

[Draft Joint Employment Report 2017](#)

I. A decrease in unemployment and severe material deprivation masks significant variations between Member States and demographics.

Most job creation was in services (1.4%) however an overall decrease in unemployment and poverty masks significant variations between Member States and demographics. A number of countries are reinforcing the individualisation of support for the long term unemployed, those who face multiple barriers for re-entering work, including outsourcing and co-ordination of services. There were some reforms to the coverage, procedure and adequacy of social benefits but greater effort is needed to reach the most vulnerable job seekers and address low proficiency in basic skills.

II. Barriers to labour market participation

The Youth Guarantee has been successful but needs reforms to be inclusive and reach the most vulnerable. Women continue to be underrepresented in the labour market. More than 25% of the inactive female population (20-64) was inactive because of family responsibilities including care for incapacitated adults. Work-life balance needs to be integrated into policy making, including access to affordable and quality care services.

III. Persons with disabilities

The number of people with disabilities is expected to increase due to an aging population. The 'at risk of poverty and social exclusion' (AROPE) rate decreased in 2015 to 23.7%. However, persons with disabilities experience a higher rate of 30.1% in 2014. The activity gap between persons with disabilities aged 20-64 and those without disabilities amount to 21.1 pps (60.6% vs 81.7%), the employment gap was 23.8pps (48.7% vs 72.5%) and over 40pps in several Member States. However such statistics do no account for those considered unable to work, the true extend of exclusion is likely to be higher.

IV. Services

Estonia and Ireland have introduced strategies and goals for the public sector for the employment of persons with disabilities. Several Member states took actions to reform social and care services. Some are addressing the fragmentation of services and funding to improve the efficiency, sustainability and quality of long-term care services. Slovakia is planning to increase the allowance for carers for persons who have a severe disability. Bulgaria and Croatia are in the process of creating new models of integrated social and employment services.

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