

NARRATIVE AND QUALITATIVE ASSESMENT OF THE REPORT

Short description (from the abstract)

- This report evaluates the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) implementation in Portugal, using counterfactual impact evaluation (CIE) methods to estimate its causal impact on young individuals' labour market outcomes. The analysis was carried out using Portuguese administrative data from the Public Employment Service, and Social Security registers.
- Findings showed that when young individuals participated in internships or hiring support schemes funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), there was a positive and long-lasting effect on the individuals' labour market outcomes. This effect varied in magnitude according to the type of intervention, and across specific population groups.

On the methodology

This report evaluates the YEI implementation in Portugal, using counterfactual impact evaluation (CIE) methods to estimate its causal impact on young individuals' labour market outcomes. The analysis was carried out using Portuguese administrative data from the Public Employment Service, and Social Security registers.

- The final sample consists of 968,910 individuals, of which approximately 9% are in the treated group;
- The empirical strategy measures the average effect of the programme on those who participate, using a complex analytic statistic method (p.8-10).

On the results (conclusions, p.16 -)

Context:

In Portugal, YEI supports a set of specific actions aimed at young NEETs in regions experiencing youth unemployment rates above 25%.

These measures include internships and hiring support, aiming at creating suitable conditions to promote the employability of young people looking for a job, which are the focus of the evaluation performed in this report.

Among all individuals participating in the selected YEI activities between 2009 and 2018, almost half undertook an internship with duration 7 to 12 months, which is the most popular YEI intervention in 13 the period object of the analysis, while approximately 14% benefited from hiring support.

Another 1/5 of the population studied participated in an intervention entailing both internship and hiring support of between 7 and 12 months each.

Conclusions:

- the initiative was able to improve young individuals' labour market outcomes both in the shorter and medium term;
- for participants to YEI interventions, 36 months after the intervention start, the probability of being employed is higher, with the effect being stronger the longer the intervention lasts, and for hiring support interventions relative to internships;
- looking at the YEI effects separately for different groups of individuals defined by demographic characteristics, namely age and educational background, it emerges that the initiative is effective for all sub-groups;
- heterogeneity is present: the oldest individuals (25 to 29 years old) benefit more, at least in terms of employment probability, from a shorter duration in case of internships; moreover internship programs seem to have a greater positive effect for individuals with higher qualifications, while hiring support schemes seem to be more effective for less educated individuals, even when coupled with internships.

GLOBAL EVALUATION

This report is highly analytic statistical, using a complex statistical approach and allows for high confidence concerning the conclusions of effectiveness and impact of the Youth Employment Initiative in Portugal.

CHECKLIST OF THE METHODOLOGY OF THE REPORT

Country	Score	Justification of the score	Description
General score	21		
Description of the intervention	4,5		
Organisation implementing the intervention, the "owner" of the intervention	1		European Commission, national government
country	1	Full description presented in the reprot	Portugal
location	0	not relevant	
timeline, dates of different phases and actions	0,5	Some description presented in the reprot	The analysis was carried out among all individuals participating in the selected YEI activities between 2009 and 2018
cost/budget	0	no information in the report	
implementation status	0	not presented in the report	No information on whether imolementation was continued during the evaluation
policy context such as adoption of a new development plan, end of an earlier/old development plan	1	Full description presented in the reprot	European Commission adopted the Youth Employment Package in December 2012, which included the proposal for a Council Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee (COM (2012) 729 final), launching the second phase of consultations with social partners on a quality framework for internships (COM (2012) 728 final), announcing the European Alliance for Learning, and methods of reducing obstacles to youth mobility (COM (2012) 727 final).
socio-economic context such as high unemployment or school dropout rate	1	Full description presented in the reprot	Since its initial implementation, the YEI in Portugal has been covering all Portuguese regions, as, at the point of programming, all regions had a youth unemployment rate equal to or higher than 25%. These regions are as follows: lesser developed regions (Norte, Centro, Alentejo, and the Autonomous Region of Azores); the Algarve as a transition region; and the most developed regions, namely Lisboa, and the Autonomous Region of Madeira. After the reprogramming of the YEI in 2017, the funding allocation was increased for regions which had youth unemployment rates above 25% in the previous year (2016). As a result, only the Algarve region has not seen its allocation increased.
Political context such as change of government	0	not relevant	
institutional such as institutiona setup and/or change, reform	0	not relevant	
international factors, such as integration into an international organisation	0	not relevant	
Description of the (intended) beneficiaries and activities of the intervention	4,5		

Country	Score	Justification of the score	Description
beneficiaries by type (ie, institutions/organisations; communities; individuals...)	0	not relevant	
by administrative-geographic location(s) (ie, urban, rural, particular neighbourhoods, town/cties, sub-regions...)	0	not relevant	
by social background (ie NEET, with fewer opportunities, ...)	1	Full description presented in the reprot / some description presented in thre report	young NEETs
total number and percentage reached (as appropriate to the purpose of the evaluation)	1	Full description presented in the reprot	82615 participants, out of 968910 individuals; 886295 used as controls
description of activities of the intervention	1	Full description presented in the reprot / some description presented in thre report	1. Qualifications/Education aimed at increasing the employability of young NEETs, through investing in their acquisition of skills adjusted to the needs of the labour market. 2. Internships and hiring support schemes, aiming to create suitable conditions for promoting the employability of young people who are looking for their first job or a new job, by supporting the transition from education into the labour market, through practical work experience in both anational and international context.
description of the intervention's intended results	1	Full description presented in the reprot / some description presented in thre report	improvement of NEETs' labor market status
Identification of the key stakeholders, their specific contributions and roles (financial or otherwise)	0,5	Some description presented in the reprot, not a thourough one	
Description of the evaluation report	12		
full reference	1		Duarte, N., Geraci, A., Granato, S., Mazzarella, G., Mortágua, M. J., <i>The evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative in Portugal using Counterfactual Impact Evaluation methods</i> , EUR 30318 EN, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2020, ISBN 978-92-76-20904-1, doi:10.2760/368100, JRC120942; https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC120942
Institution which commissioned the report	1	clearly and completely present	Joint Research Centre (JRC), the European Commission's science and knowledge service.

Country	Score	Justification of the score	Description
institution(s), which carried out the evaluation	1	clearly and completely present	Joint Research Centre (JRC), the European Commission's science and knowledge service.
type of the institution(s) which carried out the evaluation		subunit of the owner organisation	
authors of the report	1	clearly and completely present	Duarte, N., Geraci, A., Granato, S., Mazzarella, G., Mortágua, M. J.,
type of evaluation	1	impact analysis, counterfactual analysis	
goal of evaluation	1	identification of outcomes of the intervention	
Presentation of intervention logic, a theory of change, a logic model, social mechanisms in the report = the "theory/conceptual section"	1	clearly and completely present, in general	In Portugal, the YEI supports a set of specific actions aimed at young NEETs, which include: 1. Qualifications/Education aimed at increasing the employability of young NEETs, through investing in their acquisition of skills adjusted to the needs of the labour market. 2. Internships and hiring support schemes, aiming to create suitable conditions for promoting the employability of young people who are looking for their first job or a new job, by supporting the transition from education into the labour market, through practical work experience in both anational and international context.
presentation of evaluation questions in the report	1	clearly and completely present	The objective of this evaluation is to investigate whether individuals' participation in any YEI activity improved their labour market outcomes. The causal impact between young individuals' participation in the YEI, and their labour market status, and wages up to 36 months after the start of the programme is estimated
description of a selection of research design, methods and data, explanation why and how they are suitable for the evaluation's purpose, objectives and scope	1	clearly and completely present	
Methodological, epistemological approach used in the evaluation report	1	analytical-empirical, with emphasize on establishing objective knowledge (deductive reasoning, use of prior theory, operationalisation of variables, hypothesis testing, explanation	
research design	1	quasi-experimental, longitudinal time-series	The causal impact between young individuals' participation in the YEI, and their labour market status, and wages up to 36 months after the start of the programme is estimated using counterfactual impact evaluation (CIE) methods, more specifically, exact matching and an optimal matching algorithm (OMA) on

Country	Score	Justification of the score	Description
			the sequence of individuals' labour market status prior to their participation in YEI programmes.
data	1	national register data	The analysis was carried out using Portuguese administrative data from the Public Employment Service, and Social Security registers, made available by the IEFP (Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional).
Description of the level of participation of key stakeholders in the conduct of the evaluation	0	not present in the report	
Description of ethical safeguards for participants appropriate for the issues described (respect for dignity and diversity, right to self-determination, fair representation, compliance with codes for vulnerable groups, confidentiality, and avoidance of harm)	0	not present in the report - not relevant, as register data is anonymised and a legal data source	
Description of limitations, biases and constraints arising from the design, data, analysis methods and ethics of research	0	limitations, biases, constraints arising from data and methods are not described in the report	
Description of substantive findings presented in the report	1		
Identification of the causal factors (contextual, organisational, managerial, etc.) influencing achievement, partial achievement or non-achievement of intended results of the intervention	1	clearly and completely present	Findings showed that when young individuals participated in internships or hiring support schemes funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), there was a positive and long-lasting effect on the individuals' labour market outcomes. This effect varied in magnitude according to the type of intervention, and across specific population groups.
presence and quality of cost-benefit analysis (how costs compare to similar interventions or standards, most efficient way to get expected results)-if not feasible, an explanation is provided	0	not present in the report	not carried out, not intended
identification/presentation and analysis of unexpected/unintended effects (positive and negative)	0	not present in the report	not carried out, not intended
Description of recommendations	0		
The relationship between recommendations and the findings and/or conclusions	0	no recommendations	

Country	Score	Justification of the score	Description
Identification of a) target group nd b) action for that target group for each recommendation (or clearly clustered group of recommendations)	0	not relevant	
Description of structure	2		
Executive summary	1	An executive summary is provided	a short executive report
Structure of the report	1	The structure is easy to identify and navigate	