



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 649395.

NEGOTIATE

Overcoming job-insecurity in Europe

NEGOTIATE – Negotiating early job-insecurity and labour market exclusion in Europe
Horizon 2020, Societal Challenge 6, H2020-YOUNG-SOCIETY-2014, YOUNG-1-2014, Research and Innovation Action (RIA)
Duration: 01 March 2015 – 28 February 2018

Deliverable 8.2 (WP 8): Strategies to improve labour market integration of young people: Analysing linkages between horizontal and vertical policy coordination

Czech report

Deliverable type	Report
Dissemination level	Public
Month and date of Delivery	Month 24, March 2017,
Associated Work Package (WP)	Policy coordination in a System of multi-level governance
Lead beneficiary for D 8.2	UB, Germany
WP Leader	UB, Germany
Authors	Ondřej Hora, Markéta Horáková and Tomáš Sirovátka
Project URL	www.negotiate-research.eu

Youth Guarantee in the Czech Republic

3.1 First step: mirror the discourse and political process

- a. Are the goals, regulations and opportunities formulated and provided by the EU accepted in the country and by specific actors (e.g. use of funds etc.)?**

The situation of young people in the Czech Republic can be assessed as relatively stable and favourable compared with some other European countries. Although in the Czech Republic the youth unemployment is below EU average over a long time, it has exceeded the total unemployment rate considerably during the first phase of economic recession (Framework of Actions 2015). Moreover, the access to the labour market differs according to the level and the character of qualification (the labour market suffer from the lack of qualified workers mainly in technical branches).

In such situation the Czech Republic has adopted the European Council recommendation on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee program (YG). The Czech government submitted a first draft of its Implementation plan for the YG in October 2013 and the final scheme was presented in April 2014. It has committed to assess and update the text every year, however, these updates are yet not publicly available.

The goals of the Czech YG programme are fully in accordance with requirements of the EU. Implementation plan of the YG specifically states: „The Youth Guarantee programme based on the recommendations of the European Council of 22 April 2013, the Czech government guarantees that every young person up to 25 years will get a good quality offer of employment, further education, training or traineeship within four months after the person becomes unemployed, completes formal education or drops out of the formal education system.” (MPSV/MLSA 2014d: 3). Strategic aims of the Czech YG programme are formulated as follows:

- Increasingly precise targeting of employment, education and social policies on young people not in employment and not participating in education or training;
- Removing inconsistencies between the skills of young people with the skills needed in the labour market;
- Increased participation of young people in the labour market and reduction of youth unemployment;
- Preventing the consequences of social exclusion of youth (MPSV/MLSA 2014d: 4).

The effort to reduce youth unemployment in the age group of 15-24years old to 12.3% while reducing currently the unemployment rate of people with low qualification on the level of ISCED 0-2 to 18.8% is the main quantitative/measurable objective of the Czech YG programme (MPSV/MLSA 2014d: 1). In order to reach this goal the implementation plan suggests to focus on „promoting the creation of new jobs, ensuring employment through job centres, supporting educational activities according to individual needs, interconnecting education and employers’ requirements and obtaining the necessary experience“

(MPSV/MLSA 2014d: 8). All the measures are funded from the state budget as well as from the European social fund on the basis of Operational Programmes¹, although the latter significantly exceeds the share of national resources. One of the key criticism in order to establish YG programme into the national policy context is “...that the political interest in tackling the issue of youth unemployment is strictly dependent on the availability of EU funds” (Bohemian-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions (ČMKOS), cited in Bussi and Geyer 2013: 26). For more detailed information about funding of YG programme see the next subchapter.

Despite the Implementation plan for the YG some other strategic and programme documents reflected the European framework on youth policies in the Czech Republic. Three of them are of the great relevance. Firstly, at the end of 2013, the Czech government prepared a comprehensive document *Employment policy strategy till 2020* in which it identified key problems of the Czech labour market and suggested ways to resolve them. Subsequently, this strategy became a basis for the creation of other fundamental resorts’ documents, including the Implementation plan for the YG. According to the strategy the unemployment of young people has been growing due to economic crisis with the worst position of secondary education graduates (ISCED 3-4). Then, the YG programme suggests to bring crucial provisions to tackle youth unemployment: from career counselling through more effective mediatory services to the supported employment. Significantly, the strategy do not suggest new specific measures but emphasizes the professional use of existing instruments which proved to be effective in the past (including the programme of the work placements for young people under 30 years) (MPSV/MLSA 2013b: 21).

Secondly, during the economic downturn the Czech government also submitted a proposal for 37 measures to improve the situation on the labour market during the period 2014-2017 (i.e. *Activation measures to address the adverse situation on the labour market*). These measures are referred to require the most attention in public employment policy (MPSV/MLSA 2013a). The crucial activities include support for acquisition of practical skills through internships and work placement for students and graduates. From the perspective of youth (un)employment it is also positive that there is a number of measures focusing on young people among proposed instruments (although these are not usually provisions that were primarily or exclusively designed for this target group²).

Lastly, the *National Reform Programmes* (NPR 2013-2016) indicate the shift in the youth policy discourse. In 2013 and 2014 NPR did not indicate any specific tools or provisions to

¹ The Operational Programmes are as follows: „Human resources and employment“ (2007-2013) and „Employment“ (2014-2020) in the area of active labour market policy and „Education for Competitiveness“ (2007-2013) and „Research, development and education“ (2014-2020) in the area of education policy.

² These measures are as follows: the support of job creation especially in problems’ regions by introducing discounts on premiums for social security for employers hiring individuals from selected disadvantaged groups (young people under 30 years, people over 50 years, persons after parental leave); increasing the number of job seekers supported by instruments of active labour market policy – targeting on specific groups (young people under 30 years, people over 50 years, persons after parental leave); measures to promote age management (e.g. the extension of the support period for employers who create jobs for graduates or nurturing mothers) or revision of training and linking it to the system of forecasting the qualification needs (MPSV/MLSA 2013a).

tackle youth unemployment, but they assess the situation of young people on the Czech labour market as “not favourable” (MPSV/MLSA 2013c: 42) and requiring clear-cut solutions. The support of youth employment is therefore a key priority of the labour market policy even following the EU recommendations regarding YG. In contrast, NPR 2015 as well as NPR 2016 address a separate subchapter to the issue of youth employment and its support. They refer to the importance of the YG programme (this is “a fundamental strategic document of the Czech Republic for supporting young people”, MPSV/MLSA 2015: 11)) which should act as a preventive measure (especially in the field of career counselling) and contribute to easier integration of young people into the labour market. At the same time, they highlight improvement of the situation of youth due to the stabilization of economic conditions in the Czech Republic. Implementation of existing measures under the YG programme is considered to be “successful” (MPSV/MLSA 2016c: 10). NPR 2016 recommends provisions to continue and upgrade them (for example to introduce the work for trial, internships abroad or to allow young people easier to return to education).

Design of the Czech YG programme corresponds with the majority of principles stated on the European level in general terms (Bussi and Geyer 2013): the partnership approach, early intervention in terms of the offer to youth within four months and accurate targeting of renewing measures on young people. Some of the principles are, however, fulfilled uneasily in the Czech Republic and their acceptance by the actors involved is rather contentious (for example, effective early intervention is highly dependent on the capacity of PES which was shrinking in the Czech Republic due to the inappropriate reforms in 2011-2013; similarly, the impact of measures on youth depends also on how the policy affects persons outside the system – in the Czech Republic YG programme is not targeted on the group of nonregistered young people).

The YG programme in the Czech Republic was submitted in the situation of the growing rate of youth unemployment. Its development, however, was slower than in other European countries, and since 2014 the share of unemployed young people has declined significantly until in the second half of 2015 it became below the target of 12,3% (MPSV/MLSA 2016c: 3). Thus, in the public policy, the emphasis is put on the protection of young people as one of several risk/disadvantaged groups on the labour market. They are guaranteed support from the state, but it is stressed that at least older workers or mothers returning after the parental leave requires the same level of support (as it follows from the resolution of the Committee for EU Affairs on a proposal for a Council Recommendation on the establishment of the YG programme: “The senate of the Czech Republic points out that the consequences of the current economic and financial crisis equally fall also on other groups in society such as older people or mothers who would therefore deserve appropriate attention of active labour market policy” Vláda ČR: 5). Furthermore, over the last few months the general belief of stabilization and improvement of the situation of youth begins to dominate due to the declining rate of youth unemployment in accordance to demographic development and economic recovery as well as in relation to the low number of unemployed young people in the Czech Republic compared to other European countries (as Report on implementation and updating of the programme for the YG in the Czech Republic 2016 argues: “In large parts of the EU, the very high rate of youth unemployment continues to be a huge structural

problem and its solution stays at the top of local governments priorities. In the Czech Republic the situation is very different.” MPSV/MLSA 2016c: 1). In the diction of public documents, there was a shift in the rate of youth unemployment during 2010-2014 in the Czech Republic, then the situation of young people has stabilized and does not constitute significant threat (although young people remain one of the most vulnerable groups on the labour market).

b. What are the most urgent reforms discussed in order to combat youth unemployment, respectively to implement the Youth Guarantee and YEI (if applicable)?

In the context of the Czech YG programme (or youth unemployment in general), there were no specific reforms discussed. The politic and expert discussions highlighted again challenges and problems that the public policy for youth has been facing for a long time (the shortcomings of the educational system caused by erroneous decisions in the early 90s and the options of the current active labour market policy). In order to combat youth unemployment, the debates concentrated on the adjustment of existing measures rather than to searching for the new ways and instruments – this approach was assessed as quick, effective and unpretentious for the financial and personal resources of PES (as the Implementation plan for the YG programme argues: „Given the financial capacity of the Ministry and the current state of the Labour Office of the Czech Republic, the Programme, at its launch in 2014, makes use of existing projects, programmes and tools of active employment policy focused on the youth, funded from national resources as well as from the Operational Programme Human Resources and Employment, or Operational Programme Education for Competitiveness“ (MPSV/MLSA 2014d: 7). Nevertheless, the YG program contributed to the growing interest on the complex individualised measures better targeted on the youth (as the Employment policy strategy till 2020 says: it is necessary to emphasize the combination of existing instruments in complex arrangements which are targeted on specific vulnerable groups on the labour market (MPSV/MLSA 2013b)).

General topics discussed in order to combat youth unemployment can be summarized as follows:

- the stabilization of public employment services, strengthening their personal and material capacity and improvement of labour office services: among others, key documents emphasize the need to increase the number of PES workers and train them in order to work more effectively with young people, to support career counselling within schools, to strengthen the monitoring of employers in order to search for the jobs for youth;
- the concentration on prevention of youth unemployment: this question is discussed not only in accordance to early intervention of PES, but mainly in the context of general reform of education system (to strengthen its quality and transmittance, to link it to the labour market and employers requirements, to improve the linkage between initial and further education);

- the modification/innovation of current measures of active labour market policy in order to bring them closer to the needs of young individuals on the one hand and to the requirements of employers on the other (supported employment as well as training and programmes of professional apprenticeships) (for more detailed information about the YG measures see the next subchapter).

c. How is the involvement of different stakeholders discussed in the national context? Do different actors promote different goals to implement the YG or YEI?

The partnership approach is the key principle in the process of devising and implementing YG programme in the Czech Republic. References to the importance and promotion of cooperation between social partners appear in the Implementation plan for the YG programme as well as in documents generally related to the provisions combating (youth) unemployment (National reform programs, Employment policy strategy, Education strategy). The partnership approach is supposed to be strengthened also within the YEI: “Due to a partnership principle the work in an Advisory Boards of regional branches of the Czech Employment office has become more active...” (MPSV/MLSA 2014d: 10).

According to the Implementation plan two ministries are responsible for implementing measures to support young people on the labour market: “Measures of the Programme focus on two main areas – prevention and redress. In accordance with the partnership principle, responsibilities are divided between the programme's main partners – Ministry of education (MEYS) and Ministry for labour and social affairs (MLSA)” (MPSV/MLSA 2014d: 4). Thus, there is a specific feature in the implementation process of the YG programme in the Czech Republic: Employment office is the main subject implementing measures emerging YG programme within the labour market policy, while many tools are in responsibilities of education policy (e.g. outside the Employment office competencies).

In the Czech Republic, the national government completed the measures of the YG programme with targeted approach and financial support (made the Implementation plan for the YG programme and publicised it). The social partners have been participated on the design of such programme by the identification of crucial challenges in youth employment and by continuing to put forward proposals to make best use of its tools. They have been actively advocating for raising youth employment and pushed a range of activities through to the National reform programs (2014-2016) (Framework of Actions 2015), but the exact share of social partners on the devising process of the YG programme is rather unclear. Apparently they prepare and implement measures of YG (for example Further Education Fund (FDV) has been realised the programme of professional apprenticeships for youth for three years as well as the Bohemian-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions (ČMKOS) contributed to the support of youth employment by the project of Sector Agreements). The scheme 1 in Annex summarizes key actors in supporting the YG programme in the Czech Republic.

Social partners (such as educational institutions, employers, trade unions, relevant NGOs and others) accepted their role in the YG programme, but they do not promote it actively. Partly, this is due to the fact that they assert similar objectives to integrate young people

into the labour market in the long-term perspective and the adoption of the YG programme does not changed their guidelines and activities dramatically. Thus, the discourse of policy for young people in the Czech Republic has been shaped primarily by the public sector (especially by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Labour Office as the main implementers of YG programme).

d. Which goals / strategies have successfully pushed through? Has the Youth Guarantee produced some added value with respect to the coordination of different measures?

The labour market policy in the Czech Republic has been better targeted on the group of young people under 30 years since the YG programme started in 2014. Not only graduates but also students of the final year of study at secondary and/or tertiary levels are included in active provisions. Although the labour market policy use existing measures to a large extent in the first phase of the YG programmes' implementation, many of them were explicitly adapted to the requirements of the European YG programme. Furthermore, during 2014-2016 there were continuously established some new programmes or innovative modifications of successful projects respectively (for example in addition to the project of Professional Traineeships in companies for young people up to 30 years, also the programme of "Internships for youth" (for future graduates) were introduced which is now expected to continue in the project "The path for youth" (Cesta pro mladé, 2016-2020) Among other things, these programmes have shown that the cooperation between several actors involved can be effective.

In contrast, many shortcomings in order to support young people and their transitions into the labour market remain. Especially, it is a low efficiency and effectiveness of the public employment services (EC 2016b) resulting, among others, from the longstanding insufficient personal capacity of employment office. Further, there is only a little (if any) attention devoted to the young people who are NEETs – the registration on the Employment office is in fact an essential condition for entering the YG programme. In accordance to the ministry declaration and Implementation plans' statement, the reason for not reaching out to non-registered youth is only the small number of such individuals: „The Programme is based on the assumption that the vast majority of NEETs, especially from low-income families or families with one or both unemployed parents is registered at the Labour Office because it is convenient for them. The Programme therefore does not cover two youth groups: persons who are not unemployed, want to work but are currently not looking for work (about 8.2 thousand persons) and economically inactive persons (about 46.8 thousand persons). It is therefore a relatively small group of young people. We therefore believe that the vast majority of the 15-24 age group is covered by the Programme.“ (MPSV/MLSA 2014d: 5-6). Also the argument of the low motivation for programme participation (or any other activity on the labour market) of non-registered youth is used: “The YG scheme is considered to be

more effective in the case of young jobseekers who prepared and motivated to the enter into employment, internship, training or education” (MPSV/MLSA 2016c: 1).

3.2 Second step: assess the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, the Youth Employment Initiative and Youth on the Move

a) Target groups

- **Is a particular age group approached? Who are the target groups, i.e. NEETs, migrants, people with low educational background, young men and women with children, ethnic groups and/or people in disadvantaged urban districts?**
- **How are non-registered unemployed people reached by measures of the YG/unemployment policy measures in general?**

The group which is explicitly target of YG measures are the youth aged 15-24 years of age, registered at Employment Office, also students of upper classes at the secondary professional and tertiary education, and the youth in risk of social exclusion (MPSV/MLSA 2014d). In addition, some measures related to YG also include the group 25-29 in greater extent as the other groups of the unemployed, such as traineeship in companies (work experience subsidized jobs) – these have been implemented as one of YG measures for a group of the unemployed below 30 years of age (see below). There are no specific subgroups in special focus or in a specific position within YG like low skilled, drop outs, Roma, disabled, women or other although it is recognised that these groups are exposed to the high risk of unemployment/labour market exclusion. Since the beginning, participation in the programme is conditioned by registration at the Employment Office. Originally (MPSV/MLSA 2014d) the argument being that registration will effectively enable early activation and provision of the interventions in the compliance with Employment Act.

EC (2016a) summarized some criticism expressed in CRSs or Employment Committee or EMCO during years 2014-2016 as follows. In 2014: omission of providing a YG offer to the most vulnerable groups such as inactive and unregistered NEETs. In 2015: those furthest from the labour market, i.e. non-registered NEETs, are excluded from the YG. Even though, preventive actions to reduce early school leavers have been put in place, outreach strategies and support to nonregistered NEETs need to be further developed. And finally, in 2016: The outreach capacities of PES, together with appropriate and well-targeted ALMPs, will be crucial for increasing the labour market participation of vulnerable groups. This in particular concerns individualised services for Roma and young unemployed, with specific consideration fro non-registered young people who are NEETs, who risk being excluded from the YG (European Commission 2016a).

Neglect of the non-registered NEETs of the most vulnerable subgroups may be understood as an expression of the overall practice of the Czech Public Employment Services in providing ALMPs. Specifically, MPSV/MLSA (2016b: 1) has argued that YG has greater potential to be effective in the case of those young job-seekers who are better prepared for a job, vocational training/requalification, re-entering initial education programme or internship (job experience) and motivated for this. In contrast a mere offer of such options in

spite it would be of high quality and individually tailored in the case of those who are furthest from the labour market and who suffer by cumulated handicaps, there is a little chance of increasing employability remarkably or even help to the lasting labour market inclusion. The main challenge is, however, recognised (MPSV/MLSA 2016d) for the Czech Republic to improve the capacity and capability to address the tailored set of measures to these disadvantaged young people and at the same time to motivate them to get involved. MPSV/MLSA also argued that the assessment by Commission overestimates the significance of NEETs groups since the prevailing part represent obviously parents on the parental leave (which may last in the country even up to the age of 4 years of a child). However, exact data about composition of the NEET groups is not available.

Summing up, the Czech approach did not involve non-registered NEETs and did not pay specific attention to the most vulnerable subgroups of the registered youth. Anyway, recently a new measure Support to return to education is being implemented in cooperation with schools and NGOs which is aiming to activate and motivate the NEETs either registered or non-registered.

b) Focal points of measures and structural measures/instruments of YG/YEI

Context of ALMP. The ALMP measures which are available to young people under YG are in principle the same as to the other unemployed. The Czech Republic is traditionally below average in terms of expenditure on and participation in ALMPs: expenditure on ALMP measures (category 2–7 in the Eurostat classification) represented 0.193% of GDP in 2013, while the EU-28 average was 0.454% of GDP.³ Similarly, expenditure on labour market services was 0.104% of GDP, while the EU-28 average was 0.202% of GDP.⁴ The respective averages for the OECD countries were 0.43% and 0.13% in 2013 (OECD 2015).

Data show that between 2010 and 2012 the ALMPs were reduced by half in terms of numbers of participants and dropped to one-fourth in terms of expenditure. The turn in 2013 has brought partial improvement. **It was due to the change of the government, however, not so much due to implementation of the YG.** After the correction of the approach in 2013 (see below) the levels of the scope/number of participants in ALMPs from 2010 have been re-achieved in 2014. In particular, job creation measures were on the increase, including on-the-job experience for the youth. In 2015, the number of ALMP participants increased again, while the number of the unemployed dropped: in this year, the proportion of ALMP participants in the unemployment stock was 32.4%.

³ In the latter case the data are from 2011.

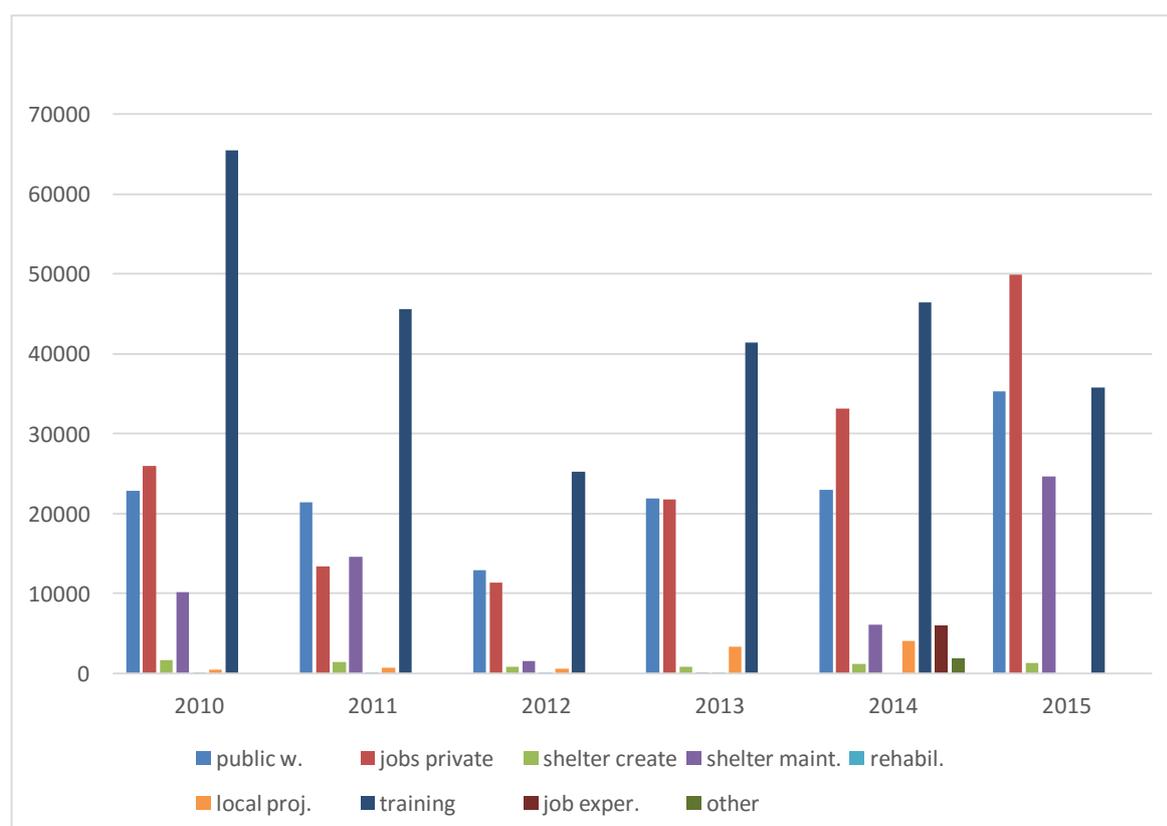
⁴ The data on EU-28 are from 2011.

Table 1: Active labour market policy in 2010-2015 (PES register data)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Unemployed (end of year)	561,551	508,451	545,311	596,833	541,914	453,618
ALMP participants:						
Total ALMP participants	126,512	96,993	52,320	89,287	121,369	146,865
as % of the unemployed	22.5	19.1	9.6	15.0	22.4	32.4
ALMP expenditure (in CZK million/in € million)	6,171.5 224.4	3,815.9 138.8	2,595.0 94.4	4,285.7 155.8	6,426.9 233.7	9,668.8
out of which ESF (million CZK and €)	4,175.5 151.8	2,156.4 78.4	1,502.9 54.7	3,233.0 117.6	5,755.2 209.3	..
out of which ESF in %	67.6	56.5	68.0	75.4	89.5	..

Source: MPSV/MLSA web portal

Note: Other (in 2014) includes activation, vacancies available to disadvantaged people made redundant by their employers, etc.

Figure 1: ALMP measures in 2010-2015

Measures of YG.

As an 'offer' within YG scheme the following is specified: job offer in the form of information about vacancy, professional traineeship (including mentor), subsidised job, internships in abroad, return to education, requalification/vocational training, job on trial, contribution to enter work/přispěvek na zapracování, activation work opportunity.

The measures provided under YG did not bring any considerable value added to the already existing policies or turn-off in policy making. They continued to correspond to the profile of the Czech labour market policy where job first measures prevail, accompanied with risks of

death weigh. In education system, although the measures also aimed at improving school to job transition for the youth, no substantial policy turn-off took place. What may be perceived as a partial improvement, however, is broader offer of the ALMPs schemes as ESF projects and better financial backing of them, including measures like internships and traineeships for young people, more focus of the target group of young people and some innovative measures implemented.

The strategic aims of YG (MPSV 2014d) were defined rather at the general level: targeting employment, education and social policies on young people; to help to tackle the structural mismatch in the skills of young people and labour demand; to raise participation of the youth in the labour market and fight youth unemployment; to prevent social exclusion of the youth. The key measures that were outlined in the Implementation plan of YG (MPSV 2014d) were as follows: ... *they will primarily focus on promoting the creation of new jobs, including self-employment, ensuring employment through job centres, supporting educational activities according to individual needs, interconnecting education and employer's requirements and obtaining necessary experience* (p.8).

EC (2016b) characterised the measures undertaken since April 2014 until 2016 as follows: supporting youth employment, school-company cooperation, to improve the quality of vocational training and reinforce employability through retraining, traineeships (which are key activity) and education support. In fact the two main lines are followed: first, to make initial education system more responsive to labour market demand, and second, to provide young people more on-the-job practice/traineeship and retraining needed for their employability.

Such orientation corresponds to the already prevailing national policy principles. In 2014, in the context of the crisis there was more emphasise put on the traineeship places for the youth, however, in 2016 (after youth unemployment dropped considerably between January 2014 and June 2016 from 23.3% to 10.1%) the discourse on the policies emphasised that the problems to be solved require the other measures as more relevant than those of ALMP. The level and type of qualification/education is seen as a problem, working conditions and remuneration, commuting to work, lack of synergy between the social system and the labour market. The measures needed are characterised as motivation of labour force to job search, motivation of the employers to hire disadvantaged groups, intensification of mediation services of the Employment Office, and support the balance between labour demand for qualification of labour force and qualification structure (MPSV 2016).

According to the most recent assessment of the YG implementation from July 2016 which covers the period since April 2014 to February 2016, this is during 23 months, there were 294,162 newly unemployed 15-24 registered at PES from which 40.1%, this is 117,906 remained in register more than 4 months. In total 153,022 offers were provided, from which 57.4% represented job offers (87,799), 17.8% re-entering initial education system (27,216), 16.6% requalification (25,333) and 8.2% job experience subsidized jobs (12,674) (MLSA 2016c, own computations). This means that participation in ALMP measures was provided to about 25% of the youth who were provided an offer under YG scheme – this

corresponds roughly to the average participation rate in ALMPs in the country which was in 2014 22% and in 2015 32%.

According to the EC monitoring indicators of the YG programme the coverage in 2014-2015 was 46.4% in the Czech republic compared to the EU average 37.5%.⁵ The implementation indicator was 61.5% compared to 40.3% EU average. ⁶ The outcome indicator is not known for the Czech Republic. Although the values of the indicators are above the EU average we need to note that most of the YG measures are job offers (this is the information about job, no definition of quality is provided).

The recent report by MLSA (2016e) informs that about 13% of young unemployed remain in registers longer than 12 months, which needs to be targeted with individualised support. On the other hand many of them exhibit quite low level of motivation to work. It is also worth to take another problematic groups into consideration which are those who were excluded from the registres by EO due to low level of cooperation: those represent about one fifth of those who left registers. We may assume that they represent a fraction of NEETs.

To overview the profile of the other measures:

- ***'Job first' measures***

The most important measure implemented under YG scheme was a modification of previously provided job subsidy scheme provided more generally, however, of better quality. This was Professional traineeships/experience for young people under the age of 30, introduced by the Labour Office. It was aimed at people under 30, who have little or no work experience (maximum 2 years), and who, at the same time, have been registered with PES for at least four months. The initiative was introduced in April 2013 and lasted until August 2015.

The professional traineeships provided employers with increased incentives to hire young people which included wage subsidies granted for interns (for 6-12 months) and mentors (for up to 7 months); candidate search and pre-selection of suitable candidates; and, retraining of candidates, where an employer deems it necessary. The job subsidy was provided up to the level of 24 thousand CZK (this is similar to net average wage in the country) much more generous than before. About 11 thousand young people were supported in this scheme (ESF supported).⁷

Based on the experiences with YG scheme and Traineeship programme there was a new project at regional EO established since 2016 (until 2018). This is 'Youth Guarantee' which is running in all regions. The activities are as follows (in fact they correspond to the activities of YG scheme): individual and group counselling, diagnostics, re-qualifications, traineeships in companies, mentoring, short-time work experience, route

⁵ Average number of young people registered in the YG scheme (and not yet having taken up an offer) a tany point during the year as a proportion of NEET population in the country.

⁶ The number of young people leaving the YG to take up an offer within four months of joining as a proportion all those leaving the scheme within a year.

⁷ For comparison: there were 98 thousand people 15-24 registered as unemployed in April 2014 (and 48 thousand in June 2016).

back to education. The traineeships as the main activity, sometimes started with 3 month trial period.

There are realisation teams established which include managers and specialists counsellors at regional EO and another specialists counsellors at each subordinated local/district EO. This is important since this way the young can get individualised advice and route across the options possible and more choice, cooperation.

The EO cooperates with the other subcontractors who provide diagnostics, requalification. Also cooperation with the employers and schools. It is possible to pay from the budget some special position at cooperating schools. An effort is carried to prepare an offer for the young of the return to the schools/programmes at secondary level, vocational training and discuss possibilities to recognise if they have some completed years of school programme, and thus shorten the education route.

- ***'Enabling' measures, predominantly related to education and training***

The second most important area of measures was focusing on education, training and counselling, more important in terms of coverage when compared to the job first measures. Balancing of the profile of the education system with the labour market demand is considered as a key task in the long term and improvement of the supply and quality of vocational training. Cooperation of the employers and schools is supported for this purpose. This support includes in particular job creation subsidies including self-employment and supported vocational training. One important measure is the tax allowance provided to companies cooperating with schools in the professional education (available to employers who enable practical vocational training in cooperation with schools) which came into effect since January 2014.⁸ Regional Boards for Human Resources bring together (among other stakeholders) schools and employers, in order to discuss the orientation and profile of the school graduates in the specific regions. The specific projects were implemented under YG (see below).

The measures under YG delivered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in fact fitted into this line of long-term effort (see below)

The career counselling centres at schools and Information and counselling centres of the Employment Offices provide advice and (both group and individual) counselling to the pupils, school graduates and young unemployed in their transition to labour market. Also, job-clubs represent the standard tool which supports young people, among other in effective job-search. However, no specific pathways exist to re-enter education for the drop-outs or the unemployed.

Regarding the specific measures, Professional apprenticeships in companies were provided to young unemployed (as the form practical re-qualifications), delivered by the Further National Fund through a national project lasting from September 2013 to August 2015. The other project supported from ESF were the Internships for youth in companies provided to the students of the secondary and tertiary education since 2015 until the end of 2015 which covered more than 5 thousand participants.

Also the project TOGETHER which has been terminated recently was supporting cooperation of schools and companies in the professional education in practice (2013-2015).

⁸ Tax deduction is 200 CZK (about 7 EUR) per one teaching hour of the practical education/training in the company. Also investments into equipment needed for practical education are subject to deduction.

The measure Support to return to education which is recently implemented as pilot measure includes several steps, starting with outreach, individual assessment of study prerequisites, diagnostics, preparation programme for entering education, assistance, excursions into companies, educational advisor, and accompanying measures like contribution to travel costs, accommodation costs. The measure is aiming mainly on young up to 29, low educated (less than upper secondary) or in risk of social exclusion.

Of course many of young unemployed participate in the other standard vocational training measures provided under ALMP programme either national or ESF financed. Their number is not known as the Czech Republic does not monitor targeting of ALMP measures nor the effects.

Although Employment Office is the implementing body of YG, cooperating with the other actors, there are several measures which are in competence of the Ministry of Youth, Education and Sports included in the Implementation plan. These include above all the following measures, supported through OP Education for Competitiveness:

Priority axis 1.1 Increasing the quality in education

Measures like cooperation of schools with the labour market actors, innovative forms (internships in companies), development of career counselling at schools including prevention of drop out

Priority axis 1.2 Equal opportunities for pupils, including pupils with special educational needs.

Measures like establishing catch-up network for pupils in risk of drop out from education and those who want to return to education.

Within OP Science, Research, Education, Priority axis 3, Investment priority 1:

Target 2 Improvement of the quality of education and educational outcomes in key competences

Target 5 Improvement of the quality of education and professional training including their stronger relevance for labour market, increasing of the quality of pedagogical and career counselling is including in both measures.

- **Structural reforms**

In the Czech Republic, no structural reforms were associated with the implementation of YG. However, what deserves attention is the reform of 2011 when re-centralization involved the stronger subordination of local employment offices to the centre of Public Employment Services accompanied with shifting the legal competences from the local (77 local offices) to the regional level (14 regional offices). Further, in 2011, minimum income scheme/social assistance administration merged with the employment offices, shifted from municipalities to employment offices. However, only 1,953 of the original 3,642 staff working on minimum income scheme/social assistance agenda at municipal social departments were employed after the merge at employment offices (Úřad práce 2014) and understaffing then became a problem, solved with difficulties later since 2013 until present. The consequences for the capacity of PES to handle YG scheme measures effectively were clearly negative.

- **Promotion of labour mobility**

There were only limited initiatives adopted to promote young people to move.

- **Other Instruments**

- **Are individual action plans used? If IAPs are used please specify on the procedure.**

According to the Employment Act the Individual action plans are obligatory for all unemployed after 5 months of registering at Employment Office and non compliance is a subject of sanctions (exclusion from register and loss of benefit entitlements or entitlements for ALMP measure). The problem is, however, capacity of PES to provide individual counselling – IAPs are often only formal arrangement not much different from standard job mediation procedure. In general, a high caseload represents the main obstacle to a more effective individual service/support. The situation is worse at those local employment offices where unemployment is high: Úřad práce/Employment Office (2015b) reports the caseload of 329 unemployed people per one mediator/counsellor (p. 10) and the number of jobseekers-facing front-line staff involving 905 mediators and 980 counsellors (p. 8). The situation did not change much during 2015 as an exploration at UP indicates.

Youth Employment Initiative

In addition to the above YG measures, in one NUTS 2 region (Northwest/Severozápad) which is composed of two NUTS 3 out of 14 regions YEI is available in amount 13.6 million Eur. YEI is a part of a priority axis within OP "Employment" (2016 – 2018).

Key types of actions currently supported by YEI:

The implementation of three projects managed by the Labour Office has already started and the provision of services for target groups was launched in March 2016:

Focus on providing education, trainings and work experience opportunities such as internships.

Consultancy and motivation of young unemployed people, also with goal to create new jobs (Karlovy Vary area).

Support to socially excluded youth and young entrepreneurs.

Other three projects to be managed by regional authorities, possibly together with NGOs, schools or employers associations, are being finalized and their implementation should start in 2016.

Also a new measure will be implemented since 2016 in NUTS 2 (Northwest) as a pilot innovative measure (planned to be used in the other regions) which is Support of return to education.

The other innovative measure is Internships in abroad (in particular good cooperation is reported with Germany, the closest neighbour to this region).

c) **Quality, Innovations and Evaluation**

- **Is the YG- qualitative offer of employment or education (planned to be) implemented in form of a binding guarantee (young people have the right to such promotion)? How is the good-quality, concrete offer defined within national policy? Do young people receive the offer that is promised? Is there an agency to control the respective rights and quality?**

In the Czech Republic there is no definition of a 'quality' offer – this was identified as one of the challenges to the country (EC 2016). Neither there is a guarantee of the offer in the national legislation. The only guarantee is that the unemployed have right to be provided with the Individual Action Plan after 5 months of unemployment. In particular, the option of employment offer within YG may be perceived as rather vague, since this is defined as a 'transparent/provable information about a job' (MPSV 2016c). In the Czech Republic the job offer under YG is corresponding to the general conditions in the Employment Act. This means that there is no need to respect the acquired level of qualification/education of the unemployed. In the case of long-term unemployed even temporary and part-time employment is a suitable job offer according to Employment Act. There is no agency which would control the respective rights of the unemployed but the Public Defender of Human Rights Office (Ombudsman Office).

- **Are gender relevant issues reflected, i.e. different training patterns for 'female' professions, reconciliation of work and family?**

Sometimes, there are some specific counselling or vocational training programmes/projects addressed to the unemployed within ALMPs focusing on parents returning back to work after parental leave. There is no general systemic strategy regarding this issue accepted.

- **To what extent do these offers include importance of freedom and choice in leading the life that young people value?**

The offers under YG are of course individually negotiated with the young unemployed. There are, however, no rights to choice provided. Rather conditionality rules of cooperation with the Employment Office, compliance with IAP and similar are relevant, making the offers irrespective of their quality quite obliging. One area provides more choices for the unemployed, the youth including: this is so called 'requalification by choice'. This means that the unemployed person may ask financial support for the requalification programme which he/she would select him/herself (this is not a right, however).

- **Was something substantially 'new' introduced within the portfolio of labour market policy due to the implementation of the Youth Guarantee?**

The innovativeness of YG can be assessed at several different levels.

- The idea of YG offer wasn't completely new in the Czech context in 2013 because similar measure "První příležitost" for all young unemployed under 25 was implemented since 2004 (MPSV 2015g). Program První příležitost (First Opportunity)

was characterised as program of prevention of long term unemployment for all young people aged up to 25 years with the duration of evidence less than 6 months. The program was based on creation of Individual action plan (IAP) – the project was actually a pilot project for implementation of IAP which was later in 2004 widened for all unemployed (Freibergová et al. 2013). The goal of the program was to offer every young person a job or to increase his/her employability by following activities: individual meetings (diagnostics, counselling), training/education, apprenticeship or other activities (MPSV 2004).

- Internship programs (realised by FDV since 2012) could be assessed as important new or renewed measure in the Czech context.
- “Professional experience for young people up to 30 years” and its successor “Guarantee for the youth” programs included innovative elements such as introduction of *mentorship*, *complex approach* (in OMP30), *traineeship abroad* and *returning to school* (both in Guarantee for the youth). Some of these were later used also in other ALMP projects (interview at EO headquarters).
- Innovation at national ALMP level was realised with two new measures introduced by Employment office: activating work offer⁹ (aktivizační pracovní příležitost) and job placement measure for people in mass layoffs (SÚPM vyhrazené pro zájemce v procesu hromadného propouštění) (Employment office 2015) of which especially activating work offer can be relevant for young people.
- Projects of social innovations have been supported in both OP LZZ and OPZ. Many of these projects provided help to specific groups with special needs (physical handicapped, people with mental illnesses, people without housing and immigrants).
- Strong innovative elements can be found also in some of the ESF LZZ and OPR local projects for young people. Such projects include e. g. support for people in socially excluded localities (often Roma) in Ústí nad Labem region (European Commission 2016b), project for young addressing possibility to work in social services (Otevřené dveře na trh práce v oboru sociálních služeb) and project for mentorship during sharing workplace by young people and people in pre-retirement age (Generační tandem). Information about these projects is included in the table A.2 in Annex.

Overall, in first years of YG, the effort in the Czech Republic was based mainly (with the exception of internships) on existing measures. The need for new approach to young people was reflected in Program document for OP Employment: *“Within contemporary approach are young people considered to be disadvantaged, however this support is partial and not sufficiently corresponding to needs of this group. Despite some improvements in this field there is no complex approach and support to help young*

⁹ This measure is new and different from other ALMP policy measures in the Czech context because it works only with agreement for specific task. It is dedicated for long term unemployed and people living on social assistance. There is financial support provided for employers (municipalities, regional institutions) who employ people from the target group by using “Agreement for specific task” for maximum of three months and with very limited salary. Program participants remain unemployed. It is expected that people work on jobs without qualification demands (cleaning of public space, basic maintenance, forestry, helping NGO in their activities etc.).

people in gaining practical skills and to support their transition from education to the labour market (MPSV 2015i: 64).” It is expected that new approaches including those mentioned above are going to be piloted in YEI projects (MPSV 2015i). Assessment of such new measures which are going to be realised in OP Employment and YEI is difficult because the projects has just started or they even haven’t been started yet.

- **How is the success of the respective measures mirrored? Are evaluation results already available and what do they prove?**

Evaluation

Information about YG consists of data from monitoring and evaluations. Overall assessment of YG (offer) is provided according to YG monitoring data (European Commission 2016b) showing that Czech YG scheme reached 46.4% of NEET aged under 25 and of young people leaving the scheme 65.1% took up an offer within 4 months of registration. This relatively high figure may be influenced by coverage and also by low scope of the NEET population in the Czech Republic (European Commission 2016c).

There were several evaluations realised at national level¹⁰ for measures included in YG or YEI including various types of evaluation¹¹. OP LZZ was evaluated according to evaluation plan (OP LZZ 2015b), another plan is prepared for OP Employment (OPZ 2015a)¹². Process forms of evaluation, case studies and monitoring dominated evaluation in the Czech Republic while outcome and impact evaluation were rather rare. Evaluations were often limited by low accessibility and availability of the data. Low evaluation capacity within Czech employment and education policy has been repeatedly criticised in EU and national documents (FDV 2015c) and reflected also in Czech MPSV internal reports (MPSV 2015h, 2016c). We provide some information about outcomes (and impacts) of measures relevant for YG from several available evaluation studies.

- After the accomplishment of the project „Stáže ve firmách“ 65% percent of interns were employed (6 months after the end of internship). From people unemployed before the internship 58% were employed and 4% were self-employed after the project (FDV 2015b). 20% of participants were offered jobs in the place of practice and another 20% have got offer of other king of work cooperation (including external work and self-employment) (MPSV 2014c, MPSV 2015e). 15% of interns worked at the workplace 6 months after the end of internship (FDV 2015b). Assessed outcomes in impact evaluation were change of income and change in employment status. Impact was evaluated by various methods including matching (comparing to results in control group). Impact evaluation showed mixed results. Better results in the treatment group than in control group were indicated for people employed before the project, worse results were for people who were unemployed before the project

¹⁰ The Czech Republic was not included (according to our knowledge) to any of YG special (piloting) projects and comparative evaluations / assessments (see e. g. EUROFOUND 2015, OECD 2015, Doyle 2015, European Commission 2016c).

¹¹ For evaluations of individual projects see e.g. OP LZZ (2015c), FDV (2015a, 2015b). For results of monitoring see e. g. MPSV (2015c), OP LZZ (2015a).

¹² Document Guidance on Evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative (European Commission 2014) is explicitly mentioned in the OPZ evaluation plan as one of the sources of standards for future evaluations. Specific impact evaluation activities for young people (YG YEI) are planned for period 2016-2018.

and there was no difference for people inactive before the project (for details see FDV 2015b)¹³.

- After the accomplishment of the project “Stáže pro mladé zájemce o zaměstnání 2“, 1.5 years after the registration to the project 44% of interns were working and 23% were self-employed and 7% were unemployed. 40% of interns were offered some further cooperation with providers of internships. Impact evaluation showed positive results according to employment and income of the interns (see FDV 2015a, Kopečná et al. 2015). One year after the end of internship (Stáže pro mladé) 12.5% of interns worked for the same subject (FDV 2016b). For further results see also Nekolová and Nekola (2015).
- After the accomplishment of the project “Vzdělávejte se pro růst! Pracovní příležitosti“ in 2012 or 2013 67% of participants in sheltered workplaces and 25% of participants in public works had job leading to paying social security contributions in last quarter of 2014 (OP LZZ 2015c)¹⁴. (Data only for young people is not available).

Overall evaluation showed some positive outcomes (see also below for the results of the OPM30 project) but it is difficult with the data at hand to convincingly conclude about real impacts of YG measures.

d) Actors and coordination

The stakeholders of YG implementation were defined in YG implementation plan (see annex, scheme 1). Implementation of YG can be characterised by its multilevel and purpose led character and strong declared partnership within realisation. There have been following actors of YG and YEI:

MPSV: Ministry of Work and Social Affairs (Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí): MPSV is aimed to various remedy (inclusive) measures for young people including specific measures not included in YG (MPSV 2014d, MPSV 2014e)¹⁵. MPSV is in cooperation with employment office responsible for regular assessment and evaluation of YG (MPSV 2014e). The report on the fulfilment of the tasks included is being elaborated each 3 months for MLSA and Employment Office heads. Irregularly it is also submitted to the Government (Interview MPSV). MPSV was also one of main actors doing information campaign about the YG.

MŠMT: Ministry of education, young people and sport (Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy): MŠMT is concerned to improvement of education system with aim to prevent bad transitions to the labour market and helping in return to education (MPSV 2014d, MPSV 2014e, Nekolová and Nekola 2015). There are many activities aimed to improvement of Czech education system, support of vocational training, national

¹³ We could comment only to summary of impact evaluation. Full text of impact evaluation was provided in separate document, which unfortunately wasn't available for us.

¹⁴ The temporary character of work in public works was reflected in assessment of Employment Office workers (see OP LZZ 2015c).

¹⁵ Effort for improvement of young people's situation is accompanied by many specific programs which although they are not main YG measures can be of substantial help. This included e. g. specific educational measures, career counseling, support of self-employment, measures for improvement of public services, measures for handicapped people, measures for people in socially excluded localities, measures for improving economic literacy of low educated people (prevention of debts), measures of international mobility etc.

registers of qualification and work positions, career counselling, reducing skill mismatch etc. (for examples see e. g. FAYE 2014, CEDEFOP 2015, FDV 2015c). The role of MŠMT in YG may be reduced due to lower role of OP VVV in next period 2014-2020 (FDV 2015c).

MF: Ministry of Finance: Involved in financing and auditing ESF programmes.

Ministry for regional development: is involved in methodical guidance of ESF funds (MPSV 2015i).

FDV: Further education fund (Fond dalšího vzdělávání) is daughter organisation of MPSV. Internship programs in YG were realised from OP Education for competitiveness (see below).

Schools and educational facilities: are partners in advisory boards, can be beneficiaries of ESF programs.

Employment office: Employment Office is main subject (principal agent and first contact point) implementing YG (MPSV 2014d, MPSV 2014e).

General Directorate of Employment office (EOGD) cooperated mainly in the development of the monitoring system for YG scheme and it is currently responsible for implementation of the scheme. Methodological guidance and supervision are the key tasks. The obligatory written guidelines are provided to the Regional Employment Offices, the financial sources allocated and also advice and consultations are realised, helping to put the Guidelines into practice (information from interview at General directorate of Employment office).

Employment office regional and local branches provides information and counselling (see Drahoňovská and Eliášová 2012, Maříková et al. 2013)¹⁶ and provide or arrange ALMP programs¹⁷. Due to existence of regional branches and local contact stops of Employment Office the implementation of YG can be easily realised in cooperation with stakeholders at regional and even local level (see MPSV 2014d). The implementing capacity of Employment office was reduced at beginning of implementation of YG (see e. g. OP LZZ 2015c) and this reduced also possibility of bringing some added value beyond standard measures from ESF and national sources at beginning phase of YG implementation (see MPSV 2014d). The implementing capacity of Employment office has been strengthened in last years by several internal measures including MIKOP, PREKVAP and ELZUP Systém efektivního řízení lidských zdrojů Úřadu práce ČR (MPSV 2015f). Number of Employment office workers was increased after previous decrease during governance reform in 2011 (MPSV 2014d). There is currently a problem to find appropriate candidates for street level positions due to quite rigid system of wages (interview at EO Headquarters).

Regions: Regional governments are responsible for some of YEI projects and can be partners in sectoral regional agreements and ESF projects.

Employers, organisations and NGO: Employers have been participating in many projects of internships and supported workplaces. NGOs and private firms have been a) specific service providers and b) also beneficiaries in many local ESF projects (for examples see table A.3).

Coordination of stakeholders

¹⁶ In 2014 as YG scheme was implemented, the EO created a new position of specialist for job mediation and counselling for school graduates. This person cooperates with other staff in job mediation by providing individual advice and counselling and also group information meetings for this group. Also, special job clubs for young people are in operation where they have programme consisting of about six meetings (information from interview at regional level of EO).

¹⁷ The overall assessment of the role of employment office in implementing YG was provided in Doyle (2015).

The responsibility for YG is divided between MPSV (labour part of YG) and MŠ (education part of YG), main coordinator is MPSV (MPSV 2014d, MPSV 2014e, Nekolová and Nekola 2015). According to FAYE (2014) and MPSV (2015i) the YG was created by MPSV and MŠMT in cooperation with social partners, Employment office, Fund of further education, the National Institute for Education (NIE), the Czech children and youth council and Czech secondary school union. MPSV and MŠMT cooperate also within National Advisory forum (MPSV 2015i)¹⁸.

The cooperation between MPSV and MŠMT is perceived to be crucial also for ESF programmes (MPSV 2015g). MPSV created working groups for solving of employment in Ústecký and Karlovarský region where employment office, regional governments and Chamber of commerce are partaking (MPSV 2015i).

Employment office is main implementing body for YG scheme who is responsible for cooperation with stakeholders at regional and local level (MPSV 2014e). Social partners declare they are further involved in the process of YG implementation (FAYE 2014)¹⁹.

Social partners were involved in creation of several regional sectoral agreements (supported from OP Employment²⁰) which should help to enhance employment. The pacts of employment include cooperation among regions and employment office, employers, chamber of commerce etc. (see e. g. Employment office 2016b, FDV 2015c). *„Based on written agreements of key partners the Employment Pacts enable to connect activities of individual institutions and organisations in creation of new and in keeping of current jobs in regions, in education and qualification training of employees as well as in other measures in order to support the employment“* (MPSV 2016d: 4). These pacts based on written agreement of stakeholders are recognised as one of implementing tools of YG (MPSV 2016d).

According to EU Youth Report (European Commission 2016e) and MPSV (2015i) young people and non-governmental youth organisations are – alongside representatives of different ministries, social partners, regional authorities, municipalities and educational institutions – part of advisory boards established in each regional labour office since 2004. People meet within these advisory boards at least twice a year (MPSV 2015i).

We asked participant in interviews about the influence stakeholders have in these pacts and boards. The worker at EO headquarter said in interview that the other actors are not much intervening into the scheme, although so called Employment Pacts established at the regional level as advisory bodies intervene to push through their priorities which implied that some resources were redirected to meet them (about 20% of the intended budget for YEI). According to opinion of one of workers at regional branch of EO, regional advisory boards do not influence much implementation of YG.

¹⁸ The member of the “section on the strategy of MLSA” suggested in interview that the Czech Action implementation plan of YG was created in close consultations with the other sections and Employment Office. It was commented by the other resorts, in particular by Ministry of Youth, Education and Sports (MYES). Also Advisory body composed from the representatives of several resorts, Trade Unions and Union of the Youth negotiated the document. Similarly, the section on strategy in cooperation with other departments of MLSA and Employment Office elaborates the other documents like respective sections of Europe 2020 programme, Employment Strategy, Activation package and similar.

¹⁹ Trade unions reported about their involvement in YG implementation plan: *“CMKOS reports having been involved in the design of the YGIP and that their involvement took place in lightly formalised institutions. However, this was after a first draft was developed by the government and, because they were not involved since the very beginning, CMKOS reports being unsatisfied”* (ETUC 2014: 43).

²⁰ See <https://www.esfcr.cz/vyzva-055-opz>

Realisation of YG and YEI are in the Czech Republic substantially supported from ESF Operational Programmes (see table 3.3)²¹. For period 2007-2013 the main link was between OP LZZ (Human resources and Employment) and OP VK (Education for competitiveness) (MPSV 2015g). Infrastructural support was realised through Integrated Operational Program within European Fund of Regional Development (MPSV 2015g). Local social partners and NGOs are involved in participation through partaking in monitoring committees and through preparation and implementation of local projects and improvement of their capacity was also supported via OP LZZ (MPSV 2015g). The OP Employment for 2014-2020 has been started and substantial money has been already allocated to the program (see MPSV 2015b, MPSV 2016a). This included both competitive projects and projects of direct placement (MPSV 2015i). The programs of direct allocation are assessed in Program partnership for OPZ (MPSV 2015i). YEI is implemented in Northwest region under the OP Employment for 2014-2020 (MPSV 2014d, MPSV 2015i).

e) Finance and budget

Overall Assessment of YG and YEI expenditures

MPSV stated about financing of YG that: "The summary of financing of YG was not monitored, mainly with regards to the fact that it relates to very complex frame of various measures, initiatives and reforms, of which many of them were started even before the term of schema realisation in the Czech Republic, and some of them can target also the support of more target groups than the only one target group NEETs (15-24)" (MPSV 2016d: 6). Czech Active Labour market policy was financed preferentially and mainly from ESF funds (75% in 2013) (Employment Office 2014, 2016a, OP LZZ 2015c). High reliance of Czech ALMP on ESF funds is often reflected (see e. g. Bussi and Geyer 2013, FDV 2015c). The estimated overall expenditures for first two years of YG in Czechia were 640.7 million Euros; this was 6,498 Euros for eligible participant (Escudero and Mourelo 2015)²². According to this is Czech Republic in middle of the range of EU countries (despite relatively low level of unemployment of young people). Effort (indicated by financing of ALMP) in the Czech Republic has high regional differences which reflects different level of structural problems of regional labour markets (see FDV 2015c). The OPZ for the Czech Republic was approved by EC in May 2015 (MPSV 2015b).

Financing of most important YG and YEI measures

Selected main activities of YG and YEI are described in the table A.1 in appendix including their planned and/or real costs. Most of these measures are described in annex of YG implementation plan (see MPSV 2013c) or they are follow-up projects. All of the project in the table A.1 are realised at national level with the exceptions of projects realised by all regional branches of Employment office (Professional experience for young people up to 30 years /Odborné praxe pro mladé do 30ti let, and Guarantee for youth/Záruky pro mladé and projects of YEI which are realised only in NUTS northwest bohemia (Ústecký and Karlovarský region). The expenditures should be interpreted with some caution, because various sources of information (even in the same document) often show slightly different amounts. There are many other activities which help young people (including education programs and national ALMP training programs) so we cannot estimate total expenditures for YG. Important part of YG is realised within ESF projects

²¹ During OP LZZ Human resources and employment were 67 000 young people aged 15-24 years and 23 707 students supported (OP LZZ 2015a).

²² Eurofound (2015) estimated necessary expenditures to cover all NEET in Czechia be 492 Million Euro.

which are designed and implemented at regional/local level²³. The 'competition exposed projects/soutěživé projekty' may become activities included under YG at the conditions that EO is cooperating in the selection of the target group (interview at EO Headquarters). It seems clear that not including local projects in our assessment would heavily underestimate the overall effort of Youth Guarantee for 2013-2015.

The project Professional experience for young people up to 30 years (OPM30) was realized as a part of OP LZZ (Human Resources and employment). It was divided into 14 regional individual projects, realized by regional branches of PES. 85 percent of financing was from ESF and 15 percent from national sources. Total financial allocation was gradually increased from initial 1.034 billion CZK (Employment Office 2013a – press report) to 1.838 billion CZK at the end of the project (Employment Office 2016a).

Important financial allocation was realized also in internship projects managed by Fund of further education (FDV). These projects were financed from OP Employment for competitiveness. Four internship projects had total planned allocation 1,250 million CZK.

The Czech Republic is eligible for the Youth Employment Initiative: it has an allocation of 13.60 million euros in current prices (European Commission 2015a), which is 800 million CZK (MPSV 2015c, MPSV 2015a)²⁴. This is one of the lowest allocation from all countries (see Escudero and Mourelo 2015, OECD 2015). The Severozapad region (which includes districts of Ústí nad Labem and Karlovy Vary) is the only region eligible²⁵. Financial allocation is dependent on population of regions: 78 percent is allocated to Ústecký region (MPSV 2016c). Half of the money for YEI is provided directly without necessity of coo-financing, the other half is provided under ESF funds (MPSV 2015c). The YEI is included in OP Employment, investment priority 1.5 (MPSV 2015c). Special appeal for YG was announced in OP Zaměstnanost with allocation of 1 billion CZK (see OPZ 2015b) for which Employment office and partner stakeholders (regions and schools) are entitled. The YEI initiative is in the Czech Republic in its initial phase as the programs have started only in 2016 (MPSV 2015c). For further details see MPSV (2015c).

According to all available data (including MPSV press reports and OP LZZ 2015c) we can conclude that support of young people in many of the projects included in YG was at program theory level really generous (when considering national conditions and former context of ALMP realization in the Czech Republic). Young people up to 25 years e. g. in project "Vzdělávajte se pro růst! Pracovní příležitosti" could be supported by higher monthly nominal amount (maximum 24 000 CZK) when comparing to standard support (maximum 15 000 CZK) (OP LZZ 2015c). Similar support was provided in project OPM30. The maximum level of support in "Guarantee for the Youth" is somehow lower (Employment office 2016c). The real level of financial support was dependent of decision of regional branches of Employment Office and it could be substantially different – in some regions it was much lower than maximum amounts (OP LZZ 2015c, for OPM30 see below).

Expenditures allocated to YG measures (including measures mentioned in table A1 and table A2) are in the Czech context high. This is also true when we consider expenditures in relation to the relatively low scope of problem of youth unemployment in the Czech

²³ Several examples of local measures (implementations at local level) are provided in annex table A.2. We couldn't include all local projects and so we included projects which are clearly targeted to young people or are more general but young people are one of the target groups and their scope is so high that strong support for the young is expected. Simultaneously we have chosen projects which were made publicly known by press reports of evaluation reports of important stakeholders.

²⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1161&intPageId=3329&langId=en>

²⁵ The Severozápad region is the only region in the Czech Republic with unemployment rate of young people above 25 percent (28.2 percent in 2012) (MPSV 2015c).

Republic. E. g. total allocation for OPM30 was almost 2 billion CZK and Internships cost more than 1 billion CZK (this is of course allocated in more years). ALMP expenditures for period 2010 – 2015 are for comparison provided in table A.4²⁶. Overall ALMP expenditures were in period in focus between 2 and 10 billion CZK. ALMP expenditures in Czech Republic are in international comparison assessed as low – usually below 0.3% of GDP (see e. g. MPSV 2014e, Hora et al. 2016). We can clearly see that YG had high priority in targeting of money in the Czech ALMP. This was also confirmed by our analysis of ALMP individualised database of employment office (see Hora et al. 2015). Strong allocation of expenditures toward young people is mentioned for OPZ (see MPSV 2015i). Young people are included in priority axis 1 in investment priority 1.1 (which constitute 43.3% of priority axis 1) and separately in investment priority 1.5). What is important to note is that high reliance on ESF funds can make Czech ALMP potentially vulnerable after the end of support from the EU.

²⁶ For some more detailed data see OP LZZ (2015c).

Annex

Table A.1: Selected YG measures in the Czech Republic

Name of the measure	Target group	Timeframe	Key stakeholders	Financing	Planned / Realized Allocation
Youth Employment Initiative	Unemployed aged 15-29	4/2016--10/2018	Employment offices in both regions (80%), regional governments in both regions (20%)	YEI direct funding (half), OP Employment (half)	800 million CZK
Odborné praxe pro mladé do 30ti let	Unemployed aged 15-29, max. 2 years after school	7/2013 – 11/2015	Employment office (regional branches)	OP LZZ (Human resources and employment), national sources	/ 1.838 billion CZK (2015)
Odborná praxe pro mladé do 30 let na ÚP ČR ²⁷	Young unemployed, employment office	8/2014 – 8/2016	Employment office, ManPower	IOP, Regional Development Fund	7 million CZK
Stáže ve firmách – vzdělávání praxí I	unemployed, inactive, employees	9/2012 – 10/2014	Further Education Fund	OP Education for competitiveness, national sources	800 milion CZK
Stáže ve firmách – vzdělávání praxí II	unemployed, inactive, employees	8/2014 – 9/2015	Further Education Fund	OP Education for competitiveness, national sources	188 milion CZK / 140 milion CZK
Stáže pro mladé zájemce o zaměstnání I	Students (last year of study)	1/2012 – 8/2014	Further Education Fund	OP LZZ (Human Resources and Employment)	71 million CZK /
Stáže pro mladé zájemce o zaměstnání II	Students (last year of study)	2/2014 – 11/2015	Further Education Fund	OP LZZ (Human Resources and Employment)	190 million CZK / 216 million CZK (2015)
Vzdělávejte se pro růst – pracovní příležitosti	Long-term unempl. (general) ²⁸	1/2012 – 12/2015	MPSV, Employment office	OP LZZ, national Individual project	6,542 million CZK / 12,000 million CZK (2015).
Vzdělávání a dovednosti pro trh práce	Unemployed (general)	6/2013-12/2015	MPSV, Employment Office	OP LZZ, National Individual project	850.1 million CZK

²⁷ Employment office employed about 450 young people directly as support and administrative staff at Employment office (Employment office 2013b).

²⁸ Young people were important target group in this project especially sheltered workplaces were highly targeted to this group (see OP LZZ 2015c).

Structural measures (MIKOP, PREKVAP, ELZUP)	Employment office	1/2013 - 6(11)/2015	Employment Office	Mainly EU sources	MIKOP 327 million CZK, PREKVAP 16.5 Million CZK, ELZUP 25 million CZK
Nové pracovní příležitosti	Long-term unemployed	4/2015-3/2017	Employment office	OP Employment	4,011 million CZK
Nové pracovní příležitosti – Společensky účelná pracovní místa	People with low work experience	9/2015-6/2018	Employment office	OP Employment	2,721 million CZK
Nové pracovní příležitosti – veřejně prospěšné práce	Long term unemployed, people with low qualification	9/2015-6/2018	Employment office	OP Employment	2,721 million CZK
Cesta pro mladé	Students (last year of study)	9/2016 - 2020	Further Education Fund	OP Employment	267 million CZK
Záruky pro mladé	People aged up 29 years, max. 2 years after school	2016-2018 (varies)	Employment office (regional branches)	OP Employment	?
Mezinárodní mobilita pro znevýhodněno u mládež	People aged up 29 years, unemployed	2015-2018	Individual subjects asking for support	OP Employment	116 million CZK

Data sources: Employment office (2014, 2015a, 2016), FDV (2015a, 2016a), European Commission (2016b), MPSV (2013c, 2013d, 2015c), OP LZZ (2015a), OP LZZ (2015c), SPCR (2015).

Table A.2: Examples of local YG and YEI measures in the Czech Republic

Name of the measure	Timeframe	Geo	Key stakeholders	Financing	Planned / Realized Allocation
Otevřené dveře na trh práce v oboru sociálních služeb	12/2012-5/2014	Moravskoslezský, Vysočina, Ústecký	Česká asociace pečovatelské služby, Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Asociace občanských poraden	OP LZZ	3 million CZK
Nová kariéra – s praxí za prací	3/2013-2/2015	Šumperk region	Akademie Jana Amose Komenského	OP LZZ	6 million CZK
Fandíme mladým	4/2013-10/2014	Central Bohemia region	Ascari	OP LZZ	6 million CZK
Úspěšný start do pracovní kariéry	9/2014-10/2015	North Moravian region	EDUCO Centrum	OP LZZ	18 million CZK
Mladá naděje v Libereckém kraji	1/2013-3/2014	Liberecký region	Republikové centrum vzdělávání	OP LZZ	10.5 million CZK
Iniciativa Karlovarského kraje	2015-2018	Karlovarský region	Employment office	YEI	141.9 million CZK
Iniciativa Ústeckého kraje	2015-2018	Ústecký region	Employment office	YEI	497.5 million CZK
Nestůj a pojď II	2016-	Karlovarský region	regional government	YEI	35.5 million CZK
Dáváme práci	2016-	Ústecký region	regional government	YEI	124 million CZK
První kroky do praxe +	5/2012-4/2014	Central Bohemia region	APIS	OP LZZ	6 million CZK
Krok ke kariéře	12/2012-10/2015	Žatec	Selli	OP LZZ	5 million CZK
Pracovní návyky	2/2014-11/2015	Karlovarský, Olomoucký, Vysočina, Zlínský, South Moravian	FDV, Employment office	OP LZZ	69 million CZK
Generační tandem I, II	4/2014-11/2015, 1/2016-12/2016(2018)	Central Bohemia, Karlovarský, Olomoucký regions	Employment office	OP Human resources and employment, OP Employment	66 million CZK (I)

sources: Potočková (2015), MPSV (2015c), press reports of MPSV and web pages of the individual projects.

Table A.3: Main operational programmes of ESF relevant for YG and YEI

	Programing Period	Budget	Coo-financing from national sources
OP LZZ "Lidské zdroje a zaměstnanost" (Human resources and employment)	2007-2013	2,227 million EUR (60 billion CZK)	15%
OP "Vzdělávání pro konkurenceschopnost" (Education for	2007-2013	2,085 million EUR	15%
OPZ "Zaměstnanost" (Employment)	2014-2020	(70.2 billion CZK)	15%
OP "Výzkum, vývoj a vzdělávání" (Research, development and Education)	2014-2020		15%

Sources: OP LZZ (2015a), MPSV (2015g),

Table A.4. ALMP expenditures 2010-2015 (in million CZK)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Direct placement (national) [1]	622	512	309	408	167	n. d.
Direct placement (total) [2]	1,454	795	366	1,024	1,937	3,807
Public works (national) [1]	402	550	273	379	321	n. d.
Public works (total) [2]	1,624	1,025	688	1,777	2,078	2,669
Training courses (national) [1]	97	85	102	166	62	n. d.
Training courses (total) [1]	582	317	146	301	344	380
ESF programmes [1]	4,176	2,156	1,503	3,233	5,755	n. d.
ALMP total [1]	6,172	3,816	2,595	4,286	6,427	n. d.
ALMP total [2]	6,172	3,816	2,451	4,251	6,387	9,669

Sources: [1] MPSV (2014b, 2015d), [2] MPSV Integrated portal.

3.3 Third step: analyse the implementation of two/three particular measures introduced/financed with explicit notion to the Youth Guarantee

Measure 1

Projects “Professional traineeship for young people up to 30 years”.

The first example measure we have chosen is a set of regional projects “Professional traineeship for young people up to 30 years” [Odborné praxe pro mladé do 30 let]] (in text below also mentioned as OPM30). The project was realised as 14 regional individual projects maintained by 14 regional branches of Employment office (corresponding to 14 regions in the Czech Republic). There was also a possibility to realise it also as national ALMP project. The project was in many official documents stated as a prime example of project realised within the Youth Guarantee (Employment office 2014a, 2015a, European Commission 2014). The project is also explicitly mentioned in EO Directive No. 24/2014 about realisation of YG as one of possibilities for suitable offer to the young people²⁹. Minister of labour and social affairs Ludmila Müllerová stated that recommendation of European Commission to support more young people under 25 years was one of the reasons to target effort of Employment office much more towards young people (see MPSV 2013b). Specific character of the project can be well documented by defined problem (lack of experience), targeting only to young people and activities which should have been tailored to the needs of young people (see below).

The project reacted to lack of experience of young unemployed people which was perceived as crucial barrier of labour market integration. General Manager of Employment office Marie Bílková stated in 2014: “Sense of this activity is to allow young people to get so much demanded praxis and so to increase their changes in job search. In other case they would get into vicious circle leading to their long term registration at employment office” (Employment office 2014b). Employment office considered this project to be a good option in times of culmination economic recession (in 2012) and this was the reason why the project was forced through against some initial reservations (interview at EO headquarters).

Goals of the project

According to descriptions of individual projects on ESF web pages³⁰ the goals of the project were inclusion of the young people to the labour market³¹. This should be realised through getting the stable job which should prevent returning to register of Employment office. It was expected that part of employers would keep young person after the end of the project (OPM30 project description – Ústí nad Labem). At the individual level the project should help young people by activation and motivation with counselling and support their employability through improving their knowledge and competences.

²⁹ The key role of the project can be illustrated by following statement from YG monitoring questionnaire (Member States’ response to 2013 Council Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee): “Within the YG scheme the Professional traineeship has the important role, as it represents the offer, i.e. the activity, with many parameters of “quality offer”, where the participant gets work skills, is remunerated for it, the mentor performs the training.” (MPSV 2016d).

³⁰ See list of the projects at:

<https://esf2014.esfcr.cz/dap/LW/Views/Core/SeznamJS?action=get&idSeznamu=cb9884cf-7c05-47ba-850f-20089e91a3e6>

³¹ These goals were generally the same for all 14 regional individual projects. We provide some concluding summary of individual projects because the descriptions of the projects are not always identical.

Targeting of the project

The project was targeted to young people (primary target group) and employers (secondary target group).

Primary target group: Young people up to 30 years old, who had been registered in Employment office for at least four months (some exceptions were possible)³² and had less work experience than 2 years after finishing education. There were no limits for the level of education of young people (Employment office 2015e)³³. This targeting makes the project different from other similar projects which are generally targeted to all people who have problems on the labour market. According to information from some of the projects reports participants were in reality often graduates from high schools or universities in economy, business, trade, management, electro-technics, IT, pedagogics, building, machinery and social sciences (Employment office 2014b, 2015c). Still in some documents (e. g. Employment office 2014b) it was reflected that the project should be targeted to “hardly to place young people” and there should be strong role of the Employment office in choosing young people in need for the project.

Secondary target group: Recipients of the project could have been any organisations including organisation in public sector. According to EO Directive No. 16/2014 more than 50% of subsidised jobs should have been realised in private for profit organisations. State institutions and organisations owned by state were excluded from claiming according to Czech employment law (Employment office 2016d) – but this was not absolute rule (see Employment office 2013b). Data from Pardubický region showed that mainly small employers and self-employed people participated in the project (Employment office 2015c). Following benefits of the project for employees can be reflected from their statements included in documents about the project (Employment office 2013a, 2014b, 2014d):

- To get perspective/promising young people (without negative habits) who can be trained for the firm (with perspective of keeping employee after the end of the project)
- To save labour costs
- To diminish risk connected with lower productivity of young employees
- To diminish expenditures connected to recruitment and selection of employees and get good candidates
- Altruistic motives (will to help young people)

Main project activities:

Possible project activities were broadly defined at EO Directive 11/2013. Following description refers to general model of the projects – specific conditions in the projects could

³² At initial phase of the project people with longer evidence were preferred (see EO Directive 11/2013). In latter phase the length of evidence was not any longer relevant for participation in the project (EO Directive No. 16/2014, Employment office 2014d). This condition was thus completely relaxed during the project. This was done may be due to the problems some EO had had to find suitable young people for the project (Employment Office 2016k – Moravskoslezský region). This also means (as it was stated in interviews with Employment Office workers) that NEET were practically excluded from the project when certain length of previous evidence was required.

³³ Available data from the regions showed that participants from the target group had often secondary or tertiary level of education (Employment office 2015c, Employment office 2016j).

be (and were!) different depending on decisions of principal agents in the local conditions. Following main activities were realised within the projects:

Individual, group and career counselling: Individual and group counselling should help young people to integrate to labour market and society. This includes work orientation and in some cases work diagnostics and career counselling of Employment office for young people without finished qualification which could help them to return to education or professional preparation to work (Employment office 2016e)³⁴. In another region young people participated in activating program (Employment office 2016g). Project description in Zlínský region stated that counselling was required (mandatory) part of the project (Employment office 2016i)– for the data see table B.2.

Training: Training (ALMP tool rekvalifikace) was possible within the OPM30 if there was a special need for it and it would be beneficiary for both sides of the contract (Employment office 2014c). This training should be realised before the placement of the worker to prepare him/her for the position (see table below and Employment office 2016e). According to available data training was rather rare in most of the projects (see Employment office 2016e, tableB.2).

Creation of traineeships (subsidised jobs): Within the context of Czech ALMP this is measure "Subsidised job – reserved" [Společensky účelné pracovní místo – vyhrazené]. The program should provide jobs for young people and training on the job. Work positions were created for full time employment. Part-time employment was possible in specific cases (e. g. parent responsibilities) but not less than 20 hours a week. It was expected that work position is created for young people that has perspective for future career development. It should somehow correspond to level of previous education of the trainee (EO Directive No. 11/2013). Both fixed-term contract and unlimited contracts were possible, but work positions with work contract of unlimited duration were preferred (Employment office 2014b)³⁵. With implementation of EO Directive No. 16/2014 it was not possible to provide traineeships to young people who had worked with the same employer on "Agreement on specific task" (i.e. low intensity work). The financial support for young people was provided for 6 (minimum) to 12 (maximum) months (usually it should have been 12 months)³⁶. The maximum level of support was 24 000 CZK per person and month including employers contributions to social insurance. Actual amounts offered to employers were different in different regions (see table x. 3). Employment office workers at regional level confirmed in interview that the financial support in OPM30 was substantially higher than level of support in similar national projects (13 000 CZK).

Work on trial (defined by EO Directive 15/2014) for maximum of three months with different financing conditions than subsidised jobs was also used in one of projects (Employment office 2016d, 2016e). The goal of this measure is to assess the readiness of young people for offer of subsidised job (EO Directive 15/2014). This was used rather rarely (Employment office 2016e).

Mentorship: The role of the mentor was in breaking young people in the job (zaškolení) according to the training plan. Mentors could have been stable employees of private firms

³⁴ The option of return young people to education was not systematically realised within the project (interview – worker of Employment Office).

³⁵ Data from Pardubický region showed that 61% of the contracts were of unlimited duration. For limited time contracts there was a condition of 2 years minimum duration implemented (Employment Office 2016k).

³⁶ The minimum duration was reduced to three months in 2015 (last year of the project). The real duration was prolonged in some cases to allow employers to better get to know young people and to prevent return of young people to evidence of Employment Office (Employment Office 2016k).

(beneficiaries) who had worked in the firm for at least 3 months. The mentor could have been paid from the project for minimum of four and maximum of seven months according to time spent on the project with appropriate proportion of his normal salary. Highest effort of the mentor was expected in first three months of the program (EO Directive 11/2013, Employment office 2013a, 2014b).

Support activities: Traveling costs, health screening before job placement and food during project activities could be paid for participants in the project (Employment office 2016d, 2016e).

Implementation of the activities

The project was financed from ESF OP LZZ (Human resourced and employment) and co-financed from national budget (Employment office 2014b). Many concrete conditions for realisation of the projects were defined in directives of General Manager of Employment office no. 11/2013 and no. 16/2014 (Employment office 2013c, 2014g).

The main stakeholder (principal agent) in the project was Employment office. There are no other partners or sub-contractors stated within the project beyond the participants from primary and secondary target group. But there could have been (were) some partner sub-contractors e. g. for diagnostics and training³⁷. The project was realised mainly as "Regional individual project". This means that 14 regional branches of Employment office realised 14 separate projects (MPSV 2014a). Some conditions in these projects could have been different (see below). Information from monitoring reports indicate that the projects had some problems with position changes and fluctuation of employees (Employment Office 2016k).

The projects were managed by regional managers and coordinators (Employment office 2013c). There were several people in each project (e. g. eight in South Moravian region) that had contact offices at local stops of Employment office and administered the applications (Employment office 2013c). They could individually recruit people for the projects. Project workers arranged media advertisements and publicity materials for the project (Employment office 2016e, 2016g, 2016i, 2016j). There were also seminars (information meetings) held for potential project participants (Employment office 2016e, 2016g). Employers were provided with manuals which included necessary information about the project and qualifying conditions. Employers could ask for support for their own candidates or they could take candidate provided by employment office³⁸. Young candidates for traineeships and candidates for mentorship should have been in each case individually assessed by specific Employment Office committee (EO Directive No. 11/2013). These channels of recruitments were similarly described in the interviews with the workers of Employment office.

To realise traineeships employers had to sign agreements with Employment office which defined conditions of the subsidised work in the company (plan, contents of work, timetable). According to information from interview at EO Headquarters mentor was provided in about 30% of traineeships, depending on how demanding the job position was. Administrative barriers and the upper limit on the support (which was 176 CZK of job subsidy per hour for the mentor, for 15 hours weekly in first 4 months and 5 hours in

³⁷ As EO is the principal implementing agent of YG, only some specific measures are outsourced like training or diagnostics to for profit or non-profit agencies (interview at EO Headquarters).

³⁸ According to evaluation report from Pardubický region of 479 project participants 87 entered the project via group information meetings and 392 entered with direct choice via employer (Employment office 2015c).

4-7 month) represented other obstacles for using of the mentor by the employers (information from the interview). Mentor (or company representative) and worker of Employment office were responsible for content of praxis and its fulfilment. The results of the project were reported in written form. Conditions for this assessment were standardised by inner acts of Employment Office in all the regions. The results of the training were assessed at least once in three months by representative of employer, worker of Employment office and trainee (EO Directive No. 11/2013). Regional projects could have been different in this aspect within given limits. E. g. according to information provided by Employment Office workers in one of the regions the assessment in the case of mentorship was once a month, in other cases once in three months. After the end of the training the employers should provide trainees with certificates about the traineeships and in case that the trainees were not going to stay in the company curent employers should also provide recommendations for other potencial employers (EO Directive No. 11/2013). The implementation of the project by employers was to some extend officially inspected (controlled) by workers of Employment office by vising places of the internships.

Outputs and outcomes in the projects

There is no evaluation of the project at national level (interview EO Headquarters). There were just intern monitoring reports (final versions of which were available to us). Output and outcomes of the projects could be evaluated according to data provided by national authority (MPSV) for sum of all the projects, data in intern monitoring reports and data in public reports provided by regional employment offices. The key evaluation problem was that the projects were evaluated individually by regional branches of Employment office and this resulted in very different public presentations of results (from final evaluation reports and continuous reporting to providing a few statistics on webpages or not providing any information at all).

The numbers of project participants and money allocations are very different in regions (see table B.1). This is influenced by different population and scope of unemployment in the region (the regions with most problems such as Ústí nad Labem and Moravskoslezský were most supported). Still some regions had similar or higher ratio of number of project participants to the level of young unemployment³⁹. Generally speaking, the resources provided to regional EOs are based on rather more complex statistical assessment of their needs rather than mere numbers of unemployed (interview at EO headquarters).

Enormous interest of both young people and employers led to great increase in the magnitude of the project in all regions (Employment office 2016i). This can be illustrated by information from Vysočina region (Employment office 2016g) where value of key indicator (participation) was gradually increased from original (planned) 180 by 27, 41, 65, 30, 25, 16, 15 and 36 participants to final value of 435 participants and this value was surpassed by further 43 people. Increase in the scope of the project was also explained by saving some money by preliminary ended contracts (Employment office 2016g).

Overall look at most common project activities based on statistics of regional employment offices is provided in table B.2. Despite the lack of data and some uncertainty about methodological consistency we conclude that results showed the projects were in regions realised quite differently. The differences are mainly in voluntary activities – this reflects different strategies of Employment offices as well as different reflection of needs of participants. In some cases general expectations about the

³⁹ We reflect that this is very rough indicator, because the both levels of the unemployment and number of participants have been constantly changing within time scope of the project.

activities were not fulfilled within the project. E.g. training courses and mentorship agreements were (much) less used than initially expected due to low interest of young people and employers who reflected immediate need for already qualified workers and low level of mentorship remuneration comparing to administrative demands (Employment office 2016k – Plzeňský region, Praha, Vysočina, Liberec, Pardubický).

Provision of traineeships was key activity in the projects. According to national report of Employment office (2016a) total of 8 580 traineeship agreements were created in the project and 2 374 agreements about the mentorship⁴⁰. Basic information about the scope of traineeships/ (SÚPM) in the projects (at regional level) is also provided in table B.3⁴¹. There is information provided about two similar indicators (created workplaces and supported people). These two indicators can be slightly different because in rare cases some people were supported twice when the first job has showed to be problematic (Employment office 2016g). Traineeships were usually the most widespread activity in the project; e. g. 80% of project participants were offered these jobs in Ústecký region (Employment office 2016e) and 93% in Vysočina region (Employment office 2016g). The subsidised jobs were realised mainly in 2014 (this was the key year of the project). The overall share of traineeship participants who didn't finish all planned duration of traineeship was estimated to be 15-25 percent – it was 18% in Středočeský region, 20.7% in Plzeňský region, 22.8% in Královéhradecký region, 18% in Vysočina region for people with 12 months traineeship (Employment office 2016k)⁴². Money unintentionally "saved" by premature ending of internships or mentorships was partially reinvested to other internships and partially it was not spent (Employment office 2016k).

Outcomes

MPSV stated that OPM30 helped 11 thousand of young people get first work experience through financial support for their employers (MPSV 2016b). All numerical data about outcomes of the projects are provided in table B.4 below. Data showed that young people usually didn't return to register of Employment office after the project was terminated⁴³ but one of the analyses showed that destiny of part of the participants was unknown. Some project participants got employment without subsidised jobs but exact numbers are not available⁴⁴.

According to representative of EO Headquarters OPM30 is considered to be a successful project. There were positive effects evidenced in providing job experience opportunities for the young (in particular during times of recession there were otherwise impossible) and positive effects for skills and motivation. There was a growing interest from employers as well as young people. But in some of the regions it was at some time difficult to find suitable, able and motivated project participants who would like to participate in the project (Employment office 2016k – Moravskoslezský kraj). Important problem was recognised in interviews at both national and local level: the offer (in this

⁴⁰ Another press report provided slightly different numbers: 8 758 and 2 379.

⁴¹ National data for 2014 and 2015, data from regional sources for 2013.

⁴² The reasons for premature ending of internship (Employment office 2016k – Středočeský region) included mainly finding another job (more than half of premature ending), young people who left because they were not satisfied with the internships and cases when employers ended the internship because young people didn't fill the conditions (e.g. absence). Other reasons were less numerous and included return to school, health problems, moving to another region etc.

⁴³ Some other employment offices (not mentioned in the table y.4) provided only general statements that return to evidence by project participants were low without providing any numbers.

⁴⁴ This is also influenced by strategies of regional Employment offices. E. g. in Plzeňský region 133 people were employed outside the key activity of supported workplace (Employment office 2014g).

case mainly subsidised job) is not sufficient for some of the participants to overcome their cumulated handicaps and various personal, life and labour market problems. These people often end the ALMP program on their will or by certain life events (even if they are excluded from evidence as a result of this). Estimation of the scope of this group was up to 10 percent of young people within the OPM30.

There is follow up project "Guarantee for the Youth" project realised in period 2016-2020 which is in many aspects similar to original OPM30 (for concrete conditions see EO Directive No. 17/2015). It is realised within both OPZ and YEI. This project is going to be realised at lower scope (interview at EO headquarters), perhaps reflecting low level of general unemployment and improved situation of young people in the Czech labour market. According to data provided by MPSV there were already more than 2 000 participants at the end of August 2016. This new version of the project allows also systematic possibility of provide two new activities: return to education and internship in foreign country. This provide good example how the YG developed within the individual projects.

Table B.1: Scope of regional projects “Professional traineeships for young people up to 30 years”

	Scope of youth unemployment [3]	Participants	Crude ratio of scope to problem	Maximum support per month (CZK)	Total allocation (million CZK)
Praha	11 219	356	0.03	n. d.	94
Středočeský	15 342	634	0.04	24 000	122
Jihočeský	7 691	438	0.06	n. d.	72.5
Plzeňský	6 595	822	0.12	24 000	93
Karlovarský	5 509	339	0.06	24 000	59.5
Ústecký	18 584	2 194	0.12	20 000	304
Liberecký	6 951	989	0.14	n. d.	119
Královehradecký	7 493	384	0.05	24 000	71
Pardubický	6 570	479	0.07	17 500 or 20 000 [1]	98
Vysočina	7 071	478	0.07	n. d.	92
Jihomoravský	18 456	1 336	0.07	16 080 - 20 100 [2]	179
Olomoucký	10 473	551	0.05	n. d.	126
Zlínský	8 553	994	0.12	20 000	165
Moravskoslezský	22 414	1 027	0.05	24 000	242.5
Total	152 921	11 021	0.07	varies	1,837.5

Sources: MPSV (2013e), Employment office (2015d, 2015e, 2016e, 2016f, 2016h, 2016i, 2016j, 2016k and webpages of EO about the projects)

Notes: [1] Depends on level of education of trainee. [2] Normally lower value but depends on assessment of concrete case. [3] Unemployment of young people up to 30 at 30th of June 2013.

Table B.2: Project activities in “Professional traineeships for young people up to 30 years”

Regions	Participants (Particip. Men)	Diagnostics	Individual Counselling	Group counselling	Career counselling
Praha	356 (173)	n. d.	see note*	n. d.	n. d.
Středočeský	634 (275)	n. d.	634 (total)		n. d.
Jihočeský	438 (173)	n. d.	437 (total)		n. d.
Plzeňský	822 (356)	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.
Karlovarský	339 (174)	n. d.	338	326	n. d.
Ústecký	2 194 (1018)	680	see note**	1 016	196
Liberecký	989 (443)	n. d.	968	n. d.	n. d.
Pardubický	479 (237)	n. d.	479	n. d.	n. d.
Královehradecký	384 (155)	n. d.	n. d.	123	n. d.
Vysočina	478 (191)	n. d.	478	n. d.	n. d.
Jihomoravský	1 336 (602)	300	1 336	49	n. d.
Olomoucký	551 (216)	n. d.	547	550	n. d.
Zlínský	994 (384)	12	991	979	5
Moravskoslezský	1 027 (424)	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.
	Training	Specific activities	Workplaces (SÚPM)	Mentor agreements	Successfully finished
Praha	10	n. d.	356	n. d.	n. d.
Středočeský	3	n. d.	531	89	435
Jihočeský	101	n. d.	316	124	n. d.
Plzeňský	33	n. d.	434	n. d.	n. d.
Karlovarský region	37	n. d.	269	119	228
Ústecký region	21	†10	1 741	350	1 344
Liberecký	57	††90	555	266	n. d.
Pardubický	15	†††464	383	190	n. d.
Královehradecký	56	n. d.	325	n. d.	251
Vysočina	0	†††225	447	4	256
Jihomoravský	150	n. d.	1 019	176	n. d.
Olomoucký	548	n. d.	527	250	n. d.
Zlínský	61	n. d.	815	249	513
Moravskoslezský	4	n. d.	1 019	536	n. d.

Sources: Employment office (2015d, 2015e, 2016e, 2016f, 2016h, 2016i, 2016j, 2016k and webpages of EO about the projects)

Note 1: * Total 1780 hours of counselling, ** 4 583 activities of individual counselling.

Note2: † Work on trial, †† Motivation activities, ††† Activisation program, †††† Counseling program.

Table B.3: Traineeships (subsidised jobs) in the projects “Professional traineeships for young people up to 30 years”

Regions	2013		2014		2015	
	workplaces	People	workplaces	people	workplaces	people
Praha	n. d.	n. d.	71	141	101	97
Středočeský	n. d.	n. d.	415	415	129	114
Jihočeský	n. d.	n. d.	213	214	62	62
Plzeňský	66	n. d.	222	355	201	186
Karlovarský	n. d.	n. d.	178	184	65	60
Ústecký	272	272	1 184	1 184	411	409
Liberecký	n. d.	n. d.	330	338	196	196
Královéhradecký	n. d.	n. d.	235	235	85	85
Pardubický	n. d.	54	296	306	95	95
Vysočina	115	n. d.	272	272	94	95
Jihomoravský	n. d.	n. d.	583	583	229	186
Olomoucký	n. d.	n. d.	353	353	145	121
Zlínský kraj	n. d.	n. d.	576	539	276	276
Moravskoslezský	n. d.	n. d.	823	825	410	410
Czech Republic	n. d.	n. d.	5 751	5 944	2 499	2 392

Sources: Employment office (2013c, 2014e, 2014f, 2015a: statistical annex, 2016a: statistical annex)

Table B.4: Outcomes in the projects of “Professional traineeships for young people up to 30 years”

Regions	Outcomes
Moravskoslezský	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediately after end of traineeship 501 participants (49.3%) stayed at the same workplace and 177 participants (17.4%) participants have found another job. • 8.6% of participants worked at SÚPM for less than three months. • 15% percent of participants returned to register of Employment office
Středočeský	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 64.4% of employers prolonged traineeship to permanent job.
Pardubický	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 74% of participants worked at the same workplace after the end of the project
Zlínský	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by 10/2015 34% of participants stayed after the traineeship with the same employer, 15% percent of participants returned to register of Employment office and 51% of participants didn't returned to register (their fate is unknown).
Plzeňský	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of 822 project participants 525 participants of the project (63.8%) have found job (traineeship are not included). 188 participants stayed after the internship with the same employers and 71 participants have found another job.

Sources: Employment office (2015c, 2015e, 2016f, 2016k) and web pages

Measure 2

Project „Internships for youths“

The project “Internships for youths” (IfY hereinafter) is considered to be one of the most important and publicly known programme for the youths in the Czech Republic. The main impulse for the implementation of such programme was the unfavourable and worsening situation of secondary education and tertiary graduates on the Czech labour market during the period of economic recession. According to its aims the project is the crucial measure to meet the YG programmes’ requirements. In fact, the project was established by Further Education Fund (FDV) in 2012 in order to improve the employability and competitiveness of future graduates not only in the phase of enter to the labour market but also in the long-term period. The motivation for entering the project was great by both the relevant actors (young students as well as employers), hence the project ran in two waves (“Internships for youths I” – from September 2012 to August 2014 and “Internships for youths II” – from February 2014 to November 2015) and now it is preparing the third one (“The path for youths” – from September 2016 to 2020). In the text below we refer mainly on the second wave of the project (“Internships for youths II”) which is actually under evaluation process. From its beginning the project is presented as an innovative tool in order to reach the specific target group of students as a future graduates (the strong preventive level of the measure). Also the educational character of the project and possibility to fund the pay for the interns as well as mentors belong to the new aspects of measures for youths.

The purpose and aims of the project

IfY project was established due to a lack of job opportunities for young graduates not only in the Czech Republic but also abroad. Like the other projects of “Professional traineeships for young people up to 30 years” and “Internships in companies – learning by practice” it focused on overcoming the crucial handicap of young people on the labour market – the lack of work experience and practical skills. Thus, the project aimed to provide young people with such experience and skills and improve their employability when entering labour market as well as in the long-term period (global aim according to the formal task of the project).

The main goals of the IfY II project are as follows (FDV 2015c: 5-6):

- to support professional development of young students as future graduates beyond the educational curriculum (internships needed to be realised within the framework of real work conditions of employers);
- to acquaint future secondary and tertiary graduates with the business environment and help them to apply theoretical knowledge to the practice on the job directly related to the field of study;
- to improve the labour market prospects of future graduates, smooth their transition from education into the labour market and strengthen their independence within the framework of real labour market conditions;
- to break down barriers and build up work relations between employers and students which can be suggested to lead to the common labour contract;
- to improve the soft-skills of the participants; and

- to provide participants with the career counselling services.

(g – differences between the respective programs/targets – what works best within country)

As mentioned above, two other respective programmes were held in order to make youth transition from education to the labour market smoother in the Czech Republic. All of programmes aimed to provide young people with work experience and practical skills but in another way. The project of “Professional traineeships for young people up to 30 years” offered temporary jobs to the relatively precisely defined target group of young people. Professional training of practical skills was related to the specific subsidised jobs for young people registered on the labour office. The second project of “Internships in companies – learning by practice” was focused on the job-related training not only for graduates and young people but also for another target groups (parents after the parental leave or people with long-term distance from the labour market in general). In contrast of such two programmes, the IfY project proposed only training activities in the limited time of 1-4 months (no placement on the job) to the newly defined target group of pupils and students as future graduates (potential employers and/or unemployed).

Targeting of the project

The definition of a target group belongs to the key innovative aspects in the project. It was defined as a group of pupils and student of secondary schools and universities in their last year of study. More generally, the project was addressed to young people just going through the education system (future graduates) with the expected end of study within following 12 months (FDV 2015c). We consider such target group to be well (suitable) selected in accordance to the fact that the majority of schools in the Czech Republic (i.e. primarily focused on humanities) offer no possibility to their students to develop their practical skills. Students were required to choose the internship in relation to their field of study. In this respect it is not surprising that the most of interns⁴⁵ attended program in the field of economics, human resources and administration, business, marketing and advertising (FDV 2015a). Not only students but also representatives of on humanities-oriented education institutions reflect the problem of lack of work experience and practical skills.

The project was built on the premise that all the activities need to happen in students’ leisure time and do not interfere with their school attendance. According to this assumption mainly tertiary students participated in the project (75% of all interns, the share of students of bachelor and master degree was almost identical, FDV 2015a). The remaining part of participants (23%) was made up by the secondary students both from grammar schools and secondary technical schools. In contrast to secondary schools, universities provide students with more flexible timetable which can be better combined with the internship. But the low share of secondary students within the target group can be explained also by the probability of follow-up tertiary studies as well as the lower motivation and activity of such age group to invest to its future employment (FDV 2015a).

⁴⁵ In this text the “intern” is used as the synonym of the “trainee”.

Generally, 2 922 trainees (67% of them were women) participated in the IfY II project and 2 930 internships took place in the period of 22 months (FDV 2015a). All the participants were interested in the project to a very large extent, hence the number of completed internships was higher by 230 than originally planned⁴⁶.

(e – how are the NEETs addressed and reached?)

The objective of the IfY II project was to prevent young people to be unemployed and/or NEET after the completion of education. It addressed young people just inside the education system, hence, the question is not relevant.

Main project activities

The project involved three interconnected activities: e-learning course of soft-skills, professional internship with an employer and vocational counselling and guidance.

E-learning course of soft-skills preceded professional internship and it had interns to facilitate the first enter into the working environment (it was aimed to help young people to adapt to working team, to engage in teamwork within the company, to manage her workload and to communicate effectively). It was subcontracted from the e-learning institution. The candidates for the internships needed to complete the course within 14 days with the final exam. However, benefits of the e-learning course were not assessed positively by the participants: they criticised its too common content as well as low interactivity. The information from the course were not new for young people (they met them in the school) and they used them in practice only partially (FDV 2015a).

The internships within individual employers formed the main phase of the project. Candidates for the internships as well as employers have been registered on the projects' web portal (the System of efficient pairing, SEP)⁴⁷. Further Education Fund intermediated the contact between both actors and then ensured the cooperation with the tripartite contract. It was, however, the role of employer (human resource department) to administrate the tender and choose an appropriate candidate for the internship. According to the FDVs' assessment, there were 3,3 applicants on each internship, thus employers did not feel so stressed with such procedure (FDV 2015a). The employer provides a mentor to each trainee who matched his know-how and experience to the needs of internships. The role of mentor was to give tasks to the trainee, train him, consult and check working procedures and give him the feedback. This way of working with students seemed to be more effective and beneficial compared to the conventional students' brigade or vocational school practices. According to the evaluation study (FDV 2015a), mentors' approach to the intern was more intensive and communication more frequent and individual (each mentor supervised only one intern). In addition, participants were convenient to include themselves into the process

⁴⁶ During the period the project have been running, a total number of 11 889 candidates for an internships were registered, from which 5 900 candidates submitted at least one application for internship card (FDV 2015a: 14). Companies also shown great interest in attendance in the project: a total number of 4 824 employers were registered as prospective provider of internship (FDV 2015a:16).

⁴⁷ In the SEP, the so-called internship cards were made which reported to the individual offer of internships. They have been formulated as an advertisement of employers. Employers looked for the suitable candidate from the SEP and after an individual interview chose the intern.

of order fulfilment and hence gain experience in real projects of employers. Both the employers as well as the trainees were interested in the project also by financial benefits: it was 60 CZK per hour for the trainee and 45 - 222 CZK for the mentor (according to the average wage in the profession, Vlková 2015). (for more detailed information about the funding see the next subchapter).

The internships were mostly long-term in their nature: they usually lasted for 300 hours. According to the rules of the project, the internships could be spread in 1-4 months. Practically, the most of internships were held within three months (53%) following with internships lasting two months (26%) and four months (20%) (FDV 2015a). Almost half of interns assess the hours offered as sufficient while the rest would like to increase it (18% of participants even more by than a half of hours offered) (FDV 2015a).

After the completion of internships, participants had secured the opportunity for professional counselling and guidance. Its goal was to prepare them for the smoother transition from education into the labour market. The professional counselling and guidance was conducted through individual interviews (in person or via Skype) and concerned with making CV and covering letter as well as coping with job interviews and selection procedures. The interns assessed the professional counselling as very useful: they valued mainly the individual and friendly attitude of lecturers who met flexibly participants' needs. Also outputs from the activity they appreciated positively (FDV 2015a).

The figure C.1 in Annex presents the process of implementation of all the project activities.

Funding of the project

The IfY II project seemed to be relatively high-cost compared to the traditional active labour market provisions (especially to training activities which belong usually to the cheapest active measure in the Czech Republic). It managed the amount of 216 mil. CZK⁴⁸ during two years. Taking into account the fact, that 2 922 interns were supported by the project, the average cost per person was 74 000 CZK and monthly 24 000 CZK for the internship. This is the amount rather common in other relevant project: the monthly cost for individual within the project of "Professional traineeship for young people up to 30 years" was also 24 000 CZK and the total average expenditure on each trainee in the project of "Internships in companies – learning by practice" were even slightly higher (90 000 Kc, FDV 2015b).

Employers interested in the project were paid in two ways:

- on every young intern they received standardised amount of 60 CZK as a wage per hour benefit and they could also provide other contribution to the intern which increased his total wage per hour (this was frequently used mainly in the profession

⁴⁸ The planed project budget was 222 199 228 CZK, however, the implementers really exhausted the amount of 216 142 913 CZK (FDV 2016a).

of IT experts, where the wage of the trainee was increased by an average of 30 CZK (Vlková 2014);

- on the services of the qualified mentor they receive benefit to the wage of mentor⁴⁹ corresponding with the average wage in the industry/profession; the average contribution ranged from 45 to 222 CZK per hour (Vlková 2014) and the total amount of the benefit for mentor could be at most 100 000 CZK (FDV 2015c). In most cases, the benefit was actually paid out in mentors' wage, however, the project allowed the employer to use it arbitrarily (Lenc 2014).

(b – how the structure of financing may influence the implementation process?)

Financial benefits to both employers and interns can be assessed as a new innovative aspect of the project which contributed considerably to the success of the project. Providing the internship within company with the financial compensation was not usually applied in the time of projects' first wave. Particularly employers appreciated the possibility to cover costs associated with the training of young people in two ways. Some of them declared that they could not afford the trainee without such financial compensation. Diverse said, without project they have lost not only the considerable assistance but also the prospective young worker (FDV 2015a).

Implementation and governance of the project activities

The IfY II project was realised by the Further Education Fund which is the organisation funded by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MLSA/MPSV). It prepared all the activities, gained funds and intermediated the contact between employers and students. For it, the employers were partners as well as projects' participants. To some extent it tried to cooperate with schools and education institutions in order to involve them in the process of creating the catalogue of internships (one of the key side effect/output of the project) (FDV 2015a). FDV coordinated and managed the project and performed advisory and supervisory activities. It provided employers as well as trainees with the individual counselling (the consultant of FDV) which was considered to be very important for the smooth running of the internship (both employers and trainees assessed it as very helpful and tailor-made, FDV 2015a). Supervisory activities were of two formats – administrative control of the fulfilment of projects' rules⁵⁰ on the one hand and the effective (reported as well as unreported) assessments of the internships' performance at the workplace on the other.

⁴⁹ According to the Manual for providers of internships (FDV 2014), the mentor has been required to work full-time in the company for at least six months before the internship. One mentor could contribute only to the education of one trainee. These were the provisions to ensure the best quality of internships provided. Each employer received the benefit which could partially cover the wage of the mentor, but its use was at the discretion of the employer (FDV 2014). In most cases, mentors received some additional money to their usual wage, but it was not the law (Lenc 2014). No extra hours for mentors in IfY project were required.

⁵⁰ The role of the consultant of FDV was not only to advise but also to supervise the internships performance. The intern filled the timesheet every day. Each month the provider of internship signed the timesheet and sent it to the FDV. It assessed whether the internship is realised according to the projects' rules and all activities correspond with the template of the internship. Financial benefits received the employer even till the end of the internship (after the last cycle of administrative control of all documents) (FDV 2014).

(a – institutions/actors governing the program/structural reform (responsibility, coordination, implementation)

(c – if the public actors on local level, i.e. public employment service, have the ability to implement the program or if they need to cooperate with other actors (employers, social partners, service provider), possibly in other policy fields (for example programs of youth assistance, particular for transfers))

(d – how is this cooperation organised and does it work?)

The project took place in all 14 regions of the Czech Republic. The share of internships realised, however, was the largest in the South-Moravian (Jihomoravský) and Moravian-Silesian (Moravskoslezský) regions (51% of all internships) (FDV 2015a). It is due to a fact, that the Moravian regions are generally more involved in programmes funded by the European social fund as well as by the fact that there is the high number of tertiary students and graduates on the one hand and the higher rate of unemployment on the other in these areas.

The number of companies which participated in each region was not limited as well as the number of internships offered by individual employers (although they had to be in accordance with the rules of the project). Recipients of the project could have been any private institutions including non-profit organisations engaged in activities on the territory of the Czech Republic (individual conditions were specified in the Manual for providers of internships, FDV 2014). Employers were not explicitly required to harmonize their activities with the professional requirements of the internship. Nevertheless, they had to be able to provide intern with a mentor with sufficient knowledge, practical skills and work experience in a particular activity (FDV 2015a). The interest of companies to enter the project was really enormous – there were 6 275 companies registered in the information system of internships (some of them remained in the evidence from the first phase of the project and 4 824 employers were newly registered during the second wave) (FDV 2015a). As data of FDV (2015a, 2016b) show, mainly small enterprises up to 5 employees and self-employed people participated in the project – it was 73% of all internships offered. The distribution of such providers was largely due to the fact that big companies have often their own internships' programmes and/or their administrative processes did not correspond to the rules of the project. The following factors and expected benefits motivated employers to the participation in the project: the opportunity to try out a prospective employee, to fulfil the requirements of social responsibility, to help young people to improve their employability and competitiveness on the labour market and last but not least to get the necessary assistance in the company associated with the partial reimbursement. The majority of employers (99%) would like to continue in the project in the future (FDV 2015a).

(f – if particular problems appear according to deficits of horizontal or vertical coordination or if success can be related to particular forms of coordination, i.e. involvement of social partners, etc.?)

The realisation of two waves of the project give evidence about its success. The implementation process run without any significant deficits, although some difficulties could be found.

Among others, the different level of cooperation with the schools and education institutions was identified. While economically oriented high schools and universities welcomed the project (they assessed the employability of their students as really difficult), institution of technical education did not use the information about the internships because of having their own system of training and practice. Especially the secondary schools perceived the project competitively to their system of professional training. Moreover, they did not recommend the participation in the project to their students actively, because they prefer students to spend their last school year by the intensive learning on the final exam. As some of the representatives of secondary schools declared, students should postpone their entry into the labour market after the completion of education (FDV 2015a).

Another aspect discussed in the context of the project implementation was the regional disparities. In some regions the supply of internships was limited due to the lower share of small enterprises interested in the project. Nevertheless, the Further Education Fund supported the mobility of trainees across regions – they could choose also the internship outside the region of residence and, in this case, the Further Education Fund could provide them with the contribution on travelling as well as accommodation (Lenc 2014).

Also the inability of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to integrate the internships realised on above mentioned basis into the system of active labour market provisions can be considered as the implementation deficit of the project (Svobodová 2015). On the other side, some positive proceeding is obvious in the field of creation the catalogue of internships which is useful for employment offices as well as for schools and education institutions.

Employers and firms' representatives assessed the cooperation with the project consultants from the Further Education Fund very positively – it was really professional, flexible, individual and non-problematic (FDV 2015a). Only partially they expressed dissatisfaction with the administrative demandingness of the project formalities. All of employers asked, however, recognized these burdens to be well tackled with the support of implementation team of Further Education Fund (FDV 2015a).

Outputs and outcomes of the project

The project progress was regularly monitored by the FDV and after its completion the FDV realised relatively comprehensive process and impact evaluation on the quantitative as well as qualitative basis. The qualitative data assessment show subjective individual effects of participating in the project both on interns and internships' providers. The quantitative data focus on the description on the implementation process of the IfY II project on the one hand and on the measurable impact on the labour market prospects of project participants on the other. To receive relevant and evident findings the impact evaluation was realised within participants of the first wave of the project "Internships for youths I". Evaluators assessed the labour market prospects of participants and compared them with the prospects of non-participants during 18 months after the completion of the project or 18 months from the date of their registration into the project in the case of non-participants respectively. The control group was made up from the candidates who submitted at least one application for the internship and did not enter it finally. There were 772 respondents in the intervention

group (82% from the participants addressed) and 731 respondents in the control group (65% from the candidates addressed).

Outputs

There were only two output indicators monitored in the project. At first the monitoring concentrate on the number of young people (students) supported by the project, e.g. the number of trainees actually entered the internship. As mentioned above, the interest of youth in such project was really high, thus the number of participants was gradually increased from original (planned) 2 200 to final value of 2 922 interns. The development of this indicator corresponded to the interest of the target group of university students who formed the overwhelming majority of projects' participants – it was decreasing during the examination period and really enormous in the time of vacation. The second indicator focused on the number of successful graduates of e-learning course of soft skills. It was 2 891 young people, e.g. 99% of all trainees supported (FDV 2015a)⁵¹.

Outcomes

Subjective individual effects on both interns as well as employers

The evaluation based on the qualitative data shows that interns were generally satisfied with the run and the volume of the internship. They have declared their satisfaction not only immediately after the completion of the internship but also one year later. As the main benefits of the projects' participation they mentioned: acquisition of practical skills in the field they studied, the opportunity to learn new things from an experienced professional, the possibility to try the "working mode" and the opportunity to improve their CV. Many respondents described also changes in their self-assessment: "the internship help me not to be afraid of failure" (young woman from Prague) (FDV 2015a: 57-58). All the benefits of the project for interns are provided in the figure C.2 in annex. When trainees were employed during the internship and after its completion they could also assessed the improvements in the employment. To the most frequent improvements discussed belong: better salary, more interesting job content and more appropriate position in the company (table C.1 in annex). Almost all the respondents suggested to make possible to pass out more than one internship in the project. They preferred to take the internship within different employers and companies and start with it earlier than in the final year of study (FDV 2015a).

Also employers assessed their participation in the IfY II project as useful and effective. They benefited mainly from the opportunity to check working skills and abilities of young people and use them for the performance of the company (with the financial reimbursement). They were also rewarding from the "drive" and enthusiasm young people brought into the firms' environment (FDV 2015a: 59). All the benefits of the project for employers are provided in the figure C.3 in annex. The employers involved in the first wave of the project (IfY I) were asked to continue in the cooperation with the trainees. They have declared they made the offer to continue in the employment relationship to the considerable part of trainees: it was usually the cooperation on the basis of the agreement on work performance (DPP) and/or

⁵¹ Some interns were not counted to the value of this indicator since they completed the e-learning course of soft skills even after the completion of the internship (but this was happen only in some extreme cases) (FDV 2015a).

agreement on working activity (DPČ) (54%)⁵². 14% of former trainees was regularly employed by the internship provider, from that 9% fully and 5% partially (table C.2 in annex) (FDV 2015a: 73).

Quantitative analysis of labour market prospects of intervention compared to control group

Counterfactual impact evaluation concentrated on four crucial aspects of labour market prospects of projects' participants compared to non-participants. These are as follows: the change of socioeconomic status, changes in the salary, the speed of finding a job and the intensity of job search (measured by the number of CV sent by the potential employers and the number of interviews passed out). In all the parameters evaluated it was the intervention group of former interns who reached better results (Nekolová and Nekola 2015). The most visible benefit of participation in the project is the increasing income from employment within the group of former trainees – the data show that the months' salary of former trainees increased in average by 1 843 CZK compared to non-participants (FDV 2015a: 81). Socioeconomic status⁵³ seemed to be better also in the intervention compared to the control group. The discrete choice model as well as the method of pairing showed that participants in the project had a lower probability of worsening socioeconomic status and also a higher probability of its improvement compared to the non-participants (at the 5% significance level). In other words, in the case of trainees, the improvement of socioeconomic status occurred statistically significantly more frequently than in the control group⁵⁴ (FDV 2015a: 81). Although the participation in the project did not affect the speed of finding a job considerably, job search was easier and smoother for the former interns than for the programmes' non-participants (FDV 2015a).

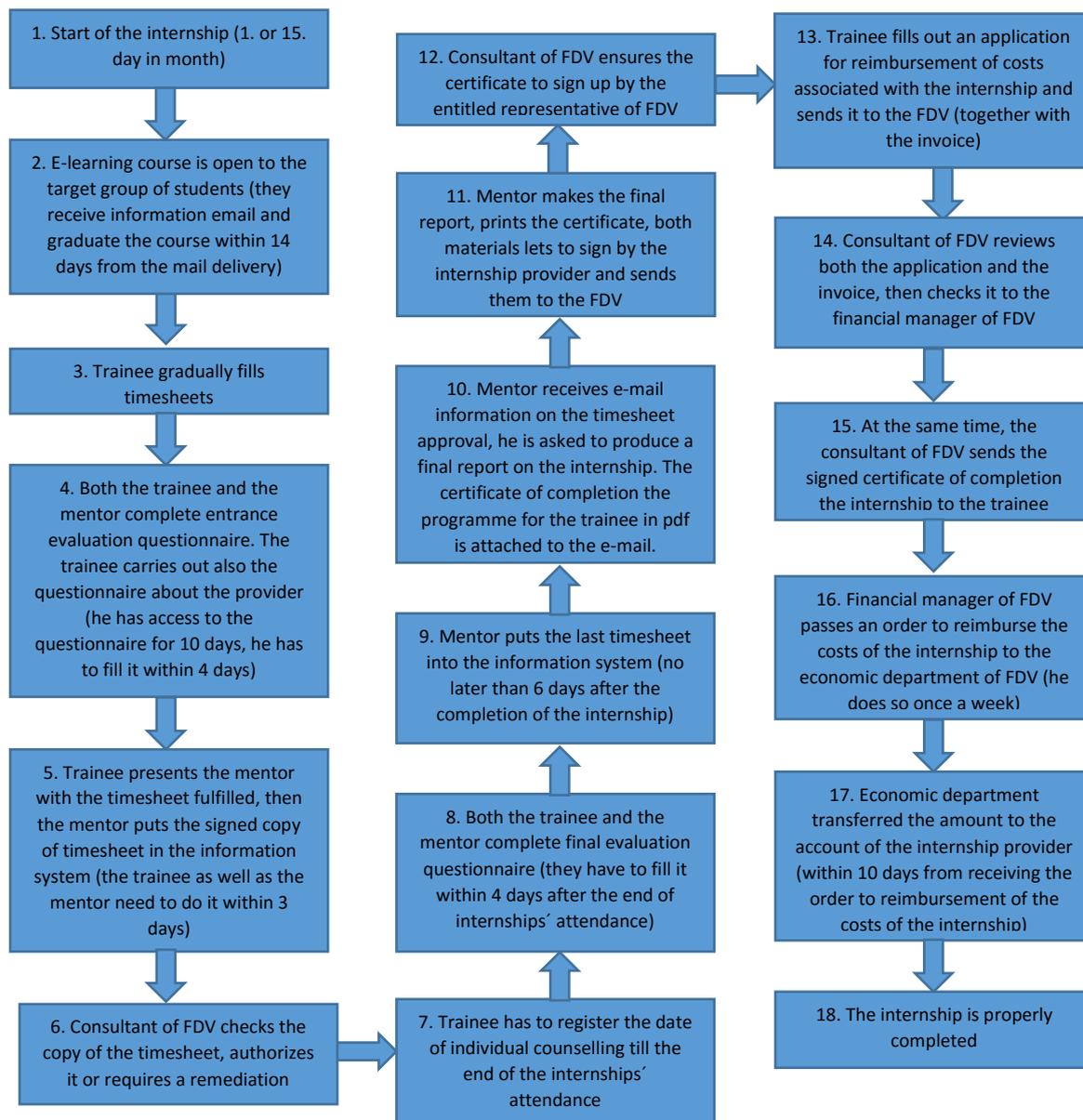
⁵² The agreement on work performance (Dohoda o provedení práce, DPP) and the agreement on working activity (Dohoda o pracovní činnosti) are the alternative forms of employment compared to the traditional full-time or part-time employment. Key difference between them is in the extent of working time providing. Under the agreement on work performance an employee can work off up to three hundred hours per year, while the agreement on working activity allows him to work more than three hundred hours per year, but no more than half the weekly working hours (i.e. 20 hours per week) (Zákon č. 262/2006 Sb.).

⁵³ The change of socioeconomic status was measured by five different values of status young people from intervention group as well as control group had in the time of interviewing: employee, self-employed, student, unemployed and economically not active (maternity/parental leave...) (FDV 2015a). As a positive impact it was considered the transition into employment, getting a working student status or being self-employed. Neutral impact meant staying a student without employment. Other possibilities (to be unemployed or economically not active) were clearly negative (Nekolová and Nekola 2015).

⁵⁴ ATET index was estimated on the value of 0,11427 in the confidence interval <0,0439; 0,1847> (FDV 2015a: 81).

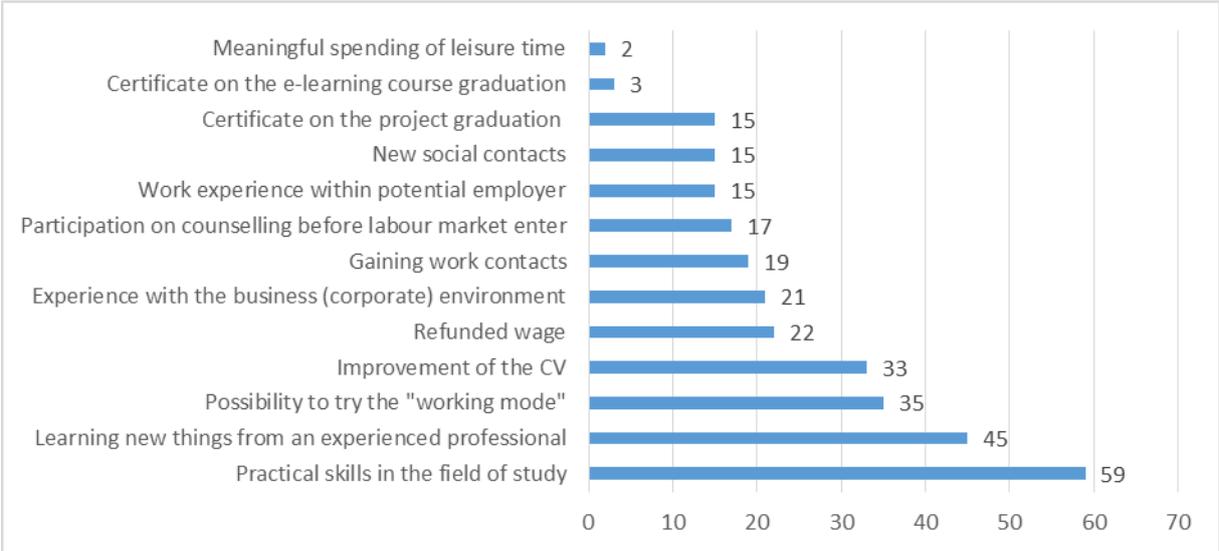
Annex

Figure C.1: The implementation process of the internship



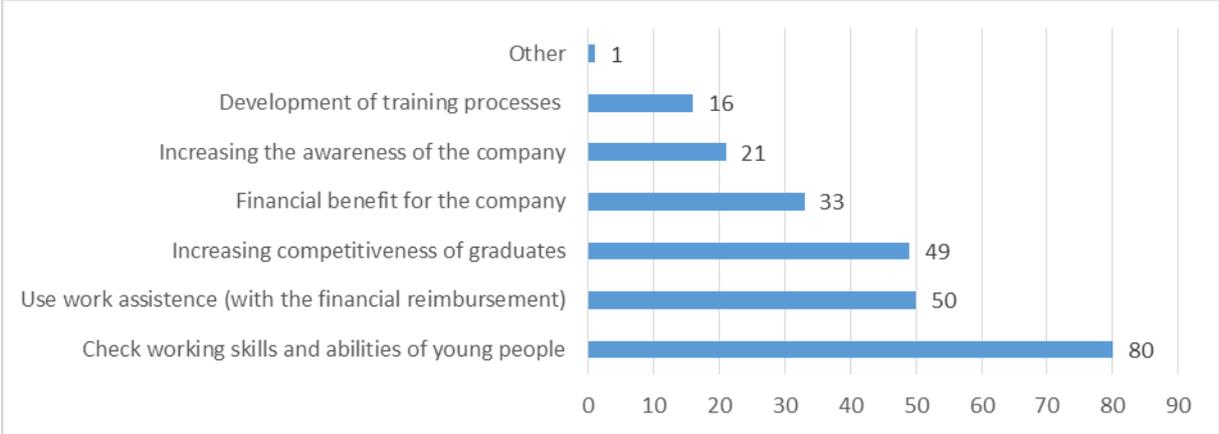
Source: FDV 2016a: 38

Figure 2: C.The benefits of internships for trainees (%)



Source: FDV 2016a: 57 (n = 2 258 trainees)

Figure C.3: The benefits of internships for employers (%)



Source: FDV 2016a: 59 (n = 2 258 trainees)

Table C.1: Improvements in employment of former working trainees

The source of improvement in employment	%
Better salary	73
More interesting job content	70
More appropriate position in company	64
More training and learning possibilities	37
More flexible working time	34
Better benefits (phone, notebook, car)	31
More vacation days	15

Source: FDV 2016a: 62 (n = 161 trainees)

Table C.2: Further employment offers to trainees by internship providers

The nature of employment contract	%
Employment – full time	9
Employment – part time	5
Agreement on working activity	18
Agreement on work performance	36
External cooperation (as self-employed)	15
Unpaid internship	3
Other	14

Source: FDV 2016a: 74 (n = 886 trainees)

3.4 Assessing change: YG and Czech policies for the young people

In this final assessment, based on the analysis provided in the above sections of the report and the findings in Task 3.4 we discuss how the Czech republic policies aiming at labour market transitions of young people fit into the broader typology of the policies, including the governance of the policies, how this changed due to implementation of Youth Guarantees and how EU influenced this policy area.

The Czech active labour market policies may be assessed as:

- less developed mix of all the types of policies as recognised by Bonoli (2010)
- employment assistance represent a weaker element of this mix
- while subsidising jobs in private sector is more emphasized, in particular protection of the existing jobs is prioritised to the job creation for the unemployed
- incentivising is implicitly stronger element, since the entitlements for unemployment benefits are not available to school graduates, similarly, social assistance benefit are not provided when they are living with parents who have sufficient incomes.

This overall profile was reinforced during the crisis, with the considerable contribution of ESF supported measures.

Anyway, YG scheme brought mainly expansion of Professional traineeships in companies for young people, although this was not first priority of ALMP measures. By co-incidence, the scheme was implemented since 2014, when re-orientation of the Czech labour market policy took place. Since 2008 the new centre-right government was not much committed to develop this policy area in spite of the crisis and rather prevented job losses during the crisis. Since 2010 the new re-elected centre-right government deliberately cut active labour market, attempted to privatise employment services and implement workfare like activation in great extent (see Sirovátka et al. 2016). These attempts failed, however, by co-incidence the government resigned in 2013 and both the new caretaker government and new centre-left government elected in 2014 put much more emphasis on active labour market policies. ESF supported measures were welcome including those which were implemented thanks YG scheme like Professional Traineeships in companies for young school graduates below 30, and Internships for the students. This all means that the ALMPs were developed more since 2014 but the profile did not change much. Implementation of YG neither changed anything in the performance of the system of Public employment services or in the approach to young people. Correspondingly, the Czech reports emphasize that in overall, the youth unemployment is not considered as a 'hot' issue.

The measures which were continuously implemented in education targeted at changes in the education system which should enable more effective transitions of school graduates to the labour market like improved responsiveness of the initial education to labour market, cooperation with the employers, counselling for the students and school graduates, development of further education. These measures were included into Implementation Plan on YG, however, they would take place in any case.

In ALMPs a certain expansion in the scope of the policies, in the quality and more recently, in coordination of different measures for young people was more transparent. The emphasis on the integrated and holistic approach was not much apparent, nor coordination of ALMPs with other social services.

From the governance perspective, the Czech active labour market policy regime is a mixture of the modes of policy coordination as recognised by Dingeldey (2011) where the strongest element is hierarchical regulation or 'bureaucratic.' In the delivery of the measures, outsourcing – market mode of governance is quite common, reinforced with the ESF financed projects. Interestingly, incentivising both Public employment services performance or using incentives in subcontracting more rigorously and consistently is less developed, similarly as New Public Management tools in general. Negotiations/networks play traditionally a certain role, mainly at the local level, since cooperation of the public and private for-profit and non-profit actors is necessary mainly due to the project management associated with ESF supported measures and in searching for the effective implementation of the measures when bureaucratic mode of governance is failing and regulation through incentivising is weak.

The changes in the policies aimed at the labour market transitions of young people during 2008-2016 may be assessed as first order change in Hall's (2003) typology: this means that certain improvements of the existing instruments took place like increased scope of the policies, better quality and some improvements in coordination of the policies provided to young people. These changes, however, neither represented substantial policy turn off, nor their cumulative effects brought any qualitative shift in policy.

The influence of the EU in this respect was, similarly, rather modest. To some extent, the issue of youth unemployment got more attention in the policy agenda, however, this was in line with the already existing emphasis on this group (among other issues), in the national employment strategy. Nevertheless, the target group in centre of attention was school graduates, neither the NEETs as YG suggests nor low skilled unemployed. The most important contribution to the national policies emerged from ESF supported projects which were pragmatically used to increase the scope of the policies aimed at the young (mainly through job subsidies for traineeships). However, similar measures for young graduates previously existed within the national job subsidy scheme, although not so generous – to some extent ESF supported measures might out-place them, actually.

3.5 Policy recommendations

Based on the analysis of YG scheme and the results in Task 3.4 we propose the following.

At the national level

1 It would be useful to target the measures of ALMPs on the most disadvantaged groups of young people like unskilled and Roma or lone parents. The new project 'Youth Guarantee' comes from the similar assumption, however, the measures used are not strong enough to bring a substantive improvements for such groups.

Therefore we recommend

2 To analyse the composition of NEETs group more transparently and consider how to include this group (outreach strategy) into the policies. It is highly probable that there is a high share of lone mothers, vulnerable in terms of labour market and social exclusion, also child employment penalty is generally too high in the country.

3 More personnel capacity is needed (front-line case workers) in order to establish more individualised and integrated approach towards young people (wrap around services). Individual action plans and YG scheme should be coordinated.

4 There should be coordination of employment and education oriented measures with other social services like child care, housing, social inclusion oriented services in the excluded localities.

5 More effective monitoring and evaluation system should be implemented for the assessment of YG implementation as well as for the instruments of ALMP in general. In particular, precise information on targeting the individual measures on the young unemployed (breakdowns of participants groups and subgroups is needed) and the effects in terms of job retention in these subgroups to be identified.

One more general issue needs to be reconsidered at the EU and national level

6 It should be considered to specify better what does 'qualified offer' exactly means. This vagueness is a more general weakness of YG – in the conditions of practical implementation in the Czech Republic this does not bring anything more than information about the jobs offered on the labour market which correspond to the 'suitable job' according to the Employment Act.

Table 1: Typologising Youth (employment) policies⁵⁵

(broadly based on Bonoli 2010; Dingeldey 2011 and Graaf/Sirovátka 2012)

	before 2013			2016			Change influenced by		Comment
	strong	medium	weak	Strong	medium	weak	YG	other	
POLICY OBJECTIVES									
Work first approach									Change: Political change – profile of the government
Flexible forms of employment as ‘bridge’		X			X				
Pricing young workers into jobs: age-related (minimum) wages		x			X				
Occupation									
job subsidies			X		X		x	X	
public employment			x		X			X	
Other			x		x			x	
social security/financial incentives									Political change
- familialised support (parents plus/without child allowances etc.)			X			X			
- individual social transfers			X			X			
- transfers during educational attainment			X			X			
- in-work or /in-education-benefits			X			x			
- sanctions for non-compliance	x				x			x	
- other									
employment assistance									
short term measures such as: placement services, counselling			x			x			
Upskilling/enabling									Political change
Encouraging training/ formation of human capital as long term measure		X			X				
- within general school-system		X			X				
- within vocational training system		X			X				
- as further training			X			X			
in general and/									
or as particular part of employment policy			X		x			x	
pathways back to education									

⁵⁵ Please note that you answered many aspects of this table in the already completed steps 1-4. Please feel free to write and give comments inside the table.

Other			x			X			
Target groups			x			X			
- according to educational level			x			X			
- NEETs			x			X			
- People with migration background			x			X			
- young parents			x			x			
- women			x			x			
-		x			x				
- Other									
OVERNANCE and vertical coordination									
Centralisation of/most relevant level of regulatory competences									
- General education		x			x				
- Vocational training		X			X				
- Youth employment policy		x			x				
Centralisation of funding/most relevant level of funding for									
- General education			x			X			
- Vocational training			x			X			
- Youth employment policy			x			x			
Forms of cooperation between actors on vertical axes									
- hierarchy		X			x				
- negotiation, network			X			X			
- other			X			x			
Relevance of non-state actors ^a									
private agencies, NGOs									
GOVERNANCE and horizontal coordination									
vocational training system as intermediary institution between school and work		x			X				
...between different policy fields									
- organised/institutionalised school-to-work transitions			X			x			
- employment policy and youth welfare policy		X			x				
- employment policy and family policy			x			x			
- alternative paths from work back to education			x			x			
- other									
...within administration									

- fragmented access to different services/transfers - creation of one-stop institution/single gateway - other		X				X			
Forms of cooperation between actors on horizontal axes hierarchy market negotiation, network (i.e. social pacts) other Relevance of non-state actors ^a <i>Private agencies, NGOs</i>	x			x					
Governance 'hard' or 'soft' forms of coordination o employment/educational guarantee as social right (binding) o involvement of social partners/ other non-state actors ^a - designing youth guarantee - implementing youth guarantee as mandatory (law) / informal /no involvement in delivery			X			X			
			X			x			
	x				x				
OUTCOMES									
Improvement of o youth unemployment o NEET rate o Educational attainment (stratification) by gender/migration/early parenthood o Segmentation of labour market - distribution of flexible forms of employment - low wage employment - according to sector/profession - according to age and gender				X		X		X	Improvement in labour market performance
							X		
								X	
								X	
								X	
	x	X	(x)		x	(x)			Middle level, small change due to labour market improvements overall
			X						

^a Please note the important actors

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Annex

Scheme 1: **Key organizations to promote and implement the Youth Guarantee programme**

Key organization name	Organization type	Level responsibility	of	Role in implementing the Guarantee programme	Ensuring success of partnership
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Public administration	National level		The main administrator of the programme, manages and coordinates the implementation of the programme, proposes legislation changes, works together with actors at the national level	Manages and coordinates the working group for coordination and management of the programme (e.g. committees, IT platforms), cooperates with other participating services.
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports	Public administration	National level		Cooperates with the MLSA, manages and coordinates educational activities within its competence, proposes legislative changes in education	Collaborates within the working group for programme coordination and management
Labour Office of the Czech Republic	Public administration	National and regional level		Programme implementer, manages and coordinates the regional branches of the LO in the implementation of programme activities	Collaborates within the working group for programme coordination and management
Further Education Fund	Public administration	National level		Implementer of programme activities	Collaborates within the working group for programme coordination and management
Council of Economic and Social Agreement	Social partners	National and regional level		Cooperating partner, manages and coordinates the representatives of employers and employees in the implementation of the programme	Collaborates within the working group for programme coordination and management
Association of Adult Education Institutions	Professional association	National level, partly also regional level		Cooperating partner, engaged in addressing the strategy and development in this area, works with state authorities and other entities in the preparation and implementation of legislative and other measures in the field of adult education.	Collaborates within the working group for programme coordination and management
National Institute for Education	Public administration	National level		Implementer of programme activities participates in the creation, development and promotion of information portals for young people in choosing educational and professional career, in school to work transition, integrating information from the world of education and the labour market, including the development of qualification requirements	Collaborates within the working group for programme coordination and management

			of the labour market.	
Czech Council of Children and Youth	Non-governmental organization	National level	Cooperating partner, brings together youth workers from the vast majority of national and many regional and local children and youth associations.	Collaborates within the working group for programme coordination and management
Czech Secondary School Union	Civic association	National level	Cooperating partner, brings together secondary school students from the Czech Republic	Collaborates within the working group for programme coordination and management
Czech Chamber of Commerce	Self-governing organization	National level	Cooperating partner representing the business community, signed a memorandum of cooperation in the labour market with the Labour Office	Collaborates within the working group for programme coordination and management
Regional branches of the Labour Office in the Northwest region	Public administration	Regional and local levels	The main implementers of the Youth Employment Initiative in the region NUTS 2 Northwest; they coordinate actors in the regional labour market. Provides information about the support options, activates young job seekers up to 25 years registered at the Labour Office and provides them individual support.	They collaborate with programme participants
Primary and secondary schools, educational facilities	Public administration and private educational facilities	Regional and local levels	Implementers of educational activities based on cooperation with branches of the Labour Office	They collaborate with programme participants
Regional authorities, municipal bodies, employers, associations of municipalities, local action groups and other actors in the labour market	Public administration and private business entities	Regional and local levels	Coordinators of educational activities within the region or within the municipality or association of municipalities, cooperating partners of the Labour Office, beneficiaries of interventions	Collaborates with programme participants

University of Economics in Prague	Public university	National level	Implementers of research serving as the basis for the preparation of recommendations of efficient employment policies	Collaborates within working group
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