 2019).



Young people represent 34.17% of the total population. Slovakia does not face a lack of young people, however, the population of youth is decreasing gradually.

43.0% (588.000) of youth live in rural areas.

The highest decline of youth population is in rural areas – 32.41pp (– 282.000), especially for youth age 15–24 years.

Chart 1 indicates the redistribution of youth population 2010–2019 in Slovakia and all degrees of urbanisation according to age categories 15–19, 20–24, 25–29, 30–34. Chart 1 represents a gradual decline of youth in all age categories since 2009. The highest decrease in total (Table 2) was in age category 15–19 years old (– 28.70 pp; – 106.8%) and 20–24 years old (– 28.40 pp; – 119.6%). The highest decrease was in the cities (– 45.50 pp; – 41.6%) for those aged 20–24 years old and for 15–19 years old (– 37.20 pp; – 26.8%). In rural areas the numbers were (– 38.50 pp; – 76.9%) for those age 15–19 years old and (– 37.60 pp; – 83.9%) for 20–24 years old. In towns and suburbs there was an increased amount of youth aged 25–34 in 2013, but afterwards it started decreasing.

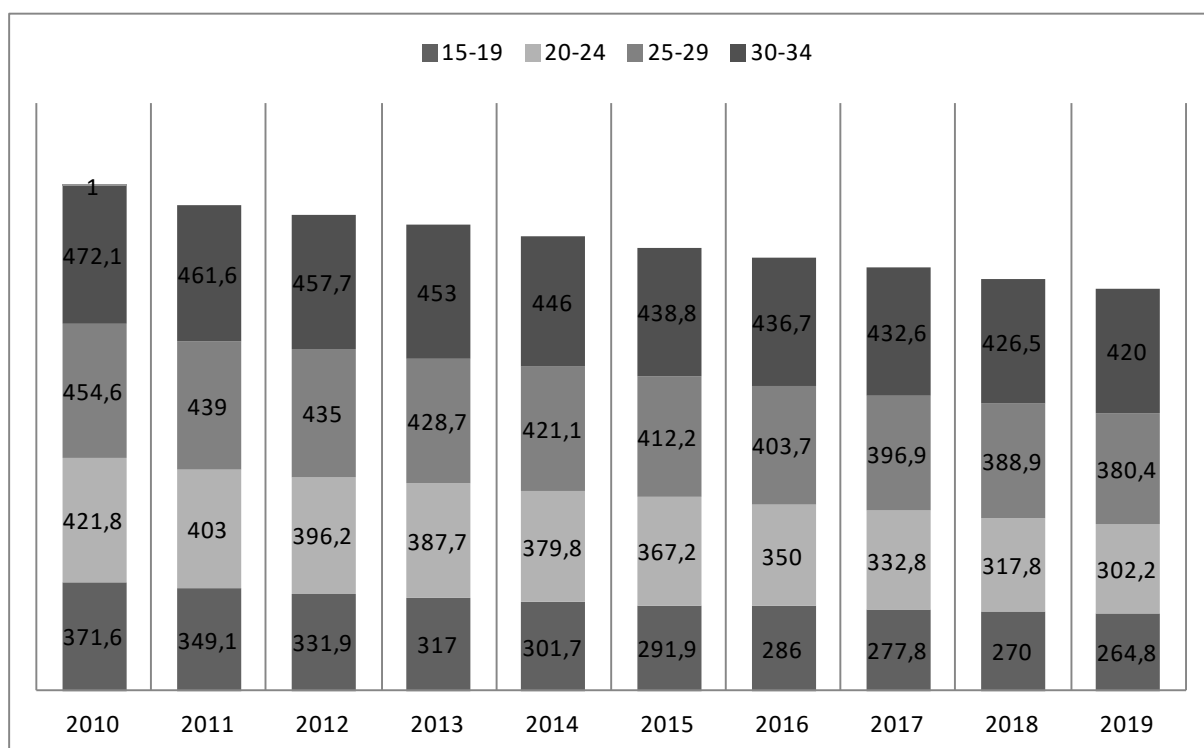
Table 1. Annual population by sex, age, degree of urbanisation and labour status (1 000) in Slovakia, sex: Total, (2010–2019)

GEO/TIME	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
15–19	371.6	349.1	331.9	317.0	301.7	291.9	286.0	277.8	270.0	264.8
20–24	421.8	403.0	396.2	387.7	379.8	367.2	350.0	332.8	317.8	302.2
25–29	454.6	439.0	435.0	428.7	421.1	412.2	403.7	396.9	388.9	380.4
30–34	472.1	461.6	457.7	453.0	446.0	438.8	436.7	432.6	426.5	4200
Total	1720.1	1652.7	1620.8	1586.4	1548.6	1510.1	1476.4	1440.1	1403.2	1367.4

Source: Eurostat (lfsa_pgauws) – extracted on 12.5.2020



Chart 1. Annual population by degree of urbanisation (1 000) in Slovakia, (2010–2019)



Source: Eurostat (lfsa_pgauws) – extracted on 12.5.2020

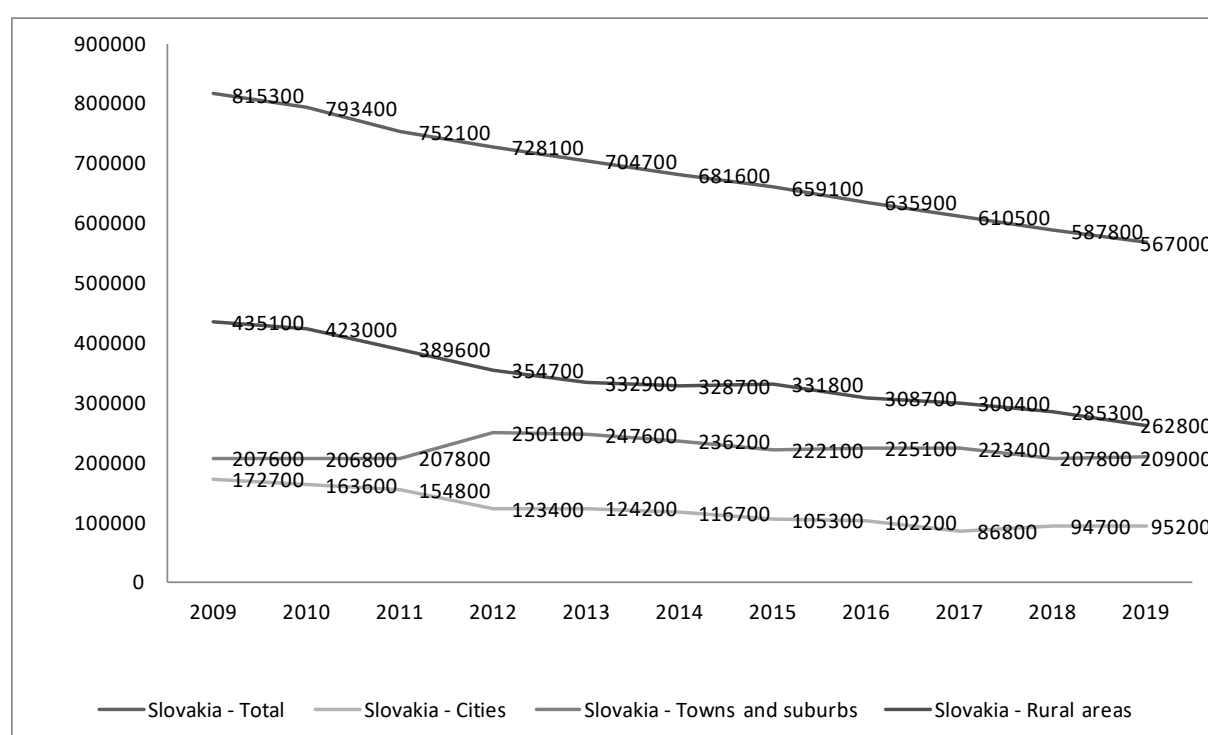
Table 2. Annual population by sex, age, degree of urbanisation and labour status (1 000) in Slovakia, including absolute and relative change (2010–2013, 2013–2010, 2010–2019)

	2010	2013	2019	Absolute change 2010–2013 (Relative change 2010–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2010–2019 (Relative change 2010–2019)
Country						
Overall	1720	1586	1367	7.80 pp (–134.000)	– 13.80 (– 219.000)	– 20.52 (– 353.000)
15–19	3716	3170	264.8	– 14.70 pp (– 54.6%)	– 16.50 pp (– 52.2%)	– 28.70 pp (–106.8%)
20–24	4218	3877	302.2	– 8.10 pp (– 34.1%)	– 22.10 pp (– 85.5%)	– 28.40 pp (– 119.6%)
25–29	454.6	428.7	380.4	– 5.70 pp (– 25.9%)	– 11.30 pp (– 48.3%)	– 16.30 pp (– 74.2%)
30–34	472.1	453.0	420.0	– 4.00 pp (– 19.1%)	– 7.30 pp (– 33.0%)	– 11.00 pp (– 52.1%)
Cities						
Overall	401.0	313.0	274.0	– 21.94 pp (– 88)	– 12.46 pp (– 39)	– 31.67 pp (– 127)
15–19	72.1	51.4	45.3	– 28.70 pp (– 20.7%)	– 12.00 pp (– 6.1%)	– 37.20 pp (– 26.8%)
20–24	91.5	72.8	49.9	– 20.40 pp (– 18.7%)	– 31.50 pp (– 22.9%)	– 45.50 pp (– 41.6%)
25–29	114.7	88.0	74.3	– 23.30 pp (– 26.7%)	– 15.60 pp (– 13.7%)	– 35.00 pp (– 40.4%)
30–34	122.3	100.8	104.8	– 17.60 pp (– 21.5%)	4.00 pp (– 4.0%)	– 14.30 pp (– 17.5%)
Towns and suburbs						
Overall	453.0	561.0	505.0	23.84 pp (108)	– 9.98 pp (– 56)	11.47 pp (52)
15–19	99.6	111.0	96.0	11.44 pp (11.4%)	13.51 pp (–15.0%)	– 3.61 pp (– 3.6%)
20–24	107.1	136.6	113.0	27.54 pp (29.5%)	17.28 pp (– 23.6%)	5.50 pp (5.9%)
25–29	118.5	153.9	141.7	29.90 pp (35.4%)	7.90 pp (– 12.2%)	19.60 pp (23.2%)
30–34	127.4	159.5	153.9	25.20 pp (32.1%)	– 3.51 pp (– 5.6%)	20.80 pp (26.5%)
Rural areas						
Overall	870.0	712.0	588.0	– 18.16pp (– 158)	– 17.41pp (– 124)	– 32.41pp (– 282)
15–19	199.9	154.7	123.0	– 22.60 pp (– 45.2%)	– 20.49 pp (– 31.7%)	– 38.50 pp (–76.9%)
20–24	223.2	178.3	139.3	– 20.12 pp (– 44.9%)	– 21.87 pp (– 39.0%)	– 37.60 pp (– 83.9%)
25–29	221.4	186.8	164.3	– 15.63 pp (– 34.6%)	– 12.04 pp (– 22.5%)	– 25.80 pp (– 57.1%)
30–34	225.5	192.6	161.4	–14.59 pp (– 32.9%)	– 16.20 pp (– 31.2%)	– 28.42 pp (– 64.1%)

Source: Eurostat (lfsa_pgaus) – data extracted on 12.5.2020

According to the Eurostat data (2019) 43.0% (588.000) of youth live in rural areas. Data from Chart 3 also indicates that the population of youth (15–24 years old) living in rural areas and cities is decreasing gradually every year. The highest decrease is in rural areas. Since 2010 till 2019 the decrease was (– 38.50pp; – 76.9%). In towns and suburbs there was an increase of youth population during 2012–2013, but this then started to decrease gradually.

Chart 2. The evolution of the ratio of youth population in Slovakia, (age group 15–24) by degree of urbanisation – cities, towns and suburbs and rural areas in thousand, (2009–2019)



Source: Eurostat: Ifsa_pgauws. Population by sex, age, country of birth, labour status and degree of urbanisation, data extracted in 12.5.2020

Table 3. Population by sex, age, country of birth, labour status and degree of urbanisation in Slovakia (1000), (age group 15–24), (2009–2019)

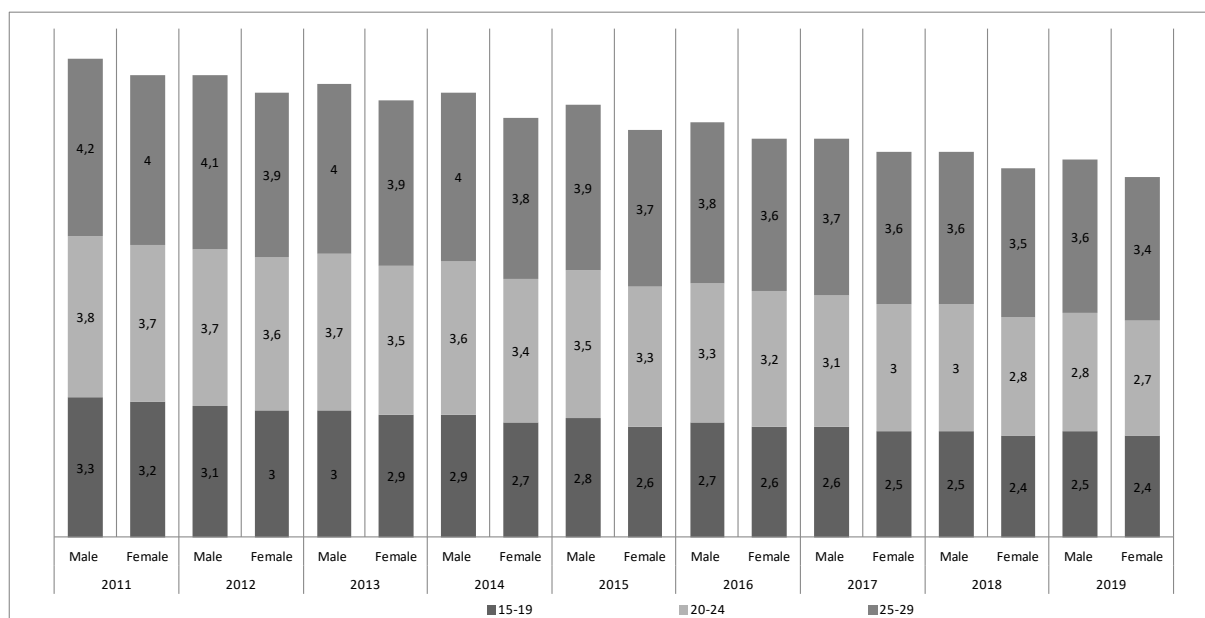
GEO/TIME	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total	815.3	793.4	752.1	728.1	704.7	681.6	659.1	635.9	610.5	587.8	567.0
Cities	172.7	163.6	154.8	123.4	124.2	116.7	105.3	102.2	86.8	94.7	95.2
Towns	207.6	206.8	207.8	250.1	247.6	236.2	222.1	225.1	223.4	207.8	209.0
Rural areas	435.1	423.0	389.6	354.7	332.9	328.7	331.8	308.7	300.4	285.3	262.8

Source: Eurostat (lfsa_pgauws) – extracted on 12.5.2020

Chart 3 summarises the evolution of youth population between 2011–2019, divided into male and females. In 2019, according to Eurostat data there were more male than females living in Slovakia (15–34 years old), specifically 668.000 females and 699.400 males. However, Chart 4 indicates the ratio of male and females in rural areas and we can observe that the ratio is more female than male. Nevertheless, in one decade the entire youth population in all age groups gradually decreased in rural areas and the population of female youth is no exception. In 2010, there were 423.600 females living in rural areas, compared to 2019 when the number of females dropped to 290.200 in total. This decrease represented a – 31.50% relative change. In rural areas, the population of males decreased from 368.100 youth (15–34 age group) in 2010, to 251.300 males in 2019. This decrease represents a – 31.70% relative change.

There are more males aged 15–34 years old living in Slovakia, but more females living in rural areas.

Chart 3. Male and Female ratio of young people in the total population 2011–2019, thousand



Source: Eurostat (Ifsa_pgauws) – extracted on 12.5.2020

Redistribution of youth in different regions of Slovakia also plays important role, especially in the context of unemployment. The highest population of Youth (0–30) is in the east of Slovakia in Prešov (17.41%) and the Košice Region (15.9%). The lowest is in the Trnava Region (9.65%), in the lower, west part of Slovakia.



3. 2. Employment and Unemployment

In 2019, the overall unemployment rate in Slovakia was 4.92%. In March 2020, it slowly started increasing again to 5.19% due the COVID-19 economic downturn (UPSVAR, 2020). Within the last 10 years, the unemployment rate was highest in 2012 (14.44%). The situation on the labour market improved significantly in 2016, 2018 and 2019. In comparison with 2012, the unemployment rate dropped by nearly – 65.92%.

The unemployment rate was peaking in 2012, but since then it has been decreasing nearly every year.

The most affected regions in Slovakia are the South-east and East of Slovakia. In 2019, the average unemployment rate was 4.92% in Slovakia. In the Kosice Region in the east of Slovakia, it was 7.57%. The highest employment rate is in the Bratislava and Trnava Region.

Table 4. Overall unemployment rate in Slovakia 2009–2019 (all productive age groups)

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
12.66%	12.46%	13.59%	14.44%	13.50%	12.29%	10.63%	4.92%	6.42%	5.04%	4.92%

Source: Eurostat (lfsa_pgauws) – extracted on 12.5.2020



3. 2. 1. Youth employment

The **regional factor**, which negatively affects overall employment and job opportunities in Slovakia negatively impacts upon the employment of young people also. Regional disparities, especially lack of job offers and differential remuneration are the main cause for the depopulation of regions. The highest unemployment of youth is in Žilina, Banská Bystrica, Košice and Prešov Region and this means that young people are forced to emigrate to regions abroad and within Slovakia. This causes depopulation of certain municipalities, especially in rural areas.

2018 and 2019 saw the lowest unemployment rate in a decade for the age category 15–39. The employment rate was 61.4% in 2018 and 61.1% in 2019 (total for all degrees of urbanisation). Since 2010, the employment rate has been gradually increasing. Table 5 indicates the evolution of youth employment by degree of urbanisation. It describes a slow increase in all degrees of urbanisation. The highest increase was in age category 20–24 in rural areas by (23.6pp; 9.4%). In particular, the employment rate increased after the year 2013. However, in towns and suburbs there was also an increase between the years 2013–2019 (90pp; 1.8%) in age category 15–19. According to degree of urbanisation, there was a decline in age category 30–34 in rural areas by (– 2.7pp; – 2.0%) and in towns and suburbs by (–1.6pp; –1.3%).

In 2018 and 2019, there was the lowest unemployment rate in a decade.

The highest increase of employment was in rural areas by 18.1 pp (5.59%) overall and for the age category 20–24.

Table 5. Employment rates by age and degree of urbanisation (%) in Slovakia, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Overall	50.05%	47.68%	54.66%	– 4.7 pp (– 2.4%)	14.6 pp (7.0%)	9.2 pp (4.6%)
15–19	3.1%	2.3%	3.4%	– 25.8 pp (–0.8%)	47.8 pp (1.1%)	9.7 pp (0.3%)
20–24	40.4%	35.2%	43.7%	12.9 pp (–5.2%)	24.1 pp (8.5%)	8.2 pp (3.3%)
25–29	70.1%	67.0%	75.0%	– 4.4 pp (–3.1%)	11.9 pp (8.0%)	6.7 pp (4.9%)
30–34	76.3%	71.8%	76.4%	– 5.90 pp (–4.5%)	6.4 pp (4.6%)	.13 pp (0.1%)
Cities						
Overall (a)	59.7%	60.9%	67.3%	2.0 pp (1.2%)	10.5 pp (6.4%)	12.7 pp (7.6%)
15–19	3.0%	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)
20–24	41.0%	32.7%	42.6%	– 20.20 pp (–8.3%)	30.30 pp (9.9%)	3.90 pp (1.6%)
25–29	75.2%	72.9%	83.0%	– 3.10 pp (–2.3%)	13.90 pp (10.1%)	10.40 pp (7.8%)
30–34	76.9%	77.7%	80.2%	1.00 pp (–0.8%)	3.20 pp (2.5%)	4.30 pp (3.3%)
Towns and suburbs						
Overall	50.99%	47.98%	52.94%	– 5.9 pp (– 3.01%)	10.3 pp (4.96%)	3.8 pp (1.95%)
15–19	3.0%	2.0%	3.8%	33.0 pp (–1.0%)	90.0 pp (1.8%)	26.7 pp (0.8%)
20–24	41.1%	33.3%	37.2%	– 19.0 pp (– 7.8)	11.7 pp (3.9%)	– 9.5 pp (– 3.9%)
25–29	69.9%	67.1%	71.6%	– 4.0 pp (– 2.8%)	6.7 pp (4.5%)	2.4 pp (1.7%)
30–34	79.4%	74.1%	78.1%	– 6.7 pp (– 5.3%)	5.4 pp (4.0%)	–1.6 pp (–1.3%)
Rural areas						
Overall	47.41%	44.87%	53.00%	– 5.4 pp (– 2.54%)	11.8 pp (8.13%)	18.1 pp (5.59%)
15–19	3.2%	2.6%	3.7%	–18.8 pp (0.6%)	– 42.3 pp (–1.1%)	15.6 pp (0.5%)
20–24	39.9%	37.7%	49.3%	– 5.5 pp (– 2.2%)	30.8 pp (11.6%)	23.6 pp (9.4%)
25–29	67.5%	64.0%	74.2%	– 5.2 pp (– 3.5%)	15.9 pp (10.2%)	9.9 pp (6.7%)
30–34	74.3%	66.8%	72.3%	–10.1 pp (– 7.5%)	8.2 pp (5.5%)	– 2.7pp (– 2.0%)

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergau) – extracted on 29.04.2020

Notes: (a) Overall indicators for cities are presented for the 15–39 years old group; (b) data not available.



3. 2. 2. Youth unemployment

According to Eurostat, data in last decades for all youth age groups shows that the unemployment rate has rapidly decreased. In 2019, the unemployment rate for the total population in Slovakia reached 4.92%. Table 6 summarises the unemployment rate for youth from 15–39 years old and indicates that the unemployment reached in 2019 (7.6%) was the lowest in the decade and lower than average in the EU. In age category 20–24, there was decline by (– 46.7 pp; – 11.4%), for 25–29 by (– 55.5 pp; – 7.6%) and for 30–34 by (– 32 pp; – 3.5%). Youth unemployment has been rising every year since 2009, peaking in 2012/2013. After its peak, it began decreasing gradually. Between the years 2013–2019 the unemployment declined by (– 57.9 pp; – 17.9%); (– 67.2 pp; – 12.5%); and, by (– 47.8 pp; – 6.6%) (Table 6). For example, 2012 had the highest unemployment rate (15–24) 34.0%. In 2009, the unemployment rate was 27.3%, in 2013 (33.7%) and 2019 (16.1%).

In 2018, the unemployment rate for age category 15–25 was 14.9%, and in 2019 this increased to 16.1%. It was the lowest unemployment rate for youth in a decade. The highest unemployment rate in this category was in 2012 (34.0%).

Chart 4 indicates the pattern of evolution of unemployment according to different degrees of urbanisation. In Slovak towns and suburbs, after the year 2018, the unemployment rate increased slightly. The lowest unemployment rate was in Slovak cities; in 2019 it was only 4.1% (15–39 years old). The lowest unemployment rate in age category (30–34) was 3.9% and 4.5% (25–29) in cities in 2019. In rural areas in 2019, in age category 25–29, it was only 6.0%. According to the Eurostat data, we can perceive the highest decrease in age category 25–29. In the last decade it decreased (– 55.5 pp; – 7.6%) in total: in cities it was (– 52.1 pp; – 4.9%) and the highest decrease was in rural areas (– 65.1 pp; – 11.2%) for age group 25–29.

In rural areas, there has been quite a high decrease of unemployment for youth in age group 25–34. The highest unemployment rate is in age category (15–19) across all degrees of urbanisation. Comparing the degrees of urbanisation, there is only small difference between rural areas and towns and suburbs. Despite decreased unemployment in age category 15–19 by (– 16.5 pp; – 8.8%) in general, the unemployment rate for this category remains quite high. In



2009, it was 53.3%; in 2013 it was 62.4%; and, in 2019 it was 44.5%. Slovakia belongs to the group of countries in EU with highest rate of unemployment in this age group. In 2019, it was the third highest unemployment rate. The average for the EU was 18.2%. In rural areas it decreased by a - 20.9% relative change.

The unemployment rate has rapidly decreased in all urban areas. Youth unemployment has been rising every year since 2009, peaking in 2012/2013. After its peak, it began gradually decreasing. In rural areas, there has been a quite high decrease of unemployment for youth in age group 25–34. The highest decrease was for age category 20–29 in rural areas.

Table 6. Unemployment rates by sex, age and degree of urbanisation (%) in Slovakia, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Overall (a)	14.4%	17.5%	7.6%	87.85 pp (3.1%)	– 56.57 pp (9.9%)	– 47.22 pp (– 6.8%)
15–19	53.3%	62.4%	44.5%	17.1 pp (9.1%)	– 28.7 pp (–17.9%)	– 16.5 pp (– 8.8%)
20–24	24.4%	30.9%	13.0%	26.6 pp (6.5%)	– 57.9 pp (–17.9%)	– 46.7 pp (– 11.4%)
25–29	13.7%	18.6%	6.1%	35.8 pp (4.9 %)	– 67.2 pp (–12.5%)	– 55.5 pp (– 7.6%)
30–34	10.7%	13.8%	7.2%	29.0 pp (3.1%)	– 47.8 pp (– 6.6%)	– 32.7 pp (– 3.5%)
Cities						
Overall (a)	8.8%	12.1%	4.1%	37.5	– 66.1pp (– 8.0%)	–53.4 pp (– 4.7%)
15–19	N/A	b.	b.	b.	b.	b.
20–24	14.3%	26.5%	b.	85.3 pp (12.2%)	b.	b.
25–29	9.4%	13.6%	4.5%	44.7 pp (4.2%)	– 66.9 pp (– 9.1%)	– 52.1 pp (– 4.9%)
30–34	8.0%	7.4%	3.9%	70.0 pp (5.6%)	– 47.3 pp (– 3.5%)	– 51.3 pp (– 4.1%)
Towns and suburbs						
Overall (a)	12.8%	16.7%	8.5%	30.5 pp (3.9%)	– 49.1 pp (– 8.2%)	– 33.6 pp (–4.3%)
15–19	57.8%	61.6%	46.0%	6.6 pp (3.8%)	– 25.3 pp (–15.6%)	– 20.4 pp (– 11.8%)
20–24	23.2%	30.0%	18.6%	29.3 pp (6.8%)	– 38.0 pp (–11.4%)	– 19.8 pp (– 4.6%)
25–29	11.4%	17.9%	7.1%	– 37.7 pp (–4.3%)	– 60.3 pp (–10.8%)	– 37.7 pp (– 4.3%)
30–34	8.7%	12.8%	7.0%	47.1 pp (4.1%)	– 45.3 pp (– 5.8%)	– 47.0 pp (– 6.2%)
Rural areas						
Overall (a)	17.8%	20.8%	8.8%	16.8 pp (3.0%)	57.7 pp (–12%)	– 50.6 pp (–9.0%)
15–19	56.5%	63.7%	44.7%	12.7 pp (7.2%)	– 29.8 pp (– 19.0%)	– 20.9 pp (– 11.8%)
20–24	28.6%	32.8%	11.4%	14.7 pp (4.2%)	– 65.2 pp (– 21.4%)	– 60.1 pp (– 17.2%)
25–29	17.2%	21.5%	6.0%	25.0 pp (4.3%)	– 72.1 pp (– 15.5%)	– 65.1 pp (– 11.2%)
30–34	13.2%	18.0%	9.7%	– 26.5 pp (–3.5%)	– 46.1 pp (– 8.3%)	– 26.5 pp (– 3.5%)

Source: Eurostat: (lfst_r_urgau) – extracted on 29.04.2020

Notes: a. Overall indicators are presented for 15–39 years old group from the total population; b. data not available.



The unemployment rate in Slovakia (for age group 15–39) was higher than the EU average until 2014 and the difference was notable. Since 2010, in order to support employment opportunities many information and advisory services have been established, which have resulted in positive outcomes. According to a Council Recommendation of April 2013, Slovakia has committed to the implementation of the Youth Guarantee. The Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan was the most complex strategy to strengthen youth employment in Slovakia. The Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family implemented National Projects financed through EU social Funds aimed at supporting the employment of young people below the age of 29. Since November 2012, the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family in Slovakia (supported through the national project) has aimed at promoting employment and reducing unemployment of selected groups of jobseekers. The project created 12.028 new jobs for youth age 29 and below. (The Youth Guarantee. Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family).

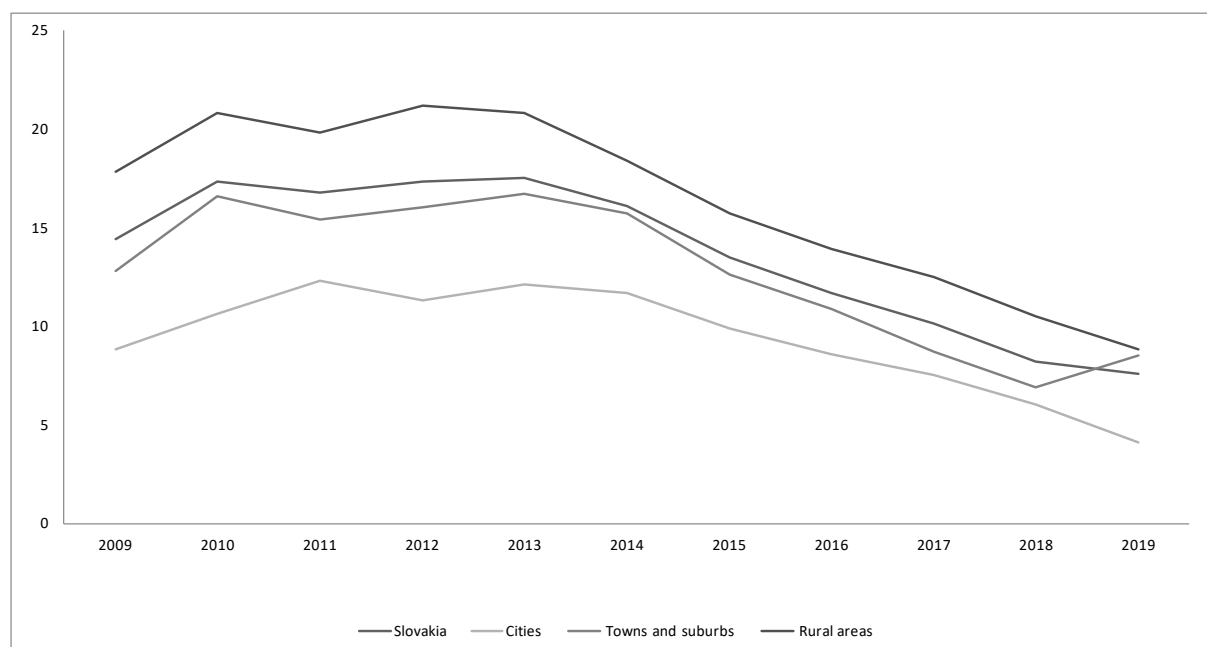
Table 7. Unemployment rates by sex, age and degree of urbanisation (%), (age group 15–39)

GEO/TIME	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
EU 28	11.7	12.6	12.7	13.9	14.3	13.4	12.2	11.2	10.0	9.0	8.3
Slovakia Total	14.4	17.3	16.8	17.3	17.5	16.1	13.5	11.7	10.1	8.2	7.6

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau) – extracted on 29.04.2020



Chart 4. Unemployment rates by sex, age and degree of urbanisation (%) in Slovakia, (2009 – 2019)



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau) - extracted on 29.04.2020



3. 3. Education

29% of Youth in Slovakia believe that they have good access to quality of education.

According to the EU dialog in Slovakia 2019, formal education can't cover all aspects of preparation for employment. So many skills are youth learning in non-formal education.

(Youth dialog, 2019)

3. 3. 1. Young people by educational attainment level

We used data for educational attainment for the age group 15–24 years-old and compared it across different levels of urbanisation and educational attainments. The comparison were: Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0–2); Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 and 4); and, tertiary education (levels 5–8).

In 2019, the attainment level for ISCED 0–2 was 47.30% in all degrees of urbanisation throughout Slovakia. In 2019, the level of ISCED level 0–2 attained by youth was more than in 2009. In the cities this level reached 45.3%, in towns and suburbs 48.0%, and in rural areas 47.5% (in 2019). The number of 15–24 year-olds having less than ISCED 0–2 education increased over the previous decade 11.0 pp in cities (4.5%); in towns and suburbs by 5.7 pp (2.6%); and, in rural areas only by 3.30 pp (1.5%).

ISCED 3–4 attainment in 2019 was 44.2% of youth in all areas. In cities it was 44.4%, in towns and suburbs 43.8%, and in rural areas it was 44.6%. ISCED 3–4 decreased over the previous decade by (–13.40 pp; – 6.9%) in the cities; by (–13.10 pp; 6.6%) in towns and suburbs; and by (–11.90 pp; 2.3%) in rural areas.

Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education gradually decreased in all levels of urbanisation within Slovakia.

ISCED 5–8 reached 8.4% youth in all areas (2019), 10.2% in cities, 8.3% in towns and suburbs and 7.9% in rural areas. Comparing the 2009–2019 levels of education, it can be seen that ISCED 5–8 increased rapidly by (82.61 pp; 3.8%) at the national level; by (29.1 pp; – 2.3%) in cities; and by (97.6 pp; 4.1%) in towns and suburbs. **The highest increase was in rural areas by (132.30 pp; 4.5%) in the previous decade.** Between 2009 – 2013, the level of tertiary education in towns and suburbs increased by (104.80 pp; 4.4%). In 2012, in Slovak cities the educational attainment peaked at 15.60% but since then rapidly decreased to 8.4% in 2014. After this, it started increasing again and in 2018 it had reached 12.0%.

Tertiary education increased rapidly by (132.30 pp; 4.5%) in rural areas.

Table 8. Population aged 15–24, by ISCED levels (%) and degree of urbanisation in Slovakia, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
ISCED 0–2	44.7%	44.4%	47.3%	0.67 pp (– 0.3%)	6.53 pp (2.9%)	5.82 pp (2.6%)
ISCED 3–4	50.7%	47.5%	44.2%	– 6.31 pp (– 3.2%)	6.95 pp (– 3.3%)	12.82 pp (– 6.5%)
ISCED 5–8	4.6%	8.1%	8.4%	76.09 pp (3.5%)	3.70 pp (0.3%)	82.61 pp (3.8%)
Cities						
ISCED 0–2	40.8%	42.5%	45.3%	4.20 pp (1.7%)	6.60 pp (2.8%)	11.00 pp (4.5%)
ISCED 3–4	51.3%	47.0%	44.4%	– 8.40 pp (– 4.3%)	–5.50 pp (– 2.6%)	–13.40 pp (– 6.9%)
ISCED 5–8	7.9%	10.4%	10.2%	31.60 pp (2.5%)	–1.90 pp (– 0.2%)	29.10 pp (2.3%)
Towns and suburbs						
ISCED 0–2	45.4%	43.0%	48.0%	– 5.30 pp (– 2.4%)	11.60 pp (5%)	5.70 pp (2.6%)
ISCED 3–4	50.4%	48.4%	43.8%	– 3.90 pp (2%)	– 9.50 pp (– 4.6%)	– 13.10 pp (6.6%)
ISCED 5–8	4.2%	8.6%	8.3%	104.80 pp (4.4%)	– 3.50 pp (0.3%)	97.60 pp (4.1%)
Rural areas						
ISCED 0–2	46.0%	46.0%	47.5%	0%	3.30 pp (1.5%)	3.30 pp (1.5%)
ISCED 3–4	50.6%	47.1%	44.6%	– 6.90 pp (3.5%)	– 20.90 pp (– 3.6%)	– 11.90 pp (2.3%)
ISCED 5–8	3.4%	6.8%	7.9%	100 pp (3.4%)	16.20 pp (1.1%)	132.30 pp (4.5%)

Source: Eurostat (edat_ifs_9913) – data extracted on 29.04.2020



3.3.2. Early school leavers

Data for Early School Leavers from Education and Training (further ESLET) was available only in age category 18–24 years old. We compared the data across different levels of degree of urbanisation for years 2009, 2013 and 2019. At the country level, the ESLET rate gradually increased. The highest increase of ESLET from 2009–2019 were in towns and suburbs. The difference was (155.0 pp; 6.2%). For males, the highest increase was between the years 2013–2019 (135.7 pp; 7.6%) in towns and suburbs. In total, all degrees of urbanisation the highest increase of ESLET was for females (92.7 pp; 3.8%) (2009–2019). The only decrease was for male ESLETs between 2013–2019 in rural areas (– 13.48 pp; – 1.2%). Between the years 2009–2019 the number of female ESLETs increased in rural areas by (40.30 pp; 2.3%). When it comes to sex-based comparisons, there are more male (13.2%) ESLET in towns and suburbs compared to females (10.2%). There was not a statistically important difference between males (7.7%) and females (8.8%) in rural areas in 2019, but there was an increase of ESLET females from 2009 onwards (40.3 pp; 2.3%).

In the previous decade, in Slovakia (all degree of urbanisation) increased number of ESLET. Especially the increase in the numbers of ESLET females. The only decrease was for male ESLETs between 2013–2019, in rural areas.

Table 8. Population aged 15–24, by ISCED levels (%) and degree of urbanisation in Slovakia, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
All degree of urbanisation						
18–24 total	4.9%	6.4%	8.30%	30.60 pp (1.5%)	29.70 pp (1.9%)	69.40 pp (3.4%)
18–24 male	5.7%	6.7%	8.80%	17.50 pp (1%)	31.30 pp (2.1%)	54.40 pp (3.1%)
18–24 female	4.1%	6.1%	7.90%	48.80 pp (2%)	29.50 pp (1.8%)	92.70 pp (3.8%)
Cities	a.	a.	a.	a.	a.	a.
Towns and suburbs						
18–24 total	5.1%	5.8%	11.7%	13.70 pp (0.7%)	101.70 pp (5.9%)	129.40 pp (6.6%)
18–24 male	7.9%	10.4%	10.2%	31.60 pp (2.5%)	–1.90 pp (– 0.2%)	29.10 pp (2.3%)
18–24 female	4.0%	6.0%	10.2%	50.00 pp (2%)	70.00 pp (4.2%)	155.00 pp (6.2%)
Rural areas						
18–24	6.2%	8.0%	7.9%	29.00 pp (1.8%)	– 1.25 pp (– 0.1%)	27.40 pp (1.7%)
18–24 male	6.7%	8.9%	7.7%	32.80 pp (2.2%)	– 13.48 pp (– 1.2%)	14.90 pp (1%)
18–24 female	5.7%	7.0%	8.0%	22.80 pp (1.3%)	14.30 pp (1%)	40.30 pp (2.3%)

Source: Eurostat (edat_ifse_30) – data extracted in 20.04.20

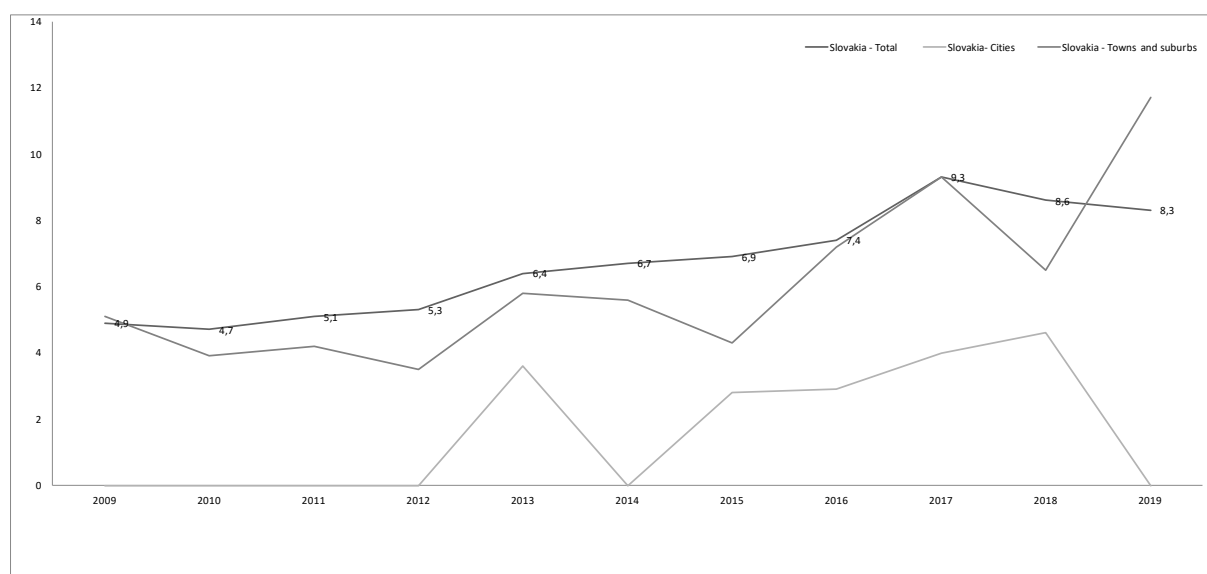
Note: a. data not available

Table 10. ESLET rates age group 18–24 in Slovakia, absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Total	4.90%	6.40%	8.30%	69.40 pp (3.40%)	30.36 pp (1.5%)	29.70 pp (1.9%)
Towns and suburbs	5.10%	5.80%	11.70%	129.40 pp (6.6%)	13.70 pp (0.7%)	101.70 pp (5.9%)
Rural areas	6.20%	8.00%	7.90%	27.40 pp (1.7%)	29.00 pp (1.80%)	– 1.20 pp (– 0.1%)

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_30) – data extracted in 20.04.20

Chart 5. Early school leavers from education and training by degree of urbanisation in Slovakia, (age group 18–24), 2009–2019.



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_30) – data extracted on 02.07.2020

The problem of ESLET and NEETS in rural areas (especially regarding marginalised Roma communities) is addressed by the Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Roma Inclusion 2020. There is a significant problem with a quite high percentage of early schools leavers from marginalised Roma communities, especially among young girls (EACEA, 2020).



3. 4. NEETs

NEET is an acronym that stands for “Not in Education, Employment, or Training”. It refers to a person who is unemployed, not in school or vocational training. Presently, we will consider NEETs aged between 15–34 for the needs of this report. In 2019, 17.20% of this group were NEETs in Slovakia. The total percentage of NEETs in the age category 15–34 in Slovakia, compared to the EU average, is higher by 26.50% (relative change). (Slovakia 17.20%, EU average 13.60%). During the previous decade, the change in the amount of NEETs was quite moderate changing by 8.5% (relative change). The highest amount of NEETs in Slovakia were seen in 2013 (21.5%) and 2014 (21.4%). The lowest amount of NEETs were in 2018 and 2019 (17.2%). Since 2015, the amount of NEETs has been decreasing. After 2010 until 2014, their number was increasing due the economic crises around 2010. 19.40% NEETs were in age category 15–29. The lowest amount of NEETs were in category 15–17, at only 4.30%. The highest decrease was seen in rural areas in the 20–24 age category between 2009 – 2019, representing a 40.30 pp. In the 15–19 age category, there was quite a high increase of NEETs: in total a 35.8% relative change during 2009–2019.

Since 2013 the amount of NEETs (aged 15–34) has decreased in all degrees of urbanisation. The largest decrease was from 2013 to 2019 in the cities (– 25.9% pp) and rural areas (– 24.70% pp). In 2013, Slovakia was in the highest bracket for NEETs (aged 15–34) with 21.50% (total). Between 2013–2019 amount of NEETs (total) dropped by relative change – 20.0% pp. In general, the amount of NEETs (aged 15–34) in Slovakia increased from 2009 to 2013 and then decreased in the following manner: total in all areas – 20.00% (relative change); cities – 25.90% (relative change); and, rural areas – 24.70% (relative change). Since 2013 (for ages 15–34) the amount of NEETS in rural areas was gradually decreased.

Age category 15–29.

In 2019, there were more female NEETs in rural areas (aged 15–29) (19.4%) than male (9.7%). This difference is statistically important, representing 9.7% absolute change. The share of NEET young females aged 15–29 is higher than the EU average.



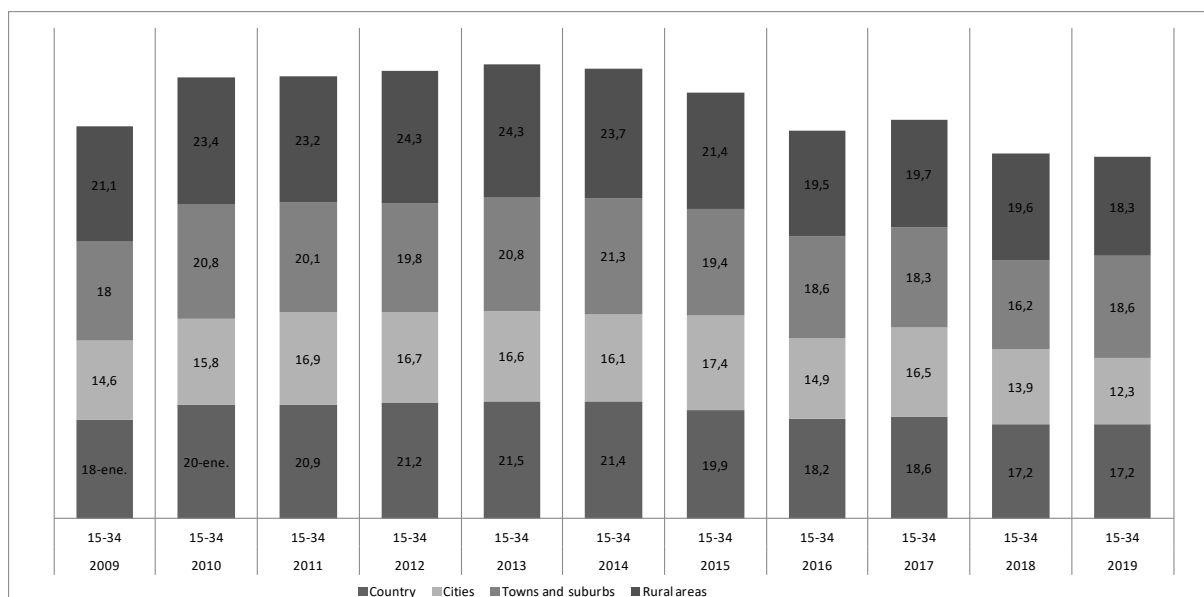
The largest share of NEETs females (15–29) lives in small towns and suburbs up to 23.3% (2019), comparing to 11.0% of male (2019). Rate for male is similar to EU average. The number of NEETs in rural areas has decreased. From 2009 – 2019, the number of NEETs (15–29) in rural areas decreased from 15.90% to 10.5%. The highest number of male NEETs in this age group was found in rural areas from 2012 to 2013 and in smaller towns/suburbs in 2011. The lowest amount of male NEETs was observed in 2018 (aged 15–29) in the cities (4.80%) and towns/suburbs (7.80%). In 2019, there were 5.4% male NEETs in the cities (aged 15–29). Comparing years 2009–2019, in 2018 (9.5%) and 2019 (9.7%) there was the lowest amount of male NEETs in total, on average. Over the same period, the lowest female NEETs rate was observed in 2019 (19.35%) in rural areas, 11.1% in cities and in 2017 the figure was 20.6% in towns and suburbs. The highest number of female NEETs live in small towns/suburbs with the exception being for 2019 in cities, where the rate for NEETs females was only 11.1%. The highest number of NEETs were in rural areas in 2012–2013 (24.3%), and the lowest was in 2019 (18.3%).

In general, the amount of NEETs (15–34) in Slovakia increased from 2009 to 2013 but decreased after 2013. In 2019, there were more female NEETs in rural areas. The number of NEETs in rural areas has decreased overall.



3. 4. 1. NEET rate

Chart 6. Youth NEET rate (%) 2009–2019 in Slovakia by degree of urbanisation (15–34)



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_30) – data extracted in 20.04.20

Table 11. Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex, age and degree of urbanisation (NEET rates) absolute & relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

	2009	2013	2019	Absolute change 2009–2013 (Relative change 2009–2013)	Absolute change 2013–2019 (Relative change 2013–2019)	Absolute change 2009–2019 (Relative change 2009–2019)
Country						
Overall	18.8%	21.5%	17.2%	14.4 pp (2.7%)	– 20.0 pp (– 4.3%)	– 8.5 pp (–1.6%)
15–19	4.3%	5.2%	6.2%	20.9 pp (0.9%)	19.2 pp (1.0%)	44.2 pp (1.9%)
20–24	19.3%	20.4%	13.5%	5.7 pp (1.1%)	– 33.8 pp (– 6.9%)	– 30.0 pp (– 5.8%)
25–29	25.8%	27.8%	20.7	7.7 pp (2.0%)	25.5 pp (– 7.1%)	–19.8 pp (–5.1%)
30–34	22.8%	27.8%	23.3%	21.9 pp (5.0%)	– 16.2 pp (– 4.5%)	2.2 pp (– 0.5%)
Cities						
Overall	14.60%	16.60%	12.30%	13.7 pp (2.00%)	– 25.9 pp (– 4.3%)	–15.8 pp (–2.3%)
15–19	a.	a.	a.	a.	a.	a.
20–24	10.80%	16.90%	N/A	56.5 pp (6.10%)		
25–29	18.20%	18.60%	14.00%	2.2 pp (0.40%)	– 24.7 pp (– 4.6%)	– 23.1 pp (– 4.20%)
30–34	22.60%	21.50%	19.20%	– 4.9 pp (1.10%)	– 10.7 pp (– 2.30%)	– 15.0 pp (– 3.40%)
Towns and suburbs						
Overall	18.00%	20.80%	18.60%	15.6 pp (2.8%)	–10.6 pp (–2.2%)	3.3 pp (.6%)
15–19	4.20%	5.10%	6.30%	21.4 pp (0.9%)	23.5 pp (1.2%)	50.0 pp (2.1%)
20–24	18.70%	19.60%	17.20%	4.8 pp (0.9%)	– 12.2 pp (– 2.4%)	– 8.0 pp (– 1.5%)
25–29	26.70%	28.20%	23.60%	5.6 pp (1.5%)	– 60.3 pp (–10.8%)	– 37.7 pp (– 4.3%)
30–34	19.10%	25.80%	21.80%	35.0 pp (6.70%)	– 15.5 pp (– 4.0%)	14.1 pp (2.7%)
Rural areas						
Overall	21.1%	24.3%	18.30%	15.2 pp (3.2%)	– 24.7 pp (– 6.0%)	–13.3 pp (– 2.8%)
15–19	5.3%	6.7	7.2	26.4 pp (1.4%)	7.5 pp (0.5%)	35.8 pp (1.9%)
20–24	23.1%	22.4%	13.8%	– 3.0 pp (– 0.7%)	– 38.4 pp (– 8.6%)	– 40.3 pp (– 9.3%)
25–29	29.40%	31.80%	21.20%	8.2 pp (2.4%)	– 33.3 pp (– 10.6%)	– 27.9 pp (– 8.2%)
30–34	24.90%	32.60%	27.50%	30.9 pp (7.7 %)	– 5.6 pp (– 5.1%)	10.4 pp (2.6%)

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted on 29.04.2020

Note: a. Data not available



When it comes to comparison based on gender, there are statistically important differences. There is a notable gender imbalance in Slovakia. The percentage of NEETs males in 2019 was 9.8% and 25.0% for females.

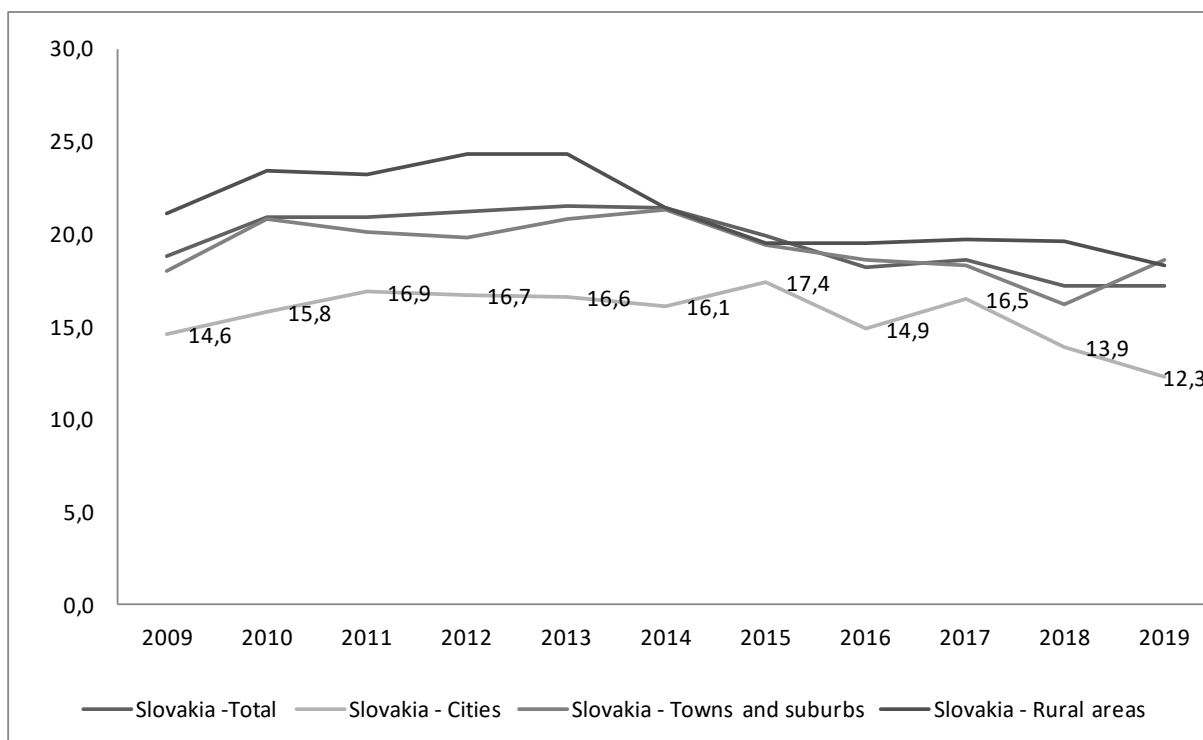
Table 12. Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex, age and degree of urbanisation (NEET rates), (15–34 years).

GEO/TIME	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Slovakia Females	24,8	26,1	26,3	27,5	27,5	27,7	26,9	25,2	26,0	25,2	25,0
Slovakia Male	13,0	16,0	15,7	15,3	15,8	15,4	13,2	11,6	11,6	9,6	9,8

Source Eurostat (edat_ifse_29) – data extracted on 29.04.2020



Chart 7. Youth NEETs rate (%) 2009–2019 in Slovakia by degree of urbanisation and sex



Source Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted on 29.04.2020



4. CONCLUSIONS

Youth population | Young people represent 34.17% of the total population. Slovakia does not face a lack of young people, however, the youth population in Slovakia is gradually decreasing. The highest decrease was in age category 15–19 years old (– 28.70 pp; – 106.8%) and 20–24 years old (– 28.40 pp; – 119.6%). 43.0% of youth live in rural areas. In rural areas, it was a decade of decrease (– 38.50 pp; – 76.9%) for those aged 15–19 years old and (– 37.60 pp; – 83.9%) for those aged 20–24 years old. There are more males than females living in Slovakia (15–34 years old). However, there are more females than male living in rural areas.

Youth employment | In 2018–2019, in age category 15–39 the lowest unemployment rate of the previous decade was observed. Since 2010, the employment rate has been gradually increasing in all degrees of urbanisation. The highest increase was in age category 20–24 in rural areas (23.6 pp; 9.4%). However, in towns and suburbs also, for age category 15–19, there was an increase (90 pp; 1.8%) (2013–2019).

Youth unemployment | The unemployment rate among all youth age groups in last decade has rapidly decreased. In 2019, the unemployment rate for the total population in Slovakia reached 4.92%. The highest increase of youth unemployment overall was between the years 2009 – 2013 (87.85 pp; 3.1%). The lowest unemployment rate was in 2019 in the age category 30–34 (3.9%) and 4.5% for age category 25–29 in the cities. In rural areas, for age category 25–29, it was only 6.0%. Youth unemployment has been rising every year since 2009, peaking in 2012/2013. After its peak, it started to gradually decrease. The highest decrease of unemployment was in the age category 25–29. Over the previous decade it decreased (– 55.5 pp; – 7.6%) in total: in cities (– 52.1 pp; – 4.9%) and in rural areas (– 65.1 pp; – 11.2%).

Educational attainment | In Slovakia, between 2009 and 2019, the population aged 15 to 24 years old has become more educated. The number of those with an education equivalent to ISCED–2 has increased, ISCED 3–4 has likewise gradually decreased in all levels of urbanisation and ISCED 5–8 has increased also. The highest increase was in the previous decade was for level ISCED 5–8 in rural areas (132.30 pp; 4.5%).



ESLET | In last decade – all degree of urbanisation number of ESLET in Slovakia increased. The highest increase was especially for females ESLET. There was an increase of ESLET females in rural areas from 2009 and a decrease of ESLET males in rural areas. For males, the highest increase was between 2013–2019 (135.70 pp; 7.6%) in towns and suburbs. In total, between 2009–2019, all degrees of urbanisation saw the highest increase for ESLET females (92.70 pp; 3.8%). The only decrease was for ESLET males in rural areas between 2013–2019 (– 13.48 pp; – 1.2%). From 2009–2019, the number of ESLET females increased in rural areas by (40.30 pp; 2.3%).

NEETs | NEETs share has slightly decreased in the previous decade in Slovakia. In 2019, Slovakia had 17.20% NEETs. The highest decrease was (– 40.30 pp; – 9.30%) in rural areas for age group 20–24. There is a notable gender imbalance in Slovakia. The percentage of NEETs males in 2019 was 9.8 but 25.0 for females.



5. REFERENCES

Báčik, 2020. SR. Zoznam obcí SR. <http://www.sodbtn.sk/obce/nuts.php>

Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (2015). The Youth Guarantee. https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/zaruky-pre-mladych.html?page_id=482966

Eurostat (2020) Early leavers from education and training. Eurostat. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Early_leavers_from_education_and_training#Overview

Eurydice (2020). Slovakia. Eurydice. https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/slovakia_en

Eurydice (2020). Early Childhood Education and Care. Eurydice. https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/early-childhood-education-and-care-72_en

Eurydice (2018/19) Educational system in Slovakia. Eurydice. https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/slovakia_en

European Union (1995–2020). Europe https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/figures/living_en#size

Report from the 7th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue (2019). <https://eudialogsmladezou.sk/2020/04/17/europsky-dialog-s-mladezou-odporucania-vii-cyklu/>

Slovak Statistical Office (2019). The state of the permanently resident population of the Slovak Republic in the age group 0–30 years. http://statdat.statistics.sk/cognosext/cgi-bin/cognos.cgi?b_action=cognosViewer&ui.action=run&ui.object=storeID%28%22i40AO3AF215OC41DE8BE98DOCOC41A764%22%29&ui.name=Vekov%C3%A9%20zlo%C5%BEenie%20%20SR%2C%20oblasti%2C%20kraje%2C%20okresy%2C%20mesto%2C%20vidiek%20%5Bom7009rr%5D&run.outputFormat=&run.prompt=true&cv.header=false&ui.backURL=%2F%2Fcognosext%2Fcps4%2Fport-lets%2Fcommon%2Fclose.html&run.outputLocale=sk



Slovak Statistics Office (2019). Distribution of young people by age categories in Slovakia.
[http://statdat.statistics.sk/cognosext/cgi-bin/cognos.cgi?b_action=cognosViewer&ui.action=run&ui.object=storeID\(%22i73A51921BEAC4C85B747133F2FF9824A%22\)&ui.name=Vekov%c3%a9%20skupiny%20-%20SR%2c%20oblasti%2c%20kraje%2c%20okresy%2c%20mesto%2c%20vidiek%20%5bom7007rr%5d&run.outputFormat=&run.prompt=true&cv.header=false&ui.backURL=%2fcognosext%2fcps4%2fportlets%2fcommon%2fclose.html](http://statdat.statistics.sk/cognosext/cgi-bin/cognos.cgi?b_action=cognosViewer&ui.action=run&ui.object=storeID(%22i73A51921BEAC4C85B747133F2FF9824A%22)&ui.name=Vekov%c3%a9%20skupiny%20-%20SR%2c%20oblasti%2c%20kraje%2c%20okresy%2c%20mesto%2c%20vidiek%20%5bom7007rr%5d&run.outputFormat=&run.prompt=true&cv.header=false&ui.backURL=%2fcognosext%2fcps4%2fportlets%2fcommon%2fclose.html)

UPSVAR (2020). Unemployment rate.

https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/statistiky/nezamestnanost-mesacne-statistiky.html?page_id=1254

EACEA. 2020. Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Roma Inclusion 2020.

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/63-preventing-early-leaving-education-and-training-elet-slovakia>



6. IMPORTANT LINKS

Act Nr. 282/2008 Coll. on youth work support from the year 2020
<https://www.iuventa.sk/en/Legislation.alej>

IUVENTA – <https://www.iuventa.sk/sk/IUVENTA-home.alej>

KOMPRAX.IUVENTA – <https://www.iuventa.sk/sk/KomPrax/Home.alej>

Labour Code. Slovak Republic – <https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/praca-zamestnanost/vztah-zamestnanca-zamestnavateľa/zakonnik-prace/zakonnik-prace-anglicka-verzia-labour-code-full-wording-2012.pdf>

National Business Centre
<http://www.sbagency.sk/en/national-business-center#.Xnio8mBCfIU>

Rural Parliament – <https://www.vipa.sk/>

Strategy of the Slovak Republic for the Years 2014–2020
https://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Slovakia_2014_Youth_Strategy.pdf

Youth Council – www.strukturovanydialog.sk a www.mladez.sk



COST Action CA18213
Rural NEET Youth Network:
Modeling the risks underlying rural
NEETs social exclusion



RURAL NEETs IN SPAIN



2009/2019
OVERVIEW

AUTHORS

Òscar Prieto-Flores – oscar.prieto@udg.edu
University of Girona – UdG

Jordi Feu – jordi.feu@udg.edu
University of Girona – UdG

Mariano Soler-Porta – mariano.soler@uma.es
Malaga University – UMA

Image by Javier Álamo from Pixabay

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network: Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged.
Please cite this publication as “COST CA18213 Rural NEETs in Spain: 2009/2019 Overview.

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. GENERAL CONTEXTUALIZATION	7
2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE	10
3. DATA ANALYSIS	11
3. 1. Population and youth population	11
3. 2. Employment and Unemployment	14
• Youth employment	15
• Youth unemployment	17
3. 3. Education	19
• Young people by educational attainment level	20
• Early school leavers	22
3. 4. NEETs	24
• NEET rate	24
4. CONCLUSIONS	27
5. REFERENCES	28
6. IMPORTANT LINKS	30

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines in detail the situation of rural Youths Neither in Employment, nor in Education or Training (NEET) aged between 15 and 34 years old, over the last decade (2009–2019) in Spain. To do this, the report utilised indicators of: youth population; youth employment and unemployment; education; and, NEETs distribution. The characterisation of all indicators adopted the degree of urbanisation as a central criterion, enabling proportional comparisons between rural areas, towns and suburbs, cities and the whole country. These analyses are further divided into age subgroups and, where possible, into sex groups for greater detail.

The statistical procedures adopted across the different selected dimensions involve: descriptive longitudinal analysis; using graphical displays (e.g., overlay line charts); and, the calculation of proportional absolute and relative changes between 2009 and 2013, 2013 and 2019, and finally 2009 and 2019. These time ranges were chosen to capture the indicators evolution before and after the economic crisis which hit European countries. All data was extracted from Eurostat public datasets.

In the last ten years (2009 – 2019) a significant portion of the Spanish youth population has migrated from rural areas to cities and towns. This migration trend could be explained by the economic crisis which impacted upon Spain from 2008 onwards. Data shown in this report makes visible the vulnerability of rural NEET youth to these downturns from 2009 to 2013. In line with this, Early-school leaving (ESLET) and unemployment rates in rural areas were more pronounced in 2013 and the following years for rural youth in comparison with youth living in urban areas and towns. However, in the last two years (2017–2019) there has been a sharp decrease in these indicators placing youth living rural areas, on average, in line with the rest (i.e., an average NEET youth rate in Spain 15% versus 16% for rural areas).

RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

Este informe describe la situación de los jóvenes ni ocupados ni en educación o formación (ninis) con edades comprendidas entre los 15 y los 34 años, durante la última década (2009–2019) en España. Para lograr este objetivo, el informe presenta indicadores de población joven, empleo y desempleo juvenil, educación y distribución de ninis. La caracterización de todos los indicadores adopta el grado de urbanización como criterio central, permitiendo comparaciones proporcionales entre áreas rurales, pueblos y suburbios, ciudades y todo el país. Estos análisis se desglosan aún más en subgrupos de edad y, cuando es posible, en grupos de sexo para mayor detalle.

Los procedimientos estadísticos adoptados en las diferentes dimensiones seleccionadas implican un análisis longitudinal descriptivo, utilizando presentaciones gráficas (por ejemplo, gráficos de líneas superpuestas), así como el cálculo de cambios proporcionales absolutos y relativos entre 2009 y 2013, 2013 y 2019 y 2009 y 2019. Estos rangos de tiempo fueron elegidos para capturar la evolución de los indicadores antes y después de la crisis económica que afectó a los países europeos. Todos los datos se extrajeron de los conjuntos de datos públicos de Eurostat.

En los últimos diez años (2009–2019) una parte importante de la población joven española ha emigrado de las zonas rurales a las ciudades y pueblos. Esta tendencia migratoria podría explicarse por la crisis económica que afectó a España a partir de 2008. Los datos que se muestran en este informe hacen visible la fragilidad de los jóvenes ninis rurales frente a estas recesiones de 2009 a 2013. En esta línea, las tasas de abandono escolar prematuro (ESLET) y desempleo en las zonas rurales fueron más pronunciadas en 2013 y los años siguientes para la juventud rural en comparación con los jóvenes que viven en ciudades y pueblos. Sin embargo, en los últimos dos años (2017–2019) hay una fuerte disminución en estos indicadores de los jóvenes que viven en áreas rurales en promedio con el resto (es decir, tasa promedio de jóvenes ninis en España del 15% frente al 16% de las áreas rurales).

SPAIN NATIONAL REPORT

At the national level, we can observe that NEETs in Spain make up around 19% of the general population, being very similar in both rural areas and in cities and suburbs, with just 1 percentage point of difference. This percentage can be explained by various factors, such as a percentage of the young unemployed population between 17% -18% and an ESLET rate between 15% -17%, being higher in rural areas than in cities.



1. GENERAL CONTEXTUALIZATION

Spain has one of the lowest fertility rate worldwide (1.26 births per woman in 2018) according to the World Bank, but also one of the highest life expectancy rates (83 years).¹ This demographic paradox helps us to understand recurrent debates in Spanish politics. Besides COVID19, or the debate about power and political independence of the regions vs the role of the central government, the sustainability of future pensions, migration, public health and the care of the elderly are also contemporary political questions within the Spanish context.

In the last years, there have been growing concerns regarding the sustainability of rural Spain or what has been called *la España vacía* (the hollowed-out Spain). To face this problem, the new government coalition PSOE and Unidas Podemos (in government since 2019) created a Ministry on the Ecological and Demographical Challenge. Such institutionalisation reflects the relevance of the challenge, but also the pressures from rural regions protesting for feeling forgotten and having staged significant demonstrations in Madrid some months before the Spanish elections. Among their claims is the necessity of providing a sustainable future in order to retain youth as well as promoting rural development.

Government. Spain has been a parliamentary monarchy since the Constitution of 1978. Some political scientists have labelled Spain as a half-way federal state because of its *Comunidades Autónomas* (its territorial distribution) wherein competences in legislating on Education, Health or Employment as well as other domains (Acosta, 2010) are distributed. Nevertheless, some political actors have highlighted that policy making is undergoing a process of re-centralisation, with the subsequent reduction of a range of rights and powers that had already been integrated into the ordinary functioning of the country. As a consequence of this historical and political discussion, Spain has been embroiled with the presence of separatist movements in different regions (particularly in Catalonia, the Basque country and Galicia). In the last 10 years, political tensions have been high with regards to who rules the government and who is/is not autonomous.

Strategic national legislation for youth. Legal adulthood in Spain is set at the age of 18 but the legal age for working is 16. The transition into adulthood in Spain is not much touched

¹ https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN?most_recent_value_desc=false



upon by the debates on education, employment and housing, in what has been called as “youth emancipation”. Emancipation in Spanish policy documents is understood as individuals having their own means and being able to live independently from the parental house. According to Eurostat, Spanish youth leave their parental homes on average at the age of 29.5, making them amongst the oldest to do so within the EU which has an average of 25.9 years old.²

Regarding youth policy, Spain has a National Youth Strategy which was approved in 2014 following European standards highlighted in the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan and strives to achieve Europe 2020 targets (Gobierno de España, 2013). In the last report, the European Commission (2020) highlights how in Spain youth unemployment decreased to 1.5% in 2018 and NEET youth share was 13.3% in 2017. However, these rates vary across regions and are still high in comparison with other EU countries (before the COVID19 outbreak).

However, each Comunidad Autónoma have their own youth policy action plans and can legislate on youth issues. The aims of these plans are usually mostly aligned with those of the Spanish government and those of the European Commission. Most of them reach youth populations between 15 and 30 years old and even 35 in some domains such housing (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2017).

Education. Compulsory education in Spain ranges from 6 to 16 years old and universal access for children from 3 to 5 (Infantil – preschool) is guaranteed. Although post-compulsory education commences beyond the age of 16, the Spanish educational system streams students from 13–14 years old onwards within high schools. These hidden educational tracks, and the process of educational segregation which takes place after 13 years old, create social inequalities and unequal educational opportunities. During early secondary education, adolescents are selected and grouped into homogeneous classrooms with specially adapted curricula oriented towards university acceptance, vocational training or employability skills. Early school leavers feel isolated, devaluated, blamed and have a feeling of not belonging to the school system. These feelings increase the chances of early school leaving as shown in a Spanish case study (see Tarabini et al., 2018). One of the aims of the government is to have more youth in education after the compulsory education period and to promote greater access of youth to vocational training courses (formación profesional) in order to widen their employability in the future. With this strategy, the country is trying



to adjust the qualification system to the employment market. Within the EU, Spain is the country with the most overqualified graduates in a job (37.6% vs. the EU average of 23.4%).

Employment. The Spanish economy was severely affected by the 2008 crisis. However, the economic structure of Spain has excessively relied upon temporary contracts and stationary work well before the economic crisis (García-Pérez & Muñoz-Bullón, 2011) especially in the building and service sectors due to its dependence on tourism and commerce.

Youth unemployment has decreased in recent years (especially from 2013 to 2019 and before the COVID19 outbreak) and Spanish youth policy has been focusing on deepening this pattern by substantially reducing the proportion of NEET youth through adapting the Spanish policy structure to the National Youth Guarantee System (Gobierno de España, 2019). The consequences of the COVID19 crisis have seriously affected this trend and youth unemployment has risen again for the first time since 2013.

This National Youth Guarantee System focuses on young people not employed or integrated within education or training systems, to receive an offer of employment, education or training, including apprenticeships or traineeships, after completing formal education or becoming unemployed. To ensure that young people can access the job market (and in line with the Youth Guarantee program and its measures) the Shock Plan for Youth Employment 2019–2021 has been approved in collaboration with the Autonomous Communities and the most representative trade union and business organisations. This plan develops 50 measures within six categories in order to reduce youth unemployment and restore quality in employment while also fighting against the gender gap in employability.³

3 <https://www.sepe.es/HomeSepe/Personas/encontrar-trabajo/Garantia-Juvenil/que-es-garantia-juvenil.html>



2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The National Report of Spain uses information gathered by the National Reports Editorial Team of the Rural NEET Youth Network in the Eurostat platform. The main data presented and analysed in this report are from the following Eurostat database:

- Population Statistics: [yth_demo_O20]
- EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS): [lfst_r_pgauwsc]; [lfst_r_ergau]; [lfst_r_ur-gau]; [edat_lfs_9913]; [edat_lfse_30]; [edat_lfse_29]
- Selected indicators were extracted from the different databases according to two criteria:
- Time range: last decade (2009–2019) in order to have a sufficiently long period of time to capture the main changes and continuities in young people's trajectories in education, training and employment. The analysis mainly covered 3 dates – 2009–2013–2019 – in order to capture the impact of the economic and financial crisis that hit Europe and that, in most countries, reached its peak in 2012/2013.
- Age group: age group range varies accordingly to the data available in each indicator (15–24; 15–29; 15–34; and 15–39). Whenever possible, age range also covered young adult's data (30–34 and 35–39) in order to capture the extent of crisis impact on these age groups.

In addition to a descriptive analysis, in order to compare main data changes and continuities in different time periods, absolute and relative change were calculated considering the three main time points that were selected – 2009, 2013 and 2019. Absolute change refers to the simple difference in the indicator over two periods in time and is expressed in percentage points (pp). Relative change expresses the change of a value of an indicator in an earlier period and is expressed in percentage terms.



3. DATA ANALYSIS

3. 1. Population and youth population

Urban-rural mobility within Spain has experienced different waves during the second half of the 20th century. One of the biggest ones was during the 1950's-70's period. Many families migrated from rural (mostly southern villages) to northern industrialised cities or to coastal cities where tourism from Northern Europe started to become popular. These migrants were seeking employment and better living conditions. This exodus from rural to urban and coastal areas reduced the rural population by 40% during that time (García, 2000), but it also accelerated the growth of the elderly dependency rate in rural areas.

It is necessary to mention that this trend of depopulation in rural areas is not homogeneous because Spanish population movements and data vary greatly between regions. For example, we need to differentiate between depopulation dynamics in rural areas of the interior (such as Castilla y León or Teruel regions) from those in coastal rural regions where the loss of population and aging of their population has not been so remarkable.

From the 1980s onwards, Spain became a country of immigration, with the decade of 2000 being the most relevant. The presence of foreigners in Spain grew uninterruptedly until 2010. This migration flows helped to keep demographic data stable and not to accelerate depopulation in rural areas as expected. It even reversed depopulation in some specific areas (Collantes et al., 2014).

However, as the economic crisis hit Spain, as a consequence, immigration rates decreased; rural areas experienced difficulties attracting newcomers. The profile of the newcomers to rural areas in this period is characterised by urban youth or families who wanted to live closer to the nature or to native-born youth who wanted to come back home after living a period in the city or in the town.

The data in Chart 1 shows the decrease of youth population in towns and suburbs in comparison with rural areas. The youth population in Spanish cities remains stable if we compare the data between 2009 and 2019. Since 2009 to 2016 (during the economic crisis and partial recovery) the reduction of youth population hit especially hard in rural areas which lost

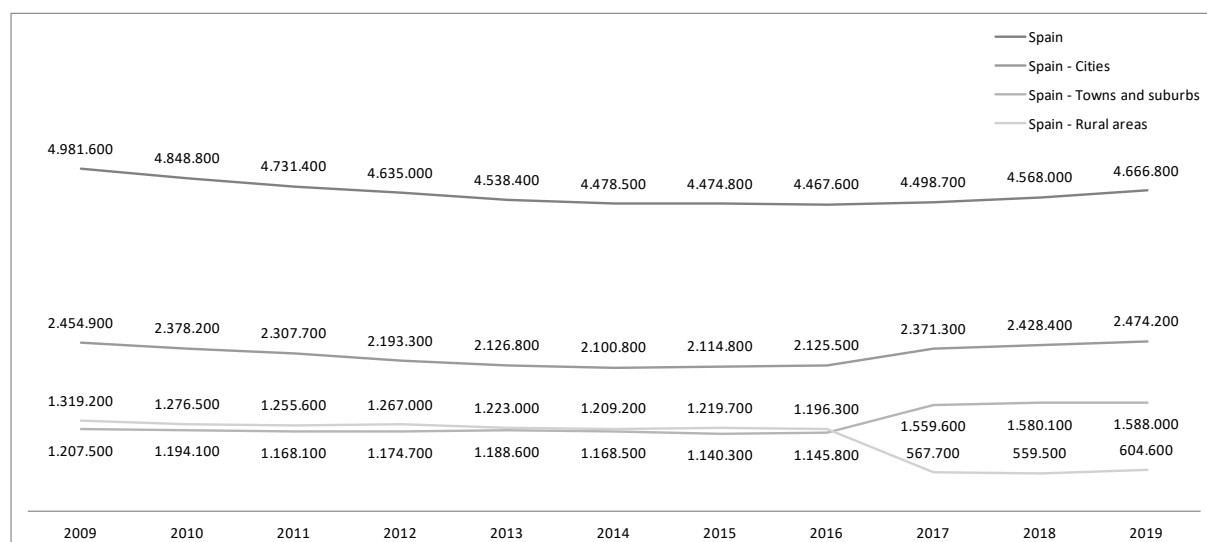


9.3% of their 15–24 years old population (see Chart 1 for absolute numbers). This reduction could be explained, among other hypotheses, by low fertility rates, the exodus of youth or families seeking new jobs in other locations as well as by the decline of internal and external immigration rates.

Besides the above-mentioned trend, we can also observe a big change in youth demographic data from 2017 onwards in rural areas as well as towns and suburbs. We think this change should be explained by the way data is gathered and categorised into towns, suburbs and rural areas from this year. Youth population decline is more accentuated among women than men. This reality is seen when comparing data between 2009 and 2016 by sex. It shows that the share loss of 15–24 year-old women living in rural areas is higher than in men (11.5% versus 7.2% respectively). This figure could be higher because more rural women study at university than men; however, they are still registered in their parental households during that period.

Thus, we can infer from this data that, in general, young women from rural areas have higher academic achievement, and consequently they leave home to study tertiary education and do not return home for permanent residence more so than men.

Chart 1. Total youth population (15–24 years) 2009–2019 (Spain) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_pgauwsc) – data extracted on 12.06.2020

Table 1. Relative and absolute changes youth population (15–24 years) 2009–2019 (Spain) by degree of urbanisation for the years 2009, 2013 and 2019

	2009 vs 2013		2013 vs 2019	
Spain	-443.200,0	-8,90%	128.400,0	2,83%
Spain – Cities	-328.100,0	-13,37%	347.400,0	16,33%
Spain – Towns and suburbs	-18.900,0	-1,57%	399.400,0	33,60%
Spain – Rural areas	-96.200,0	-7,29%	-618.400,0	-50,56%

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_pgauwsc) – data extracted on 12.06.2020



3. 2. Employment and Unemployment

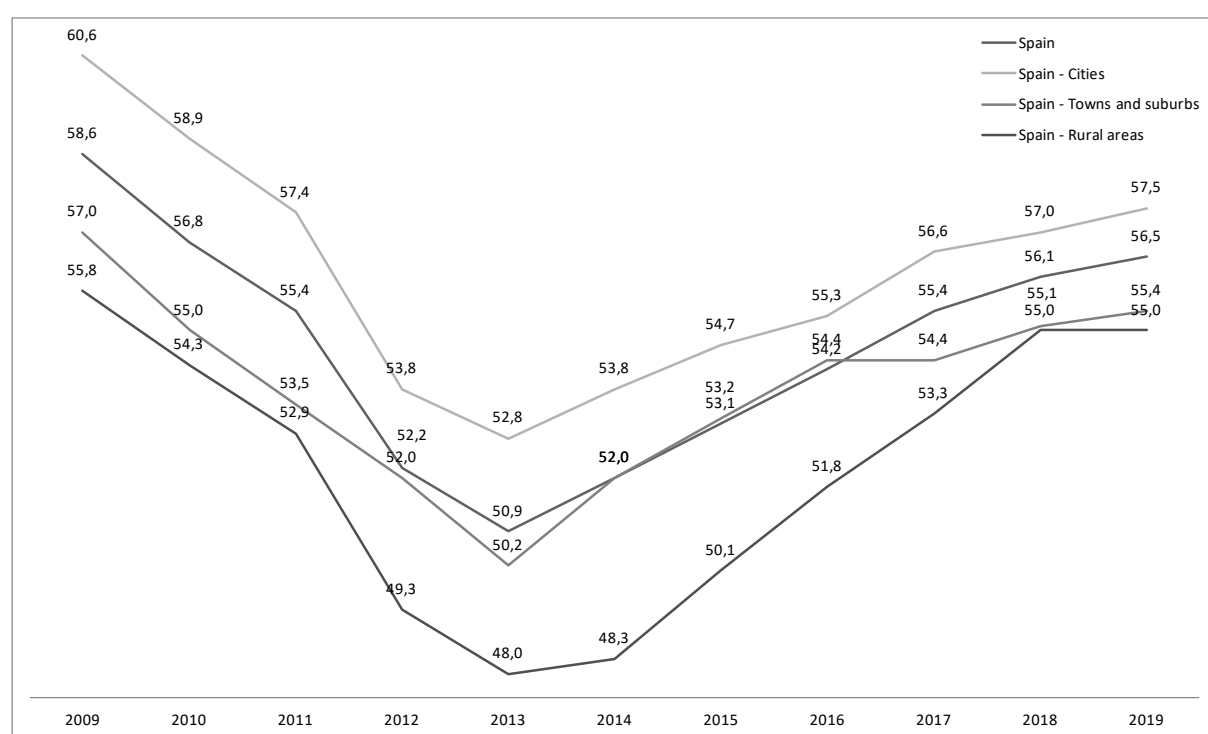
Spain has been one of the most affected countries in Europe by the 2008 economic crisis due to various factors (such as a great dependence of the economy on the building industry) that have made the economic recovery slower than in other countries. In fact, the Spanish unemployment rate in 2019 (14.7%) had not reached the same figure than before the crisis (8.23% in 2007) after having peaked at 24.79% in 2013. It is evident that the COVID19 economic downturn is negatively affecting the creation of employment or the odds of being employed during 2020. It remains unknown as to how long its effects will endure in employment figures affect rural youth.

The following data shows how youth and women, and especially those living in rural areas, tend to be the most affected in pre-COVID19 times.

3. 2. 1. Youth employment

Chart 2 shows data concerning youth employment rates of 15–39 years–old and Table 2 shows absolute and relative change during the ten years period we examine in Spain. Data shows how youth were not participating in employment during 2019 at the same rate as in 2009. Economic recovery started for youth from 2013 onwards when figures registered the lowest rates of youth engaged in jobs in the formal economy. It is worth noting that youth living in rural areas were especially affected by the crisis, especially from 2011 until 2016. The following chart indicates this pattern as evidence of the greater vulnerability of youth living in rural areas in Spain in contrast to their peers who are also experiencing the same trends but which are not so pronounced.

Chart 2. Youth employment rate (%) 2009–2019 (Spain) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergau) – data extracted in 12.06.2020



In this regard, Table 2 shows youth living in rural areas experience the highest share of losses in their participation in employment from 2009–2013, but also the highest share of gains in the following six years.

Table 2. Youth employment absolute & relative change between 2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
Spain	58,60%	50,90%	56,50%	-2,10%	-3,58%	-7,70%	-13,14%	5,60%	11,00%
Spain Cities	60,60%	52,80%	57,50%	-3,10%	-5,12%	-7,80%	-12,87%	4,70%	8,90%
Spain Towns and suburbs	57,00%	50,20%	55,40%	-1,60%	-2,81%	-6,80%	-11,93%	5,20%	10,36%
Spain Rural areas	55,80%	48,00%	55,00%	-0,80%	-1,43%	-7,80%	-13,98%	7,00%	14,58%

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergau) – data extracted on 12.06.2020

1. Youth empl. rates 2009; 2. Youth empl. rates 2013; 3. Youth empl. rates 2019; 4. Absolute change 2009/2019; 5. Relative change 2009/2019; 6. Absolute change 2009/2013; 7. Relative change 2009/2013; 8. Absolute change 2013/2019; 9. Relative change 2013/2019.

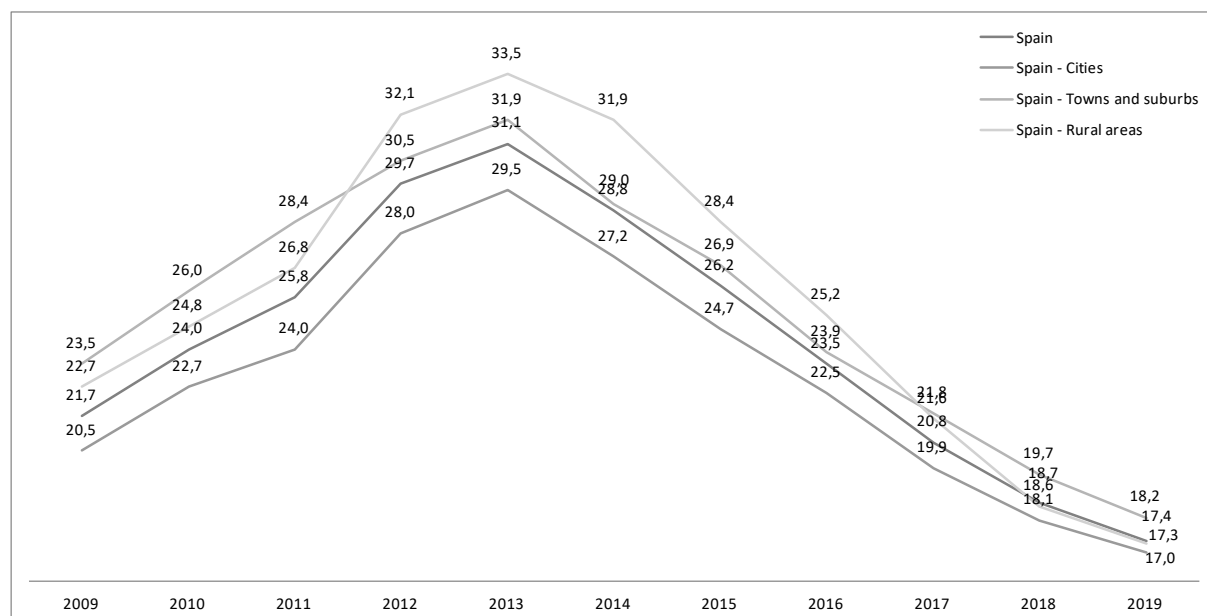


3. 2. 2. Youth unemployment

Data on youth unemployment demonstrates the same pattern the other way around as can be seen in Chart 3, but this time 2019 youth unemployment rates are situated below figures registered in 2009. In the case of youth living in rural areas, Table 3 shows how the reduction of the unemployment rate was 23.79% during these ten years. Nevertheless, we can observe the greater risk 15–39 year-old rural youths are exposed to given that they registered the highest unemployment rates, reaching 33.5% in 2013. In this regard, it is necessary to closely analyse data from 2016 to 2019 to identify the main drivers of this change vis-à-vis the sharp decline of the unemployment rate for rural youth from 25.20% to 17.30%. Those most affected by unemployment are the youngest ones. In their case, the unemployment rate of 15–24-year-olds rose to 55.5% in Spain with few differences when differentiating by the degree of urbanisation.

In addition to this pattern, it is also necessary to explore how the COVID19 crisis will affect rural youth differently than the others.

Chart 3. Youth unemployment rate (%) 2009–2019 (Spain) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau) – data extracted in 12.06.2020

Table 3. Youth unemployment absolute & relative change between 2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
Spain	21,70%	31,10%	17,40%	-4,30%	-19,82%	9,40%	43,32%	-13,70%	-44,05%
Spain Cities	20,50%	29,50%	17,00%	-3,50%	-17,07%	9,00%	43,90%	-12,50%	-42,37%
Spain Towns and suburbs	23,50%	31,90%	18,20%	-5,30%	-22,55%	8,40%	35,74%	-13,70%	-42,95%
Spain Rural areas	22,70%	33,50%	17,30%	-5,40%	-23,79%	10,80%	47,58%	-16,20%	-48,36%

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau) – data extracted on 12.06.2020

1. Youth unempl. rates 2009; 2. Youth unempl. rates 2013; 3. Youth unempl. rates 2019; 4. Absolute change 2009/2019; 5. Relative change 2009/2019; 6. Absolute change 2009/2013; 7. Relative change 2009/2013; 8. Absolute change 2013/2019; 9. Relative change 2013/2019.



3.3. Education

Since 2001, when the first PISA results were published by the OECD, many countries felt pressured to make changes to their educational policies since international data showed comparatively how well their educational systems performed. The publication of these results (together with other figures), such as the early-school leavers rate (above 30% in 2009), placed Spain in one of the worst positions in educational rankings among European countries. This situation generated several debates on how the educational system should be reformed in order to have more youth engaged in education and improve educational outcomes. One of the major educational reforms promoted by the Partido Popular, LOMCE (Law 8/2013) legitimised the streaming of students by homogeneous ability grouping and made curricula more flexible in lower secondary education. This reform had several consequences. On the one hand, it was shown to be productive in terms of granting Compulsory Secondary Education certificates, facilitating the participation of students in Vocational Education and Training systems and, as a consequence, lowering down the rate of early school leavers in Spain. However, on the other hand, it reinforced the reproduction of social inequalities in schooling as conditioned by social class and ethnic background.

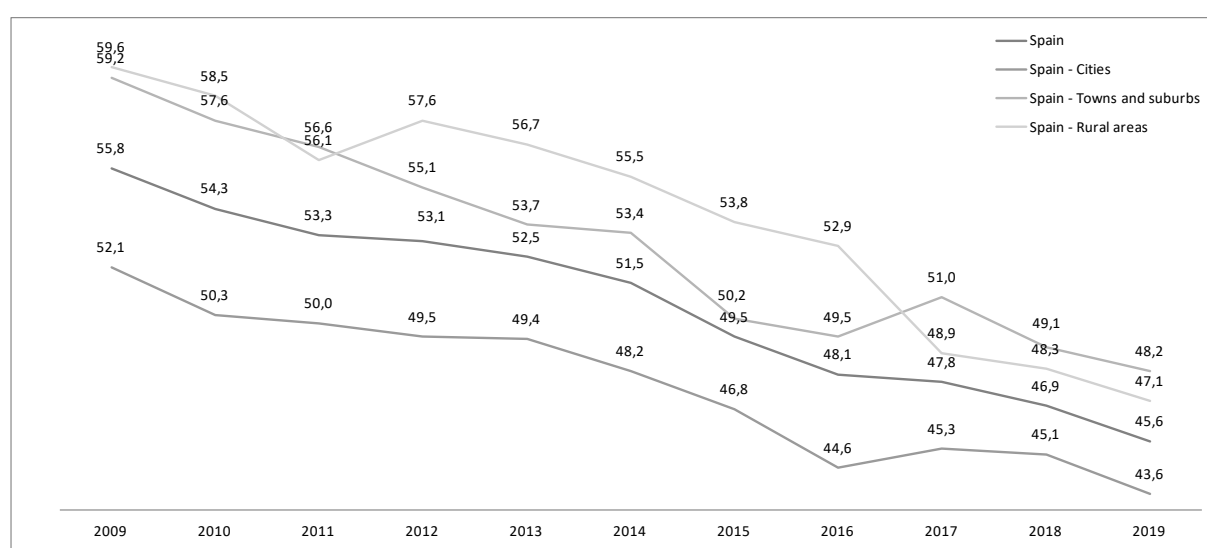
Another relevant determinant in educational attainment and early school leaving which should be mentioned is gender. In the last years, the presence of women in tertiary education has surpassed men. Moreover, males tend to be more present among early-school leavers than women. As we will see in this section, this trend is accentuated in the data, especially when we make the distinction between degrees of urbanisation.



3. 3. 1. Young people by educational attainment level

As shown in Chart 4, the number of 15–24 year-olds having less than primary education or lower secondary education declined especially after 2012. If we compare data among regions, rural areas are those benefiting the most of this reform by having more people with compulsory secondary education certificates (ESO for Spanish acronym) and exhibiting the sharpest decline between 2009 and 2019 (–20.97%). It should be noted that most of this decline took place from 2013 to 2019 (–16.93%) as is shown in Table 4.

Chart 4. Educational attainment rate (%) 2009–2019 (Spain) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfs_9913) – data extracted in 12.06.2020



Table 4. Educational attainment absolute & relative change between 2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
Spain	55,80%	52,50%	45,60%	-10,20%	-18,28%	-3,30%	-5,91%	-6,90%	-13,14%
Spain Cities	52,10%	49,40%	43,60%	-8,50%	-16,31%	-2,70%	-5,18%	-5,80%	-11,74%
Spain Towns and suburbs	59,20%	53,70%	48,20%	-11,00%	-18,58%	-5,50%	-9,29%	-5,50%	-10,24%
Spain Rural areas	59,60%	56,70%	47,10%	-12,50%	-20,97%	-2,90%	-4,87%	-9,60%	-16,93%

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfs_9913) – data extracted on 12.06.2020

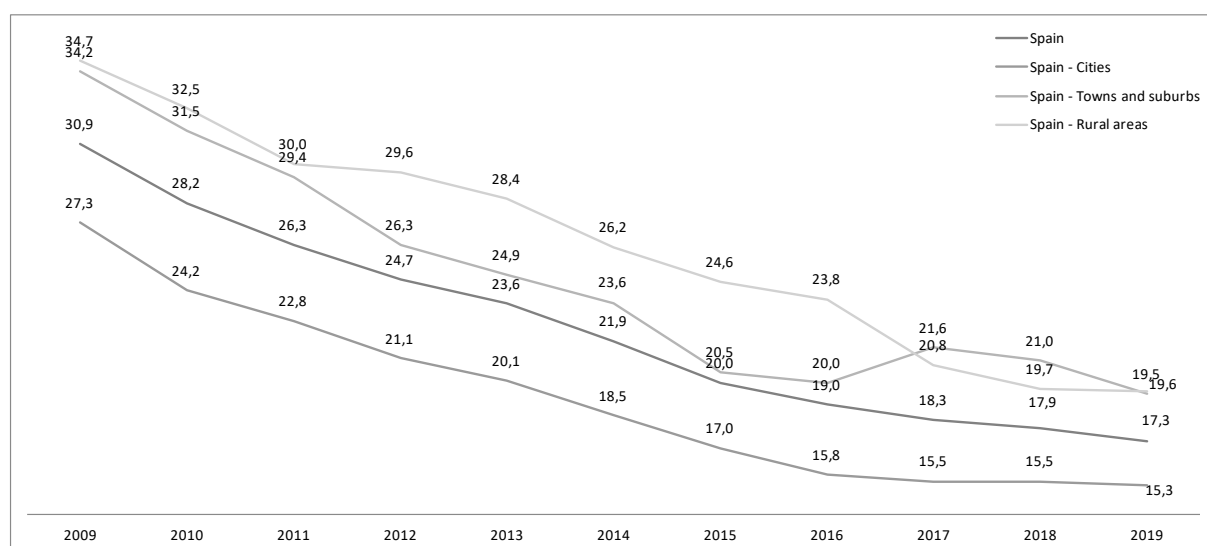
1. Educ attain. rates 2009; 2. Educ attain. rates 2013; 3. Educ attain. rates 2019; 4. Absolute change 2009/2019; 5. Relative change 2009/2019; 6. Absolute change 2009/2013; 7. Relative change 2009/2013; 8. Absolute change 2013/2019; 9. Relative change 2013/2019.

3.3.2. Early school leavers

A similar declining trend takes place with the rate of early school leavers. Chart 5 indicates a reduction of 30.99% in this share in rural areas from 2013 to 2019.

However, the rate of early school leavers in rural areas as well as in towns still remains above the Spanish average and well above that for cities (for example 19.6% in rural areas versus 15.3% in cities).

Chart 5. ESLET rate (%) 2009–2019 (Spain) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_30) – data extracted in 12.06.2020

Table 5. ESLET absolute & relative change between 2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
Spain	30,90%	23,60%	17,30%	-13,60%	-44,01%	-7,30%	-23,62%	-6,30%	-26,69%
Spain Cities	27,30%	20,10%	15,30%	-12,00%	-43,96%	-7,20%	-26,37%	-4,80%	-23,88%
Spain Towns and suburbs	34,20%	24,90%	19,50%	-14,70%	-42,98%	-9,30%	-27,19%	-5,40%	-21,69%
Spain Rural areas	34,70%	28,40%	19,60%	-15,10%	-43,52%	-6,30%	-18,16%	-8,80%	-30,99%

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_30) – data extracted on 12.06.2020

1. ESLET rates 2009; 2. ESLET rates 2013; 3. ESLET rates 2019; 4. Absolute change 2009/2019; 5. Relative change 2009/2019; 6. Absolute change 2009/2013; 7. Relative change 2009/2013; 8. Absolute change 2013/2019; 9. Relative change 2013/2019.

When we introduce the gender dimension in the data analysis we can conclude that the reduction of early-school leavers in rural areas has been more pronounced among females than in males. While this figure was reduced by half among females (from 26% in 2009 to 13% in 2019), it was not similarly reduced among males (from 42.9% in 2009 to 25.8% in 2019). Although this demonstrates a declining pattern, there remains 1 out of 4 male youths not finishing school in rural spaces as should be normally expected. In 2019, while data concerning early-school leavers with reference to rural females was comparable to the national average (16%), the same figure for males in this demographic continues to be well above (20.4%, or 4.4% higher).

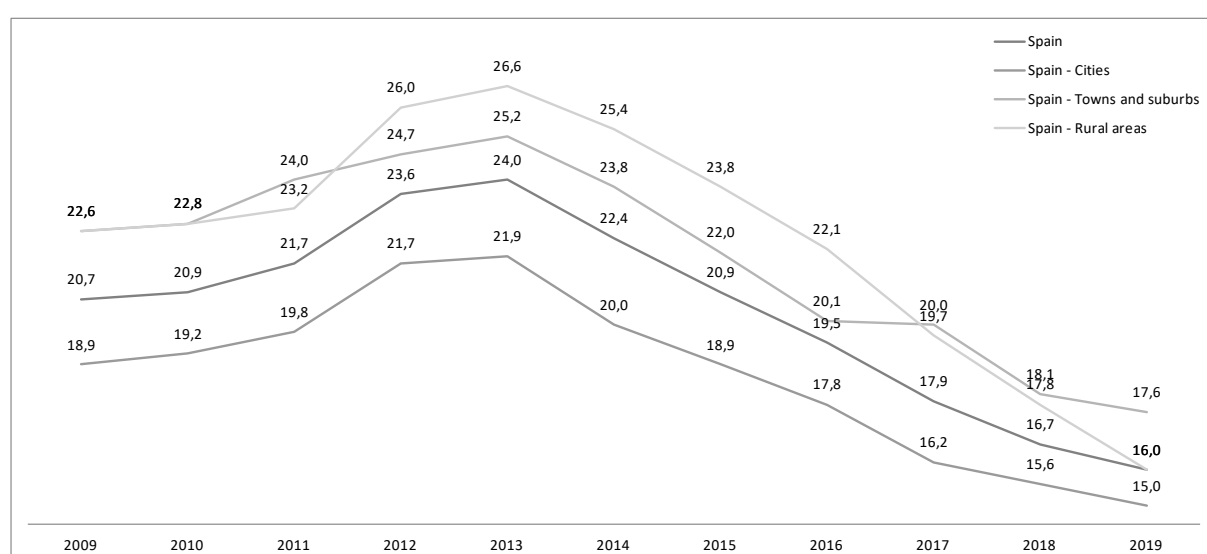


3. 4. NEETs

3. 4. 1. NEET rate

Similar figures as those seen in the previous section in the 2013–2019 period are also seen for NEET rates. In this sense, this share declined steadily for rural areas among 15–34 year-old as is seen in Chart 6. While the NEET youth rate was 21.9% for cities in 2013, it was 26.6% for rural areas. This gap that initially was of almost five points was reduced only to 1 in 2019 (15% versus 16% respectively). Table 6 also reflects these changes. It can be seen how rural youth are the most vulnerable when exposed to economic cycles. During the economic crisis the rural NEET youth rate increased at a faster rate than in cities and towns (17.70% in 2013). However, its reduction during the economic recovery period was the highest at -39.85% from 2013 to 2019.

Chart 6. Youth NEET rate (%) 2009–2019 (Spain) by degree of urbanisation



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted in 12.06.2020

Table 6. NEET absolute & relative change between 2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
Spain	20,70%	24,00%	16,00%	-4,70%	-22,71%	3,30%	15,94%	-8,00%	-33,33%
Spain Cities	18,90%	21,90%	15,00%	-3,90%	-20,63%	3,00%	15,87%	-6,90%	-31,51%
Spain Towns and suburbs	22,60%	25,20%	17,60%	-5,00%	-22,12%	2,60%	11,50%	-7,60%	-30,16%
Spain Rural areas	22,60%	26,60%	16,00%	-6,60%	-29,20%	4,00%	17,70%	-10,60%	-39,85%

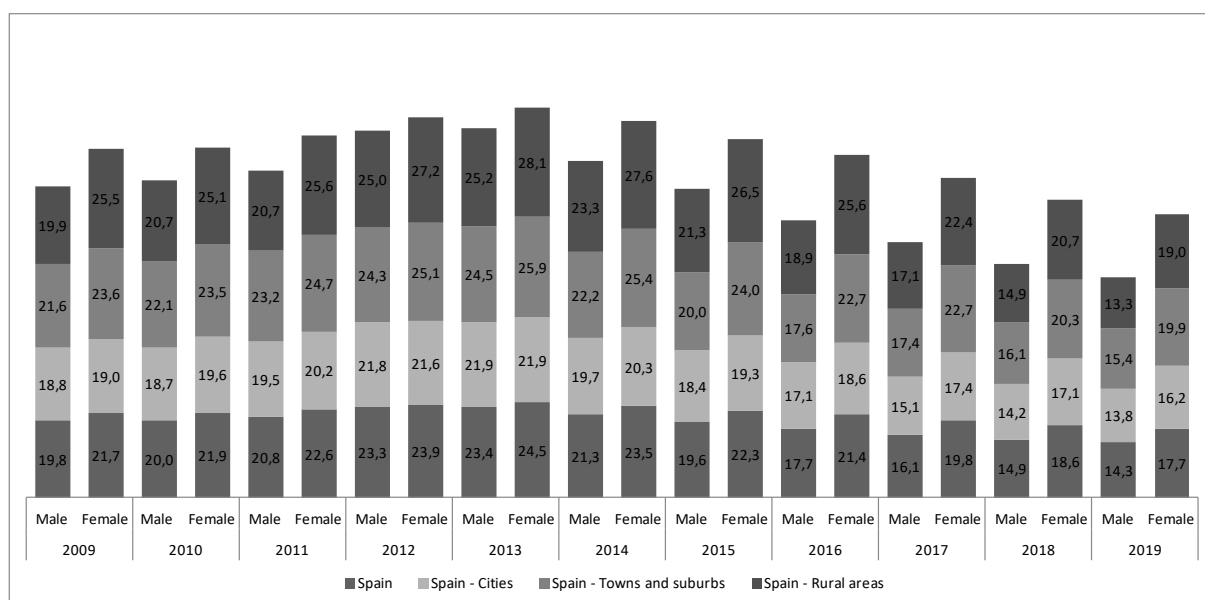
Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted on 12.06.2020

1. NEET rates 2009; 2. NEET rates 2013; 3. NEET rates 2019; 4. Absolute change 2009/2019; 5. Relative change 2009/2019; 6. Absolute change 2009/2013; 7. Relative change 2009/2013; 8. Absolute change 2013/2019; 9. Relative change 2013/2019.

Although in education we can see higher rates of early-school leavers among males in Spain, those who represent higher NEET rates in 15–34 year-old are women. This is because gender inequality plays a big role. Despite the fact that women have more education, they have less chances of being employed than their male peers mostly because of maternity and/or the assumption of traditional gender roles. This situation is more pronounced in rural than in urban settings as can be seen in Chart 7. While in 2009, one out of four women in rural areas were NEET (25.5%), this rate was still high in 2019 in pre-COVID19 Spain (19%). Moreover, if we compare data from 2019 onwards, NEET youth in relation to rural women showed the lowest probabilities of being engaged in work or study in comparison with their male counterparts (0.70), if we compare this figure with that for towns and suburb areas (0.77), or cities (0.86).



Chart 7. Youth NEET rate (%) 2009–2019 (Spain) by degree of urbanisation and sex



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted in 12.06.2020



4. CONCLUSIONS

In order to understand specific data concerning rural NEET youth in Spain, it is necessary to take into consideration the structure of autonomías (regions with some degree of autonomy) in order to develop specific policies on population, family, employment, unemployment etc. Hence, there is no centralised Spanish policy on the topic. At the same time, depopulation trends in rural areas in Spain are not homogeneous. There are some regions, such as Castilla-La Mancha and Castilla-Léon where these trends are more pronounced and where population density is lower compared to the rest of the territory and is having a direct impact on the average Spanish depopulation trends in rural territories. However, on the other hand, it is worth mentioning that there are some specific towns and rural areas gaining some population. It could be of interest to explore what are the driving factors that make these regions go against the grain in the COVID19 era and its aftermath. Despite these territorial and structural differences, we can find a common policy framework if we take into consideration how Spain implements its National Youth Guarantee System (European-funded program), and how this is specifically adapted to each territory or Comunidad Autónoma.

In the last ten years (2009 – 2019) a significant amount of Spanish youth population has migrated from rural areas to cities and towns. This migration trend could be explained by the economic crisis that hit Spain from 2008 onwards. Data shown in this report makes visible the fragility of rural NEET youth to these downturns from 2009 to 2013. In this regard, early-school leaving (ESLET) and unemployment rates in rural areas were more pronounced in 2013 and the following years for rural youth compared to youth living in urban settings and towns. However, in the last two years (2017–2019) there has been a sharp decrease in these indicators placing youth living rural areas, on average, at a similar level with the others (i.e., the average NEET youth rate in Spain (15%) versus 16% for rural areas). The two principal factors that have influenced this decreasing trend in the past years are economic recovery and outgoing migration of youth to other areas. However, we do not know what the effects of the COVID19 crisis are on rural NEET youth as yet. One hypothesis we can infer if we draw on the data from this report is that in the upcoming years it is expected that we will see higher levels of early-school leaving and unemployment among rural youth because they tend to be more fragile in relation to economic and social changes. Data confirming or refuting this hypothesis will become available in the upcoming months and years.



5. REFERENCES

- Acosta, P. (2008). National legal tradition – Spain in Galera, S. Judicial review. A comparative analysis inside the European legal system (pp. 113–136). Council of Europe Publishing.
- Camarero, L. et al. (2009). La población rural de España. De los desequilibrios a la sostenibilidad social. Obra Social “La Caixa”.
- Collantes, F., Pinilla, V., Sáez, L.A. & Silvestre, J. (2014). Reducing Depopulation in Rural Spain: The Impact of Immigration. *Population, Space and Place*, 20 (7), 606–621.
- Domínguez, M., Monllor, N. & Simó, M. (2010). Món rural i joves. Realitat juvenil i polítiques de joventut als municipis rurals de Catalunya. Generalitat de Catalunya.
- European Commission (2020). Youth Guarantee country by country. Spain. DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.
- García, B. (2000). Procesos sociodemográficos actuales en el mundo rural: Atención especial a la juventud rural. *Estudios de juventud*, 48, 21–32.
- García-Pérez, J.I. & Muñoz-Bullón, F. (2011), Transitions into Permanent Employment in Spain: An Empirical Analysis for Young Workers. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 49, 103–143. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8543.2009.00750.x
- Gómez, C. & Díaz, C. (2009). La juventud rural en el cambio de siglo: tendencias y perspectivas. *Revista de Estudios de Juventud*, 87, 125–144.
- Generalitat de Catalunya (2017). Pla d’actuació de polítiques de joventut 2017–2020. Departament de Treball, afers socials i famílies.



Gobierno de España (2019). Action plan for youth employment 2019–2021. Ministerio de Trabajo, Migraciones y Seguridad Social.

Gobierno de España (2013). Spanish national youth guarantee implementation plan. Ministerio de Empleo y Seguridad Social.

Instituto de juventud (2014). Estrategia Juventud 2020. Gobierno de España.

Peligros, C. & Vázquez, G. (2018). El mercado laboral y la formación de los jóvenes desde una perspectiva geográfica y rural. *Revista de Estudios de Juventud*, 122, 103–116.

Sampedro, R. (2000). Mujeres jóvenes en el mundo rural. *Estudios de juventud*, 48, 83–90.

Tarabini, A., Jacovkis, J. & Montes, A. (2018). Factors in educational exclusion: including the voice of the youth. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 21 (6), 836–851.



6. IMPORTANT LINKS

Youth Wiki national description: Youth policies in Spain, 2017.

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/sites/youthwiki/files/gdlspain.pdf>

National Youth Guarantee System

<https://www.sepe.es/HomeSepe/Personas/encontrar-trabajo/Garantia-Juvenil/documentacion-garantia-juvenil.html>

Youth Wiki national description: Youth policies in Spain, 2017.

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/sites/youthwiki/files/gdlspain.pdf>

National Youth Guarantee System

<https://www.sepe.es/HomeSepe/Personas/encontrar-trabajo/Garantia-Juvenil/documentacion-garantia-juvenil.html>

National Institute of Youth of Spain

http://www.injuve.es/en/home_principal

Youth Council in Spain

<http://www.cje.org/en/>

Spanish rural development network

<http://redr.es/es>

RURAL NEETs IN TURKEY



2009/2019
OVERVIEW

AUTHORS

Emre Erdogan – emre.erdogan@bilgi.edu.tr
Istanbul Bilgi University

Pinar Uyan-Semerci – pinar.uyan@bilgi.edu.tr
Istanbul Bilgi University

Image by Wallula from Pixabay

This document is published by COST Action CA 18213: Rural NEET Youth Network: Modeling the risks underlying rural NEETs social exclusion.

© COST CA18213, December 2020.

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged.
Please cite this publication as "COST CA18213 Rural NEETs in Turkey: 2009/2019 Overview.

Visit: www.rnyobservatory.eu

INDEX

1. GENERAL CONTEXTUALIZATION	7
2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE	14
3. DATA ANALYSIS	16
3. 1. Population and youth population	16
3. 2. Employment and unemployment	18
• Youth employment	18
• Youth unemployment	20
3. 3. Education	25
• Education attainment	25
• Early school leavers	26
3. 4. Poverty and social exclusion	25
3. 5. NEETs rate	28
4. CONCLUSIONS	33
5. REFERENCES	34
6. IMPORTANT LINKS	36

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report describes the situation of rural Youths Neither in Employment, nor in Education or Training (NEET) aged between 15 and 34 years old, over the last decade (2009–2019) in Turkey. To achieve this goal, the report portrays indicators of youth population, youth employment and unemployment, education and NEETs distribution. Since the urban/rural distinction is not clear in Turkey, the overtime change in the status of the Rural NEETs cannot be analysed.

The adopted statistical procedures across the different selected dimensions involves descriptive longitudinal analysis, using graphical displays (e.g., overlay line charts) as well as the calculation of proportional absolute and relative changes between 2009 and 2013, 2013 and 2019 and 2009 and 2019. These time ranges were chosen to capture the indicators evolution before and after the economic crisis that hit European countries. All data was extracted from Eurostat public datasets, in addition we also used the statistics provided by the Statistical Institute of Turkey, in addition to some academic works.

The analyses show that Turkey has an ageing population, and that the share of the youth in the population declined over years. The relatively younger population of Turkey has previously always been accepted as an advantage, but this advantage has disappeared with declining birth rates. The transition to a new administrative system in 2012 prevents a detailed analysis of the situation of rural NEETS. However, the available data shows that there is a significant gender gap and the lower levels of female labour force participation has led to the emergence of the NEETs as a gendered problem.

YÖNETİCİ ÖZETİ

Bu rapor, Türkiye’de son on yılda (2009-2019) 15 ila 34 yaşları arasındaki Ne İstihdamda ne de Eğitimde veya Öğretimde (NEET) bulunan kırsal gençlerin durumuna odaklanmaktadır.

Rapor, bu hedefe ulaşmak için genç nüfusu, genç istihdamı ve işsizliği, eğitim ve NEET’lerin dağılımına ilişkin göstergeleri içermektedir. ediyor. Türkiye’de kent / kır ayrımı net olmadığından; Kırsal NEET’lerin durumundaki fazla mesai değişikliği analiz etmek mümkün değildir..

Analizler, Türkiye’nin yaşlanan bir nüfusa sahip olduğunu, nüfus içindeki gençlerin payının yıllar içinde azaldığını gösteriyor. Türkiye’nin nispeten genç nüfusu her zaman bir avantaj olarak kabul edildi, ancak bu avantaj, azalan doğum oranları ile ortadan kalktı. 2012’de yeni bir idari sisteme geçiş, kırsal NEETS’in durumunun ayrıntılı bir analizini engellemektedir. Bununla birlikte, mevcut veriler, önemli bir cinsiyet farkı olduğunu ve kadınların işgücüne katılımının daha düşük seviyelerde olması NEET’lerin toplumsal cinsiyete dayalı bir sorun olarak ortaya çıkmasına yol açtığını göstermektedir.



1. INTRODUCTION

TTurkey is a Middle Eastern country whose membership application to European Union has been “in progress” since 1987. Turkey is always in-between Europe and Asia, the West and East. It is both developed and developing, and the gap among the regions in the country is also enormous. Migration–internal and external; child labour; gender related inequalities; Kurdish issues and polarised politics constitute continuous political, economic and social problems in Turkey and which have multi-layered effects on youngsters’ current and future wellbeing.

Turkey has 12.95 million people aged 15–24, 15.6 % of the total population of 83.15 million. The country hosts 4 million refugees, the highest number in the world. 3.6 million of these refugees are registered Syrians under temporary protection status.

In this national report of Turkey, the general context for the youth–legislation and agencies, policy and employment, the education system and the administrative structure will be elaborated. EU funded projects are also listed.

The data analysis in the report includes population pyramid age; gender and urban/rural divides. Thus, there is a methodological and definitional problem of ‘rural’ in the data in Turkish case. The data presented in the report shows that Turkey has the highest NEET ratio among the OECD countries and the gender gap among the NEETS is striking. Although there is a chronic high unemployment rate among the Turkish youth, gender and seasonal variations are important to elaborate upon. Regarding education, despite improvements, school drop-out scores are significantly high in comparison with EU and OECD countries. Poverty/social exclusion and intersectionality are important factors to analyse in order to understand the current situation and to develop effective social policies.



1. GENERAL CONTEXTUALISATION

Legislation and Agencies

The base for the youth policies of Turkey is the provision of the Constitution of Turkey, article no. 58 which defines the relationship between youth and the State. According to this article, the State has a praetorian role, saving youth from different threats, from alcohol and narcotics to separatist ideologies. However, it doesn't include any provision about their rights, and it is thereby a unidirectional and paternalistic relationship, a style which dominates almost every sphere of state-society relationships in Turkey. The major agency which is responsible for conducting youth policies is the Ministry of Youth and Sports, established in 1982 and its structure has been revised several times. Responsibilities of the Ministry are defined as: developing policies supporting the personal and social development of youth; providing opportunities for the fulfilment of their potentials; and, opening avenues for active participation of youngsters to every aspect of social life. The ministry has its local branches, organised at the provincial (NUTS3) and district levels (NUTS4). For 2020, the budget of the Ministry was defined as 19 billion TLs and more than half of this budget was composed of transfers to households and "Treasury Transfers". As the Ministry oversees the organisation of sport activities at amateur and professional levels, its focus on youth employment is highly limited.

Other ministries of the central government have some responsibilities within the domain of youth policies. The National Employment Agencies (İŞKUR), a branch of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, was established in 1946 and it has the responsibility of solving employment problems of youngsters. The İŞKUR organises training activities for youngsters in order to facilitate their entry into the job market and supports entrepreneurship in the country through specific incentives. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the İŞKUR class had the responsibility of channelling government funds to beneficiaries. (İŞKUR, 2011)

The National Agency of Turkey is a specifically established organisation dependent on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It has the responsibility of coordination of the youth and education programs of the European Union and its organisation at the national level. The National Agency has the role of coordination of the Erasmus and Erasmus+ Programs in Turkey.



The youth in Turkey is also under the jurisdiction of different bureaucratic bodies. The Ministry of National Education is in charge of coordination and organisation of educational activities, including the vocational training system. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry conducts its own programs to empower young farmers. The Higher Education Council of Turkey acts as a coordinator of the higher education institutions and is composed of public and foundation (aka private) universities. Moreover, the university and other centrally organised exams are organised by the Measuring, Selection and Placement Centre, another autonomous institution.

Beyond this, many duties are assigned to municipalities, such as construction of dormitories for youngsters and supporting their sport activities. Similarly, the City Councils, newly established bodies targeted at empowering local participatory practices have duties aimed at supporting the youth, specifically by forming “Youth Assemblies”.

Major Documents

The youth in Turkey are the subject of different policy documents. The Eleventh Development Plan of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey forms the umbrella document for the policies to be pursued during next five years. The plan has a specific section allocated to youth and it targets to reduce youth unemployment (target no. 116), equipping youngsters with new skills to facilitate market entrance (target no. 210), improving the inclusivity of society (target no. 536), providing decent jobs to women and youngsters (target no. 539), and raising children and youngsters as individuals who have humanitarian and moral values (target no. 544). The youth unemployment is perceived as a problem to be solved with the cooperation of the central and local authorities, and a new body for development of youth policies (the National Youth Council of Turkey) has been provisioned. The İŞKUR will have the responsibility of developing new training programs and incentives with cooperation of civil society organisations (the Presidency of Turkey, 2019). The Plan also has a supportive document prepared by a large group of experts and policy recommendations which are linked to this document (the Ministry of Development, 2019).

The Development Plan does not have a binding function. However, all national and local government agencies must prepare their own strategic plans in accordance with its provisions. Hence, the strategic plans of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Fa-



mily, Labour and Social Services and the Ministry of National Education have specific sections allocated to the policies concerning the youth. The plan of the Ministry of Youth and Sports is highly general, however, the MoFLS's plan has specific policy proposals to solve the unemployment problem and the situations of NEETs (The Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2019). Agencies such as İŞKUR have already composed their own strategic plans. Like other documents, attracting NEETs to employment is among its specific targets (İŞKUR, 2019).

Youth Policy and Employment Measures

As stated above, unemployment has been perceived as the most important problem of youth and specific targets have been put in place within the official documents.

The Eleventh Development Plan (the Presidency of Turkey, 2019) notes youth unemployment reaching up to 35% as the most important problem, and links it to the worsening global economic environment (p.16). It also emphasises on the necessity of equipping youngsters with the professional skills required in the labour market (p.36). Ongoing digital transformation and technological developments are perceived as opportunities for vulnerable groups and youth (p.137). Developing local policies are put among the priorities of the local administrations (p.146). NEETs are among the specific target groups of the Plan, and it proposes the development of incentive plans to increase the participation of them in the labour force and employment. According to the plan, a training needs analysis will be carried out to identify occupational areas for them. The plan makes provisions to conduct short-term certification and diploma programs in innovative areas (p.161). These actions will be conducted by the İŞKUR, KOSGEB and civil society organisations (p.162).

The MoYS have limited responsibilities of developing these policies. In its strategic plan, it aims to develop entrepreneurship programs in its Youth Centres and Youth Camps with the cooperation of other institutions (pp.68–69).

The MoFLSS also has some responsibilities towards to youth employment. Developing specific regional programs targeting youth, women and the disabled is one of these responsibilities (p.52). The MoFLSS plans to develop an information system for attracting NEETs to the labour market with the cooperation of other ministries and agencies. (p.52).



The İŞKUR has specific targets and policies addressing the employment problem of youth and the situation of NEETs. Among these responsibilities are: conducting a profiling analysis of NEETs; conducting skills and talents research; developing matching mechanisms; improving the quality and the content of training programs; and, providing consultancy services.

In addition to these planned activities, İŞKUR has some active incentive programs to encourage employment of youth, such as subsidising social security payments for a period from 2 to 5 years depending on age, previous employment and attendance to training services of İŞKUR. İŞKUR also conducts active employment policies such as vocational training courses, professional training incentives, on the job training programs, public work programs, entrepreneurship programs through KOSGEB and projects for the disabled (İŞKUR, 2020). The Ministry of Treasury developed some incentives for young entrepreneurs such as tax waiving and in cash donations of about 4000 Euros (Goksen et. al., 2017).

The Education System of Turkey

Similar to the domain of youth, the education system of Turkey is also multi-headed and under the jurisdiction of separate agencies. The MoNE has the responsibility of conducting educational activities at the central and local level. The education system has been divided to five different stages, and the MoNE has the control of the first four stages in addition to education for the individuals with specific needs. They are as follows.

1. Pre-school.
2. Primary school (1–4th grades), the General Directorate of Basic Education, the Ministry of National Education.
3. Lower Secondary (5–8th grades), the General Directorate of Basic Education and Secondary Education & the General Directorate of Religious Education (Religious educations).
4. Upper Secondary (9–12th grades), the General Directorate of Secondary Education, the General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education and General Directorate of Religious Education.
5. Higher Education (University), the Council of Higher Education (EURDYCE, 2020).



Non-formal education is under the responsibility of the MoNE, through the General Directorate of Apprenticeships and Non-Formal Education, which conducts adult education and training activities through Adult Education Centres. The İŞKUR also organises trainings for different segments of society. The Chambers of Commerce, private enterprises and other private institutions are other agencies providing non-formal education, but all of them are under the supervision of the MoNE (European Committee on Regions, 2020). Compulsory education in Turkey lasts 12 years, starting at 6 years old (56 –60 months) and is divided to three different stages: primary school, secondary school and high school.

The Administrative Structure of Turkey

The Republic of Turkey is a democratic, secular and social state governed by the rule of law (Article 2 of the Constitution). The Turkish State is an indivisible whole with its country and nation (Article 3 of the Constitution).

The administrative system is organised in a two-tier structure composed of central and local government. The central government is composed of central bodies (ministries and agencies) and their local branches appointed by the central government. The local administration is organised into three different and autonomous types of local government which are locally elected: special provincial administrations, municipalities and villages.

The country is composed of 81 (NUTS3) provinces and 957 districts (NUTS4). The governors of provinces and sub-governors of districts are appointed by the Ministry of Interior. Additionally, there are currently approximately 1,394 municipalities and 18,247 villages. The municipalities are organised into several categories: metropolitan municipalities (30 overall); province capitals (51 overall); district municipalities (519 in metropolitan municipalities, 400 in other provinces); and, town municipalities (394). Each district also hosts its municipality, while many small settlements are organised as town municipalities. Mayors of these municipalities are elected via popular vote.

Municipalities consist of several neighbourhoods, each of which has its own basic administration consisting of a headman (muhtar) and an assembly of aldermen. The latter are



elected for a five-year term and have an advisory function. Villages represent the smallest form of local administration in rural areas and usually have a population of 150 to 5,000 inhabitants. The local administration of a village consists of a headman (muhtar) and an assembly of aldermen (European Committee on Regions, 2020b).

Child Labour and Entrance to the Labour Market

According to the legal regulations in Turkey, any person under 14 years old is regarded as a child and their employment is strictly prohibited. A child worker is a person between 14 and 15 years old and a young worker is someone who is over 15 but has not completed the age of 18. Child workers and young workers may be employed in light work, “that will not prevent their success at school” and the preparations to be made for the choice of profession, or participation in vocational training. With a change in the regulations, children under the age of 14 may be employed in arts, culture and advertising activities that do not impede their physical, mental, social and moral development and when their attendance at school has been ensured (the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, 2017).

EU funding specifically for Youth sector and Non-formal Education

The EU coordinates its efforts for improving the situation of the youth in Turkey through the National Agency. Erasmus+ is the umbrella program of different efforts such as the mobility of individuals, international cooperation between actors, support for policy innovation, Jean Monnet activities and sports activities. The last official figures showed that 45 000 individuals in 1417 projects benefited from mobility programs in higher education, vocational education and training, school education, adult learning and youth learning, costing for a total grant amount of 83.96 million Euros.

The most important program conducted by the İŞKUR (with the support of the EU as part of the **Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)**) was the “Improving Youth Employment Program” (2009–2013) which targeted the improvement of the human resources of the country during the pre-accession process. The program was covered 44 provinces (NUTS3) and the total volume was 23 million Euros. The program supported 127 different projects in these provinces, and was composed of entrepreneurship trainings, personal development trainings, ICT courses, vocational trainings in specific sectors such as tourism, textile, and furniture.



Another program conducted by the İŞKUR is the “Promoting Youth Employment in Sectoral Investment Areas (PYE-2)” (2013–), with a budget of 26 million Euros, targeting 43 relatively underdeveloped provinces. The program objective has been defined as “delivering effective active labour market measures to increase the employability and entrepreneurship of young people while promoting their integration into labour market”.

Turkey recently launched a new program “Labour Market Support Program for Young People Not in Employment Education or Training (NEETs) (NEET PRO)” in summer 2020, with a budget of 17 million Euros. As the first program specifically targeting NEETs, its objective is defined as “to increase employability and labour force participation of NEETs by providing comprehensive and holistic active labour market measures”. Actions under the program can be vocational trainings, entrepreneurship training programs, on the job trainings, generic and soft skills trainings and improving qualification of NEETs to meet the local labour market needs (İŞKUR, 2020b).

Main Political Challenges

Youth in Turkey faces with many different challenges in the political and social domains. They include:

1. Political Instability;
2. Macroeconomic Instability, regional disparities;
3. Gender Inequality;
4. Problems of Education System;
5. Othering;
6. Syrian Refugees.



2. METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

Definition of Urban and Rural areas

In Turkey, the definition of rurality continuously changed and different criteria have been employed to distinguish between rural and urban areas. In 1924, the major criteria was population, and settlements having a population lower than 2000 have been defined as rural and settlements with 2000–20 000 individuals were “kasaba”. Having a population greater than 20 000 was accepted as a threshold for being defined as a city, in other words an urban place. Over time, TURKSTAT combined the first two categories and put a threshold of 20 000 in order to be defined as a city. This categorisation had administrative outcomes: villages are governed by “mukhtars” and are subject to different legal structures. This distinction was generally accepted.

However, in 2012 the government reformed the administrative structure of Turkey and declared 30 provinces having a population higher than 750000 individuals as the Metropolitan Areas. All villages in these provinces have been transformed to neighbourhoods (urban units) and the rural population of Turkey declined to 8% from 23% in one night. Following this administrative change, the previously accepted distinction based on population size lost its meaning and TURKSTAT has not yet developed an alternative measurement to be used in academic works. All statistics are still being produced by using the above discussed and invalid categorisation. TURKSTAT still uses the administrative categorisation.

On the other hand, there are some attempts to develop alternative and better measurements of rurality as a part of the harmonisation of policies with the EU. The classification is mainly based on clustering of square kilometre grid cells inhabiting fewer than 300 persons and land use in 2006. Based on this new classification, 794 districts (LAU1) are classified as thinly populated while 55 are having intermediate population and 121 are densely populated. Distribution of population in these district groups is 40.0%, 7.2% and 52.8%, respectively. Geographically, thinly populated areas which will be regarded as rural covers 90%, intermediate areas cover 4% and densely populated areas cover 6% of Turkey.



However, this newly applied categorisation is not yet used by TURKSTAT and available statistics are based on the previously defined administrative distinction. Hence, as EUROSTAT fails to provide many statistics based on urban/rural distinction, for the main indicators presented in this report, we choose to use TURKSTAT data.

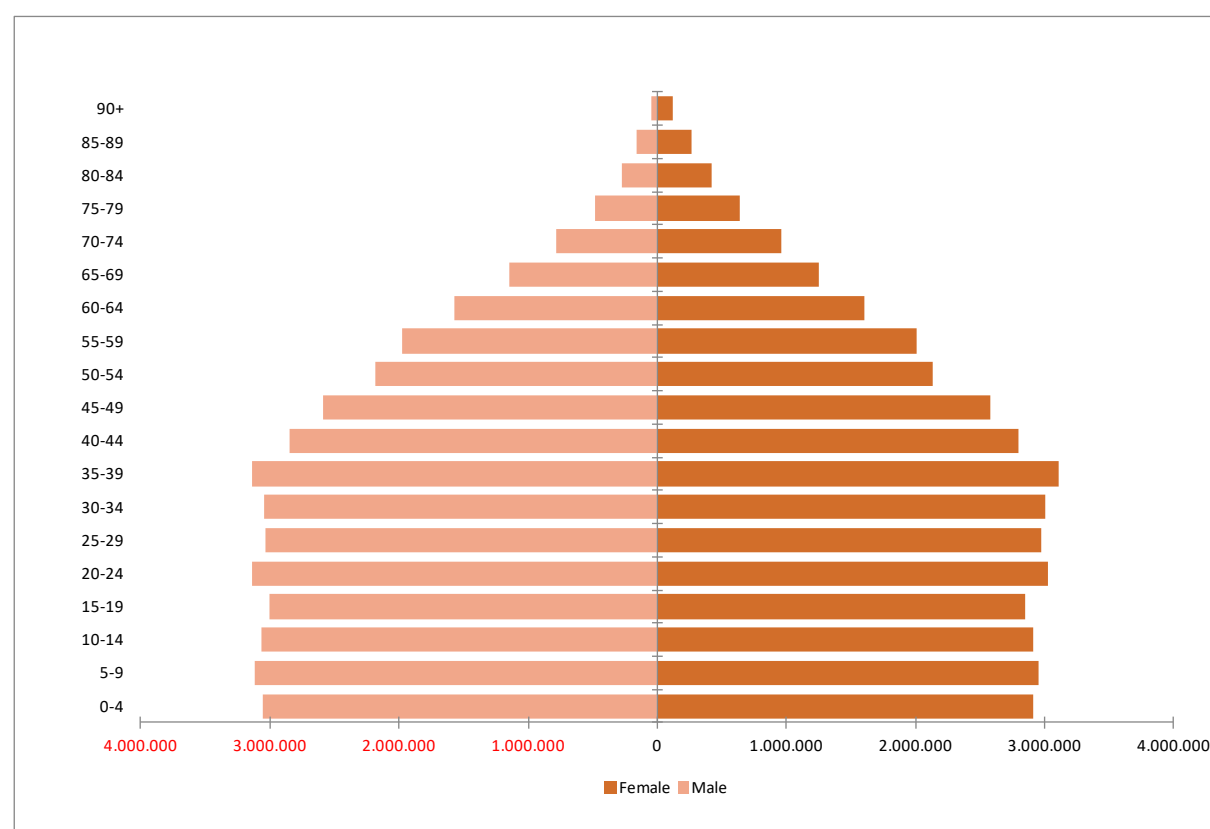


3. DATA ANALYSIS

3.1. Population and youth population

According to the last official statistics, Turkey has a population of 83 million, putting it among the most populous countries in Europe. As presented above, a significant portion of this population is relatively younger. The total number of individuals under 29 years old is about 39 million, forming almost half of the population (46%). Meanwhile, the percentage of youngsters is 23% with a total number of 19 million. Gender distribution is almost equal.

Chart 1. Population Pyramid (2019)



Source: Eurostat (Ifsa_pgauws) – extracted on 12.5.2020

The same official statistics using the above discussed urban/rural divide shows that 93% of the population lives in the urban areas (77 million). However, this figure is highly misleading as it based on an administrative division, instead of sociological or spatial considerations. According to these figures, the percentage of youngsters living in urban areas is 23%, with a sum total of 18 million. As observed above, gender distribution is almost even.

According to the official statistics, only 7% of the population of Turkey lives in urban areas (6 million). Out of this population, 21% is classified as youngsters (15–29 ages old) and as the above figures show, the percentage of males is relatively higher, especially within the 15–24 age brackets (700 000 vs. 584 000). Reasons for this gap are numerous and migration to urban places because of marriage is one of them.

Table 1. Ratio of youth population by age subgroups and absolute and relative change in Turkey by age groups (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)

	2011	2015	2019	Absolute Change / Relative Change (2011–2015, pp)	Absolute Change / Relative Change (2015–2019, pp)	Absolute Change / Relative Change (2011–2019, pp)
15–19	8.5	8.4	7.8	–0.1 / –1.2	–0.6 / –7.1	–0.7 / –8.2
20–24	8.5	8.1	8.0	–0.4 / –4.7	–0.1 / –1.2	–0.5 / –5.9
25–29	8.7	8.1	7.7	–0.6 / –6.9	–0.4 / –4.6	–1 / –11.5

Source: Source: Eurostat: yth_demo_O20 – data extracted in 05.05.20

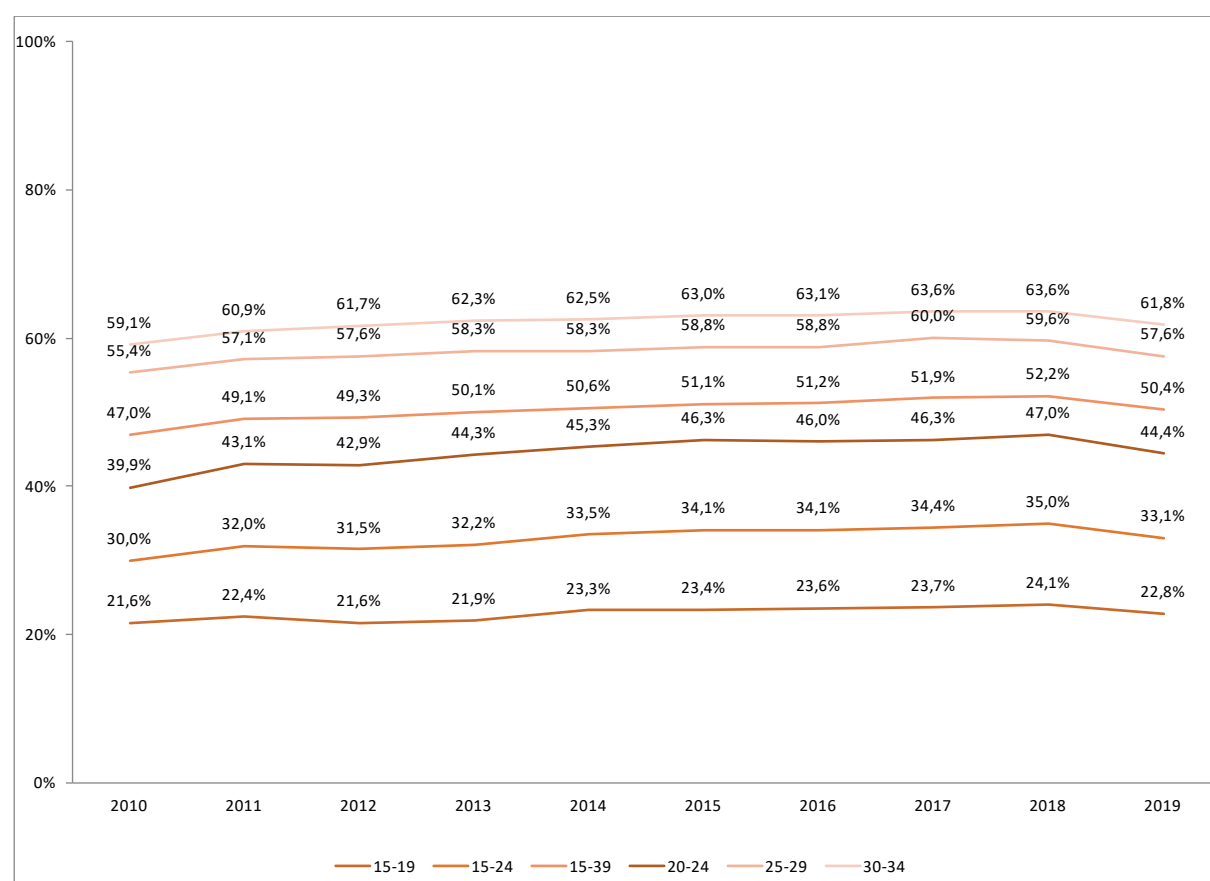
Table 1 above shows that the share of the youth population in Turkey declined slightly over-time with a percentage of 8.2% between 2011 and 2019 in the youngest age bracket (15–19). This decline is also observed in other age brackets (20–24 and 25–29), indicating an ageing population. The young population of Turkey seemed to have a demographic advantage for a while, however this advantage will have disappeared within couple of years.

3. 2. Employment and Unemployment

3. 2. 1. Youth employment

Chart 2 presents long term employment trends among Turkish youth, according to different age brackets. As it is observed, the long term variation is relatively small for every age bracket and for this decade employment rates have remained almost static. The highest employment ratio is observed in 30-34 (61%) and 25-29 (58%) age brackets, whereas only 23% of those in the 15-19 age brackets are employed. Similarly, the employment ratio of the 20-24 age bracket is relatively low, a figure fluctuating between 40 – 45%.

Chart 2. Employment in Turkey by age groups (2010–2019)



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020



Table 2. Youth employment (%) and absolute and relative change in Turkey by age groups (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)

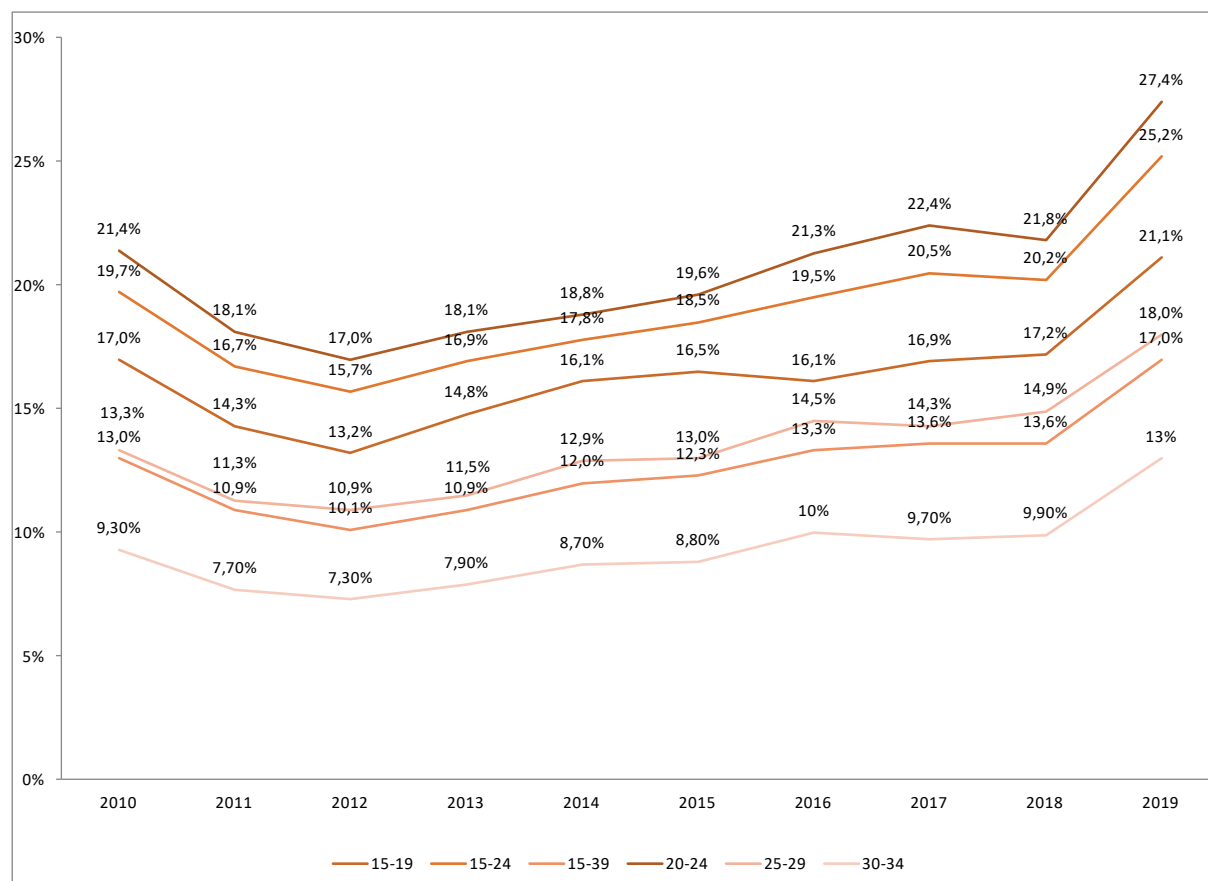
	2011	2015	2019	Absolute Change / Relative Change (2011–2015, pp)	Absolute Change / Relative Change (2015–2019, pp)	Absolute Change / Relative Change (2011–2019, pp)
15–19	22.4	23.4	22.8	1 / 4.5	–0.6 / –2.7	0.4 / 1.8
20–24	43.1	46.3	44.4	3.2 / 7.4	–1.9 / –4.4	1.3 / 3
25–29	57.1	58.8	57.6	1.7 / 3	–1.2 / –2.1	0.5 / 0.9
30–34	60.9	63.0	61.8	2.1 / 3.4	–1.2 / –2	0.9 / 1.5

Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020

Table 2 above presents the overall change of the youth employment in Turkey. It is possible to argue that the employment rates did not change over this time period.

3. 2. 2. Youth unemployment

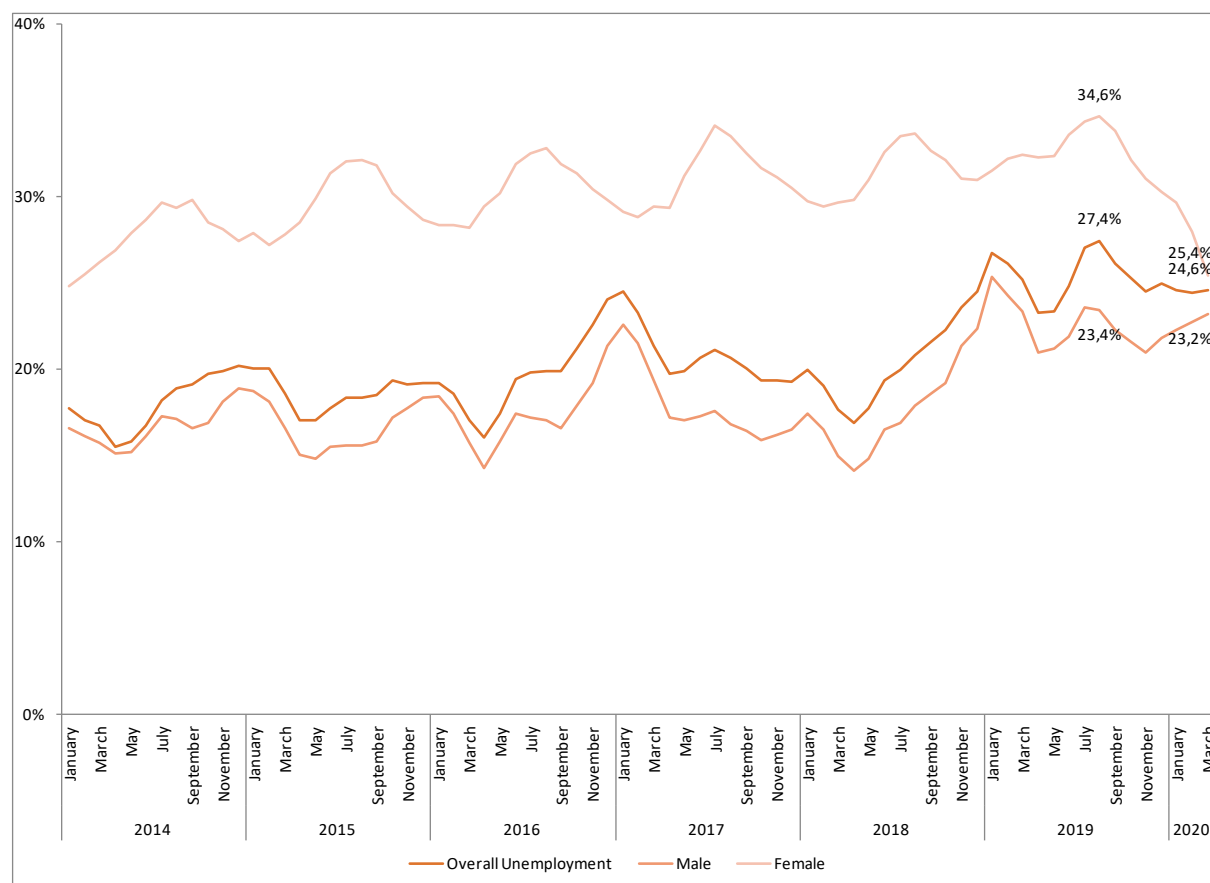
Chart 3. Unemployment in Turkey, by age groups (2010–2019)



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_ergau) – data extracted on 29.04.2020

As the above figure shows, unemployment has become a chronic problem in Turkey, even when ignoring the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to official figures, the percentage of those who are unemployed in the 15–39 age bracket increased to 17% in 2019, from 11% in 2011, most probably because of the worsening macroeconomic conditions. The unemployment rate among youngsters also increased: it rose to 21.1% for the 15–19 age brackets and 25% for the 15–24 age brackets. The highest unemployment ratio is observed in the 20–24 age bracket, reaching 27.4%.

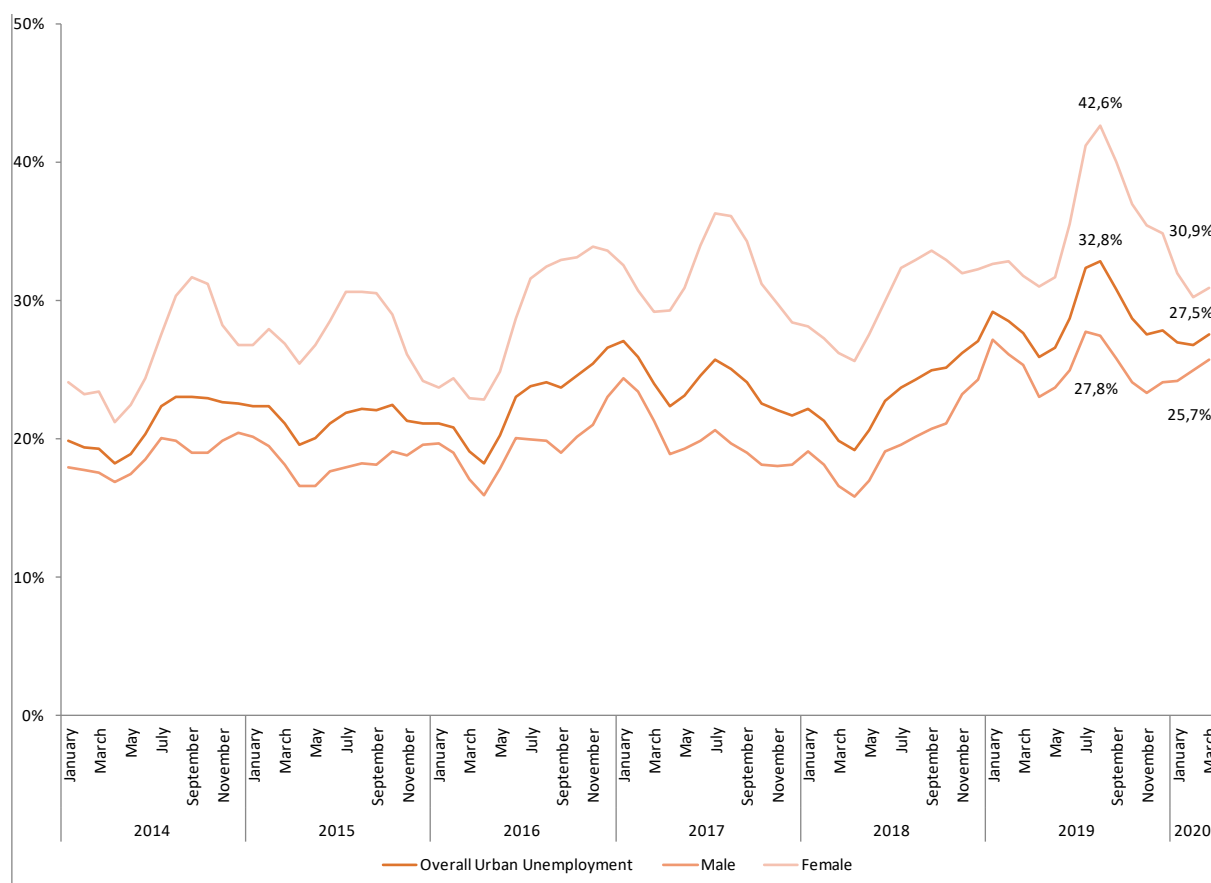
Chart 3. Unemployment in Turkey, by age groups (2010–2019)



Source: Turkstat, Labour Force Statistics – data extracted on 02.11.2020

The above data, obtained from TURKSTAT presents a seasonal variation in the unemployment rate among youngsters (15–24 age group). However, this pattern is not the same for male and female youngsters. Parallel to the overall unemployment ratio, unemployment among males increases during the winter months and declines during the summer. However, female unemployment peaks during the summer, most probably because of increased demand for jobs during the summer months. Nevertheless, the above figure shows that following the economic fluctuation of 2018, unemployment among youngsters increased regularly and reached to 25% among young males. On the other hand, above figure shows a rapid decline during March 2020 in female unemployment; this was as a result of a declined labour force participation ratio.

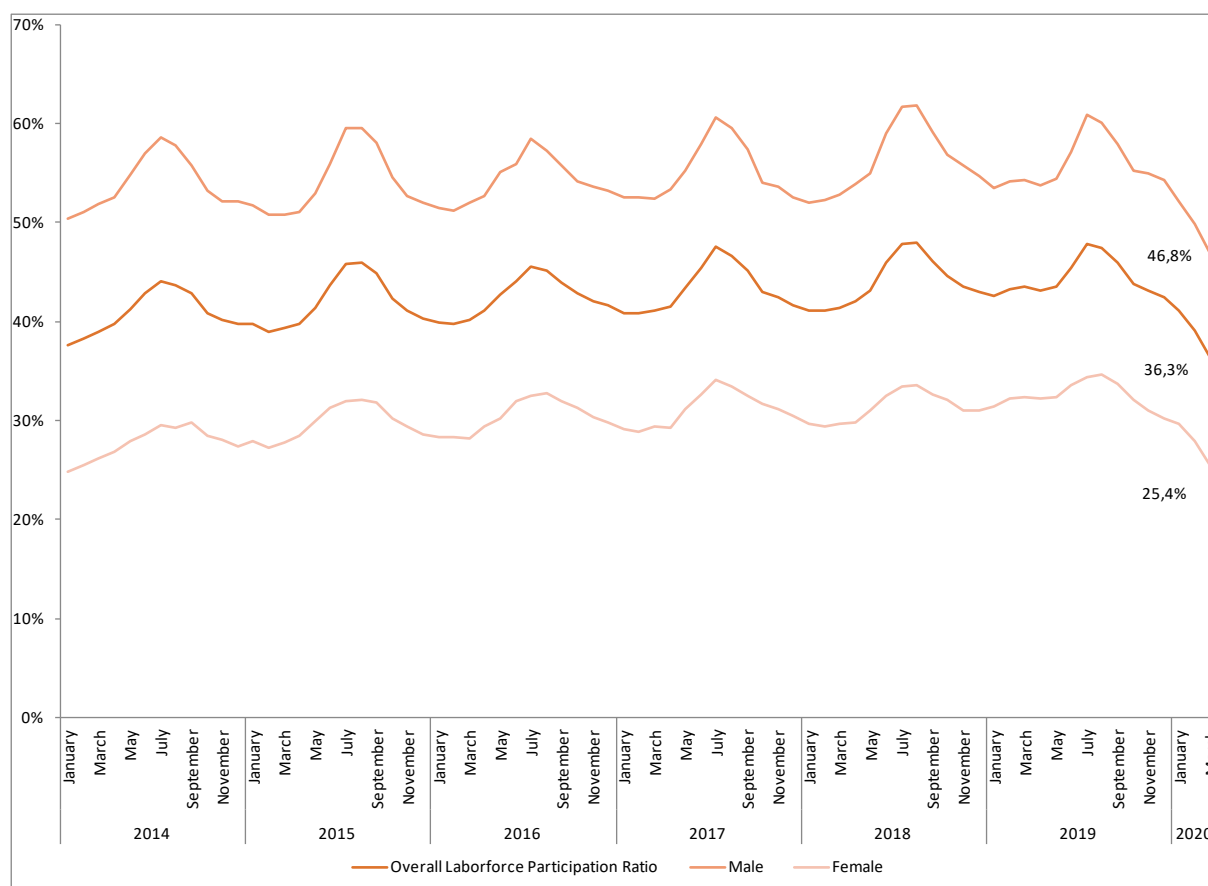
Chart 5. Urban Unemployment in Turkey, by Months and Gender, age group 15–24 years old(2014–2020)



Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau) – data extracted on 27.06.2020

Changes in the urban unemployment rates among the youngsters are presented above. This figure shows that urban unemployment is significantly higher compared to the rest of the country, fluctuating between 20 – 30%. Secondly, female unemployment has a higher average compared to their male counterparts and it has its own seasonal variation, especially during the summer months. Another interesting finding is the peak of female urban unemployment observed during the summer of 2019, almost reaching 45%. Following this peak, female unemployment ratio declined and converged towards the ratio of their male counterparts.

Chart 6. Labour Force Participation Ratio in Turkey, by Months and Gender, age group 15–24 years old (2014–2020)



Source: Turkstat, Labour Force Statistics – data extracted on 02.11.2020

A major factor affecting the unemployment ratio is the labour force participation of youngsters. As the unemployment ratio is calculated based on labour force, fluctuations in the labour force naturally affect it. As presented above, there is a strong seasonality in this ratio during the summer months, as students and other youngsters are starting to look for jobs and during the winter this ratio remains almost stable. A gender gap is also visible in this ratio; specifically, the labour force participation of male youngsters almost doubles the ratio of their female counterparts. Female labour force participation ratio fluctuates around 30%. The first quarter of 2020 showed us a rapid decline in labour force participation meaning that youngsters withdrew from the job market and stopped looking for jobs.

Table 3. Youth unemployment (%) and absolute and relative change in Turkey (2009–2013, 2013–2019 and 2009–2019)

	2011	2015	2019	Absolute Change / Relative Change (2011–2015, pp)	Absolute Change / Relative Change (2015–2019, pp)	Absolute Change / Relative Change (2011–2019, pp)
15–19	14.3	16.5	21.1	2.2 / 15.4	4.6 / 32.2	6.8 / 47.6
20–24	9.0	10.4	14.0	1.4 / 15.6	3.6 / 40	5 / 55.6
25–29	18.1	19.6	27.4	1.5 / 8.3	7.8 / 43.1	9.3 / 51.4
30–34	11.3	13.0	18.0	1.7 / 15	5 / 44.2	6.7 / 59.3

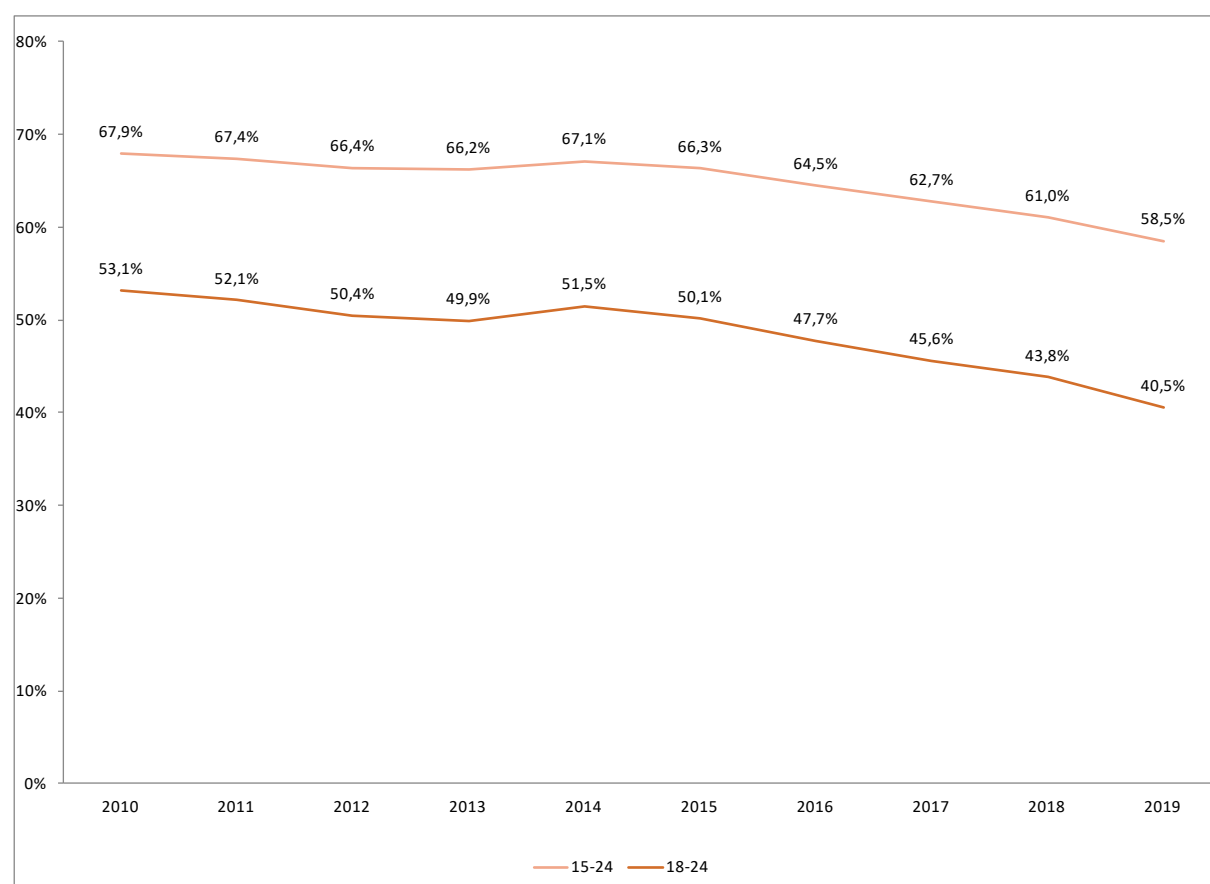
Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_urgau) – data extracted on 05.05.2020

According to Table 3, which presents the absolute and relative change in the youth unemployment in Turkey between 2011 and 2019, unemployment became an acute problem of the youth. The percentage of unemployed youth between 15–19 years old increased to 21% in 2019, up from 14% in 2011, thereby indicating a relative change of almost 50%. Similarly, unemployment increased by 56% in the 20–24 age bracket and 52% in the 25–29 age bracket. These figures shows that many youngsters had to switch to a NEET status as a result of increased unemployment.

3. 3. Education

3. 3. 1. Education attainment

Chart 7. Educational Attainment Less than Primary, Primary and Secondary Education rate (%) in Turkey (2010–2019)



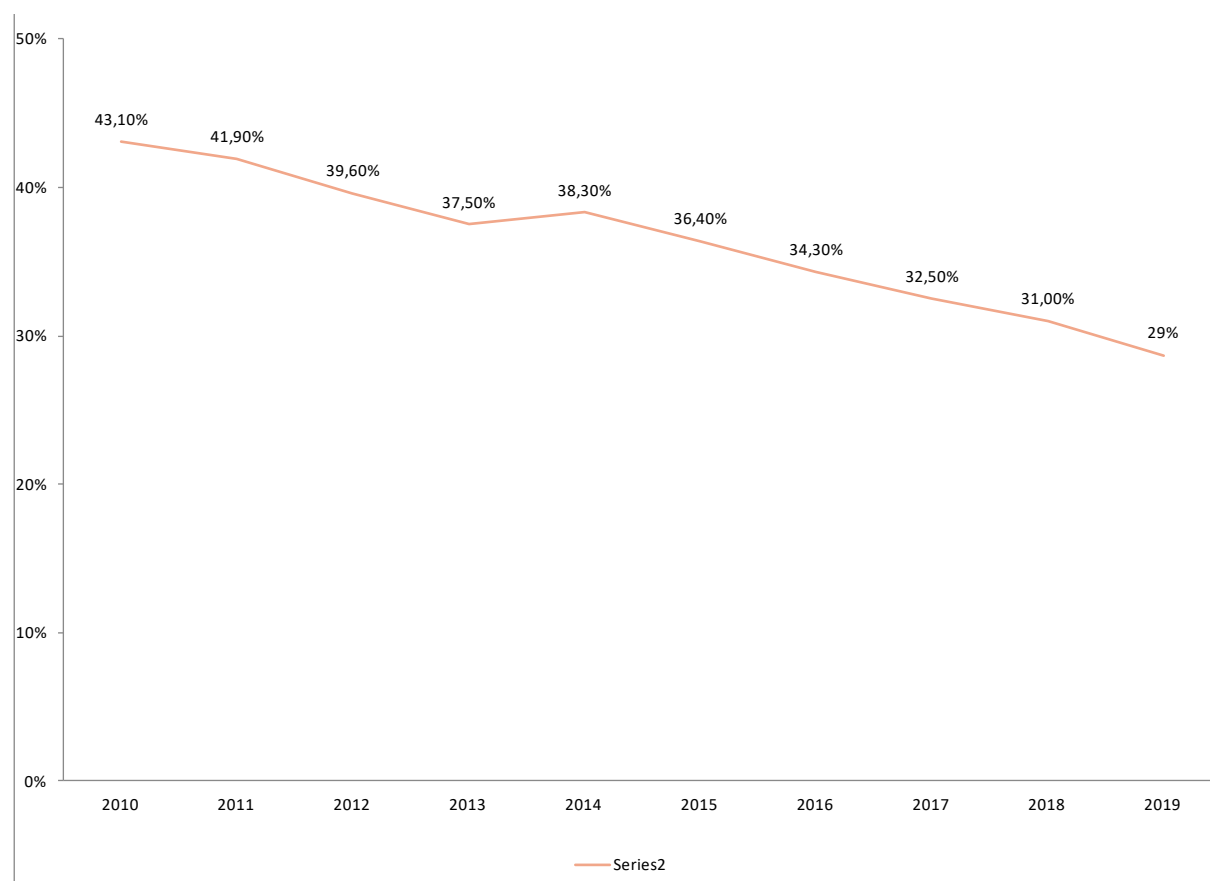
Source: Eurostat (edat_ifse_9913) – data extracted in 27.06.2020

Similar to the good performance to prevent school drop-outs, Turkey's performance on the inclusiveness of the education system is also improving. As presented in the above figure, the percentage of those having less than higher education declined over time, 59% in the 15–24 age brackets and 41% in the 18–24 age brackets. Despite this relative success, these scores are significantly high when considered within the context of EU and OECD countries.



3.3.2. Early school leavers

Chart 8. Early School Leavers rate (%) in Turkey (2010-2019)

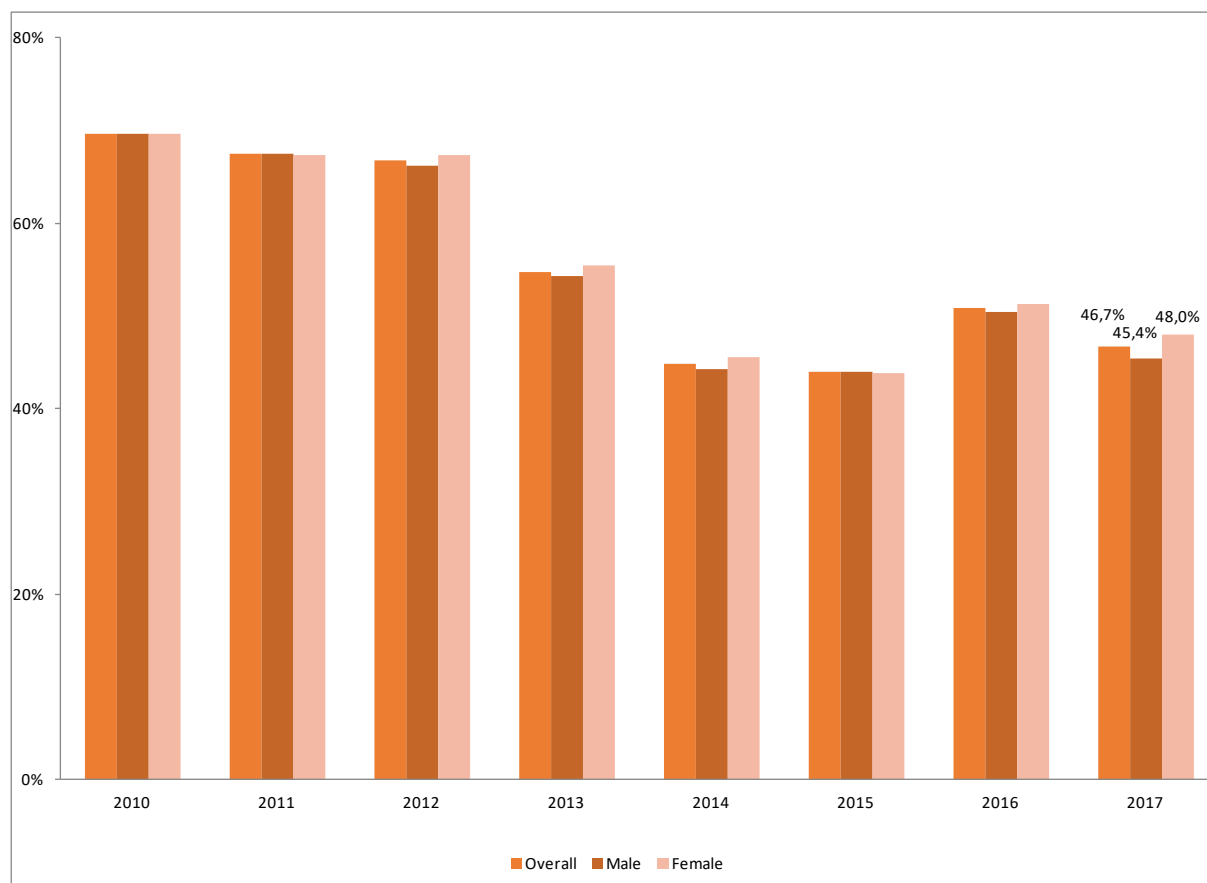


Source: Eurostat (edat_lfs_9913) – data extracted in 05.05.2020

Turkey has a good record on fighting against early school dropout and this performance is visible in Chart 8. It was 43% in 2010 and then declined continuously to 29% in 2019. This performance is linked to the increased capacity of the tertiary education sector.

3. 4. Poverty & social exclusion

Chart 9. People at risk of poverty or social exclusion age group 15–24 years old (%) in Turkey, by gender (2010–2017)

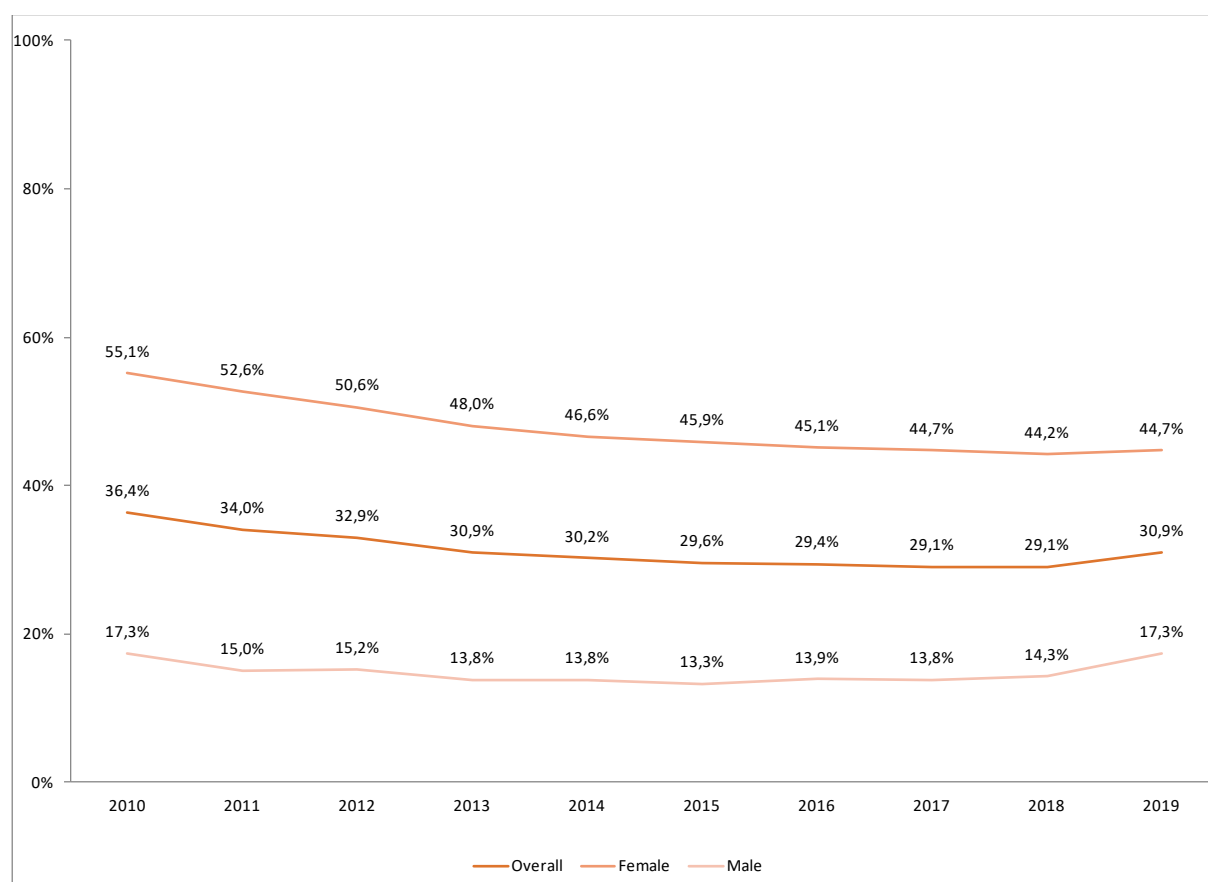


Source: Eurostat (T2020_50) – data extracted in 05.05.2020

The above figure shows the change in percentage of youngsters at risk of poverty or social exclusion in Turkey. This score was almost 70% in 2010 and it declined to 45% in 2014. Despite increases in the following two years, this ratio is less than 50%. However, we do not have access to the recent figures, meaning that available statistics do not reflect the effect of the economic crisis of 2018, and most importantly the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. We can already speculate that the poverty risk of youngsters will be increased for these three years (2018–2020). The same figure shows that there is no gender gap, that is male and female youngsters have similar ratio of risks.

3. 5. NEETs rate

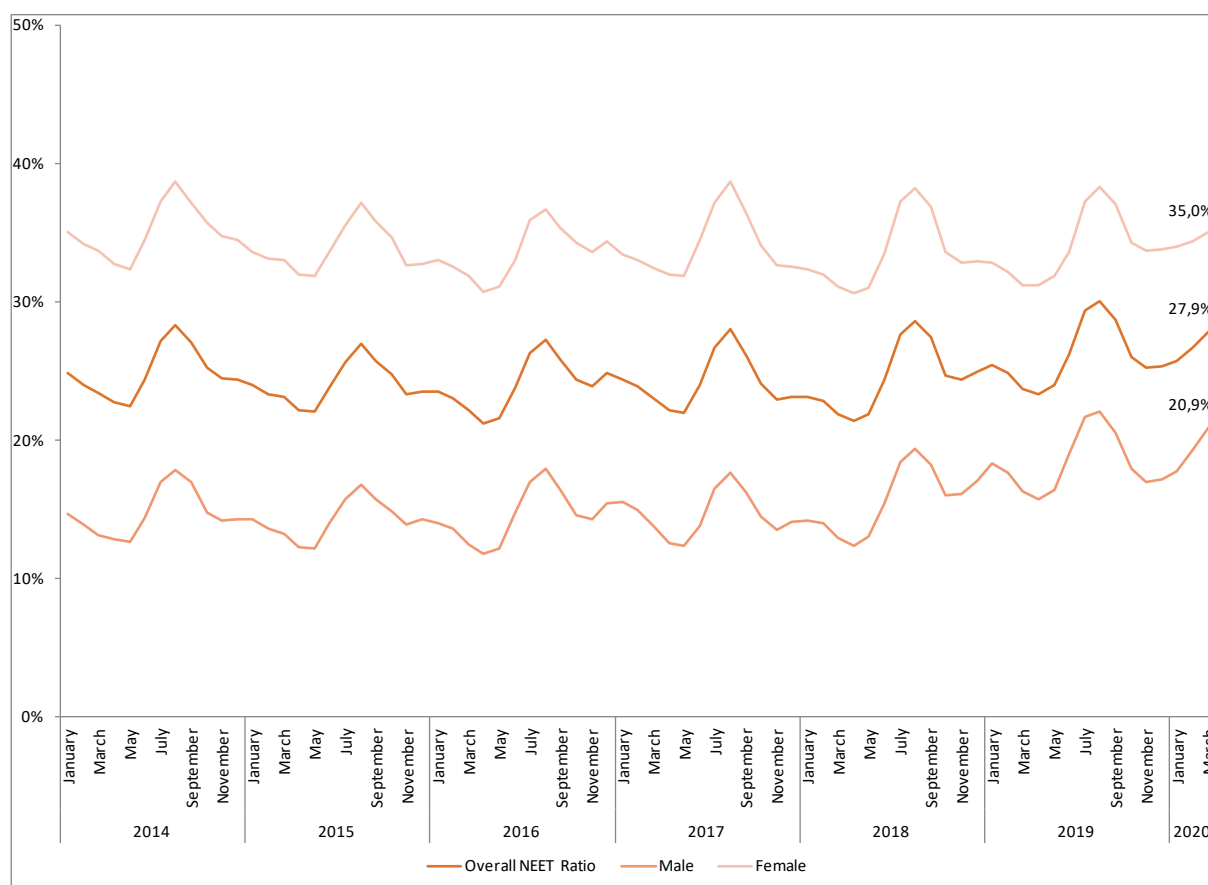
Chart 11. NEETs ratio, aged 15–24 (%) 2009–2019 (Turkey)



Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted in 05.05.2020

It is known that Turkey has the highest NEET ratio among the OECD countries with a ratio moving between 30 – 40%. Chart 11 presents the gender gap among NEETs in Turkey. The ratio of NEETs among males was 17.3% in 2010, it declined to 13.3% in 2015 and it started to increase and became 17.3% in 2019. Meanwhile, this trend was different among females. The NEET ratio was 55% in 2010 and it declined continuously until 2018 when it became 44%. According to this figure, this score is 45% as of 2019. As observed above, gender is the most important factor affecting this particular situation.

Chart 12. NEETs rate, aged 15–24 (%) 2014–2020 (Turkey), by Months and Gender



Source: Turkstat, Labour Force Statistics – data extracted on 02.11.2020

Using the data obtained from TURKSTAT, Chart 12 above presents monthly fluctuations in the ratio of NEETs in Turkey, focusing especially on the 15–24 age group. This figure presents the seasonality of these fluctuations. The NEET ratio declines during the winter months and it presents a regular increase during the summer period. According to these statistics, the NEET ratio among this age bracket was 28% in March 2020, presenting a relatively low gender gap between males (21%) and females (35%). We need to remember that this data was collected during the earlier days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 4. NEET rate (%) by age subgroups and by gender in Turkey, including absolute and relative change (2009–2013, 2013–2019, 2009–2019)

		2011	2015	2019	Absolute Change / Relative Change (2011–2015, pp)	Absolute Change / Relative Change (2015–2019, pp)	Absolute Change / Relative Change (2011–2019, pp)
Overall	15–19	22.4	16.3	18.1	–6.1 / –27.2	1.8 / 8	–4.3 / –19.2
Overall	20–24	34.0	29.6	30.9	–4.4 / –12.9	1.3 / 3.8	–3.1 / –9.1
Overall	25–29	37.8	32.7	34.7	–5.1 / –13.5	2 / 5.3	–3.1 / –8.2
Overall	30–34	38.6	35.5	36.1	–3.1 / –8	0.6 / 1.6	–2.5 / –6.5
Male	15–19	14.8	11.2	14.4	–3.6 / –24.3	3.2 / 21.6	–0.4 / –2.7
Male	20–24	15.0	13.3	17.3	–1.7 / –11.3	4 / 26.7	2.3 / 15.3
Male	25–29	20.0	17.7	22.6	–2.3 / –11.5	4.9 / 24.5	2.6 / 13
Male	30–34	15.1	14.3	18.4	–0.8 / –5.3	4.1 / 27.2	3.3 / 21.9
Female	15–19	30.2	21.7	22.0	–8.5 / –28.1	0.3 / 1	–8.2 / –27.2
Female	20–24	52.6	45.9	44.7	–6.7 / –12.7	–1.2 / –2.3	–7.9 / –15.0
Female	25–29	53.4	46.8	46.5	–6.6 / –12.4	–0.3 / –0.6	–6.9 / –12.9
Female	30–34	62.3	56.7	53.7	–5.6 / –9	–3 / –4.8	–8.6 / –13.8

Source: Eurostat (edat_lfse_29) – data extracted in 05.05.2020

As presented in the above Table 4, the NEET ratio in the population fluctuated significantly over-time. Between 2011 and 2019, the ratio of NEETs among the youth aged between 15–19 declined by 19.2% (the absolute decline is 4.3 percentage points). Similarly, the NEET ratio also declined, changing between 9% and 8%. These figures show that the NEET population declined overall.



However, a closer analysis shows that there is a significant gender gap. During this period, the NEET ratio among the young males increased by 15–19 years old with rates changing between 15% and 21%. Absolute figures reached to 17% in the 20–24 age bracket and 23% in the 25–29 age bracket. According to these figures, being a NEET became common place among young males.

On the other hand, the ratio of female NEETs declined over time. In 2011, this ratio was 30% in the youngest age group (15–19) and it declined to 22% with a relative change ratio of 27%. This decline is also observed in older age brackets, with rates changing between 13% and 15%. Despite this rapid change, the gender gap still exists and a significant portion of young women in Turkey are not active in the labour market.

Although Turkey has millions of NEETs, it is recognised as one of the important problems of youth as provisioned within the official documents. However, the number of academic works dealing with this problem is limited. Bilgen–Susanlı (2016) analysed the determinants of the NEET status by using the microdata of the household labour force survey from TUR–KSTAT. The most important determinants are education, gender, and marital status. Not surprisingly, as the level of education increases, the risk of being a NEET decreases and secondary education acts as the threshold. Similarly, females and those who are married have higher tendencies to be a NEET, in comparison with the reference group. When the number of other household members in employment is included in the equation as an indicator socioeconomic status, we observe that it has a negative effect on the risk of being a NEET. The same model shows that, youngsters living in the urban places have lower propensity towards becoming a NEET.

Another academic work conducted by Erdoğan et al. (2017), was based on a field survey that shows female youngsters have higher propensities towards becoming a NEET and moreover that education decreases this risk also increases. This change is most pronounced at the lowest education level. Those who are married have higher scores (3 times higher) compared to single youngsters. Parental education and the economic situation of households are two other factors affecting the propensity of being a NEET, showing that the lower socio-economic status, the more vulnerable people are to this situation. Finally, the ethnic origin of the respondent also matters: Kurdish respondents have 2.5 times higher tendencies.



The same article shows how determinants of being a NEET change according to the gender of the respondent. Age is an important determinant for female youngsters, yet its effect is statistically insignificant for their male counterparts. On the other hand, education is very important for female participants: the propensity of being a NEET is 10 times higher for the lowest education level, compared to the highest category. Ethnic origin has a similar affect, whereas parental education is significant for male participants and insignificant for their female counterparts. Male respondents living in rural areas have higher tendencies.

These different fieldwork research papers show that being a NEET in Turkey is a gendered problem, as presented in the previous descriptive figures. Education and socioeconomic status of family – most probably two interlinked factors – are factors which reduce the risk of being a NEET. The most important finding is that being a NEET is correlated with ethnicity, even after controlling for other variables.



4. CONCLUSIONS

Turkey has a population of 83 million and a significant portion of this population is relatively young. The total number of individuals under 29 years old is about 39 million, forming almost half of the population (46%).

The fact of youth unemployment reaching to 35% is one of the most important problems in Turkey. Moreover, the worsening of the unemployment rate and increase in the vulnerability of those whom it impacts upon is to be expected with the current global and local economic environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although digital transformation and technological developments are perceived as opportunities for vulnerable groups and youth, with the existing gap between the haves and have-nots in Turkey is not narrowing.

The Eleventh Development Plan regards NEETS as one of the specific target groups to develop incentives in order to increase participation in the labour force. The definition of “urban” and “rural” areas is a problem in Turkey. Although there are some attempts to develop alternative and better measurements for rural categorisation as part of the EU harmonisation process, TURKSTAT has not yet used them and EUROSTAT fails to provide many statistics with respect to the rural/urban distinction. According to available official statistics, 93% of the population lives in urban areas: however, this is a highly misleading data. This represents an important challenge for both research and policy development for rural NEETs.

Turkey has the highest NEET ratio among OECD countries. Although there had been a slow improvement-decrease and/or stability in the percentage of NEETs between the years 2018–2020, one can observe a small increase in the year 2019. Thus, the continuous large gender gap should also be noted (e.g., in the year 2019, this ratio is 45% for females and 17% for males). Focused attention on the reasons for this big gap is an urgently needed. According to the findings of the limited research on NEETs in Turkey, gender, parental education, the economic situations of households and ethnicity are the key factors which affect the propensity of becoming a NEET. With the current COVID-19 pandemic conditions, vulnerable groups face further risks all around the world, not only in Turkey. To realise the aim of decreasing the high ratio of NEETs in Turkey requires strict measures and targeted policies that takes into consideration of these current risks.



5. REFERENCES

Bilgen-Susanli, Z. (2016). Understanding the NEET in Turkey. *Eurasian Journal of Economics and Finance*, 4(2), 42–57.

Erdoğan, E., Yentürk, N., Akyüz, A. A., Kurtaran, Y., Yurttagüler, L., Dursun, K., & Oy, B. (2017). Being a NEET in Turkey: Determinants and consequences (No. 30). Power2Youth Working Paper.

Eurdyce (2020), Turkey: Basic Characteristics of Education System, https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/turkey_en, accessed on November 2nd, 2020

European Committee On Regions, Division of Power (2020a), Turkey: Vocational Training, <https://portal.cor.europa.eu/divisionpowers/Pages/Turkey-Vocational.aspx> accessed on November 2nd, 2020

European Committee On Regions, Division of Power (2020b), Turkey: Candidate Country, <https://portal.cor.europa.eu/divisionpowers/Pages/Turkey.aspx>; accessed on November 2nd, 2020

Goksen, F., Yüksek, D., Kuz, S., Öker, İ. (2015) Policy Performance and Evaluation: Turkey. STYLE Working Papers, WP3.3/TR. CROME, University of Brighton, Brighton. <http://www.stylesearch.eu/publications/working-papers>

İŞKUR (2011) National Youth Employment Action Plan, <https://media.iskur.gov.tr/13507/national-youth-employment-action-plan.pdf>, accessed on November 2nd, 2020

İŞKUR, (2019), The Strategic Plan (2019–2023), <https://www.iskur.gov.tr/yayinlarimiz/strategik-plan/>; accessed on November 2nd, 2020

İŞKUR, (2020a), Incentives for the Employment of Women and Youth, <https://www.iskur.gov.tr/isveren/tesvikler/kadin-genc-ve-mesleki-yeterlilik-belgesi-olanlarin-tesviki/>, accessed on November 2nd, 2020



İŞKUR, 2020b, Labour Market Support Programme for Young People Not in Employment Education or Training (NEETs) (NEET PRO), <http://ihale.ikg.gov.tr/list.aspx?lang=tr&id=175>, accessed on November 2nd, 2020

Karatay, A., Erdoğan, E., Semerci, P. U., & Müderrisoğlu, S. (2016) "Turkey in Between: The Continuing Search for Development" In The State of Social Progress of Islamic Societies Habib Tiliouine, Richard J. Estes (eds.) Springer.

The Ministry of Development (2019), the Eleventh Development Plan- The Youth Working Group Report, http://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Cocuk_ve_GenclikOzellhtisasKomisyonuGenclikCalismaGrubuRaporu.pdf, accessed on November 2nd, 2020

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security, (2017), National Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, https://www.ailevecalisma.gov.tr/media/1321/cocukisciligimucadele_2017_2023_en.pdf

The Ministry of Youth and Sports,(2019) The Strategic Plan (2019–2023), <http://www.gsb.gov.tr/public/edit/files/strateji/2019-2023-Stratejik-Plan%C4%B1.pdf>, accessed on November 2nd, 2020; The Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Security, (2019), The Strategic Plan (2019–2023)

The Presidency of Turkey, Presidency of Strategy and Budget (2019), The Eleventh Development Plan (2019–2023), http://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/On_BirinciPlan_ingilizce_SonBaski.pdf, accessed on November 2nd, 2020



6. IMPORTANT LINKS

The Presidency of Turkey, Presidency of Strategy and Budget (2019), The Eleventh Development Plan (2019–2023), http://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/On_BirinciPlan_ingilizce_SonBaski.pdf

The Ministry of Development (2019), the Eleventh Development Plan– The Youth Working Group Report, http://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Cocuk_ve_GenclikOzellhtisasKomisyonuGenclikCalismaGrubuRaporu.pdf, accessed on November 2nd, 2020

Eurdyce (2020), Turkey: Basic Characteristics of Education System, https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/turkey_en, accessed on November 2nd, 2020

Youth wiki – Turkey national youth policies – <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/overview-turkey#122>