

# Combating youth unemployment

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 PORTUGAL

## Timeline

2015 Implementation	2016 Implementation	2017 Implementation
2018 Implementation	2019 Implementation	2020 Implementation
2021 Implementation	2022 Implementation	2023 Implementation
2024 Implementation	2025 Implementation	

ID number 36738

## Background

The government developed a national strategy to fight youth unemployment based on a new generation of active employment measures that provide specific support for unemployed young people, and the National plan for the implementation of a youth guarantee responding to the recommendation of the Council of the European Union.

## Objectives

To provide young people with a good quality offer of employment, continuing education, apprenticeship and traineeship within a period of 4 months after becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

## Description

The government promoted a set of active employment measures, including vocational training, associated with the creation of self-employment and youth entrepreneurship, which stand out for their impact on this target group:

- The Perception and business management network (*Rede de Percepção e Gestão de Negócios, EJA*) created in 2016, promotes entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation; and supports the NEETs (young people not in education, employment and training).
- The Invest in young people programme (*Investe Jovem Programa*) was created in 2014 to complement these measures and aims to promote the creation of new companies. It supports the creation of self-employment and micro-businesses, through projects carried out by unemployed young people.

2015 Implementation

2016 Implementation

### 2017 Implementation

### 2018 Implementation

### 2019 Implementation

The implementation was continuing.

### 2020 Implementation

In 2020, the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP) supported 20 projects under the *Investe Jovem* programme. The programme provided to these 20 projects/ business proposals:

- (a) financial support to beneficiaries (applicants) for investment in new businesses and the creation of new job placements;
- (b) technical support in the area of entrepreneurship for strengthening beneficiaries' skills and structuring and consolidating their projects.

### 2021 Implementation

According to the Resolution of Council of Ministers No 188/2021, that updated the National plan for the youth guarantee (PNI-GJ), the PNI-GJ was developed and it is based on the following strategic elements: integration in the labour market; skills and qualification; green and digital transition; inclusion of vulnerable groups; integrated system of outreach, guidance and follow-up; and governance model.

This legislation launched a new edition of the programme *Empreende Já* (Be an entrepreneur now!), a support measure for self-employment targeting young people who are in a NEET situation, aged between 18 and 29 years old and who have completed the 12th grade. This programme includes 250 hours of vocational training on entrepreneurship skills

Another programme related to NEET is *Afirma-te Já!* (Be Yourself Now!). Its aim is to support the promotion of local intervention projects, and combating obstacles to access to education, vocational training and decent employment. It intends to intervene as a link between young people and the employment services, and comprises two areas of intervention - learning and employability.

### 2022 Implementation

In the scope of the implementation of the renewed Youth Guarantee, the Trajectories Programme (*Programa Trajetos*) was created with the aim to promote access to education, training, employment or entrepreneurship opportunities for young people who are not working, studying or in training.

During 2022, as a result of work done by PES to strengthen signalling namely to reach unregistered unemployed and inactive youth (with ILO support), as well as the involvement of the partners' network 18 327 NEETs participated in VET.

### 2023 Implementation

Published in November, the report 'Who are the young unemployed? - Diagnosis and Recommendations' presented a diagnosis of youth unemployment in Portugal. Some of the study's findings are:

- (a) the lack of qualifications continues to be an obstacle to young people entering the labour market;
- (b) nearly half of the unemployed young people were not registered in PES, corresponding to 50.5% of first-time jobseekers and 50.7% of those looking for new jobs;
- (c) 13.9% of all unemployed young people had completed upper secondary education and were not studying;

## 2024 Implementation

The Portuguese Institute of Sport and Youth had developed a new programme, *Arribar*, whose regulations completed the public consultation phase at the end of June. The *Arribar* programme aims to promote integrated responses to the inclusion of young people deprived of their liberty, namely young people aged between 16 and 21 who are in an educational centre or between 16 and 29 who are in prison and are between 12 and 24 months into their sentence. The implementation of the *Arribar* Programme is based on local action/intervention, promoted by a consortium of entities. The projects, 36 months long, are to be designed on the basis of a diagnosis of the needs of prisons and/or educational centres in the North, Centre and Alentejo regions. The financial support is EUR 411 764.71 (EUR 350.00 ESF+).

In February, a new platform for NEETs was launched. The new platform uses more youth-friendly language and design, is more attractive, and provides more information about jobs, internships, and training opportunities. Young people can register their details in 'two minutes' and indicate the type of opportunity they are looking for. The platform also provides information on programmes to support hiring and training grants.

Published in July, the report 'Who are the unemployed young people? Diagnosis and Recommendations' complements the 2023 report and, based on data collected by IEFP, delved deeper into some trends and explored new characteristics of youth unemployment that the previous report did not address, allowing for an analysis of the situation of young people who are involved in active employment policies, and those employed but seeking further employment.

The study identified three main groups: young people with low qualifications, young immigrants, and young people with higher education in lower-employability areas.

Young people with low qualifications are particularly vulnerable, especially those who have completed, at most, the second cycle of basic education. They are largely excluded from active employment policies and represent a small proportion of those placed in jobs.

Young immigrants, although also largely excluded from active employment policies, account for a significant proportion of those registered and stand out for having a shorter average registration time with the IEFP than young Portuguese nationals, and a higher placement rate.

The group of more qualified young people is relatively well covered by active employment policies and performs satisfactorily in terms of placements.

## 2025 Implementation

Five projects began in May 2025 within the scope of the *Arribar* programme, to run for three years: CAIS, LEME, BD, Geração 'R', and Cante Crescendo.

As part of the *Trajetos* programme, applications were opened for the development of 14 projects with a duration of 36 months.

The *Afirma-te Já!* (Be Yourself Now!), one of the measures of Trajectories programme (*Programa Trajetos*) began in August with the financing of 14 projects for the North, Centre and Alentejo regions, for a period of 36 months. The financial support is EUR 1 500 000.00 (EUR 1 275 000.00 ESF+).

The National Youth Strategy for the period 2026-30 was under review according to Council of Ministers Resolution No. 134/2025 of 9 September. This revision was based on Portugal's urgent need to respond to the Youth Guarantee Recommendation, ensuring that all young people have access to personal, professional and family development opportunities that are tailored to their needs and profiles, and aligned with social innovation and the green and digital transition.

## Bodies responsible

- Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP)
- Portuguese Institute of Sport and Youth (IPDJ)

## Target group

### Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)

Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)

## Thematic categories

### Modernising VET offer and delivery

Acquiring key competences

### Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

## Subsystem

IVET CVET

## Further reading

[Ordinance \[Portaria\] No 308/2015, of 25 September 2015](#)

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[Ordinance \[Portaria\] No 151/2014, of 30 July 2014](#)

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[Resolution of Council of Ministers \(Resolucao do Conselho de Ministros\) No 188/2021, of 30 December 2021](#)

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[Ordinance \[Portaria\] No 98/2022 of 18 February 2022](#)

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[Report 'Who are the young unemployed?'](#)

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[Regulations for the Arribar Programme 2024](#)

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[Arribar Programme website](#)

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[Youth Guarantee platform](#)

## Related policy developments

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**2025 Implementation**

### Professional programmes

Professional programmes (*cursos profissionais*) are IVET upper secondary education programmes leading to EQF level 4 (academic and professional certification); they are part of compulsory education and of the formal education and training system.

 PORTUGAL

**Type of development**

Practical  
measure/Initiative

**Subsystem**

IVET

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**2025 Implementation**

## National anti-poverty strategy

The approach underlying the National anti-poverty strategy goes far beyond the definition of poverty as the deprivation of monetary resources, avoiding approaches focused solely on the analysis from a monetary point of view and seeking to make poverty reduction dependent only on economic growth.

 PORTUGAL

**Type of development**

Strategy/Action  
plan

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2023 Completed**

## Community networks for NEET social inclusion

The project started in September 2017 and was completed in October 2020. It was coordinated in Portugal by the Vocational Training Centre for the Commerce and Services Sectors (CECOA), in cooperation with partners from Germany, Italy, Spain, and the UK.

 PORTUGAL

**Type of development**

Practical  
measure/Initiative

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2025 Implementation**

## Second opportunity programme

The 20 programme provides young early leavers from education and training, at risk of social exclusion, with training tailored to their needs, expectations, and specific interests, aligned with local labour market needs.

**Type of development**

Practical  
measure/Initiative

**Subsystem**

IVET

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“ ... ” **Cite as**

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/36738>