



Cities for Active Inclusion

THE ACTIVE INCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE:
Cities supporting youth employment



EURO
CITIES

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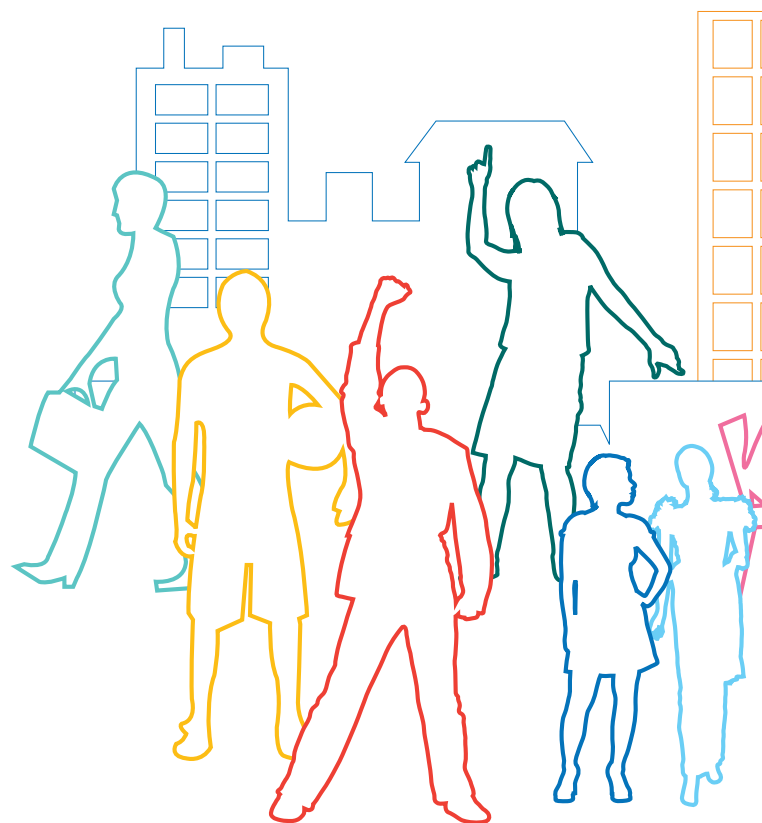


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Introduction

High youth unemployment and the social exclusion of young people pose serious problems for Europe. The future socio-economic wellbeing of the European Union depends on young people maximising their potential and having the necessary skills to contribute fully to society.

Supporting youth employment and ensuring the socio-economic inclusion of young people are crucial issues for cities. Statistics show that the economic crisis has hit young people in particular. This has had a significant impact at city level, with employment, education and social services directly confronted with rising youth unemployment and more young people at risk of social exclusion. These issues need to be taken seriously and all stakeholders, from city administrations, to education providers, NGOs, business communities and regional and national governments, need to work together to stimulate youth employment and find solutions to social exclusion.

Cities are committed to promoting the active inclusion of young people in line with the European Active Inclusion Strategy¹ and the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy². They do this by implementing targeted measures to support young people in entering the labour market and providing accessible, high quality social services.

This report provides an overview of the trends, challenges and good practices on the active inclusion of young people³, with a particular focus on youth employment in nine European cities. It is based on studies undertaken by the members of Cities for Active Inclusion⁴ (EUROCITIES-NLAO⁵) carried out in the first half of 2011.

This overview is presented in four sections. Part one focuses on the context in which cities work on the active inclusion of young people. Part two looks at the main challenges for cities. Part three provides good practice examples on youth employment and social inclusion. Finally, part four presents local level plans for policy improvements.

Box 1 – Definition of youth and young people

The EU defines young people as being between 15-24 years of age. Cities' definition varies due to different classifications of this group in national policies. Youth policies at city level generally apply to an age range of 14-29 years. For example:

- 18-29 years in Copenhagen;
- 14-34 years in Bologna;
- up to 26 years in Krakow.

1 See the European Commission Recommendation on the Active Inclusion of People Excluded from the Labour Market (2008/876/EC): <http://bit.ly/mHzQMe>.

2 See 'Youth on the Move', one of the flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart sustainable and inclusive growth for 2010-2020. It is intended to optimise the potential of young people in Europe: COM(2010)477 final - <http://ec.europa.eu/youthonthemove>.

3 People from 14-29 years of age, see box 1 for a complete definition.

4 The participating cities are Birmingham, Bologna, Brno, Copenhagen, Krakow, Lille Métropole-Roubaix, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Sofia. The Metropolitan area of Lille and the urban area of Roubaix are counted as one member. However, some of the findings in this report only apply to Roubaix.

5 EUROCITIES-NLAO: EUROCITIES Network of Local Authority Observatories on Active Inclusion. Since 2011 it is also referred to as Cities for Active Inclusion.

1 Urban youth: some trends and observations

In the EU, youth unemployment rates are typically higher than adult unemployment rates. Indeed, in the 27 EU member states, the unemployment rate for 15-24 year olds is generally twice as high as the overall unemployment rate. For example, in 2010 the EU youth unemployment level was 20.9% while the overall unemployment rate was 9.6%⁶.

Young people face specific challenges, often complex and interrelated. These can concern the transition from education to work, such as having insufficient work experience or not having the skills required by the labour market. In some cases young people, especially those facing multiple disadvantages, may also lack self-confidence, aspiration and motivation. The situation is even more difficult for young people with health problems or disabilities who often find it difficult to enter the labour market.

Other issues affecting young people can relate to their individual situation in the labour market. For example, their initial wages may not always be adequate to meet the cost of living. Young people are also more likely to have a temporary or flexible employment contract, which makes it difficult to plan for the future. Young people have been badly hit by the economic downturn: many businesses are not recruiting or are making redundancies, especially amongst those people with flexible contracts⁷. Due to the economic crisis, youth unemployment rates are at a record high in nearly all EU countries, with an average level of more than 20% in the EU27 in 2010 and early 2011, compared to around 15% in 2007-2008⁸.

These trends and challenges are reflected at local level. In their reports, the nine cities outline the social and labour market contexts for young people⁹. A number of municipalities reported a youth unemployment rate of close to or above the 2010 EU average of 20%. This is 29% in **Bologna**, 25% in **Roubaix**, 21% in **Stockholm**, and 16% in **Sofia**. Furthermore, cities reported that youth unemployment often has a clear territorial dimension, with a concentration of youth unemployment and social exclusion in deprived urban areas. In some disadvantaged neighbourhoods of **Roubaix**, for example, the youth unemployment rate can be twice that of the youth unemployment rate for the city as a whole, at around 40% in 2009¹⁰.

The economic crisis has increased the number of unemployed young people in these cities, even in those with traditionally low youth unemployment rates. In **Copenhagen** for example, the youth unemployment rate nearly doubled between 2008 and 2010, from 3.5% to 6.3%. In **Rotterdam**, youth employment increased by about one fifth between 2010 and 2011. The impact of such increases is highly significant at local level, resulting in more young people at risk of poverty and social exclusion and requiring unemployment benefits and social services support.

In their reports, cities highlighted the complexity and variety of groups in need of some form of active inclusion support. These are represented in box 2. In practice, many individuals fall into several of these categories.

6 See the European Commission monthly labour market factsheets: <http://bit.ly/oyF55P>.

7 European Commission (2009). SEC (2009)549 final. Youth-Investing and empowering. EU Youth Report: <http://bit.ly/iojeH>.

8 See the European Commission monthly labour market factsheets: <http://bit.ly/poFyhl>.

9 More details can be found in the city reports. See: <http://bit.ly/q114Uc>.

10 According to the 2010 report of the French National Observatory for Sensitive Urban Areas (ONZUS), the youth unemployment rate in Roubaix's sensitive urban areas was 43% for young men and 37% for young women in 2009.

Box 2 – Groups and characteristics of young people at risk of social exclusion

Main problem	Sub-classification of the main problem	Cities reporting the problem
Lack of formal qualifications	early school leavers	all cities
	young people with few qualifications ¹¹	all cities
	young people with learning difficulties	all cities
Disadvantaged background	teenagers from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and/or disadvantaged families	all cities
	young people with a migrant background	Lille Métropole-Roubaix, Rotterdam and Stockholm
	teenage parents, including young single mothers	Birmingham, Rotterdam and Stockholm
	Roma children	Brno, Krakow and Sofia
	children whose parents are working abroad	Krakow
Anti-social behaviour	(former) gang members	Birmingham, Rotterdam
	football hooligans	Krakow
	ex offenders	Birmingham, Krakow
NEETs (young people who are neither in education, employment nor training)		all cities
Unemployed graduates		Birmingham, Brno, Copenhagen, Krakow and Rotterdam
Young people with disabilities		Brno, Sofia and Stockholm

¹¹ Such as only primary or lower secondary school qualifications.

2 Active inclusion of young people: where the challenges lie

The main challenges to promoting the active inclusion of young people as identified by the cities are:

- rising graduate unemployment;
- lack of flexibility in national programmes and policies for young people;
- budget cuts and financial constraints; and
- inadequate outreach to young people.

Rising graduate unemployment

An emerging challenge, resulting from slow economic growth, is a rise in unemployment amongst university graduates (**Birmingham, Brno, Copenhagen, Krakow** and **Rotterdam**). **Copenhagen** reported that the unemployment rate for university graduates more than doubled between 2008 and 2010: from 6% to 14.5%. Cities also report rising unemployment in sectors that have traditionally been characterised by a high number of vacancies, such as the health care sector: in Denmark, 65% of newly graduated nurses were still unemployed in March 2011. **Birmingham** reported that the graduate unemployment rate in the UK nearly doubled from 10.6% to 20% during the last quarter of 2010.

Lack of flexibility in national programmes and policies for young people

Several cities pointed out that programmes or policies designed at national or regional level are not always flexible enough to respond to young people's needs at city level. Bureaucratic organisational structures in general and limited power at city level can hamper policy effectiveness (**Birmingham, Brno, Copenhagen, Krakow, Lille Métropole-Roubaix** and **Rotterdam**).

For example, **Birmingham** highlighted the need to bridge the division of responsibilities that exists at national government level between the Department for Education (providing services for 14-19 year olds) and the Department for Work and Pensions (providing services for people aged 19+). Both groups of young people require similar support (such as education and training and pre-employment support) and could benefit from integrated services if the departments worked closer together.

In **Rotterdam** the fact that the municipality does not have many formal competencies in the field of education sometimes prevents city officers from providing personalised solutions to young people who have dropped out of the education system but then wish to re-join.

Budget cuts and financial constraints

Nearly all cities reported that they are facing financial constraints. Some are severely affected by national cuts in public expenditure for social, education and employment policies, while facing rising numbers of unemployed people and at risk of social exclusion (**Birmingham, Bologna, Copenhagen, and Rotterdam**). While it is difficult to estimate how much these cuts will affect public policies for young people, the cities fear the cuts will negatively impact on the delivery of public services. Cities are also under pressure to re-prioritise their policy work and projects and find new sources of funding for supporting the active inclusion of young people.

One example is **Birmingham**, where the future of several projects promoting youth employment¹² is uncertain due to the central government's austerity measures, which led to a cut of around €2.3 billion in national employment support activities. In **Copenhagen**, guaranteeing the same high level of quality of social services is a challenge due to substantial cuts in funding for both employment services and welfare benefits. For example, it is foreseen that the intensity or duration of municipal job guidance programmes will have to be reduced. Cuts of 9% in the national budget for local social policy are also stretching **Bologna** municipality's capacity to deliver.

In **Rotterdam**, national funding for employment and training support as well as social benefits for young people are expected to be reduced by about two thirds in 2014. The Dutch national government believes that withdrawing welfare benefits for inactive young people will motivate them to find employment. However, at city level, it is feared that contact with a substantial number of youths will be lost, since they will no longer have financial incentives to attend activation services.

Inadequate outreach to young people

City policy makers and people working for local social services find it difficult to reach and engage young people who are socially excluded and who are not in education, employment or training. Often these people are less proactive in trying to improve their personal situation. Communicating with them and motivating them to take steps towards education, the labour market or social activities is often a challenge for social workers (**Krakow**, **Rotterdam**, **Roubaix** and **Stockholm**).

Rotterdam reports that not all public policy makers are sufficiently familiar with young people's needs. In **Roubaix**, social workers from the municipality find that gaining the trust of young people can be very difficult.

¹² For examples of projects supported by the Future Jobs Fund and the Young Person's Guarantee, see 'The Active Inclusion of Young People - Birmingham': <http://bit.ly/oF6Uas>.

3 Cities' activities and good examples of the active inclusion of young people

Municipalities' competences and responsibilities for the active inclusion of young people differ from country to country. Some municipalities have clear responsibilities as the national laws give them the power and the duty to offer support to and follow-up with young people moving from education to the labour market (**Copenhagen, Stockholm**). In other countries, the responsibility for youth policy lies with higher levels of government, such as the national (**Birmingham, Sofia**) or regional level (**Bologna, Brno** and **Lille Métropole-Roubaix**).

Despite the different institutional arrangements, all cities play an important role in ensuring young people's needs are addressed by the various local social services. Most of the local policy instruments relate to facilitating the transition from school to work by investing in education and strengthening the role of employment and inclusion services.

In their reports, cities outlined several successful and promising approaches for the active inclusion of young people. In some cases these respond to the challenges outlined in section two. The examples that follow are largely based on integrated working methods and a personalised approach to specific target groups. They focus on:

- prevention and early intervention;
- empowerment and a bottom-up approach;
- offering personalised services;
- coordination and partnerships; such as:
 - coordination between municipal departments and other public agencies;
 - partnerships with the third sector;
 - involving local businesses;
- promoting entrepreneurship through education and financial assistance.

Prevention and early intervention

Cities are integrating national education policy instruments with local actions to prevent early school leaving and social exclusion. They target young people at risk of dropping out of education and unemployed young people who dropped out of school.

The city of **Rotterdam** has a system to prevent truancy. Truant officers act as intermediaries between pupils, parents and teachers. They can intervene from an early stage to prevent school drop out. In several cities, school drop outs can attend 'second-chance' schools. These are special schools in which early school leavers get a second chance to complete their secondary education by following a personalised study programme in line with their individual learning capacities (**Rotterdam**¹³, **Roubaix** and **Stockholm**¹⁴).

¹³ The Rotterdam vocational schools (*Vakscholen*) work directly with employers in order to guarantee a job after completion of studies, e.g. in car mechanics or construction.

¹⁴ The Stockholm second-chance school system, set up by the city's Education Department is called the 'High School Channel' (*Gymnasieslussen*).

In **Lille Métropole-Roubaix**, education agencies, local authorities, public employment services, local businesses and non-profit stakeholders from the whole Nord-Pas de Calais region are engaged in the Partaj project for preventing young people from dropping out of both education and training programmes. By working in partnership, the stakeholders monitor and give personalised support to young people from deprived urban areas who are at risk of dropping out. They also help them to find apprenticeships.

In **Copenhagen**, active labour market support is provided to people within four weeks of becoming unemployed. This system prevents people from being inactive for very long and substantially reduces the risk of long-term unemployment.

Empowerment and a bottom-up approach

Cities promote initiatives that combine the development of young people's social skills, autonomy and employability.

Stockholm's local employment service (Jobbtorg) coordinates the FILUR project. This offers young people individualised coaching, training placements and mentoring, with a specific focus on improving social skills and self confidence. Six months after participating in FILUR, three quarters of the 25 young people who were first engaged in the project were either in employment or education.

Krakow's Social Aid centre carries out the Streetwork programme, aimed at young people with mental health problems and those exhibiting offensive or anti-social behaviour. As part of the programme, social workers motivate young people to attend and take part in cultural and sports activities. In some cases, financial help can be provided to help young people to participate in these activities and to look for a job. If needed, the social workers can also direct them to specialised social services, such as mental health professionals.

To support the independence and social inclusion of people with disabilities, **Sofia** municipality set up Knyaz Bori: a vocational training centre for young people (16-22 years). It offers a combination of professional training, for instance in cooking or construction skills, coupled with teaching them how to live independently in their own home.

The city of **Bologna** supports a virtual network created by and for young people: Flash Giovani (Flash Youth). It aims to increase awareness on youth issues, such as the transition from education to work or health questions. The success of the project lies in its bottom-up approach, with young people themselves producing the information for the web portals, allowing them to acquire practical work experience¹⁵.

The city of **Rotterdam** financially supports an innovative project called SkillCity¹⁶ aimed at improving children's motivation and sense of responsibility at primary school. As part of the project, primary school children from deprived areas learn about citizenship, entrepreneurship and multiculturalism. Lessons are offered in judo, gardening, cooking and philosophy. Pupils' families are also engaged in the lessons. Evaluations show that the children are more motivated to attend school, which has a positive impact on their educational performance.

¹⁵ Flash Giovani is part of the Youth project, managed by Bologna's Urban Living Department since 2000. For more information (in Italian): www.flashgiovani.it.

¹⁶ SkillCity is part of an urban revitalisation programme for southern parts of Rotterdam. It is developed and implemented by Henk Oosterling, philosopher and lecturer at Erasmus University Rotterdam, and financially supported by public and private organisations. For more information see www.henkoosterling.nl/rotterdam-skillcity-english.html.

Offering personalised services

City administrations provide personalised employment and inclusion services to young people. Local employment services offer information on job vacancies, matching job seekers with employers, providing career advice and guidance in applying for a job. In some countries these services are, in the first instance, provided at regional level (**Bologna, Brno**). In other cities they are also increasingly offered at district level, because geographical proximity to citizens' homes facilitates the physical access to these services (**Bologna, Rotterdam, Roubaix** and **Stockholm**).

Birmingham allocates a personal advisor to every young person aged 13-19 identified as NEET¹⁷, to support them in finding employment or training¹⁸. In **Krakow** and **Sofia**, municipal social assistance centres organise protected housing and provide personal counselling for young people with disabilities to support their independent living and help them access training and adapted employment.

Copenhagen supports the transition from compulsory schooling (until 16 years) to further education. Students, their parents, teachers and the municipality's Department for Children and Youth consult to find a way to help the young person finish school, for example through mentoring or supplementary lessons. For pupils who are not expected to finish compulsory education, alternative education paths are offered. These include guidance, mentoring or flexible education plans with the option to transfer to other courses. Pupils can also take up vocational education (e.g. work placements or lessons to improve language skills or mathematics).

Coordination and partnerships

■ Coordination between municipal departments and other public agencies

Some cities are working to improve the level of coordination between their different departments and other agencies working on youth issues (**Copenhagen, Rotterdam, Sofia** and **Stockholm**).

In **Copenhagen**, different municipal departments try to offer better integrated and more efficient social services by creating inter-departmental task forces (e.g. between the Employment and Social Services departments). An integrated youth strategy is currently under development (see section four on future trends).

Rotterdam set up a one-stop-shop for youth inclusion through four city departments working together: Youth, Education & Society; Social Affairs and Employment; Health and Wellbeing; and Safety. Other local agencies are also involved, for example secondary and upper secondary vocational schools and the local job centre. This Central Youth Desk targets 16-23 years old NEETs in particular and offers information on employment, training, housing, health care and other services.

The recent **Stockholm** project to improve the Skarpnäck district integrates different services for the prevention of crime and social exclusion. Without requiring additional funding, the city administrations, police, housing organisations and citizens enhanced their cooperation to improve the lives of young people living in the area. For example, local youth are engaged to work as guardians on the streets in the evenings to increase the safety of the area.

¹⁷ Young people who are not in employment, education or training.

¹⁸ This is part of the September Guarantee process that helps local authorities to secure sufficient suitable education and training places for people aged 16 to 19 years old. See <http://bit.ly/nlg9fa>.

▪ Partnerships with the third sector

Cities also work in partnership with social economy organisations on youth inclusion projects. This is an established practice in **Bologna, Brno** and **Lille Métropole-Roubaix**.

Roubaix has a formal partnership with ADICE¹⁹ to promote the active inclusion of young people through international mobility and volunteering. Specialised youth workers contact young people from disadvantaged areas, offering them the opportunity to travel and to work as volunteers.

The city of **Brno** works with voluntary organisations to design and deliver social and employment services to young people with disabilities²⁰. Examples of the activities and services carried out by the partner NGOs are social rehabilitation, housing for people with special needs and support for independent living.

▪ Involving local businesses

Cities are building partnerships with local businesses in order to guarantee on-the-job work experience placements or to build strategies to better match education with the demand for certain skills (**Birmingham, Lille Métropole-Roubaix, Rotterdam**²¹ and **Stockholm**).

For example, **Birmingham** City Council cooperates with local and regional businesses to provide apprenticeship placements for young people from deprived areas. The placements increase their chances of finding employment. They receive on-the-job training, a wage subsidy and intensive coaching by specialist mentors. After a year, nearly 95% of the participating young people are either retained in employment, have started a business or are taking part in life long learning activities. The key success factors are ensuring high quality placements and providing mentoring by employers.

Promoting entrepreneurship through education and financial assistance

Several cities are involved in promoting youth entrepreneurship, including start-up and early-stage business development, and they support entrepreneurship education (**Bologna, Krakow, Lille Métropole-Roubaix, Rotterdam** and **Stockholm**).

Stockholm encourages entrepreneurship programmes in primary and secondary schools: with the involvement of local businesses, pupils experience how to run a business²².

In **Roubaix**, 18 new businesses were started by young people in 2009, with help of the Local Mission²³, which provided assistance and financial support of about €10,000 per project.

¹⁹ ADICE: Association for the Development of Initiatives and European Citizenship.

²⁰ Through the community planning method involving all stakeholders (municipality, service providers, NGOs, research institutions and service users) in discussion groups to plan, design and budget for new social services.

²¹ DAAD Rotterdam is a service centre for employers made up of the business community, municipality and job centre, working to better match labour demand and supply: www.daadwerkt.nl.

²² The city's Education department works together with schools and local businesses, supported by the Young Enterprise organisation. For more information (in Swedish), including short films: www.ungforetagsamhet.se.

²³ The local mission provides public services for the active inclusion of young people in the field of employment, social care and citizen participation.

4 What next? Trends for the future

A number of discussions are taking place at city level and plans are being developed to improve the active inclusion of young people.

Better integrated approaches for youth policies

Some cities are improving the integration of their local partnerships for youth inclusion as a way to improve programme effectiveness (**Copenhagen, Lille Métropole-Roubaix** and **Stockholm**).

Copenhagen is working on a strategy to include young people in education and employment. It targets all levels of education, including kindergartens, and works on improving the transition between different levels of education and facilitating the move from education to employment. The aim is also to support early intervention in the event a student is likely to drop out of school.

Birmingham is in the process of establishing a local partnership between two areas of service provision for young people (14-19 year olds and 19-26 year olds). This would improve social inclusion programmes at city level for the two age groups. Moreover, as part of the city's new Employment and Skill's Action Plan,²⁴ all employment and training services will be integrated.

Better linking training services with labour market needs

Several cities plan to improve the provision of education and training in order to better match young people's skills with labour market demands (**Birmingham, Krakow, Lille Métropole-Roubaix, Rotterdam** and **Sofia**).

The city of **Rotterdam** is planning to better match labour demand with young job seekers in sectors of economic growth such as logistics, health and care, and creative industries. They will do this through consultations with businesses, economic forecasting and supporting job centres to develop better links between job seekers, potential employers and educational institutions.

Lille Métropole-Roubaix reported that in the Nord-Pas de Calais Region, a new pact for the employment of young people is about to be launched (PACTE). The pact aims to better match education and training with the needs of the labour market. The pact is based on increased cooperation between local and regional authorities and businesses. It should identify growing economic sectors, as well as increase lifelong learning opportunities, by helping more people to access training, regardless of their employment status, age or level of education.

²⁴ See 'The Active Inclusion of Young People - Birmingham: <http://bit.ly/oF6Uas>.



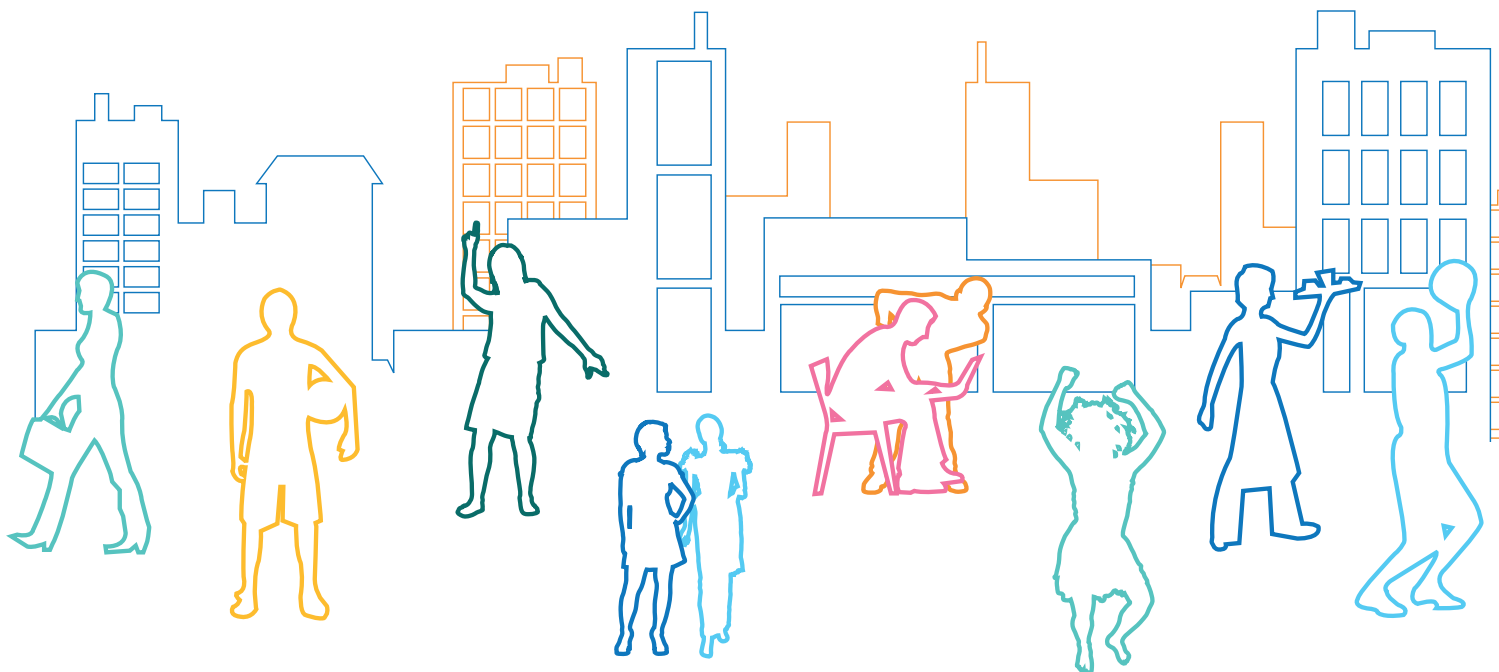
Conclusions

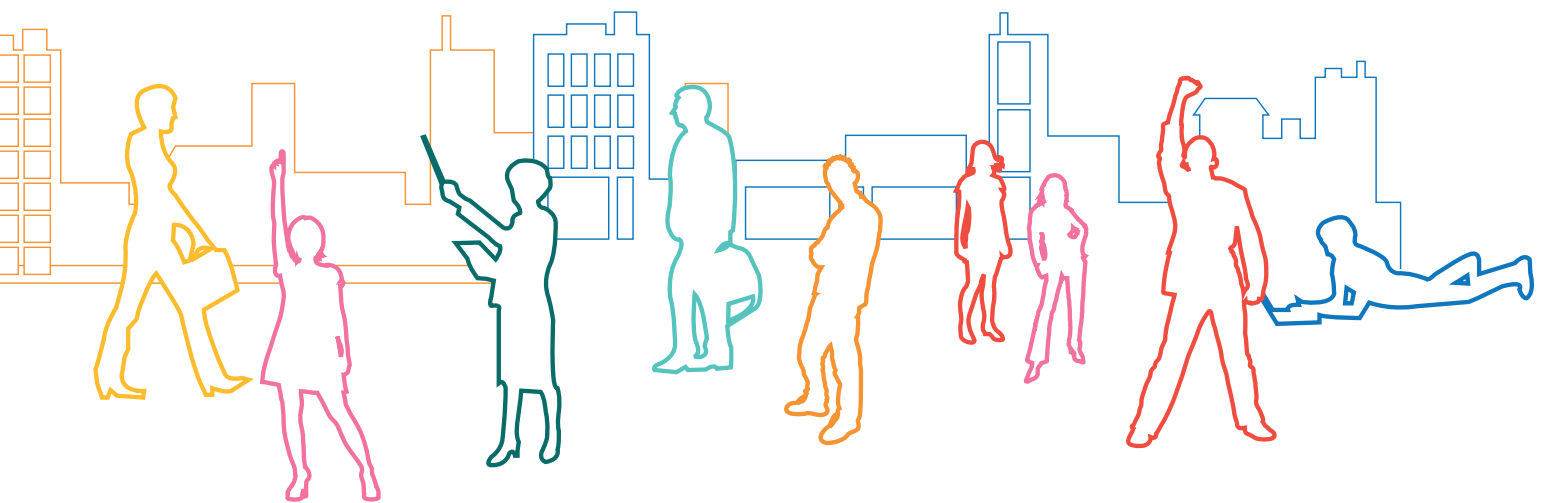
The rising number of young people in Europe who are unemployed and at risk of social exclusion calls for clear actions and coordination of efforts between the different levels of government, NGOs, education and training providers and the business community. Cities, being the level of government closest to young people, have a crucial role to play in ensuring that young people's skills and potential are harnessed and that young people can use their talents to make a positive contribution to society.

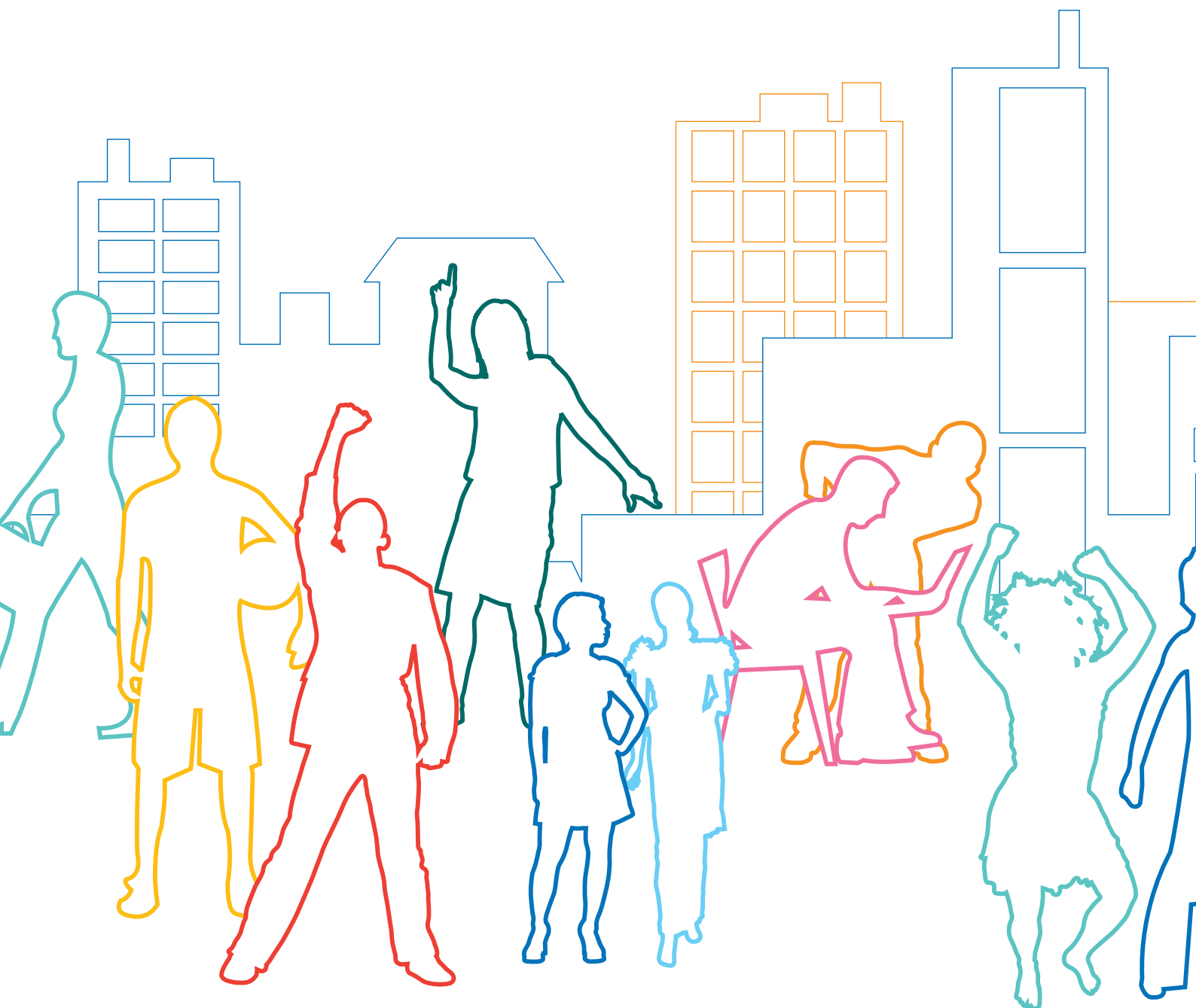
This report identifies a number of challenges that cities are facing in promoting the active inclusion of young people on the ground, such as the rising number of young people who are unemployed and at risk of social exclusion. Besides this, city administrators have pointed out that national employment and youth policies do not always allow for the flexibility necessary to adapt policy and programmes to the complex and specific needs that materialise at city level. Furthermore, it is undeniable that budget cuts in public administrations are threatening the provision of quality social services and the delivery of projects for youth employment.

However, this report has also showed that cities can help to improve the socio-economic situation of young people and make a difference in their lives. This is done by implementing specific projects and programmes for the active inclusion of youth and by promoting coordination and the creation of synergies with other stakeholders, such as NGOs, education providers and businesses. It is clear that cities can act at an early stage to prevent social exclusion by preventing school drop out and by facilitating the transition from school to work. They also have a role to play in better linking education and training with labour market demands, promoting youth entrepreneurship and strengthening employment and inclusion services. By working with NGOs and the business community, local administrations are also able to provide individual and targeted support to young people facing multiple and complex disadvantages.

Finally, local administrations' commitment to the active inclusion of young people is also demonstrated by cities' plans to continue providing integrated services, improving policy coordination, as well as creating more effective links between education, training and the labour market.







Cities for Active Inclusion is a dynamic network of nine European cities – Birmingham, Bologna, Brno, Copenhagen, Krakow, Lille Métropole - Roubaix, Rotterdam, Sofia and Stockholm – each with a local authority observatory (LAO) within its administration. Their aim is to share information, promote mutual learning and carry out research on the implementation of active inclusion strategies at the local level.

The observatories are coordinated by EUROCITIES, the network of major cities in Europe, and supported by a partnership between the European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion) and EUROCITIES.