

Benefits receipt and youth poverty in Latvia (Investing in Youth: Latvia)

Social benefits have played a key role in cushioning the effects of the crisis for young people: Unemployment benefit receipt rates among youth doubled but have since returned to pre-crisis levels, social assistance benefit levels increased, and receipt of housing benefits is much more frequent today than before the crisis. Post-crisis benefit receipt rates in Latvia are relatively high by OECD standards, which, however, mostly reflects receipt of non-means-tested family benefits. Few NEETs are covered by unemployment benefits, and there appears to be no strong conditionality on job-search behaviour. Inactive NEETs tend to be covered better than the unemployed, in particular by disability and family benefits. The growing share of disability benefit recipients might however be a reason for concern, especially since exit rates from disability benefit receipt are extremely low. Youth poverty in Latvia has strongly risen during the crisis, but is nearly back to precrisis levels. It is generally less severe than working-age or adult poverty, but there is significant regional variation.

Country: [Latvia](#) [1]

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Knowledge Type: [Country report](#) [2]

Other Tag: [training](#) [3]

[copyright](#) [4]

[base of the pyramid](#) [5]

[international research and development networks](#) [6]

[labour demand](#) [7]

[middle income countries](#) [8]

[national innovation systems](#) [9]

[policy assessment](#) [10]

[public understanding of science](#) [11]

[second stage of tertiary education](#) [12]

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Links

[1] <https://www.innovationpolicyplatform.org/country/latvia>

[2] <https://www.innovationpolicyplatform.org/knowledge-type/country-report>

[3] <https://www.innovationpolicyplatform.org/topic/training>

[4] <https://www.innovationpolicyplatform.org/topic/copyright-0>

[5] <https://www.innovationpolicyplatform.org/topic/base-pyramid>

[6] <https://www.innovationpolicyplatform.org/topic/international-research-and-development-networks>

[7] <https://www.innovationpolicyplatform.org/topic/labour-demand>

[8] <https://www.innovationpolicyplatform.org/topic/middle-income-countries>

[9] <https://www.innovationpolicyplatform.org/topic/national-innovation-systems>

[10] <https://www.innovationpolicyplatform.org/topic/policy-assessment>

[11] <https://www.innovationpolicyplatform.org/topic/public-understanding-science>

[12] <https://www.innovationpolicyplatform.org/topic/second-stage-tertiary-education>

[13] <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264240407-en>