

## Covid-19: how the EU fights youth unemployment



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**Youth unemployment remains a key concern in the wake of the coronavirus crisis. Find out more about an EU initiative to help young people find work.**

Covid-19 could lead to the emergence of a "lockdown generation", as the crisis hits young people's job prospects. According to the [International Labour Organization \(ILO\)](#) the pandemic is having a "devastating and disproportionate" impact on youth employment, while the most recent figures show that [young people](#) face major obstacles in continuing training and education, moving between jobs and entering the labour market.

[More about EU measures against youth unemployment](#)

## Reducing youth unemployment in coronavirus times

Before the pandemic, EU youth unemployment (15-24) was 14.9%, down from its peak of 24.4% in 2013. In August 2020, it stood at 17.6% and is expected to continue rising. The European Commission's summer 2020 economic forecast predicts that the EU economy will shrink 8.3% in 2020, the deepest recession in the EU's history. To offset the impact on young people, the Commission proposed a new initiative called [Youth Employment Support](#) in July 2020.

[Check out our timeline of EU measures to tackle the Covid-19 crisis](#)

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## *The Youth Employment Support Package consists of:*

- A reinforced Youth Guarantee
  - Improved vocational education and training
  - Renewed impetus for apprenticeships
  - Additional measures to support youth employment
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## What is the Youth Guarantee?

Launched at the peak of the youth employment crisis in 2013, the Youth Guarantee aims to ensure people under the age of 25 get a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

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## *A reinforced Youth Guarantee*

- Covers young people aged 15 - 29 (previously the upper limit was 25)
  - Reaches out to vulnerable groups, such as minorities and young people with disabilities
  - Provides tailored counselling, guidance and mentoring
  - Reflects the needs of companies, providing the skills required and short preparatory courses
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*Check out what the EU is doing to help Europe's [economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic](#)*

In a [resolution adopted by Parliament on 8 October 2020](#), MEPs welcome the Commission's proposal but call for more money to be mobilised for the next phase of the Youth Guarantee (2021-2027). They also criticise the [budgetary cuts](#) for youth employment support that were made at the EU summit in July.

In addition, the Parliament advocates a legal framework to be put in place to ban unpaid internships, traineeships and apprenticeships in the EU. MEPs also criticise that not all EU countries comply with the voluntary recommendations of the Youth Guarantee and therefore call for making it a binding instrument.

## Parliament calls for more ambition

In a resolution on [EU Employment Guidelines](#) adopted on 10 July, MEPs called for a revision of the forthcoming guidelines in light of the Covid-19 outbreak, underlining the need to tackle youth unemployment through a reinforced Youth Guarantee.

In July Parliament also backed an increase in the budget for the Youth Employment Initiative, the main budgetary instrument for Youth Guarantee schemes in EU countries, to €145 million for 2020.

Parliament called for a significant increase in funding for the [implementation of the Youth Employment Initiative](#) in a resolution on the EU's next long-term budget adopted in 2018. MEPs

liked how the initiative has supported young people, but said improvements are needed, including an extension of the age limit and the setting of clear quality criteria and labour standards.

*Find the views of your MEPs on social media.*

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## 24 million

The Youth Guarantee has helped more than 24 million young people since its creation in 2013

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### Find out more

[Youth Employment Support](#)

[Fact sheet: vocational education and training](#)