**Spain: improving youth opportunities: the 2019 Action plan for youth employment**

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**Challenges faced by the Spanish youth population, such as low pay, high unemployment and low qualification levels, are the key drivers of the Action plan for youth employment put in place by the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security to offer all young people better opportunities for training, employment and decent work.**

The labour ministry has committed to contributing to the development of a new productive model and long-term strategies to support innovation in specific sectors or branches. The [***Action plan for youth employment***](https://www.sepe.es/SiteSepe/contenidos/personas/encontrar_empleo/pdf/Plan-de-Choque-Empleo-Joven-2019-2021.pdf)includes the following objectives:

* establishment of a new economic model based on productivity and added value; and of a labour framework for quality employment and dignity at work;
* supporting the capacity, means and resources of public employment services (PES) to offer adequate individualised support;
* more qualifications and job placements that provide skills for employment;
* assisting young people in taking charge of their own labour market integration and upskilling processes;
* development of specific training in equal opportunities between women and men to eliminate gender biases, fight horizontal segregation and reduce the gender wage gap;
* motivating young people who do not seek employment because they believe they will not find any;
* focus on, and special attention to, particularly vulnerable groups (migrants, long-term unemployed, school dropouts, people with disabilities, etc.).

Quantitative targets were also set:

* to reduce youth unemployment rate to 23.5%;
* to increase activity rate to 73.5% for young people aged 20 to 29 (58.73% in the third quarter of 2018), and at least by 1% for men and 3% for women;
* 20% reduction in the gender gap between young men and women in registered unemployed;
* to increase by 15% each year the number of permanent contracts among young people;
* to offer training for core skills to unemployed young people:

- key skills/Spanish and maths (at least 43% of registered unemployed with no qualifications);  
- language skills (30%)  
- strategic sector skills (25%);  
- digital skills at basic and higher levels for 225 000 young people;

To achieve these objectives by the end of 2021, the action plan comprises 50 measures, divided into six axes (guidance, vocational training, employment opportunities, equal opportunities, entrepreneurship, and improvement of the institutional framework), with a EUR 2 000 million budget. Measures included in this plan are in line with goal 8 of the [**2030 agenda for sustainable development**](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/) (SDGs) and aim specifically to contribute to target 8.6 ’By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training’.

The Autonomous Communities collaborated in its preparation and the most representative trade union and business organisations were consulted. Local entities, different social and economic stakeholders, and other public and private institutions responsible for youth, education and social services (such as higher education guidance and counselling services, the national institute for youth-INJUVE, social services of the Autonomous Communities) also made contributions.