

# Analysis of the policy context addressing 25+ NEETs

COUNTRY REPORT – SPAIN

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**IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PROJECT ‘LOST  
MILLENNIALS – TRANSNATIONAL RESEARCH  
NETWORK FOR THE EVALUATION OF INITIATIVES  
TARGETING 25+ NEETS’**

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Project summary:

*The project 'Lost Millennials' focuses on a regularly neglected group of the generation of Millennials: young people aged 25-29 neither in employment or education and training (25+ NEETs). This generation started their working life shortly after the economic crisis of 2008, perceiving uncertainty and lack of security for work and well-being, they are more likely to be inactive or in precarious jobs. The main objective of the project is to contribute to the successful integration of 25+ NEETs to the labour market through increasing knowledge on the effects of employment initiatives on 25+ NEETs, building capacity of stakeholders to perform impact studies and thus improving the quality of labour market interventions. This objective will be achieved through the creation of the transnational research network which will share know-how and good practices, the evaluations of governmental and community-based initiatives targeting 25+ NEETs, as well as the engagement of stakeholders to increase the policy-relevance of project results.*

For more information, please visit our [website](#), contact us on [lm.leadpartner@hetfa.hu](mailto:lm.leadpartner@hetfa.hu) and follow our [social media](#).

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Implemented by:



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## 1. Introduction

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Despite its progresses along the last decade, Spain is still one of the EU countries with a higher proportion of NEETs (Eurostat, 2021). To tackle this problem, Spain has set some overall plans and strategies targeting NEETs, unemployed young people, or entrepreneurs (these policies will be addressed in chapter 2). The Autonomous Communities play a key role in the implementation of these policies, and Spain has made a lot of efforts to improve its institutional framework regarding youth (see chapter 3).

Spain presents some important challenges regarding education that have been shown to impact the NEET rate. For instance, the early school leaving rate is still significantly higher than the EU average rate, and Spain has a high percentage of students repeating a school year. Further, Spain has a training structure that, in comparison with other countries, is biased downwards and upwards with people underqualified or overqualified. The government aims to face these challenges through different strategies and plans to modernise compulsory education, Vocational Educational Training, and higher education (these policies will be analysed in chapter 4.1.).

The high NEET rate in Spain has been linked to the increases on youth employment during economic crises (Villanueva & Cárdenas, 2021). The crisis of 2008 led to a record number of NEETs in the whole EU (Eurostat, 2021), but the NEET phenomenon in Spain seems to be more affected by the economic cycle than in other countries (Villanueva & Cárdenas, 2021). For this reason, the governments have undergone reforms regarding labour market (see chapter 4.2.) and entrepreneurship (see chapter 4.3.) also, trying to tackle youth unemployment.

Apart from its weakness over economic cycles, Spain faces the challenges of gender inequality and of NEETs situations among specific groups of disadvantaged youth. The government aims to tackle the vulnerability of these groups with policies to promote effective equality between men and women and reconciliation policies (see chapter 4.4.) as well as with policies aimed at people with disabilities, mental health problems, under risk of poverty or social exclusion, or living in rural areas (see chapters 4.5. and 4.6. respectively).

Spain centres its effort in the supply-side policies, and the provisions establishing demand-side measures (measures aimed at employers willing to hire NEETs or unemployed young people) are dispersed through different laws that the National Public Employment Service compilate (see chapter 5). This national Public Employment Service as well as the regional ones are encouraged to improve their guidance services, and the government has also approved some policies aimed at orientation (these policies are addressed in chapter 6).

## 2. Overall policy context

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Spain is one of the EU countries with a higher proportion of young people in NEET situations (Eurostat 2021). To tackle this problem and following the recommendations from the EU (Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013), Spain approved the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan in 2014 and the Youth Guarantee System implementation in 2016 (still in force). The first plan was targeting only NEETs between 16 and 24 years old, but in 2015, with the Law 25/2015 (of July 28, on the second chance mechanism, reduction of the financial burden and other social measures) this limit was increased from 24 to 29 years old (Strecker, 2021).

Indeed, this increase of the age limit is still in force and the legal subjects of Young Guarantee System in Spain are individuals older than 16 and younger than 30 years old. According to the law 25/2015, this upper limit is 30 years old - instead of 25 -, provided the condition that the unemployment rate of this group is equal to or greater than 20 percent, according to the Survey of Active Population corresponding to the last quarter of the year. In the last quarter of 2021, this unemployment rate was 30.7% for people between 16 and 24 years old and 23.6% for people between 16 and 29 years old (INJUVE, 2022). Therefore, the upper limit is still 29 years old.

This means that **the national strategies approved to tackle the situation of NEETs in the case of Spain are also targeting NEETs between 25 and 29 years old. The strategy that is in effect at the time of this report is the Youth Guarantee Plus Plan 2021 - 2027 of decent work for young people.**

The Youth Guarantee Plus Plan was approved by the Council of Ministers in June 2021 and consists of 69 measures structured in 6 pillars (orientation, training, employment opportunities, equal opportunities, entrepreneurship, and institutional framework). It pays particular attention to equip young people with the necessary skills and training for their integration into the labour market. The plan focuses on those under 30 with low skills, but it also pays attention to those who are overqualified.

Turning to the **regional-level strategies** targeting NEETs/ 25+ NEETs, Spain is a decentralised country where some competences belong to the central government, some other competences belong to the regions, and some are shared between both of them (see chapter 3 'Institutional Framework').

The strategies and policies related to the Youth Guarantee are defined at a national level. Moreover, these policies are applicable throughout the national territory and young people can access under equal conditions, which means that there are no strategies or important plans targeting NEETs defined at a regional level. However, the Autonomous Communities (regions) play a key role in the implementation of these policies through programs and actions. Indeed, the Youth Guarantee System in Spain depends on the good coordination between the different administrations. For this reason, there is a Commission

between the central government and the autonomous communities for the coordination, evaluation and monitoring of the National Youth Guarantee System.

Nevertheless, there are youth policies carried out by the autonomous communities that, even if they do not target NEETs directly, they define important measures regarding training, employment, etc. that also influence NEETs. To illustrate, the region of Navarra has in effect the Foral Youth Strategy 2020-2023 (*Estrategia Foral de Juventud*), Castilla y León has the Strategy to Boost Youth (*Estrategia de Impulso Joven*) or Andalusia has the Youth Strategic Plan (*Plan Estratégico de la Juventud en Andalucía*).

According to previous recommendations and commitments regarding **youth policies** (such as the Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee, or the Spanish National Youth Strategy 2020), the **Action Plan for Youth Employment 2019-2021** transferred the strategic pillars of these strategies to objectives and quantitative terms. This Action Plan is also structured in 6 axes (orientation, training, employment opportunities, equal opportunities, entrepreneurship, and institutional framework) and has the following objectives: 1) establish a framework for employment quality and dignity at work; 2) put young people at the heart of their employability and qualification process; 3) increase their qualification and employability by giving them more work skills; 4) promote a new economic system based on productivity and added value; 5) provide the Public Employment Services with the means and resources to give adequate and personalised assistance; 6) provide specific training on gender equality of opportunity to eliminate bias, combat horizontal segregation and the gender wage gap; 7) address feelings of despair among young people who give up looking for work because they have no hope of finding it; and 8) pay special attention to vulnerable groups (migrants, long-term unemployed, school leavers, disabled people, etc.).

The abovementioned National Youth Strategy 2020, which was the base for plans like the Action Plan for Youth Employment, is going to be replaced in the next months by the **Youth Strategy 2030** (it has been presented in May 2022 by the Youth Institute, but it has not been published in the government gazette yet). This Youth Strategy 2030 will inform the next plans targeting young people and NEETs.

In relation to entrepreneurship policies, the Spanish government explains the need to improve the country's business climate, which is currently composed mainly of small and even micro-enterprises without workers. To improve this business climate, it establishes the **Strategy Spain Entrepreneurial Nation** and the planned reforms in the Resilience, Recovery and Transformation Plan (Law on Start Ups to promote the development of emerging high-tech companies and the Law 'Create and Grow' to promote the growth of SMEs).

The Strategy Spain Entrepreneurial Nation is aimed at the whole population of Spain and identifies three levers on which to improve the bases for future entrepreneurial development: (1) Improvement of

education, (2) Effects of Research, Development, and Innovation and (3) Innovative entrepreneurship. Through these three levers, this strategy aims to address the four gaps: gender, territorial, socio-economic and generation gaps. Despite referring to the difference in backgrounds and skills -digital skills- between young and elder people, the measures focus on solving the generation gap by teaching elder people digital skills and promote entrepreneurial activity among people over 50 years old.

### **EU-level policies in Spain**

The European Employment Strategy (EES) was approved in 1997 as 'a set of common objectives and targets for employment policy' in the EU Member States. This EES was undertaken to create more and better jobs and, accordingly, established some principles to orientate the employment policies of the different countries. One of these orientations is what the literature has called 'activation' (Ballester González, 2005; Sanz, 2016). Activation was meant to change the focus from passive policies (e.g., unemployment benefits) to active policies (e.g., actions to improve training and adaptability to the labour market), and in the early 2000s, Spain welcomed this orientation to activation from the EES. The diagnosis from the Spanish labour market showed that Spain was one of the EU countries where unemployed people stayed longer living on unemployment benefits and where there were higher disincentives to actively look for a job (Sanz, 2016). The consideration of this activation principle led to some important changes in the Spanish labour market policies. Among these changes, the main one was the introduction of the 'commitment to activity', in which people receiving unemployment benefits must be committed to 'actively seek employment, accept a suitable job and participate in specific motivational and informational training, reconversion or professional insertion activities in order to increase their employability' (Law 45/2002 of December 12, on urgent measures to reform the unemployment protection system and improve employability). This activation principle still inspires the employment policies in Spain as it is stated in the art. 41 of the Royal Legislative Decree 3/2015, of October 23, approving the consolidated text of the Employment Law, which develops the commitment to activity that is still in effect.

The activation orientation adopted in the early 2000s was also related to the preventive approach to avoid unemployment situations. In the case of Spain, this preventive approach was based on two objectives: the achievement of a higher number of open-ended (instead of temporary/fixed term) contracts and the change to a 'knowledge driven economy' with a focus on training. Despite some efforts along the last twenty years to improve these situations, the temporary nature of work and the abuse of temporary contracts is still one of the main challenges of the Spanish economy (EURES, 2022).

Before the COVID-19 crisis, when the EES was already part of the Europe 2020 growth strategy and it was implemented through the European semester, the European Council was recommending Spain to 'foster transitions towards open-ended contracts, including by simplifying the system of hiring

incentives' (Council Recommendation of 9 July 2019 on the 2019 National Reform Programme of Spain and delivering a Council opinion on the 2019 Stability Programme of Spain). After the pandemic, the EU created the Recovery and Resilience Facility which adapted the European Semester by taking into account the challenges and vulnerabilities exposed by the sanitary crisis. To raise the funds of this Recovery and Resilience Facility, Spain has approved the **Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan**. This plan has helped Spain to promote a labour market reform to reduce the high share of workers on temporary contracts and to promote reforms to increase the employability of young people, by modernising the whole Education system with a special focus on Vocational Educational Training (see chapters below).

In 2013, the EU launched the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) to support young people, specifically young people who are not in education, employment, or training (NEETs), in regions where youth unemployment was higher than 25%. That was the case of Spain, eligible for the YEI with a youth unemployment rate higher than 50%.

Prior to the design and implementation of the YEI in Spain, there were some actions aimed at young people included within the employment policy at a general level. However, there were no specific policies on employment or entrepreneurship targeting youth. The YEI provided an important incentive to boost youth employment policies in Spain, especially at regional and local levels (Cabasés & Úbeda, 2021). As a result, Spain approved the Strategy for Entrepreneurship and Youth Employment 2013-2016, which included the first Youth Guarantee Plan in 2013 and its successive plans. The current plan in effect is the abovementioned Youth Guarantee Plan Plus 2021-2027 of decent work for young people.

Moreover, the YEI made it possible to create the National Youth Guarantee System (NYGS) in Spain. This NYGS is managed by the Public Employment Services and establishes the following requirements for young people to be registered (SEPE, 2022):

- Have Spanish nationality or, to be citizens of the Union or the state party of European Economic Agreement or in Switzerland or be holding a permit to reside in Spain, necessary to work, as well as unaccompanied minors provide accreditation of child protection services of the autonomous community that individually justified the access, through the registration to activities or programmes of education or training that are of benefit to them.
- Be registered in any location of the Spanish territory.
- Have more than 16 years old or less than 30 at the time to apply for registration
- Not having worked in the calendar day preceding the date of submission.
- Not having received training in the calendar day preceding the date of submission.
- Not having received training actions in the calendar day preceding the date of submission



- Sign a statement that expresses the interest in participating in the national Youth Guarantee, acquiring a commitment to active participation in the proceedings being conducted in the framework of the Youth Guarantee. In the case of persons seeking employment, it is sufficient to register in the public employment services.

Two specificities of the NYGS were introduced after its creation. First, the age limit was increased from 25 to 30 years old if the unemployment rate of this group (people younger than 30 years old) is equal to or greater than 20 percent, according to the Survey of Active Population corresponding to the last quarter of the year. Second, when the NYGS was created, one of the requirements to be registered was a certain disconnection from work and education (Visconti, 2017). As such, it was necessary to be 30 days without working, and not have received training or training actions in the 90 days prior to the request. Currently, it is simply required not to have worked or received educational/training actions on the calendar day preceding the application for registration. Therefore, the age limit has been increased and the waiting time reduced to prevent the situation and reach a higher number of NEETs and 25+ NEETs.

To sum up, the European employment policies play a key role in Spain, not only through the activation orientation of the EES, but also through the YG in Spain. Despite some mistakes in their implementation, and the necessary national reforms to solve them, the EU youth policies have helped *'as an engine in the national policy aimed at young people'* (Cabasés & Úbeda, 2021, p. 101).

### 3. Institutional framework

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The Spanish Constitution of 1978 (*Constitución Española de 1978*) establishes a **decentralised state model with three political-administrative levels**. The main one is the national level with the Central Government and the General Government Administration as its administrative apparatus. Additionally, there are two other levels: the regional and the local ones. On the regional level, there are 17 Autonomous Communities (regions) and two Autonomous Cities; they all rely on an Autonomous Government with an Autonomous Administration. The referential framework of policies' competences of the regions established by the Statute of Autonomy of every region. Last, on a third level, Local Authorities and Provinces. The main distribution of competences takes place between the regions and the central government, and it is established in the Title VIII of the Spanish Constitution. This title establishes that some competences belong exclusively to the central government (article 149) while some others can be taken by the Autonomous Communities (article 148).

Regarding youth policies, that in the case of Spain target NEETs and 25+ NEETs (the upper limit is 30 years old), the competences distribution is not defined in the Spanish Constitution. Only the article 48

of the Constitutions mentions the youth policies establishing that '*public powers will promote the conditions of free and effective participation of youth in political, social, economic and cultural development*'. This article only refers to public powers without assigning the competences on youth, so the different Autonomous Communities (regions) have assumed some responsibilities in youth policies in their own Statutes of Autonomy. As explained above, the strategies and policies related to the Youth Guarantee are defined at a national level. Moreover, these policies are applicable throughout the national territory and young people can access under equal conditions, which means that there are no strategies or important plans targeting NEETs defined at a regional level. However, the Autonomous Communities implement these strategies and carry out most of the actions related to youth. Indeed, the actions implementing the Youth Guarantee Plans in Spain depends on the good coordination between the different administrations. For this reason, there is a Commission between the central government and the autonomous communities for the coordination, evaluation, and monitoring of the National Youth Guarantee System.

## 4. Supply-side policies

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### 4.1. Education and qualification

The education system in Spain offers the following studies: pre-primary education, compulsory primary education, compulsory secondary education, *Bachillerato*, vocational training, adult education, and university education. Also, Language, Artistic and Sports Education are provided, which are considered specialised education.

#### 4.1.1. Compulsory education

The compulsory education in Spain consists of Primary Education (*Educación Primaria*) and Compulsory Secondary Education (*Educación Secundaria Obligatoria*, ESO) or Basic Vocational Training cycles (*ciclos formativos de grado básico*).

Despite not being compulsory, the early childhood education and care (ECEC) is part of the Spanish education system and applies to children aged 0–5 years. This ECEC is divided into two cycles: first cycle (for children aged 0–3 years) and second cycle (for children aged 3–5 years). The second cycle of ECEC is free of charge and takes place in the same schools than primary education (Eurydice, 2022).

Students begin the **Primary Education** in the calendar year in which they reach the age of 6 and attend primary education schools between the ages of 6 and 12. This primary education is organised into six grades, grouped into three cycles of two school years (Eurydice, 2022a).

**Compulsory secondary education** (lower level of secondary education) is the second and last compulsory stage after compulsory primary education, for students aged 12-16. It provides access to the Secondary Education Diploma. Instead of getting this diploma after having successfully completed Compulsory secondary education, some students may be proposed by the teaching team for incorporation into **basic vocational training** cycles. This basic vocational training is aimed at learning a trade and carry out professional activities, and provides access to intermediate vocational training or, after the Modernisation and digitalisation of the education system, including early year's education from age 0 to 3, to the Secondary Education Diploma.

Consistent with the objectives set at the European level, during the last 15 years, the compulsory education in Spain has focused on reducing early school leaving, on improving the quality of education and the competencies and skills of students and on addressing the right to study with equal opportunities. Despite these efforts, the early school leaving rate in 2020 in Spain was still 16.0%. From 2010 (28.2%), there has been a reduction by 43%, but the distance to the average of the European Union (10.2%) is still significant. Moreover, Spain has a high percentage of students repeating a school year. At the age of 12, 13.5% of Spanish students have accumulated some delay and are still enrolled in Primary Education and at the age of 15, and 30.5% remain enrolled in previous courses.

To face these challenges as well as to raise the funds of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, Spain has promoted a plan for the **Modernisation and digitalisation of the education system, including early year's education from age 0 to 3** (Component 21 and part of the VII Lever Policy -Education and knowledge, lifelong learning, and capacity building of the Recovery Transformation and Resilience Plan).

Regarding compulsory education (primary and secondary education), this plan aims at improving educational outcomes by **reducing early school leaving and high repetition rates, reducing segregation in public schools on the basis of the students' background, and by developing a new curriculum for key competences (including digital)**. The fundamental principles of this plan to modernise the education system are therefore equity and excellence. Regarding equity, the reform aims to guarantee students, teachers, and schools an inclusive and modern model. The government highlights among the main changes of the new law, that the tracks for the 4th year of ESO (last grade in Secondary Compulsory Education, ISCED 3) are eliminated. Before this reform, students could choose between the track leading to vocational training and the track leading to *Bachillerato* (each track with different content in the subject of maths and different selective subjects) (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2022<sup>1</sup>). The new law eliminates these tracks, and all options will lead to the same ESO degree. Moreover, students who attend Basic Vocational Training will also get the ESO degree, which will allow them to

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/mc/fse/actuaciones/itinerarios-3-4-eso.html>

access to any post-compulsory education program. About the principle of excellence, this law introduces diagnostic assessments in the 4th grade of primary education and in the 2nd grade of secondary education, which will be of informative, formative and of guiding nature.

In the milestones assessed preliminarily by the European Commission to raise the mentioned funds, the Government highlights the entry into force of the new Organic Law on Education (Organic Law 3/2020 of 29, December 2020, modifying the Organic Law on Education 2/2006, of 3 May 2006, as published in the Official Journal (BOE Number 340, 30 December 2020).

#### 4.1.2. Vocational Education Training

As the government states in the grounds of the recent Organic Law 3/2022 on the organisation and integration of Vocational Training, **Spain has a training structure that, in comparison with other countries, is biased downwards and upwards.** Whereas there is a high number of people with no qualifications, there is also a high number of overqualified people in relation to the work they carry out. Unlike other European countries whose main labour force is based on this intermediate group with VET degrees, Spain lacks this group of intermediate qualifications.

The literature that studies the millennial generation explains that in many cases this generation was the first one in Spain to attain the same levels of higher education than other European countries, and it was meant to represent a leap forward in the educational level in comparison with their parents' generation (Holleran, 2019). This expectations about higher education and becoming a graduate from university has led to a social stigmatization of the vocational training in Spain. Vocational Training is still the 'ugly duckling' of education in Spain, and parents discourage their children to join vocational training education (Educa2020 and AXA Foundation, 2019).

To tackle this problem and boost the VET system in Spain within the context of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the government has approved a **Strategic Plan for the Vocational Training**. The aim of this Plan is to establish a single Vocational Training System that integrates the VET System and the VET for Employment, with reference to the National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications. This new single Vocational Training System aims to reskill and upskill the workforce through the digital transformation of Vocational Training (training for teachers, creation of entrepreneurship classrooms, network of centres of excellence) and through the principles of innovation and internationalisation. The government establishes in this plan how promoting the VET is a priority to also reach an adequate balance between the training levels of the citizens and the qualification needs of the human capital required by the labour market. The objective that the Plan sets is achieving a percentage of 50% of the active population with a medium level of qualification, between 35 and 40% of the population with a high level of qualification and no more than 14% with a low level of qualification. This plan aims

to increase the number of people with professional accreditation of their skills and get closer to 100% of the active population, which currently only reaches 51%. Among the milestones assessed by the European Commission about the reforms carried out by Spain to raise funds for the Resilience and Recovery Facility, the Government highlights the entry into force of the Organic Law 3/2022, of March 31, on the organisation and integration of Vocational Training.

### 4.1.3. Higher education

Although higher education in Spain is integrated by advanced vocational training, advanced artistic or sports education and university education, the policies defined by the government regarding this higher education are mainly focused on university education. Indeed, University education belongs to a different Ministry than the rest of education levels and the Ministry of Universities has different competences than the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training.

University education is organised into three levels: Bachelor, Master's, and PhD programs. The university system in Spain is considered a public service that comprises of research, teaching, and study. Universities can be public or private universities, are granted legal status and they develop their functions in a system of autonomy.

According to the National Institute of Statistics, people with university studies have a better employment situation. For instance, in the second quarter of 2020, the unemployment rate for people with a level of training in Higher Education was 10%, while for those with secondary and primary education it was 17.7 and 28.4%, respectively (Ministry of the Presidency, 2022). However, there is still a mismatch as the demand for qualified employment is lower than the supply of graduates, and one of the problems of young people in Spain is the high level of 'over-qualification'. Simultaneously, various studies show that a high percentage of companies have difficulties in matching certain job vacancies with certain university qualifications. Training and adaptation of skills and abilities to the new needs of the labour market are basic requirements to improve the employability of graduates.

Spain is making some efforts to solve these problems, and it has initiated a comprehensive reform of the university system through the **Plan of Modernisation of the University System** based on the following fundamental objectives:

1. Promote access to and permanence in higher education. This objective focuses on increasing the number and amount of scholarships, and, at the same time, on reducing public universities' fees.
2. Adapt the organisation of university education. This objective promotes the deployment of the European Higher Education Area and the adaptation of higher education to the social,

economic, technological, and educational transformations that have occurred in the last decade to solve the mismatch between job vacancies and university qualifications.

3. Promote the re-qualification of teaching and research staff.
4. Guarantee the quality and good governance of university institutions.

As explained in the Overall Policies chapter, in the case of Spain, youth policies are also targeting people between 25 and 29 years old. In the case of NEETs, the strategy in effect is the Youth Guarantee Plus Plan 2021 - 2027 of decent work for young people. The **axis number 2 of this Youth Guarantee Plus Plan refers to training** and has measures grouped into three blocks: a) training in alternation through workshop schools, employment workshops and mixed employment-training programmes; b) coordinated action of training for employment and the business fabric: close collaboration with the business world is a priority; c) Identification and promotion of preferential action sectors.

In the same vein, the **axis number 2 of the Action Plan for Youth Employment 2019-2021 refers to training** of young people (older than 16 and younger than 30 years old) and establishes some measures grouped into two objectives: a) to improve the competitiveness of companies through the qualification of people, adjusting the skills of workers to the current and future requirements of the labour market; b) to improve the employability of workers in order to facilitate their transitions to and from employment, their personal development and their professional promotion.

Some of the main risk factors to become a NEET among the people between 25 and 34 years old are disabilities and health issues (12.36% of the people between 25 and 29 and 20.49% of the people between 30- and 34-years old state that 'disability and health issues' is the main reason for being inactive). The **Spanish Disability Strategy 2022-2030** that has been approved recently (further details in chapter 4.5.) aims to prevent this risk and **establishes the 'inclusive education' as one of its main axes**. This inclusive education axis promotes an education *'that favours the maximum development of the personality, abilities and skills of students with disabilities, responding to their individual needs and expectations about their future'* (p. 58).

Scholars also consider vulnerable NEETs the people who, besides not working or studying, find themselves in a situation of long-term unemployment or inactivity (Alegre & Todeschini, 2013). The Spanish Government has approved the **Get-Yourself-Back-to-Work Plan** for long-term unemployed people (further details in chapter 4.2.) of which the **axis number 2 is focused on training**. Despite targeting the whole population, and not just NEETs, this axis establishes different actions aimed at learning, training, and professional recycling. One of its main purposes is also to articulate a 'permanent training system' to get training throughout the whole working life.

Although it does not target NEETs or young people, the **National strategy for preventing and fighting poverty and social exclusion 2019-2023** includes as **one of its main objectives the promotion of inclusive education**, especially among young people and adults with few qualifications, to **reduce early school drop-out**, improve qualification levels and skills to enter the labour market (objective 2.1. further details in chapter 4.6.).

Regarding gender inequality, one of the main objectives of the **Strategic Plan for Effective Equality of Women and Men 2022-2025** (further details in chapter 4.4.) is based on training and capacity building, and aims to promote a higher education without gender gaps and one that incorporates the approach of equality between women and men, as well as to promote a higher presence of women in the areas of knowledge in which they are underrepresented, especially in STEM disciplines.

## 4.2. Labour market policies

The Spanish labour market has been dragging for decades important imbalances that aggravate economic cycles and weigh down productivity gains. The combination of the structural high unemployment and the duality between workers (between those entering the labour market with temporary contracts and those with an extensive experience and fixed contracts) together with the business' tendency to adapt to crises by reducing the workforce, not only reduces productivity but also generates precariousness and inequality.

Besides these traditional challenges, the pandemic has added new ones derived from the decline in economic activity and has accelerated important changes in the labour market. In the context of the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan (component 23: 'New public policies for a dynamic, resilient and inclusive labour market'), the government has started to undertake reforms to regulate remote work, to tackle the gender gap regarding salaries or to address the problem of false self-employed delivery workers using digital platforms.

The policies to foster the employability of young people (older than 16 and younger than 30 years old) are also included in this component 23 that establishes some programmes focused on **dual paths** (which combine both teaching and learning processes in workplaces) in both VET and university education. These dual paths are regulated in the provisions of article 11.2 of the Workers' Statute (reformed by the Royal Decree-Law 32/2021, of December 28, on urgent measures for labour reform, the guarantee of employment stability and the transformation of the labour market) under the legal form of the **contract for alternating training**. This contract aims to combine paid work activity with the corresponding training processes in the field of vocational training, university studies, or the Catalogue of training specialties of the National Employment System.

Moreover, this component includes within their milestones, the approval of the **Youth Guarantee Plan Plus 2021 - 2027 of decent work for young people**. Additionally, the first block of the Pillar 2 (Training) of this Youth Guarantee Plan includes Training in alternation through workshop schools, employment workshops and mixed employment-training programmes. The **axis 3 of this Plan (Labour opportunities)** contains different measures that are grouped into three blocks: a) actions aimed at promoting the stable hiring of certain groups such as young people with no prior experience; b) actions aimed at specific sectors (e.g., rural areas, social economy); c) actions to match labour supply and demand like the ones promoting geographic mobility. Additionally, the first block of the Pillar 2 (Training) of this Youth Guarantee Plan includes training in alternation through workshop schools, employment workshops and mixed employment-training programs.

The policies regarding long-term unemployment that are currently in effect are included within the **Get-Yourself-Back-to-Work Plan** (*Plan Reincorpora-T*). One of the main objectives of this plan is to reduce long-term unemployment and prevent unemployed people from ending up in it. This plan targets long-term unemployed people (from 12 to 23 months in unemployment) and very long-term unemployed people (24 months and more in unemployment), registered as jobseekers with the public employment offices. This plan specifically refers to the groups that are especially affected by long-term unemployment that have been identified as particularly vulnerable. Among the factors for being especially vulnerable to long-term unemployment, the plan points to gender (being a woman), age (being over 45 years old), education (not having completed vocational training or a university education), sector of activity (from the construction sector), origin (immigrant), and even occupation (managers and/or former self-employed workers).

This plan aims to prevent and reduce long-term unemployment and encompasses 63 measures, divided into 6 axes (orientation, training, employment opportunities, equal opportunities, entrepreneurship, and institutional framework), designed under a comprehensive and systemic perspective.

Through the axes, in line with the established objectives, the areas of action considered priority are:

- To reduce the unemployment rate among the long-term unemployed, with special attention to the most vulnerable groups;
- To fight against the gender gap in employment;
- To recover the quality of employment.

In the context of the mentioned component 23 of the Recovery and Resilience Plan, the government approved another ambitious reform of the labour legislation (Royal Decree-Law 32/2021, of December 28, on urgent measures for labour reform, the guarantee of employment stability and the transformation of the labour market) that focuses on 1) simplifying contracts, 2) modernising collective bargaining and



contracts to hire and outsource business activities, and 3) establishing a permanent mechanism for flexibility and stabilization of employment. Furthermore, this **reform aims to reduce temporary employment**, which had become the most common way of hiring and it is specially worrying among youth. The government aims to reduce the use of temporary contracts and boost job security especially among young people. To do so, the new law simplifies the types of contracts and is aimed to be stricter about the causes that employers can claim to hire people through temporary contracts instead of permanent ones. From now on, it will be possible to distinguish between the two main types of temporary contracts according to the cause that justifies said contract: contracts due to production circumstances and substitution contracts.

Despite not targeting young people nor NEETs, **another reform has increased the minimum wage** and has set this minimum wage for any activities in agriculture, industry and services, without distinction of sex or age of the workers, at 33.33 euros/day or 1,000 euros/month, depending on whether the salary is fixed for days or months.

Spain is also making **efforts to transform undeclared work into formal employment**. In doing so, the government has approved **Strategic Plan of the Labour and Social Security Inspectorate 2021-2023** (elaborated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Economy) addresses this issue. Within Axis 1 of this Plan is Objective 3: To reduce undeclared work and improve the protection of persons trafficked for the purpose of labour exploitation. People who do not have a declared job are in a more precarious situation, as they lack contractual recognition of rights and do not enjoy the protection of the Social Security System. Inspection campaigns will be intensified to combat undeclared work. These campaigns will be more intense in sectors and geographical areas where there is greater fraud. Regarding fraud in hiring, this Plan aims to correct the most harmful aspects of the labour market in relation to temporary employment. Specifically, the aim is to correct the excessive temporary hiring focused on very short-term contracts, which mainly affects young people. Moreover, within the objective of improving communication to make the activity of the State Labour and Social Security Inspection Agency more visible, in order to enhance the knowledge of young people, it is contemplated to promote the connection with other information networks on youth social affairs, such as the National Network of Youth Information Services and Youth Offices of the Youth Institute.

The active labour market policies (ALMPs) in Spain are defined by the **Spanish Active Employment Support Strategy 2021-2024**. This strategy creates a common framework for the Public Employment Services to design and manage their policies. This Strategy also defines a framework for the actions of the National Employment System in terms of active policies and professional training in the workplace. It also defines the principles, the common objectives, the instruments, the strategic planning of and the financial resources of the actions of the National Employment System.

The priority objectives of this Strategy are:

- a) Adopting of the necessary measures to make active employment policies more effective (improvement of evaluation and cooperation between public administrations);
- b) Strengthening prospecting and orientation mechanisms;
- c) Promoting a higher investment in active employment policies (so the percentage of the GDP converges with the European average).

Further, this is the only strategy on employment in Spain that specifically refers to the millennial generation in one of its objectives:

- d) **Supporting the creation of permanent contracts and enterprises among the millennial generation.**

The Strategy explains that the period prior to March 2020 was mainly a recovery period, in which people who suffered major job placement problems due to the 2008 crisis were able to get a job or start professional projects. However, their link with the labour market has been, in general, weaker than that which would correspond to this generational cohort, due to such problems of entering the labour market later. Now, the 2020 crisis has affected them disproportionately more because of their still precarious professional development.

This priority objective of the strategy aims at strengthening their professional careers and connect them more solidly with the labour market. Two axes of action should be promoted:

- a) Regarding wage employment, this priority line promotes permanent contracts aimed at unemployed people or the conversion of temporary contracts, linked in both cases to improve employability, through specific training actions for employment that give priority to this generational cohort.
- b) Regarding self-employment, this line promotes second chance mechanisms and rescue aids for professional and business projects that have been frustrated as a direct or indirect consequence of COVID-19. It pays exceptional attention to especially solvent or promising new projects of people without previous experience on entrepreneurship.

**To sum up, the basic objective is to ensure a stable relationship with the labour market in favour of a generation of people whose labour insertion has been hampered by two successive crises (people between 30 and 40 years of age).**

As explained in chapter 2, the European Employment Strategy established some principles to orientate the employment policies of the different countries. One of these principles was the 'activation' orientation (Ballester González, 2005; Sanz, 2016) and meant a change from focusing on passive policies

to active policies. Spain welcomed this orientation to activation and has **no strategy nor plans regarding passive policies.**

The regulations of the different benefits in effect are stated in different laws, and the National Public Employment Service (SEPE), which is in charge of their management, creates some guidelines to agglutinate them. The main one is the **contributory unemployment benefit** (*prestacion contributiva por desempleo*): a contributory benefit awarded to people who are unemployed but committed to working and who have contributed for a minimum of 360 days during the previous 6 years before becoming unemployed (European Commission, 2022; SEPE, 2022a).

In case of not having contributed to Social Security, there are two social benefits:

**1) Non-contributory unemployment allowance** (subsidio por desempleo de nivel asistencial) (European Commission, 2022a; SEPE, 2022b):

- For people who have dependents and have exhausted the unemployment benefit;
- For people older than 45, without dependents who have received unemployment benefit;
- For people older than 52 who meet the requirements for old-age pension (except for the age requirement).

**2) Active integration income** (renta activa de inserción) (European Commission, 2022a; SEPE, 2022b).

Applicants need to meet one of these requirements:

- Be long-term unemployed and older than 45;
- Be a returned emigrant, older than 45 and have worked outside Spain for at least six months;
- People with disabilities;
- Victims of gender-based violence.

Concerning vulnerable NEETs, the aforementioned **Youth Guarantee Plus Plan refers in its axis 4** to the **Equal Opportunities in Access to Employment**. The first block of this axis 4 deals with the principle of gender equality, and establishes measures to reinforce it within the employment policies (including access to employment, permanence, working conditions, particularly remuneration, promotion or training for employment). It also includes initiatives to promote the reconciliation of personal, family and work life for both men and women.

The second block establishes the measures aimed at reinforcing equal treatment for groups in a situation or risk of exclusion (e.g., people with disabilities) and the principle of non-discrimination as operating principles of the Youth Guarantee Plus.

Although it does not target NEETs, the **Get-Yourself-Back-to-Work Plan** also refers **in its axis 4** to the **Equal Opportunities in Access to Employment**. This axis is focused on addressing gender inequalities

and comprises of initiatives to support the role of women in rural areas, avoid the gender impact on the domestic work industry and establish individualised guidance and support actions for women with social vulnerability factors and labour insertion difficulties.

The **National strategy for preventing and fighting poverty and social exclusion 2019-2023** (chapter 4.6.) does not target NEETs, either, but addresses the integration of young people in the labour market by developing and implementing training contracts and apprenticeships that help to upgrade their skills (objective 2.1.). This strategy promotes the regulations and controls over training contracts and apprenticeships to guarantee their quality and improve working conditions. It also establishes measures to combat precarious employment and ‘false’ self-employment among the people at risk of social exclusion (objective 2.2.)

### 4.3. Entrepreneurship

The abovementioned Strategy **Spain Entrepreneurial Nation** does not establish specific policies to promote young entrepreneurship. It only refers briefly to youth when it explains its goal of promoting STEM disciplines and boosting the creation of innovative start-ups with young teams. Nevertheless, the **axis number 5 of the Youth Guarantee Plus Plan refers to entrepreneurship**. The Youth Guarantee Plus Plan is going to incorporate this axis of entrepreneurship policies in the plan of the European Framework for Entrepreneurial Competence (EntreComp), within the *‘New Skills Agenda for Europe: working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness’* created by the European Commission. According to this axis, youth entrepreneurship will be supported by a) promoting social economy within the context of the green, circular, care and rural economy, b) promoting entrepreneurial projects with new perspectives, and c) boosting innovative business perspectives with the capacity to renew entrepreneurial ecosystems and boost rural and inclusive economies.

Similarly, the **axis number 5 of the Action Plan for Youth Employment 2019-2021 also refers to entrepreneurship** and establishes as objectives: 1) to promote entrepreneurship, self-employment and the social economy among young people; 2) to promote entrepreneurship through the digital economy and the different formulas of the social economy and the economy of digital platforms within activation and insertion policies; 3) to train and orientate entrepreneurs; 4) to promote measures aimed at generating employment, business activity and boosting local economic development; 5) to collaborate with the productive sectors and territorial entities.

There are no ‘entrepreneurship’ policies specifically targeting vulnerable NEETs, but considering long-term unemployed people among the people at higher risk of exclusion from the labour market, the axis 5 of the Get-Yourself-Back-to-Work Plan focuses on entrepreneurship. This axis aims to orientate long-term unemployed people towards entrepreneurship and promote entrepreneurial initiatives at the local

level. Despite targeting the whole population, as this axis bases the creation of an entrepreneurial culture on the large professional experience of the unemployed people, it seems to exclude young people with short experience or no experience at all. The Strategy Spain Entrepreneurial Nation highlights the gender gap as one of its main challenges, but it does not establish specific measures addressing this inequality. As explained, it does not target young people or NEETs, either.

#### 4.4. Work-life reconciliation policies

Before 2007, the only existing leave was the leave aimed at mothers (for 16 weeks), and fathers had only two days off after their children's birth. From 2007 to 2017, this leave for fathers was stipulated at 2 weeks. After 2017, paternity leave was extended to 4 weeks, in 2018 to 5 weeks and from 2019, the leave is the same period for both parents (Royal Decree-Law 6/2019, of March 1, on urgent measures to guarantee equal treatment and opportunities between women and men in employment and occupation).

The parental leave now lasts 16 weeks in Spain. These 16 weeks of leave are aimed at both parents, and they can be divided as follows (Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration, 2022):

- 6 mandatory weeks, uninterrupted and full time, after childbirth (judicial resolution or administrative decision in the case of adoption);
- The remaining 10 weeks will be taken up in weekly periods, accumulated or interrupted, within the 12 months following the birth or the judicial resolution or administrative decision in the case of adoption.

After approving the Royal Decree-Law 6/2019 with some urgent measures to promote gender equality, the government further developed the public policies with a gender perspective and has approved recently the **Strategic Plan for Effective Equality of Women and Men 2022-2025**. This Plan establishes priorities based on four axes: 1) good governance of public administration, 2) economy and fair distribution of wealth, 3) guarantee of life free of violence against women, and 4) effective rights.

The second axis is focused on employment and reconciliation policies. It aims to tackle the most precarious and promote the most strategic sectors (STEM), and to promote the activity of companies that show an effective commitment to this gender perspective. It also aims to arrange a system of public and universal childcare, face the precariousness of the care industry, as well as promote the co-responsibility of men and the market in the fair reorganisation of childcare.

In the same vein and also addressing the gender gap in the activity and the employment rate, the abovementioned plan Modernisation and digitalisation of the education system, including early year's education from age 0 to 3 (Component 21 of the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan) aims to

promote an accessible, affordable, inclusive, and high-quality first cycle of Early Childhood Education and Care (for children from 0 to 3 years old).

#### 4.5. Health/ Social Insurance policies

In Spain, the right to health care is one of the basic pillars of the welfare state and it is recognised within the fundamental rights and duties of the Spanish Constitution (article 43). This article 43 establishes that *'the public authorities are responsible for organizing and protecting public health through preventive measures and the necessary benefits and services'*. The development of this right to health protection took place through the General Health Law (Law 14/1986), which establishes that health protection must be publicly funded, universal and free of charge; this law also establishes its regional decentralisation and its integration into the National Health System (Sistema Nacional de Salud, SNS). Health care is a non-contributory benefit financed out of general taxation. It does not depend on the employment situation, and it is included in the general budget of each Autonomous Community.

In short, **all people living in Spain have the right to quality health care under equal conditions** and the access to health protection is not a risk factor in the situation of NEETs nor 25+ NEETs.

Regarding disability, the government periodically approves a national Disability Strategy, which develops through an Action Plan. In May 2022, it has approved the **Spanish Disability Strategy 2022-2030**. This strategy is based on two strategic axes: a driving axis and a transversal axis.

On the one hand, the driving axis (Active citizenship and full exercise of human rights) aims to ensure that all people with disabilities have access to exercise all their recognised rights under conditions of equality with the rest of the people. It contains four axes: social inclusion and participation; personal autonomy and independent living; equality and diversity; design and universal accessibility.

On the other hand, the transversal axis (gender perspective, territorial cohesion, information systems, governance and civil dialogue, innovation, and sustainable development) is aimed at providing cross-cutting elements to promote and support.

As the Disability Strategy has just been approved, its action plan has not been approved yet, and the previous Action Plan of the Spanish Disability Strategy 2014-2020 is still in effect. This plan is based on 5 axes, from which two are especially interesting regarding vulnerable NEETs: employment (this axis aims to promote the right to work of persons with disabilities with disabilities, under conditions that guarantee the principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination) and education (this axis aims to reduce the school dropout rate and increase the number of people with disabilities with a higher education degree).

As well as the Spanish Disability Strategy 2022-2030, the government has recently approved (by the end of May 2022) the **Mental Health Strategy** of the National Health System 2022-2026. This Mental Health Strategy will be developed through an Action Plan that is still pending approval. This plan is expected to have six strategic lines: 1) reinforcement of human resources in mental health (the component 18 of the Recovery and Resilience Plan funds the training of health professionals in mental health); 2) optimisation of comprehensive mental health care in all areas of the National Health System; 3) awareness and fight against stigmatisation of people with mental health problems; 4) prevention, early detection and attention to suicidal behaviour; 5) addressing mental health problems in contexts of greater vulnerability; 6) prevention of addictive behaviours with and without substances.

#### 4.6. Other supply-side policies

Apart from the mentioned Youth Guarantee Plus Plan 2021-2027, there are no more policies specifically targeting NEETs or 25+ NEETs. However, there are some policies that target vulnerable population and can indirectly affect these 25+ NEETs. The first one is the **National strategy for preventing and fighting poverty and social exclusion 2019-2023**. As mentioned, this strategy includes some objectives that promote an inclusive education to reduce school dropout (chapter 4.1. 'Education and qualification') and a lifelong learning to make people at risk of social exclusion active and stable members of the labour market (chapter 4.2. 'Labour Market policies'). In addition, this strategy includes some intervening policies such as the minimum income scheme to increase the net disposable household income, or the improvement of social services especially for households with children.

Concerning ethnic minorities, public administrations in Spain do not record statistics on the ethnic, religious or racial background of its population, and they only record the country of origin of foreign population. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has made multiple recommendations for Spain to amend its data collection process (Minority Rights, 2022). The only minority whose information is available through the NGO Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG) is the Roma population. According to FSG, Roma Secretariat Foundation (2019), the percentage of young (16-30 years old) Roma people who are not working nor studying or training is 57.6% for women and 42.4% for Roma men. Based on these data, the **National Strategy for Roma Equality, Inclusion and Participation 2021-2030** establishes as one of its objectives the reduction of the NEET rate among Roma population (to 40% in Women and to 30% in Men). As well as this objective that is the only one targeting NEETs, this strategy sets as priorities the improvement of essential services (education, employment, healthcare, housing services) and the non-discrimination through the empowerment of Roma women and the promotion and recognition of Roma culture.

Although at the national level, the percentage of NEETs (16-34 years old) is very similar in both rural and urban areas, rural NEETs are more sensitive to economic turndowns such as the 2008 crisis, when youth

unemployment grew faster in rural areas (Prieto-Flores et al., 2020). Again, there are no specific policies targeting rural NEETs. The closest policy is the **National Strategy against the Demographic Challenge**. In this strategy, the line of action number 2 addresses youth challenges in rural areas by supporting the implementation of socioeconomic development projects for young people. It also aims to develop projects that guarantee the effective freedom of residence of women in the territory, and it aims to favour the upbringing of children to bring birth rate closer to the average of the European Union.

## 5. Demand-side policies

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Spain dedicates most of its efforts to the supply-side policies and there are no specific demand-side policies aimed at increasing the amount of labour that employers seek to hire (Sapsford & Tzannatos, 1993). Unlike the strategies on education and employment focusing on potential students or employees, there are no specific strategies focusing on employers.

Every year, the National Public Employment Service agglutinates the different measures diffused in different laws and policies, and creates a document with guidelines for employers about the types of contracts in effect and the existing bonuses, reductions, and incentives. In the 2022 version, for instance, the PES explains that if an employer wants to hire a person younger than 30 years old registered at the Employment Office, the type of contract with incentives in effect is the Alternating Training Contract (*Contrato para la Formación en Alternancia*). If the company has less than 250 employees, the employer has a bonus of the 100% of the annual amount of his/her social security contribution quotas for this young employee. If the company has more than 250 employees, this bonus is 75%.

To further illustrate these incentives, we have summarised the ones that are spread in the policies targeting NEETs and young people in Spain.

The Axis 3 (Employment opportunities) of the Youth Guarantee Plan Plus 2021-2027 establishes some incentives for employers such as:

- Measure 39. Creating incentives, or aid that does not imply the payment of direct amounts to the company or the worker, for the promotion of the first employment by the Public Employment Services.
- Measure 50. Training of young people through incentives or aid applied to Spanish business entities dedicated to activities marked by seasonality.

The axis 5 (Entrepreneurship) of the Youth Guarantee Plan Plus 2021-2027 also establishes some incentives:



- Measure 58. Youth Guarantee Plus will promote aid for the payment of Social Security contributions for 6 months for young people who had been registered in the Special Regime for Self-Employed Workers before the declaration of the state of alarm. Also, it promotes aid for investment in advertising and digital transformation of the business to encourage their business as well as E-learning training programs to support digital marketing and commercialisation for young entrepreneurs.

The measure 29 of the Action Plan for Youth Employment 2019-21 in its Axis 3 (employment opportunities) indicates that the framework of incentives and subsidies for quality hiring and entrepreneurship will be evaluated and reviewed. As a result of this evaluation, those that have proven to be ineffective will be eliminated. Where appropriate, new incentives will be designed, which will consider the results of the previous evaluation, and will be linked to individualised support during hiring and, in addition, to other complementary active policies, especially for young people with greater insertion difficulties.

## 6. Orientation

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In the case of the NEETs in Spain, the strategy in effect (Youth Guarantee Plus Plan 2021 - 2027 of decent work for young people) also targets people between 25 and 29 years old. The **axis number 1 of this Youth Guarantee Plus Plan refers to orientation** and has measures grouped into two blocks: a) Establishment of mechanisms to increase the quality and effectiveness of guidance; b) Setting up of specialised guidance services on specific topics.

In the same vein, the **axis number 1 of the Action Plan for Youth Employment 2019-2021 refers to orientation** aimed at young people (older than 16 and younger than 30 years old) and establishes some measures grouped into three objectives: a) professional orientation and personalised attention; b) relationship with labour market actors; c) governance of guidance measures: single one-stop-shop for young people.

## 7. Conclusions

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After the previous great crisis in 2008, many experts were demanding a comprehensive reform package to modernise the Spanish economy (FUNCAS, 2021). The change of government after the general elections in 2019 - as well as the need of facing the challenges that the pandemic revealed - has led to a period of multiple reforms. These reforms have been accelerated under the urge of the EU to address the structural problems of Spanish economy (e.g., low labour market competitiveness, high unemployment rate and even higher youth unemployment rate) as well as to face the challenges of the

future (e.g., digitalisation, green economy), in order to raise funds from the Recovery and Resilience Facility (Next Generation EU). Thus, Spain is undergoing an *'unprecedented process of reform, in terms of its scope and breadth'* (Rodríguez-Piñero Royo, 2022, p. 26).

This unprecedented number of reforms at the national level, together with the decentralised model of state in which the Autonomous Communities (regional level) also carry out implementing policies, makes the mapping of policies in Spain very difficult.

An added difficulty is related to the definition of youth. In Spain, the definition of youth is broader than in other EU countries, and youth policies target people older than 16 and younger than 30 years old. The analysis of this report that intends to map policies targeting millennials (people between 25 and 35 years old) therefore comprises of policies aimed at both youth and general population.

Actually, as explained during this report, the policies and measures targeting NEETs, 25+ NEETs and young employed people are dispersed among multiple strategies and plans (e.g., Youth Guarantee Plus Plan 2021 - 2027 of decent work for young people, Action Plan for Youth Employment 2019-2021, Spanish Active Employment Support Strategy 2021-2024, National strategy for preventing and fighting poverty and social exclusion 2019-2023), which can be an advantage as youth policies can be considered a transversal axis of the whole process of reforms, or can be a disadvantage, given the difficulties to map and coordinate such an amount of spread measures. Moreover, as all these initiatives and measures are part of different strategies with different Ministries in charge and different responsible organisms, it is difficult to evaluate the separate success and effectiveness of each of these measures to solve the 25+ NEETs situation.

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## POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

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