



BRIEFING PAPER

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Youth Unemployment Statistics

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A photograph of a bright green sign for 'job centre plus' mounted on a brick wall. The sign is tilted and features the text 'job centre plus' in a bold, sans-serif font. 'job' and 'plus' are in white, while 'centre' is in a yellow-to-white gradient.

*job
centre
plus*

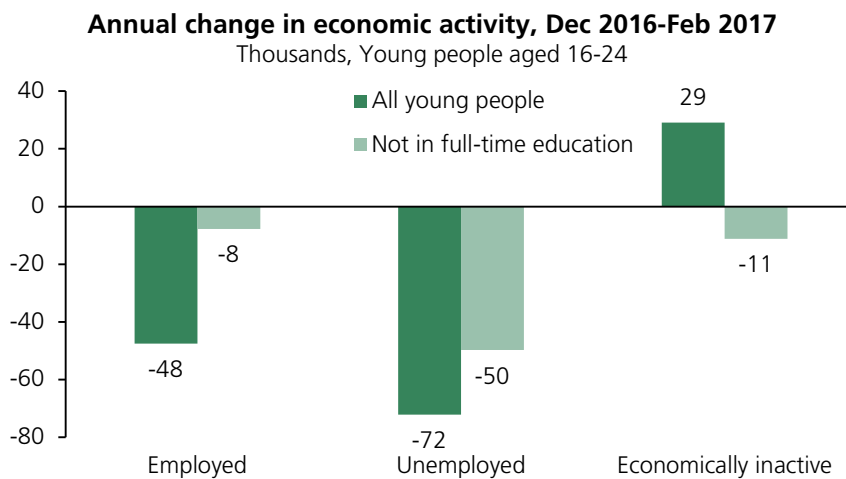
1. Youth Unemployment Statistics

558,000 young people aged 16-24 were unemployed in December 2016-February 2017, down 14,000 from the previous quarter and down 72,000 compared to a year ago.¹

The unemployment rate (the proportion of the economically active population who are unemployed) for 16-24 year olds was 12.4%, down from 13.7% a year ago.

Excluding young people in full-time education, 365,000 people aged 16-24 were unemployed in December 2016-February 2017, down 15,000 from the previous quarter and down 50,000 from a year earlier.

The unemployment rate for 16-24 year olds not in full-time education was 10.9%, compared to 12.1% a year ago.



Unemployment by age

The unemployment rate for people aged 18-24 was 10.8% in December 2016-February 2017, down from 12.2% the year before. 431,000 18-24 year olds were unemployed, while 1.73 million were economically inactive (not in work and not looking or available for work).



¹ All data are taken from ONS [Labour Market Statistics bulletins](#) and are seasonally adjusted unless otherwise stated.

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127,000 16-17 year olds were unemployed in December 2016-February 2017, compared to 933,000 who were economically inactive. The unemployment rate for 16-17 year olds was estimated at 25.4%, about the same as a year earlier. This rate is higher than levels seen in the 1990s and early 2000s. This is explained by increasing numbers staying in full-time education so that fewer 16-17 year olds are economically active (the unemployment rate is calculated as a proportion of the economically active population).

These figures for 16-17 year olds are more volatile than the estimates for 18-24 year olds, since they are based on a smaller number of survey responses.

Long term youth unemployment

81,000 people aged 16-24 had been unemployed for over 12 months at December 2016-February 2017, down 15,000 on the previous quarter and down 31,000 on the previous year.

14.5% of unemployed 16-24 year olds had been unemployed for over 12 months.

Men and women

335,000 men aged 16-24 were unemployed in December 2016-February 2017, down 22,000 from a year ago. The unemployment rate for men in this age group was 14.3%, compared to 14.9% a year ago.

224,000 women aged 16-24 were unemployed, down 50,000 compared to a year ago. The unemployment rate for women aged 16-24 was 10.4%, compared to 12.4% a year ago.

People claiming unemployment benefits

On a non-seasonally adjusted basis, 173,200 people aged 18-24 were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance or were claiming Universal Credit and required to seek work in March 2017. This was down 4,400 from a year earlier.

Universal Credit appears to follow a different seasonal pattern to Jobseeker's Allowance. Furthermore, under Universal Credit, a broader span of claimants are required to look for work than under Jobseeker's Allowance. This has the effect of increasing the number of unemployed claimants.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) believes that due to the impact of Universal Credit, seasonally adjusted data on the claimant count "may now be providing a misleading representation of the UK labour market".²

The effect is most visible in areas operating Universal Credit "Full Service" (where rollout of Universal Credit is more advanced). Most jobcentre areas have not yet moved to "Full Service" but will do so over the course of 2017 and 2018. For more details see the Library's briefing paper on [Universal Credit and the claimant count](#).

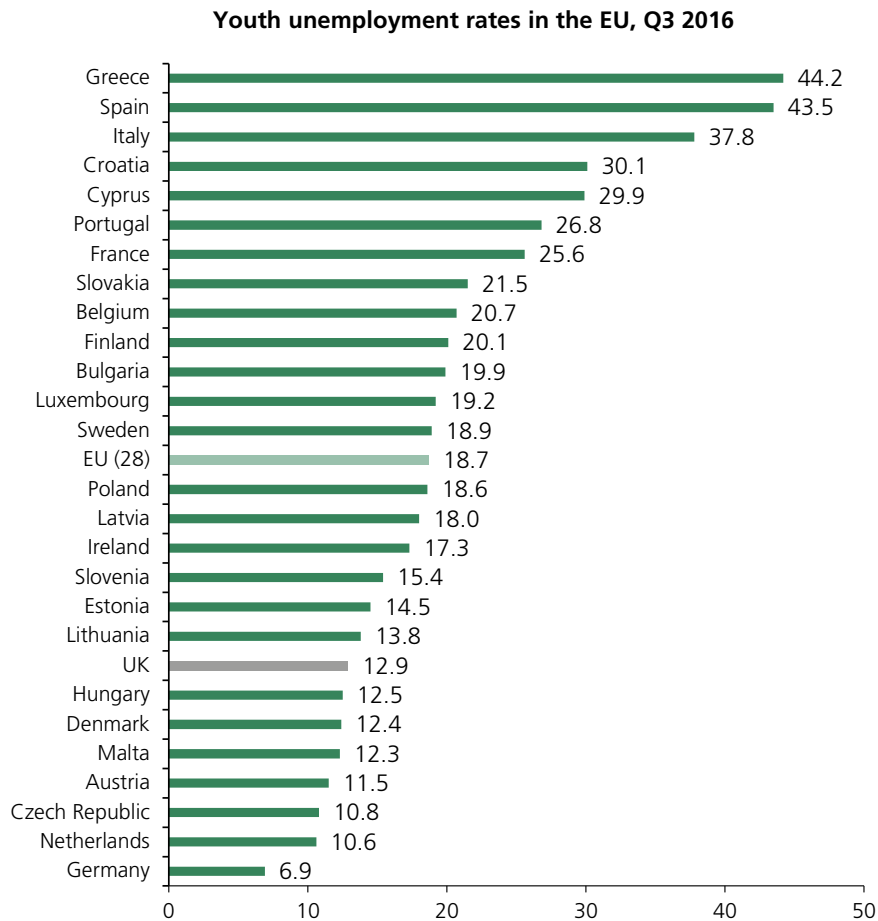
² ONS, [Publication arrangements for the Claimant Count](#), 23 February 2017

2. Youth Unemployment across Europe

The chart below shows the youth unemployment rate in all European Union countries. Figures are published by Eurostat (the European statistical authority) and therefore may differ from what is published elsewhere in this note.

Greece had the highest rate of youth unemployment in Quarter 3 of 2016, at 44.2%. Germany had the lowest youth unemployment rate at 6.9%.

The UK had a youth unemployment rate of 12.9% compared to the European Union average of 18.7%.



Notes: Seasonally adjusted

Rate refers to the percentage of economically active young people, aged 15-24, who are unemployed.

Data for Romania unavailable

Source: Eurostat

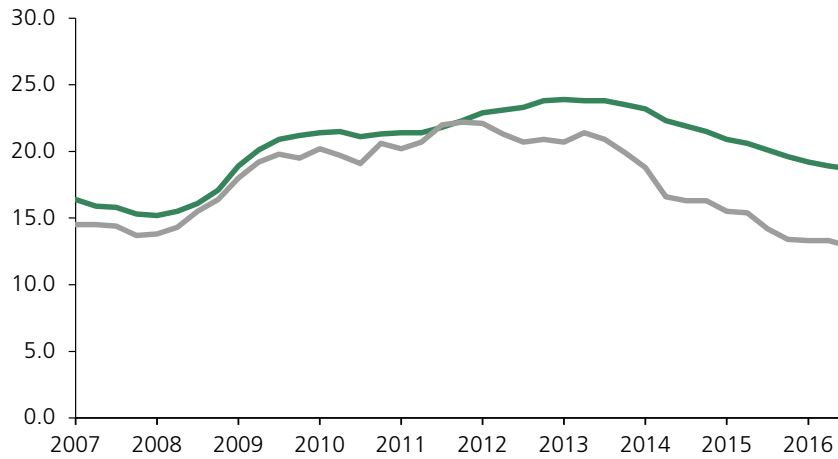
Historic European Union youth unemployment

Since 2013 the youth unemployment rate in the EU and UK has been falling. The UK rate of youth unemployment has been falling faster than

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in the EU as a whole. Between Q3 2013 and Q3 2016 the youth unemployment rate fell by 8.0 percentage points in the UK, compared to a fall of 5.1 percentage points in the EU as a whole.

Rate of youth unemployment , UK and EU, 2007- 2016



Notes: Seasonally adjusted

Rate refers to the percentage of economically active young people, aged 15-24, who are unemployed.

Source: Eurostat

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