

## Concept

### EVBB Working Group – NEETS

**2015/2016**

#### 1. Introduction

According to reports from the European Commission, unemployment in Europe affected 24.6 million people in August 2014. 5 million of these were only 15 to 24 years old.

Millions of young people are currently struggling to gain acceptance into training or employment positions. They feel confronted by a world with which they are becoming increasingly estranged. The economic recession has already driven many into unpaid work placement or even into unemployment. This situation has residual effects: lacking self-esteem, social exclusion, health problems, depression and even suicide.

Youth unemployment is without doubt a profound challenge for Europe's future. According to Eurofound, the costs incurred by so called NEETs (young people who are not in education, employment or training) through necessary social measures and missed revenue from taxes, so far total 153 billion euros, and thus 1.21 % of the European GDP.

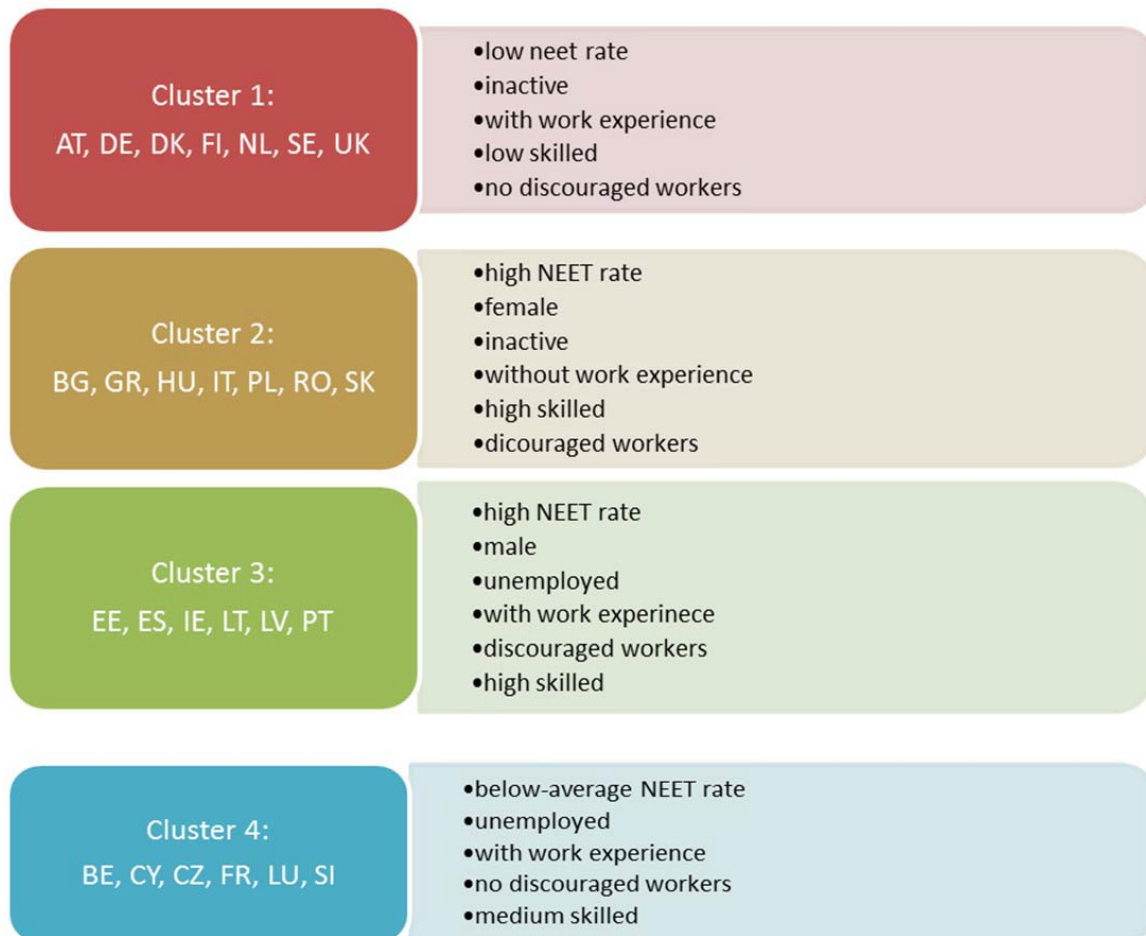
The international definition, which gives unemployment a very narrow definition and employment a rather broad one, carries the risk of underestimating the scale of the problem, especially with regard to young people. For this reason, the European labour market research and decision makers are focused on the NEET-indicator as a supplement to the youth unemployment rate. This is based on the assumption that this indicator will enable those young people to be recorded, who have already drifted further from the labour market. The NEET-indicator thus also represents, in a certain sense, a measurement of the social exclusion of young people and young adults.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It must be mentioned that not every NEET is at risk of social exclusion, just as not all socially excluded young people are recorded by the NEET-indicator, although a higher level of coverage can be achieved than by observing youth unemployment rates alone.

The characteristics of NEETs in Europe are very diverse:

The “European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions” in its 2012 publication: “NEETs. Young people not in employment, education or training: characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe” sets out 4 clusters in order to gain a general overview of the situation in Europe:<sup>2</sup>



<sup>2</sup> See [https://eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef\\_files/pubdocs/2012/54/en/1/EF1254EN.pdf](https://eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_files/pubdocs/2012/54/en/1/EF1254EN.pdf), p. 40

Austrian studies show that four primary factors contribute to an increase in NEETs:

- ✓ Impact of care obligations for infants (especially among young women)
- ✓ Impact of previous experiences of unemployment
- ✓ Impact of early school leaving
- ✓ Impact of illness and impairment

The effects of early school leaving are particularly significant, as these also contribute to the NEET-risk through an increased risk of unemployment and care responsibilities. This is consistent with the statement (relating to the German labour market) of Gieseke et al. (2010: 435), that “certificates of education and especially vocational training certificates still – and in certain areas even more so than in the past – have a lasting influence on the risk of marginalisation and exclusion”.

Further factors, albeit more difficult to define, are the affected individuals’ own attitudes to their NEET-status and the existing individual circumstances, which mirror the inequality of opportunities within society.

Qualitative interviews with (former) NEETs shows that three factors are particularly relevant to a successful exit from a NEET status:

- ✓ They need to take a differentiated approach and relate to the life conditions and environment of the young person.
- ✓ They need to be structured in a close meshed safety net – a combination of different aspects to cover complex requirements and coordination through case management, to prevent people from falling through.
- ✓ They should place young people at the centre of focus, take their opinions and needs seriously, meet them at eye-level and be structured as interactively as possible (reinforcement, empowerment, self-determination).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See current state of international research (Tunnard 2008, Maguire/Thompson 2007, Simmon/Thompson 2011, Tanner et al. 2007)

## 2. Topics/Goals

of the EVBB working group on the subject of NEETs could be – detailed content will be set down at the first meeting:

- ✓ Discussion and formulation of innovative concept ideas und recommendations for measures to reduce the percentage of early school leavers (intersection education/employment) under consideration of the previously presented factors of NEET-risk.
- ✓ Analysis, discussion and further development of best practice examples from different European countries and transfer-concepts and ideas in other European countries.
- ✓ Development of a catalogue of measures for (new/country specific) target groups in NEET (1. migrant generation, mothers with further education interests or requirements, apprenticeship graduates in agriculture,...).
- ✓ Discussion and (further) development of concepts for measures which address the individual needs of young people, are low-threshold, comprehensive and flexible, are implemented in time and have a lasting impact.
- ✓ Development of project concepts to be submitted to European programmes (interreg; Erasmus plus).

### Organisation:

- ✓ Meetings to take place 3 times in the period summer 2015 to summer 2016
- ✓ 2-day
- ✓ In Linz
- ✓ Kick-off meeting summer 2015
- ✓ Nomination of participants until 31. May to: [sabine.stellnberger@bfi-ooe.at](mailto:sabine.stellnberger@bfi-ooe.at)
- ✓ Travel and accommodation costs to be carried by the participants or their organisations
- ✓ Working language is English
- ✓ Working group leader: Petra Drews-Milalkovits

***“The labour market in Europe is constantly evolving. Therefore, also the skills, competences, and qualifications that people need change over time. People need to have a variety of skills and in particular transversal skills for employability and active citizenship, such as digital competences, entrepreneurship, etc. Unfortunately, evidence tells us that too many people in the EU still do not have these competences.”***

Godelieve Van den Brande, European Commission, DG Education and Culture, Nov. 2014