



SOCIO-LABOR ANALYSIS

**THE YOUTH
SITUATION
IN EUROPE**



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Introduction

The year 2020 and the first months of 2021 have been characterized by COVID-19 and its consequences. One of the most important consequences is, without a doubt, the economic impact it has had on the working class throughout Europe and around the world. But are you doing it the same way in all countries?

A few months ago, we found out that young people are the "Buried Generation", because this productive model is killing our life projects and our **right to decent work and housing has become a privilege**. Lack of stability and precariousness is marking our lives, when we had not yet recovered from the 2008 economic crisis caused by the capitalism system, we must once again face a new crisis arising from the lack of care in society.

The main aim of this report is to serve as a radiography of the current socio-labor situation of European youth. Avalot is the first youth union in our country and one of the first in Europe, with a close relationship with other different European youth unions. For the preparation of this report we have had the participation of the various European unions that have provided us with information on their countries and with which we have met to exchange knowledge on the situation of young people throughout Europe, while establishing synergies to encourage networking.

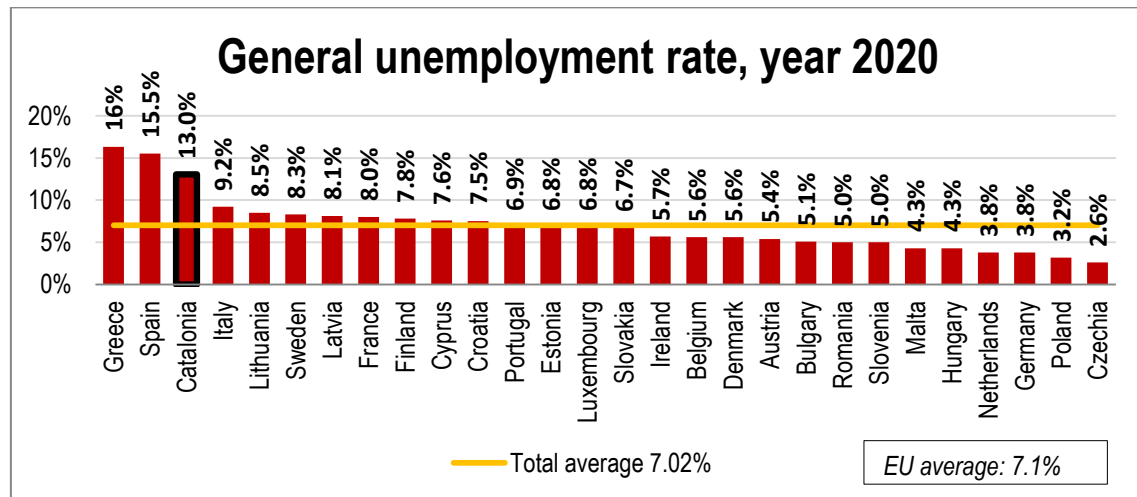
From *Avalot - Joves de la UGT de Catalunya* we want to insist on the gravity of the situation that suffers the youth of Catalonia and all Europe. We are the best prepared generation in history but with many difficulties to develop our personal and professional life project with guarantees and security.

The fight against job security and the defense of a productive model that ensures decent conditions for young workers, has always been the highest priority for our organization and from Avalot we will not stand idly by watching as the young Catalans are systematically discriminated against by the adult-centric society in which we live.

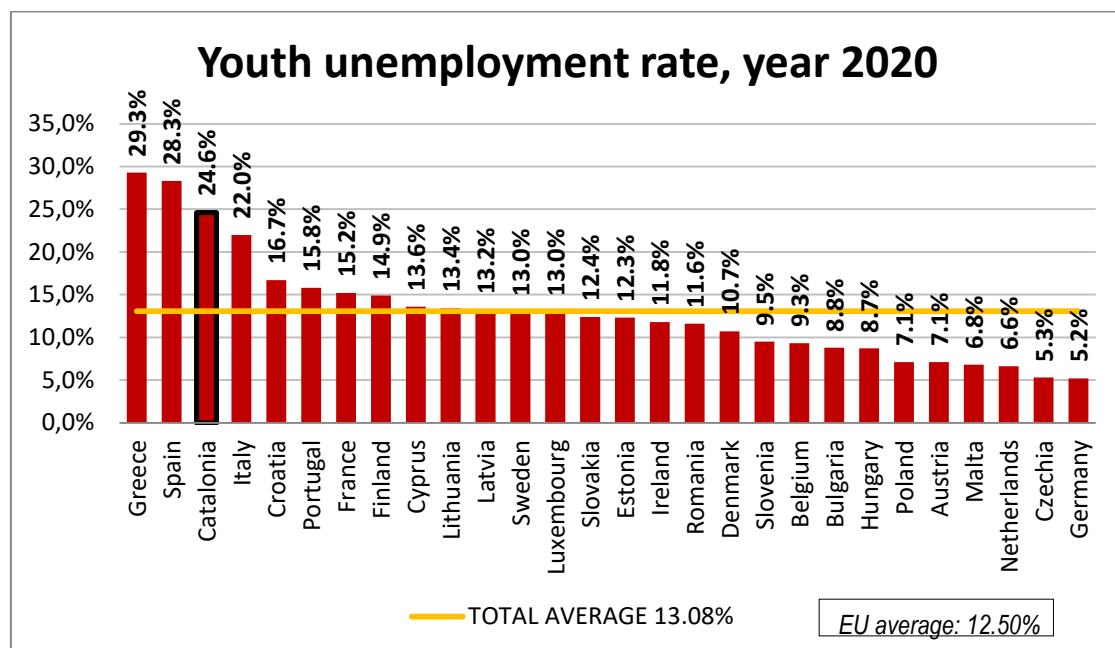
The youth situation in Europe

Unemployment

The unemployment rate is the ratio of the unemployment population to the total active population.



¹ 1. Source: Own elaboration based on [Eurostat data](#) (European countries) and [Idescat](#) (Catalonia). Year 2020.



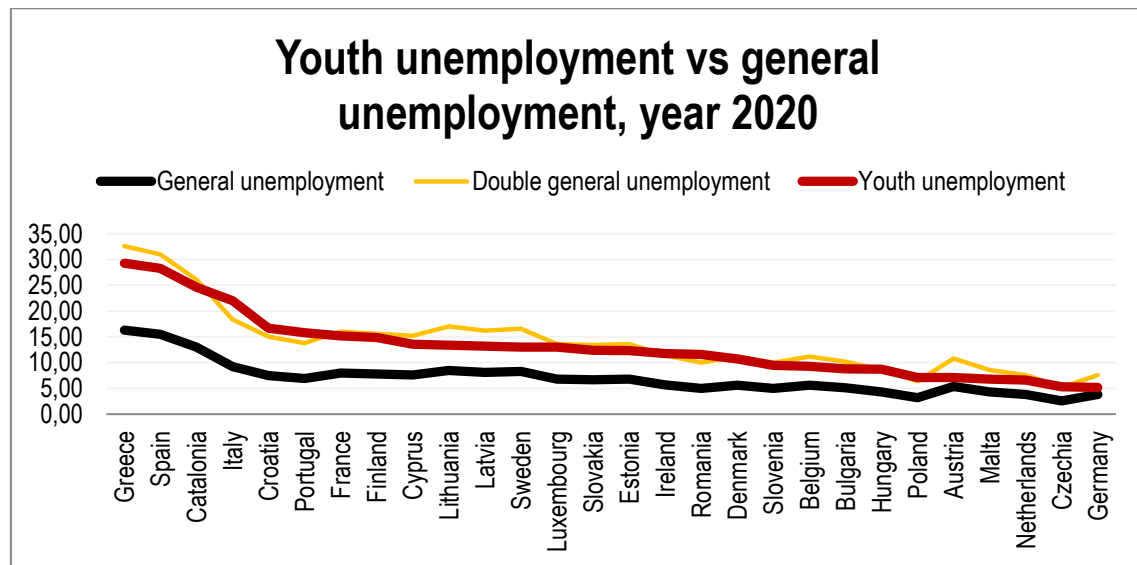
2. Source: Own elaboration based on [Eurostat data](#) (European countries) and [Observatori Català de la Joventut](#) (Catalonia). Year 2020.
Youth people aged 16 to 29 (Catalonia) and from 15 to 29 years (European countries).

¹ **Metodological Note.** In the different bar graphics of this report, the total average has been calculated taking into account the data of Catalonia. The "Eurostat Average" corresponds to the data provided by Eurostat for all EU and Euro Area States, regardless of those included in this report ([more information here about reference area of Eurostat](#)). We have also taken into account that Eurostat provides the annual unemployment data and Idescat the quarterly and, therefore, with the aim of unifying values, the data for Catalonia corresponds to the calculated average of four quarters of 2020.

The graphics show unemployment in 2020 in the different countries of the European Union. With regard to the general population, Catalonia is in the lead with a rate of 13.04%, only behind Spain and Greece, which have the worst rates. In the queue, we find in Poland and Czechia with 3.2 and 2.6% respectively.

As for the youth population, **Catalonia suffers from one of the worst youth unemployment rates, just below Greece and Spain.** The total average is 13.08% unemployment among young people and Catalonia exceeds this rate by 11.5 percentage points. Germany, the country with the lowest youth unemployment, stands at 5.2%, 19.4% less than Catalonia, as can be seen in the graphic bar above.

If we make the comparison between the unemployment of the total population and the unemployment of young people, we observe that the rate of youth unemployment is substantially higher than that of the total population.



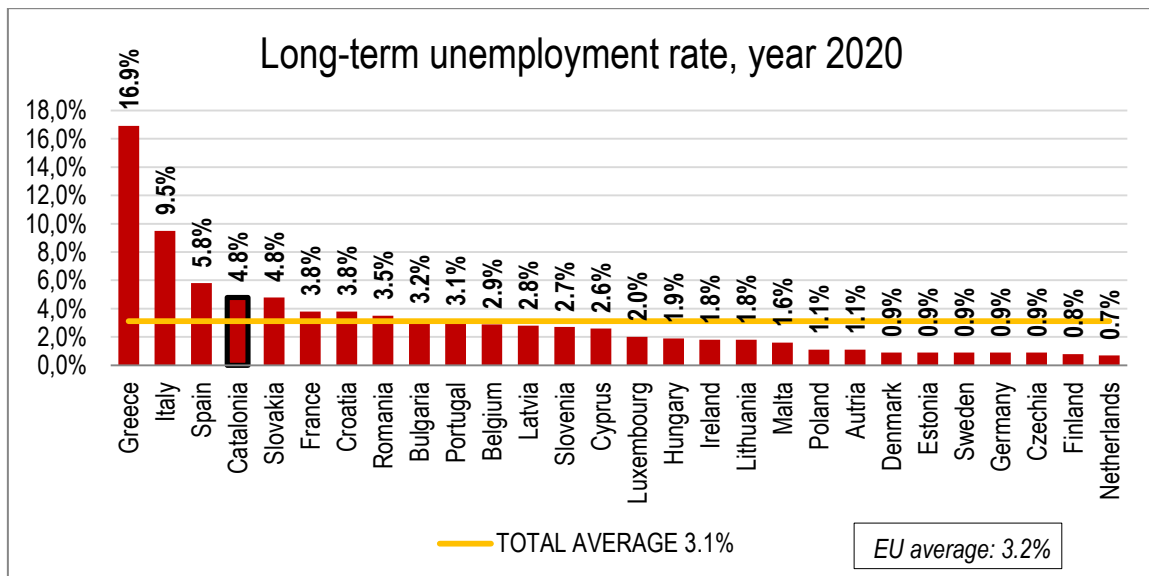
3. Source: Own elaboration based on [Eurostat](#) data (European countries) and [Idescat](#) (Catalonia). Year 2020.

In the graphic above we can clearly see the **difference between the general unemployment rate and the youth unemployment rate, which in most countries is almost double the general rate.** With the yellow line we wanted to mark what would be twice the general unemployment, so that it's easier to see which countries exceed this limit.

Some countries, such as Lithuania and Sweden, do not come close to this limit, as youth unemployment is 3.6 percentage points higher than general unemployment. However, in these two countries, youth unemployment is almost 5 points above general unemployment. We also see countries where youth unemployment is more than double general unemployment, such as Italy and Portugal, two southern European countries. In Italy, youth unemployment is 12.8 percentage points above general unemployment; and in Portugal the difference is 8.9%.

In Catalonia, youth unemployment is also almost double of general unemployment. Young Catalan suffer 11.6% more unemployment than the total population. This difference between youth unemployment and general unemployment is one of the highest in Europe, behind only Greece and Spain.

Analyzing the differences between men and women², no significant differences were observed. The most significant variation is in Greece, where young women suffer 3.8% more unemployment than men of the same age; and in Luxembourg, where men suffer 6.2% more youth unemployment than women.



4. Source: Own elaboration based on [Eurostat data \(European countries\)](#) and [Observatori Català de la Joventut \(Catalonia\)](#).

Long-term unemployment includes all those people who have been without work uninterruptedly for at least 12 months and are actively looking for work.

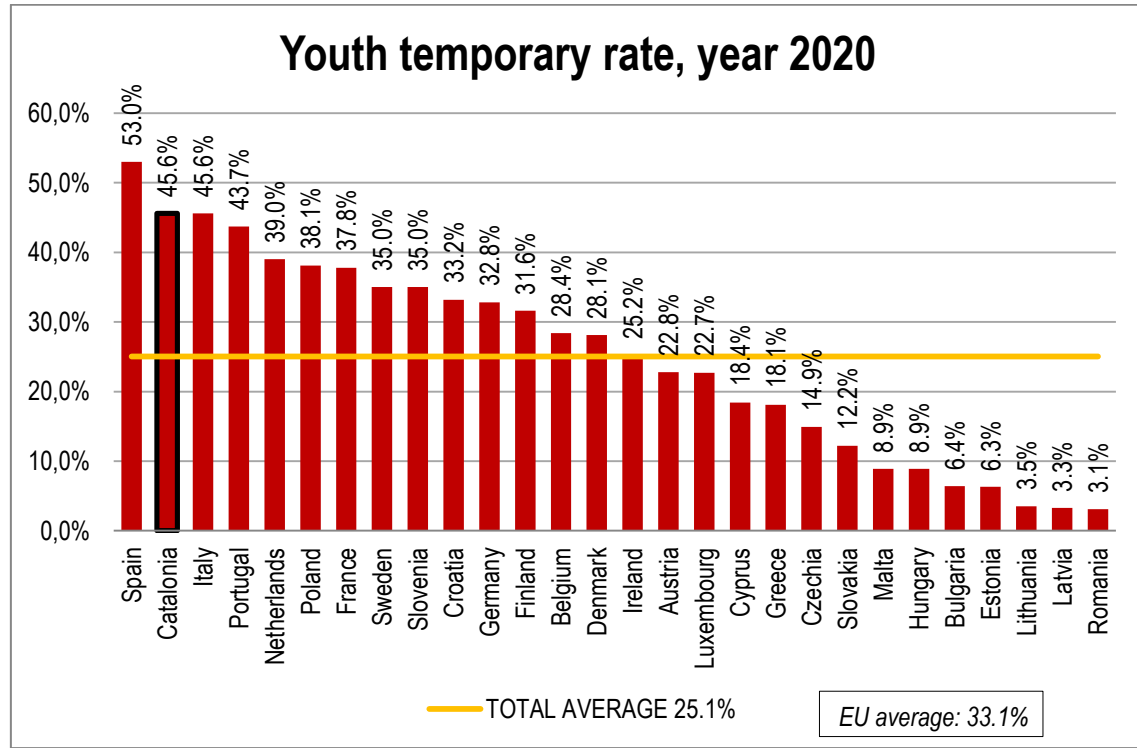
As can be seen in the table above, the European Union country with the longest-term youth unemployment is Greece with 16.9%, followed by Italy, despite a significant decrease with 9.5%. Catalonia, with 4.8%, is 1.7 points above the total average. Seven countries are below 1% led by the Netherlands with 0.7%.

“Catalonia has 19.4% more youth unemployment than Germany, the country with the lowest youth unemployment in Europe”

² Official Eurostat data and Idescat are binary and do not include non-binary or fluid genders.

Temporality

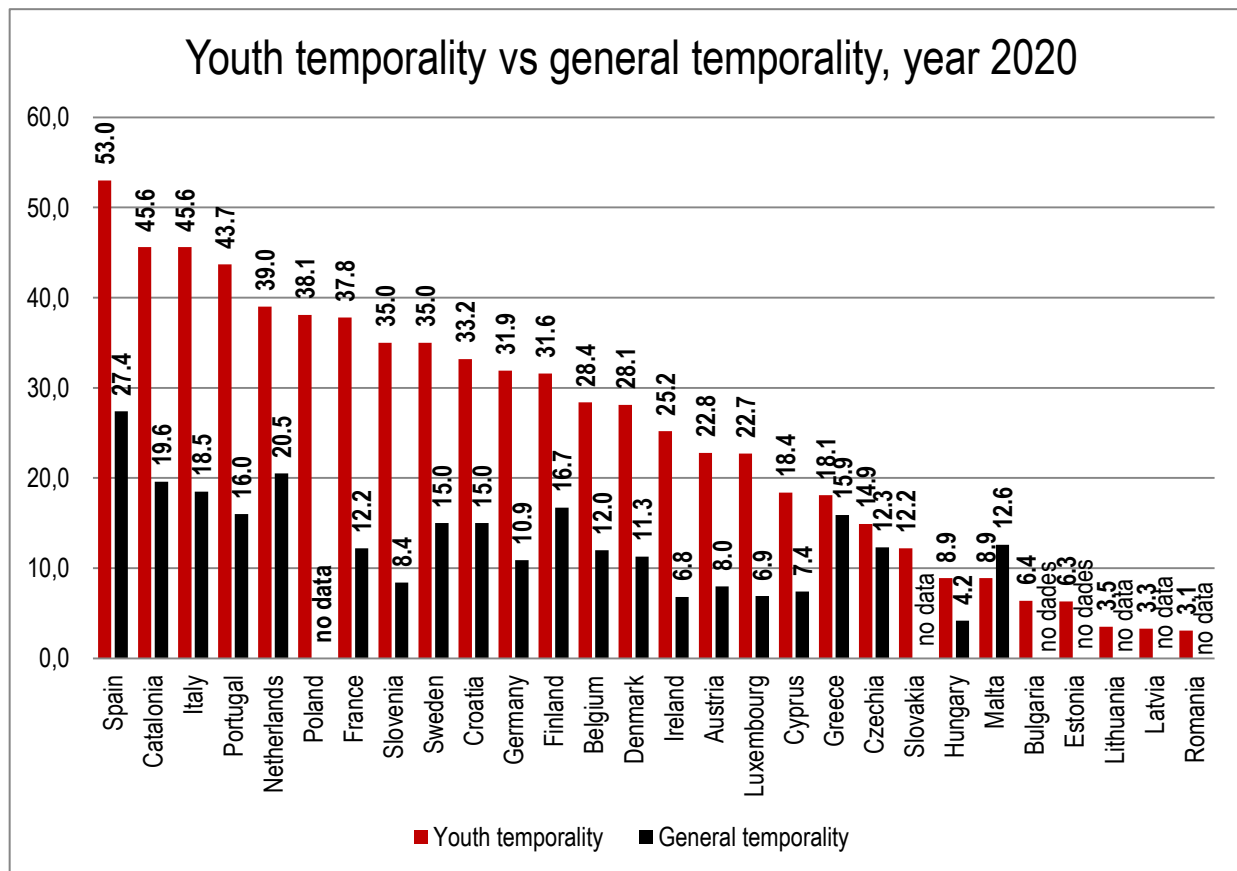
The temporary rate is the ratio of salaried youth population with a temporary contract with respect to the general population.



5. Source: Own elaboration based on [Eurostat data \(European countries\)](#) and [Observatori Català de la Joventut \(Catalonia\)](#).

This graphic shows how one of the main problems of the Catalan labor market is still the high rate of temporary employment, as Catalonia and Spain lead the ranking in the European Union, with 45.6% and 53% respectively. This indicates that **Catalonia has 20.5 percentage points more youth temporary time than the average of the countries analyzed**. This is also very surprising when we compare it with many of the other countries, for example, Lithuania (3.5%), Latvia (3.3%) and Romania (3.1%) which lead below this graphic and who have a virtually residual rate of youthful temporality.

As for the difference between women and men, Eurostat data shows that in the vast majority of countries women suffer more temporarily than men. There are only eight countries in Europe where the rate of temporary employment is higher among men. In Catalonia, Idescat does not provide gender-differentiated temporality data for the young population, but given that in the general population women sign the majority of temporary contracts, it is to be expected that the same will happen among young people.



6. Source: Own elaboration based on [Eurostat](#) data (European countries) and [Observatori Català de la Joventut](#) (Catalonia).

Temporality is, unfortunately, one of the worst scourges of the labor market in Catalonia (and in Europe) and that affects us especially young women, as it is endemic in sectors such as hospitality, tourism, trade, etc. that mainly affects young people.

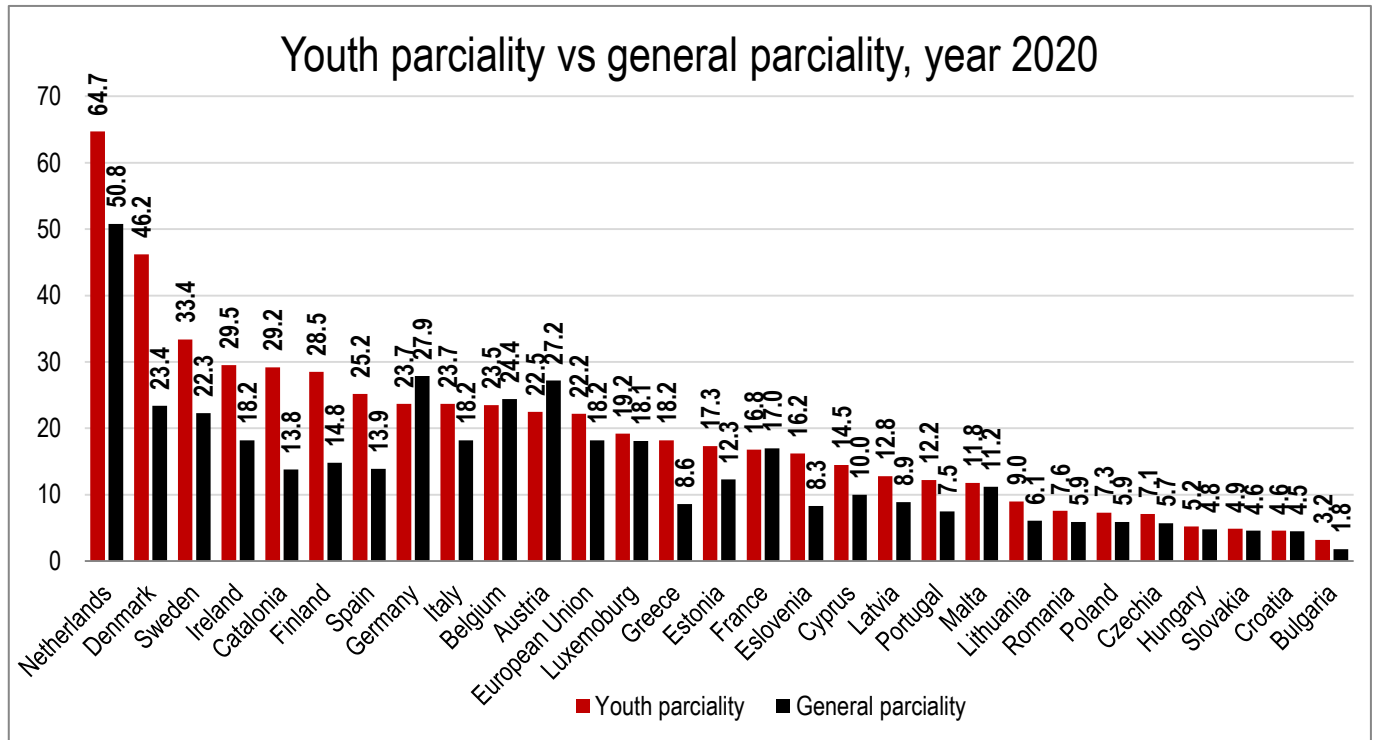
As we can see in the graphic, the youth temporary employment rate in Catalonia is 45.6%, 26% higher than the general temporary employment rate of 19.6%. This situation is very similar to other nearby countries such as Italy with 45.6% youth or Portugal with 43.7%. Therefore, the strong dependence on tourism or non-strategic sectors means that structurally young people work under very precarious conditions. On the other hand, countries with a diversity of powerful economic sectors, such as Germany or France, have youth temporary employment rates of more than 30%. Therefore, we can state that temporality negatively affects young women in most of the countries analyzed.

This lack of job stability, makes it almost impossible for us to start or maintain our life project in decent conditions and makes it difficult for us to access housing (remember that most rentals require an indefinite contract to prove the economic solvency).

“Catalonia has 20.5 percentage points more youth temporality than the European average”

Parciality

The parciality rate indicates the ratio of the part-time employed youth population to the local employed youth population.



7. Source: Own elaboration based on [Eurostat data](#) (European countries) and [Observatori del Treball i Model Productiu](#) (Catalan youth).

As we see in the graphic, in the most of the countries, the parciality is higher among young people than among the total population. Only in Germany, Austria, France and Belgium is there a lower parciality among young people.

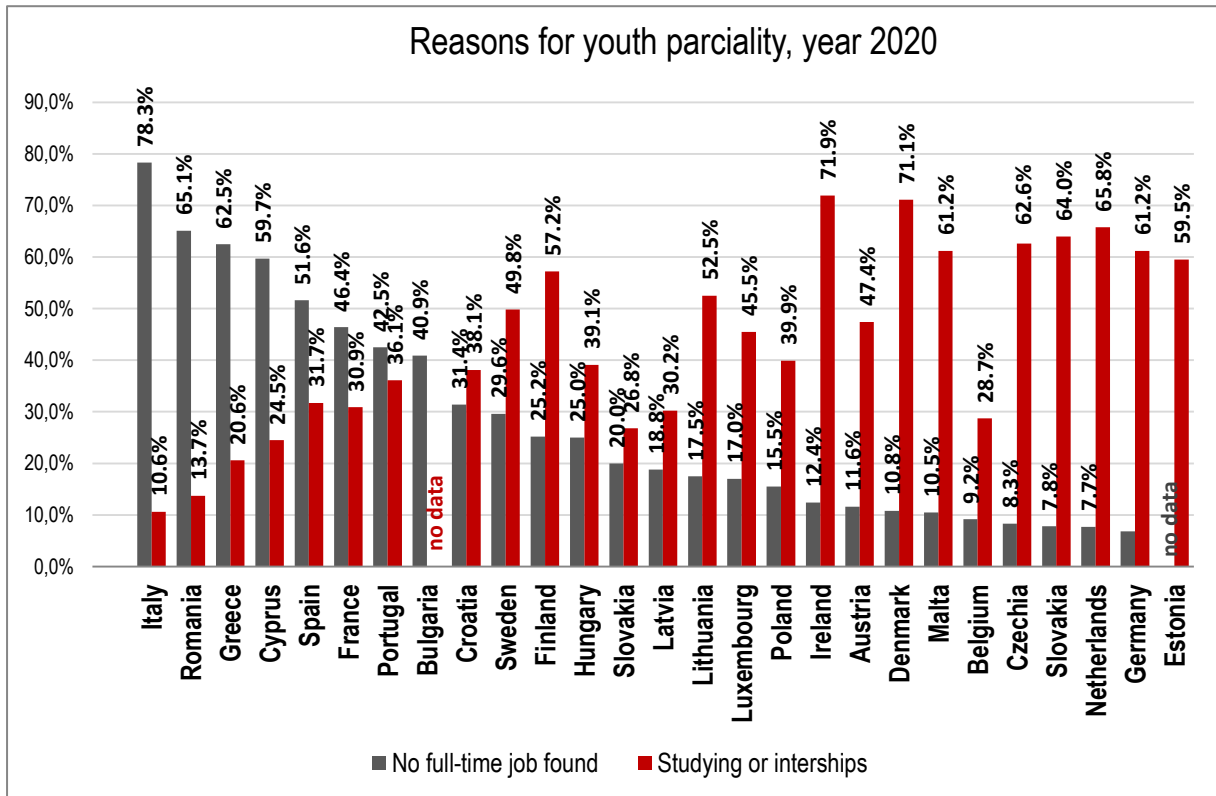
In Catalonia, the youth parciality rate is 29.2%, according to data from the [Observatori del Treball i Model Productiu](#), more than double that of the total population (13.8%). Catalonia is the territory of Europe where there is more difference between youth and general parciality.

With regard to the gender breakdown, we do not have data on the youth population, but we do have data on the general population. The data indicate that in all the countries of the European Union and also in Catalonia, the parciality is higher among women than among men. In Catalonia there is a difference of 13.18%. We can therefore say that parciality has a woman's face, which means that all this means: women have more partial contracts than men, we have a lower purchasing power and the wage gap increases. However, we know that historically the main reason women have more part-time contracts than men is to take care of children and their families, a job that is unpaid and that falls almost entirely into the hands of women. It is a fact that care is unequally distributed and falls disproportionately on families, specifically women, thus generating strong inequalities. The context we face calls for a reorganization of responsibilities and a socialization of care, so that we make them visible, valued and distributed.

In the European Union as a whole, the youth parciality rate is 22.2% and the general parciality rate is 18.2%, a difference of 4 points. Besides, of the total parciality, 26.4% of partial contracts are involuntary. According to the latest [Eurostat data](#), Spain is one of the EU states with the highest percentage of involuntary part-time contracts: 61.5% of part-time workers would like to work more hours, but do not have

the possibility. Although we do not have data disaggregated by gender of the youth partiality rate in Catalonia, following the trend of the general population, it is expected to be higher for women.

There are two main reasons why young women have a part-time job. One is the impossibility of combining full-time work with studies or internships and, on the other hand, we find people working part-time because it has been the only way they have found to enter the job market and that their desire is to change full time as soon as possible.



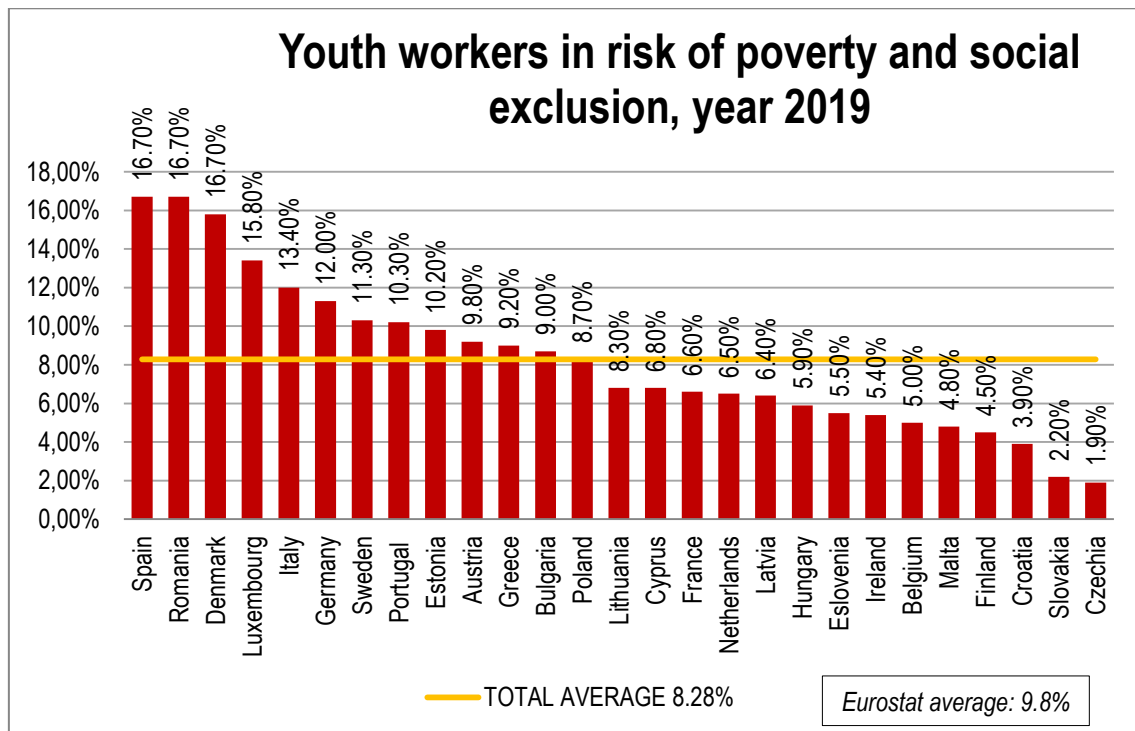
8. Source: Own elaboration based on Eurostat data.

In the bar chart above we can see a clear trend: young women in southern European countries have more difficulty finding full-time work. Thus, in countries such as Ireland or Denmark, the vast majority of young people with part-time contracts are for studies or internships, 71.9% and 71.1% respectively, while in these same countries, there is very low rate of unwanted partial contracts (12.4% and 10.8%, respectively).

In contrast, other countries, such as Italy, with 78.3% and Romania, with 65.1% are in the European head of countries with part-time contracts for not finding a full-time job. We do not have data available on the reasons for partiality in Catalonia, but, following the trend of all the markers analyzed, it is to be hoped that, as is the case in the whole of Spain, most young Catalans will work in part-time due to the impossibility of finding a full-time job.

“Young people in southern Europe have more difficulty finding full-time work”

Poverty and risk of social exclusion



9. Source: Own elaboration based on Eurostat data

The AROPE rate (At Risk Of Poverty and/or Exclusion) is an indicator that includes the proportion of the population that is either in a situation of risk of poverty, or in a situation of severe material deprivation, or that lives in households with very low labor intensity.

As we can see in the table, there is a triple tie of Spain, France and Romania, as the countries with the highest rate of young workers at risk of social exclusion, with a percentage of 16.7%. By contrast, at the bottom of this list are Croatia (3.9%), Slovakia (2.20%) and, closing the list, the Czechia with 1.90%.

As for Catalonia, Idescat does not provide us with the exact data, but we know that **the young population under the age of 29 is already the group with the highest risk of poverty and social exclusion**³. In addition, 15.6% of the working population aged 16 to 29 are poor (20.7% in the case of young women).

The mechanism that states have to alleviate situations of risk of exclusion and poverty in the case of unemployed people are subsidies and benefits. That is why at this point it is important to note that only 10.6% of unemployed young people under the age of 30 receive unemployment benefits or allowances (2020). As for the population over 30, they receive 36.4%⁴.

As for the variation between men and women, the differences are not very significant. Only Germany stands out, young female workers are 4.3% more at risk of poverty than men.

“Young people are the group most at risk of poverty and social exclusion”

³ Report “[Joves i COVID-19: L'impacte de la crisi en la precarietat del jovent](#)” of CNJC, year 2020.

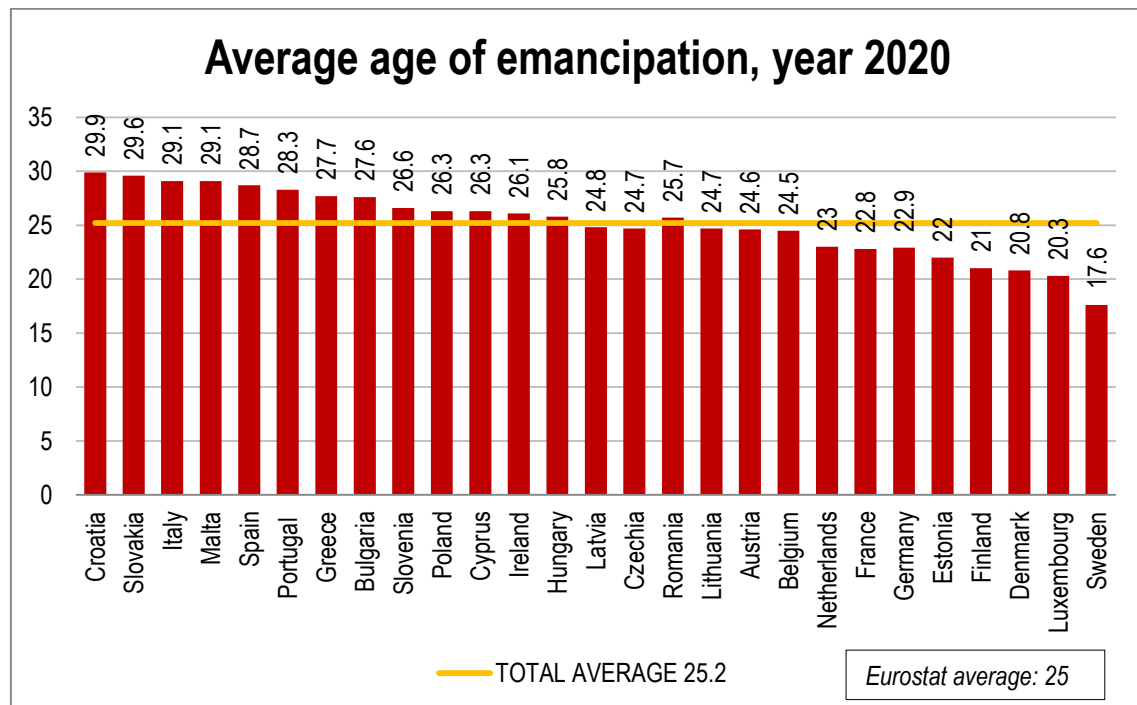
⁴ Report “[Generació Enterrada: la crítica situació del jovent a Catalunya](#)”. Avalot, year 2020.

Housing and emancipation

The rate of youth emancipation measures the ratio of the youth population who no longer live in their familiar home with respect to the total population.

At the end of 2020, the rate of youth emancipation (young people up to 29 years old) stood at 18.6%. In other words, only 18.6% of young women in Catalonia can leave the family home. According to data from the [Observatori Català de la Joventut](#), before the pandemic, in 2019, the youth emancipation rate was 22.6%, 4 percentage points above the current rate. In 2007, the emancipation rate among young people reached 33.1%, and has since lost 14.5 percentage points.

Despite the economic crisis of 2008 and its consequences, the data indicate that the rate of youth emancipation had never dropped from 20% until 2020. That is, young people have never had so much difficulty emancipating ourselves and leaving our family home.



10. Source: Own elaboration based on [Eurostat data](#).

The average age of emancipation in the states analyzed is 25.2 years. The data confirm that the countries where we have found the most job insecurity so far are also the ones with the highest average age of emancipation, making this job insecurity one of the reasons that makes it impossible for us to access housing.

It should also be noted that, unlike other markers, in the vast majority of European states, women are emancipated before men. Only in Sweden are men emancipated before.

“Only 18.6% of young women in Catalonia can emancipate themselves”

Radiography of European countries

Catalonia

In Catalonia, the data are frightening and show that the effects of COVID-19 have had a very negative impact on the economy and the labor market, especially for young people, who are already the most vulnerable group in terms of the risk of poverty and social exclusion.

Young Catalans have never recovered from the economic crisis of 2008. In the worst year and quarter of the previous economic crisis, 31.65% of young people had a job or were looking for one, but in the fourth quarter of 2020 this percentage fell to 27.85%. That is, in 2020 it ended with 147,200 fewer active young people than in 2013, the worst year of the previous crisis.

Catalonia is one of the European territories with the worst youth unemployment rate. In 2020 the unemployment rate for the group aged 16 to 29 is 24.6% well above the European average for young people aged 15 to 29 which stands at 12.5% and only surpassed by Spain (28.3%) and Greece (29.3%). In terms of gender, we also see that youth unemployment in men is slightly higher than in women, with 24.8% and 24.5% respectively.

The youth temporary employment rate in 2020 is 45.6%, which is more than three times the general population temporary employment rate which is 19.62%.

In relation to salary conditions, in the table below we see how young women in 2019 (the last year with the available data), according to Idescat, received an average of €17,363.64 gross per year, **which means that we charged them €8,604.57 less than the total population**, which receives an average of €25,968.20 gross per year. The difference is even more exaggerated if we look at the age group of those under 25, who earn €13,897.51 less than the total population.

As for the gender pay gap in the young age group, we see how **women earn on average €2,282.55 gross less than men our age**, who earn an average of €18,481.59 gross per year, which represents a difference of 12.35% in gross salary.

Annual average gross salary, year 2019			
	Men	Women	Total
Under 25 years	13.928,57	12.122,68	13.070,69
Aged 25 to 34	23.034,61	20.275,40	21.656,58
Total young people	18.481,59	16.199,04	17.363,64
Total population	28.965,38	22.988,22	25.968,20

11. Own elaboration table based on Idescat data.

The rate of emancipation in Catalonia had never been lower than 20% until 2020 (not even in the worst years of the previous crisis of 2008), in which it has fallen to 18.6%. Which means that the crisis caused by the pandemic has had a very negative effect on our opportunities to emancipate ourselves. The conditions of the labor market and the abusive prices of housing, make it **impossible to establish a project of a dignified life in Catalonia**.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also had a very negative impact on young people in the field of mental health. In fact, according to the dossier [*"Youth and mental health in times of COVID-19 IV"*](#) of the Department of Labor, Social Affairs and Families, young people aged 16 to 30 are the group most affected by the symptoms of depression and anxiety. Age, therefore, is a risk factor as is gender (42% of young women have experienced some symptomatology).

The report highlights a clear relationship between the impact of the pandemic and the risk of suicide caused by social isolation, especially in women under the age of 17 after returning to school and growth of eating disorders.



12. Summary table of own elaboration based on Idescat data. Year 2020.

Italy

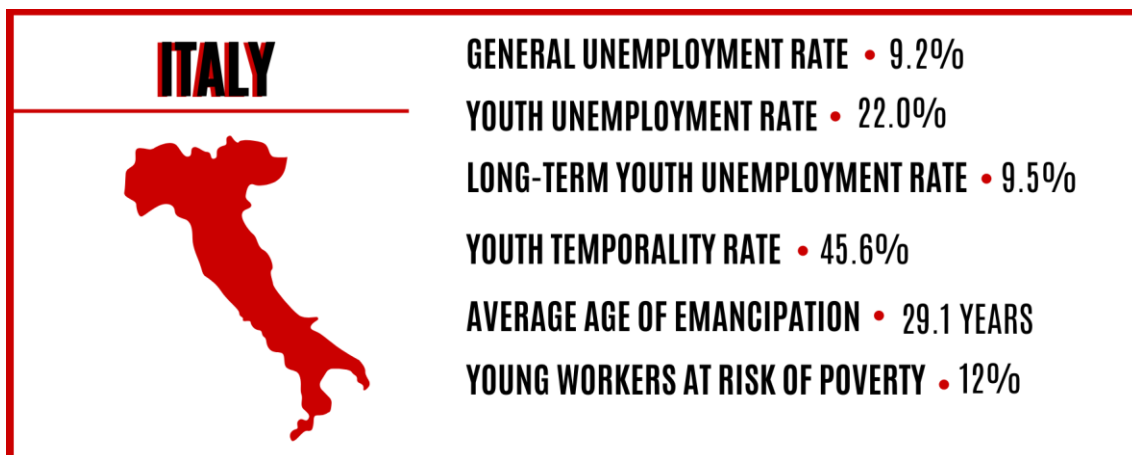
In Italy during the pandemic the main measure that was implemented was aimed at blocking the possibility of making redundancies during 2020, according to data from the union **CGIL Lombardia**. The **Cassa Integrazione Guadagni** is a tool through which the state helps companies in difficulty to offer them the possibility of taking advantage of a plan where the state pays the wages of workers in exchange for not being fired the staff for lack of work. This protection measure would be assimilated to the exceptional rules put in place by the Spanish Government in relation to ERF(employment regulation files).

The most negative effect of this measure would be the lack of turnover in the workforce that causes few young people to enter the labor market. In this sense, the **youth unemployment rate in 2020 was 22%**, the fourth highest in the European Union.

Working conditions for young people are worrying, as **the temporary employment rate is 45.6% (just below Catalonia and Spain)** and the rate of workers who despite having a job are at risk of poverty or social exclusion is 12%.

Another problem that affects young Italian people is the difficulty of emancipating themselves and developing their own life project. In this sense, **the average age of emancipation is 29.1 years** according to Eurostat data (3.9 years above the European average).

The CGIL Lombardia union points out that this whole situation has had a **serious impact on the mental health of young Italians** and in Italy there has been an increase in the number of mental health disorders during 2020. As well as the number of feminicides has increased during the home confinement, from January to October 2020 there were 91 feminicides.



13. Summary table of own elaboration based on Eurostat data. Year 2020 (2019 for risk of poverty).

Croatia

In Croatia, according to the union **Savez Samostalnih Sindikata Hrvatske**, youth unemployment has always been a big problem, similar to other countries in the south of the EU. The COVID-19 pandemic raised the youth unemployment rate, which by 2020 stood at almost 16.7%.

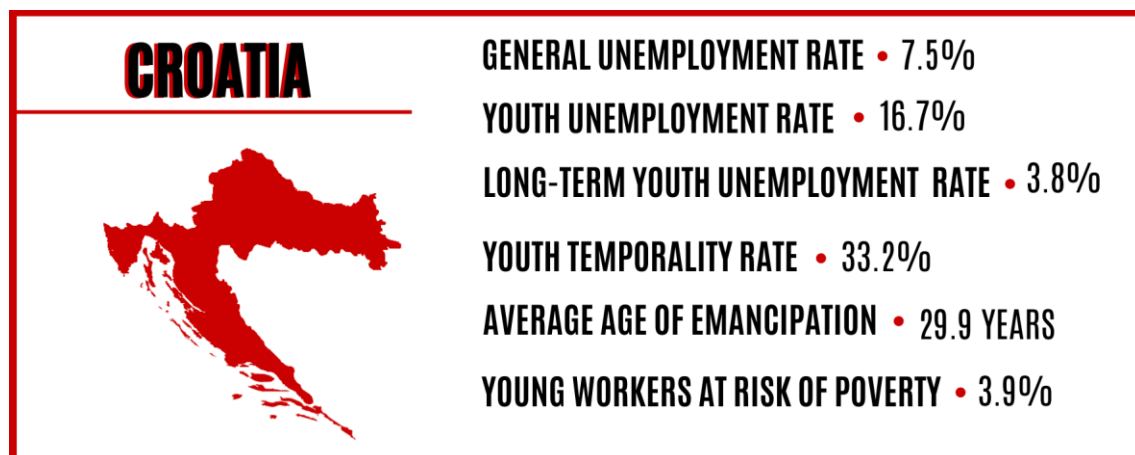
It is important to note that in the first 2 months of the pandemic (March 1 - May 1, 2020), **people under the age of 35 accounted for 47% of all people who lost their jobs**. In 2021, unemployment in general declined, especially in recent months, due to the start of the tourist season which is usually the time of higher employment rates in Croatia and southern Europe.

Temporality is a reality for young Croats. **The temporary employment rate among young people is 33.2%, slightly above the European average**, and of the total temporary contracts signed by the total population, 43% are young people under 30 years of age. In addition, 90% of the first contracts signed by young people are temporary short-term.

Such high temporality therefore makes it difficult to emancipate oneself, which is why Croatia has the highest age of emancipation, which stands at 29.9 years, according to Eurostat data (4.7 years more than the European average).

According to the union **Savez Samostalnih Sindikata Hrvatske**, from 2013 to 2019 Croatia carried out, as part of the Youth Guarantee program, a measure called "*Occupational training without joining a job*" (abbreviated SOR in Croatian) which had a devastating effect on the opportunities for young people to enter the labor market, also reducing the wages of total inexperienced young workers, who are mostly young. Thanks to the struggle of unions and organizations ("*young SOR*"), finally in 2019 the program was canceled, but the negative consequence it left on the opportunities for young people and people entering the labor market today they are still palpable.

In terms of education, it is worth noting that in **Croatia the rate of young people with higher education is 33.1% while the EU average is 41.6%**.



14. Summary table of own elaboration based on Eurostat data. Year 2020 (2019 for risk of poverty).

Latvia

In Latvia, the youth unemployment rate in 2020 is 13.2%, slightly below the EU average, but still considerably higher than the average unemployment rate of the active population (8.1%).

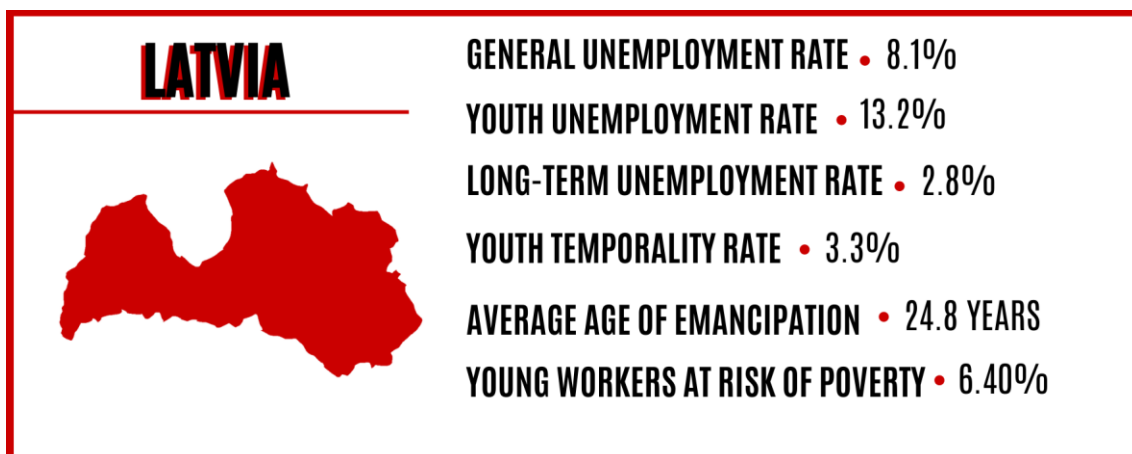
According to the **union Latvijas iekšlietu darbinieku arodbiedrības**, the positive indicators refer to the steady decline in youth unemployment since its peak after the global financial crisis of 2008. Since the gradual exit from the global financial crisis of 2008, the youth employment has gradually declined since 2012 and has shown a lower level of youth unemployment than the EU-27 average. This is partly attributed to the encouragement of young workers as a workforce in the industrial sectors and to the aging of society, as well as to significant migration trends over the years, as Latvia is not usually a receiving market of workers from other countries.

The most positive figure for Latvia is the youth temporary employment rate, with 3.3% being the second lowest in the European Union and far from the European average of 25.1%.

Historically, in Latvia, the groups most at risk of poverty are older workers (50-64 years) and people who have reached retirement age (over 65), but young people are at higher risk of poverty than adults aged 25 to 49 and **1 in 5 young people at the time of the transition from education to employment are at risk of poverty**. In fact, the rate of workers aged 16 to 29 who are at risk of social exclusion in 2019 is 6.4%.

Unfortunately, there is no data on the level of poverty currently available for the years 2020 and 2021, but these years are expected to show a slight increase in poverty levels for young people and, in particular, for young women, who have seen the largest rise in unemployment and the decline in their income.

In this sense, poverty and the risk of social exclusion make it difficult for young workers to emancipate themselves, although it does not exceed the European average and is therefore considerably better than other EU countries. Thus, the average age of emancipation is 24.8 years, according to Eurostat data, slightly below the average.



15. Source: Own elaboration based on Eurostat data. Year 2020 (2019 for risk of poverty).

Germany

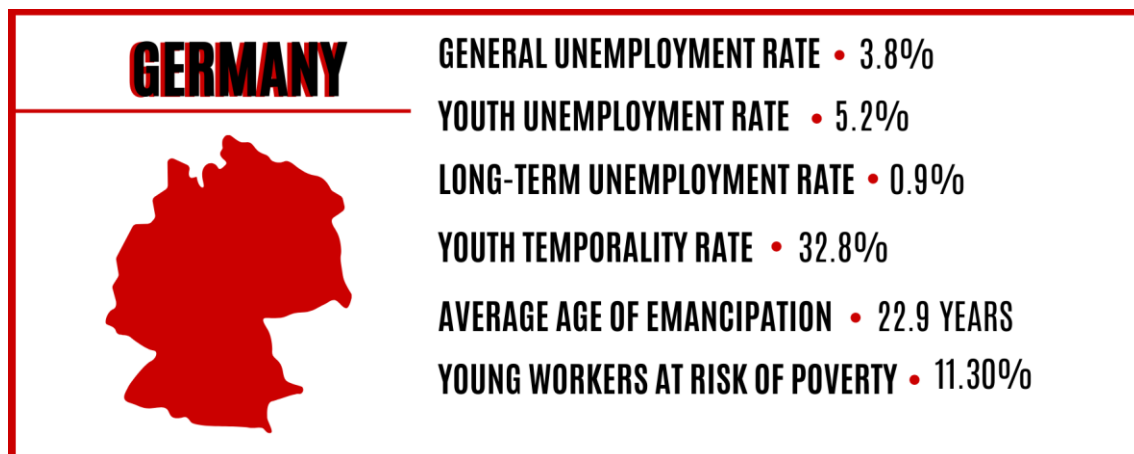
Germany is considered a positive example in terms of youth unemployment rates and other working and social conditions, although according to data from the **union DGB-Jugend Baden-Württemberg**, there are significant differences between regions, gender and origin. In fact, the unemployment rate for migrants (both women and men) is always higher than the German unemployment rate and they are concentrated in the aged 25-34 group in both genders.

The youth unemployment rate in 2019 was 4.4% and in 2020 it was 5.2%, increased by the COVID-19 pandemic, but it is still **the lowest youth unemployment rate in Europe and is 8.25 points below the European Union average**. After the initial blow, the situation has reversed a bit and in fact, the youth unemployment rate decreased and in May 2021 it was 4.9%. In 2020, the difference between young men and women in relation to youth unemployment was 1%, men 5.7% and women 4.7%.

However, it is note worthy that the **youth temporary employment rate is quite high, standing at 32.8%**, just below the European average. The temporary nature of contracts has an effect on the average age of emancipation, which stands at 22.9 years, but is still 7.7 years above the European average.

This situation has an impact on the rate of risk of poverty or social exclusion that is improving in Germany, as in 2019 it was 11.30%, which is a significant decrease, since in 2016, the rate was 19.3%.

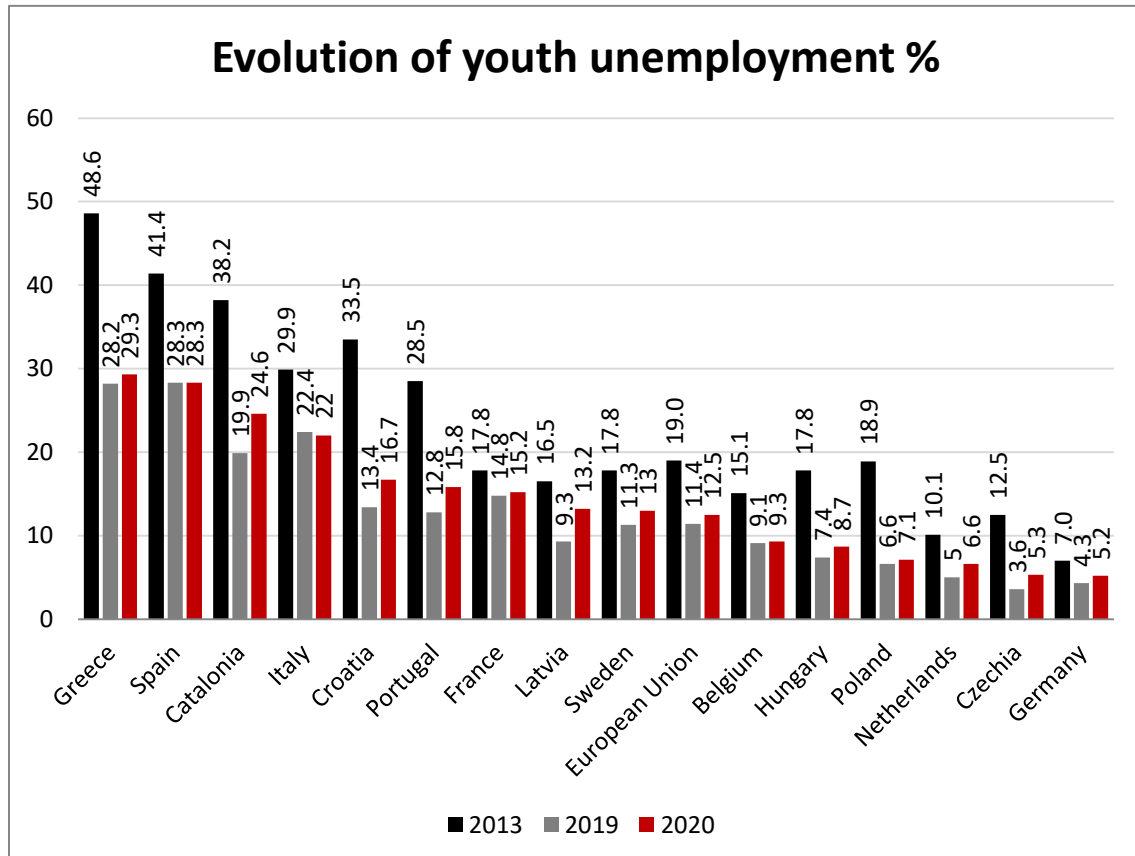
In terms of partiality, Germany is one of the countries that, with 23.7%, has a youth partiality rate above the European Union average. However, this partiality is mainly due to young people who combine work with studies (61.2%) and not to young people who do not find a full-time job (6.8%).



16. Source: Own elaboration based on Eurostat data. Year 2020 (2019 for risk of poverty).

Evolutionary sample of European countries

In order to have a global vision of the evolution of the socio-economic situation of young people in Europe and to be able to compare it with that of Catalonia, we have taken as a sample the most representative countries for their geopolitical situation: the north of Europe will analyze Germany and the Netherlands, central France and Belgium, southern Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece and Croatia, and eastern Poland, Hungary and Latvia.



17. Source: Own elaboration based on [Eurostat data](#) (European countries) and [Observatori Català de la Joventut](#) (Catalonia).

In the graphic above we can see the youth unemployment rate in 2013, 2019 and 2020. Among these, 2013 is the worst year for all countries analyzed, considered the year in which the devastating effects of the financial crisis evidence more in the labor market. Very significant is that in countries such as Spain, Greece, Croatia and Catalonia the youth unemployment rate in 2013 exceeded 30%.

The years analyzed (2013, 2019 and 2020) show that **Catalonia has one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in a sustained manner over time**, as in the three years analyzed it is always above the European average. The pandemic has had a major impact on the destruction of jobs, as in 2019 it was 19.9% and in 2020 it was 24.6% which is an increase of 4.7%.

Compared to the European Union, we see how **Catalonia has a higher than average youth unemployment rate**, 8.5% more in 2019 and 2020, 12.1% more. Thus, we are well above the European average and therefore, it is shown that young Catalans suffer more unemployment than most of the countries analyzed, only below Greece and Spain. Surely the lack of diversification of the Catalan productive model and the strong dependence on tourism (a sector severely punished by the restrictions of the pandemic and where a large number of young people work) has led to an increase in the youth

unemployment rate. On the other hand, it has become structural in our country as shown by the graphic of the evolution of youth unemployment, as it has always been well above the European average.

Other countries such as Croatia and Portugal suffered very high unemployment rates in the previous crisis, but in the one caused by the pandemic they have managed to keep an unemployment rate well below that of 2013.

Evolution of youth unemployment rate %							
	Men				Women		
	2013	2019	2020		2013	2019	2020
Greece	44,9	25,3	27,5	Greece	52,8	31,5	31,3
Spain	42,6	24,2	28,1	Spain	40	25,4	28,6
Catalonia	40,5	20,8	24,8	Catalonia	35,7	18,8	24,5
Italy	28,8	21,6	21,3	Italy	31,4	23,5	23,1
Croatia	34,9	10,6	14,6	Croatia	31,8	16,9	19,6
Portugal	27,5	11,7	15,9	Portugal	29,6	13,8	15,7
France	18,1	16	15,7	France	17,3	13,6	14,6
Latvia	16,7	10,2	13,5	Latvia	16,2	8,2	12,9
Sweden	16,2	11,4	13,6	Sweden	15,3	11,1	12,4
European Union	19,3	11,6	12,6	European Union	18,8	11,1	12,3
Belgium	15,8	10,6	10,1	Belgium	14,2	7,5	8,5
Hungary	17,9	7,7	8,2	Hungary	17,6	7,1	9,5
Poland	17,4	6,1	6,9	Poland	21	7,3	7,4
Netherlands	10,5	5,6	6,9	Netherlands	9,7	4,4	6,2
Czechia	12,3	3,4	4,6	Czechia	12,8	3,9	6,4
Germany	7,8	4,9	5,7	Germany	6,1	3,6	4,7

18. Source: Own elaboration based on [Eurostat](#) data (European countries) and [Observatori Català de la Joventut](#) (Catalonia).

In terms of the difference between men and women, in most of the countries analyzed, 2013 was also the worst year with a male youth unemployment rate of 40.5% and female unemployment rate of 35.7%. And comparing them, we observe that there are not many differences. There is a trend in 2020: in the southern countries, women tend to be more unemployed than men, and in the northern (and central) countries it is the other way around.

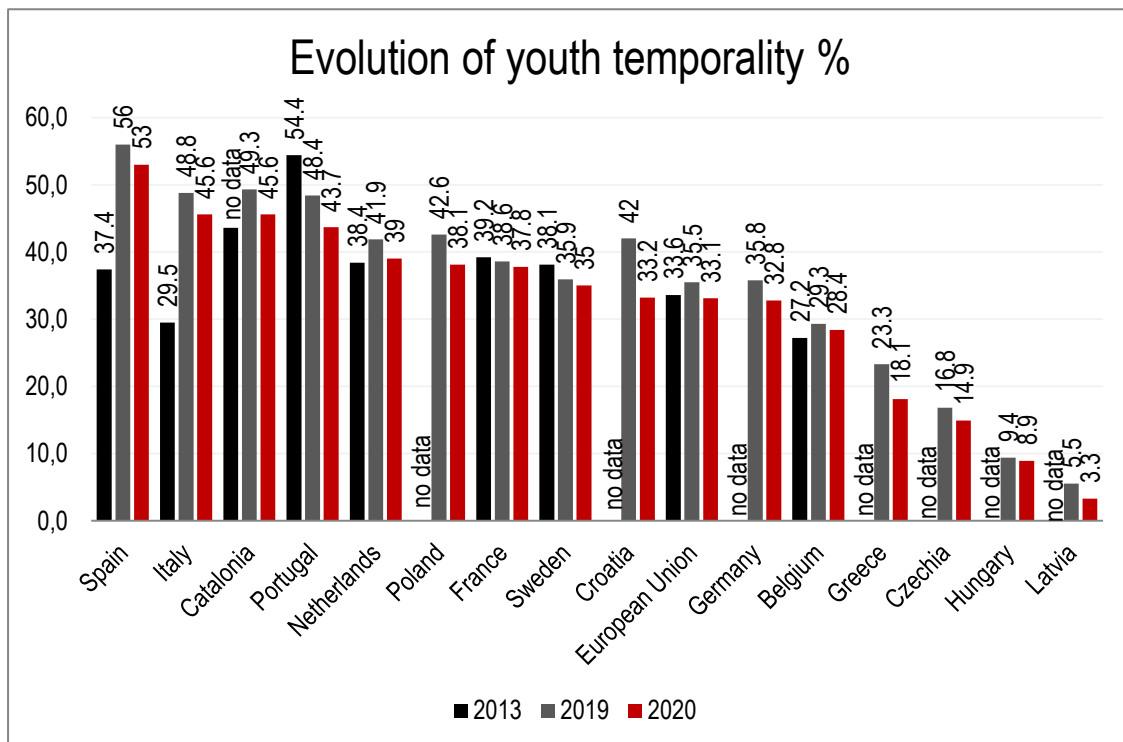
The economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in all countries has increased the youth unemployment rate, both for men and women, if we compare the youth unemployment rate for 2020 with respect to the year previous.

In Catalonia, the increase in the youth unemployment rate follows the trend of the countries analyzed, both in women and men, although the figures are among the highest and therefore, the situation of **Catalan youth is much more dramatic than in other parts of the European Union** as can be seen in the table.

In terms of gender, historically (2011-2020) youth unemployment has been higher in men than in women, in 2011 the highest difference was reached, 7.2%. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in the unemployment rate in both genders in 2020 compared to the previous one, although the gender gap is narrowing, from 2.1% in 2019 to 0.3% in 2020. Therefore, we can say that in **Catalonia the pandemic has affected more young women than young men**, as the unemployment rate has increased in 2020 compared to the previous year in men a 3.9% and in women 5.7%.

Regarding the effect of the pandemic on the rate of long-term youth unemployment, the data indicate that COVID-19 has had a negative impact on Catalonia. In fact, the average rate of long-term youth unemployment in our country during the 1st and 2nd quarter of 2021 is 6.5%, 1.1 points higher than the relative average for the same period last year which is 5.4%, according to data from the Observatori Català de la Joventut. In terms of the breakdown between men and women, the incidence of the pandemic has affected both men and women, with an increase of 1.8% and 0.4% respectively.

However, in order to analyze the real effects of the pandemic on long-term youth unemployment, we should analyze the data for the year 2021, but these data are not yet available on Eurostat, since after the initial coup in March 2020, the economies were resentful and it would be necessary to analyze whether the measures adopted by the respective governments have favored or not, youth employment.



19. Source: Own elaboration based on [Eurostat data \(European countries\)](#) and [Observatori Català de la Joventut \(Catalonia\)](#).

As we can see in the graphic, in the vast majority of countries analyzed the rate of youth temporality is higher in 2019. In Catalonia, the rate of youth temporality is higher in 2019, standing at 49.3 % (well above the European average of 35.5% and only surpassed by the Spanish state with 56%). If we analyze the data we will see how in Catalonia the temporary rate has decreased in 2020 by 3.7% compared to the previous year. A reduction that also happens in the European Union and in most of the countries analyzed. While this may seem like a good fact, we need to keep in mind that the pandemic has destroyed temporary jobs first (the vast majority are young people), to be more precarious than the indefinite ones. In fact, from the labor reform we can say that the contractual temporality between young people is structural with all that entails.

Thus, **the pandemic has affected young women very negatively, as the destruction of employment has mostly affected people with temporary contracts**, the vast majority of whom are young people. In fact, since the labor reform we can say that this type of recruitment among young people is structural with all that entails.

Compared to the European Union, we can see that the Catalan youth temporary employment rate in 2019 is 13.8% higher than in Europe and in 2020 it is 12.5% higher. Thus, we can see that the trend is that in Catalonia the rate of youth temporary work is always higher than the European average. This characteristic can be translated into the high precariousness of the Catalan production model that does not protect its young workers who work with a high degree of uncertainty due to the temporary nature of their contracts.

However, we cannot analyze the effects of COVID-19 accurately because the data for 2021 are not available as of the date of this report, but due to the historical trend we can suspect that the youth temporary rate is will be negatively and significantly affected this year 2021 and beyond.

Conclusions

- The data collected in this report in collaboration with the different unions in the member countries of the European Union have allowed us to get an idea of the situation of young people. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative effect on the socio-occupational situation of young women, although a very precarious situation has already been observed before.
- Countries with **productive models focused on tourism and other seasonal sectors** that depend on other countries and economies suffer from more precarious working conditions, such as unemployment and temporary work.
- **In Catalonia the situation of young people is critical.** We suffer almost twice as much unemployment than the general population, almost triple of temporality, more than double of parciality and we are also the group with most risk of suffering poverty and social exclusion (strongly aggravated by consequences of COVID-19). This entire means thaht only 18.6% of young catalans can emancipated ourselves to develop our life project.
- In all European Union countries, the **youth unemployment rate** is much higher than the general unemployment rate. In addition, having a job in a context of job insecurity so obvious and with such high rates of temporary employment, ensures almost nothing. In fact, there are several reports warning of an increase in the rate of risk of poverty and social exclusion among young people.
- With regard to **parciality**, we can group the main reasons as follows: in the countries of southern Europe the reason for the parciality is because there is not a full-time one, while in the countries of northern Europe the reason are studies or internships.
- The **youth temporary rate** has always been well above the general temporary rate and it has been one of the caracatheristics of youth labor market. The European average of temporary rate stands at 25.1% and Catalonia suffers from one of the worst rate with 45.6% of temporary. Romania is the country with the least temporality, 3.1%.
- The negative **social-labor conditions** from capitalist system cause the proportion of young people aged 16 to 29 at risk of poverty or social exclusion to be quite high. In fact, the European average is 8.66% of young workers who, despite having a job, this is not enough to cover basic expenses and live in decent and quality conditions.

- **Emancipation** is essential to analyse the situation of young people. The possibility of leaving family home to establish the project of individual life is not as easy in Europe as we would like to think. In Catalonia, only 18.6% of young people can emancipate themselves. **The emancipation rate had never been less than 20% until 2020** (not even in the worst years of the previous crisis of 2008) and therefore, developing our life project is something inaccessible to the vast majority of young people.
- **Crises affect women more.** In terms of the evolution of the unemployment rate, as a general rule, more unemployment is observed among women, with the exception of some countries in northern and central Europe. In Catalonia, youth unemployment has always been higher among men, but this 2020 has been fairly even and there is only a 0.3% difference, which indicates that the crisis has destroyed more contracts of women. Temporality is a clear indication of the gender gap, as women suffer the most (3% if the European Union average is taken into account).
- So, despite being the best-prepared generation in history (a feature applicable on a European scale), we are the first generation to live worse than its predecessors. That is why we say that we are the Buried Generation, a generation that has been severely damaged by successive economic crises, which is in a critical situation because of this productive model that is killing our life projects.

The present and the future for young people is not very promising. Therefore, we understand that the administrations must ensure compliance with brave policies that attack the bone marrow and go to the center of the problems (which are structural) in order to offer a quality solution that allows young people establish their life project in dignified, quality and durable material conditions over time.

Claims

Analyzing the data on a European scale and, having held a meeting and various contacts with different countries mentioned in this report, from the Avalot, we understand that we must continue to fight to eliminate the precariousness of the work we suffer and give a boost to put us at the forefront of Europe or, at the very least, to be among the countries that offer better working conditions to their young workers.

To break with this job insecurity that is hitting us harder and harder from Avalot, we claim:

- A change in **production model different from the current one**, which moves away from mass tourism that causes a devastating effect where it is implemented, raising rental prices, expelling neighbors from the neighborhoods and emptying the associative and commercial fabric. Catalonia is one of the territories most affected, in large part, because we have an economy that has been based on tourism and that is why we demand a model that respects people, non-human animals and the environment.
- Promote the **diversification and decentralization of industry** to become independent of other countries and other economies. In a global world like the current one, a certain degree of dependence is inevitable, but the excess causes the misery of workers who see their jobs endangered. In this regard, we have seen that the countries that have best withstood the

negative consequences of the pandemic are those with stronger industries and more diversified and strategic production models, which do not depend directly on the decisions of third countries.

- End the **adult-centricism** that prevails in our society and that has even affected the measures to contain and protect employment due to the pandemic. Some aid has left out many young people who, due to non-compliance with the established requirements, which are impossible given the characteristics of the labor market and the working conditions that affect young women, have not been able to benefit.
- The promotion of **active employment policies** with criteria that ensure quality youth recruitment and that promote the **youth vision in collective agreements**, so that young women do not continue to be second-class workers in the **adult-centric labor regulations** that they currently have. Examples of this would be the inability to of reconcile without children or the salary tables that reward a veteranism and experience impossible to achieve for young people, who enjoy few or no opportunities. There is an urgent need for change to help us reverse the situation and adapt to new socio-labor needs.
- **Repeal the latest labor reforms** that are suffocating young women, dramatically precarious labor markets. It has been amply demonstrated that not only have labor market conditions not improved, but they have directly contributed to increasing job insecurity by facilitating layoffs, establishing excessive probationary periods, or allowing unilateral modification by the company of working conditions, especially of young people, who mostly have temporary and part-time contracts.
- More investment **and public policies** that propose measures to offset the devastating effects that the pandemic has caused in the most affected sectors that are where we work mostly young women.
- Encourage **indefinite employment** in order to provide stability to the labor market and enable young women to establish their life project.
- More resources in **labor inspection** in order to control and monitor that companies comply with current regulations on recruitment. We know very well that many of the temporary contracts we young women have are in breach of the law.
- Effectively incorporate psychosocial risks into the processes of assessing and preventing occupational risks in all companies and organizations, as the increase in **mental health** disorders that have particularly affected young people are directly related to the structural conditions of the capitalist system. Stress, depression, anxiety, suicide, etc., are largely a consequence of living in a system that does not care about people. Not reaching the end of the month, not being able to emancipate yourself, not having to pay rent, not finding a decent job, having one with very precarious conditions... all this causes the breeding ground that makes many young people live their present and their future with strong insecurity and anguish.

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