

## Executive summary (Investing in Youth: Latvia)

The situation of youth in the Latvian labour market has changed dramatically over the last decade. After plummeting in the years of catch-up growth since the mid-2000s, unemployment among 15 to 29 year-olds increased threefold during the recent deep recession of 2009 to reach 28.3% of active youth in 2010. The share of youth not in employment, education or training (the NEET rate) soared to 22%. The economic recovery that started in 2011 allowed for a quick return of NEET rates back close to the OECD average – a trend that was not observed in many other countries heavily hit by the crisis. In 2013, the NEET rate was 16.5%, and it continues to decline. The main driver of the recovery for youth was however not job creation but the demographic situation: the strong increase in employment rates since 2010 can be explained primarily by a decline of the youth population, due to both low birth rates and high emigration, while the number of youth in employment increased only little.

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