

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT TRENDS & POLICIES AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

ROMANIA



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CONFEDERATION
**SYNDICAT
EUROPÉEN
TRADE UNION**

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Youth Employment Trends & Policies After the COVID-19 Pandemic

Country report **Romania**



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. OVERVIEW OF KEY TRENDS	6
2. POLICIES FOR DIRECT YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT	8
3. POLICIES ON SOCIAL PROTECTION	11
4. POLICIES SUPPORTING EDUCATION / TRAINING OF YOUNG PEOPLE	14
5. YOUTH GUARANTEE POLICIES AND YOUTH POLICIES IN THE NATIONAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLAN	15
6. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY POINTERS	17
ANNEXES	19

ROMANIA



Overview of key trends¹

1

The situation of young people on the Romania labour market has remained challenging over the last years.² The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic led to the loss of jobs, primarily by young people in the service sectors, such as tourism, hospitality, food, and affected many young people negatively. The number of young people out of work increased, as employers reduced or stopped their recruitment activities and / or reduced the working hours to cope with decreasing demand. Especially the service industry, an important part of source of jobs for young people, was affected negatively.³

The youth unemployment rates have increased since the 2008 crisis (from 11.8% in 2008 to 13.1% in 2021) to the level where **the main issues for young people** are relating to both the lack of jobs and employment opportunities and the **quality of jobs available, especially the low wages**. Significant are also differences between the quality employment

opportunities available to young people in urban and rural areas. This translates into different labour market outcomes for young people in rural and urban areas.

Wages for young people in Romania have grown over the last decade but remain significantly below the EU average. In 2018 (latest data available), young people in Romania earned around EUR 10,000 per year, against the EU-27 average of EUR 22,000 per year. 60% of the working young people in Romania are paid the minimum wage (around EUR 500).

A key issue in Romania is a significant proportion of young people outside the labour market and formal education and training across the two crisis periods (the so-called NEET rate). The proportion of such young people has risen in Romania, indicating a lack of significant progress (from 13% in 2008 to 20% in 2021). **Romania has one of the highest NEET rates in EU-27.**

¹ The detailed statistics are provided in Annex 1.

² Chung H, Bekker S and Houwing H (2012) Young people and the post-recession labour market in the context of Europe 2020. Transfer 18(3): 301–317. Clauwaert S and Schoemann I (2012) The crisis and national labour law reforms: a mapping exercise. ETUI Working Paper 2012/04. Brussels: ETUI. Also Editorial (etui.org) .

³ [01-ETU BM2021-Chap2-Labour market and social developments crisis further entrenches inequality_0.pdf \(etui.org\)](#); Eurofound (2021), Impact of COVID-19 on young people in the EU, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

Many young people remain **at risk of poverty whilst working** in Romania (16% of employed in the 16-29 age group in 2021), which is one of the highest rates in the EU. However, this has decreased over the last years.

Similarly, nearly 36% of all young people (employed and unemployed) remain **at risk of poverty and social exclusion** in Romania (2021 data, against EU-27 average of 25%, **making Romanian youth situation one of the worst in European comparison**). This has improved slightly over the last years.

High is the proportion of **young people who are self-employed**. In Romania, this was 9% in 2021, against the EU-27 average of 6%, making it one of the countries with highest rates of young self-employed across Europe (together with Poland).

In Romania, few young workers are working on temporary work contracts (less than 6%, compared to over 30% for the EU-27 average).

Part-time employment is somewhat less popular (with 4% of young workers working part-time in 2021) and this has declined since the 2008 crisis. However, when working part time, many young people in Romania have to work part time so although they do not want to – because full time jobs are not available. The situation for involuntary part time employment for Romanian youth has not improved significantly between the two crisis periods.

Young people in Romania continue to work one of the highest numbers of **weekly working hours across the EU**. In 2021, this was 36 working hours per week across the EU, whereas Romanian young people worked 40.2 hours per week.



KEY TRENDS OF YOUTH IN ROMANIA

Unemployment rates

 **High youth unemployment**

13.1%

in 2021

Employed on a temporary basis

47% 

36% 

EU-27 Average 2021

NEET rate

20% **outside the labour market and formal education**
in 2021

One of highest rates in EU 

Risk of poverty and social exclusion

16% of employed
in the 16-29 age group in 2021

One of highest rates in EU 

Weekly working hours

40.2 
hours

36 
hours

Policies for direct youth employment support

2

The key policy change **adopted in the context of the 2008 crisis** in Romania was focussed on **changing the landscape of trade union representation and the position of collective bargaining**.⁴ The national collective bargaining agreements have been abolished, which led to the current situation where collective bargaining is now mostly undertaken at the individual employer level.⁵ At the same time the trade union right to organise public protests and strikes has been limited. Furthermore, an employee representative can be elected in addition to the trade union representative, who can also be competent in

the collective bargaining situations. Following the abolition of national collective bargaining in 2011, the collective bargaining coverage had declined from almost 100% in 2010 to approximately 35% in 2013. Data from the Labour Inspectorate in 2020 indicates a collective bargaining coverage of 32%.⁶

Currently, trade unions are also not allowed to have members who are not in employment, such as students, or pupils at the vocational training places. This means that information about the trade unions and the employees rights reaches young people only when they access employment.

⁴ Chung H, Bekker S and Houwing H (2012) Young people and the post-recession labour market in the context of Europe 2020. Transfer 18(3): 301–317. Clauwaert S and Scho“mann I (2012) The crisis and national labour law reforms: a mapping exercise. ETUI Working Paper 2012/04. Brussels: ETUI. Also [Editorial \(etui.org\)](https://www.etui.org)

⁵ Social Dialogue Law 62/2011 abolished collective bargaining at national level. At the same time, the new legislation replaced the branch collective bargaining with sectoral collective bargaining. The new legal framework decentralised collective bargaining by increasing the importance of the collective agreements at company level. Between 2011–2018, the only collective bargaining was mainly at company level, but it is not mandatory to reach a collective agreement as a result of the bargaining. Collective bargaining is legally binding only at company level and only in companies with at least 21 employees.

In January 2016, Law no. 1/2016 amended the Social Dialogue Law (no. 62/2011) and provided that in those units where the trade union is not representative (50%+1 of the company’s employees), the collective agreement can be concluded by the representative trade union federation to which the respective company union is affiliated. In such situations, the trade union federation is also entitled to conclude the collective agreement at the company level.

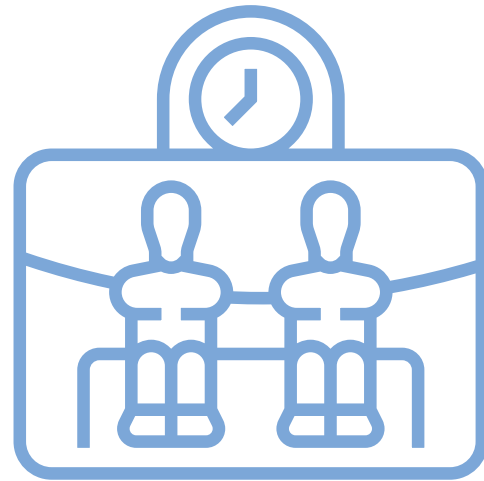
The abolishment of collective bargaining left approximately 1.2 million employees working in 450,000 companies with fewer than 21 employees uncovered. As for the respective companies, collective bargaining is not compulsory by law. Before Law 62/2011 came into effect, the law provided a mechanism for extending collective agreements to companies that were not affiliated to the signatory federation. Under the 2011 legislation, such a mechanism no longer exists. Living and working in Romania | Eurofound (europa.eu)

The regulation adopted in April 2020 restricted further the trade union rights to industrial action, extended the duration of those collective bargaining agreements which have been negotiated and postponed the possibility to renegotiate the collective agreements, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic situation.

The recent law adopted in November 2022 in Romania has seen a movement to reinstate some of the trade unions' competences and rights.

Policies adopted in Romania in the context of tackling the economic and social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic were not explicitly aimed at young people and young workers, rather at the workers and general population.⁷ Few measures were taken for young people, mainly focusing on the labour market, online education and higher education; with a limited focus on disadvantaged young people. The main focus of the policies was to preserve the existing employment levels. No explicit focus was put on improving the quality of existing jobs. The key economic and employment policy instrument used in the COVID-19 context was the short-term work scheme⁸, Romania spent relatively few resources on the scheme compared to other European countries. In Romania, job retention measures had a significant

impact on income stability and unemployment, yet their focus was more on employers and employees, and only marginally on all other categories (non-standard workers, self-employed people⁹). Trade unions in Romania heard of many experiences where young people were still asked to work full-time, being paid 75% of their salary (which was subsidised by the government, where workers in quarantine were entitled to 75% of their previous salary under the measures).



⁶ [Living and working in Romania | Eurofound \(europa.eu\)](#)

⁷ Eurofound (2021), Impact of COVID-19 on young people in the EU, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

⁸ [Q1-ETU BM2021-Chap2-Labour market and social developments crisis further entrenches inequality_0.pdf \(etui.org\)](#) Figure 2.8.

⁹ Baptista, I., Marlier, E., Spasova, S., Peña-Casas, R., Fronteddu, B., Ghailani, D., Sabato, S. and Regazzoni, P. (2021), Social protection and inclusion policy responses to the COVID-19 crisis. An analysis of policies in 35 countries, European Social Policy Network (ESPN), Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.



Interesting practice from Romania

Incentives to offer permanent contracts to young employed

Through Emergency Order No. 92 of 28 May 2020 establishing active support measures for employees and employers in the context of the epidemiological situation caused by the spread of coronavirus, Romania provided incentives to employers to offer permanent contracts to young people (aged 16–29) listed as unemployed by employment agencies. Employers hiring employees registered as unemployed in the records of the county employment agencies, respectively of the municipality of Bucharest, receive monthly, for a period of 12 months, for each employed person in this category, 50% of the employee's salary, but not more than 505 €. The costs incurred by the unemployment insurance budget were covered by EU funds. The intended long-term outcomes were the prevention of youth unemployment and the encouragement of long-term contracts for young people. The coordination between the bodies involved in the measure's implementation and the creation of an online platform that made the process quick and effective were key factors in the measure's success.¹⁰ However, his Emergency Ordinance apparently created jobs, but in practice the employers did not integrate those young people into the labour market or offered training, what interested the employers was primarily the state subsidy.

The focus of the **Public Employment Services** activity in Romania is on the assistance to the unemployed. Not many young people access and register with the PES as they perceive it as an old style institution, associate its procedures with a significant bureaucratic burden and red tape and do not consider it youth-friendly.

Currently, PES Romania does not have staff dedicated exclusively to work with the Youth Guarantee implementation. The average time for making an offer to a young person is within 4 months. In this respect, current PES in Romania does not have plans to train counsellors on how to work with young people.¹¹

¹⁰ Eurofound (2021), Impact of COVID-19 on young people in the EU, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

¹¹ PES Network (2021) European Network of Public Employment Services 2021 PES Capacity Questionnaire Part II: Monitoring of PES support of the reinforced Youth Guarantee. [PES Knowledge Centre - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://pescentre.europa.eu/)

Policies on social protection

3

Social protection systems should provide protection against the risks and needs associated with unemployment, sickness, parenthood and social exclusion. However, full social protection in Romania

is not, due to the various conditions attached, available to young people who are economically inactive or who have only recently entered the world of work.¹²

Interesting practice from Romania

Specific unemployment benefit for young graduates¹³

In Romania, a specific unemployment benefit is available for school (lower secondary/upper secondary, professional) or university graduates if they apply within 60 days of graduation and register with the local Labour Office. After a waiting period of two months, graduates without a contribution record can receive an allowance of 50% of the value of the reference social indicator (used to set social benefits) for a period of six months. Recent graduates must complete a waiting period of 60 days before receiving the unemployment benefit.



¹² Ghailani, D., Peña-Casas, R., Coster, S. and Regazzoni, P. (2021), 'Access to social protection for young people. An analysis of policies in 35 countries', European Social Policy Network (ESPN), Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

¹³ Ibid

Unemployment benefits remained the most difficult social protection scheme to access for some categories of non-standard workers and the self-employed (which are prevalent amongst the young workers), and there were no changes in the rules governing formal access for these groups in Romania. In Romania, the government expanded the list of employee categories that are eligible for workers as well as certain categories of self-employed.¹⁴

Those employed in the least stable employment situations are mostly young people (platforms, catering, other services) and not all have equal access to social security. Specific categories not entitled to unemployment benefits include, for instance: people employed on some types of civil law contracts for a specified task (Romania).¹⁵

In Romania, the self-employed (which is a popular choice for young people) often choose not to pay sickness insurance contributions as these are non-mandatory and reduce the monthly income. In Romania, the self-employed can, in principle, acquire unemployment insurance, on a voluntary basis, yet this is restricted to people aged 18 or over.

Access to healthcare is universal. In Romania, young people up to the age of 18, or 26, if they continue education, are covered by their parents' health insurance, via their educational institution in case of vocational training, or by the State (in case of unemployment or maternity/paternity).¹⁶



Employment status is the main factor contributing to variability of eligibility for maternity, paternity and parental leave. Some specific categories of non-standard workers are excluded from the schemes (such as self-employed).

¹⁴ Baptista, I., Martier, E., Spasova, S., Peña-Casas, R., Fronteddu, B., Ghailani, D., Sabato, S. and Regazzoni, P. (2021), Social protection and inclusion policy responses to the COVID-19 crisis. An analysis of policies in 35 countries, European Social Policy Network (ESPN), Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Ghailani, D., Peña-Casas, R., Coster, S. and Regazzoni, P. (2021), 'Access to social protection for young people. An analysis of policies in 35 countries', European Social Policy Network (ESPN), Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

In the context of combatting the COVID-19 pandemic, a one-off support measure was introduced for self-employed. In the context of tackling the COVID-19 pandemic, self-employed and freelancers not covered by any social protection mechanism and losing income due to COVID-19 were compensated for the 75% average gross wage, during the state of emergency.¹⁷ In Romania, the government also expanded the list of employee categories that are eligible for workers as well as certain categories of self-employed.

Besides, in Romania, there were no changes to the qualifying period for the unemployment benefit, and workers on temporary contracts may have been at

a disadvantage.¹⁸ The qualifying period remained 12 months of employment. The benefit was paid at 75% of the previous wage, for between 6 – 12 months.

Most of the measures adopted during the Covid-19 pandemic did not enable access to various benefits for those who previously had no access, but rather consolidated support for those who were already covered. Support for the unemployed was limited to those registered and already receiving unemployment benefit while the long-term unemployed – registered or not – had to rely on social assistance benefits (such as minimum income, child allowance and parental leave).

¹⁷ Eurofound (2021), Impact of COVID-19 on young people in the EU, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

¹⁸ [Social protection for atypical workers during the pandemic-2022.pdf \(etui.org\)](#)

Policies supporting education / training of young people

4

During the COVID-19 pandemic, in Romania, a national programme purchased 250,000 electronic devices with an internet connection for primary, lower secondary and upper secondary students in full-time or part-time education or taking evening classes.¹⁹

A key change in the recent years was the abolishment of the vocational schools. This means that young people wishing to pursue the educational pathway in the vocational area have to access vocational training offered directly by the employers, and receive training

directly on the job, whilst working (rather than attending a vocational school).

Romania has adopted comprehensive legislation on traineeships in recent years.²⁰ In Romania, the term “traineeship” is more exclusively used for university graduates who conclude a special training contract with an employer. Traineeships prior to the university graduation are usually called “internships”. Traineeships after graduation are considered the dominant form of open-market traineeships in Romania.

Interesting practice from Romania

Legal regulation of traineeships

These graduate traineeships have to be remunerated according to the national minimum wage and are under social security coverage because they are considered a form of employment, or, more specifically, a supplemental agreement to a regular employment contract. Among other requirements, traineeships cannot exceed six months. Trainees have to be supervised by a mentor, benefit from a programme of activities/training, and receive a formal evaluation upon completion. Key to success is the motivation of the mentor to supervise the trainee. Employers can apply for (limited) funding from public funds. According to law, traineeship contracts have to be registered with the respective labour authorities.²¹



¹⁹ Eurofound (2021), Impact of COVID-19 on young people in the EU, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

²⁰ European Network of Public Employment Services (2021) Study on Remuneration of Open-Market Traineeships in EU-27.

²¹ European Network of Public Employment Services (2021) Study on Remuneration of Open-Market Traineeships in EU-27.

Youth Guarantee policies and youth policies in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan

5

The Romanian Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan was presented in December 2013 and the scheme launched in January 2014. Still, Youth Guarantee scheme is not well known in Romania by employers or trade unions who argue that YG is not allocated sufficient budget to provide sufficient support to young people. This is certainly an area to improve, as Romania is one of the EU countries where at least 12.5% of the European Social Fund Plus in the 2014-2020 period has to be spent on the Youth Guarantee.²²

The assessment of the implementation of the Youth Guarantee by the European Commission noted limited improvements so far.²³ Under the Youth Guarantee, training does not yet match the needs of

the targeted beneficiaries, especially for NEETs with a low level of education. Challenges also remain as to partnerships with employers, monitoring (especially of the effectiveness of measures undertaken), and needs for follow-up data.

Almost two-thirds (64.2%) of those registered in the YG at any point during 2018 had been waiting for an offer for more than 4 months - slightly improved (decreased) since 2017 (- 2.3pp) but still well above the EU average of 48.6%. The proportion leaving to take up an offer within the 4-month target has also slightly improved (increased) from 40.2% in 2017 to 42.1% in 2018 but remains below the EU average of 46.7%. Coverage of the NEET population remains poor and has slightly deteriorated compared to 2017

²² The European Social Fund Plus, Member States with a NEET rate above the EU average (over the period 2017–2019) will need to devote at least 12.5% of the funds allocated to them to investments in young people, particularly in implementing the Youth Guarantee. <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-11320-2020-INIT/en/pdf>

²³ See Country Factsheet Romania, [The Youth Guarantee country by country - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&plugin=1)

(- 2.5 pp), with only 11.6% of all NEETs aged 15-24 covered by the YG in 2018.²⁴

The National Recovery and Resilience Plan for Romania envisages a significant overall financial expenditure of around 5.93% of GDP.²⁵ Policies in Pillar 6 of the Plan dedicated to children and youth, and education and skills, represent around 12.52% of the total Plan expenditure. Specific quality youth employment measures are not foreseen, with measures in Pillar 6 mostly oriented towards digitalisation in education system and the expansion of early childhood education.²⁶



²⁴ See Country Factsheet Romania, [The Youth Guarantee country by country - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

²⁵ [Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard \(europa.eu\)](#).

²⁶ Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard (europa.eu) ; also Simoes (2022) School to work transition in the Resilience and Recovery Facility framework. Youth oriented active labour market policies under Pillar 6. Study for the European Parliament, [School to work transition in the Resilience and Recovery Facility framework \(europa.eu\)](#).

Conclusions and policy pointers

6

MAIN POLICY PRIORITIES TO PROMOTE QUALITY JOBS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



► Need to improve the mandate and the possibility of trade unions to work with young people, and engage with them before they enter the labour market; in the context of overall strengthening of trade union competences and supporting the reinstatement of deep social dialogue at the tripartite level. Overall, young people below 35 years of age make up around 40% of trade union members represented in the project in Romania, both at the sectoral and confederal levels. Education and information about trade unions and the rights of young people at work need to be better reflected in the school curriculum.



► Improving social dialogue, so that trade unions and employers can advise on what are the necessary skills for current and future jobs in the labour market. Social dialogue and sectoral collective bargaining is also needed in order to improve the quality of jobs that employers offer to young people. Young people need to be better heard in the structures of social dialogue, where the consultations currently take place in a very short notice, and not consistently across all the relevant ministries.



► The reform of the Social Dialogue Law 62/2012 to once again have a collective bargaining system and outcomes at the sectoral level.



► Need to improve the work of PES with respect to youth, broaden their scope and focus on young people too, and ensure they address the needs of young people in employment, who might be seeking to change jobs, as opposed to being unemployed. It seems that the PES need to target to a greater extent those who are outside the labour market as well as those who are in the labour market and it seems necessary to open PES to those who are employed, not just unemployed.



► Improving the quality of offers, outreach and outcomes under the Youth Guarantee, making it more available and accessible to the young people. Youth Guarantee needs to be better promoted to young people, as well as improving the quality of its offers to young people in Romania. at the sectoral and confederal levels. Education and information about trade unions and the rights of young people at work need to be better reflected in the school curriculum.



► Making good use of funds available under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan for Romania for supporting youth. not consistently across all the relevant ministries. .

Annex 1

Detailed picture on young people situation on the labour market

In the two crises, many young people were left out of the labour market. Youth unemployment rates across the EU-27 have not declined when comparing the two crisis periods. On the contrary, in 2021, youth unemployment rate in the EU-27 at 13% was higher compared to 12.3% rate in 2008. The situation in the individual project countries is as follows. Spain and Italy continue to have the highest youth unemployment rates in the EU, which increased in the COVID crisis and do not show signs of improvement since 2020. Romania and Slovenia have lower overall rates, but they have increased in 2020-2021 compared to the 2008-2010 period. Here the situation is also not showing signs of improvement. In contrast, youth unemployment declined in Hungary and Romania, however, the rates are relatively high.

FIGURE 1 YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, ALL, EU-27 AND SELECTED COUNTRIES, SELECTED YEARS



Source: Eurostat, Youth unemployment by sex, age and educational attainment level [YTH_EMPL_090_custom_3603201], aged 15-29, accessed 17/10/2022.

Youth unemployment has also a gender dimension. In the project countries, consistently, more young women remained unemployed compared to young men, comparing both crisis periods.

TABLE 1

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, MEN AND WOMEN, EU-27 AND SELECTED COUNTRIES, SELECTED YEARS

Gender	2008		2009		2010		2019		2020		2021	
	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂
EU-27	12.8	11.9	15.3	16.4	16.6	17.5	11.8	12.0	13.3	13.3	13.0	13.0
Spain	18.5	17.9	26.6	30.2	30.0	33.3	25.4	24.1	29.9	28.5	27.2	26.8
Italy	17.7	13.5	20.4	16.8	21.8	19.2	23.9	21.2	23.6	21.0	23.5	21.4
Hungary	13.2	12.3	16.2	18.1	17.6	19.7	6.9	7.6	9.3	8.2	8.6	7.9
Poland	13.5	10.7	15.0	13.6	17.7	16.2	7.2	6.0	7.3	6.9	7.3	7.2
Romania	10.3	13.0	12.0	15.2	14.2	15.5	9.4	10.8	11.1	11.9	12.4	13.6
Slovenia	9.7	7.2	12.2	11.2	13.5	13.9	9.0	6.3	11.0	8.7	11.4	8.3

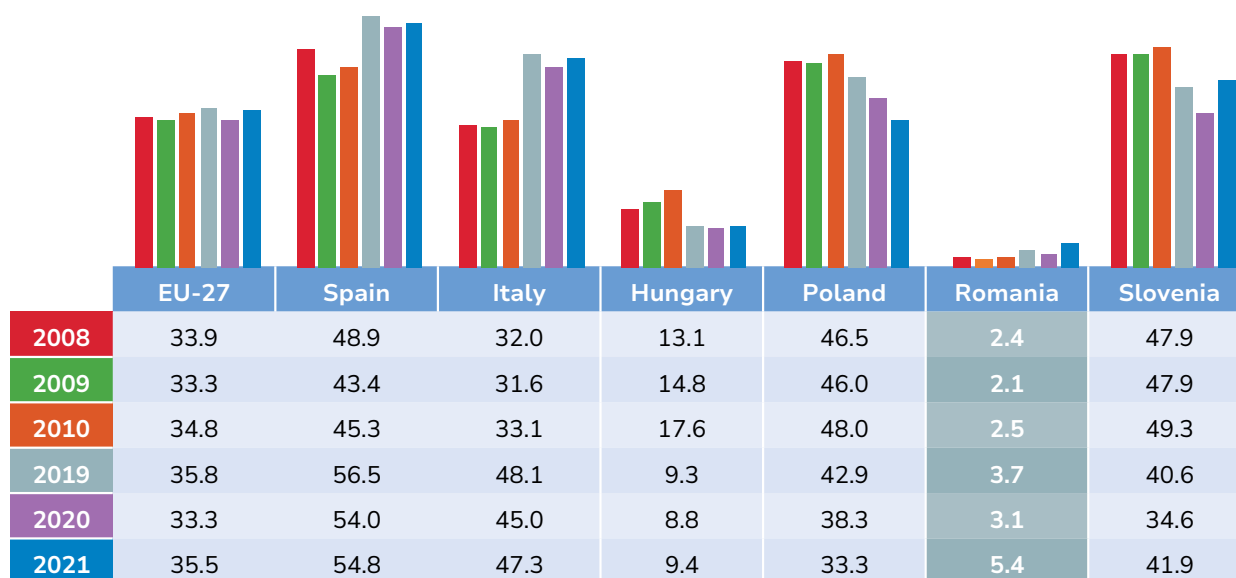
Source: Eurostat, Youth unemployment by sex, age and educational attainment level [YTH_EMPL_090_custom_3603201], aged 15-29, accessed 17/10/2022.

Even when able to get a job, young people continue to experience precarious work conditions on the labour market.

Across the EU, over a third of young people employed are working on temporary work contracts. This is particularly high in Spain, Italy, Slovenia and Romania, where almost half of young people are employed on a temporary basis. The situation is somewhat better in Hungary and less of an issue in Romania (albeit on a rise).

FIGURE 2

TEMPORARY YOUTH EMPLOYMENT RATE, ALL, EU-27 AND SELECTED COUNTRIES, SELECTED YEARS

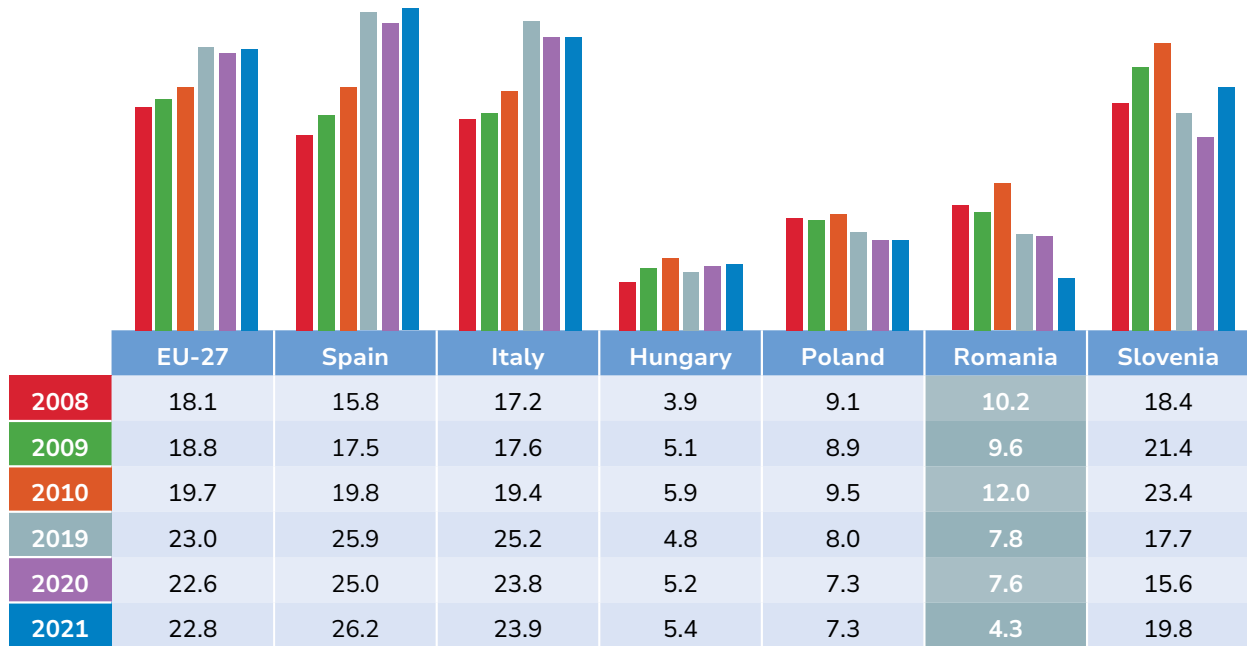


Source: Eurostat, Youth employment by sex, age and educational attainment level [YTH_EMPL_090__custom_3603201], aged 15-29, accessed 17/10/2022.

Also, part-time employment amongst young people is on the rise. This is the case across the EU and in the selected countries. Part time employment is especially high amongst young people in Italy, Spain and Slovenia.

FIGURE 3

PART-TIME YOUTH EMPLOYMENT RATE, ALL, EU-27 AND SELECTED COUNTRIES, SELECTED YEARS



Source: Eurostat, Part-time employment as percentage of the total employment for young people by sex, age and country of birth [YTH_EMPL_060_custom_3604126], accessed 17/10/2022.

Furthermore, when working part time, many young people have to do so although they do not want to – because full time jobs are not available. The situation has not improved significantly between the two crisis periods. On the contrary, involuntary part time employment for young people has risen substantially in Italy and Spain. Only minor declines are observed in Hungary and Romania (which has the highest rate in the EU at 60%).

FIGURE 4

INVOLUNTARY PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT AS PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, ALL, EU-27 AND SELECTED COUNTRIES, SELECTED YEARS



Source: Eurostat, Involuntary part-time employment as percentage of the total part-time employment for young people by sex and age [YTH_EMPL_080_custom_3604033], accessed 17/10/2022.

Next, a significant proportion of young people has remained outside the labour market and formal education across the two crisis periods. Across the EU, this figure has remained similar both in 2008 and 2021, indicating a lack of significant progress. The rate remains high especially in Italy and Romania, and has declined only slightly in Spain, Hungary and Slovenia. The proportion of such young people has risen in Romania.

FIGURE 5 YOUNG PEOPLE NEITHER IN EMPLOYMENT NOR IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING, EU-27 AND SELECTED COUNTRIES, SELECTED YEARS



Source: Eurostat, Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex, age and labour status (NEET rates) [EDAT_LFSE_20_custom_3605489], accessed 17/10/2022.

Also, the proportion of young people experiencing poverty whilst working has remained unchanged in the EU. It is particularly high in Romania, Spain and Italy. Whilst lower in Slovenia, Romania and Hungary, the trend of decrease has not been significant.

TABLE 2 IN-WORK AT-RISK-OF-POVERTY RATE, PROPORTION OF EMPLOYED 16-29 AGE GROUP, EXPERIENCING POVERTY

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
EU-27	9.3	9.8	11.1	10.8	11.0	10.5	10.4	9.8	9.8	9.7
Spain	9.8	9.9	16.2	15.8	15.1	20.0	16.3	16.7	10.9	13.0
Italy	11.8	11.5	12.2	12.6	12.0	12.4	13.1	12.0	11.4	13.1
Hungary	4.8	7.6	6.3	9.5	9.2	6.6	4.4	5.9	5.4	8.5
Poland	8.4	8.7	8.5	10.0	9.0	7.7	8.8	8.3	6.6	7.2
Romania	21.0	21.7	22.6	22.4	23.9	19.0	16.2	16.7	18.4	15.8
Slovenia	7.1	7.2	6.5	7.4	8.2	6.3	5.6	5.5	4.6	4.2

Source: Eurostat, In-work at-risk-of-poverty rate by age and sex - EU-SILC survey [ILC_IW01_custom_4422115], accessed 09/01/2023.

Similarly, the proportion of young people at risk of poverty and social exclusion remains high in the EU, affecting around a quarter of young people. This is particularly high in Romania, Italy and Spain, less so in Hungary, Romania and Slovenia.

TABLE 3**PROPORTION OF PEOPLE IN THE 16-29 AGE GROUP, AT THE RISK OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
EU-27	28.1	28.3	26.7	25.5	24.3	25.3	25.3
Spain	36.7	36.6	34.4	33.3	31.3	28.6	31.3
Italy	33.3	32.7	30.9	31.2	28.4	29.9	30.2
Hungary	32.6	30.9	26.6	21.9	19.7	18.0	20.3
Poland	24.4	23.1	19.4	19.9	19.2	18.0	17.6
Romania	47.7	48.3	45.9	39.8	37.2	37.6	36.1
Slovenia	19.0	18.2	15.5	14.1	12.3	12.2	11.5

Source: Eurostat, Persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion by age and sex [ILC_PEPS01N_custom_4441552], accessed 09/01/2023.

Earnings data available for young people show a slow increase in the wages for young people across the EU, over the years. In 2018, on average the annual earnings for young people were around EUR 22,000. Young people in Italy, Spain and Slovenia were earning wages around the EU average. In contrast, earnings for young people in Romania, Hungary and Romania were twice below the EU average, around EUR 11,000.

TABLE 4 MEDIAN ANNUAL EARNINGS, FOR PEOPLE AGED BELOW 30, IN EURO

	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
EU-27	:	:	18,912	20,274	22,402
Spain	15,462	17,375	20,274	20,697	21,203
Italy	:	21,151	23,291	25,649	26,001
Hungary	4,960	6,543	8,113	8,415	11,103
Poland	5,522	6,747	8,353	9,079	11,297
Romania	1,732	3,345	5,093	5,699	10,424
Slovenia	9,787	12,467	16,876	17,802	19,608

: missing data

Source: Eurostat, Structure of earnings survey: annual earnings [EARN_SES_ANNUAL_custom_4442459], accessed 09/01/2023.

TABLE 5

AVERAGE NUMBER OF USUAL WEEKLY HOURS OF WORK IN MAIN JOB, YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 15-34

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
EU-27	36.7	36.5	36.4	36.4	36.3	36.3	36.2	36.2	36.1	36.0
Spain	36.8	36.2	36.0	36.0	35.9	35.8	35.8	35.6	35.7	35.3
Italy	36.5	36.3	36.3	36.3	36.3	36.4	36.6	36.4	36.3	36.6
Hungary	39.5	39.6	39.9	40.0	39.7	39.8	39.7	39.7	39.5	39.4
Poland	40.4	40.4	40.4	40.5	40.4	40.2	40.2	40.2	40.0	40.1
Romania	40.4	40.3	40.3	40.0	40.1	39.8	39.7	40.0	39.8	40.2
Slovenia	38.0	38.1	37.7	37.7	38.0	37.5	37.7	38.2	38.6	38.3

Source: Eurostat, average number of usual weekly hours of work in main job, by sex, age, professional status, full-time/part-time and economic activity (from 2008 onwards, NACE Rev. 2) [LFSA_EWHUN2_custom_4444349], accessed 09/01/2023.

TABLE 6

SHARE OF SELF-EMPLOYED WITHIN TOTAL EMPLOYMENT, 2021

	15-29 age group	15-64 age group
EU-27	6	13
Spain	5	6
Italy	12	20
Hungary	6	11
Poland	10	18
Romania	9	11
Slovenia	5	12

Source: Eurostat, accessed 09/01/2023.



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