



Associazione Studi e Ricerche
Interdisciplinari sul Lavoro

Working Paper n° 53/2020

**DO HIGH-QUALITY TRAINEESHIP HELP TO FIND BETTER JOBS?
EVIDENCE FROM A SURVEY ON THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE YOUTH
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Anno 2020

ISSN 2280 – 6229 -Working Papers - on line

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esemplare fuori commercio
ai sensi della legge 14 aprile 2004 n.106

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DO HIGH-QUALITY TRAINEESHIPS HELP TO FIND BETTER JOBS? EVIDENCE FROM A SURVEY ON THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE YOUTH GUARANTEE PROGRAM

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Abstract: Job quality is a key issue in the agenda of policy makers at the international and European level: a strong commitment towards decent work has strengthened and a particular attention to young generation has been devoted. Since 2014 the European Youth Guarantee Program has been strongly investing in active labor market policies, with the aim to combat youth unemployment and inactivity: non-curricular traineeship is one of the most widespread measure supported by the program and the issue of its quality has become more and more relevant.

Against this background, the paper has analysed the relationship between the quality of traineeship that young people have experienced and the quality of their job: the hypothesis is that participating in a high quality traineeship entails a better transition towards decent jobs. We use data of a sample survey carried out in 2017 by ANPAL on 20,000 young people who have registered to the Youth Guarantee program. Preliminary results suggest that the quality of traineeship is important in promoting better job for young people.

Key words: quality of work, non-curricular traineeship, NEETS, Youth Guarantee

Jel Codes: J24, C38

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Introduction

In the last decade, since the beginning of the economic and financial crisis, the main labour market indicators have registered a negative trend, particularly with regard to unemployment and inactivity rates. The effects of the crisis have had severe repercussions on young people, whose situation on the labor market has worsened. Another phenomenon has been consolidating in this same period, that of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs)¹. In 2014, the unemployment rate for young people aged 15-29 was 22.2% in EU and 42.7% in Italy and, although in our country the share of NEETs decreased between 2014 and 2018 from 26.2% to 23.4%, it remains well above the European average (Eurostat, 2019).

In a deteriorated and unstable economic environment, we can observe a specific vulnerability and weakness of young people in the labour market, due to a number of factors: first of all the lack of work experience resulting from a long and uneasy school-to-work transition; a consequent deterioration/depreciation of the skills acquired; the mismatch between the skills required by enterprises and those acquired in the educational and training contexts; weak capacity of young people to look for a job, often associated with a “dampening effect” (Goerlich et al., 2013; Carcillo, 2015). On the other hand, employment services, which should act as intermediaries in job matching, have not always been successful in playing this role, especially for this specific target (OECD, 2019).

Looking at the characteristics of employment, the quality of work of young people in Italy has also worsened and flexible, informal or low-skilled and part-time works have increased. In 2018 in Italy, the share of young people 15-29 with a fixed-term contract was 50.6%, compared to a European average (EU28) of 31.9% (Eurostat, 2019). In the years immediately following the crisis, the share of young people with part-time contracts increased from 18% to 24%. Data on involuntary part-time is also worrying: in 2018, around 80% of young people was engaged in involuntary part-time contracts. Another aspect to be considered is the labour market segmentation: young people mainly work in economic sectors such as manufacturing, retail, hospitality or construction, which are more vulnerable to economic slowdown.

While fixed-term contracts allow young people to enter the labour market, enabling them to gain work experience, the insecurity and discontinuity which are intrinsically associated with them may have a negative impact on young people’s career pathways, as well as on income prospects. In a recent speech, President Mario Draghi warned about

¹ Since 2005 at the European level a specific indicator on NEETs is calculated as a percentage of this target on the total number of young people in the age group 15-24.

the risks of “social instability” that job insecurity of young people can cause, by defining it as a “destabilising factor” for the economy of a country².

In this context, supporting youth employment, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, is a priority that has gained momentum in recent years and found a relevant place in the political agenda of governments and international institutions. Recently the UN launched the *Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth* in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. ILO has strengthened its commitment towards decent work given particular attention to young generation.

Even though active labour market policies (ALMP) have not always been successful in improving employability and their effects are controversial, they are still a key instrument to support employment and remove barriers to access to the labour market (Caliendo and Schmidl, 2016; Kluve, 2014; Martin, 2014). ALMP can act both on the supply side, by providing training on relevant skills required by firms, and on the demand one, by encouraging firms to recruit the unemployed, or supporting business and self-employment. The employment services act as facilitators in the transition to work.

With reference to the specific target of NEETs, at the European level the Commission has made available to Member States a huge amount of resources to finance ALMP. In addition to the European Social Fund, since 2014, the Youth Guarantee (YG) has been the main policy instrument of the EU strategy for the integration of young people, in particular NEETs, in the labor market (Eichhorst, 2017). The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) is the specific budget line set up by the Commission.

The non-curricular traineeship is one of the measure proposed in the framework of the YG. A large investment on traineeship has been made both in Italy and in Europe and it has become a very popular experience among young people (European Commission, 2018; ANPAL, 2017b). The latest European Eurobarometer survey on internships showed that in 2013 46% of 18-35 year olds had at least one traineeship in the reference year (Flash Eurobarometer, 2013), even though one in three trainees said the experience was unsatisfactory from the point of view of working conditions and training content.

In the light of its large and rapid spread, Member States have also sought to raise the quality of this work experience, by introducing a more strict legal basis and a regulatory framework aimed at providing some protection to trainees.

Basically, the aim of this workplace-based experience is to ease the transition to work and help young people to overcome the ‘experience trap’: “traineeships should thus result in shorter job search duration, lower probability of unemployment, more job stability, better

²https://www.ecb.europa.eu/press/key/date/2017/html/ecb.sp170922_1.en.html.

job matches, greater job satisfaction and higher earnings” (European Commission, 2013; O’Higgins, 2018, Comyn, 2018).

Against this background, the paper aims at verifying the relationship between the quality of the traineeship carried out by young people under the YG program and the quality of the work that trainees have found in the period after the participation in the policy. We used data from a specific survey on the beneficiaries of the Programme carried out by ANPAL in 2017. The results suggest that the quality of traineeship is crucial for the quality of the work that a young person finds entering the labour market.

The paper is structured as follow: in the first paragraph, we present the Youth Guarantee, its origins and the theory of the programme, with a specific focus on non-curricular traineeship; in the second paragraph, the issue of the quality of traineeship and the quality of work are discussed and the main dimensions are analysed; the third paragraph sets out the methods and sources of information used. In the fourth paragraph, descriptive statistics and the results of the logit analyses are proposed and discussed. Finally we draw some conclusion.

1. The Youth Guarantee programme and the role of traineeship

In 2013, the European Commission launched the Youth Guarantee, an initiative aimed at tackling youth unemployment and inactivity caused by the lasting of the economic and financial crisis affecting Member States since 2008. The European initiative specifically addresses NEETs, that is young people who are not in education, employment or training³. This target includes not only unemployed young people, but also inactive, who are both those people looking for a job, and those who stopped looking for it (‘discouraged’) (Eurofound, 2012 and 2016).

In the years prior to 2013, with the worsening of the economic situation, the issue of youth unemployment was introduced in the political agenda of the European institutions and a number of specific initiatives were put in place⁴. Finally, in December 2012 the European Commission proposed a *Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee*, which was adopted by the Council of Ministers of the European Union in April 2013.

³The origin of this categorisation can be traced back to the end of the 1990s in the United Kingdom, where it was used to indicate those 16-18 year-olds who, after compulsory schooling, choose not to continue their studies and cannot enter the labour market.

⁴ In 2010, *Youth on the Move-Europe 2020 flagship initiative* is launched to tackle youth unemployment by improving education and training. The *Youth Opportunities Initiative* is proposed in December 2011, and in January 2012 the Commission announces the establishment in the eight Member States most affected by the youth unemployment of the *Youth Action Team (YAT)*, in order to improve the use of EU funding still available for the 2007-2013 programming period.

The Council Recommendation establishes that ‘all people aged between 15 and 24 would receive a good quality offer of employment, training, education or apprenticeships within a period of four months of being unemployed or leaving education’. By fostering a “guarantee-approach”⁵, the Recommendation aims at reactivating young people - NEETs, supporting their employability and integrating them into the labour market as quickly as possible through the intermediation of public employment services.

The initial Youth Employment Initiative budget was 6.4 billion euros. In September 2016, given the still high levels of youth unemployment, the Commission proposed to increase this budget and 2.4 billion euros were added for the period 2017-2020. An outline of the Programme theory is set in the following table.

Table 1 — Youth Guarantee in Europe

Target	Neets (not in education, employment and training) 15-24 years
Approach	Early intervention on NEETs through employment services
Intervention	Active labour policies (ALMP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employment incentives, self-employment supported through start-ups and dedicated subsidies; - Continuous education and training; - Apprenticeship; - Traineeships (open-market and ALMP traineeships).
Objectives	Activation Employability Integration into the labour market
Financial resources	EUR 8.8 billion (2014-2020)

In order to implement the Recommendation, Italy submitted to the European Commission a strategic plan⁶, which can be considered the first step towards the development of a national strategy to combat youth unemployment and for a major structural reform of employment services in our country (ISFOL, 2016; ANPAL, 2017a).

The National Operational Programme (NOP) Youth Employment Initiative was then adopted in 2014. With an overall budget of approximately 1,5 million euros for the 2014-2015 period, it is the main funding line of the Youth Guarantee in Italy. Thanks to the re-financing of the Initiative, Italy has received additional resources until 2020, approximately 1,2 million euros (ANPAL, 2018). The NOP is centrally managed by ANPAL⁷ and implemented at regional level by the intermediate bodies (Regions).

On the basis of the European Recommendation, the NOP finances a set of active labour market policy measures (ALMP) for the NEETs aged 15-29 years⁸, including universal

⁵On the Scandinavian origins of this approach see, Escudero and Lopez (2017).

⁶ *National Plan for the Youth Guarantee*, submitted to the European Commission on 23rd December 2013.

⁷ ANPAL – National Agency for Labour Market Policies was established by Legislative Decree No 150/2015.

⁸ Italy decided to extend the Guarantee to 29 years.

guidance service and civil service. The proposed measures are heterogeneous, but they can be traced back to three main strategic objectives:

- demand-side measures, to create employment opportunities;
- services, to facilitate matching and the transition to work;
- supply-side measures, to make young people’s skills more responsive to enterprises needs.

The following table shows the classification of YG measures according to their strategic objectives:

Table 2 — Youth Guarantee in Italy

Youth Guarantee measures	Demand side	Services	Supply side
Specific guidance (Measure 1C)			
Training for job integration (Measure 2A)			
<i>Second chance</i> training (Measure 2B)			
Accompanying to the work (Measure 3)			
Apprenticeship (Measure 4)			
Traineeship (Measure 5)			
Civil service (Measure 6)			
Supporting self-employment (Measure 7.1)			
Start-up support (Measure 7.2)			
Transnational mobility programmes (Measure 8)			
Employment incentives (measure 9)			

According to that classification, traineeship is one of the measures that acts on the demand side, by improving/adjusting the skills of young people, making them more responsive to firms needs. Through short-term periods of work practice in a firm, public body or non-profit organization, young people receive training and acquires experience in a specific field or career area prior to taking up regular employment. In this sense, Youth Guarantee traineeship is explicitly an active labor market policy measure⁹ targeted at unemployed young people with the specific aim of facilitating their labour market transition. Together with apprenticeship, it is part of the so-called ‘*work based learning experiences*’, but it is worth noting that nowise can traineeship be considered a contract typology.

Traineeship has different advantages for both young people and firms: on the one hand, it provides young people with on-the-job experience, boosts their human capital, signalling their ability to potential employees and helps them to connect to professional networks. For employees, it is a mean to screen potential candidates, a process that is more and more complex, time-consuming and expensive.

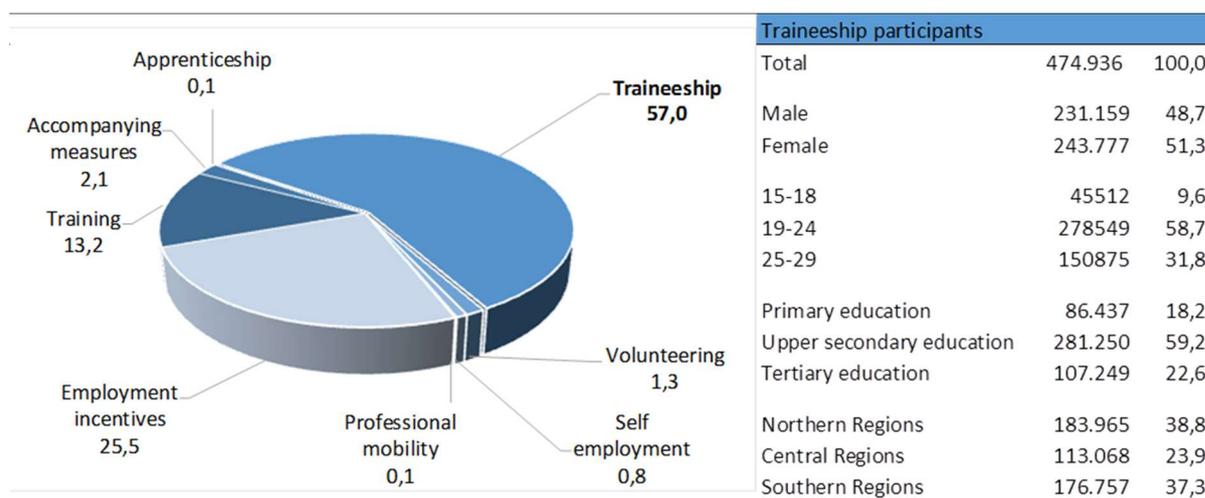
⁹ It is important to distinguish it from traineeships associated with educational programmes of secondary and tertiary level.

In the context of the Youth Guarantee, Italy has programmed traineeship in the NOP by defining its content and characteristics: traineeship may be carried out in host entities of both public and private nature and have a maximum duration of 6 months. Trainees shall be offered the assistance and support in drawing up the training project, as well as the recognition of an allowance for participation and a final certification of the skills acquired performing their tasks. The Programme gives also the possibility to carry out traineeship in the framework of transnational geographical mobility.

A key element of the Youth Guarantee traineeship is the role played by public employment services, that act as intermediaries between the host organization and the trainee: in fact, in order to activate a traineeship, the promoter (university, higher school, employment agency, training centre, etc.) and the host (business, cooperative, public body, etc.) must sign an agreement containing a training plan. The promoter and the hosting entity shall each appoint a mentor who shall assist the trainee in drawing up the training plan, introduce him in the new context and define the organizational and educational conditions. In addition, they shall monitor and attest the activity carried out. In this respect, compared to traineeships offered on the open market by enterprises, the ALMP traineeships can benefit from an intermediary institution, which also has a supervising function in terms of its quality.

The Youth Guarantee traineeship is one of the most important measures both at the European and national level (European Commission, 2018; Escudero et al., 2017). In Italy it represents the first ALMP measure (57%), involving 474.936 young people.

Table 3 — Participants in a YG traineeship (as of 31 August 2019)



Source: ANPAL

In financial terms, Regions have programmed approximately 582 million euros to traineeship, about 51.6 % of all the resources available on the 2014-2015 programming period (ANPAL, 2018).

2. The quality of traineeship and the quality of work in the context of the Youth Guarantee

One of the key feature of the Youth Guarantee approach is the issue of “quality offer”: as already pointed out, the Recommendation states that young people will receive ‘a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education’.

The concept of quality, both with regard to traineeship and job, was elaborated in the European methodological guidance on the Youth Guarantee implementation and evaluation¹⁰.

2.1 Quality of traineeship

As already said, the specific focus on traineeship quality stems from the fact that this policy has involved a huge number of people and this has brought about the need to provide some regulation to prevent abuse and ensure its quality. In fact, it has been observed that the training content of experience has often been underestimated; in many cases trainees carry out low profile tasks - or not coherent with their educational level -; sometimes, trainees are used to replace regular employment since they are “cheaper”.

In order to cope with this problem, in 2014, the EU published the Council of the European Union’s *Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships (QFT)*. It represents the reference document for traineeship quality. It defines traineeship as a: ‘work practice (either as part of a study or not) including an educational/training component which is limited in time. It allows to document practical work experience as part of the individual CV and/or as requested in educational curricula or to gain work practice for the purpose of facilitating the transition from education and training to the labour market. They are predominantly short- to middle term (a few weeks up to 6 months, in certain cases one year).’

Although the Recommendation gives a broad definition of traineeship, it actually refers only to two types of traineeship: internship in the open market and traineeship as an active labour market policy (non- curricular). Therefore, the QFT does not cover traineeships

¹⁰European Commission, *Guidance on evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative*, September 2015.

that are part of curricula of formal or vocational education and training or those regulated under national law and whose completion is a mandatory requirement to access specific profession (e.g. medicine, architecture, etc.).

The EU framework includes the six quality dimensions:

1. written agreement
2. learning and training content
3. duration
4. conditions of traineeship
5. validation and recognition
6. transparency requirements in hiring practices.

According to the Recommendation, participants must be assisted and supported in the design of the training project, receive an allowance and – eventually - a contribution to bear the costs of transnational mobility. They should include validation and certification of acquired skills and promote the employability of young people who conclude the experience successfully.

The Recommendation also calls on Member States to adopt legislative measures aimed at improving the quality of traineeships. In Italy, since 2013, a national framework to discipline traineeship experience was set up and specific guidelines were adopted (Law 92/2012). In 2017, the Government, Regions and the Autonomous Provinces signed an agreement containing new guidelines for traineeship with a view to revising, updating and supplementing those of 2013. The primary aim is to combat the use of traineeships to replace regular employment relationships and ensure greater protection for the trainees.

In the context of the Youth Guarantee, the EC evaluation guidance of YEI suggest that the quality of the traineeship offer made under the program should take into account the following dimensions:

- learning content (usefulness for the transition into the labour market),
- working conditions (equivalent to those of regular employees in terms of equipment, working hours, work, treatment, etc.),
- rights and obligations,
- duration.

2.2 Quality of work

As far as the quality of work is concerned, the reference framework is much broader and more complex. This concept has been widely studied in the literature and can be analysed from different theoretical points of view, mainly based on a multidimensional

approach. There is no single definition of job quality, but there is agreement in identifying some key dimensions.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) is one of the international institution which has developed a comprehensive approach to the quality of work. Since the 90s, ILO has been promoting *decent work* policies, with the aim to ensure that all men and women can have access to work in conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity. The ILO approach to decent work is a universal one and highlights the key role of employment, with its quantitative (jobs created) and qualitative dimension (working conditions). It is based on four strategic pillars: the first refers to international employment standards and labour rights; the second dimension concerns employment and the appropriateness of earnings for all; the third fundamental aspect of decent work is social protection and safety at work; the fourth dimension concerns the promotion of social dialogue and tripartism.

On the basis of this conceptual framework, the ILO defines a set of indicators organised in ten sections to which it adds a series of indicators covering the main aspects of the economic and social context: employment opportunities; adequate earnings and productive work; decent working time; combining work, family and personal life; work that should be abolished; stability and security of work; equal opportunity and treatment in employment; safe work environment; social security; social dialogue, employers' and workers' representation; economic and social context for decent work¹¹.

At the European level, the issue of job quality entered into the political debate at the end of the '90s with the European employment strategy (EES). The *Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs*, adopted by the EU countries in 2000, sets out the policy objective of full employment and the creation of more *and better jobs*. In order to compare the results achieved by Member States in the context of the EES, a first attempt to operationalize the concept of quality of work was done at the Laeken European Council in 2001¹². The Laeken indicators define the quality of work according to ten dimensions, which can be traced back to two main aspects: the characteristics of work and workers on the one hand, and the wider socio-economic and labour market context on the other¹³. In 2008, this list of indicators was extended to cover aspects related to wages, labour intensity and training, and linked to four main dimensions¹⁴:

¹¹ International Labour Office, *Decent work indicators: guidelines for producers and users of statistical and legal framework indicators*, ILO manual: second version, International Labour Office. -Geneva: ILO, 2013

¹² European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Employment and Social policies: a framework for investing in quality*, Luxembourg, COM (2001) 313 final.

¹³ These indicators can be quantified from the main European Labour Force Survey (LFS) and European Union Statistics on Living Conditions (EU-SILC).

¹⁴ European Commission, *Employment in Europe*, 2008.

1. socio-economic security (intrinsic job quality, flexibility and security, inclusion and access to the labour market, diversity and non-discrimination, age);
2. training (lifelong learning and career development, overall economic performance and productivity);
3. working conditions (health and safety at work, social dialogue and workers' involvement, work intensity);
4. reconciliation of working and non-working life and gender balance.

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), monitors the conditions and quality of employment in the European Union through the *European Working Conditions Survey* (EWCS). Over the years, the scope of the survey has been considerably extended compared to the first edition, especially in the direction of capturing the multi-disciplinary nature of the quality of work concept. Eurofound's work quality indices aim to assess the way in which workers perform their work and under which conditions¹⁵:

1. physical environment (posture-relates, ambient, biological and chemical);
2. work intensity (quantitative demand, pace determinants and interdependency, emotional demands);
3. working time quality (duration, atypical working tome, working time arrangements);
4. social environment (adverse social behavior, social support, management quality);
5. skills and discrediting (cognitive dimension, decision latitude, organizational participation, training);
6. prospects (employment status, career prospects, job security, downsizing);
7. earnings (hourly earnings).

As already pointed out, in the context of the Youth Guarantee, job quality is a key issue: providing all young people with a “good quality” job improves life and work prospects in the long term and ensures decent living standards¹⁶. In general, an offer is of good quality if the person who benefits from it does not return to unemployment or inactivity: a “good-quality” offer can therefore be measured in terms of its outcome (so called outcome-based approach)¹⁷.

The EC guidance on YEI evaluation¹⁸ gives some more detailed indications on how to measure a good quality job offer and identifies some criteria. They are all embedded in

¹⁵ Eurofound, *Sixth European Working Conditions Survey — Overview report* (2017 update), Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

¹⁶ Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing the Youth Guarantee.

¹⁷ European Commission, *Frequently Asked Questions about the Youth Guarantee*, April 2015.

¹⁸ European Commission, *Guidance on evaluation of the Youth Employment Initiative*, September 2015.

the international framework previously analysed. In particular, the Commission suggests to evaluate job offer in terms of: a) its characteristics and b) its relevance to NEETs needs, as shown in the following table:

Characteristics of the job offer	Characteristics of NEETs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • duration of the contract: fixed duration or open-ended contract • part-time/full-time contract • voluntary/involuntary part-time • remuneration level • level and type of qualification required • availability of additional job-related training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • age • labour market status • level of skills/qualifications • previous professional experience • previous unemployment/inactivity • household composition (joblessness) • caring situation (lone parent)

The type and duration of the employment contract are strongly linked to the areas of job security and working conditions. The indicators are linked not only to the duration of the employment contract, the access to social protection rights and more generally to working conditions in terms of contractual stability and standard working time, but also to fixed-term and involuntary part-time contracts because they are more associated with negative outcomes on young people in terms of career prospects. That is why, even though temporary contracts can help to enter the labour market, open ended contract are of a higher quality; furthermore part-time work can be considered a quality job only if it is on voluntary basis.

Remuneration is also relevant to the extent that the level of income is capable of influencing people’s well-being. The indicators used include individual measures (e.g. average monthly income) and aggregate measures (e.g. average income of workers below the poverty line). As far young people are concerned, European guidance documents say that given the differences in the wage-setting systems for young workers regarding minimum, wages, it is difficult to set unique criteria. However one should consider as good offers those that respect national or sectoral wage agreements.

As regards to competence development and training dimension, a key aspect in defining the quality of work for young people is that of matching between the level and type of qualification required to carry out a specific task. *Educational mismatch*, that is non-alignment between competencies held by workers (level of education or training pathway) and those required by firms (needed to carry out their work), may have negative effects on young people in terms of satisfaction, earnings and long-term effects on skills obsolescence.

The following table summarizes the common approach to quality work of different institutions.

Indicators	Institution	Dimension
Type and duration of the employment contract	European Commission	Flexibility and security
	Eurofound	Working time quality
	ILO	Stability and security of work
Wage	European Commission	Age
	Eurofound	Learning
	ILO	Adequate earning
Level and type of qualification required for work	European Commission	Skills, lifelong learning and career development
	Eurofound	Skills and discretion

3. Assumptions, methods and data base

The aim of this analysis is to check whether there is a relationship between the quality of traineeship carried out by young people under the Youth Guarantee Programme and the quality of work that the trainees have found after their participation in the policy.

Recent evaluations have shown that participation in a YG traineeship increases the probability to be employed (ANPAL, 2019). In this work we focus on the assumption that the quality of the policy can influence the quality of job placement. To this end, the analysis is aimed at identifying the determinants that most influence the probability of finding a job of good quality.

We used a data set stemming from a sample survey on the participants in the Youth Guarantee programme. They were interviewed with a CATI technique based on a questionnaire. The survey was carried out by ANPAL during 2017 on a sample of 20.000 individuals. The universe is represented by young people aged between 18 and 29 years old, registered in the Youth Guarantee Programme, or who went to a public employment service in 2016 to update their employment status (*Dichiarazione di Immediata Disponibilità*).

To assess the quality of traineeship we have considered all young people registered in YG, who have concluded a traineeship (1.659). In terms of employment outcome, 72% of them found a job at the end of the traineeship. As regard to the quality of work, we have considered a sub-sample of the previous aggregate, i.e. those who are employed one

year after the end of the traineeship and have at least an upper secondary education (1.082)¹⁹.

Two synthetic indicators of quality have been developed and quantified for both traineeship and job.

As far as the **quality of traineeships** indicator is concerned, we have taken into consideration four dimensions, which stem from the European regulatory framework:

- 1) the coaching of the firm's staff to trainees;
- 2) the correspondence between the educational level and the task carried out;
- 3) the final certification;
- 4) the employment outcomes.

As regards the first and second dimension, the indicator takes a dichotomous value '0/1': where value '1' indicates that training has been carried out with the coaching of the company's staff and if the job assigned to the trainee is consistent with his educational qualification level; value '0' otherwise.

As regards the third dimension concerning the final certification, the indicator takes the following values: '1' in case of certification of competence; value '0.5' if the young people have received a certification of attendance; value '0' if no certification has been issued.

Finally, taking into account the employment outcome dimension, it takes the following values: '1' if the trainee has accepted the offer of employment proposed by the firm where the traineeship has taken place and if the employment relationship is still active (at the time of the interview) or, in case of an interruption, if this is due to a choice of the young person; '0.5' if the trainee has accepted the job offer proposed by the firm where the traineeship took place, but the employment relationship ended for reasons which are beyond the control of the young person; '0' if the participant has not received any job offer at the end of traineeship.

The first synthetic indicator, which results from the sum of the values of the four dimensions, may thus be of a value ranging from '0' to '4' corresponding to five different quality levels (from a low to excellent).

The second synthetic indicator on the **quality of work** has been developed taking into consideration a taxonomy of three dimensions:

¹⁹The choice to exclude participants with a lower secondary education qualifications is linked to the fact that, by definition, the over-education indicator does not include such educational level.

1. over-education,
2. contractual protection,
3. working time.

Unfortunately, the available survey information did not allow to consider wages, which is one of the variable suggested in the international framework.

The first dimension concerns the matching between the occupation and the level of education. The over-education phenomenon occurs when a person is holding a level of education higher than what would be required to perform a particular job.

Educational level	Profession
Tertiary	Clericals support workers Service and sales workers Crafts and related trade workers Plant, and machine operators and assemblers
Upper secondary	Elementary occupations

The second dimension that we have considered to identify a work of good quality is the typology of contract. In particular, we have reasoned in terms of contractual protection, which is mainly linked to the duration of the contract: the quality of work entails an open-ended contract, including also the apprenticeship contract, or a fixed-term contract of more than 36 months.

Type of work	Working time
Full time	Weekly working time between 36 and 40 hours
Part-time (voluntary part-time)	Weekly working time between 18 and 24 hours

The third dimension concerns the quality of working time. From a theoretical point of view it is not easy to define what could be the highest working time in absolute terms: it depends on multiple factors of psychological, social and environmental nature. On the basis of the available information, we have considered a working time between 36 and 40 hours for full-time contracts and 18-24 hours for part-time ones. In this last case, part-time work must be on voluntary basis.

Type of contract	Duration of contract
Employee	Permanent contract
	Duration of more than 36 months
Apprenticeships	

Finally, to quantify the synthetic indicators of job quality, instead of considering a scale of quality levels, we have identified a dichotomous variable which can get value ‘1’ if the job meets all of the three dimensions: over-education, contractual protection and working time; and ‘0’ otherwise.

4. Analysis of data

Descriptive statistics

The following is a descriptive analysis of the single dimension of the quality of traineeship and work and their respective synthetic indicators. The results of the estimation based on the logit model are then proposed.

With reference to the first dimension, data show that 96% of young people say they have performed training sessions with firm’s staff, while 8% say they have participated in classroom training courses (table 4). The other training arrangements seem to be residual.

Table 4 —Training during traineeship

Coaching	96,0
Internal training course	8,0
External training course	2,9
Both internal and external training course	1,1
On-line training	0,3

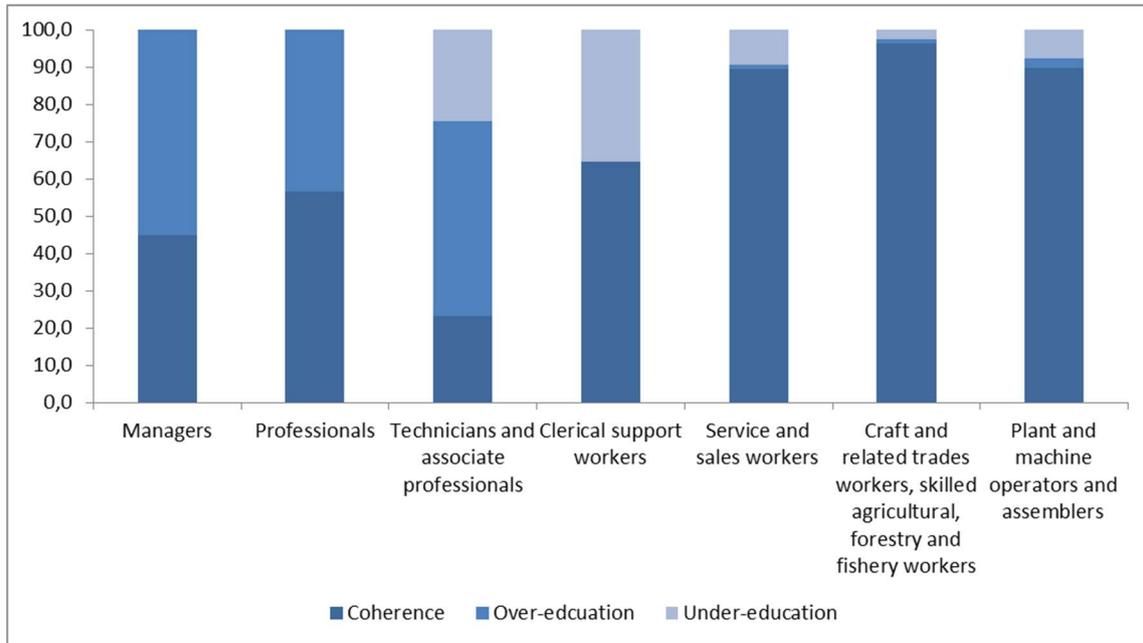
Source: ANPAL, Sample survey on the employment outcomes of the Youth Guarantee participants, 2017

As regards the second dimension, bearing in mind that each occupation²⁰ corresponds to a level of education, data show that the highest level of correspondence lies in the group of craftsmen, specialised workers and farmers (96.4%) (figure 1). High level of

²⁰The field of unskilled occupations is not taken into account in the analysis.

correspondence can be found among operators of plant, stationary and mobile machinery workers and drivers of vehicles and skilled occupations in commercial and service activities. The highest percentage of over-education is in the office and the technical professions (35.4% and 24.7%, respectively) and managers (55.2%).

Figure 1 - Educational level and occupation



Source: ANPAL, Sample survey on the employment outcomes of the Youth Guarantee participants, 2017

Considering now the third dimension, at the end of traineeship 26.5% of young people say they have acquired a certification of attendance and 6.6% have got a certificate attesting their skills (table 5). The majority of them (63.7 %) declare that they have received no formal certification.

Table 5 — Final certification

Certification of attendance	26,5
Certification of skills	6,6
Professional qualification/diploma	2,2
Other	1,0
No certification	63,7
Total	100,0

Source: ANPAL, Sample survey on the employment outcomes of the Youth Guarantee participants, 2017

As far as the fourth dimension is concerned, 46.4% of the participants declare that they have received no job offer (46.4%); 48.9% of young people have received a job offer from the firm where they completed their traineeship (table 6). Most of the trainees who were offered a job say that they accepted it and that this was the job held at the time of the interview.

Table 6 — Job offer

A job offer - same firm of traineeship	48,9
A job offer - different firm	2,5
A traineeship offer - same firm of traineeship	1,3
No offer received	46,4
Other	1,0
Total	100,0

Source: ANPAL, Sample survey on the employment outcomes of the Youth Guarantee participants, 2017

The synthetic indicator shows that more than half of young people registered in YG participated in a medium-high quality traineeship (56.9%), with a peak of excellence of 6.5 % (table 7). 36.6% of them were involved in a low quality traineeship. Young people aged under 25 have experienced traineeships that are on average of a higher quality than that of “older” young people (60.8% against 53.1%). As far as the education is concerned, the highest share of high-medium quality traineeships are among those with upper secondary education (60.9 %), followed by those with lower secondary education (54.5 %).

Therefore, it seems that holding a tertiary educational qualification is not decisive in relation to the quality of experience (49.3%), even though this is partly due to the fact that the most qualified young people are also the most penalized in terms of coherence between level of education and occupation. Finally, young people living in the Northern Regions have participated in medium/high quality traineeships in 60% of cases, with a peak of 9.6%. The Central and Southern Regions show a higher percentage of low quality traineeships (10 percentage points higher than in the whole country).

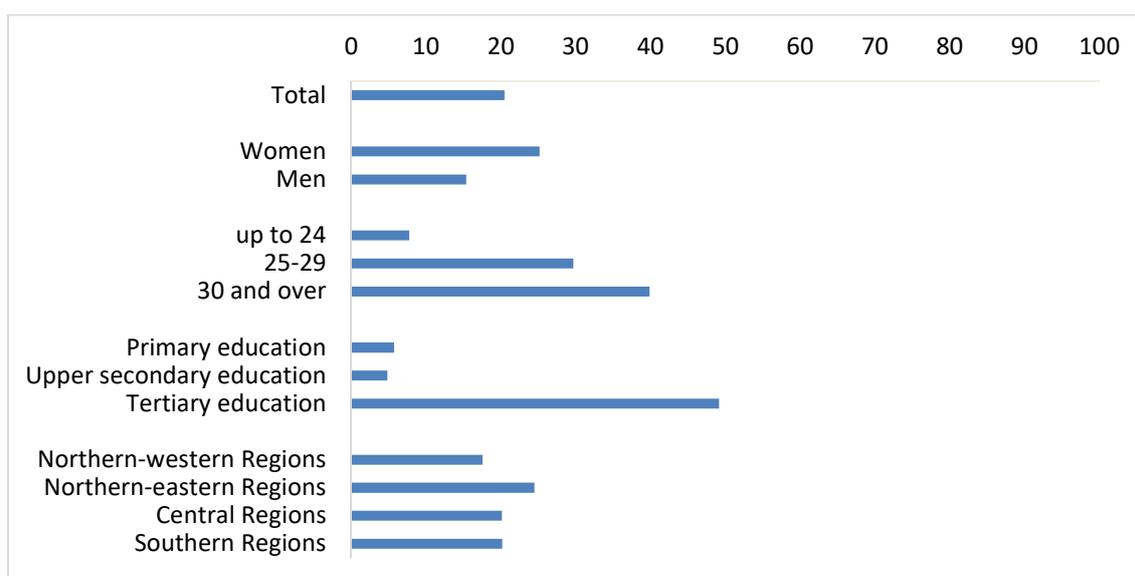
Table 7 – Quality of traineeship: synthetic indicators

	Very low	Low	Medium	High	Excellent	Total
Total	9,0	27,6	26,3	30,6	6,5	100,0
<i>Gender</i>						
Men	9,3	26,7	28,0	29,9	6,1	100,0
Women	8,7	28,4	24,4	31,5	7,0	100,0
<i>Age group</i>						
Under 25	6,2	25,8	26,6	34,2	7,2	100,0
Over 25	11,7	29,2	25,9	27,2	5,9	100,0
<i>Educational level</i>						
Primary education	8,4	31,7	25,1	29,4	5,4	100,0
Upper secondary education	6,3	25,8	27,6	33,3	7,0	100,0
Tertiary	15,0	29,7	23,8	25,5	6,0	100,0
<i>Regions</i>						
Northern Regions	8,9	21,5	25,9	34,1	9,6	100,0
Central Regions	7,5	35,8	29,5	22,7	4,4	100,0
Southern Regions	10,2	31,0	26,3	28,1	4,4	100,0

Source: ANPAL, Sample survey on the employment outcomes of the Youth Guarantee participants, 2017

Turning now to job quality, data on the first dimension show that the overall rate of over-education is 20.5%, with an important gender gap (figure 2). If we consider the average value, women are highly penalized compared to men, with a difference of more than 10 percentage points. The over-education phenomenon by definition concerns the better-educated population (with tertiary education) and thus higher values can be observed among the over 25 population. There are no relevant territorial differences.

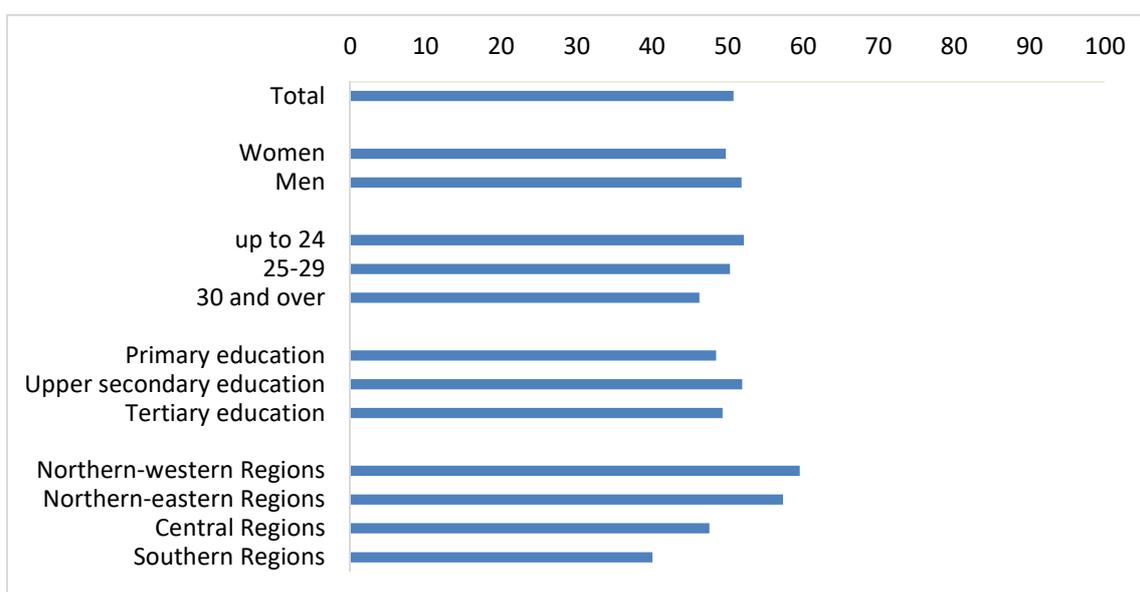
Figure 2 - Over-education



Source: ANPAL, Sample survey on the employment outcomes of the Youth Guarantee participants, 2017

The analysis of the type of contract offered to young people show that half of them have a precarious contract (figure 3). Gender gap is not so high, with a difference of only two percentage points between men and women. Considering the age, lack of contractual protection is more prevalent among over 30, while we do not notice significantly differences as regard the educational level. Not surprisingly in our country, contractual protection is higher among young people living in the Northern Regions, with a difference of 20 percentage points compared to those living in the South.

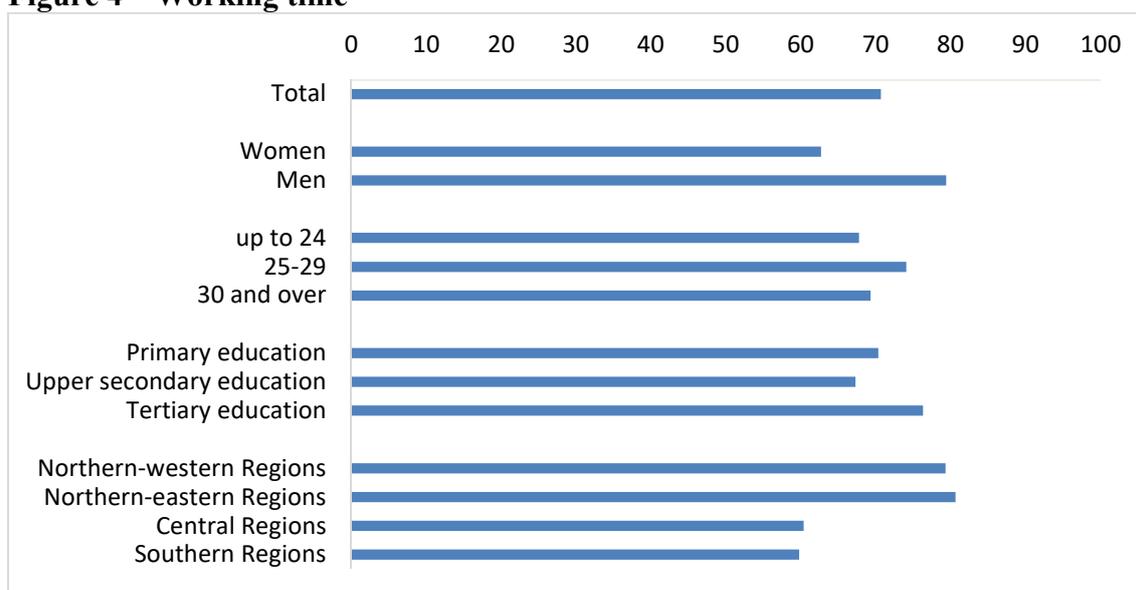
Figure 3 —Contractual protection



Source: ANPAL, Sample survey on the employment outcomes of the Youth Guarantee participants, 2017

Finally, looking at the working time, for more than 70% of young people it falls within the standards set by collective bargaining. However, gender differences are important: 63% of women carry out work in accordance with good-quality working time, compared to 79% of men (figure 4). Results confirm that part-time work and the so-called “atypical working hours” are still a prerogative of women, probably because there they need to reconcile professional and family care activities. At the territorial level, the distribution of atypical working hours mainly concerns young people living in the Central and Southern Regions.

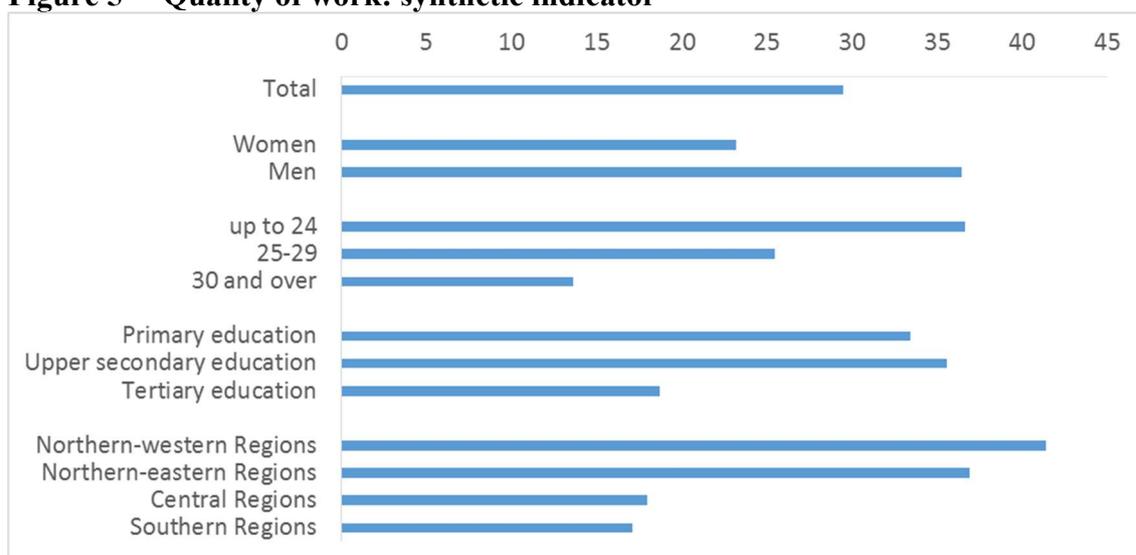
Figure 4 – Working time



Source: ANPAL, Sample survey on the employment outcomes of the Youth Guarantee participants, 2017

As a result of this three dimension, the synthetic indicator shows that 30% of young people are performing a job of good quality, even though the gender gap is significantly high: the proportion of good-quality jobs is 36% for men, but only 23% for women (figure 5). The relationship between the quality of work and the age of young people is inversely proportional: young people up to the age of 24 are above the average (37%), while those aged over 30 are penalized (14%). This result is strongly influenced by the weight of the over-education phenomenon among young people with a tertiary education, who are involved in poor quality jobs. Finally, the quality of work is higher in the Northern Regions compared to Central and Southern ones.

Figure 5 —Quality of work: synthetic indicator



Source: ANPAL, Sample survey on the employment outcomes of the Youth Guarantee participants, 2017

Logit estimation

Previous descriptive analyses have focused on the relationship between the job quality synthetic indicator outcome and the characteristics of young people. The following analysis is based on a logit model which is aimed at identifying and quantifying the drivers of good quality work. In particular, the analysis refers to young people who are in employment 12 months after the completion of a traineeship in the framework of the Youth Guarantee. Therefore, it should not be considered as a study on the probability of finding a job of good quality, but rather a study on the dependent relationship between the quality of work and the quality of traineeship. The objective is, in fact, to assess simultaneously the relationship between these two dimensions under the same variables which are linked to the individual characteristics of young people.

We have assumed as dependent variable ‘having/not having a good job’: the predictors are 4 groups of variables: the first one concerns the personal characteristics of the young people (gender, age and region of residence) and their socio-economic situation. Since information on wage was not available, it was approximated with the economic condition of young people (young people who declare to live with their parents for economic reason).

Table 8 - Results of the logit model estimation

Quality of work indicator	Coef.	Std.Err.	z	P>z	[95%Conf.Interval]	
Woman	-0,35369	0,15482	-2,28	0,022	-0,65712	-0,05026
Age 20-24	0,45006	0,26291	1,71	0,087	-0,06524	0,96536
Age 25-29	0,32114	0,26201	1,23	0,220	-0,19239	0,83466
Lives at the parents' home	0,21492	0,20778	1,03	0,301	-0,19231	0,62216
Economic problems	0,53432	0,16596	3,22	0,001	0,20904	0,85960
Has small children	-0,75769	0,82100	-0,92	0,356	-2,36683	0,85145
Never repetition	0,17658	0,22025	0,8	0,423	-0,25511	0,60827
Has not continued the studies	-0,34248	0,17527	-1,95	0,051	-0,68600	0,00105
Central Regions	-0,78575	0,28898	-2,72	0,007	-1,35214	-0,21936
Southern Regions	-0,71653	0,17232	-4,16	0,000	-1,05427	-0,37878
No NEETS in the previous 12 months	-0,36872	0,10057	-3,67	0,000	-0,56582	-0,17161
Went to PES to look for work	0,23396	0,18352	1,27	0,202	-0,12573	0,59365
Works in a small business	0,19500	0,18378	1,06	0,289	-0,16520	0,55520
Manufacturing	0,56529	0,22294	2,54	0,011	0,12834	1,00224
Construction	0,91279	0,35950	2,54	0,011	0,20819	1,61740
Wholesale and retail trade	0,43073	0,21411	2,01	0,044	0,01109	0,85037
Accommodation and food service activitie:	-0,49587	0,31035	-1,6	0,110	-1,10415	0,11241
Professional scientific and technical activit	0,27613	0,24781	1,11	0,265	-0,20958	0,76183
Other service activities	0,22750	0,37899	0,6	0,548	-0,51530	0,97030
Traineeship Quality Indicator						
Average	-0,05227	0,23967	-0,22	0,827	-0,52201	0,41747
High	0,56822	0,20714	2,74	0,006	0,16223	0,97420
Excellent	1,16230	0,25162	4,62	0,000	0,66912	1,65547
_cons	-1,79413	0,46769	-3,84	0,0000	-2,71078	-0,87748

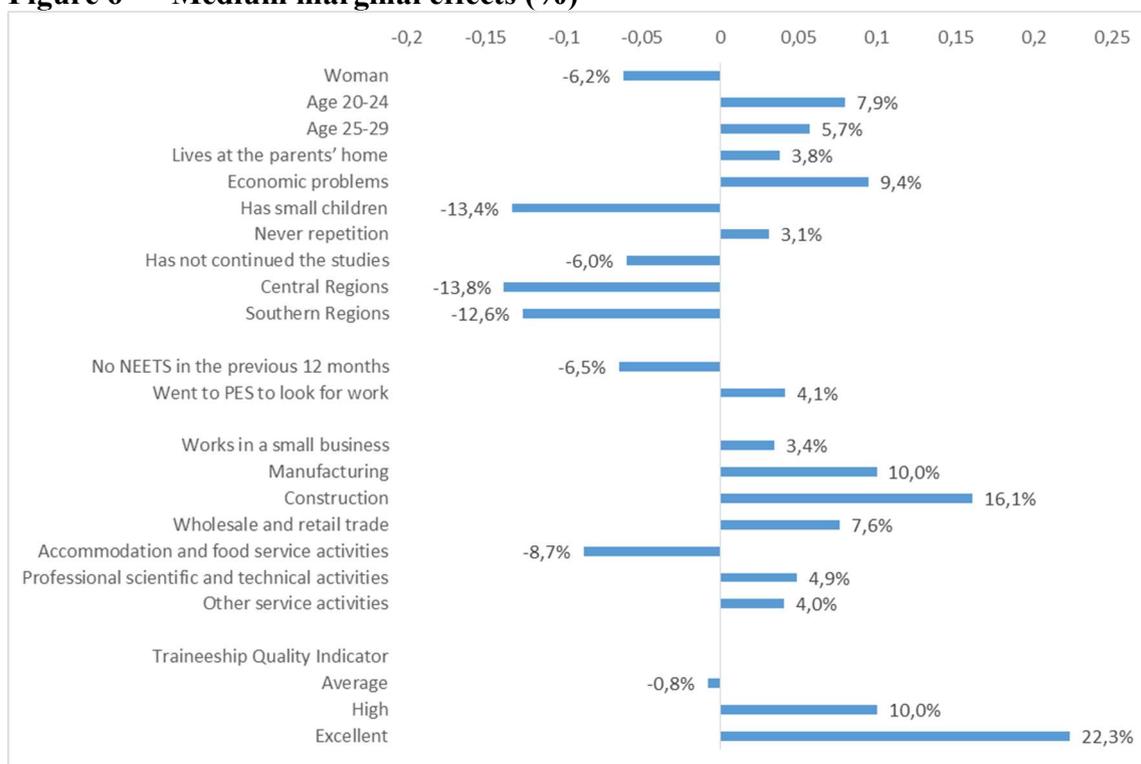
Source: ANPAL, Sample survey on the employment outcomes of the Youth Guarantee participants, 2017

A second group of variables measures the ability of young people to change their situation in the labour market, that exiting the NEET condition. Other variables are linked to the characteristics of the employment (sector and size of the company). Finally, the last variable that we have considered is that of quality of the traineeship, which is the focus of our analysis. The results of this estimation are shown in table 8.

Figure 6 shows the analysis of the marginal effects of each explanatory variable of interest on the estimated probability of finding a good quality job, setting the other variables at their average value. The results confirm that, in the same way as other dependent variables, having completed an excellent or a high quality traineeship significantly influence the probability of finding a job of good quality.

The gender variable has a negative impact on the quality of work: being a woman reduces the probability of finding a job of quality of 6 percentage points. Having small children has a strong negative effect. Also being an “active NEET” reduces the likelihood of finding a job of quality. This is probably linked to the so called “gig economy”, which involves in particular young people in jobs, such as baby sitters or the delivery of food at home. Very often young people are forced to accept jobs for which they are over-educated, while waiting for a job of better quality. The same is true for young people who have decided not to continue their studies, who are likely to accept any ‘job’ in order to work and get a salary.

Figure 6 — Medium marginal effects (%)



Source: ANPAL, Sample survey on the employment outcomes of the Youth Guarantee participants, 2017

An additional factor, that negatively affects the probability of finding a good job, is linked to the territory in which young people live. Negative marginal effects (-13.8 p.p. e -12.6 p.p.) are observed for those living in the Central or in the Southern Regions.

As regards the economic sector, data show that activities of services, accommodation and catering entail a low probability of finding a job of good quality, having negative values.

Conclusions

Quality of traineeships and quality of job are two core themes in the framework of policies supporting youth employment. On the one hand, it is a matter of offering young people the experience of traineeships that are genuinely qualifying. On the other hand, there is the need to guarantee that young people can enter the labour market in a sustainable way.

The paper has analysed the relationship between the quality of traineeship and the quality of work considering a sample of young people who took part in a non-curricular traineeship under the Youth Guarantee Program and were employed within 12 months from the end of the policy.

Data show that traineeships funded under the Youth Guarantee reach a level of quality more than acceptable, but only 1/3 of the young people who found employment at the end of the traineeship perform a work of quality.

However, logit results confirm that the quality of traineeship is important in promoting quality employment. In fact, data show that, under the same dependent variables, having completed an excellent or a high-quality traineeship is one of the determinants that significantly affects the probability of finding a good job.

This confirms the importance to carry on strengthening the quality of traineeships as an active labour policy measure for young people, not only to improve their employability but also to help them to find a good job.

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