



**BRIEFING PAPER**

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# Youth Unemployment Statistics

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1. Youth Unemployment Statistics
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A photograph of a bright green sign with the text 'job centre plus' in white and yellow. The sign is set against a brick wall background.

*job  
centre  
plus*

# 1. Youth Unemployment Statistics

545,000 young people aged 16-24 were unemployed in April-June 2017, 17,000 fewer than the previous quarter and 78,000 fewer than the year before.<sup>1</sup>

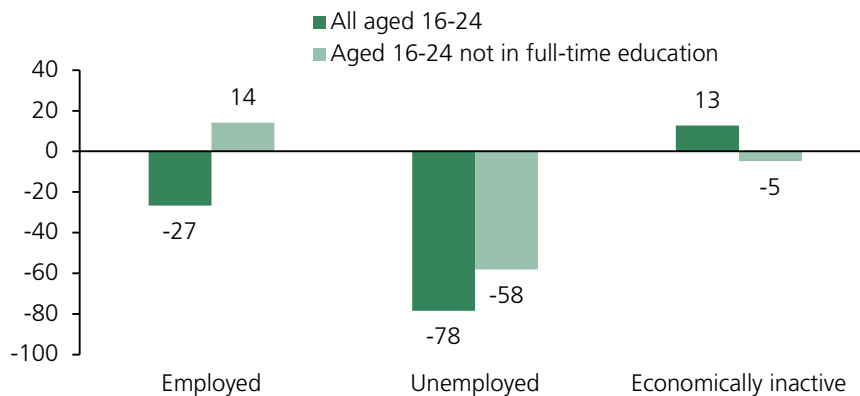
The unemployment rate (the proportion of the economically active population who are unemployed) for 16-24 year olds was 12.2%, down from 13.6% a year ago.

Excluding young people in full-time education, 359,000 people aged 16-24 were unemployed in April-June 2017, slightly lower than the previous quarter but down 58,000 from the year before.

The unemployment rate for 16-24 year olds not in full-time education was 10.6%, compared to 12.1% a year ago.

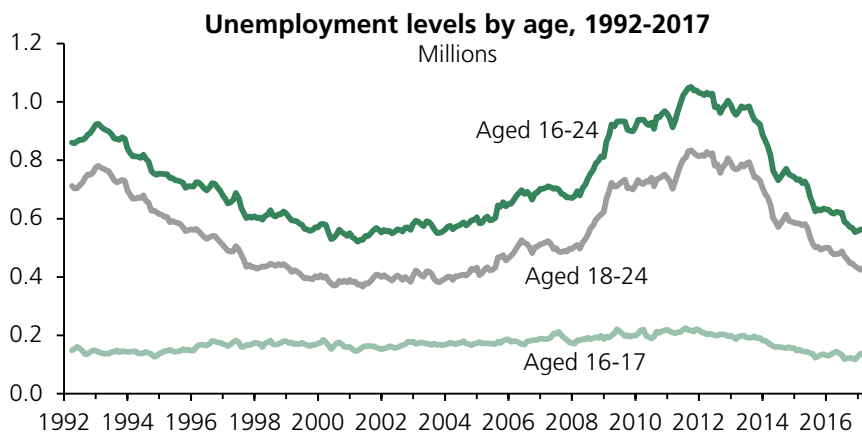
Figures are based on a survey so some of the reported changes may arise from survey error rather than actual movements in the levels.

**Annual change in economic activity, April-June 2017** (Thousands)



## Unemployment by age

The unemployment rate for people aged 18-24 was 10.8% in April-June 2017, down from 11.8% a year ago. 434,000 18-24 year olds were unemployed, while 1.68 million were economically inactive (not in work and not looking or available for work). 3.58 million were in work.



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

### 3 Youth Unemployment Statistics

111,000 16-17 year olds were unemployed in April-June 2017, compared to 964,000 who were economically inactive and 346,000 in employment.

The unemployment rate for 16-17 year olds was estimated at 24.3%. The rate is higher than it was in the 1990s and early 2000s, despite there being a lower number of 16-17 year olds unemployed. 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**

79,000 people aged 16-24 had been unemployed for over 12 months at April-June 2017, a slight decrease from the previous quarter and 23,000 lower than a year ago.

15% of unemployed 16-24 year olds had been unemployed for over 12 months, down from 16% a year ago.

#### **Men and women**

318,000 men aged 16-24 were unemployed in April-June 2017, down 43,000 from a year ago. The unemployment rate for men in this age group was 13.7%, compared to 15.3% a year ago.

227,000 women aged 16-24 were unemployed, down 35,000 compared to a year ago. The unemployment rate for women aged 16-24 was 10.6%, compared to 11.8% a year ago.

#### **People claiming unemployment benefits**

Not adjusting for seasonal effects, 157,100 people aged 18-24 were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance or were claiming Universal Credit and required to seek work in July 2017. This is 2,200 fewer than a year ago.

These numbers are, however, highly seasonal and are impacted by the ongoing rollout of Universal Credit. 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 compared to the previous system. Additionally, Universal Credit appears to follow a different seasonal pattern to Jobseeker's Allowance.

The effect of Universal Credit is most visible in areas operating Universal Credit "Full Service" (where rollout 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](#).

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

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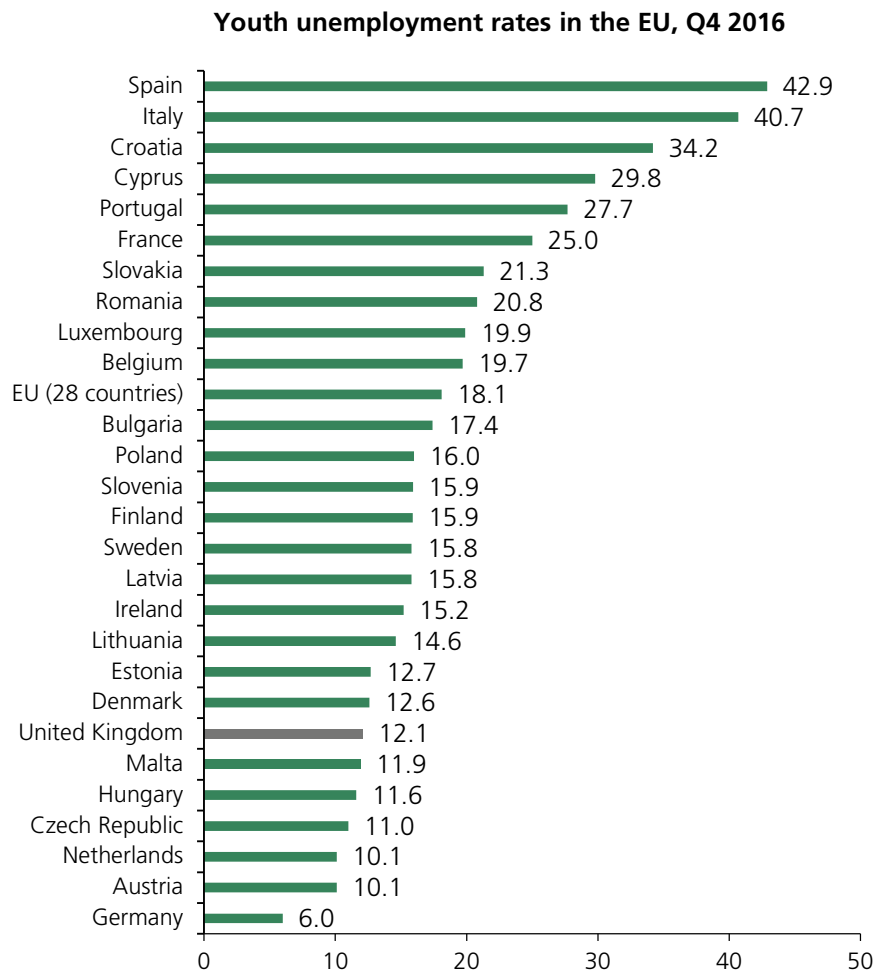
<sup>2</sup> ONS, [Publication arrangements for the Claimant Count](#), 23 February 2017

## 2. Youth Unemployment across Europe

The chart below shows the youth unemployment rate across 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 4 of 2016, at 42.9%. Germany had the lowest youth unemployment rate at 6.0%.

The UK had a youth unemployment rate of 12.1% compared to the European Union average of 18.1%.



**Notes:** Seasonally adjusted

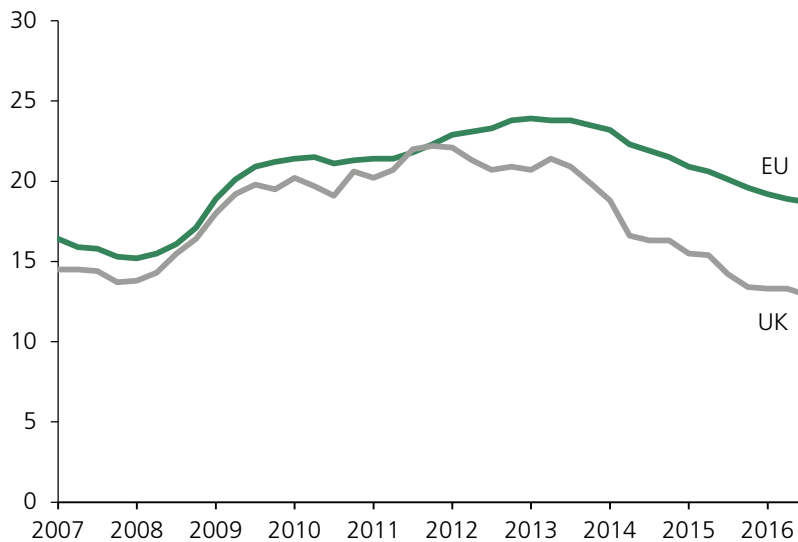
Rate refers to the percentage of economically active young people, aged 15-24, who are unemployed.

**Source:** Eurostat

### Recent trend in youth unemployment in the EU

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 in the EU as a whole. Between Q4 2013 and Q4 2016 the youth unemployment rate fell by 6.7 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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