



**BRIEFING PAPER**

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# Youth Unemployment Statistics

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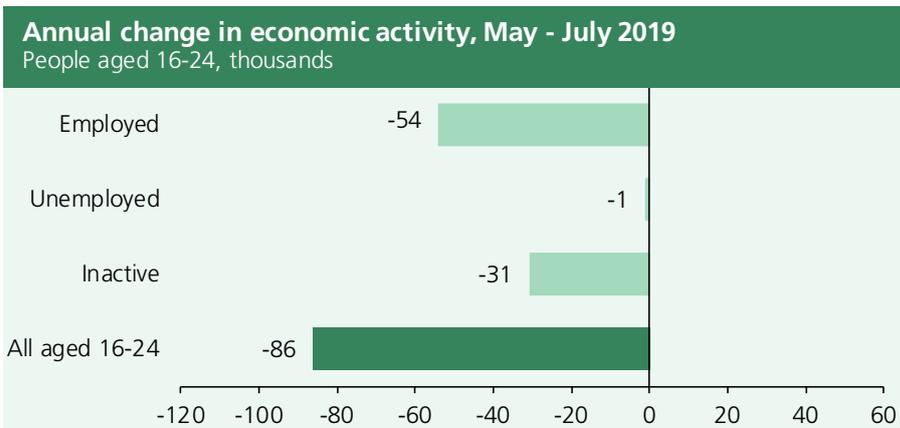
A photograph of a bright green sign for 'job centre plus' mounted on a brick wall. The sign is tilted and features the text 'job centre plus' in a bold, sans-serif font. 'job' and 'plus' are in white, while 'centre' is in a yellow-to-white gradient.

*job  
centre  
plus*

# 1. Youth Unemployment Statistics

488,000 young people aged 16-24 were unemployed in May-July 2019, a small increase from the previous quarter and little changed from the year before. By historical standards, unemployment levels for young people are very low.<sup>1</sup>

For context, it is worth noting that the total population aged 16-24 has been declining in recent years; in the year to May-July 2019 it decreased by 86,000. The number of young people in employment decreased by 54,000 over the past year, while the number who are economically inactive (not in or looking for work) decreased by 31,000.



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

The **unemployment rate** (the proportion of the economically active population who are unemployed) for 16-24 year olds was 11.4% in May-July 2019. This is up from 11.2% in the previous quarter and up slightly from 11.3% a year before.

The **inactivity rate** for young people is 38.2%. Three quarters of young people who are economically inactive are in full-time education.



The youth unemployment rate was 11.4%, compared to an unemployment rate of 3.8% for the whole population.

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

### Unemployment and education status

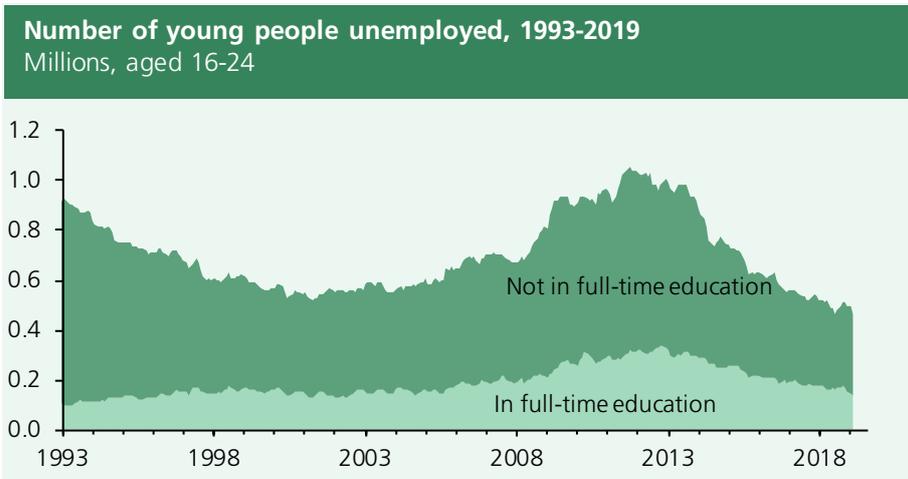
143,000 unemployed young people were in full-time education (29.4% of all unemployed young people) in May-July 2019, little changed from the previous quarter but 26,000 fewer than a year before.

Excluding those in full-time education, 344,000 people aged 16-24 were unemployed. This is a slight increase from the previous quarter and an increase of 25,000 from a year before.

The unemployment rate for 16-24 year olds in full-time education was 13.7%, down from 16.0% a year before.

For those not in full-time education, the unemployment rate was 10.7%, up from 9.8% a year before.

29.4% of unemployed young people are in full-time education.



### Unemployment by age

404,000 18-24 year olds were unemployed, while 1.68 million were economically inactive. 3.43 million were in work. The unemployment rate for people aged 18-24 was 10.5% in May-July 2019, up from 10.0% a year before.

84,000 16-17 year olds were unemployed (almost three quarters of whom were in full-time education), while 957,000 were economically inactive and 351,000 were in work.<sup>2</sup>

### Long term youth unemployment

77,000 people aged 16-24 had been unemployed for **over 12 months** in May-July 2019. This was 15.8% of all unemployed 16-24 year olds.

### Men and women

292,000 men aged 16-24 were unemployed in May-July 2019, 20,000 more than a year ago. The unemployment rate for men of this age was 13.3%, up from 12.0% a year before.

195,000 women aged 16-24 were unemployed, down 21,000 from a year before. The unemployment rate for women aged 16-24 was 9.5%, compared to 10.5% a year before.

The rise in youth unemployment over the past year was due to a rise among men.

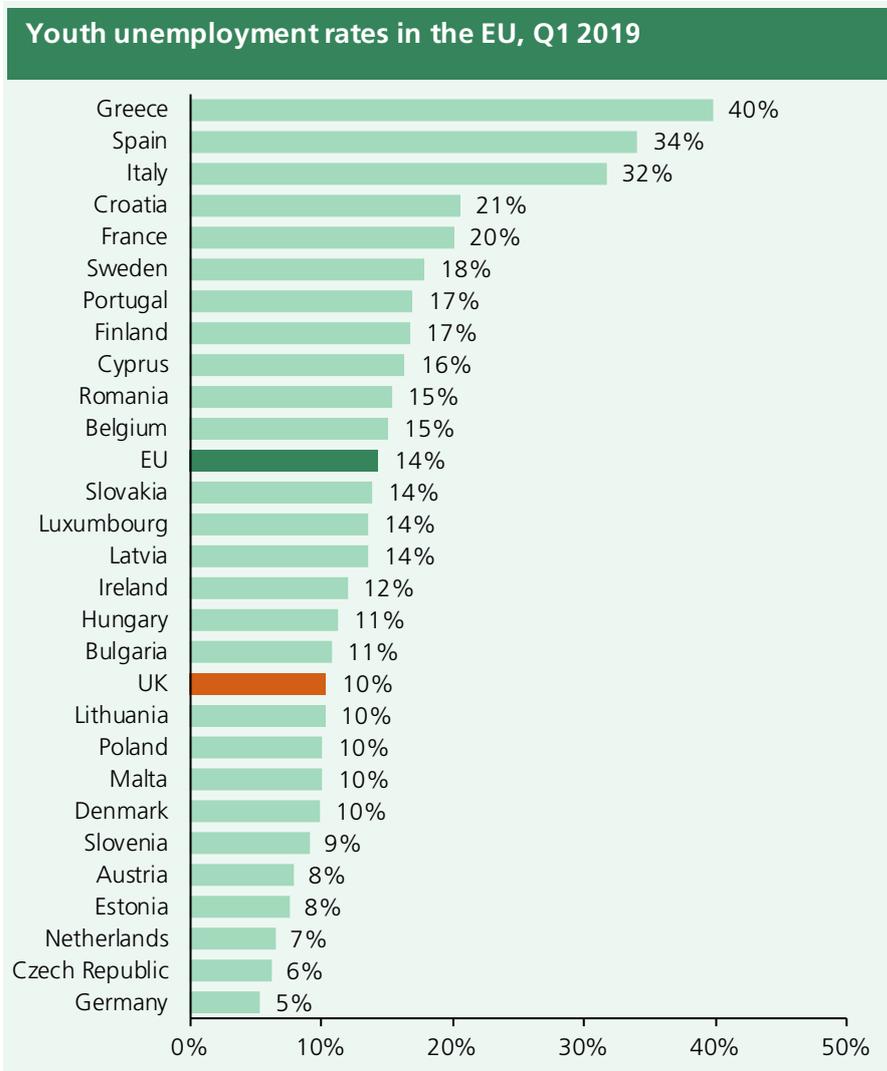
<sup>2</sup> The estimates for 16-17 year olds are more volatile than those for 18-24 year olds, since they are based on a smaller number of survey responses.

## 2. Youth Unemployment across Europe

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

Greece had the highest rate of youth unemployment in January-March 2019 at 39.8%. Germany had the lowest youth unemployment rate at 5.4%.

The UK youth unemployment rate was 10.4%, compared to 14.4% for the European Union as a whole.



Notes: Seasonally adjusted. Rate refers to the percentage of economically active young people aged 15-24 who are unemployed (16-24 year olds in UK, Italy and Spain).

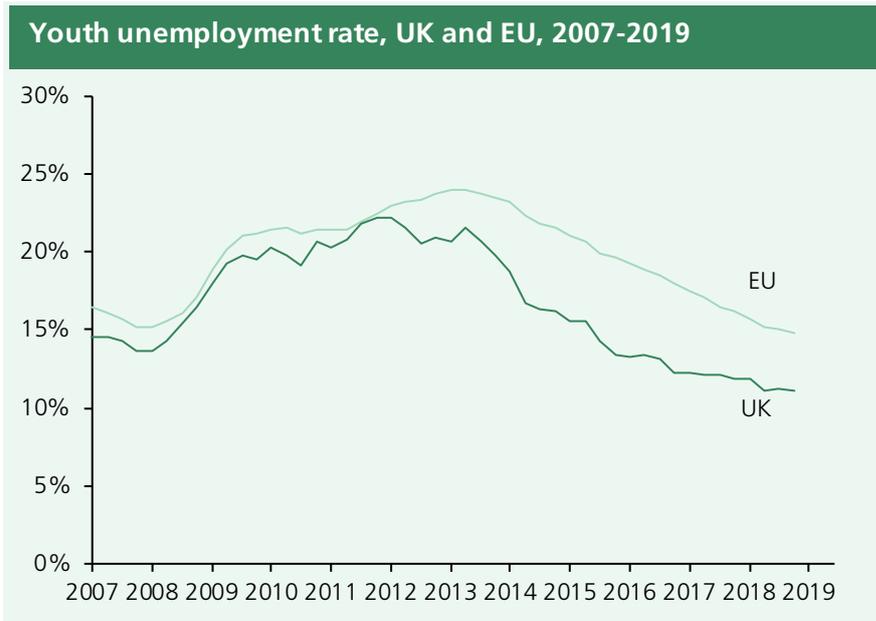
Source: Eurostat

### Recent trend in youth unemployment in the EU

The UK's youth unemployment rate has consistently been lower than the rate across the EU as a whole.

Since 2013, the youth unemployment rate has been on a downward trend in both the UK and for the EU as a whole.

The youth unemployment rate fell by 8.4% points in the UK between January-March 2014 and January-March 2019, compared to a decrease of 8.8% points for the EU.



Notes: Seasonally adjusted. Rate refers to the percentage of economically active young people aged 15-24 who are unemployed (16-24 year olds in UK, Italy and Spain).

Source: Eurostat

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