

YOUTHShare | A Place for Youth in Mediterranean EEA: Resilient and Sharing Economies for NEETs

Youth Unemployment Tops Policy Concerns of Southern Europe

YOUTHShare project investigates pathways to solution

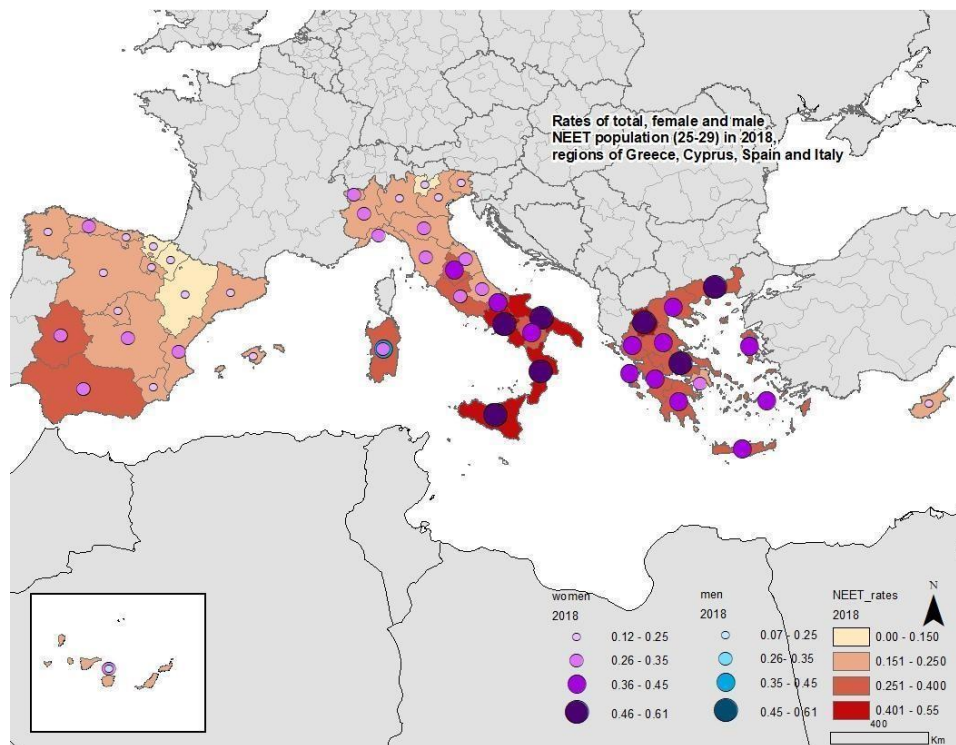
The European Parliament has recently issued its regular survey on the policy concerns of the EU citizens. The *Parlameter 2019*, part of the Eurobarometer, reveals alarming results regarding youth unemployment and its geographical distribution among EU countries.

Unemployment is a decades long issue plaguing the civil debate and policy making in Europe. The collapse of the “post-war consensus” from the end of the 1970s has undermined certainties such as the “full employment”. The last years, however, and regardless of the economic crisis, it is youth unemployment that looms as the new threat against the economic growth; among the several reasons, the most basic one being that youth with no labour experience will most likely fail to get a permanent and meaningful job now and in the future. In that way the growing bifurcation between the well-equipped personnel and the long-term unemployment, that depends upon social support, will spiral economic recession.

The above have been repeatedly confirmed through detailed statistical analyses and in-depth scientific research. Light has also been shed, amongst else, by the YOUTHShare project, on youth unemployment as a structural feature of Southern European economies. What is new is that youth unemployment leaves the scientific analysis and becomes a lay concern. If science has the tendency to ring early warning bells, then the fact that youth unemployment tops at the people’s policy concern translates to the high visibility and the emergency of the situation.

In its recent study on [the distribution of the youth that is Not Employed, in Education or in Training \(NEETs\) among the Southern European countries](#), the YOUTHShare

project has demonstrated the prevalence of this particular phenomenon. Indeed, youth unemployment with NEET characteristics appears to be a structural issue especially for the Greek, Cypriot, Italian and Spanish economies.

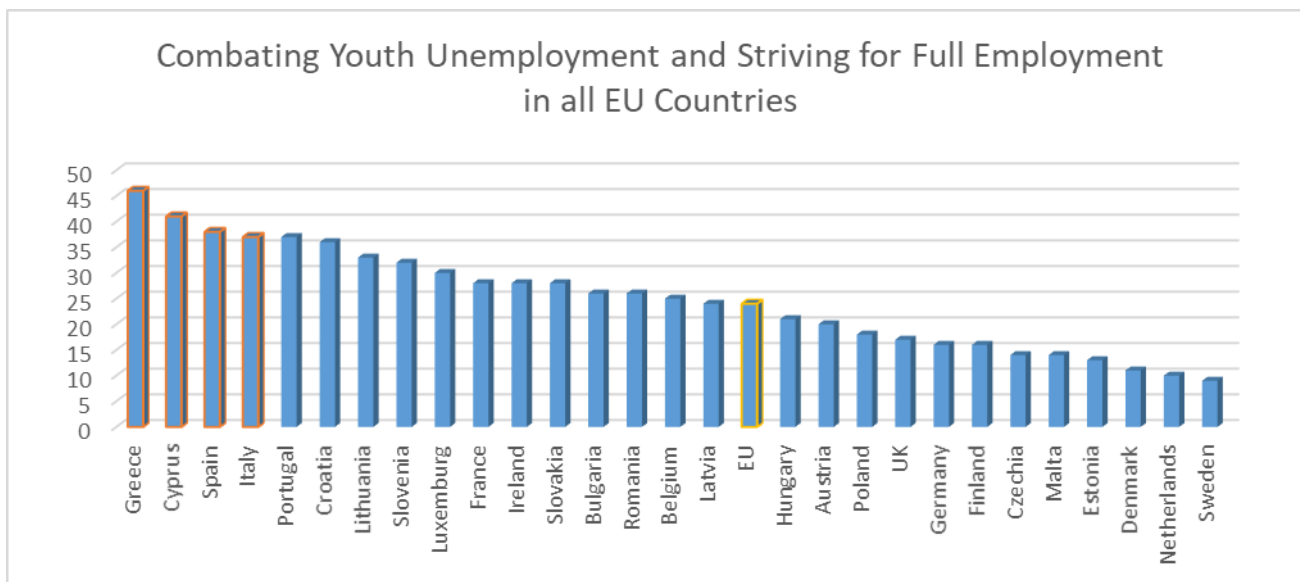


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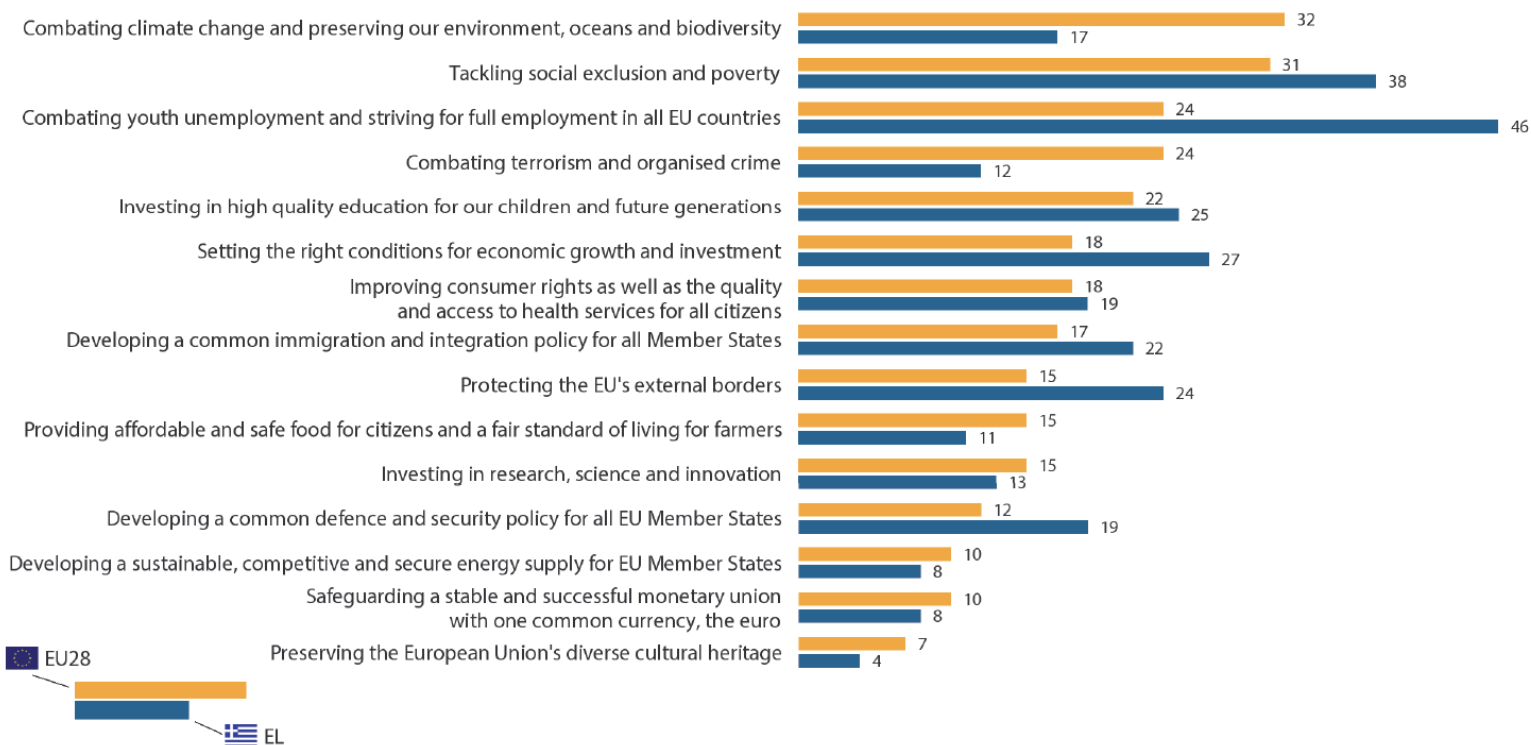
The Parlameter 2019 comes to confirm the above ascertainment, although, through the people's viewpoint. The concern "combating youth unemployment and striving for full employment in all EU countries" is the top priority in Greece, Italy and Cyprus exceeding by far the next concern "social exclusion and poverty" which is one of the most common among the rest of the EU countries. In Spain the social exclusion tops the concerns of the people with 39% of the answers followed by youth unemployment with 38%. Youth unemployment tops also the concerns in Slovakia and Croatia although in close range with other concerns.



Data from Parlameter 2019. Adaptation by YOUTHShare project

The Ranking of Concerns of Citizens in Greece

QB5T The EP makes decisions on European legislation which directly impacts every citizen's life. In your opinion which of the following should be given priority by the European Parliament? Firstly? And then? (MAX. 3 ANSWERS)



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The research conducted by the YOUTHShare project has demonstrated that the young NEET phenomenon is prevalent in the Southern European societies at least the last decade. The NEET population is persistently high in all study countries with uneven distribution among different regions. During the recent economic recession, the NEET rates have skyrocketed; in the post-crisis period the decreasing of the phenomenon is apparent but uneven among countries and regions. Finally, the age group 25 - 29 years old along with women and migrants are considerably more vulnerable to becoming NEETs compared to other population groups.



The people’s concerns echoed by the parameter survey, pinpoint a new danger, that of “mainstreamisation”. The effect of understanding the NEET issue not only as a structural phenomenon of the economy but also as a standard social feature in the popular mindset may lead to abatement of the pertinent concern as well as the pressure for effective policy adaptations.

The YOUTHShare project is already acting to prevent both effects. The NEETs phenomenon is put under the prism of in-depth analysis shedding light on the causes and potential methods of reversing the trend. The research staff of the project is already working on a multi-layer intervention strategy aiming in mapping the problem both in the sense of the regional concentration of NEETs but also in the sense of their social profiles. Up to date 44 long qualitative interviews with NEETs have been conducted in Greece, Cyprus, Italy and Spain. They have contributed in a better understanding of the phenomenon’s social dimensions and in structuring an intervention strategy that focuses on their actual needs. The impact of previous policy interventions countering the NEET phenomenon has been assessed with more than 70 interviews with key informants from employment organisations, social and sharing economy sectors in an attempt to form data-informed policy recommendations.



As the analysis of more statistical data and more interviews are on the way, a more detailed picture of the NEET phenomenon is gradually formed. YOUTHShare’s primary goal is to make the NEET person visible to the public and to deepen the understanding that the societies of the Southern Europe are reaching an alarming state regarding their cohesion.

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