

INTERCEPT (motivating mobilizing supporting NEETs green Career Pathway)

Connecting young NEETs with job opportunities in the green sector

Date of creation

2021

Description

Funded through the EEA and Norway Grants, INTERCEPT was a collaborative initiative led by a dynamic consortium of nine distinguished organisations from Malta, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Luxembourg.

The project addressed the green jobs sector, focusing specifically on NEETs (young people not in employment, education, or training) aged 25-29. In light of green policies, such as the European Green Deal, and in response to youth activism for a greener environment, the project acknowledged the significant impact of the green transition on employers and the labour market. This transition has been expected to create numerous new industries and job opportunities, as highlighted by the ILO and Cedefop.

To support this transition and ensure that vulnerable individuals were not left behind, the INTERCEPT Project provided targeted assistance through a pilot programme. This programme included personalised training and work placement opportunities within the green sector in Malta, Italy, and Lithuania. The training featured a 25-hour micro-course on green jobs, developed based on research with employers identifying essential skills for the green economy. It was also influenced by a study on NEETs' needs, trends, and demographics, and an evaluation of existing Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs). Based on this research, a 40-hour training was also developed for Public Employment Services (PES) staff to better support NEETs in navigating new career paths that aligned with labour market needs and emerging priorities.

Following the completion of the training phase, the project offered NEETs work placements of 240 hours (approximately 3 months) with green companies, providing them with opportunities to enter new jobs or roles within the green sector. For both the training and work placement phases, NEETs received an allowance, all funded by the project.

By providing these opportunities, the INTERCEPT Project aimed to help NEETs realise their potential, leading to increased employment or further training and reducing youth inactivity. This initiative was fully evaluated in parallel with the pilot phase, and key lessons learned, as well as outcomes and guidance on the implementation of such pilot programmes, have been developed and published.

Beneficiaries

NEETs in recent search

Supporting NEETs aged 25-29 in gaining the necessary skills and work experience to access jobs in the green sector was an investment with a high potential return and a promising tool for social inclusion.

A total of 242 NEETs aged 25-29 in Italy, Malta, and Lithuania were selected, given 25 hours of training focused on green jobs, and enrolled in a 240-hour (12-week/3-month) paid work placement within green businesses.

The beneficiaries consisted of young, inactive individuals aged 25 to 29 who were not in employment, education, or training (NEETs) from Malta, Italy (specifically Tuscany), and Lithuania. The initiative was offered to participants regardless of their level of education or work experience. Their characteristics varied by country, as outlined below:

- **Malta:** Individuals facing multiple disadvantages including those with lower educational attainment, women with caregiving responsibilities, and men with illnesses or disabilities. These individuals often have lower aspirations and lack prior work experience.
- **Lithuania:** Individuals with a secondary or vocational qualification often have work experience in the transportation or service sectors. They typically reside in smaller municipalities or rural areas and face challenges in commuting to work due to family-related responsibilities.
- **Italy:** Typically, women living in single-parent households or in couples with children, as well as foreigners and individuals with low educational attainment, facing family-related responsibilities. A lack of educational qualifications did not pose an issue for female NEETs in this context.

Countries



Education level and sector

 **Lower secondary vocational education and training (work-based learning)**

Level of implementation / Scope

 **Provider level**  **Local level**

Aims of policy/initiative

The key objectives of INTERCEPT were to address the challenges posed by climate change by investing in the future workforce, with a focus on inactive youth and their potential in green careers. Specifically targeting NEETs aged 25-29, INTERCEPT aimed to:

Identify Needs and Opportunities: Research the specific needs and opportunities in the green sector for NEETs and green companies.

Provide Practical Experience: Offer targeted training (25 hours focused on green jobs) and immersive work placement experiences (240 hours, or 12 weeks/3 months) in green and sustainable businesses across Malta, Italy, and Lithuania.

Enhance Effectiveness: Assess and refine the on-the-ground experience to improve its impact.

Influence Policy: Use insights gained from these experiences to shape recommendations

for European Institutions, thereby influencing future policies.

Overall, INTERCEPT sought to guide young talents towards green career pathways, making a meaningful contribution to addressing climate uncertainties.

Features and types of activities implemented

The Key Features and activities of INTERCEPT, included:

Training:

Two training courses were developed to enhance knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The first, a 25-hours course, specifically tailored for NEETs, focusing on green jobs, motivation, and behavioural change. This course was later accredited in Malta with 2 ECTS at EQF level 3 and is currently offered. The second course is a 40-hours training programme aimed at Public Employment Services (PES) staff from Italy, Malta, and Lithuania (who were implementing the pilot programme). It is designed to improve their understanding of emerging jobs, NEETs, and the circular economy. The programme includes various components, such as employer study visits, videos, in-person training, and self-study.

Research:

Prior to the intervention, two comprehensive pieces of research were conducted on the [transversal skills required for green jobs](#) and [the demographics, trends, challenges and needs of NEETs](#). After the intervention, the overall evaluation of impact of the pilot scheme was carried out. This research provided critical insights into the skills necessary for new and emerging job markets, informing the design of both the NEET and PES staff training programmes.

Networking with Employers:

Engagement with employers played a vital role in identifying whether their organisations, roles, and processes fell within the green job spectrum. This collaboration facilitated the provision of on-the-job work experience and training opportunities for NEETs, ensuring that both employers and trainees benefitted from the initiative.

Outreach to NEETs, Employers, and the Public:

A strong outreach campaign was launched to raise awareness among NEETs, employers, and the general public about the pilot project and its focus on green jobs. This effort aimed to educate all stakeholders about emerging roles and the skill sets required, helping to bridge the gap between NEETs and employment opportunities.

Gainful Employment Opportunities and Empowerment for NEETs:

The pilot project offered NEETs valuable on-the-job experience, with the aim of helping them secure sustainable employment upon completion. Through targeted training and networking, NEETs were empowered to enter the workforce with the necessary skills for green jobs, providing them with long-term career prospects and personal development opportunities.

Resources

INTERCEPT benefited from a grant of EUR 2.04 million from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment.

Partners:

- Jobsplus from Malta was the lead partner and coordinated the entire project.
- Visionary Analytics from Lithuania, CASE - Centre for Social and Economic Research from Poland, and the Institute of Economic Research - Slovak Academy of Sciences oversaw the research aspects of the project.
- The Region of Tuscany, Anci Toscana, and the Grosseto University Hub in Italy focused on communications, outreach, and training development.
- Anci Toscana, along with Jobsplus and the Lithuanian Public Employment Service, piloted the innovative training in green skills, involving 300 NEETs across the three countries (Lithuania, Malta, and Italy).

As the project's expert partner, ADEM, the National Employment Agency of Luxembourg, shared knowledge about labour market mechanisms and guidance for young jobseekers.

Evaluation of the measure

INTERCEPT initiative was evaluated, and the main findings revolve around are:

- **Relevance:** The pilot scheme proved relevant to NEETs, employers, and local Public Employment Services (PES) in all three countries (Italy, Lithuania, and Malta), and continues to be relevant beyond the pilot's conclusion.
- **Effectiveness:** The programme significantly improved employment opportunities for NEETs aged 25-29, with participants reporting improved skills related to the green economy. The collaboration between PES and green employers laid a foundation for future employment opportunities in the sector.
- **Efficiency:** A cost-benefit analysis showed that the benefits of the pilot exceeded costs within 95 days to 1.4 years, depending on the country and wage scenario. Despite minor delays, resources were used as planned, and the programme's overall impact was not affected by these delays.
- **Impact:** Participants' unemployment rates were reduced by 10-12 percentage points compared to a control group, demonstrating a significant positive impact.
- **Sustainability and scalability:** The project successfully built partnerships between PES and green companies, creating future employment pathways. While the transferability of the model depends on local adjustments, its flexible design makes it adaptable for other regions.
- **Innovation:** While the programme's structure (training followed by work placements) is standard, the focus on involving young people in the green economy and offering allowances to participants (not employers) was considered innovative.

The lessons learned from the INTERCEPT initiative were also used to develop guidelines for effectively integrating 25-29 year-old NEETs into the labour market, particularly in green jobs. These guidelines outline key steps for various stakeholders to adapt the pilot programme to their local context.

The four main steps are:

1. **Context Analysis:** Conducting an analysis of local needs and challenges faced by NEETs and green companies.
2. **Objective Identification:** Defining clear objectives and tailoring the intervention to the local context.
3. **Pilot Implementation:** Carrying out the pilot programme based on the defined objectives.
4. **Evaluation:** Assessing the effectiveness of the intervention.

More detailed information can be found in the [full study](#) and [guidelines](#).

Evidence of effectiveness of the measure

A total of 242 participants from Malta, Italy, and Lithuania took part in the pilot scheme. NEETs activation rates varied by country: 16.12% in Malta, 18.59% in Italy, and 65.29% in Lithuania. The scheme notably benefited females, with 51.24% female participants compared to 48.76% male participants.

The intervention has shown significant success. Following the pilot's conclusion, 105 of the 242 participants, equivalent to 43.39%, have either secured employment, enrolled in other schemes, or pursued further training. Specifically, 90 participants found jobs, and 15 engaged in other schemes or training programmes.

This positive outcome underscores the effectiveness of the pilot scheme in transitioning participants from inactive status to productive engagements.

Success factors

The success of the INTERCEPT measure can be attributed to several key elements that provide valuable insights for potential application in other regions:

- **Flexibility in programme design:** The programme's adaptability was a crucial factor in its success. By tailoring the approach to the specific contexts of Malta, Italy, and Lithuania, the programme accounted for differences in demographics, as well as social, political, and economic conditions.
- **Motivation through green initiatives:** Integrating green objectives significantly motivated both participants and employers. The idea of contributing to environmental goals, such as "saving the planet" or "fighting climate change," enhanced participant engagement and commitment.
- **Impact on unemployment:** Programme participation effectively reduced unemployment among participants.
- **Beneficiary engagement:** Regular interaction with beneficiaries, combined with ongoing feedback and evaluation, contributed to the programme's success. This adaptive approach allowed the programme to meet specific needs and improve results.
- **Tailored implementation:** Each participating country adapted the programme to local requirements. For example:
 - Lithuania covered commuting costs for participants.
 - Malta provided free access to public childcare and tested higher allowance rates.
 - Italy offered online self-study training options.
- **Enhanced employer attitudes:** Employers, initially uncertain about their role in the green economy, became more willing to participate after gaining a clearer understanding of the programme's benefits.

The positive impact on reducing unemployment and the programme's successful adaptation to various contexts suggest that this approach could benefit other regions. Its flexibility, focus on green initiatives, and tailored implementation provide a valuable model for addressing youth unemployment that can be adapted to fit different regional needs.

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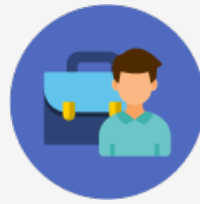
<https://interceptproject.eu/>

Contact email

Related intervention approaches



**Helping female NEETs
(re)integrate into education,
employment or training**



Easing transitions into work



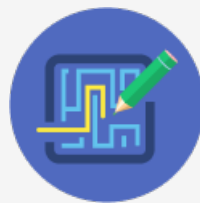
Outreach



Skills development



**NEETs living in remote areas
- Bridging the geographic
divide**



**Validation of non-formal and
informal learning**



Preparing NEETs to access green jobs

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