CHAPTER 2

The youth employment challenge

Young people are a vital asset in all OECD countries. But there are significant cross-country differences in terms of the labour market situation of the youth population. There is also considerable heterogeneity among young people, which needs to be factored into any strategy to improve their employment prospects. Some countries have done much better than others in reducing the impact of the crisis on youth joblessness and appear much better placed for the recovery. Conditions in some of these countries when the crisis started were relatively favourable, while others have adopted effective policies to help youth weather the crisis.

The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

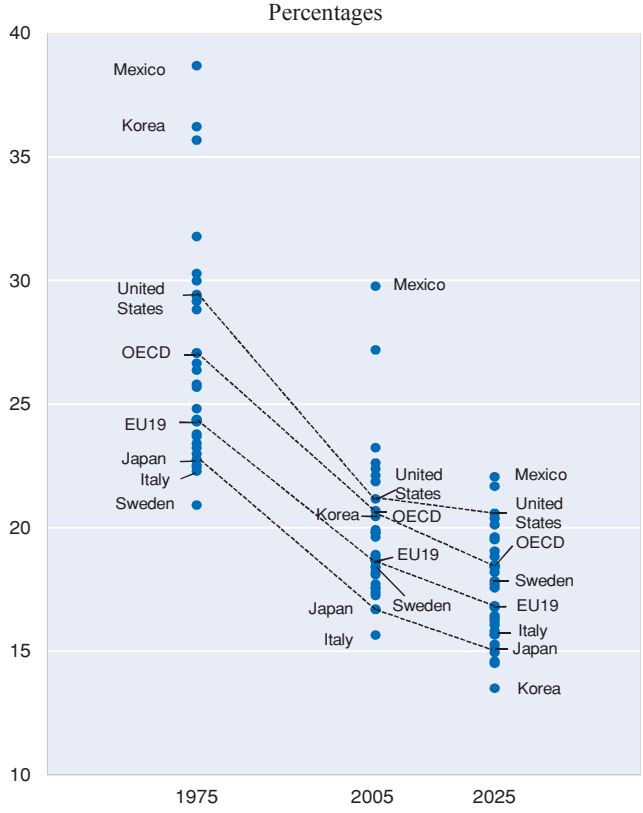
In all OECD countries, the labour force is ageing but this does not translate automatically into more and better employment opportunities for young people (OECD, 1996 and 2006a; Bank *et al*., 2008). The ageing factor does little to explain the significant cross-country differences in terms of the labour market situation of the youth population. Labour markets become more and more selective and barriers such as a lack of relevant skills entail a higher risk of unemployment.

A. The magnitude of the demographic challenge

1. In the past, smaller youth cohorts did not per se create more opportunities for youth

The OECD area is experiencing an ageing process with a declining share of youth in its working-age population. However, this ageing process is more pronounced and occurring at a faster pace in some countries than in others: while the youth share of the working-age population which stood at 27% in 1975 decreased on average to 21% in 2005, in Korea the share went from 36% in 1975 to 20% in 2005 (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1. **Declining share[a] of youth in the working-age population, OECD countries, 1975-2025**



a) Ratio of the population aged 15-24 to the population aged 15-64.

Source: National projections and United Nations projections for 2006 for Australia, Denmark, New Zealand and Spain; 2004 for Luxembourg; 2005 for all other countries.

The relative scarcity of the labour force over the longer term should in theory favour stronger labour market outcomes for the smaller cohorts of young entrants to the labour force. However, the sharp declining share of youth in the OECD working-age population between 1975 and 2005 (6 percentage points) did not translate into better youth labour market outcomes across-the-board. In 2005, the youth unemployment issue was far from being resolved, with unemployment concerning on average one youth in six in the OECD labour force.

2. The sharp decline of youth in the working-age population is over

The decline in the number of young people in the working-age population is likely to be less steep over the next two decades (3 percentage points) than in the past. The share of youth in the working-age population is projected to be 18% in 2025. Nine countries are likely to have a much lower youth share than the OECD average in 2025: 13% in Korea, between 14% and 15% in the Czech Republic, Japan, Poland and the Slovak Republic and between 15% and 16% in Germany, Greece, Italy and Switzerland.

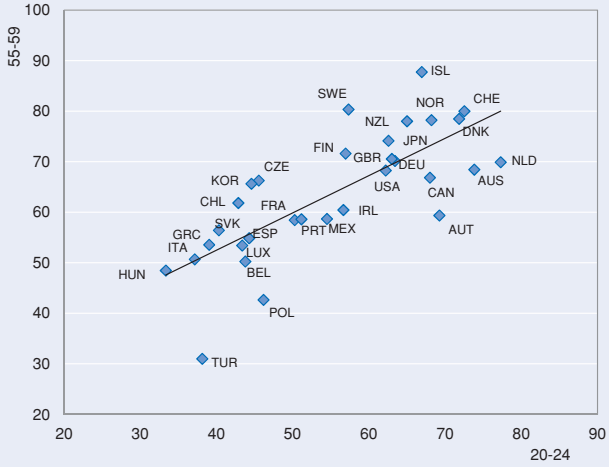
It is often claimed that more jobs for older workers means fewer jobs for youth (Box 2.1). This is based on a myth concerning the way the labour market functions, the so-called the "lump-of labour" fallacy: there are a fixed number of jobs to go around and one worker can easily be substituted for another. OECD (2006a) already stressed that neither of these "statements" is true; younger workers cannot necessarily be easily substituted for older workers and the costs of subsidising early retirement can result in reduced employment opportunities for younger workers because of higher labour taxes to finance these costs. Recent work analyses in detail the relationship between social security programmes and retirement on the one hand and youth employment (Gruber and Wise, 2010) on the other.

Box 2.1. **Jobs for younger and older workers**

One concern often voiced in the debate about encouraging people to work longer and defer their retirement is that this will deprive youth of jobs. Economists call this the "lump-of-labour fallacy".

Figure A. **Employment rates: younger and older workers**

Percentage of 55-59-year-olds and 20-24-year-olds in employment, 2009



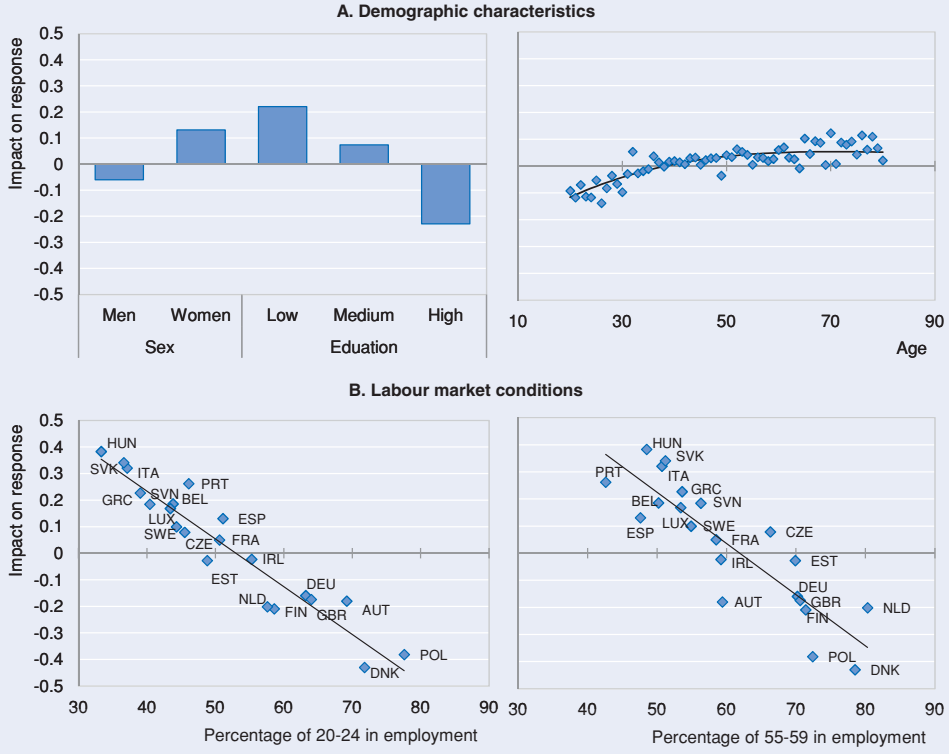
Note: Regression line shown (heteroskedasticity-adjusted standard errors in parentheses) is employment rate of 55-59-year-olds = 23.33 (6.918) + 0.7163 (0.1230) x employment rate of 20-24 years. The R^2 of the regression is 0.5203.

Source: National labour force surveys.

Box 2.1. **Jobs for younger and older workers** *(con'd)*

The idea that public policy can re-shuffle a fixed number of jobs between workers of different ages is simply not true. This is clearly demonstrated in Figure A which compares employment rates of older (aged 55-59) and younger people (aged 20-24). The relationship between the two is positive and highly significant in statistical terms. The lump-of labour hypothesis is indeed a fallacy.

Figure B. **"As older people work until a later age, fewer jobs will be available for younger people": the impact of different factors on responses**



Note: Estimation based on an index with answers of "Strongly disagree" rated as -2, "Somewhat disagree" as -1, "Somewhat agree" as 1 and "Strongly agree" 2. In addition to the variables shown, the analysis controlled for region (metropolitan, other urban and rural) and economic activity (retired, other not working, employed, self-employed). The results shown are predicted values taking all these factors into account at once. All variables included in the econometric model were significant at the 1% level.

Source: OECD analysis of Eurobarometer survey (fieldwork in March 2009 published in April 2009) of 27 113 people in the European Union, of which 21 133 are in OECD member countries; national labour force surveys for employment rates.

However, public perceptions of the trade-off between employment of younger and older workers are significant, especially when these influence the minds of policy makers. Figure B explores views on the hypothesis: "As older people work until a later age, fewer jobs will be available for younger people". It is based on Eurobarometer data, and so only covers member states of the EU that are also in the OECD. Overall, 56% of people agree with this sentiment; 26% of them strongly so. The strongest support comes from southern and eastern Europe – Hungary, Italy, Portugal and Slovenia, for example – with nearly 80% of Greeks agreeing, almost 60% of them strongly so. Nevertheless, there are exceptions to this regional pattern, with Poland and Spain recording lower-than-average support. Danes are by far the least likely to agree that older workers deny younger workers jobs, with about 25% support, of which only 11% is strong agreement. There is also a majority against the lump-of-labour hypothesis in Ireland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, but it is a smaller one than in Denmark.

Box 2.1. **Jobs for younger and older workers** *(con'd)*

The detailed results in Figure B are instructive. Women are significantly more likely than men to believe that older workers deny younger people jobs. Older people and those with a shorter time in education are also more likely to agree that as people work longer there will be fewer jobs for youngsters.

However, the most powerful effect on people's perceptions derives from the state of different countries' labour markets, as demonstrated in the lower two charts in Figure B. Citizens of Hungary, Italy and the Slovak Republic are more likely to agree with the lump-of-labour hypothesis, yet these are countries in which the employment rate for both young and older people are low. In contrast, Danes and Finns, for example, are less likely to believe that older workers deny younger workers jobs. And they have a high employment rate for both 20-24-year-olds and 55-59-year-olds. The forthcoming *Pensions at a Glance* will revisit this issue (OECD, 2011).

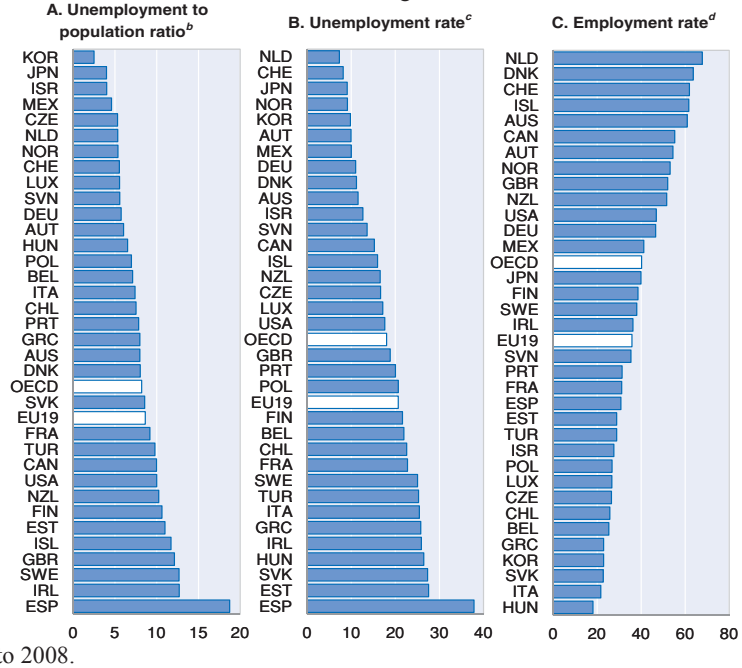
B. Diversity of youth labour market outcomes across individual countries

1. Employment and unemployment

As far as youth employment and unemployment are concerned, there are significant differences across individual OECD countries. In 2009, the youth unemployment to population ratio ranged from a low of 2.5% in Korea to a high of 19% in Spain. The youth unemployment rate ranged from 7% in the Netherlands to 38% in Spain, while the employment rate was the highest in the Netherlands (68%) and the lowest in Hungary (18%) (Figure 2.2).[1]

Figure 2.2. **Youth unemployment and employment indicators differ across countries, 2009**[a]

Percentages



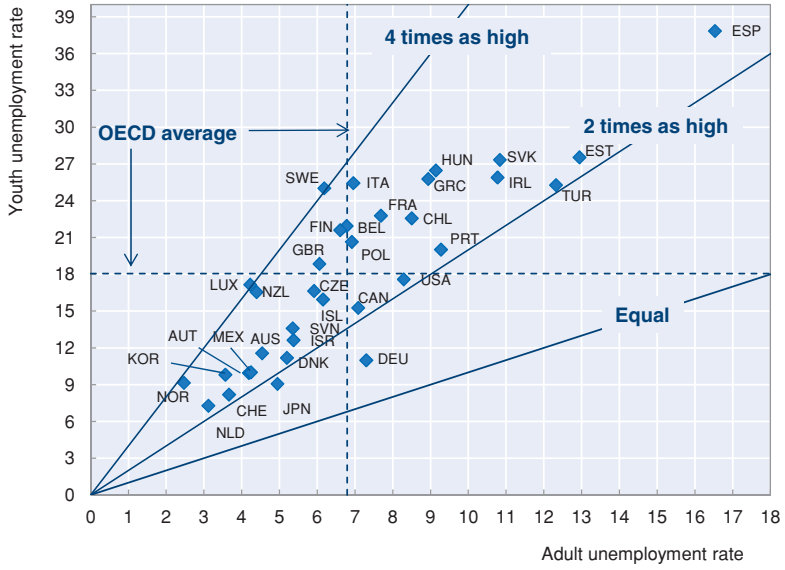
a) Data for Israel refer to 2008.
b) Unemployed as a percentage of the population.
c) Unemployed as a percentage of the labour force.
d) Employed as a percentage of the population.

Source: National labour force surveys.

Furthermore, while the ratio of youth to adult unemployment rates was 2.7 on average in the OECD area in 2009, there are large differences across countries (Figure 2.3). All countries are located above the line where youth face the same risk as adults. Germany has the lowest ratio (1.5), largely because of a rather successful apprenticeship system that ensures a relatively smooth transition from school-to-work for most youth (OECD, 2010e).The ratio stood at between 2 and 4 in most OECD countries, above 3 and below 4 in six countries (Belgium, Finland, Italy, New Zealand, Norway and United Kingdom) and around 4 in Luxembourg and Sweden.

Figure 2.3. **Youth face a much higher risk of unemployment than adults,[a] 2009**

As a percentage of the labour force



a) All countries above the "Equal" line have a higher youth unemployment rate than that of adults.

Source: National labour force surveys.

2. An alternative indicator: NEET (neither in employment, nor in education or training)

But unemployment is only one possibility for young people who have left school. Many may not choose to enter the labour force, or engage in irregular employment or in domestic unpaid work, etc. The numbers of youth in these situations can be large and it is important to be able to measure them and compare them across countries. Hence, the OECD review has made much use of the NEET indicator.

The NEET category seeks to capture the "joblessness" of young people, many of whom are not captured by conventional measures of unemployment. The concept of being NEET was popularised in certain English-speaking and South-East Asian countries during the 1990s, when it came to refer, under different definitions, to a target category for public policy aimed at youth (Bowers, Sonnet and Bardone, 1999) (Box 2.2).

Box 2.2. **NEET: a target category for public policy aimed at young people**

Youth classified as NEET can differ greatly from one country to another, thus demanding policies adapted to the situation of each category. For example, in the United Kingdom and New Zealand, NEET teenagers are the main policy target, as they constitute the main group at risk among youth, and their rate is significantly higher than the average for other OECD countries. In the United Kingdom, the OECD (2008d) has essentially identified a problem of qualifications, as low-skilled youth are at double the risk of being NEET as their peers who have a higher level of educational attainment. This situation underlies the labour government's decision to gradually lift the compulsory schooling age to 18 by 2015 instead of the current 16. In New Zealand, NEET youth are mainly of Maori/ Pacific Islander origin, and are more exposed to unemployment and to being out of the labour market, so the phenomenon has an ethnic dimension (OECD, 2008b).

In Japan and Korea, the NEET category tends to be related to a social phenomenon that affects not only the labour market but also the integration of young generations into society more generally. This was particularly the case following the economic crisis in the mid-1990s and the subsequent social changes, which in Japan upset the labour-market entry of the generation now in their 30s. The national definition of NEET thus differs from that used by the OECD. In Japan (where "youth" covers people aged up to 34), NEET is defined as "people aged 15-34 years old, not in the labour force, not attending school and not housekeeping" (OECD, 2008f). In Korea, NEET refers to people in the 15-34 age group considered to be "discouraged", that is, they have left school, are not preparing to enter a company, do not have a job, do not have family responsibilities (or children) and are not married (OECD, 2007e).

A youth is considered as NEET if he or she has left the school system and is not employed (nor in continuing education).[2] The immediate value of the NEET concept is as an alternative indicator to the youth unemployment rate. It responds to two aspects of the youth unemployment rate that are often criticised. The number of NEETs is calculated as a proportion of the entire age category, and not only of the labour force, which eliminates the bias related to youth still in school. It can also be used to determine all those without jobs, and not simply those who have been identified as unemployed under the ILO definition. The battery of indicators of labour market performance increasingly includes indicators for those outside the labour market in order to better target populations "to be mobilised", in addition to the unemployed.

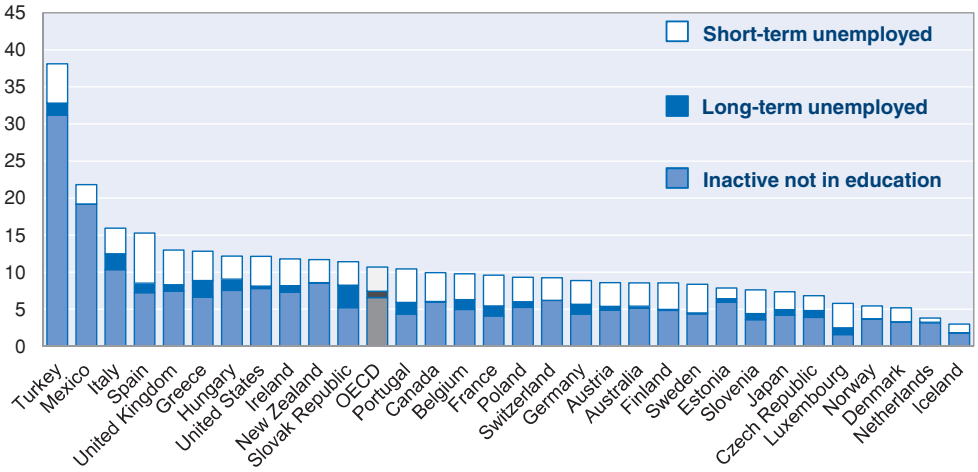
In 2008, the latest year for which data for this indicator are available in the *OECD Education database*, 12% of youth were NEET in the OECD on average (Figure 2.4). Iceland, the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway had the lowest NEET rates in 2008 (4-6%), while the share of youth in NEET was the highest in Turkey and Mexico at 42% and 22%, respectively. Among NEET youth, two in three were already clearly outside the labour market, either because they had been unemployed for more than a year or were inactive and were not seeking employment.

Recent quarterly data up to the second quarter of 2010 suggest that during the last two years, the NEET proportion among the population aged 15-24 increased of at least 1 percentage point in 18 among the 26 OECD countries for which data are available (Figure 2.5). On average, the increase was 2 percentage points, a little more than half due to the increase in short-term unemployment (less than one year). If long-term unemployment was also on the rise among youth, the increase of inactivity among school-leavers remained

marginal. The situation is, however, very different across OECD countries. The increase of the NEET rate was over 5 percentage points in Estonia, Ireland, Iceland and Spain. While Estonia and Iceland experienced a dramatic increase in short-term unemployment, the situation is more worrisome in Ireland and in Spain marked by a significant hike in long-term unemployment and even in inactivity among non-students in Ireland.

Figure 2.4. **NEET youth at risk of losing contact with the labour market, OECD countries, 2008[a]**

As a percentage of the 15-24 age group

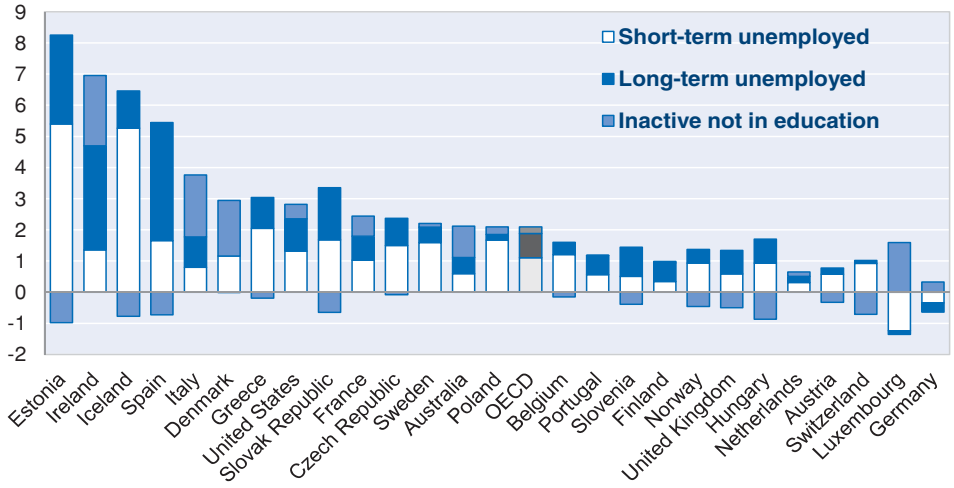


a) Data for Mexico refer to 2004. There are no data for Korea.

Source: *OECD Education database*.

Figure 2.5. **The number of NEET aged 15-24 increased during the crisis**

Difference in percentage points between 2008-Q2 and 2010-Q2[a]



a) Data for Switzerland refer to Q2-2009 instead of Q2-2010. Data for Canada, Japan, Korea, Israel , Mexico, New Zealand and Turkey are missing.

Source: European Union Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) for European countries, National labour force surveys for all the others.

3. *Beyond averages: the role of gender, age, ethnicity and education*

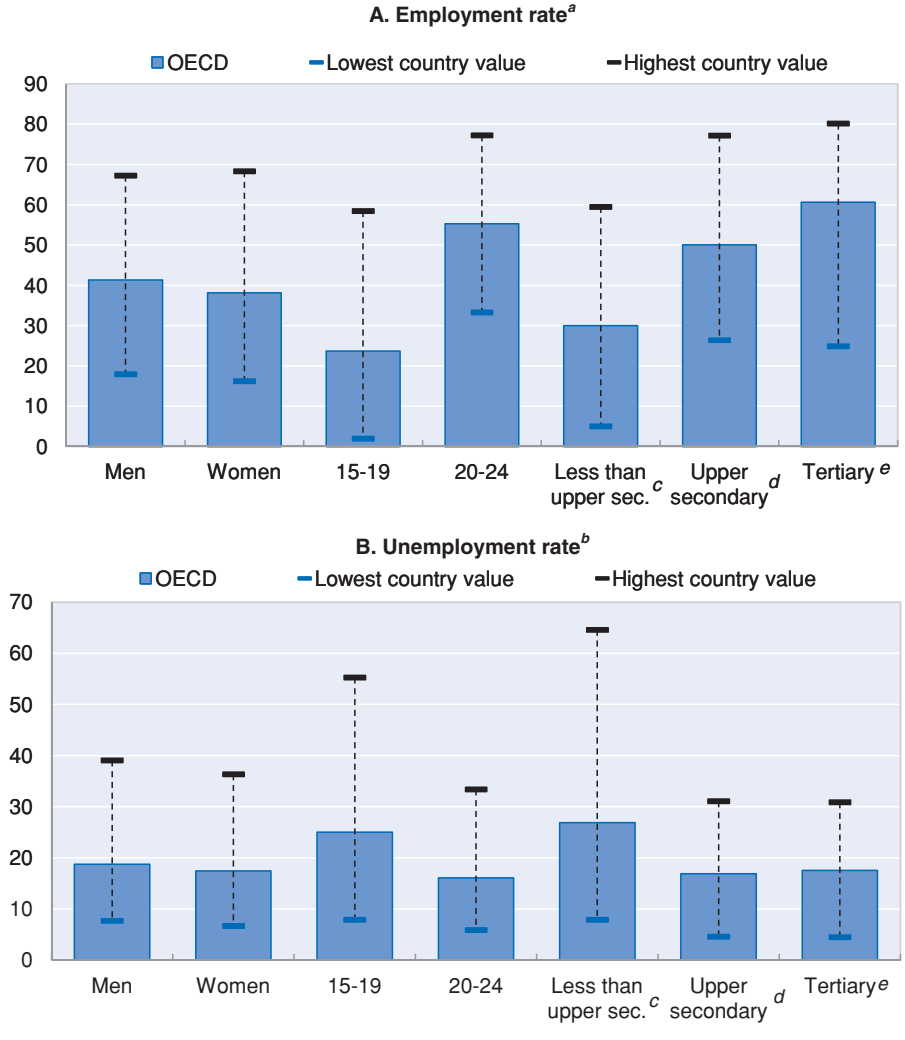
The average labour market performance hides considerable variation across individuals with different socio-demographic characteristics. On average for the OECD area in 2009, young men had a slightly higher employment rate than young women (respectively 41% and 38%) while the gap between teenagers and youth in their early twenties is more than double (respectively 24% and 55%) (Figure 2.6, Panel A). The fact of still being in education explains a large part of the employment discrepancy between teenagers and young adults. However, what is crucial is the level of educational attainment: youth with a tertiary degree have an employment rate of 61%, twice the employment rate of youth without an upper secondary education (30%). In 2009, the Netherlands had the highest youth employment rates across all socio-demographics while several countries have low youth employment rates in specific population categories: Hungary for women, teenagers, young adults, and youth lacking any qualification; Korea for men; Greece for youth with an upper secondary qualification; and Italy for youth with a tertiary qualification.

The youth unemployment rate differs also a lot across socio-demographic characteristics (Figure 2.6, Panel B). On average for the OECD area in 2009, young men had a slightly higher unemployment rate than young women (respectively 19% and 17%), while teenagers already out of school and in the labour force were much more vulnerable to unemployment than young adults (respectively 25% and 16%). As the labour market becomes more and more selective, a lack of qualifications brings a higher risk of unemployment: having no qualification is associated with an unemployment rate of 27% while having at least an upper secondary qualification leads to a lower risk of unemployment (around 17-18% of the labour force aged 15-24). Spain recorded in 2009 the highest youth unemployment rates across all socio-demographics except for youth with an upper secondary qualification and youth with a tertiary qualification where the highest rates were recorded in the Slovak Republic and Greece, respectively. The Netherlands had the lowest unemployment rates, except for teenagers and youth with no qualification, where Switzerland had the lowest rates.

Youth labour market performance differs also across *ethnicity*, even if it is difficult to present comparative data for most OECD countries (Box 2.3). One observes a clear difference between some non-European OECD countries on the one hand and some European OECD countries on the other hand. In the former, the children of migrants have labour market outcomes that tend to be at least on a par with those of the children of natives. In the European OECD countries (except in Switzerland), labour market outcomes of the children of immigrants tend to be much less favourable. One of the differences in labour market performance observed in most European countries is due to the fact that the children of immigrants tend to have a lower average level of education than the children of natives. Liebig and Widmaier (2009) stress, however, that significant gaps remain in many countries, even after corrections are made to take differences in average educational attainment into consideration.

Figure 2.6. **Socio-demographic disparities in youth employment and unemployment rates, OECD countries, 2009**

As a percentage of the population in each status



a) Employed as a percentage of population.
b) Unemployed as a percentage of the labour force.
c) Less than ISCED 3 or International Standard Classification of Education referring to upper secondary education.
d) ISCED 3.
e) More than ISCED 3.

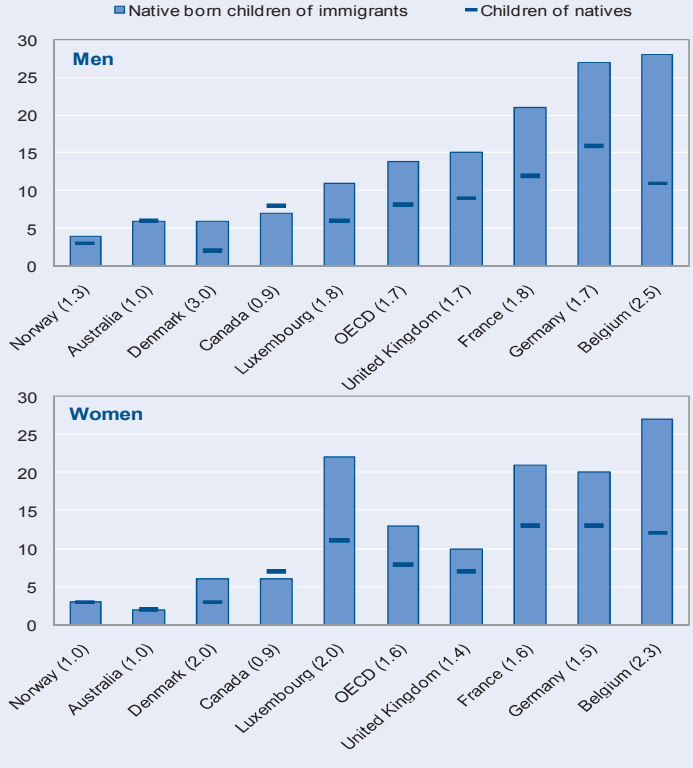
Source: National labour force surveys.

Box 2.3. **Children of immigrants have higher unemployment rates than the children of natives in Europe**

The OECD Secretariat has collected comparative data in some ten OECD countries on the situation of the native-born children of immigrants having left education (Liebig and Widmaier, 2009). On average over the OECD countries for which comparative data are available, the children of immigrants have an unemployment rate that is 1.7 (1.6) times higher than that of the children of natives for men (women) (see figure below). According to the same study, the children of immigrants also have lower employment rates.

Unemployment rates[a] of youth aged 20-29 having left education, by immigrant status[b] and gender, around 2007 in a selection of OECD countries[c]

As a percentage of the labour force in each category



Countries are ranked in ascending order of the unemployment rate of native-born sons of immigrants.

a) The ratio of the unemployment rate of native-born children of immigrants to the unemployment rate of children of natives is given in parenthesis.

b) Children of natives are defined as children born in the country with at least one native-born parent. Native-born children of immigrants refer to children with two foreign-born parents.

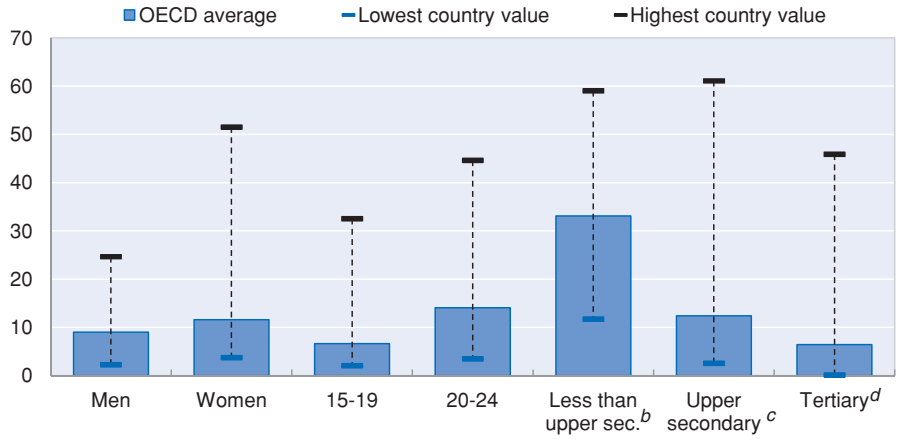
c) Unweighted average of countries shown.

Source: Liebig and Widmaier (2009).

On average in the OECD, the NEET rate among 15-24-year-olds in 2008 also differs a lot across socio-demographic characteristics (Figure 2.7). Young women have a higher NEET rate than young men (respectively 12% and 9%), while the NEET rate for teenagers is half the rate for young adults, partly because education is compulsory at least until the age of 16 in OECD countries (respectively 7% and 14%). A lack of qualification brings a much higher risk of being NEET (33%). In 2008, Turkey recorded the highest youth NEET rates across all socio-demographics. Iceland had the lowest NEET rates in 2008, except for youth without an upper secondary qualification where rates were lower in Denmark, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

Figure 2.7. **Socio-demographic disparities in youth NEET rates, OECD countries,[a] 2008**

As a percentage of the population in each group



a) Data are missing for Mexico and Korea and by age for Japan/ Data are not significant for some socio-demographic categories (less than upper secondary in Japan; upper secondary in Iceland and tertiary in Iceland, Luxembourg and the Netherlands).
b) Less than ISCED 3 or International Standard Classification of Education referring to upper secondary education.
c) ISCED 3.
d) More than ISCED 3.

Source: *OECD Education database*.

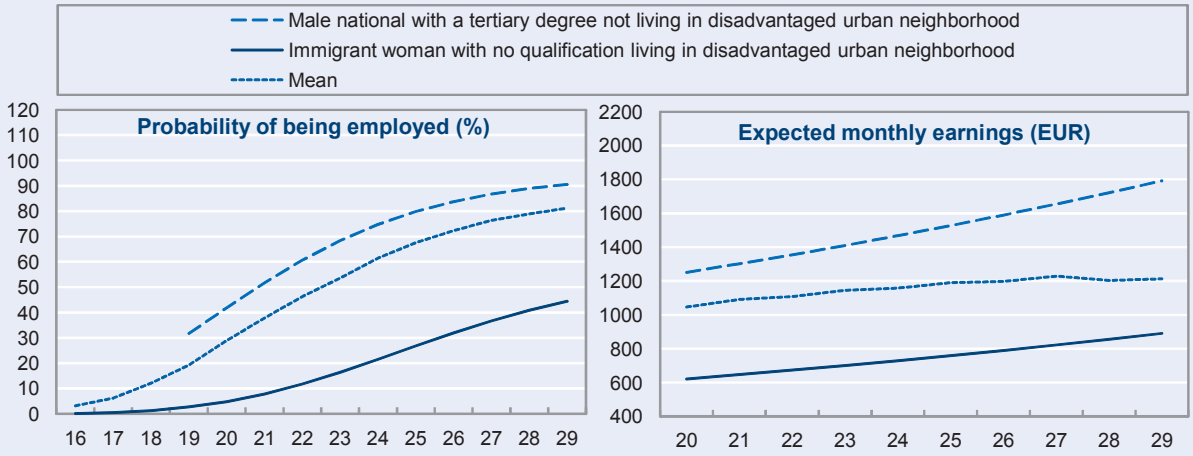
4. Disadvantages very often cumulate for youth leading to poor employment and wage outcomes

The socio-demographic disadvantages suffered by certain young people very often cumulate on the labour market. A micro-analysis applied to young individuals in France shows that the fact of being a foreign-born young woman without a diploma living in a disadvantaged urban neighbourhood negatively influences employment and wage outcomes (Box 2.4). Socio-demographic disadvantages differ significantly across OECD countries. For example in Canada, aboriginal youth living on reserves form the most marginalised group among youth (OECD, 2008c).

Box 2.4. **Disadvantages cumulate for youth on the labour market: the case of France**

The *Jobs for Youth* report on France (OECD, 2009e) stresses that the difficulties experienced by young people on the labour market are cumulative. The figure below shows the most and least favourable cases of labour-market entry. The estimated likelihood of having a job for a foreign-born young woman without a qualification living in a disadvantaged urban neighbourhood is about four times less than that of a young male French national, with a tertiary education diploma and not living in a disadvantaged urban neighbourhood. The average is relatively close to the most favourable situation, suggesting that the great majority of young people with jobs are from socio-economic categories that do not experience many barriers to labour-market entry. The differences are also very pronounced with respect to having a wage, as the likelihood in the best case is double that of the worst case. With respect to expected wages, the average represents more of an intermediate situation than in the case of having a job. This shows that, once hired, young people experience less inequality in terms of compensation. The main difficulty for French youth is to enter the labour market, but once they have a job, the existence of the minimum wage (the SMIC) guarantees relatively high average levels of compensation.

Probabilities of employment and expected wages[a] by age in the best and worst cases of labour-market entry, France, 2006



a) Probabilities estimated using a probit model for activity and an ordinary least squares regression for the logarithm of expected wages (monthly net in EUR).

Source: Estimates by the OECD Secretariat based on the *Enquête Emploi*, OECD (2009e).

C. Towards a scoreboard of youth labour markets

The impact of socio-demographic factors on labour market prospects for youth depends greatly on the very different institutional set-ups across OECD countries. These differences also explain why there is some divergence in those areas that are considered to be a priority for policy action in each country. For these reasons, each of the 16 OECD *Jobs for Youth* reports presents a scoreboard including ten indicators and their trend during the past decade to set the scene in each country compared with international averages. These ten comparative indicators cover not only the standard indicators on employment and unemployment, including long-term unemployment, but also indicators partly based on education performance such as the proportion of school drop-outs, the proportion of NEETs or youth's vulnerability to unemployment by qualification. In addition, the type of jobs held by young people is assessed, notably through the incidence of part-time and temporary jobs in youth employment.

A similar scoreboard is presented in Table 2.1 for each OECD country in 1999 and 2009. Such a scoreboard helps to give a comparative overview across countries over the past decade. Nevertheless, it offers only a *static* view of youth labour markets. Further analysis is addressed in the next chapter, in terms of *pathways* between school and work, to better understand which groups are the most at risk of poor labour market outcomes during the transition from school to work.

Table 2.1. **Scoreboard for youth aged 15-24,[a] 1999 and 2009**

	Australia		Austria		Belgium		Canada		Chile		Czech Republic	
	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009
Employment rate (% of the age group)[b]	61.0	61.0	53.8	54.5	25.5	25.3	54.5	55.3	27.5	25.8	40.1	26.5
Unemployment rate (UR) (% of the labour force)[b]	13.3	11.6	5.1	10.0	22.6	21.9	14.1	15.3	21.8	22.6	17.0	16.6
Relative UR youth/adult (15-24)/(25-54)[b]	2.4	2.5	1.5	2.4	3.1	3.2	2.2	2.2	2.6	2.7	2.3	2.8
Unemployment to population ratio (% of the age group)[b]	9.4	8.0	2.9	6.0	7.4	7.1	8.9	10.0	7.6	7.5	8.2	5.3
Incidence of long-term unemployment (% of unemployment)[c]	16.3	9.2	14.7	12.7	36.9	26.0	4.1	2.6	-	-	24.4	20.7
Incidence of temporary work (% of employment)[d]	-	-	33.0	35.6	37.5	33.2	28.1	27.8	-	-	17.3	18.8
Incidence of part-time work (% of employment)[e]	42.0	43.4	7.0	14.6	18.0	20.3	44.2	47.0	5.1	16.3	2.0	6.8
NEET rate (% of the age group)[f]	12.5	8.6	9.0	8.6	13.9	9.8	11.9	9.9	-	-	13.4	6.8
School drop-outs (% of the age group)[g]	21.0	14.3	10.8	13.6	15.8	14.2	12.5	9.9	-	-	6.5	6.1
Relative UR low skills/high skills (ISCED<3/ISCED>3)[h]	3.7	3.4	2.6	3.7	3.7	2.5	2.7	2.8	-	-	2.5	4.3

Table 2.1. **Scoreboard for youth aged 15-24,[a] 1999 and 2009** (*con'd*)

	Denmark		Estonia		Finland		France		Germany		Greece		Hungary	
	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009
Employment rate (% of the age group)[b]	66.0	63.6	28.2	28.9	41.8	38.5	20.7	30.1	47.1	46.6	26.8	22.9	34.1	18.1
Unemployment rate (UR) (% of the labour force)[b]	10.0	11.2	17.6	27.5	20.3	21.6	26.5	22.4	8.6	11.0	31.7	25.8	12.9	26.5
Relative UR youth/adult (15-24)/(25-54)[b]	2.3	2.2	1.8	2.1	2.4	3.3	2.5	2.9	1.1	1.5	3.2	2.9	2.1	2.9
Unemployment to population ratio (% of the age group)[b]	7.3	8.0	6.0	11.0	10.6	10.6	7.5	8.7	4.5	5.7	12.5	8.0	5.1	6.5
Incidence of long-term unemployment (% of unemployment)[c]	5.8	4.0	32.4	26.7	7.5	4.5	20.0	24.9	26.9	27.2	49.7	31.0	37.5	30.7
Incidence of temporary work (% of employment)[d]	29.7	23.6	7.9	8.3	47.5	39.0	54.4	51.2	53.1	57.2	28.8	28.4	11.1	21.4
Incidence of part-time work (% of employment)[e]	43.5	56.1	9.6	13.9	28.7	34.5	20.6	17.3	10.7	18.5	8.4	12.4	2.1	4.5
NEET rate (% of the age group)[f]	4.5	5.2	10.3	7.9	10.4	8.5	9.5	9.6	11.5	8.9	20.2	12.8	20.2	12.2
School drop-outs (% of the age group)[g]	9.8	15.8	8.9	10.9	9.4	9.3	28.9	13.3	14.4	12.7	26.2	16.9	19.0	12.6
Relative UR low skills/high skills (ISCED<3/ISCED>3)[h]	0.9	2.1	4.3	2.4	1.8	4.7	2.1	3.0	2.3	2.0	0.7	0.8	5.2	2.2

	Iceland		Ireland		Israel		Italy		Japan		Korea		Luxembourg	
	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009
Employment rate (% of the age group)[b]	65.1	61.7	48.2	36.3	27.8	27.6	27.3	21.7	42.9	39.9	27.6	22.9	31.7	26.7
Unemployment rate (UR) (% of the labour force)[b]	4.4	16.0	9.8	25.9	16.9	12.6	31.1	25.4	9.3	9.1	14.0	9.8	6.8	17.2
Relative UR youth/adult (15-24)/(25-54)[b]	3.2	2.6	1.9	2.4	2.4	2.4	3.4	3.7	2.3	1.8	2.4	2.8	3.4	4.1
Unemployment to population ratio (% of the age group)[b]	3.0	11.7	5.2	12.7	5.7	4.0	12.3	7.4	4.4	4.0	4.5	2.5	2.3	5.5
Incidence of long-term unemployment (% of unemployment)[c]	1.2	3.2	36.8	25.2	9.9	17.7	58.6	40.1	13.0	21.6	2.0	0.2	18.3	12.1
Incidence of temporary work (% of employment)[d]	23.8	26.9	11.9	25.0	-	-	26.2	44.4	22.8	25.5	40.2	47.5	17.4	39.4
Incidence of part-time work (% of employment)[e]	39.8	43.5	22.1	33.3	18.7	24.4	9.6	18.8	23.5	27.4	9.4	21.0	7.9	17.7
NEET rate (% of the age group)[f]	4.4	3.0	7.9	11.8	32.8	29.7	23.4	15.9	7.6	7.4	-	-	7.9	5.8
School drop-outs (% of the age group)[g]	31.8	26.1	17.1	10.8	9.2	7.3	30.9	21.4	4.0	4.5	-	-	25.9	16.4
Relative UR low skills/high skills (ISCED<3/ISCED>3)[h]	1.7	1.6	3.4	3.1	1.4	1.4	0.9	1.0	3.0	4.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.9

Table 2.1. **Scoreboard for youth aged 15-24,[a] 1999 and 2009** (*con'd*)

	Mexico		Netherlands		New Zealand		Norway		Poland		Portugal		Slovak Republic	
	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009
Employment rate (% of the age group)[b]	50.3	41.2	65.4	67.8	54.1	51.6	57.8	53.2	24.3	26.8	42.1	31.3	31.0	22.8
Unemployment rate (UR) (% of the labour force)[b]	4.1	10.0	7.1	7.3	14.2	16.6	9.6	9.2	30.0	20.7	8.8	20.0	33.8	27.3
Relative UR youth/adult (15-24)/(25-54)[b]	1.9	2.4	2.5	2.3	2.5	3.8	4.0	3.7	2.8	3.0	2.2	2.2	2.6	2.5
Unemployment to population ratio (% of the age group)[b]	2.1	4.6	5.0	5.3	9.0	10.2	6.1	5.4	10.4	7.0	4.1	7.8	15.8	8.6
Incidence of long-term unemployment (% of unemployment)[c]	0.1	1.2	19.9	10.7	11.2	2.7	0.7	2.1	26.9	16.2	24.3	26.8	36.5	38.0
Incidence of temporary work (% of employment)[d]	26.6	26.4	33.3	46.5	-	-	30.2	32.4	35.5	62.0	39.5	53.5	7.1	12.5
Incidence of part-time work (% of employment)[e]	-	-	50.7	63.9	38.1	41.1	40.8	48.7	13.5	11.3	6.7	9.8	0.8	4.5
NEET rate (% of the age group)[f]	23.1	21.8	5.2	3.8	-	11.7	5.2	5.4	14.6	9.3	10.3	10.5	22.3	11.4
School drop-outs (% of the age group)[g]	68.1	46.0	16.8	15.3	-	19.4	-	20.6	9.6	5.3	50.3	39.9	6.3	6.7
Relative UR low skills/high skills (ISCED<3/ISCED>3)[h]	0.5	0.6	4.0	2.5	2.1	1.9	3.2	3.4	1.7	1.2	0.8	0.6	3.8	4.0

	Slovenia		Spain		Sweden		Switzerland		Turkey		United Kingdom		United States	
	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009
Employment rate (% of the age group)[b]	30.6	35.3	34.4	30.8	43.8	38.0	64.8	61.9	39.7	28.9	60.8	52.1	59.0	46.9
Unemployment rate (UR) (% of the labour force)[b]	16.5	13.6	28.3	37.9	14.3	25.0	5.7	8.2	15.0	25.3	12.2	18.9	9.9	17.6
Relative UR youth/adult (15-24)/(25-54)[b]	3.1	2.5	2.0	2.3	2.3	4.0	2.1	2.2	2.6	2.1	2.5	3.1	3.1	2.1
Unemployment to population ratio (% of the age group)[b]	6.1	5.6	13.6	18.7	7.3	12.7	3.9	5.5	7.0	9.8	8.4	12.1	6.5	10.0
Incidence of long-term unemployment (% of unemployment)[c]	43.2	20.3	39.1	24.6	11.1	4.3	-	-	25.2	22.2	13.9	19.1	3.6	12.2
Incidence of temporary work (% of employment)[d]	54.3	66.6	70.1	55.9	50.1	53.4	45.9	52.0	26.5	15.0	12.6	11.9	-	-
Incidence of part-time work (% of employment)[e]	14.9	31.7	13.3	23.8	32.1	38.4	20.3	20.6	9.6	11.4	31.3	35.7	34.9	38.3
NEET rate (% of the age group)[f]	9.3	7.6	15.2	15.3	9.0	8.4	8.1	9.3	34.5	38.1	11.6	13.0	10.6	12.1
School drop-outs (% of the age group)[g]	4.4	3.9	32.4	35.6	8.0	7.9	9.0	8.9	61.6	46.6	18.6	12.1	13.9	9.5
Relative UR low skills/high skills (ISCED<3/ISCED>3)[h]	1.4	0.6	0.9	1.9	3.2	2.7	0.6	2.2	0.3	0.6	2.7	3.3	4.9	4.6

Table 2.1. **Scoreboard for youth aged 15-24,[a] 1999 and 2009** *(con'd)*

	EU-19[i]		OECD[j]		Total[k]	
	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009
Employment rate (% of the age group)[b]	40.3	35.8	44.7	40.2	42.8	38.9
Unemployment rate (UR) (% of the labour force)[b]	17.7	20.7	15.0	18.0	15.4	18.2
Relative UR youth/adult (15-24)/(25-54)[b]	2.4	2.8	2.5	2.7	2.5	2.7
Unemployment to population ratio (% of the age group)[b]	7.9	8.6	7.2	8.2	7.1	8.0
Incidence of long-term unemployment (% of unemployment)[c]	26.8	21.0	20.2	16.4	21.0	16.9
Incidence of temporary work (% of employment)[d]	32.4	37.5	31.9	35.8	31.8	35.9
Incidence of part-time work (% of employment)[e]	17.3	23.3	21.8	27.1	20.6	26.4
NEET rate (% of the age group)[f]	12.6	9.9	12.8	10.9	13.2	11.3
School drop-outs (% of the age group)[g]	18.8	15.0	21.4	17.0	20.0	16.1
Relative UR low skills/high skills (ISCED<3/ISCED>3)[h]	2.3	2.5	2.3	2.5	2.3	2.4

ISCED 3: International Standard Classification of Education referring to upper secondary education; NEET: neither in education nor in employment or training; UR: unemployment rate.

a) Youth aged 16-24 for Iceland, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States; youth aged 15-24 for all other countries. Youth aged 20-24 for school drop-outs.

b) Data for Estonia and Slovenia refer to 2002 instead of 1999; for Israel to 1998 and 2008 instead of 1999 and 2009;

c) Data for Iceland refer to 1998 instead of 1999; for Estonia and Slovenia to 2002 instead of 1999; for Israel to 1997 and 2007 instead of 1999 and 2009.

d) Data for Korea refer to 2003 instead of 1999; for Estonia and Slovenia to 2002 instead of 1999; for Mexico to 2004 instead of 2009; for Poland to 2001 instead of 1999.

e) Data for Australia refer to 2001 instead of 1999; for Estonia and Slovenia to 2002 instead of 1999; for Israel to 1997 and 2007 instead of 1999 and 2009; for Japan to 2002 instead of 1999.

f) Not in employment nor in education or training, 1998 and 2008. Data for Austria refer to 2002 instead of 1998; for Finland to 2003 instead of 1998; for Estonia and Slovenia to 2003 instead of 1998; for Israel to 2002 instead of 1998; for Ireland and Luxembourg to 1999 instead of 1998; for Mexico to 2004 instead of 2008; for United Kingdom to 2000 instead of 1998.

g) Share of youth not in education and without an ISCED 3 educational attainment; 1998 and 2008. Data for Austria refer to 2002 instead of 1998; for Finland to 2003 instead of 1998; for Germany, Iceland and Ireland to 1999 instead of 1998; for Estonia and Slovenia to 2003 instead of 1998; for Israel to 2002 instead of 1998; for Japan to 2003 instead of 2008; for United Kingdom to 2000 instead of 1998.

h) 1998 and 2008. Data for Germany refer to 2001 instead of 1998; for Estonia, Slovenia and Israel to 2002 instead of 1998; for Iceland to 2001 instead of 1998; for Japan to 2001 instead of 2008; for Luxembourg and Netherlands to 1999 instead of 1998.

i) Unweighted averages for the 19 OECD and EU countries.

j) Unweighted averages for the 30 OECD member countries.

k) Unweighted averages of all the 34 countries shown.

Source: National labour force surveys and *OECD Education database*.

Notes

1. By contrast to the unemployment to population ratio and the employment rate that refer to the whole age group, the unemployment rate measures the risk of unemployment of a particular sub-group, those young people who are *already* in the labour force. This sub-group tends to be small in countries where most young people are still full-time students in their early twenties.

2. The main difficulty posed by the way the NEET category is defined is that it can be understood only by what it is not: young people are NEET because they are neither in employment nor training nor in school. By definition, the category is a catch-all residual. The source used is the *OECD Education database*.

From:

Off to a Good Start? Jobs for Youth

Access the complete publication at:
https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264096127-en

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2010), "The youth employment challenge", in *Off to a Good Start? Jobs for Youth*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264096127-6-en

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