Abeona
AN EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO CARE LEAVERS’ PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION

Erasmus+

SPAIN

Authors
Jordi Sàlvia Tobias and Miriam Garcia Marmol
Doris Krendl
Summary

PART 1: NATIONAL CONTEXT AND INFORMATION 4

1 THE NATIONAL CONTEXT 5
1.1 Historic and legislative framework 5
1.2 Existing services and support: 7
    1.2.1 Housing 9
    1.2.2 Training and socio-professional integration 11
    1.2.3 Socio-educational mentoring 11
    1.2.4 Psychological support and supervision 11
    1.2.5 Financial support for youths of adult age formerly in care 12
    1.2.6 Legal support 12
1.3 The role of different actors: 13
    1.3.1 Collaboration as a key factor in support for youths formerly in care in catalonia 13

2 YOUTHS FORMERLY IN CARE. DATA. 15
2.1 Context of youth in Spain 15
    2.1.1 Leaving school 15
    2.1.2 Youth unemployment and types of recruitment 16
    2.1.3 Age of emancipation 17
2.2 Profile of youths formerly in care: 19
    2.2.1 Youths by gender 19
    2.2.2 Age trend of youths 2013-2014 20
    2.2.3 Origin trend of youths 2013-2014 20
    2.2.4 Gender distribution trend based on origin 21
    2.2.5 Study trend among youths for 2013-2014 22
    2.2.6 Time spent in provided housing 22
    2.2.7 Profile overview of youths assisted in emancipation programmes: 23

3 PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION 24
3.1 Institutional tools for youth employment 24
3.2 Objectives, strategies and actions 24
    3.2.1 Strategic axis 1. Education and training. 25
    3.2.2 Strategic axis 2. Employment and entrepreneurship. 27
3.3 Organisations participating in professional integration 29
    3.3.1 National level 29
    3.3.2 Autonomous community level 30
    3.3.3 Local level 30
3.4 Levels at which youths are able to gain access to the labour market: 31
    3.4.1 Integrated access: 31
    3.4.2 Recruitment companies: 31
    3.4.3 Youth information service: 31

4 RESULTS 32
4.1 AXES of the national strategy 32
    4.1.1 Axis 1. Education and training. 32
    4.1.2 Axis 2. Employment and entrepreneurship. 33
    4.1.3 Axis 3. Housing. 33
4.1.4 Axis 4. Health, recreation and sport. 33
4.1.5 Axis 5. Participation, volunteering, inclusion and equality. 33
4.1.6 Axis 6. Institutional cooperation. 33
4.2 Challenges 34
4.2.1 Guarantee emancipation policies and services for youths formerly in care in spain 34
4.2.2 PRE-ADULTHOOD PREVENTIVE ACTION IN WORK THROUGH PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL INDEPENDENCE 34
4.2.3 Access to compulsory and post-compulsory regulatory learning 34
4.2.4 Resolution of difficulties faced by foreign youths formerly in care through the attainment of work permits 35
4.2.5 Improvement of measures concerning development of the social network and family relationships 35
4.2.6 Overcoming difficulties in the area of educational intervention 35

PART 2: YOUTH WORKER EXCHANGE – FEEDBACK AND ANALYSIS 36

5 CHAPTER 1: THE YOUTH WORKER EXCHANGE’S FEEDBACK 37
5.1 Brief description of the structure in which the exchange took place, and the overall environment: 37
5.2 Brief description of the field practice. 38
5.2.1 Detailed visit plan: 40
5.3 The meetings with youth workers and youngsters. 42
5.3.1 For the informal moments with the youngsters: 42
5.3.2 For the interviews and participative session: 43
5.3.3 A short conclusion is necessary to summarize the different observations that the youth worker made, the lessons to learn, the topics to work on, etc. 43
5.4 The meetings with external stakeholders and partners on professional integration. 44
5.5 The good practices. 45
5.6 The checking. 45
5.7 The conclusion. 46

6 CHAPTER 2: THE VOCATIONAL INTEGRATION 47
6.1 What does the structure do to help the professional integration of the young care leavers? 47
6.2 The role of the youth workers. 47
6.3 The different partnerships of the structure. 48

7 CHAPTER 3: ANALYSIS OF NEEDS 50
7.1 Based on the experience of the week, please identify and describe the needs of support for the youngsters regarding their professional integration 50
7.2 Based on the experience of the week please identify and describe the needs of youth workers regarding competences and tools in order to better help the young people regarding their professional integration. 50

8 CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSIONS AND GOOD PRACTICES. 52
8.1 General conclusions on the youth worker exchange 52
8.2 Description of good practices identified regarding how youth workers help young people achieve their professional integration 53
PART 1: NATIONAL CONTEXT AND INFORMATION
1 THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

1.1 Historic and legislative framework

On a political level, Spain is organised through autonomous communities, territories with their own political structure that are given jurisdiction over different legislative matters but whose authority is generally limited to implementing regulations that are subordinate to the content of national laws. In this sense, the national law of reference in regard to the protection of minors is the Organic Law amending the system of protection for childhood and adolescence of 22 July 2015 which introduced an amendment to the previous legislation, Organic Law 1/1996 of 15 January 1996 on the Judicial Protection of Minors, partially amending the Spanish Civil Code and Civil Procedure Code.

Prior to the amendment of the law of July 2015, there was no national law in place that specifically addressed the group of youths formerly in care. In this respect, the approval of this amendment signified a substantial improvement on the previous national regulations as it took into account, for the first time, measures for encouraging processes of emancipation of youths in care as provided for in Article 22-bis.

“Independent life preparation programmes. Public authorities shall offer independent life preparation programmes aimed at youths living under a protection measure, especially where they are in residential care or in a situation of particular vulnerability, starting from two years prior to reaching adult age and thereafter, where needed, seeking their active participation and to ensure they benefit. The programmes should provide socio-educational mentoring, housing, socio-professional integration, psychological support and financial aid.”

Even still, despite the increase in quality of life for youths formerly in care who for the first time are being recognised under a national law, the fact is that the development of specific policies remains susceptible to the budgetary constraints of the different autonomous administrations and, therefore, to the discretion of their respective political governments at each given moment.

In this sense, in view of the national legislative context, there is certainly a great disparity in policies for fostering the emancipation of youths formerly in care in the different autonomous communities. In the majority of those territories there are no specific regulations; there is merely the possibility, in some cases, of extending the stay of youths in centres for minors. As such, there are very few territories that have implemented specific public policies or benefits for the group of youths formerly in care. Some territories may have a decree in place that makes specific reference to the emancipation of youths having been under government protection, but these have often not been implemented due to a lack of resources.

In the territories where no specific legislation exists, given the lack of services to facilitate the emancipation of youths formerly in care, one of the territorial formulas adopted with youths who have reached adult age and are living under protection measures is to extend their stay in centres for minors for a period of time that can range from several months to over a year, or even two years in some cases. Financial benefits for youths, given that in
most cases there are no benefits specifically aimed at their group within each territory, are known as minimum integration income (the name varies by territory) and are available where the eligibility requirements are met. Youths can receive such income after the age of 18 (rather than 25 as established in the law for the general public) when they have been under government care. The main added difficulties in this respect are processing and resolution times.

In the autonomous communities that are starting to implement their own regulatory framework, a highly positive note is the approval of **Law 7/2015 of 10 April 2015 laying down the regulatory framework for the personal independence of minors having lived under a protection or reform measure** in the Balearic Islands, and which, since its approval, certain entities and administrations have begun to plan its implementation. In this same sense, it is also interesting to take into account the processes initiated in other communities such as the Comunitat Valenciana, the Canary Islands or Andalusia, which could result in the approval of specific short-term legislations. In this same situation, we would also point to the case of Castile-La Mancha, a territory which used to have a specific regulatory framework that was eliminated during the previous autonomous legislature, but which, thanks to the recent change in government, they hope to be able to reinstate.

Finally, Catalonia is also a noteworthy case. The Catalan legislation is a pioneer in Spain in this area and has provided support to youths formerly in care since 2010. In doing so it reaffirms the need to provide support to these youths, something that its own government has encouraged since 1994 with the creation of the 1st Interdepartmental Over-Eighteen Youth Plan, which in 2005 became the Àrea de Suport al Jove Tutelat i Extutelat (ASJTET).

The new social service benefits provided under the Cartera de Serveis Socials (Catalan social services portfolio) include specialist support for youths currently and formerly in care (SAEJ), financial support for youths having been under the care of the Generalitat de Catalunya for three or more years, and residencies or housing support for youths currently in care (age 16-18) and those formerly in care (aged 18-20).

**Articles from the Catalan legislation:**

**Law 14/2010 of 27 May 2010 on the rights and opportunities of childhood and adolescence, Chapter IV. Post-emancipation or adult-age support**

**Article 151. Welfare measures**

1. After reaching adult age or emancipation, protection measures are removed. However, the competent body of the government may provide any welfare measures it deems necessary by means of a reasoned decision, with the consent of the affected person or, where consent is not given, if such person is presumed disabled, by judicial authorisation.

2. The content of these welfare measures may be financial, legal or social in nature or they may consist of the allocation or maintenance of a space in a centre for minors, and they can be extended until the age of twenty one.

3. The government attorney may represent in court any persons formerly in care who request such representation upon reaching adult age or emancipation, on the condition that it was first provided when they were still minors.
Article 152. Support programmes for the emancipation and personal independence of youths formerly in care and those in a situation of risk to promote equal opportunities

1. The competent body shall provide the necessary guidance, training and support to youths formerly in care who request it upon reaching adult age or emancipation, provided that they meet the requirements established in the personal independence programmes.

2. Personal independence programmes are intended to offer youths formerly in care the necessary personal support, housing, training and professional resources so that they may be advised and guided in their everyday lives in conditions of equality, with responsibility and with the maximum level of integration into their society.

3. Personal independence programmes must include gender analysis-based insertion methods to guarantee the acquisition of professional skills.

1.2 Existing services and support:

The following table gives a brief schematic overview of the existing emancipation policies and services in the different autonomous communities in Spain. The data has been obtained from the document *La emancipación en España* (Emancipation in Spain) drafted and published by the Federation of Entities with Projects and Assisted Homes (FEPA) in December 2013. The full document, which will be updated throughout 2016, can be found at: http://www.fepa18.org/la-emancipacion-de-jovenes-tutelados-y-extutelados-en-espana/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Autonomous community</th>
<th>Existence of specific legislation</th>
<th>Existing government-recognised projects and services</th>
<th>Existence of specific financial benefits for emancipation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andalusia</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>- High intensity resources</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Medium-low intensity resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aragón</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>- Personal Emancipation Project (PEP)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Personal support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Financial support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Residential support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Educational support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Professional support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Alternative housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Centre of Resources for Minors Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asturias</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>- Independent life preparation programme (approx. ages 16 to 21)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- General resources, Centre for Minors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Apartments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- ITACA Programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantabria</td>
<td>Non-deployed</td>
<td>- Homes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- ‘UMBRELLA’ Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantabria Acoge</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>- Care homes&lt;br&gt;- Independent life preparation programme&lt;br&gt;- ‘Enlace’ Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castile and León</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>- Personal Independence Programme (ages 16 to 24)&lt;br&gt;- Financial Support&lt;br&gt;- Educational/professional support&lt;br&gt;- Residential support&lt;br&gt;- Personal support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castile-La Mancha</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>- Socio-educational mentoring programme&lt;br&gt;- Housing programme&lt;br&gt;- Professional integration programme&lt;br&gt;- Financial support programme&lt;br&gt;- Legal support programme&lt;br&gt;- Psychological support and supervision programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalina</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>- Extensions in Centres for Minors&lt;br&gt;- Independent housing&lt;br&gt;- Support for professional integration up to age 18&lt;br&gt;- Grants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community of Madrid</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>- Government resources&lt;br&gt;- Agencies offering emancipation housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community of Valencia</td>
<td>Non-deployed</td>
<td>- Semi-independent housing for minors and youths&lt;br&gt;- Shelter homes&lt;br&gt;- Associations which manage housing for minors in care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremadura</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>- Mentor programme&lt;br&gt;- Professional integration&lt;br&gt;- Integration support resources (RAI)&lt;br&gt;- Care homes&lt;br&gt;- Support housing&lt;br&gt;- Independence assistance plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galicia</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>- Operated by private entities&lt;br&gt;- Centres for minors (ages 14 to 18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Rioja</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>- Extension of residential care&lt;br&gt;- Emancipation housing&lt;br&gt;- Emancipation support programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National Report – Spain
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Availability</th>
<th>Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Navarre</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>- Extension in centre for minors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Private entities offering emancipation support programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basque Country (Álava)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>- Emancipation preparation housing (ages 14 to 18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Post-care mentoring programme (over 18s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basque Country (Biscay)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>- Care, information and guidance service (SAIO, ages 16 to 21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Extension in centre for minors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Specific emancipation housing resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Spaces in centres for women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- ‘Mundutik Mudura’ Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basque Country (Gipuzkoa)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>- Network of emancipation centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Extension of stay in centre for minors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Severance financial support plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murcia Region</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>- Emancipation housing (ages 16 to 18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- ‘Labor’ Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- ‘Impulso’ Programme (ages 16 to 23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- ‘Inicia’ Programme (ages 14 to 23)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite not being recognised under national law, for which they have a different level of application in different territories, the various services available to youths formerly in care in Spain can be classified as follows:

### 1.2.1 Housing

There are various housing projects for youths in care, those formerly in care and those with social difficulties, most of which are managed by partner entities. These programmes offer living opportunities in apartments or residences, and their aim is to enable youths to complete their education and achieve personal independence and professional and social integration.

#### 1.2.1.1 Extended stay in centres for minors

Minors are offered an extended stay in the same centre after they turn 18. This is studied case-by-case and offered where an extension is deemed necessary and the minor’s stay is justified due to his/her personal process and based on situations for which the measure is required due to particular circumstances. The extension at the centre is for the time considered necessary, up to around one and a half additional years.
1.2.1.2 **Housing support service for youths aged sixteen to eighteen**

This is a care and education based housing service for youths from ages sixteen to eighteen for whom it is considered that a gradual process of de-institutionalisation would be beneficial. The aim is for youths to acquire sufficient skills to achieve professional integration upon reaching adult age. Despite living in an apartment rather than a residential facility, these youths remain under the protection and control of the local government. Each apartment has an educational team consisting of a social educator who is permanently on site, while the number of youths can vary depending on the characteristics of each resource.

1.2.1.3 **Housing support service for youths over age eighteen**

These are homes intended for youths between the ages of eighteen and twenty five without any personal resources or relatives and who, upon reaching adult age, are forced to leave institutions where they have lived in care. They have one social educator who is responsible for each apartment, but in this case they are not permanently on-site. The average number of users varies according to the size of the apartment, which functions as a shared home in which the users are required adopt an increasing level of independence.

1.2.1.4 **Residency or housing service for youths participating in socio-professional integration or training programmes**

These are residential services for minors who are working or in training (from ages sixteen to eighteen) and under government care, and for youths of adult age (age eighteen and up) who were formerly in care. Each device has resources specialising in pre-vocational training, labour market integration and offering educational support to training processes.

1.2.1.5 **Family integration service**

This is a resource with spaces that are more limited, which provides shelter through families of young foreign persons formerly in care. The programme selects candidates and offers preliminary training and support both to candidates and to their shelter families.

1.2.1.6 **Special support and alternative housing service for youths currently and formerly in care**

The situation and characteristics of certain young people has led the government to evaluate the need for specialised care with different and alternative resources to institutionalisation in centres or transfer to housing support through the offer of alternative housing (board payments, management of shared housing, etc.). This is especially the case with young immigrants searching for work or who are already in work and who in some cases maintain relations with their original family. It involves projects generally aimed at youths over the age of 18 with a level of independence which exceeds that of those living in support housing. These youths receive support in searching and paying for housing, as well as in developing their personal path. Some centres also cover their maintenance costs.
1.2.2 Training and socio-professional integration

This programme is aimed at youths aged sixteen to twenty three. Its objectives are to improve their skills and increase their employability so that they may gain access to employment as a stable source of income and to cover their basic needs.

It consists of an integration course personalised based on the skills, characteristics and interests of each person, with the supervision of a tutor.

Cases involving immigrants are more complex given the difficulty obtaining a work permit and residency. In order to qualify, candidates must have an offer of full-time work with at least a one-year employment contract, something which is virtually non-existent in the current context.


1. Foreigners living in Spain for at least one year may gain access to residency and employment when the permit application is submitted by the employer and the labour requirements set forth in Article 64, with the exception of that under part 3(a), are met.

In exceptional cases, foreigners may obtain residency and work permits without meeting the one-year requirement where they can demonstrate a need to work due to particular circumstances in order to guarantee their subsistence.

2. The validity of the issued work permit shall be dependent on the worker's subsequent registration under the corresponding social security regime within one month from notification of issue. Where this condition is met, the permit shall be retroactively validated to the day immediately after the date of expiration of the previous permit.

3.

1.2.3 Socio-educational mentoring

This programme primarily supports young people accepted to housing schemes or who receive financial support, although it is also open to people in other situations. They are offered support and assistance to help them progress towards personal independence or to return to their family unit.

Professionals, through personal interviews, support the youths in making decisions regarding their options for the future, such as emancipation and independence, returning to their original home or the possibility of living with a partner, among others.

The work involves the development of a personal independence project before and after de-institutionalisation. Socio-educational mentoring is compulsory in order to be accepted for aid under the Benefits Act.

1.2.4 Psychological support and supervision

The aim of this programme is to offer youths psychological support or guidance in order to help them overcome specific problems which impede them from achieving personal independence.

Participation in this programme is through personalised care offered by a psychology professional.
1.2.5 Financial support for youths of adult age formerly in care

The aim of this programme is to provide youths formerly in care of adult age with income to enable them to develop their path towards personal independence in a progressive manner. Financial support is strictly dependent on their integration into education or housing schemes, or into an individual work plan linked to the Benefits Act. Students must commit to follow this plan, under which they receive mentoring from a professional. There are various types of financial support:

1.2.5.1 Financial support for youths formerly in care

This aid, provided under the Financial Benefits Act, is a temporary legal entitlement, provided to overcome situations of need for youths having been under the care of the local government body responsible for the protection of minors.

1.2.5.2 Basic integration income

The assignment of basic integration income for youths formerly in care, under the age of twenty five and who need financial support in order to pursue personal and social reorganisation, must be proposed by social services and is accompanied by a period of training and dependent upon an approved and supervised work plan.

1.2.5.3 Salary-based grants

These grants are aimed at youths involved in the training and socio-professional integration project who carry out a company-based training or professional activity. Salary-based grants are subject to an adequate performance of the activity and continued care.

1.2.5.4 Grants for training activities

In Catalonia, there are grants offered by the La Caixa Foundation, managed by the Federation of Entities with Projects and Assisted Homes (FEPA). The grants are aimed at youths formerly in care between the ages of eighteen and twenty four and are intended to enable them to achieve the goals set out in their individualised work plan, namely to improve their professional and occupational skills and to continue to follow regulated education.

Other autonomous communities also offer different types of grants for studies.

1.2.6 Legal support

The aim of this programme is to provide advice, legal support and mediation, paying close attention to issues raised among young people in relation to the professional community. The programme is made effective thanks to individualised case-by-case mentoring, with plenty of flexibility to adapt to the specificities of each situation.
Support is provided in the following areas:

- **Immigration**: Guidance in each situation, processing of passports and documentation, authorisations and permits for residency and employment, and mediation with companies and other agents.
- **Criminal matters**: Violations in the case of minors, procedures for misdemeanours or offences. Continued mentoring is provided, along with support in relation to alternative measures.
- **Civil matters**: Nationality, disability, other issues affecting persons of adult age formerly in care.
- **Mediation between youths and the professional community**, families, companies and other social agents.
- **Support and mentoring for legal issues** in any other area raised by young people, the professional community or collaborating entities.

**1.3 The role of different actors:**

Given the lack of a more developed legislative framework, in most territories, it is the entities themselves who take the initiative in developing projects for promoting the emancipation of youths currently and formerly in care. Many third sector entities operate residential centres for minors under the age of eighteen and often, once youths reach adult age, they find that there are no available services to guarantee their transition towards full independence. It is the identification of this need among local services that has driven the initiative to implement such programmes and resources.

In this sense, it is found that where there is greater coordination between entities working in the area of independence and where greater cooperation has been fostered between the third sector and the government, there is a greater implementation of service benefits. A clear example of this coordination and cooperation can be seen in Catalonia.

**1.3.1 Collaboration as a key factor in support for youths formerly in care in Catalonia**

The process of growth and maturation in the third sector has gone hand-in-hand with a growing propensity towards collaboration between different social agents. Behind this inter-sector collaboration is the idea of a society of shared responsibility.

In regard to attention for youths formerly in care, in Catalonia there is a long history of collaboration between the public administration and social entities. This has been and continues to be an ongoing experience of mutual enrichment for the two parties, which has resulted in the development and maintaining of consolidated programmes in the different areas in need of coverage in order to guarantee a strong process of emancipation (housing, financial support, legal support, education or professional integration) and to provide a legal framework. Not all youths having been in care can access these programmes.
The Àrea de Suport al Jove Tutelat i Extutelat (ASJTET) of the Generalitat de Catalunya, which turned twenty in 2014, helped 1,932 youths in 2013. Coordination between entities and the government has helped improve interventions with youths and has served to promote policies and new programmes for two decades. Today they are working on several projects, such as ‘EspaiJove’ (a meeting place for youths with a range of workshops and activities), jointly running financial aid programmes to support studies, or sharing spaces to make them profitable and to make communications faster and simpler.

A look at how the different programmes have been gradually incorporated through ASJTET over the last twenty years illustrates how well the two agents complement each other. Their goal now is keep working to provide the most appropriate responses at each given moment. Ongoing education with continuing paths within the framework of regulated teaching is one of their main challenges.

### Timeline of ASJTET programmes and services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>1st plan for the coordination of interdepartmental measures aimed at youths under the care of the Generalitat de Catalunya: housing, education and professional integration and youth mentoring programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Modification of the education and professional integration programme: incorporation of the Work Route.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2nd plan for the coordination of interdepartmental measures aimed at youths in care: new financial support programme with de-institutionalisation assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Creation of the Àrea de Suport als Joves Tutelats i Extutelats (ASJTET). Modification of the housing programme with the incorporation of housing for youths aged 16 to 18 and residences for working youths.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>New “Acompanyament Jurídic” legal support programme. Modification of the housing programme (Servei d’Acompanyament Especialitzat per a Joves Tutelats i Extutelats, SAEJ).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Modification of programmes, residency for youths in studies (‘Cabestany’) and financial support for youths in studies. Barcelona Work Route.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Programme modification, Girona Work Route.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>New programme, “Recerca d’origens”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 YOUTHS FORMERLY IN CARE. DATA.

There is little data and very few studies regarding the group of youths without family support and in the process of emancipation in Spain. This is an ongoing issue, the resolution of which would help improve the situation of these youths.

It should be noted that it is difficult to keep data on support provided to youths formerly in care within Spain since there is no monitoring of this group of youths as a whole once they reach adult age, therefore there is a lack of data available. This means that very little is known about the development, level of independence and emancipation of a youth that has been under the protection system.

2.1 Context of youth in Spain

2.1.1 Leaving school

Spain has one of the highest rates of early school leavers in the European Union. 23.5% of youths from ages 18 to 24 have not completed secondary education and in 2013 followed no education or training whatsoever (“State system of education indicators for 2014”, National Institute of Educational Assessment (INEE), 2014). This represents a fall of 1.4 per cent from the 2012 rate of 24.9%, but it is still far from the target for 2020 which is to reduce the school lever rate to 15%. At present, in seven autonomous communities this rate is above 25% (“State system of education indicators for 2014”, National Institute of Educational Assessment (INEE), 2014).

In 2012, the unemployment rate among the working population of 25 to 64-year-olds with an education below secondary level two was 31%. The rates for completing secondary education were 23% for women and 20.2% for men (“Education at a Glance 2014: OECD Indicators”, Spanish Report, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport 2014).
In the investigation *Young People from a Public Care Background: Pathways to Education in Europe*, carried out from 2007-2010 in five European countries (UK, Denmark, Sweden, Hungary and Spain), it was found that 31.7% of the population in care born in 1994 was on the correct course (compared to 69.4% in the general population).

However, it pointed to an educational gap when entering the school system as well as additional delays during time spent in care. 64.5% of adolescents in care born in 1994 were having to repeat a course, compared to just 9.1% in the general population. It also highlighted the education being accessed, with 50% of youths coming from an initial professional qualification programme or PCPI (versus 4.4% in the general population).

### 2.1.2 Youth unemployment and types of recruitment

The rate of unemployment in Spain was 23.6% in the third quarter of 2014, more than double the EU average. In the third quarter of 2014 there were 867,000 unemployed youths under the age of 25, more than 52% of the total. In 2008, there were less than 30% in the same age band. This shows that the percentage has almost doubled. This aspect is a determining factor of youth emancipation. Around 51% of youths aged 16 to 29 were working under temporary contracts (Emancipation Observatory, July 2014). Youths between the ages of 16 and 24 had a temporary employment rate of 68.5%, the highest of all groups (Emancipation Observatory, July 2014).

Access to employment has been interpreted as the main stumbling block in the transition to adult life among young people. Employment is also linked to the personal self-esteem and social placement of the individual, such that it is seen as the key to the rights to citizenship. The youth employment rate remains at historically low levels. In the second quarter of 2014, the employment rate among youths under 25 in Spain was 18.3%, compared to 38% in 2007. While at that time it was slightly above the European average (37.4%), in 2013 the average level in the EU was double at 32.3%. In 2013, Spain had the lowest employment rate of all EU countries, after Greece and Italy.

However, the most recent data points to a slowdown in the decline of the employment rate and even suggests it has started to recover. The employment rate for youths under 25 in the last two quarters has shown the smallest rate of decline since the beginning of the crisis (0.36 points and 0.44 points, respectively), while among youths aged 25 to 29 the employment rate has grown for the first time since 2008.

The improvement in youth education has also been aided through measures to promote recruitment with the Training and Education Contract, which offers youths a pathway to integration into employment while completing their education (Institute for Youth, September 2014).

As for youths who neither study nor work, there are a total of 1,793,500 in the country. The number of youths who contribute to their family income by combining studies with work (known as ‘SiSí’) amounted to 444,900, according to the most recent Active Population Survey (EPA) (International campaign for the declaration of the youth employment decade, 2016).
2.1.3 Age of emancipation

Only one in five people under the age of 30 is emancipated in Spain.

According to a survey carried out in the autonomous community of Catalonia (“Enquesta a la Joventut de Catalunya”, Direcció General de Joventut 2012), 42% of non-emancipated Catalan youths between ages 30 and 34 cited a lack of financial resources or insufficient availability of resources as a main reason for not emancipating. Among youths aged 20 to 24, 40% claim this as the main reason.

Youth emancipation processes are characterised by aspects such as the age of completing studies, age of incorporation into the labour market and social values. This goes hand-in-hand with making decisions and sentimental commitments and, in many cases, financial investments. The same “Enquesta a la joventut de Catalunya 2012” gives a simulation of the rate of poverty among youths aged 15 to 34 in the case of emancipation and based on the type of home they would form. This simulation is simple way of highlighting the severity of this cycle. The rate of emancipation increases significantly among immigrant youths, which is around 30% higher among both women and men. The chart shows a comparison in relation to youths between ages 15 and 34.
2.2 Profile of youths formerly in care:

In Spain there are more than 30,000 children and youths in care (Childhood Observatory, 2013). More than 5,000 are in the process of emancipation and more than 3,800 are approaching adult age (Childhood Observatory, 2013). It should be noted that youths having been in government care are in a situation of vulnerability that is very different to that of most youths at the age of eighteen. The demands facing youths formerly in care are not the same as those for youth in general.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total children in care in Spain 2013</th>
<th>Total youths in care approaching emancipation 2013</th>
<th>Youths formerly in care in the process of emancipation 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30,171</td>
<td>More than 3,800</td>
<td>More than 5,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are youths who have been in care and who, upon reaching adult age, are forced to emancipate without family support or the resources needed to do it. In these cases, emancipation comes with no guarantees that the young person has achieved a sufficient level of independence, placing that person in a particularly vulnerable situation. If this is the case, it will be very difficult for that person to achieve personal success.

Since no official data is available on youths formerly in care at the state level, below we have provided data on more than 2,200 youths formerly in care assisted by the 61 FEPA-federated entities in different emancipation projects in the years 2013-2014:

2.2.1 Youths by gender

![Graph showing gender distribution of youths in care](image)
2.2.2  Age trend of youths 2013-2014

In 2014, the number of assisted youths between ages 16 and 18 grew by around 6%, while this was around 6% among youths aged between 21 and 25.

2.2.3  Origin trend of youths 2013-2014

Around 800 foreign youths who are or who have been in care only have a residency permit.
2.2.4 Gender distribution trend based on origin

2013

Extranjera
- Chicas: 17%
- Chicos: 83%

España
- Chicas: 45%
- Chicos: 55%

2014

Extranjero
- Chicas: 16,3%
- Chicos: 83,7%

España
- Chicas: 44,4%
- Chicos: 55,6%
2.2.5 Study trend among youths for 2013-2014

In 2014, the number of youths who “only study” rose 5%, while the number of youths who “neither work nor study” fell by more than 7%.

2.2.6 Time spent in provided housing

Housing support consists primarily of emancipation housing for youths between ages 18 and 21, who make up 39.5%. The most common length of stay is between 1 and 2 years. Most homes are rented, in 55.1% of cases. 40.3% of youths have no source of income.
### Profile overview of youths assisted in emancipation programmes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vivienda:</td>
<td>Sin posibilidad de tenerla propia o familiar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referente</td>
<td>Necesidad de tener referente adulto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proyecto</td>
<td>Compromiso y voluntariedad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actitud:</td>
<td>Con capacidad de convivencia y aceptación de normas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formativo y laboral:</td>
<td>Desarrollando alguna o ambas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economía:</td>
<td>Ingresos económicos inexistentes/básicos.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION

3.1 Institutional tools for youth employment

At the national level, the Inter-Ministerial Commission for Youth was created in 1986. It currently operates under the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, and has a representative serving as director-general from each ministry and through the Spanish Youth Council. It is a body that coordinates and connects with the other ministries to promote youth policies, an instrument which facilitates the development of plans and other inter-ministerial measures aimed at youth, while maintaining an overview of government actions implemented through different ministries which affect young people.

Another public body operating under the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality is the Institute for Youth (INJUVE), dedicated primarily to promoting measures to the benefit of youths in society. INJUVE promotes equal opportunities between male and female youths, fosters youth participation in political, social, economic and cultural development and encourages collaboration with other ministerial departments and other public administrations whose activities affect this sector of the population.

This highlights the importance of the collaboration with the youth organisations of the autonomous communities and with local councils through the FEMP (Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces) and with the youth association movement, in this case through the Spanish Youth Council. The body's Governing Council also ensures the participation of youth associations in youth-related government policies.

One of the priorities of the Institute for Youth is to ensure that employment policies do not begin with a job search but by following a formal and informal training and education policy which empowers young people from adolescence. This empowerment includes positive attitudes and motivation towards entrepreneurship and innovation.

3.2 Objectives, strategies and actions

With respect to the areas of youth training and integration, at the state level, any public policy to be implemented must now fall under or be based on the “Europe 2020” Strategy, which pursues the following objectives:

- 75% employment of people aged between 20 and 64.
- Early school leaver rates below 15%; at least 40% of people aged 30 to 34 must complete tertiary level studies.
- Combat poverty and social exclusion: reduce the number of people in a situation or at risk of poverty and social exclusion by at least 20 million.
Of the 6 strategic axes identified by the Ministry of Health Social Services and Equality (Education and Training, Employment and Entrepreneurship, Housing, Prevention and Health, Volunteering, Inclusion and Equality and Institutional Cooperation), the first two are particularly significant as they specifically include aspects pertaining to lines of action targeting the professional integration of youths.

3.2.1 Strategic axis 1. Education and training.

The expansion of the education system in Spain has undoubtedly been one of the country’s most significant milestones in recent decades. However, today’s education system is faced with new challenges. Specifically, there is a need to reduce the number of youths leaving school early and to ensure that those entering the labour market are adequately prepared in order to improve their prospects of finding employment.

In pursuit of these objectives some important initiatives have been introduced over the last two years, such as the education system reform with the approval in late 2013 of the Organic Law for Improving the Quality of Education (LOMCE) and the implementation of dual professional training, based on successful models used in other countries. A public grant system has also been retained, which guarantees all youths equal opportunities of access to education.

Other measures have also been adopted, designed taking into account that we are living in what has become known as the knowledge society and that only a society capable of running an education system that offers its citizens highly rated, life-long qualifications with a special focus on new generations of youths can offer sufficient opportunities to everyone.

3.2.1.1 Objective 1. Improve the quality of the Spanish education system to increase employability and entrepreneurship.

Measures:

One prominent measure is the Erasmus+ Education and Professional Training Programme, which promotes continuous Europe-wide learning, encourages the modernisation of education and training systems and reinforces the international aspect of education and training and language learning. Also included are all programmes related to educational remote language learning, grants for post-graduate, master and research courses, doctorate thesis awards, and educational cooperation agreements for professional practices.

New Basic Professional Training Cycles have been implemented, intended primarily to prevent youths from leaving the education system early, with the government having committed to covering the excess implementation costs of this new level of education until 2017.
Dual professional training is also gradually being adopted, combining teaching and learning processes both in companies and in education centres. Also noteworthy are the annual calls to implement a specific state programme for youths under 30, which include specific educational activities for youths registered under the National Youth Guarantee System. This is an open training provided through training centres and institutions.

3.2.1.2 Objective 2. Promote the informal training system.

Measures:
The informal training system is a social skills learning model that encourages the acquisition of competences and offers many youths the opportunity to obtain new knowledge, qualifications and skills which contribute to their personal, professional and educational development, improving their prospects for education and employment. Human resources departments in many companies are placing a growing emphasis on these skills and competences when selecting candidates for a job.

The Erasmus+ Youth Programme, together with other youth-targeted measures, represents the maximum expression of informal learning in Spain. It is therefore essential to guarantee the development of the Youth Pass through the Erasmus+ Programme, through which the informal and formal learning acquired in each project can be described and validated. Such learning falls under the eight key competences set forth in the European reference framework for lifelong learning: communication in the mother tongue; communication in foreign languages; mathematical competence and basic competencies in science and technology; digital competence; social and civic competences; learning to learn; sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; and cultural awareness and expression.

3.2.1.3 Objective 3. Identify and promote new niches and areas for generating employment through training.

Measures:
The digital economy sector holds the greatest potential for creating employment and generating businesses today. At the same time, youths are highly skilled and capable in the use of new technologies. It is therefore considered that by combining these two ingredients, we have the ability to generate invaluable opportunities for the youth sector in Spain.

Particularly relevant in this respect are the programmes implemented during 2014, such as Inngames, a programme related to employment, entrepreneurship, training, innovation and development, technology and the transfer of knowledge in the digital recreation industry which is intended to lay the foundations for promoting this sector and creating employment in Spain, the main beneficiaries of which will be Spanish youths. Programmes related to this third objective include those aimed at educating digital professionals, supporting initiatives to promote entrepreneurship within the digital economy, implementing e-learning within the area of the digital economy and emerging
technologies, particularly those related to e-commerce, digital marketing and software and app development.

### 3.2.2 Strategic axis 2. Employment and entrepreneurship.

Despite continuing efforts in the areas of economics and employment, which are enabling the country to emerge from the crisis and consequently improve the living conditions of society as a whole, the situation affecting youths specifically requires other measures. High rates of unemployment, which are still over 50% in the 16-24 age band and 37.7% in the 16-29 band, make overcoming the scourge of youth unemployment one of the country’s major priorities.

The measures adopted over these last two years, such as the Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment Strategy 2013-2016, creation of the National Youth Guarantee System and the focus on calls for income tax-based grants under programmes which encourage employability and entrepreneurial culture among youths, highlight the importance placed on implementing youth employment policies. And these actions have been used to establish the objectives of this axis dedicated to entrepreneurship and employment.

#### 3.2.2.1 Objective 1. Enhance the creation of youth employment opportunities.

Promoting youth integration into the labour market, as well as increasing the number of youths entering self-employment and supporting company set-up among people under age 35.

February 2012, the government approved a labour reform with main objective of halting the short-term destruction of employment and laying the foundations to create employment once the economy resumes medium and long-term growth. The measures which place a particular emphasis on youths included under this objective are:

- Modification of the Training and Education Contract to increase its use.
- Creation of the full-time support contract for business owners, the aim of which was to promote stable recruitment by SMEs with specific incentives for hiring youths.

The Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment Strategy 2013-2016, with the goals of improving youth employability, increasing job quality and stability, promoting equal opportunities of access to the labour market fostering a culture of entrepreneurship.

#### 3.2.2.2 Objective 2. Foster a culture of entrepreneurship.

This objective includes programmes and measures which include studies and research, programmes for fostering entrepreneurship such as the National Contest for Young Entrepreneurs, as well as resource guides and digital applications to facilitate entrepreneurship.

At the annual call for income tax-based grants in 2014 and within the programmes aimed at youths, priority is placed on supporting youth entrepreneurship projects or programmes which encourage a spirit of entrepreneurship among youths.
The Annual Employment Policy Plan now includes the adoption of common services to be provided by all Public Employment Services, with one of the more prominent being the specialised self-employed and entrepreneurship advice service which helps users, including beneficiaries of the Youth Guarantee, to set up self-employment and entrepreneurial activities, providing advice and support in all related processes and following an entrepreneurial pathway that includes all phases of business ownership, and particularly consolidation. Users can also receive advice on available incentives and resources to encourage recruitment. Particular focus is placed on self-employed work, the social economy and collective entrepreneurship.

3.2.2.3 Objective 3. Promote the implementation of the youth guarantee system.

Spain’s Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan and the National Youth Guarantee System, approved in coordination with the autonomous communities, is an initiative which falls under the Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment Strategy of the Ministry of Employment and Social Security and which responds to the European Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 which aims to provide employment opportunities to youths under age 30 who are not studying, in training or working.

In Spain, the Institute for Youth is the body responsible for the management, coordination and implementation of this programme in relation to the youth sector, through the Spanish National Agency. This is carried out in collaboration with the youth organisations of the autonomous communities. The Institute for Youth is collaborating with the Ministry of Employment and Social Security in introducing and promoting the Youth Guarantee System among Spanish youths.

The idea is to give them the opportunity to find a job based on their skills, training and experience, or to acquire relevant skills, training and experience that will increase their chances of finding a job in the future.

The ultimate goal of the National Youth Guarantee System is to ensure that youths between the ages of 16 and 30, including those with a degree of disability of 33% or higher, who are unemployed and not integrated in systems of education or training, receive an offer of employment, continued education, training or a period of practice after completing their formal education or becoming unemployed.

The autonomous communities and other agents involved may also establish additional requirements at each of their calls or actions they carry out.

Recruitment support: provided for actions or measures which encourage professional integration. In this respect, the actions or measures implemented may include incentives in social security contributions, promotion of training contracts provided under the legislation in force, employment aid for recruiting for a minimum term, promoting the social economy, and training and promotion of employment for the group of young researchers.
Fostering entrepreneurship: actions or measures shall include those which support the spirit of entrepreneurship, fostering responsibility, innovation and entrepreneurship, and offering youths more support services to set up businesses, in particular with closer cooperation between employment services, business support entities and funding providers. In this respect, the actions or measures adopted may include incentives for social security contributions, self-employment aid, capitalisation of unemployment benefit, fostering a culture of entrepreneurship, measures to promote self-employment and collective entrepreneurship within the framework of the social economy, advice on self-employment and starting businesses and training for entrepreneurs.

At the same time, consideration shall be given to access to training programmes and employment by users with a disability and/or at risk of social exclusion, whether through ordinary employment or protected employment. In any case, gender perspective shall be incorporated into the design, implementation, monitoring and assessment of actions taken.

### 3.3 Organisations participating in professional integration

#### 3.3.1 National level

At the national level, the Institute for Youth (INJUVE) remains a national focal point for dialogue with other ministerial departments and economic and social agents, autonomous amenities, local councils and the youth association movement, and has consolidated its presence at the national level through its lines of research, materials, information, national and European programmes, international resources, examples of good practices and pilot initiatives.

Involvement of regional and local government administrations. The involvement of regional and local government administrations is vital to the implementation in Spain of decisions made at the European level, given that their objective is to bring Europe closer to citizens, including at the youth level. It is also essential to guarantee movement in the other direction so that Spain's good practices and experiences in regard to youth are known by and recognised among our neighbours. And, of course, representation of the political will of autonomous communities in European youth-related decision-making bodies.

Outside the strictly intergovernmental sphere, Spain's relationship with the European Commission translates to the implementation at the national, autonomous and local levels of European youth programmes which help increase the sentiment among European citizens
and the solidarity of our youths through tools such as European volunteering, exchanges and other actions that facilitate relations with other youths around Europe.

Meanwhile, the Spanish Youth Council (CJE) carries out what are essentially advisory and representative functions, with the overall image of youth councils at the different regional levels being very weak (just 18% of young people state that they are aware of or have heard of them, and only 9.2% find them useful). The main strength of youth councils lies in their advisory role and their presence at numerous advisory councils and other public administration bodies at all levels.

3.3.2 Autonomous community level

Responsibilities over youth matters were transferred to the autonomous communities as the statutes of autonomy were gradually approved. This resulted in a certain regional variability in the way in which such responsibilities are assumed.

The autonomous communities have generally created planning and coordination instruments within their own territory, through youth laws and plans with varying forms of drafting, content, resources and frequencies. These plans and laws have maintained a certain continuity between them and have been systematically evaluated, despite being affected by some degree of discontinuity on occasions.

3.3.3 Local level

The variability of municipal policies is even greater than that of autonomous committees. But with a substantial difference; even if all autonomous communities have a more or less well-defined youth policy, albeit with different content, this is not the case with local councils, many of which do not have one (or have drafted one but never put it into practice), while many others that do, and they are generally well developed.

At this local level, it should also be noted that the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) and other municipal territorial federations also have a Youth Commission for promoting youth policies and programmes in local governments and councils, which configure their own areas of local cooperation. The Institute for Youth continues to hold an annual convention in collaboration the FEMP to promote the implementation of pilot programmes at the local level.

Youth access to employment or pathways to integration which enable them to enter the labour market may be either directly through the public system, delegated to the offices of the employment service in each community, or, as has been done in the past, through third sector entities, which promote integration projects at different levels. Such projects may be promoted and financed at the public or private level.
3.4 Levels at which youths are able to gain access to the labour market:

3.4.1 Integrated access:

In this case, the process of individual development of transversal competences, employability and technical skills is accompanied by the possibility to carry out on-the-job training or to search for training or employment. Monitoring is also provided to ensure that these are maintained, and this is often supplemented with resources related to professional intermediation.

Included along these lines is the Youth Guarantee Programme, or the Incorpora Social Work Programme (La Caixa) which helps establish personalised pathways for populations at risk of social exclusion. This programme benefits from the inclusion and coordination of different third sector entities which facilitate intermediation between users prepared for access to the labour market and prospective companies, helping them fit each other’s needs, and monitoring those individuals having already been placed. At the same time, Incorpora Training Points offer training in different sectors through such entities.

3.4.2 Recruitment companies:

Focusing on integration into the labour market, facilitating contact with and discovery of the work environment through action. In Spain, there is increasing number of entities striving to promote the creation of these types of companies to encourage the recruitment of youths, whether or not they have previously been in care, who need an opportunity to discover and experience the labour market. These may be from different sectors, such as bicycle mechanics, maintenance or repair work, catering, second-hand clothing shops or artistic creations.

It is important to note that such companies establish plans of action both in advance, ensuring the individual has the necessary preliminary training, and after his/her integration, monitoring the individual process of each youth.

3.4.3 Youth information service:

Information points operating under the autonomous communities, local councils and through different social initiatives which give youths a place to learn about and participate in nearby activities, including those related to training or employment.
4 RESULTS

The Strategy 2020 document (Inter-Ministerial Commission for Youth, Spanish government), from a general perspective of the youth training and employability situation at the national level, describes how in recent years, the situation among young people has moved towards the more habitual parameters in Europe’s most developed countries, except in relation to the rate of unemployment. It is found that the number of students has increased (we were below the European average). The increasing difficulties in finding work have driven up the number of youths studying and family support has declined (which were largely geared towards the purchase of a house).

This document indicates that there is, therefore, a need to take on an education system with new demands and challenges ahead if we want it to respond to the new social, economic and cultural demands:

- The high rate of early school leaving, which reached 31% some years ago when the economy was high, although the crisis has driven down these levels as a result of greater difficulties in finding employment.
- Educational results (measured after the fourth year of compulsory secondary education) which are not reaching the desired levels to put us in a good position within the international framework of competitive knowledge.
- A mismatch between youth qualifications and available employment, caused due to the lack of an adequate link between the education system and the labour market.
- Little motivation towards entrepreneurship.

The incorporation of young people into social life means developing their own life project, which requires an adequate level of education, decent training and an ability to handle information received. It also requires experience for learning, an adequate knowledge of social media and the institutional context, as well as an ability to rationalise and conceive the content of this personal project and its social links.

4.1 AXES of the national strategy

4.1.1 Axis 1. Education and training.

- Improve the quality of the Spanish education system to increase employability and entrepreneurship.
- Promote the informal training system.
- Identify and promote new niches and areas for generating employment through training.
4.1.2 **Axis 2. Employment and entrepreneurship.**

- Enhance the creation of youth employment opportunities.
- Promoting youth integration into the labour market.
- Increase the number of youths entering self-employment and support company setup among young people under age 30.
- Foster a culture of entrepreneurship.
- Promote the implementation of the youth guarantee system.

4.1.3 **Axis 3. Housing.**

- Increase the rate of youth emancipation.

4.1.4 **Axis 4. Health, recreation and sport.**

- Promote actions to encourage healthy lifestyle habits.
- Reduce the consumption of drugs and narcotics.
- Fight against any types of violence or discrimination.

4.1.5 **Axis 5. Participation, volunteering, inclusion and equality.**

- Promote channels and tools for increasing participation and volunteering among associated and non-associated youths, especially those related to ITC.
- Fight against social exclusion in the least-served sectors of the youth population.
- Promote equality.

4.1.6 **Axis 6. Institutional cooperation.**

- Promote collaboration between public administrations, national and international bodies and youth entities whose actions have an impact on youth, through the following areas of youth cooperation:
  - Inter-Ministerial Commission for Youth.
  - Inter-territorial Youth Council.
  - Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces.
  - European Union. Erasmus+.
  - Spanish Youth Council.
  - European Council. Youth.
  - Ibero-American Youth Organisation (OIJ).
  - New international spaces.

When we add to the current social and economic context the characteristics of our youths formerly in care, there is a need to identify specific areas of work on which it is necessary to keep moving forward. These involve improving opportunities for personal stability in
4.2 Challenges

4.2.1 Guarantee emancipation policies and services for youths formerly in care in Spain

Support policies and programmes for youths formerly in care are implemented in an uneven manner across the different national territories.

On the one hand, the support provided in territories in which there is genuine government commitment needs to be maintained. On the other hand, the impact and consolidated of programmes where this is not provided is one of the priorities that must clearly be addressed as it concerns guaranteeing equality of opportunities and work for social cohesion.

There is a need to visualise support programmes for those over age eighteen generating a social return on the investment made, in all respects, in the protection of minors. Otherwise, the efforts made may be rendered completely ineffective if the continuity of such pathways is not ensured.

Meanwhile, it is essential to pay attention to the personal processes of youths formerly in care, combined, given the nature of adolescence, with vital experience marked by significant shifting points, often manifested in a low drive to follow a path towards professional integration that requires passing through multiple stages before directly entering the labour world (need for immediacy and difficulty maintaining effort and constancy, as well as little interest in participating in creative processes that allow them to identify and adjust their own characteristics and needs to the employment on offer), as well as often poorly internalised study habits. This maturative and idiosyncratic process of youths formerly in care needs to be taken into account in order to offer housing and educational resources during adulthood that are suitable to their needs.

4.2.2 PRE-ADULTHOOD PREVENTIVE ACTION IN WORK THROUGH PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL INDEPENDENCE

Preventive action in the area of work is necessary with adolescents and youths before they reach adulthood at age 18. Working harder towards their own personal and social independence, making them more involved and responsible for their own path, will be beneficial and give them higher chances of success in the process of emancipation upon turning 18.

4.2.3 Access to compulsory and post-compulsory regulatory learning

There is a need to address the inclusion of youths formerly in care in compulsory and post-compulsory regulatory learning as a way of generating better opportunities, situations and
future work. The promotion and implementation of the National Youth Guarantee Plan certainly creates new opportunities among part of our target population.

However, such training activities are often out of tune with the academic level of the youths involved and the required transversal competences and/or employability, with the requisites for accessing training or integration projects generally being superior to those met by our youths (such as having completed compulsory secondary education or holding a work permit in the case of immigrants).

4.2.4 Resolution of difficulties faced by foreign youths formerly in care through the attainment of work permits

The current legislation requires that youths have an offer of full-time work with at least a one year employment contract in order to obtain a work permit. This measure undoubtedly exacerbates the social exclusion suffered by these youths. Considering that overall youth unemployment stands at more than 52% among youths under the age of 25, it is practically impossible to obtain an offer of employment with those conditions.

4.2.5 Improvement of measures concerning development of the social network and family relationships

Expanding the social network of youths is one of the key aspects to their successful emancipation. It is therefore essential to generate and promote activities which help them expand their social environment. Similarly, links must be established with contacts that will help them to visualise and share opportunities and who will provide them with highly personalised support based on an intense but ongoing relationship. Despite being personal factors that significantly influence the development of pathways to emancipation among youths formerly in care, the initiatives, projects and resources dedicated to these youths to date have been very limited.

4.2.6 Overcoming difficulties in the area of educational intervention

- Motivate and maintain motivation among youths towards the achievement of objectives.
- Help youths increase their awareness of the need for effort and study habits.
- Help youths identify their interests based on self-knowledge.
- Help youths improve their transversal competences and employability, key elements to the progress, maintenance and success of educational and professional integration.
PART 2: YOUTH WORKER EXCHANGE – FEEDBACK AND ANALYSIS
5  CHAPTER 1: THE YOUTH WORKER EXCHANGE’S FEEDBACK

5.1  Brief description of the structure in which the exchange took place, and the overall environment:

In the framework of the ABEONA project, a youth worker exchange with Plataforma Educativa took place. During a 5 days visit in Catalonia/Spain I had the chance to get insights on the work developed by the organisation and its partners and on the support they provide to Care Leavers to promote their labour insertion and to achieve a socially integrated life. Plataforma Educativa was founded 20 years ago and has now more than 500 professionals and integrates 8 foundations within the group. Their work fields include children and adolescents, persons with disabilities, community, capacity building, labour insertion and international cooperation. One specific working area of this organisation is the development of projects and programs for the extensive care of children in risky family conditions.

In the following paragraph, I am describing the process how children get from their families to the residential care facilities provided by Plataforma Educativa. It starts with the fact, that someone detects a problem in a family and reports this observation to the Social Service of Catalonia. The Social Service of Catalonia provides support to the families and tries to help solving the problems. If this does not work the Social Service hands the case over to EAIA (Care for Children and Adolescents), because the child will be placed in out-of-home-care.

EAIA makes a diagnosis and decides in consultation with the social services which institution would be best for the child. During the decision-making process, the child stays in a “Children’s Reception Center”. EAIA has to write a report for the social services and the public administration within 72 hours. The child can stay in this institution maximum 1 year. Plataforma Educativa provides two residential options for children under 18, the “Residential Centre of Educativa Action- CRAE” and the “Residential Centre of Intensive Education- CREI”. Both institutions are for children and adolescents, who cannot stay with their families, with the difference that children placed in the CREI need more intense residential and educational support. A third option would be the placement with foster parents. Plataforma Educativa provides flats just for boys, other organisations like SUARA and FILLES CARITAT offer places for girls. OSCOBE is another organisation that offers places for boys.

When a youngster becomes 16 years old, the case is handed over from the public administration to the ASJTET (Support to young People under Guardianship or Ex-Guardianship department), the youngster can still stay in the residential care facilities. When the young adult reaches the age of 18, a decision will be taken, whether the young adult leaves care or moves into an assisted or shared flat. In the assisted flat “Pis Bolos” provided by Plataforma Educativa - the one I got to know during my visit - youth workers are present 24 hours a day. Youth workers change two times a day, that is to say the six boys that live there are always well supported. Even in the night, the youth workers are not allowed to sleep. Their duties include the daily support in emotional, social and educational aspects.
When the boys are 18 years old and have already been in care for 3 years, they get an economic support of 663€/months until they reach the age of 21. If they have not been in care for three years on their 18th birthday they receive the financial support of 663€/months only for 6 month.

The leader of ASJTET is Jordi Jordá. ASJTET, a service offered by the government of Catalonia, provides different programs and projects for the vocational integration of young adults who were in care measures, for minors under guardianship as well as for youngsters at high social risk. Their main tasks are social and educational monitoring, housing, social and labour integration (VIA LABORAL), psychological monitoring, economic support and legal accompaniment. The members of the project VIA LABORAL try to figure out and combine the skills and wishes of the youngsters, so that their possibilities can be put into concrete terms. Afterwards they find fitting offers for them or prepare them for working life.

5.2 Brief description of the field practice.

On the first day of the exchange week, on 25th January 2016, I met the representatives of Plataforma Educativa Rafa Jiménez, Olaf Anguera and Irene Kopetz in the offices of Plataforma Educativa. They explained me the structure of the organisation and gave a theoretical explanation of the Catalan youth protection system. This input was very helpful to understand, how the Catalan system works and to combine this knowledge later on with the organisations, projects and persons I got to know during the week.

Afterwards we had a planning meeting, where we discussed the week plan and had lunch. In the afternoon, we visited the care facility “Pis Bolos” where I got a first impression of the assisted flats. I met some youngsters in their daily life, some came back from work, some were going to work and some had free time. I did the first interview with a youngster. I also met different youth workers who let me be part of their daily life. They explained the structure and were pleased to answer the interview questions; I did interviews with three youth workers.

On the next day, on 26th January 2016, Olaf and I went again to the assisted flat “Pis Bolos”, where we met another youngster with whom we did an interview. After that, we went to the Area of Youth Support (ASJTET), where we had the possibility to interview two persons in charge of the Youth Support for Vocational Integration in Girona. In the afternoon we went to visit the programme “Prepara’t” where we did another interview with a member of this organisation. “Prepara’t” prepares the youngsters to do apprenticeship; this is why the interview took place in a classroom.
After the interview, we had the possibility to experience the learning conditions of at “Prepara’t” in a tour through the house. After lunch break, we went back to the Area of Youth Support where we did 4 interviews with youngsters.

**On 27th January 2016,** we went to “Estació Espai Jove”, a center where youngsters can go to receive support in vocational aspects. This organisation also provides workshops and a working space. We did an interview with the director of “Estació Espai Jove” who also acts as the linking person for other organisations. In the afternoon, we went to the CARITAS office, where the director of the working project ECOSOL answered our interview questions. This project offers migrants the opportunity to work for one year, so that they can obtain a working permission afterwards, which is very hard to get in Catalonia and Spain.

**On 28th February 2016,** we went to “Pis Bolos” again, where we did another interview with a youngster. Afterwards we visited EINA a project ofPlataforma Educativa that works similarly to ECOSOL. We talked to a member of the organisation and got a tour through the building. After that, we went to the Cafeteria of the University ofGirona where we met a young adult, who did his apprenticeship there and was actually at work. We also did an interview with him. In the afternoon Olaf, Irene and I had lunch and did a checking about the last days and the received information.

**On Friday, 29th February 2016,** the last day of the exchange week, I went to Barcelona, where I visited the ESPAI CABESTANY. I had a meeting with the director of the Cabestany Space and with the director of the ASJTET (Area for Young persons protected and ex-protected). The two of them answered my interview questions and showed me the facilities of the ESPAI CABESTANY which is is a group home for 5-6 youngsters. They offer workshops for the youngsters living in the group home and for other young adults. After this meeting I went to visit FEPA, FEPA is the Spanish Federation of Entities with Projects and Assisted Homeswich gathers organizations working in this field. FEPA provides information to non-profit members - especially youth workers - on different topics through awareness rising materials such a flyers and information on the website,. I did an interview with the director of FEPA. Afterwards I met with Irene, we had lunch and the conclusion meeting.

During all the interviews I was accompanied by someone from Plataforma Educativa (mostly Olaf Anguera), so I did not face any problems with finding the different places to visit. Only a few of the persons I interviewed had sufficient knowledge of English that is why Olaf translated all interviews – with the exception of those done in Barcelona. The presence of Olaf during the interviews helped create a pleasant and informal atmosphere. The persons interviewed seemed authentic, some of them even honoured to be interviewed. In my opinion, this is the reason why some interviews with the youth workers and stakeholders took a long time. Some interviews with the youngsters did not take that long. I do not think that this was because they were feeling embarrassed or insecure; but rather because their age leads them to short and concise answers. All the youngsters seemed close to Olaf, maybe that is the reason why other youngsters explained their answers in great detail and reflective.

Appointments had been made beforehand with all the persons interviewed, and if for any reason an interview could not take place, the members of Plataforma Educativa found appropriate alternatives.
All the interviews took place in the working places of the youth workers or stakeholders and the homes, working or training places of the youngsters.

5.2.1 Detailed visit plan:

25/01/2016
9:30-12:00 Meeting with Rafa Jiménez, Olaf Anguera and Irene Kopetz at the offices of Plataforma Educativa.
→ Presentation of Plataforma Educativa
→ Theoretical explanation of the Catalan youth protection system
12:00-12:30 Planning meeting with Olaf Anguera and Irene Kopetz: Explanation of the week program and the planned interviews.
12:20-14:00 Lunch (La Taverna)
14:00-20:00 Visit to the assisted flat “Pis Bolos” for minors in care between the age of 18 and 21.
   Interviews with youth workers:
   - Youth Worker_1
   - Youth Worker_2
   - Youth Worker_3

Interview with youngster:
   - Youngster_1

Working on the feedback report and the transcription of the interviews.

26/01/2016
10:00-10:30 Visit to the assisted flat “Pis Bolos” for minors in care between the age of 16 and 18.
   Interview with youngster:
   - Youngster_2

11:00-14:00 Visit to the Area of youth support
   Interviews with youth workers:
   - Youth Worker_4
   - Youth Worker_5

15:00-15:45 Visit of the project “Prepara’t”
   Interview with stakeholder:
   - Stakeholder_1

16:00-16:45 Lunch (Café del parc)
17:00-19:00 Meeting at the Area of youth support
   Interviews with youngsters:
   - Youngster_3
   - Youngster_4
   - Youngster_5
   - Youngster_6

Working on the feedback report and the transcription of the interviews.
27/01/2016
10:00- 11:45 Visit to the “Estació Espai Jove” (Youth Centre)  
   Interview with stakeholder:  
     - Stakeholder_2
12:15- 13:00 Visit to the CARITAS Office  
   Interview with stakeholder:  
     - Stakeholder_3
14:00- 15:00 Lunch (Taverna Catalana)  
   Working on the feedback report and the transcription of the interviews.

28/01/2016  
10:00- 10:30 Visit to the assisted flat “Pis Bolos” for minors in care between 18 and 21.  
   Interview with youngster:  
     - Youngster_7
11:00-11:30 Visit to a project for professional integration “EINA”
11:45-12:30 Visit to the Cafeteria of the University of Girona to meet a youngster at his working place  
   Interview with youngster:  
     - Youngster_8
13:13-15:00 Lunch (Café del Parc), Checking with Irene Kopetz, Olaf Anguera  
   Working on the feedback report and the transcription of the interviews.

29/01/2016 (Travelling to Barcelona)
10:30-13:00 Visit to ESPAI CABESTANY  
   Interviews with stakeholders:  
     - Stakeholder_4
     - Stakeholder_5
13:15- 14:00 Visit to FEPA  
   Interview with stakeholder:  
     - Stakeholder_6
14:45-15:30 Lunch, Checking with Irene Kopetz and final conclusions
5.3 The meetings with youth workers and youngsters.

The interviews with young care leavers and youth workers were done following previously prepared questionnaires. The questionnaire for young care leavers was divided into three parts: The first part focused on the profile and background of the youngster to capture basic information like the time they have been living in care/within the visited structure, their school background and their current situation.

The second part concentrated on their experiences regarding employment. The third part dealt with the desired situation of the youngsters and the support they have and need for their vocational integration. The questions in this part focused on the efficiency of the structure’s projects and tools, the received support, the information provided and support persons as well as the youngster’s opinion regarding support, difficulties, challenges and needs.

The questionnaire for the interviews with the youth workers started with a short introduction of the profile to be followed by questions about the daily support youth workers provide to the youngsters. The next part focused on the strategy and tools of the structure to provide support to the youngsters for their professional integration. Questions were about projects, delivered information, partnerships, the education and training of the youth workers and tools and methods used in their daily work. The last section addressed the opinion of youth workers regarding their work on professional integration, needed competences and their own role.

5.3.1 For the informal moments with the youngsters:

The youngsters were mostly motivated to answer the questions. During the interviews, some of them answered in short sentences, some in long sentences. Some boys seemed to feel honoured and talked in a proud way about their experiences and past. Some interviews with the youngsters took place in the office of “Via Laboral”. It seemed that these youngsters were incited by the interest shown by Olaf and me.

Before starting the interviews, the youngsters were informed about the purpose of the project. Sometimes it was necessary to mention during the interview, that all questions related to vocational integration, because some of the youngsters liked to explain their situation but not necessarily with regard to the specific questions.

Because of the language barrier as well as the tight week-plan to follow, the activities with the youngsters were limited to the interviews and some informal small talk situations.
5.3.2 For the interviews and participative session:

Three of the interviews with the youngsters took place in the assisted flat “Pis Bolos” during the youngsters’ free time in their familiar environment. They were very polite, took their time to answer the questions in a relaxed wax without any stress. We did four more interviews with youngsters in the office of “Via Laboral”.

It was a more formal area for them, because they had extra appointments there, but it seemed that therefore they felt proud answering the questions- as I have already mentioned. The last interview with a youngster took place at his work place the university cafeteria. He behaved very adult, offered us a seat and something to drink and then answered all the questions in detail.

5.3.3 A short conclusion is necessary to summarize the different observations that the youth worker made, the lessons to learn, the topics to work on, etc.

The questionnaires to follow in the interviews were too long. The youngsters were motivated but needed much energy to answer all the questions. Furthermore not all the youngsters had that much time- like the one who was interviewed during work. He used his break to answer our questions, but at the end of the break we still hadn’t finished the interview.

It was very beneficial for the youngsters, that a person they trusted was present during the interviews, not only because of the language barrier. With Olaf on our side the atmosphere was comfortable and relaxed. There were no signs of fear or retreat. The youngsters seemed relaxed and acted as if they felt save.

The youngsters mostly answered both questions related to the difficulties and the challenges of their vocational integration, mentioning the legal problems. Most of the interviewed youngsters are young adults with migrant background. That is to say, the legal challenges for vocational integration are not necessarily a concern of young care leavers in general, but of young migrants.
I did six interviews with stakeholders and partners of the organisation.

The interviews with stakeholders were done following a previously prepared questionnaire, that mainly focused on three topics: the role of the stakeholder and/or his/her institution regarding professional integration of young care leavers and/or regarding the improvement of competences of youth workers who support the youngsters in this process; good practices regarding young care leavers' professional integration and examples of practices that did not work. And finally on the question what could and should be done to improve the support for young care leavers in their vocational projects.”

- **The first interview** took place in a classroom of the “Prepara’t” program with a teacher. She explained her tasks and missions. She seemed very interested and provided a lot of information.

- **The second interview** was with the person in charge of a Youth Centre. She also provided a lot of information, but she did not only answered the asked questions, but told us about many other problems, that is to say, we got lost a little bit.

- **The interview with the director** of the vocational projects of Caritas was very interesting and she provided a lot of information.

- **I did the fourth and fifth interview** with the directors of ASJTET and of Cabestany Space with both of them together at the same time. This was an interesting experience because they started discussing and talking about the different topics, so I got a lot of information. This interview took place in Barcelona without translator. Nevertheless, it was possible for us to communicate in English and a little bit in Spanish. The last stakeholder interview with the director of FEPA again in Barcelona was a nice experience because it was not the typical interview situation, but more like a very active normal conversation led by questions. I got a lot of information about the field too.

To sum up, all these interviews provided me with a huge amount of information. Nevertheless it would probably have been important to find a way to bound the time of the interviews.

Stakeholders agreed on the fact that there is a high number of (good practice) offers for young adults, but it is hard to get an overview; another difficulty mentioned are the different laws that apply for the youngsters. One of the main problems for the vocational integration of young adults with immigrant background is the restrictive access to the labour market for immigrants in Spain/Catalonia.
Stakeholders mention (described more in the chapter on the needs) that more training and better working conditions for the youth workers and more time dedicated to the young adults professional integration topic as well as social and economic security for the young adults are some of the issues that could help to improve the vocational integration of young care leavers in Catalonia/Spain.

5.5 The good practices.

I have witnessed different kinds of good practices:
Firstly, projects, that help the youngsters to integrate into professional life, like “Via Laboral” or the “Estació espai jove”. These projects support the youngsters in figuring out what they can and what they want, they help them to write the CV and to find a fitting job or education place.

“Prepara’t” is also a good practice. It is a school, which prepares the youngsters for their apprenticeship. They get prepared as cook, waiter or gardener. They can join the course any time throughout the year; this means, that they can continue their vocational training without interruption, when they lose their previous job or training place.

Another good practice are the EINA (Plataforma Educativa) and Ecosol (Caritas) projects. These are projects for young migrants to get access to the labour market. These projects offer young migrants the opportunity to work for one year, so that they can obtain a working permission afterwards, which is very hard to get in Catalonia and Spain. The youngsters work in fixing bicycles. If they do not find employment after one year, they can get a working contract with the organisation.

Analysing the answers of the interviewed young adults another good practice has to be mentioned here: the support youth workers provide them. Some of the youngsters mentioned the importance for them of just knowing that they have someone they can count on – the youth workers.

5.6 The checking.

I had checkings with Irene Kopetz on Monday, Thursday and Friday. I received the visit plan some weeks before I travelled to Girona, so I had the chance to get familiar with the planned activities. Whenever I had questions I could also ask Rafa Jiménez or Olaf Anguera, that is to say I had the possibility to have checkings every day. Furthermore, Olaf or Rafa have always been present at the interviews and we reflected on them together afterwards.
There has been no need and time for additional activities; I got all the information I needed during the week.

### 5.7 The conclusion.

Five days is very short time for doing the planned number of interviews. Therefore regrettably there was nearly no time to be present in daily life activities in the assisted flats, which would have been important to complement the picture and information gathered during the interviews with own impressions and experiences.

The language barrier somehow also impeded more interaction with the young adults and even the youth workers. During the interviews with the youngsters, having on the their side a person they know and trust, helped create a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere. The interviewer was not just a foreign person anymore, but also a person who came with someone they knew.

The introduction into the social system generally and the Catalan youth protection system was very helpful to understand the backgrounds of the different persons that were interviewed and their work. At the end of the week, I felt that all the small pieces fitted into a whole and that I achieved a good overall picture.
6  CHAPTER 2 : THE VOCATIONAL INTEGRATION

6.1  What does the structure do to help the professional integration of the young care leavers?

The youngsters receive constantly support and help from the youth workers. Youth workers are often the linking persons, who mediate between the youngsters and other organisations, or who make the first contact between them.

The youth workers help the youngster to write CVs and to search for companies, where the youngsters can apply for a job.

The youth workers give emotional support, which is very important for the youngsters. They need to know, that there are persons they can rely on.

The main support activities for vocational integration of young care leavers are provided by other organisations/institutions, external to the structure the youth workers establishes the contact and transfers the young adult to the support programme/project.

The structure does not have statistics on vocational integration of young care leavers; nevertheless, two types of reports are drafted that help to follow up the development of the individual young adult:

The youth workers draft a report on each youngster once a year, where changes, improvements and difficulties are reported. A second report is drafted twice a year between a youth worker and a youngster. In this report, the youngster has the possibility to explain his personal aims and put milestones for reaching them.

6.2  The role of the youth workers.

As already mentioned before, the youth worker help the youngster to get in contact with different companies, projects and organisations – they act as linking persons.

Youth Workers support the youngsters in preparing their job applications. They offer support with writing the CVs and cover letters and instruct them on proper behaviour in working life. While the young persons are going to school, youth workers provide them with learning support.

Sometimes the youngsters just need emotional support, or someone who can listen to them. Thus, another main part of their work is talking with the youngsters about their life, difficulties and wishes. This is an important method to figure out what youngsters imagine when it comes to their vocational integration.
The already mentioned report drafted twice a year between a youth worker and a youngster is very important for the vocational integration. The youngster has the possibility to explain his personal aims, put milestones for reaching them and discuss them with the youth worker. This is very efficient, because the youngsters make their own rules and want to follow them on their own.

Furthermore, Plataforma Educativa offers after care support for care leavers who do not live in an assisted flat anymore.

### 6.3 The different partnerships of the structure.

Plataforma Educativa has many partnerships; I have already mentioned most of them as good practice examples.

Via Laboral as well as “Estació espai jove” give appointments to the youngsters to provide them with support, so there are no regularly patterns. Usually the youngsters are motivated and willing to make these appointments on their own.

1. **Via Laboral**
   This is a project from ASJTET, where Youngsters get support in finding fitting jobs or training places. In a first step the trainers help the young adults to figure out what they know, what they can and what they want. In a second step they figure out what is still needed to reach the goals, that is to say they support the youngsters to concrete their plans and ideas. In a next step they support them in writing CVs and Cover letters as well as in finding a suitable job or training place.

2. **“Estació espai jove“**
   This youth centre has many connections and links to companies, so there are a broad range of possibilities where the youngsters can start their professional integration. The team of the youth centre also supports young adults with writing CVs and finding suitable working places. Furthermore, the youth centre offers various workshops on job applications, good appearance at the workplace, among many others. They also provide free access to computers within the facility, where the youngsters can work and inform themselves on their own.

3. **Eina (Plataforma Educativa)/ Ecosol (Caritas)**
   These are projects for migrants to get access to the labour market. This projects offer migrants the opportunity to work for one year, so that they can obtain a working permission afterwards, which is very hard to get in Catalonia and Spain. The youngsters work in fixing bicycles. If they do not find employment after one year, they can get a working contract with the organisation.
4. Prepara’t

It is a school, which prepares the youngsters for their apprenticeship. They get prepared as cook, waiter or gardener. They can join the course any time throughout the year; this means, that they can continue their vocational training without interruption, when they lose their previous job or training place.

Generally these partnerships are considered effective and positive by the youngsters, youth workers and stakeholders interviewed. With regard to the existing partnerships, one of the difficulties mentioned by the interviewed youth workers is the high number of different projects/programmes for vocational integration of young adults in Catalonia. For youth workers it is hard to get an overview and find the appropriate offer for the young adult. Another difficulty mentioned related to "Prepara’t" is the distance and the public transport to the place where the courses are offered. If the young adult misses the bus, she/he does not have any further possibility to get there on time.
7.1 Based on the experience of the week, please identify and describe the needs of support for the youngsters regarding their professional integration

- **Person of trust**: For all of the youngsters and care leavers it is very important, that they have someone (youth worker) who is there, listens to them and improves their motivation and courage. That is to say, they need a person of trust.

- **Advice and guidance**: For the youngsters and care leavers it is important, that they can rely on someone who helps them figuring out what they want. That is to say, they need someone who gives them advice and supports them in making a concrete plan.

- **More possibilities to gain first work experience**: Some of the youngsters are worried, that they have not yet collected enough work experience to be a good worker, so they would need more possibilities to participate in an internship.

- **Working permission for young adults with migrant background**: The needs of youngsters with migrant background all concern the same topic- the working permission. This is a huge problem, because the youngsters want to work, but are not allowed to. Without projects like Eina or Ecosol, the difficulties would be immense.

- **Social and economic security**: For the youngsters it is hard to be independent at the very moment they become eighteen. When they become 18 years old and have been in care for 3 years, they get an economic support of 663€/ months until they reach the age of 21. If they have not been in care for three years on their 18th birthday, they receive the financial support only for 6 month. This fact is on the one side hard to understand for them and on the other side nearly not bearable. If they cannot immediately find a job, these conditions can threaten their life situation.

7.2 Based on the experience of the week please identify and describe the needs of youth workers regarding competences and tools in order to better help the young people regarding their professional integration.

Youth workers need...

... an overview of existing organisations, programmes and projects that support young adults and/or young care leavers in their vocational integration. Youth workers have to search and find organisations, projects and offers without any support. There are many
projects in Catalonia; it would improve the effectivity of the youth workers, if they knew where they can find the different offers. Moreover, the youngsters themselves could also benefit from having access to this overview.

... specific knowledge on how to work together with the youngsters on their competences and interest to help them find and access work. For some youngsters it is hard to figure out their competences and interests and they need the support of the youth worker in collecting and analysing different ideas.

... specific competence in motivating the young adults. Motivation is an important issue in vocational integration; the youngsters often do not have enough motivation on their own, thus a main task of the youth workers is to give support to the youngsters that keeps them motivated.

... specific competence in giving emotional support. The youngsters often have no role models and thus no idea on how to act in different situations. It is important that youth workers try to offer them different kinds of acting or living- and the youngsters can choose. In nearly every case, the youngsters come from difficult family conditions, which means they normally did not have positive role models before.

...The youth worker need more time for working with the youngsters. The work is often stressful and because of many time constrains, they have to rush the youngsters most of the time to reach the given or appointed goals.

... For youth workers it is important to know, that they cannot help or save everyone. They need to know, that they just can be a save place, where the youngsters can return to and that they offer the looking for solutions. However, that does not necessarily mean, that they are giving solutions.

... It is important that the youth workers get in contact with different companies and organisations during their studies to get in contact with vocational integration very early and improve the knowledge in this area.

... The youth workers need to improve the way in which they provide support. Therefore, researches and cooperation with other organisations, projects and companies would be important. That is to say, experience is very important for the work of the youth worker.

... For youth workers it is important to receive better trainings and enhanced education. At university they need to do more internships (practical work), so their knowledge is not just theoretical.

...Youth workers need better working conditions. Good working conditions means, that there aren’t too many youngsters in one flat and that they do not have to work alone. Because if they have a colleague they can share their problems and solutions and cover the needs of the others.
For youth workers it is important, that their methods and competences are improved. The best way to do this would be to offer courses for youth workers that are provided by professionals who detected their needs and developed tools and steps accordingly.

8 CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSIONS AND GOOD PRACTICES.

8.1 General conclusions on the youth worker exchange

The youth worker exchange was a very interesting time for me. I experienced new impressions and ideas regarding the vocational integration of young care leavers. I got to know many different people, projects and organisations and at the end of the week, I felt that all the small pieces fitted into a whole and that I achieved a good overall picture. I was impressed by the different projects that have been implemented to help youngster to enter into vocational life and youngsters with migrant background to get a working permission.

In Spain and Catalonia youth unemployment is very high, the percentage is at 52. The organisations mentioned in this report are dealing with youth unemployment for a long time. In my opinion, this is one reason why they have already developed many high quality projects on a level other countries have not yet reached.

Despite the efforts of young workers and various actors to improve the conditions for youths, there are certain laws and impediments which put up significant barriers to this action. A good example of these impediments are foreign youths. On the one hand, they face serious difficulties in obtaining work permits, while on the other, without work permits they cannot access support programmes under the Youth Guarantee Plan.

The youngsters and other persons interviewed answered the questions related to the difficulties and the challenges of vocational integration, specially mentioning the legal problems – the difficulties to get a working permission. Most of the interviewed youngsters are young adults with migrant background. That is to say, the legal challenges for vocational integration is not necessarily a concern of young care leavers in general, but of young migrants.

The youth workers and other professionals try hard to support the youngsters in their vocational integration, even if there are many time constrains. They offer support in many topics like writing the CV, acting as linking persons with other companies or projects and finding places where the youngsters can go. In Catalonia, many projects and organisations work with vocational integration; but it seems to be difficult to get an overview and find fitting offers for the youngsters. However, when everything works well and a proper offer has been found, youngsters who had no chance can achieve a high level of education or a good job.

Nevertheless, as mentioned before there are still many needs of young care leavers and youth workers to be taken into account to improve the possibilities of a social and vocational
8.2 Description of good practices identified regarding how youth workers help young people achieve their professional integration

As already mentioned before, the youth worker help the youngster to get in contact with different companies, projects and organisations – they act as linking persons. Youth Workers support the youngsters in preparing their job applications. They offer support with writing the CVs and cover letters and instruct them on proper behaviour in working life. While the young persons are going to school, youth workers provide them with learning support.

Sometimes the youngsters just need emotional support, or someone who listens to them. Thus another main part of their work is talking with the youngsters about their life, difficulties and wishes. This is an important method to figure out what youngsters imagine when it comes to their vocational integration.

The already mentioned report drafted twice a year between a youth worker and a youngster is very important for the vocational integration. The youngster has the possibility to explain his personal aims, put milestones for reaching them and discuss them with the youth worker. This is very efficient, because the youngsters make their own rules and want to follow them on their own.

Furthermore, Plataforma Educativa offers after care support for care leavers who do not live in an assisted flat anymore.

The youth workers establishes the contact and transfers the young adult to external support programmes/projects. Among the external support programmes, the good practices identified are:

Projects, that help the youngsters to integrate into professional life, like “Via Laboral” or “Estació espai jove”. These projects support the youngsters in figuring out what they can and what they want, they help them to write the CV and to find a fitting job or education place. “Prepara’t”: a school, which prepares the youngsters for their apprenticeship. They get prepared as cook, waiter or gardener. They can join the course any time throughout the year; this means, that they can continue their vocational training without interruption, when they lose their previous job or training place.

EINA (Plataforma Educativa) and Ecosol (Caritas): These are projects for migrants to get access to the labour market. This projects offer migrants the opportunity to work for one year, so that they can obtain a working permission afterwards, which is very hard to get in Catalonia and Spain. The youngsters work in fixing bicycles. If they do not find employment after one year, they can get a working contract with the organisation.
AN EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO CARE LEAVERS’ PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION