



**SKILL GAP ANALYSIS ON CAPACITY  
OF YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS AND IDENTIFYING KNOWLEDGE  
REQUIRED FOR YOUTH PROFESSIONAL REALIZATION**

**Countries' analysis**



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CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS  
Sofia, 2020



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## BULGARIA

### Introduction

Youth unemployment levels and all the challenges faced by different groups of young people are becoming a top priority at European, national and regional level. Various institutions in the country are working on the introduction of measures and the implementation of projects that will contribute to overcoming them. One of the areas in which special efforts are envisaged are the youth organizations and formations. This emphasizes the capacity and opportunities of young people, and their willingness to be involved and involved in the field of youth work.

In this report, key indicators for young people are included. Responsible bodies and institutions for dealing with the challenge have been identified, and working and non-working mechanisms and measures in this direction have been noted, based on which recommendations for future actions should be made.

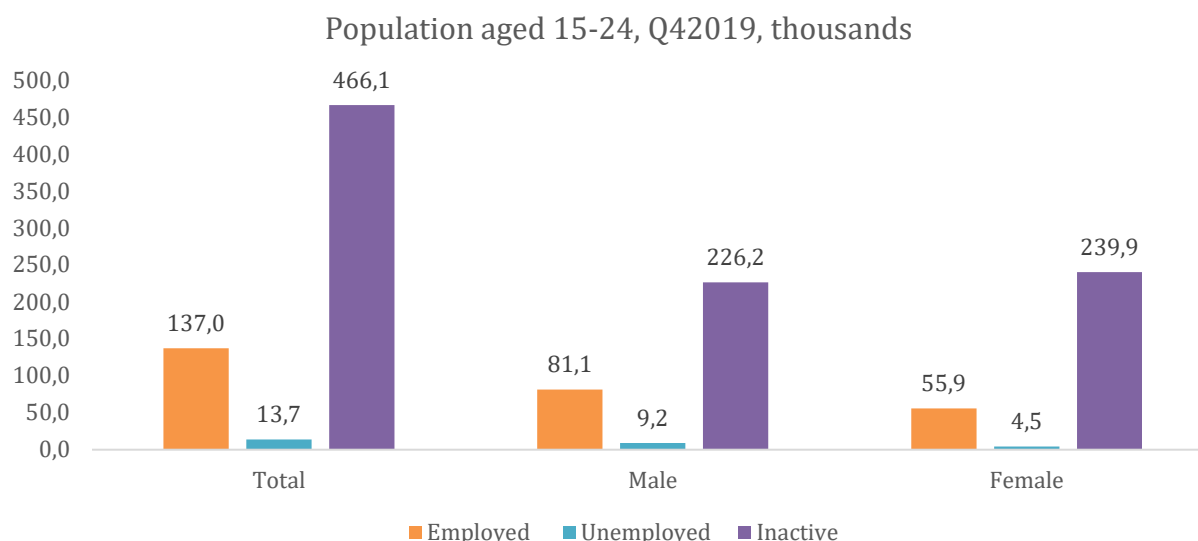
### Description of economic situation of the country and key features of labour market with focus on youth employment/ unemployment in the country

#### **a. Key trends in youth employment/ unemployment**

The labour force status of young people falls into one of the following three categories: employed, unemployed and inactive. In the last quarter of 2019, 137 thousand of young people aged 15-24 are employed, while 13,7 thousand are unemployed. The highest number of young people in the age group 15-24 are inactive – 466.1 thousand.

Here it is important to note the specifics of this age group and of the definition of “inactive”. According to the International Labour Organization people outside the labour force are those that are neither employed, nor unemployed. Thus, the group of inactive people includes those young people that are still studying.



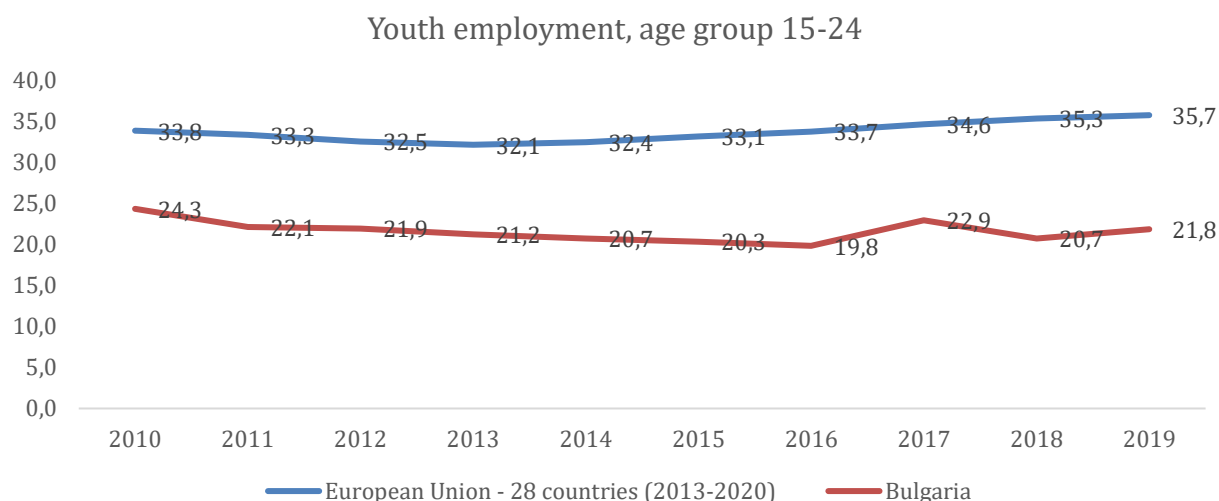


Source: Eurostat

### Youth employment

The employment rate of persons aged 15-24 in 2019 is 21.8%. In the period 2010-2016 there is a decrease in the employment rate of this age group. The employment rate reaches the highest value in 2017 – 22.9%.

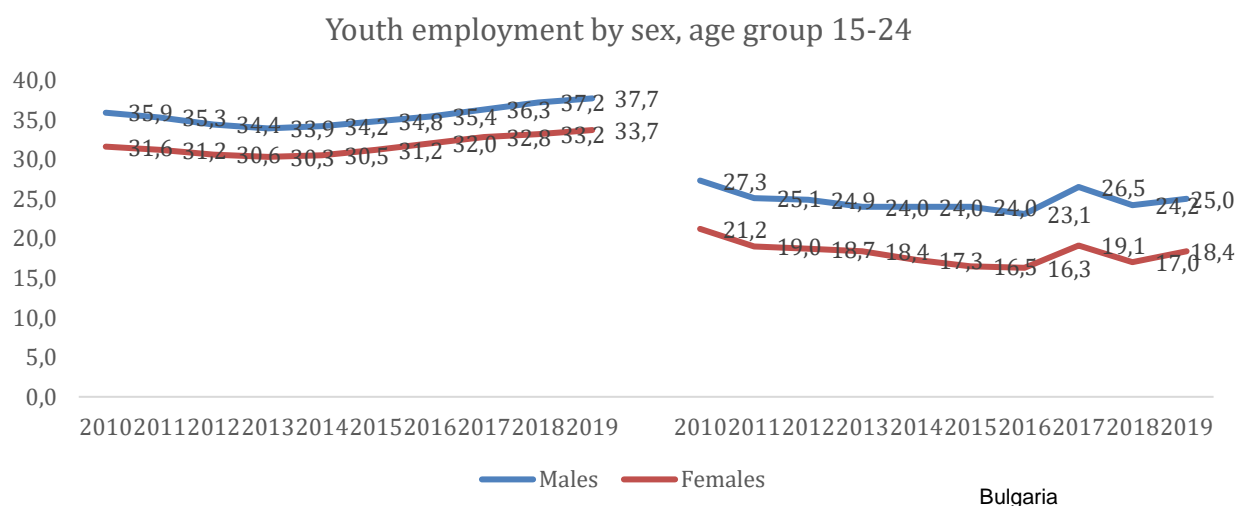
Bulgaria has lower employment rate of young people in the age group 15-24 compared to EU. In 2019 the youth employment of this group in EU is 35,7%, which is 13,9 p.p. higher than the value of the indicator for Bulgaria. Another tendency in the observed period is that while the employment rate in EU in 2019 has increased with 1,9 p.p. compared to 2010, in Bulgaria it shows decrease of 2,5 p.p. compared to 2010.



Source: Eurostat

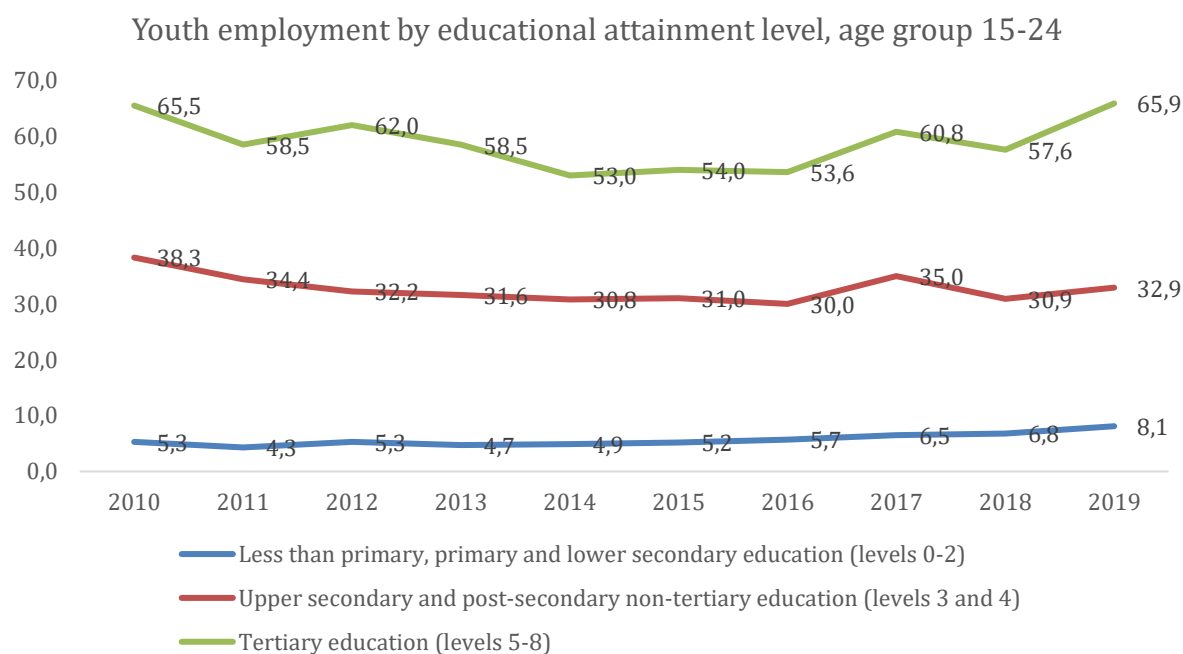
The employment rate for men is higher than for women. In 2019 the employment rate for men is 25% and for women – 18.4%. There is a similar tendency on EU level, where the employment rate for men in the age group is 37.7% and for women- 33.7%

Source: Eurostat



Source: Eurostat

Young people in the age group 15-24 with tertiary education have the highest employment rate. In 2019 the employment rate in this group is 65.9%. Although there are some periods of decrease in the employment rate of this group, in 2019 it has almost the same value as in 2010. The high share of the employed in this group can be explained by the fact that the longer time spent in education develops more the qualities and skills of young people, which in turn allows them to make a smoother transition to employment. The share of the employed among young people in the age group 15-24 with secondary education is 32.9%, and that of young people with lower education – 8.1%. While the employment rate of young people with secondary education shows decrease of 5.4 p.p. in 2019 compared to 2010, the employment rate of young people with lower education has increase with 2.8 p.p. in 2019 compared to 2010.



Source: Eurostat

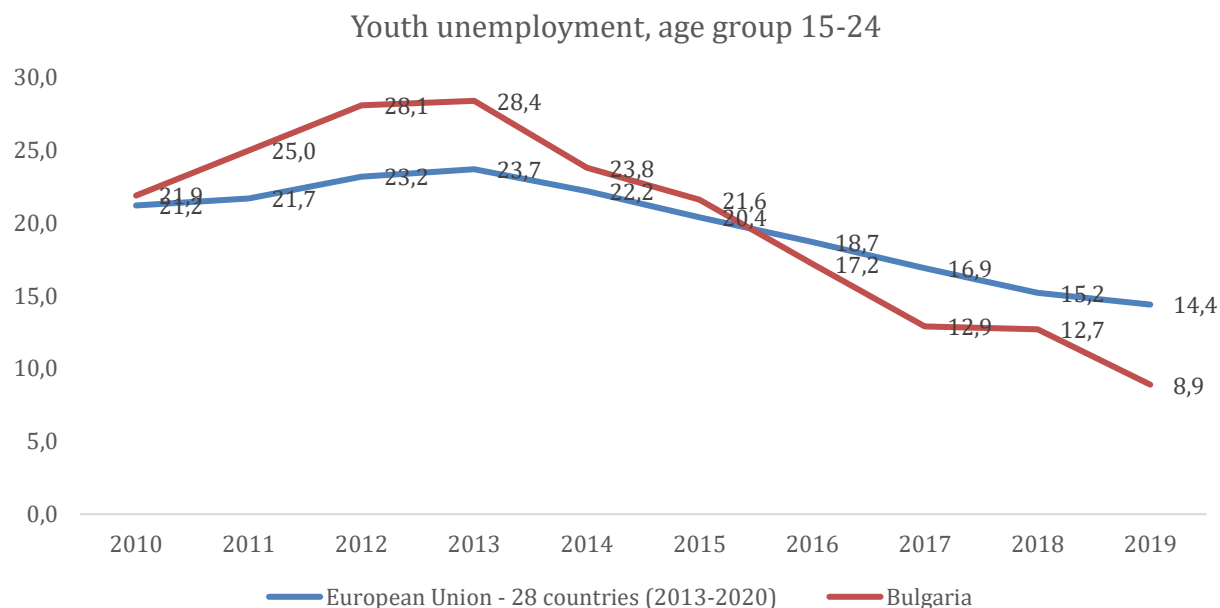
### Youth unemployment

According to Eurostat the unemployment rate for young people aged 15-24 is the main indicator for youth unemployment. The unemployment rate is the number of the unemployed in the age group divided by the total number of people in the labor market (employed plus unemployed) in the age group.

However, this rate does not take into account the fact that not every young person is in the labor market. This is why Eurostat proposes second indicator for youth unemployment – youth unemployment ratio. The youth unemployment ratio is the percentage of unemployed young people compared to the total population of that age group (not only the active, but also the inactive such as students).

According to Eurostat data, from 2010 to 2013 there is a steady trend in the increase in the share of unemployed young people in the age group 15-24. After 2013 there is a process of decrease in the share of unemployed youth. In 2019 the share of unemployed young people aged 15-24 is 8.9%, which is with 13 p.p. lower than 2010.

Until 2015, the share of unemployed young people in Bulgaria is higher than this of EU. After 2016 the share of unemployed young people in Bulgaria decreases and is lower than the this of EU. In 2019 the share of unemployed people aged 15-24 in Bulgaria is with 5.5 p.p. lower than the share of unemployed youth in EU.

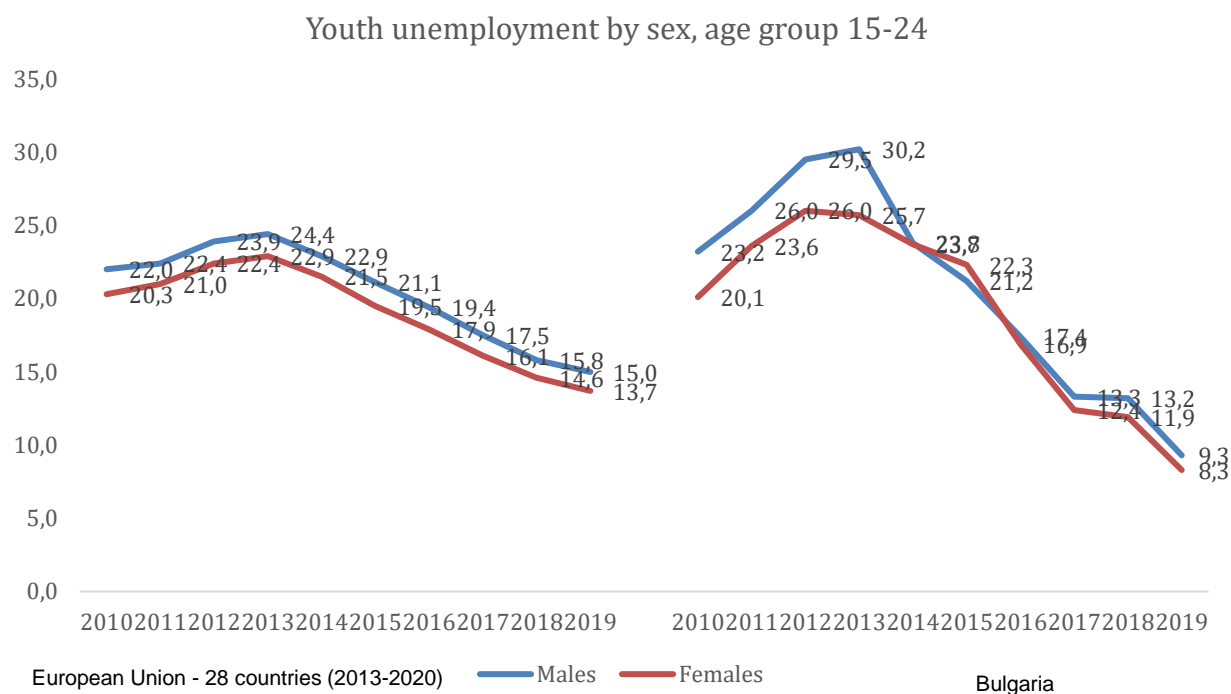


Source: Eurostat

The unemployment rate for men is higher than for women. The share of unemployed young men is higher than the share of unemployed young women almost throughout the whole observed period. An exception to this trend is 2015, when there is a higher unemployment

rate among women. In 2019 the share of unemployed young men is 9.3% and that of young women is 8.3%.

On EU level the tendency of high unemployment rate among men is also observed. In 2019 the unemployment rate of men aged 15-24 in EU is 15%, while for the women it is 13.7%.

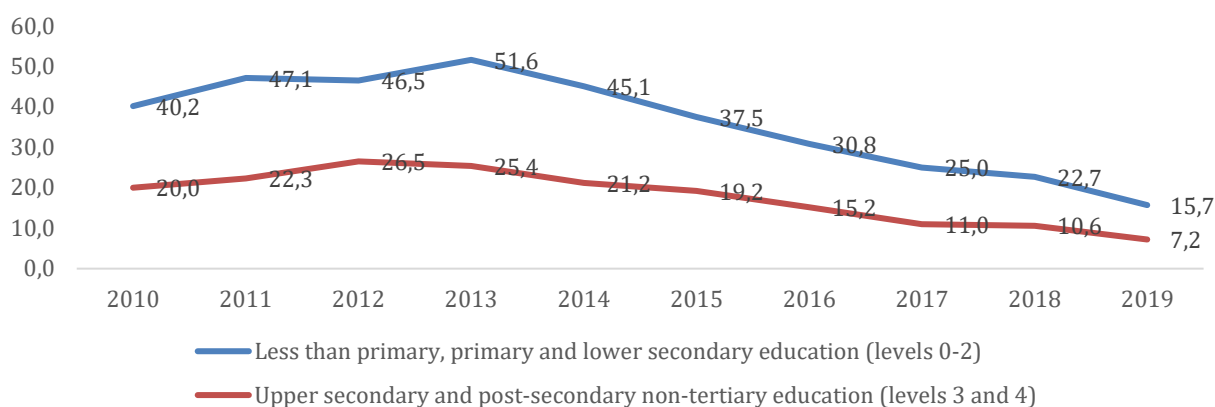


Source: Eurostat

The data for youth unemployment by educational attainment level shows that the young people with less than primary, primary and lower secondary education are the most vulnerable group. The unemployment rate among this group in 2019 is 15.7%. It is important to note that the unemployment rate in this group shows significant decrease since 2010. In 2019 the share of unemployed young people aged 15-24 with less than primary, primary and lower secondary education is with 24.5 p.p. lower compared to 2010.

The share of the unemployed among young people with secondary education is significantly lower - 7.2% in 2019. The unemployment rate in this group also shows decrease during the observed period and in 2019 is with 12.8 p.p. lower compared to 2010.

Youth unemployment by educational attainment level, age group 15-24

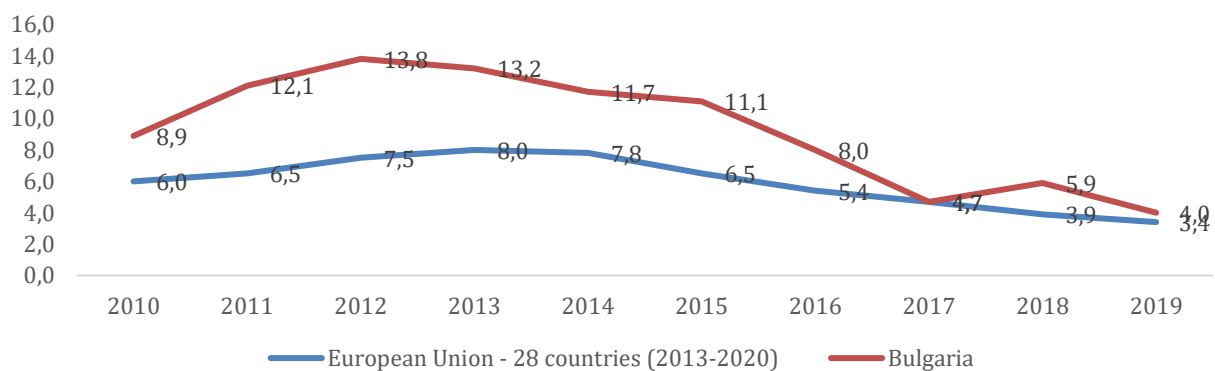


Source: Eurostat

In the period 2010-2012 there is an increase in the share of long-term unemployed young people aged 15-24. In 2012, 13.8% of young people aged 15-24 are long-term unemployed. After 2013 there is a process of reducing the share of long-term unemployed young people, reaching their lowest value in 2019 - 4.0%. The share of long-term unemployed young people in the age group 15-24 in 2019 is with 4.9 lower compared to 2010.

During the whole observed period Bulgaria has higher share of long-term unemployed young people compared to EU.

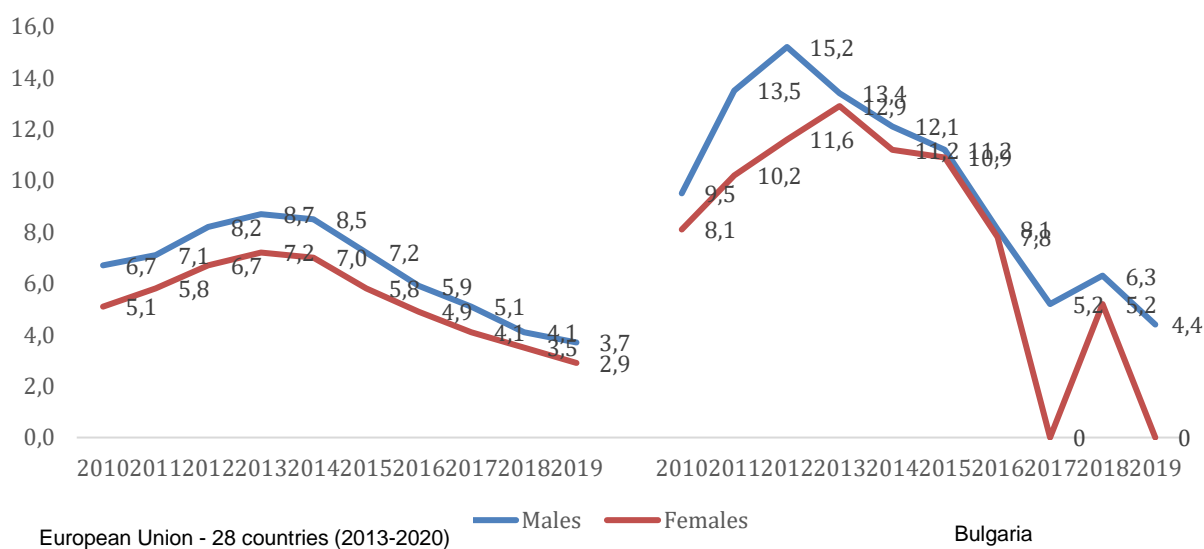
Youth long-term unemployment rate (12 months or longer), age group 15-24



Source: Eurostat

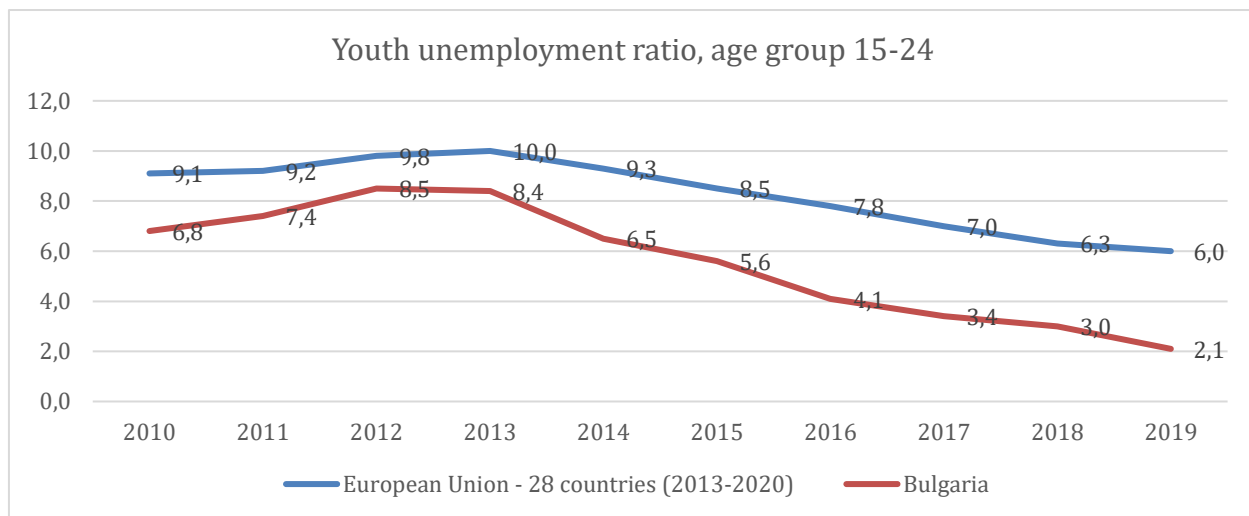
The share of long-term unemployed youth aged 15-24 years for men is higher than for women. In 2018, the share of long-term unemployed men aged 15-24 is 6.3 % and that of women is 4.4%. In both groups there is a decrease compared to 2010. On EU level the tendency for higher share of long-term unemployed men is also present.

Youth long-term unemployment rate by sex (12 months or longer),  
age group 15-24



Source: Eurostat

The youth unemployment ratio in 2019 is 2.1%. This value is lower than the EU average for 2019 - 6%. In the period 2010-2012 there is an increase in the youth unemployment ratio, but after 2013 there is a trend of decreasing. In 2019 it is 4.7 p.p. lower compared to 2010. For comparison on EU level the youth unemployment ratio in 2019 is 3.1 p.p. lower compared to 2010.



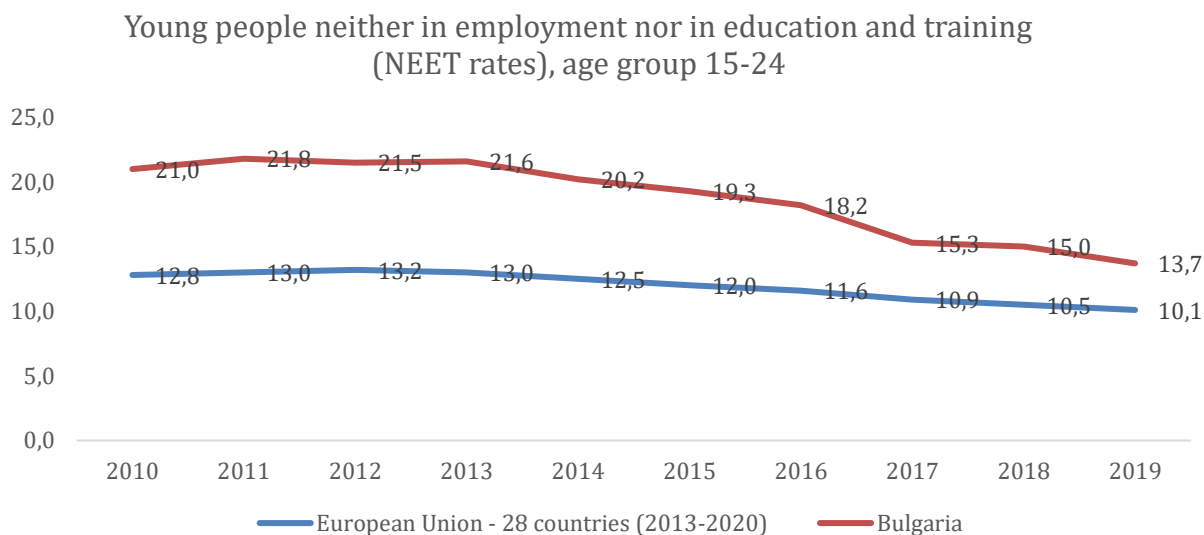
Source: Eurostat

### Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex, age and labour status (NEET rates)

NEETs are defined as young people who do not work, do not participate in the formal education system, and are not included in training. This definition includes: unemployed persons not participating in any education and training, as well as inactive persons not participating in education and training.

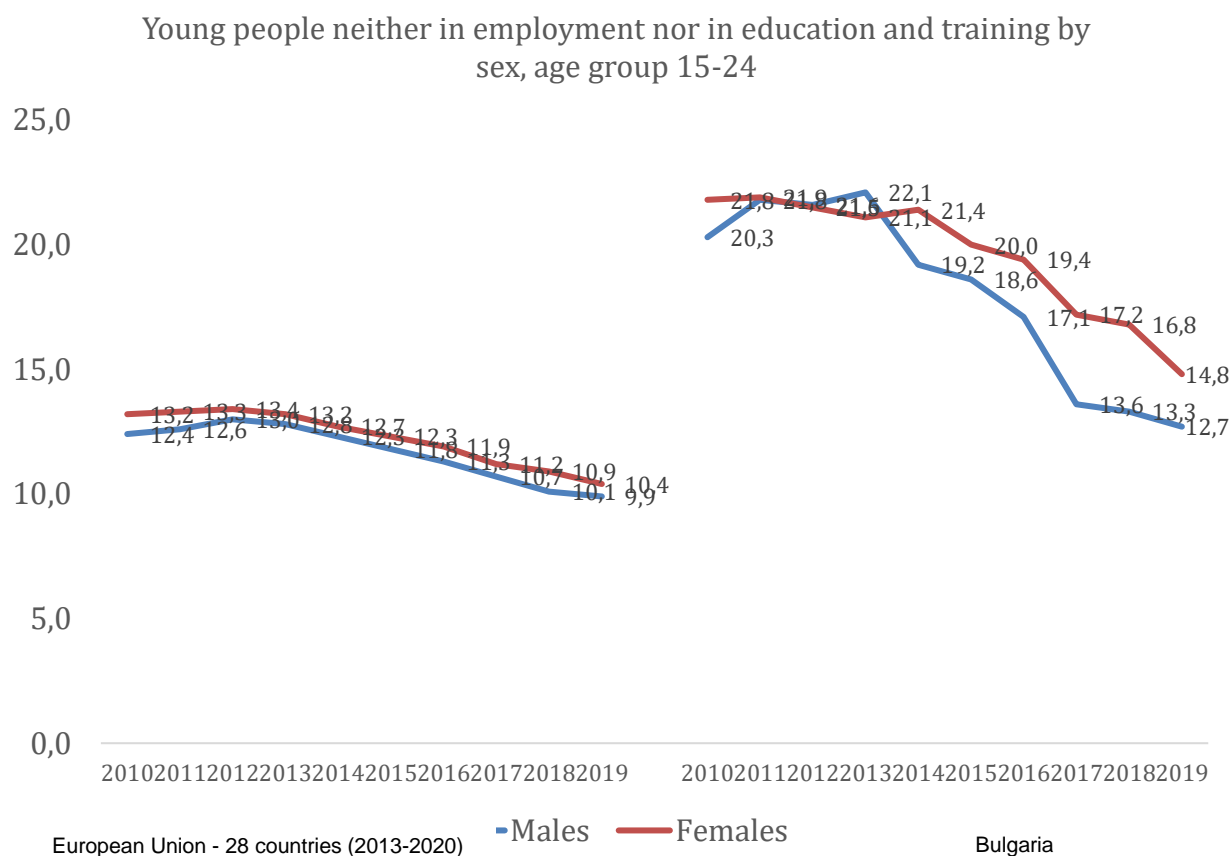
After 2013 there is decrease in the share of young people neither in employment nor in education and training. The share of NEETs aged 15-24 in 2019 is 13.7%, which is 7.3 p.p. lower compared to 2010.





Source: Eurostat

The share of young people neither in employment nor in education and training for men is lower than for women, 12.7% and 14.8% respectively in 2019. On EU level the share of NEETs for men is also higher compared to women.



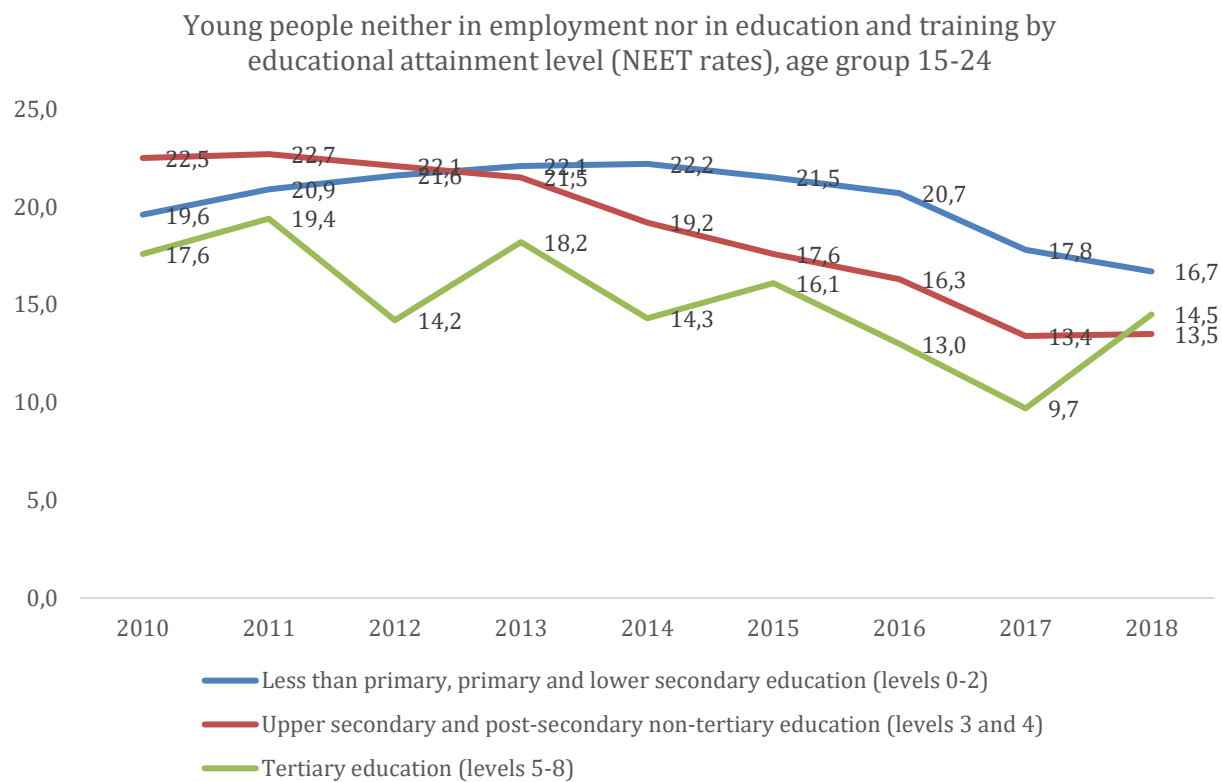
Source: Eurostat

The highest share of young people neither in employment nor in education and training aged 15-24 is observed among people with less than primary, primary and lower secondary education – 16.7% in 2018. In the period 2010-2014 there is an increase in the share of NEETs in this group, with the highest value reached in 2014 – 22.5%. After this peak, the share of NEETs in this group starts to decrease and in 2018 it is with 2.9 p.p. lower compared to 2010.

In 2018, the share of NEETs among young people aged 15-24 with secondary education is 13.5%. In the observed period, there is a tendency of decreasing in the share of NEETs in this group and in 2018 it is with 9 p.p. lower compared to 2010.

The share of NEETs among young people aged 15-24 with tertiary education in 2018 is 14.5%. During the observed period there are fluctuations in the share of NEETs in this group and in 2018 this share is with 3.1 p.p. lower compared to 2010.

Thus, people with a low level of education are twice as likely to be neither in employment nor in education and training than people with a high level of completed education.

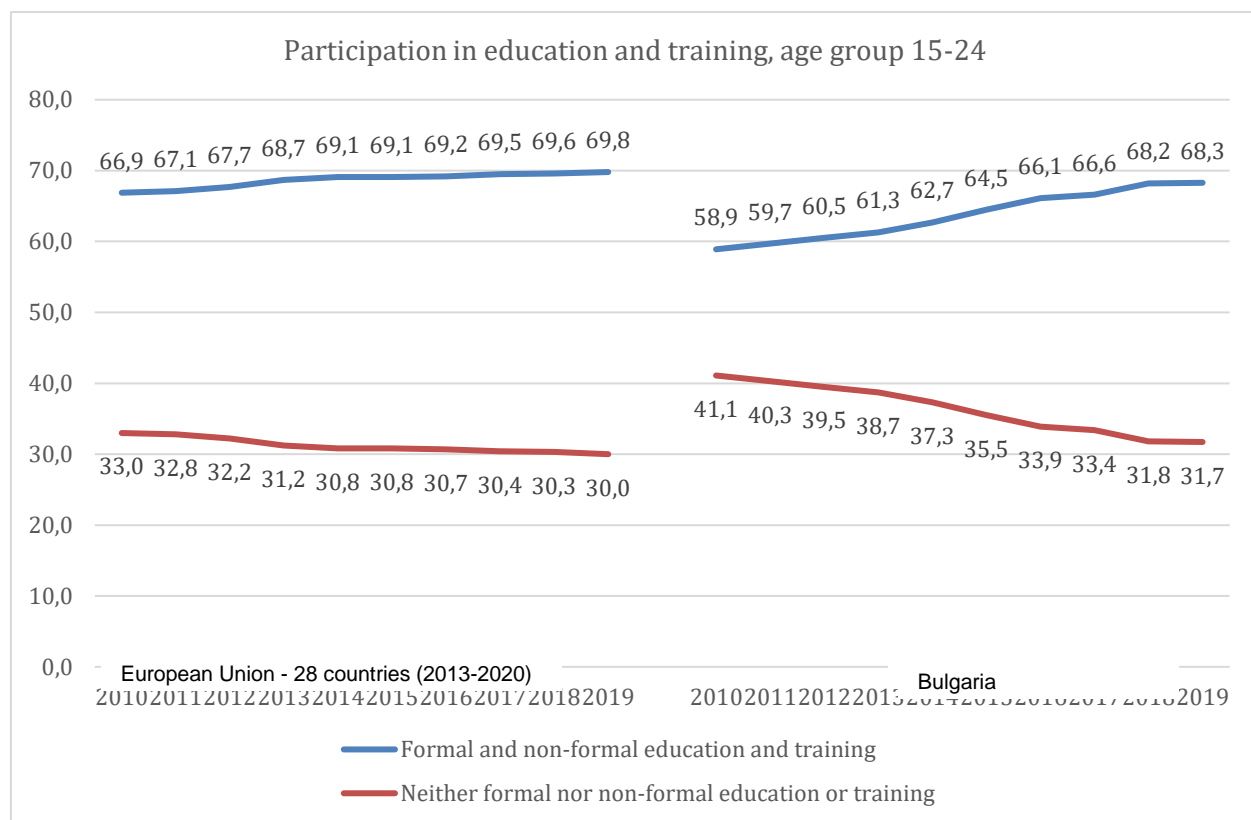


Source: Eurostat

### Participation in education and in the labor market

There is a tendency of increase in the share of young people aged 15-24 participating in formal and non-formal education and training. In 2010, 58.9% of young people aged 15-24 participate in formal and non-formal education and training, while in 2019 this share is 68.3%. Accordingly, the share of young people who are not participating in either formal or non-formal education decreases from 41.1% in 2010 to 31.7% in 2018.

There is a similar tendency of increasing the share of young people aged 15-24 participating in formal and non-formal education in EU. However, while the increase on EU level in 2019 is 2.9 p.p. compared to 2010, in Bulgaria the share of those young people has increased with 9.4 p.p. compared to EU.



Source: Eurostat

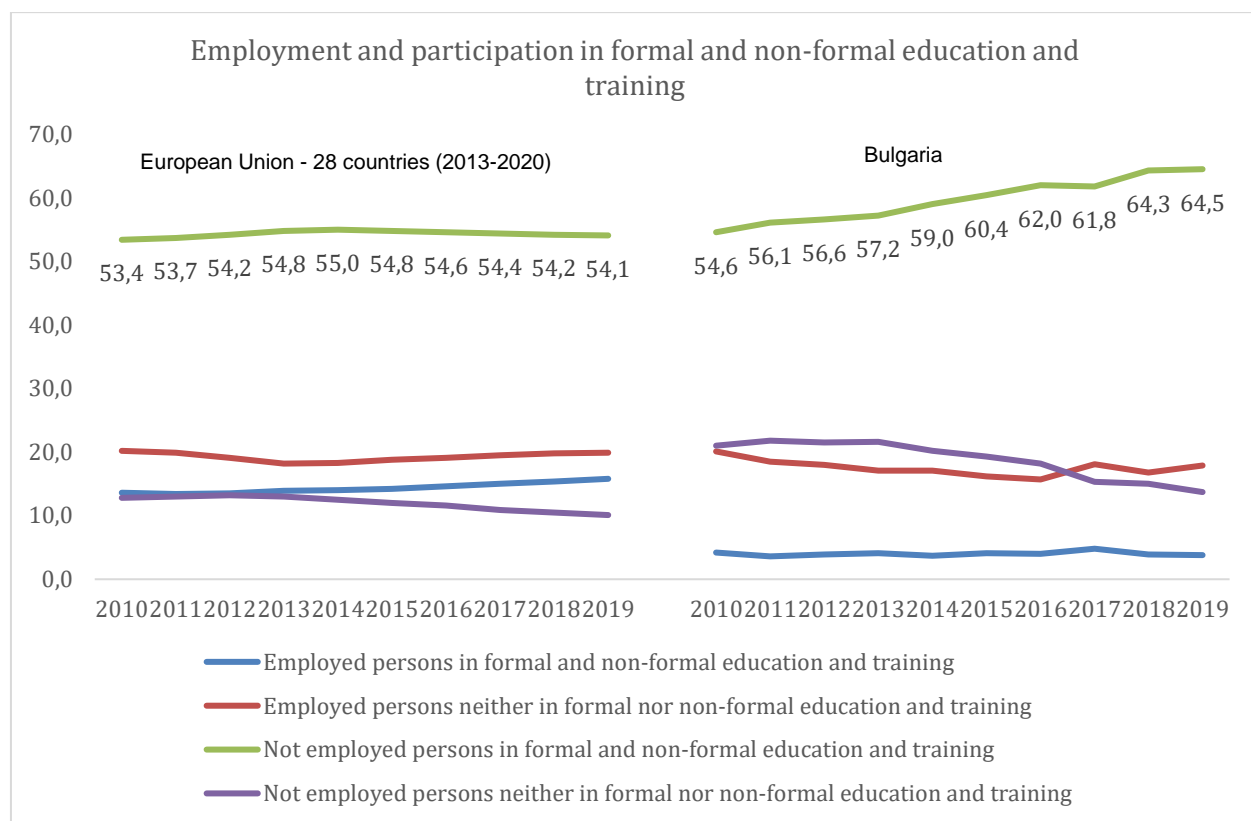
The highest share of young people aged 15-24 in 2019 are not employed, but participating in formal and non-formal education and training – 64.5%. The share of this group of young people in EU is lower – 54.1%. While in EU the share of young people that are not employed, but participating in formal and non-formal education and training increases with only 0.7 p.p. compared to 2010, in Bulgaria the increase in 2019 is 9.9 p.p. compared to 2010.

The share of young people in the age group 15-24 that are not employed and are not enrolled in formal and non-formal education and training in 2019 is 13.7%. This is the group of the so-called NEETs. Despite the increase in the share of these young people in the period 2010-2013, there is then a process of reducing the share of young people who are not working and not enrolled in education or training and their share reaches 13.7% in 2019, which marks a decrease of 7.3 p.p. compared to 2010. The share of NEETs in Bulgaria in 2019 is higher compared to EU average. On EU level there is also a tendency for decrease in the share of NEETs since 2013.

17.9% of young people aged 15-24 in 2019 are employed, but do not participate in formal and non-formal education. In the observed period 2010-2019 there is decrease in the share of this young people and in 2019 their share is with 2.2 p.p. compared to 2010.

The share of young people aged 15-24 in 2019 are employed, but do not participate in formal and non-formal education in Bulgaria is lower than the EU average. In 2019 the share of this young people in EU is 19.9% and it is with 0.3 p.p. lower compared to 2010.

Only 3.8% of young people aged 15-24 combine employment and education. For comparison the share of this group on EU level in 2019 is 15.8%.



Source: Eurostat

## b. The circumstances causing the youth unemployment;

Taking into account the key trends in the labor market participation of young people up to 24 years of age, some factors can be identified that adversely affect the ability of young people to enter the labor market.

### ● Lack of experience

The first cause of unemployment that can be identified is lack of experience. It is often related to lack of established work habits and basic professional skills, which can result in inability to perform everyday work tasks.

### ● Lack of qualifications

Lack of specific qualifications needed by employers is another obstacle that young people can face in their transition from education to employment. Many job positions require specific qualifications on the part of the employees, which are crucial in performing everyday work tasks. Employers may not be willing to hire young people without experience or qualifications because it will mean that they will have to devote certain time and resources to train them.

### ● Educational attainment level

One of the main factors that influence the realization of young people in the labor market is the degree of education completed. In 2019 only 8.1% of young people with less than primary, primary and lower secondary education aged 15-24 are employed. At the same time, the share of unemployed young people in this group is highest - 15.7%. In 2019, the percentage of NEETs for young people aged 15-29 is 16.7% among people with low educational attainment. These data indicate a greater vulnerability of young people with lower education.

When talking about the impact of education on the transition of young people to the labor market is important to point out that the different types of secondary education may have different outcomes. Young people who have completed secondary general education (without continuing to higher education) can be in more vulnerable position compared to those who have completed secondary vocational education. Unlike students enrolled in vocational programs who receive training in specific professions, secondary general school graduates are less preferred by employers, precisely because of the lack of more specific specialization and professional skills.

### ● Lack of information about vacancies

Having information about various opportunities for employment is of crucial importance. Some young people may not be able to access such information (either of lack of necessary skills to look for such opportunities online or because of lack of knowledge about where to search for such information), while others may simply refuse to do so.

### ● Unrealistic expectations

Some young people can have realistic expectations regarding their employment opportunities after graduation. These unrealistic expectations can be concerning the job position or the remuneration. Often after graduating young people would want to start working at higher positions and with higher salaries, thus they are prone to refusing job they think are not “suitable” or “good enough” for them.

- **Constrained opportunities due to location**

Another factor that can influence the realization of young people in the labor market is the place of living - urban or rural areas. People living in villages or remote areas are more vulnerable in the labor market than people living in larger cities. The main reason for this is the lack or limited choice of job opportunities in villages and remote areas.

- **Constrained opportunities due to disability**

Young people with disabilities may also be in a less privileged position in the labor market than other young people. One of the obstacles to including this group in the labor market is the lack of an environment tailored to their needs. Another obstacle can be employers' attitudes towards hiring people with disabilities.

- **Discrimination due to ethnicity**

Young people from marginalized groups (eg minorities) are also one of the more vulnerable groups in the labor market. The main obstacle to this group is the prejudices and attitudes of the general public (including employers) towards them.

- **Overall state of economy**

The overall state of economy and lack of demand/vacancies can have serious impact on youth unemployment. All of the above mentioned circumstances make young people one of the most vulnerable groups on the labor market. If the economy is in bad state employers may not be willing to hire young people but rather more experienced ones.

Diagnostics on required skills of young people for sustainable employment opportunities considering innovation and digital society, review on gap of policies and capacity building of youth organizations

- a. labour market requirements

Having the necessary skills and qualities is of crucial importance for smooth transition from education into labor market and sustainable employment. With the spread of internet and information and communication technologies, there are changes in the work tasks and the specific skills required by the labour market.

The topic of the new skills needed in the digital society has been studied by different organizations.

In OECD Skills Outlook 2019<sup>1</sup> is presented analysis of skills for a digital society. Considering the fact that internet is an inseparable part not only of everyday life, but also everyday life, the analysis presents different types of internet usage that are connected to different set of skills. Internet usage is not only important for implementing different work tasks that are changing more and more and requiring using of different technologies, but also can play a crucial role in finding employment. Online searching for jobs in digital society is certainly becoming one of the main channels for finding suitable employment.

The OECD analysis<sup>2</sup> presents four types of internet usage:

- 1/ Diversified and complex use
- 2/ Diversified but simple use
- 3/ Use for practical reasons
- 4/ Use for information and communication

The main differences between the outlined profiles is the number and range of activities performed online. While the more diversified use of internet includes different complex activities such as e-financing and learning, the last category of internet usage is concentrated mainly on online communication and searching for information. According to the analysis these different profiles of internet usage are related to different skills sets.

Relying on this analysis we can outline certain skills that can lead to more diversified and complex use of internet and as such can be seen as skills that can provide sustainable employment in the digital society:

- literacy and numeracy skills
- problem-solving skills in technology-rich environments
- cognitive and socio-emotional skills
- high-level ICT skills

Although some of these skills may sound largely known and may refer not only to the digital society, they can lead to more complex use of internet and all its resources and different

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/df80bc12-en.pdf?expires=1588597359&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=CD6CE6F5956069246B31704E0EBC1820>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/df80bc12-en.pdf?expires=1588597359&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=CD6CE6F5956069246B31704E0EBC1820>



technologies, which is certainly needed for the new transformed job positions in the age of technology.

In their report “How to develop the skills of 21st century in class?”<sup>3</sup>, Teach for Bulgaria presents 13 skills that should be developed in the school curriculum and that can help students achieve better results both in school and later on in life. The presented skills are the following:

- **reading literacy** - this skill goes beyond the ability to read text, but rather to understand it and be able to use it for different purposes. The reading literacy skills include the ability to retrieve information from a text, to summarize and analyze information from a text, understand and assess information from a text.
- **mathematical literacy** - this skill refers to the ability to be able to use mathematical approach and logic for problem-solving in different contexts. The mathematical literacy skills include mathematical thinking, translating a real situation into mathematical language and vice versa, solving mathematical problem, analyzing, assessing the solving of the problem.
- **scientific literacy** - this skill includes the ability to formulate scientific question, conducting research, formulating hypothesis, testing the hypothesis, formulating conclusions, communication of results
- **emotional intelligence** - this skill refers to the ability to recognize and manage your emotions and the emotions of those around you. The emotional intelligence includes recognizing emotions, connecting certain emotions to certain actions, managing emotions, reflection.
- **skills for personal development** - these skills include self-knowledge, personal effectiveness, personal motivation, personal presentation, reflection.
- **learning skills** - these skills include learning styles, keeping notes and organizing information, finding and reading information, concentration, memorizing and recalling information, time management, motivation to learn, management of the learning environment outside school, reflection on the goal and the problem-solving process, reflecting on yourself, reflecting on knowledge.
- **critical thinking** - this skill refers to the ability to analyze, synthesize, evaluate and apply information gathered through observation, experience, reflection in order to solve problems. The critical thinking includes approaching the problem, systematic

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<sup>3</sup> <https://prepodavame.bg/>

thinking, evaluate arguments / possible solutions, formulating decision/ conclusion, review of the results.

- **teamwork** - this skill includes organization of the process, effective operation and time management, presentation and defense, reflection.
- **communication skills** - this skill refers to the ability to convey clearly and intelligibly ideas, thoughts, feelings and information both orally and in writing, visually and non-verbally. Communication skills include articulating ideas and thoughts clearly and effectively, listening to understand meaning, communication to achieve different goals in different environments.
- **civic activity** - this skill includes knowing and explaining basic functions and mechanisms of local, state and international institutions, knowing basic human and civil rights and obligations, expressing reasoned and an informed position on issues of public importance, expressing an active civil position and taking action to solve problems.
- **creativity** - this skill includes researching specific topic, generating ideas, grouping of ideas according to a certain criterion, creation / testing of the idea (product), reflection/ assessment.
- **financial literacy** - this skill refers to the ability to make informed financial decisions with a clear awareness of the long-term effects we create for both our own well-being and the general public. Financial literacy includes planning of expenses and related revenues, making informed financial decisions, investment instruments and entrepreneurship, influence of personal financial choices at the macro level.
- **digital literacy** - this skill includes the following six main components - finding information, organizing information, information processing, creativity in digital environment, sharing and communication, security, identity and work ethics.

Some of the skills presented in this analysis are part of the survey<sup>4</sup> among employers conducted in 2019. One of the purposes of this survey is to evaluate which of the skills are important for the employers and how do they assess this skill in the workforce. The results of the survey are presented in the third section of this report - ***Skills based profiling and matching - identification of the missing competencies and skills, training needs analysis.***

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<sup>4</sup> [http://cra-bg.org/sites/default/files/uploads/files/opdu/otchet\\_deynost1\\_globulrisurch\\_03\\_04\\_2019.pdf](http://cra-bg.org/sites/default/files/uploads/files/opdu/otchet_deynost1_globulrisurch_03_04_2019.pdf)

#### b. impact of youth organizations

At national level, youth unemployment policies and the career opportunities of young people are implemented through specially designed measures and interventions managed by The Ministry of youth and sports, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (through the Employment Agency), The Ministry of Education and Science, and other institutions, such as the Ministry of Health, the Agency for Social Assistance, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, which also have some responsibilities in formulating and implementing policies.

One of the main documents in this regard is the developed National Plan for the implementation of the European Youth Guarantee. The cited plan outlines the implementation of the Youth Guarantee through the national measure adopted for this purpose. In general, the measure provides for every young person between the ages of 15 and 24 to receive an appropriate offer for employment, continuation of education, apprenticeship or internship within 4 months after being unemployed or leaving the formal education system.

The second strategic document of major importance for the policy in the area is the National Youth Strategy for the period 2012-2020, as well as the program through which it is implemented - the National Youth Program 2016-2020. Part of the goals set out in the strategy directly concerns the implementation of a youth employment policy. These include promoting young people's economic activity and career development, improving access to information and quality services, preventing social exclusion of disadvantaged young people and developing young people in small towns.

Since 2009, the state expenditure on active labour market policy in general has been declining due to budget cuts. As a result, ESF replaced the state budget as the most important source of funding for the most types labour market programs.<sup>5</sup> According to available sources the existing labour market programs addressing youth (regardless of their source of funding), are part of the European Youth Guarantee, i.e. all state and EU-funded programs are part of the European Youth Guarantee.

Most of the labour market programs are coordinated at central level but implemented by private sector employers and municipalities (including municipal enterprises). All the goals and measures set out in the National Plan **are implemented on the basis of a partnership approach**, where interventions are implemented by responsible state institutions, social

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<sup>5</sup> Youth employment policies in Bulgaria, EXCEPT working paper no. 27 May 2018, Maria Jeliaskova, Douhomir Minev, Dragomir Draganov, Veneta Krasteva, Atanas Stoilov

partners, local authorities and youth organizations. The latter are usually involved in conducting an information campaign for the purposes and nature of the National Youth Guarantee and contributing to the identification and activation of young people from different target groups.

Some of the Youth employment policies in the country are focusing on selected interventions:

**“New Workplace”** - The measure aims to encourage employers to hire young unemployed up to 29 years of age by providing support for the investment and labour costs for a period of between 6 and 12 months depending on the creation of new jobs for the target group. It provides opportunities for vocational training and /or training in key competencies of employed young people depending on the needs of the employer. The intended effects are related to increasing the labour demand through providing incentives to employers to hire youth unemployed registered at local employment offices; decreasing youth unemployment; improving the knowledge and skills of young people in accordance to employers’ needs.

Concerning youth involvement there is no publicly available information if young people had participated in the process of designing the measure. However, the effectiveness of the program indicates that the unemployed young people who participated in the operation had the opportunity to improve their vocational skills and to acquire certain key competences. In addition, they gained work experience that hypothetically should facilitate the transition from education to employment or from unemployment to employment and expand their future job opportunities.

The most important incentive for young people participating in the operation was the fact that they gained valuable first work experience in the field of their completed education.

**“Youth employment”** - Main aim of the measure is to increase the competitiveness of young people by providing opportunities for internships or on the job training. Employers who provide internships under the measure's conditions are reimbursed for salaries for income for the main economic activity and qualification group of occupations to which the opened internship position belongs, as well as the health insurance and social security contributions of the young people for a period of 6 months. Employers who provide job training are reimbursed for the remuneration of the individuals hired in the amount of 90% of the minimum wage for the country and the costs of health insurance and social security contributions for a period of six months. If after the internship, the young person remains on the job and signs a permanent employment contract, the employer is additionally reimbursed for the costs of health insurance and social security contributions for another period of six months. In the event that current address of a young person is different from the job location, young people are covered for the travel costs to and from the job during the first month of the internship or training. The intended effects are related to facilitate the transition from

education to employment and to accumulate valuable experience required for filling vacant jobs announced by employers.

Concerning youth involvement there the operation is co-financed by the Human Resources Operational Programme 2014- 2020. Therefore, its design has been adopted by a Programme's Monitoring Committee where non-governmental organizations representing youth are present. On that basis, it might be assumed that they have been involved in the process of planning and measure formulation.

**“Creating employment for young people by providing internship opportunities”** - The program provides an opportunity for young people up to 29 years of age for internships with employers in order to increase the competitiveness of young people. The main purpose of the program is to facilitate the transition from education to employment and to enable the accumulation of valuable initial professional experience required for appointment to vacancies announced by employers.

There are no specific activities planned to include targeted youth actively in designing the programme. The most important incentive for young people participating in the operation was the fact that they gained valuable first work experience in field of their completed education.

**“Programme Career Start”** - The program aims to provide work experience for unemployed young people who have completed secondary or higher education in order to facilitate the transition from education to employment. Intended effects are prevention of disqualification of young people; prevention against ‘brain drain’; providing opportunities for renewal of public administration; providing opportunities for further recruitment of young people to permanent jobs; achieving a flexible combination of knowledge, skills and experience in-line with the requirements of the market economy.

Available data indicate that the most important incentive for young people participating in the program is to gain valuable first-time experience in the specialty / area of completed education. In addition, this practice aims to resolve the problem of lack of professional experience for future job applications. Access to mediation services and institutional support is provided both pre- and post-operatively, most often by youth to youth.

**„Subsidies for employers hiring unemployed youths up to 29 years of age “** - The main aim of the measure is to encourage employers to provide “first job” to unemployed people up to 29 years of age. The intended effects are increasing youth employment and reducing youth unemployment; increasing labour demand and facilitating school-to-work transitions for young people.

**“Promoting the launch of projects for the development of independent business activity”** - The aim of this measure is unemployed individuals who have a clear idea of starting a business to get support in its further development through specialized training and provision of services. The scheme is implemented in three components: Component I – provision of trainings for unemployed persons in entrepreneurial, managerial and business skills. Training is provided through the so-called ‘training vouchers’. The vouchers are securities with a fixed par value and the employment office directorates of the Employment Agency give them directly to the unemployed, who in turn, can choose the training provider by themselves. The training organization supports the unemployed in elaborating a business plan for the further development of the idea underlying the business start-up. Component II – following the successful completion of training, the unemployed individuals establish their own businesses and compete for funding amounting up to EUR 10 000. The funds can be used for salaries of hired personnel, purchase of equipment and for covering other costs related to the first months of the enterprise operations. Component III – within this component are provided consulting services to those who started projects under Component II.

**“First job”** - The intervention provides incentives for employers to hire unemployed young people up to 29 years of age and registered with the employment offices. The purpose of the program is towards to reducing youth unemployment.

There are no specific activities planned in the programme to include targeted youth actively in designing the programme or other way. The mere fact that the scheme was included in the National Plan for implementing the European Youth Guarantee 2014-2020 means that it was judged as promising by the responsible institutions.

Along with that, media reports indicate that business is interested in such schemes, and this is reflected in the announced positions. Thus, the implementation of the scheme is heavily dependent on the needs of the employers.

**National Programme “Activation of inactive people”**- The aim of the programme is to activate and include in the labour market inactive and discouraged persons by motivating them to register at the employment offices and to acquire the right to be included in training and/or employment. Intended effects are related to increasing the labour supply, reducing the share of economically inactive people and increasing the economic activity rate.

**“Career orientation system in secondary education”** - Main aim of the measure is creating an integrated system facilitating labour market entry and realization of young people that have completed their secondary education. This intervention achieves its direct objectives – to create school-based career counselling centers and to provide services to students.



**“Students’ practices”** - The main aim is to improve the quality of the tertiary education and to establish a well-functioning connection between the business organizations and universities. The intended effects are facilitating school-to-work transition of the university students. As the intervention is not intended to produce direct positive employment results, its contribution to lowering youth unemployment is not clear.

**“Development of the network of youth information and consultation centers”** - Main aim of the measure is supporting activities initiated by the youth, supporting youth workers and actions, activation of NEETs. Intended effects are personal development and professional realization of young people and the measure involved youth workers and other professionals directly engaged in providing of services to young people. The type of intervention is focusing on (re-) orientation courses, preparation for training or employment vocational guidance, career counselling. Despite the sustainable growth of the youth centers network, public authorities believe that their capacity should be strengthened further and the quality of the provided services – to be improved. In addition, they should ensure a better coverage of small towns and engaging more local youth to work with their peers.

For the most of the interventions in the field of youth unemployment and career opportunities, there is no specific activities planned to include targeted youth in designing the measures. In the best case, the operations are co-financed by the Human Resources Operational Programme 2014- 2020. Therefore, its design has been adopted by a Programme’s Monitoring Committee where non-governmental organizations representing youth are present. On that basis, it might be assumed that youths and their organizations have been involved in the process of planning and measure formulation. On the other hand, local youth organizations are involved in drawing up action plans to identify at-risk youth and those from vulnerable groups and to inform them about the opportunities provided by the National Youth Guarantee. In this context, each youth institution or organization is committed to informing and consulting certain youth groups in order to reach each of them.

In fact, several weaknesses stand out in the analysis of youth performance and engagement in career guidance and development interventions.

There is no information available to what extent and to what activities the youth formations are involved in the interventions carried out. From the available sources, it is clear that they primarily carry out activities in the field of providing information, counselling, thematic trainings and leisure activities that support the personal and professional development of Bulgarian youth.

However, apart from the information on the implementation of Erasmus + projects, the National Youth Program and the development of the network of youth information and

counselling centers, it is difficult to measure the extent of participation and capacity development of this type of formation.

This gives an opportunity for additional reflection and work towards increasing the capacity of youth formations, organizations and expanding the network of youth units, as well as increasing the services provided by and for them.

### Skills based profiling and matching

- a. identification of the missing competencies and skills, training needs analysis.

In 2019 the Center for research and analysis conducted research on employers' needs of workforce.<sup>6</sup> The survey was conducted among employers and companies for human resources. In the course of the survey, employers were asked to assess/rate, on the one hand, certain qualities/ skills of the workforce / candidates and, on the other hand, to indicate to what extent each of these qualities/ skills is important to them. The qualities/ skills assessed by the employers are divided into three categories: preparation for work, basic professional skills and soft skills.

When it comes to preparation for work the five most important skills for employers are ability to master knowledge and skills, work discipline/ work habits, practical preparation of the workforce, preliminary preparation for the work tasks and ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practice.

When it comes to the assessment of the employers whether the workforce possesses the above-mentioned skills, employers give lower ratings compared to the rating of the importance. The highest assessment by employers are on the ability of employees to master new knowledge and skills. Employers also place a high average rate on the educational (theoretical) preparation of the workforce. However, this quality is not among the most important for employers. The third highest average rate is the ability of candidates to apply their theoretical knowledge in practice.

Three of the five skills related to preparation for work that are most important to employers receive low rates, namely practical preparation, work discipline / work habits and preliminary training for the work tasks. These are the biggest gaps between the level of importance of the skill for the employer and the extent to which the workforce possess it.

This assessment of the above-mentioned skills leads to the one of the main problems in the in the preparation and the overall educational process at the university. Although students receive good theoretical knowledge, they do not receive the real experience and preparation

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<sup>6</sup> [http://cra-bg.org/sites/default/files/uploads/files/opdu/otchet\\_deynost1\\_globulrisurch\\_03\\_04\\_2019.pdf](http://cra-bg.org/sites/default/files/uploads/files/opdu/otchet_deynost1_globulrisurch_03_04_2019.pdf)



to handle real work tasks. The lack of practical training at the university is also reflected in the absence of well-established working habits and discipline, which further complicates the transition from education to employment and the quality performance of work tasks.

| <b>PREPARATION FOR WORK</b>                                                                  | Assessment | Importance | GAP  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|------|
| Educational (theoretical) preparation of the workforce                                       | 3,60       | 4,35       | 0,75 |
| Practical preparation of the workforce                                                       | 3,35       | 4,88       | 1,52 |
| Ability to master knowledge and skills                                                       | 3,88       | 5,00       | 1,12 |
| Preliminary preparation for the work tasks and professional requirements of the organization | 3,48       | 4,77       | 1,29 |
| Ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practice                                           | 3,60       | 4,70       | 1,10 |
| Basic professional preparation                                                               | 3,54       | 4,62       | 1,08 |
| Work discipline / work habits                                                                | 3,42       | 4,92       | 1,50 |

With regard to basic professional skills, the five listed as most important for employers relate, on the one hand, to the professional skills and competences of a particular specialty and, on the other, to more general skills such as information reading skills. Professional skills in the specialty, compute skills, analytical thinking, and information reading skills, combined with resourcefulness and combinability, make the list of core professional skills that are important to employers.

When it comes to assessment of employers on basic professional skills of the workforce the highest average grade is for computer skills. This is also the third most important professional skill for employers. Both the high average grade and the importance of this skill are dictated by the widespread use of technology and their use in almost every field of work. The skills to find and read information of the workforce are also highly rated by employers.

Here again three of the most important professional skills for employers receive low average marks. Business representatives give the lowest average grades of workforce in terms of their professional skills in the specialty, resourcefulness / combinability and analytical thinking.

| <b>BASIC PROFESSIONAL SKILLS</b>     | <b>Assessment</b> | <b>Importance</b> | <b>GAP</b> |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Information reading skills           | 3,89              | 4,63              | 0,74       |
| Information finding skills           | 3,99              | 4,60              | 0,61       |
| Text writing skills                  | 3,83              | 4,55              | 0,72       |
| Analytical thinking                  | 3,60              | 4,62              | 1,02       |
| Computer skills                      | 4,23              | 4,79              | 0,56       |
| Professional skills in the specialty | 3,81              | 4,88              | 1,07       |
| Resourcefulness/ combinability       | 3,70              | 4,83              | 1,12       |

The soft skills that employers most often pay attention to and are noted to be most important to them are with emphasis on relationships with other team members in the organization, as well as the individual's drive for self-development and improvement. In this regard, teamwork, skills for developing good relationships, skills for working independently, diligence and striving for improvement, as well as attention to detail, are the 5 basic soft skills that employers want to be developed in employees.

Employers give the highest average grade on the workforce's skills for developing relationship. Candidates' team skills are the second highest average grade. Other skills and qualities that earn high grade are diligence and striving for improvement and adaptation to business processes and environment. It is important to note that all the qualities and skills that employers identify as important to them receive high average grades. Candidates' time management, project management, work under pressure and leadership skills are the lowest rated.

| <b>SOFT SKILLS</b>                               | <b>Assessment</b> | <b>Importance</b> | <b>GAP</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Communication skills                             | 3,68              | 4,69              | 1,01       |
| Problem-solving skills                           | 3,54              | 4,71              | 1,18       |
| Time management                                  | 3,50              | 4,71              | 1,21       |
| Leadership skills                                | 3,45              | 4,51              | 1,06       |
| Innovative thinking                              | 3,58              | 4,64              | 1,06       |
| Attention to detail                              | 3,62              | 4,78              | 1,17       |
| Developing relationships                         | 3,86              | 4,82              | 0,96       |
| Teamwork                                         | 3,80              | 5,01              | 1,21       |
| Work under pressure                              | 3,46              | 4,72              | 1,26       |
| Diligence and striving for improvement           | 3,74              | 4,81              | 1,07       |
| Adaptation to business processes and environment | 3,72              | 4,74              | 1,01       |
| Project management                               | 3,50              | 4,49              | 0,99       |
| Organizational skills                            | 3,52              | 4,61              | 1,09       |
| Ability to work independently                    | 3,68              | 4,86              | 1,18       |
| Proactivity / self-initiative / initiative       | 3,55              | 4,74              | 1,19       |

## Recommendations for development of Module with Entrance tests and Job Expectations of young people looking for employment

- Examples and good practices in this field

If we look back, we will find that the problem about “why some people are satisfied with their careers and some are not” has been studied by many psychologists. Their aim has been to find ways to help people to choose suitable careers.

In this analysis we choose to present in detail two of the most popular theories on which are based many of career tests widely used these days - Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Holland Codes career tests/ RIASEC. We will also look at methodology behind the Motivational Appraisal of Personal Potential (MAPP) career assessment test which is defined as first and most comprehensive career test online for consumers.

### Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

The Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator is a self-report inventory designed to identify a person's personality type, strengths, and preferences. The questionnaire was developed by

Isabel Myers and her mother Katherine Briggs based on their work with Carl Jung's theory of personality types.

The test was created back in 1940s, during the World War II. The aim of its creators was to help people to select occupations that were best suited to their personality types by helping them understand themselves.

The test is based on statements for which responders should specify their level of agreement. According to the given answers people are identified as having one of 16 personality types:

- ISTJ - The Inspector
- ISTP - The Crafter
- ISFJ - The Protector
- ISFP - The Artist
- INFJ - The Advocate
- INFP - The Mediator
- INTJ - The Architect
- INTP - The Thinker
- ESTP - The Persuader
- ESTJ - The Director
- ESFP - The Performer
- ESFJ - The Caregiver
- ENFP - The Champion
- ENFJ - The Giver
- ENTP - The Debater
- ENTJ - The Commander

The four letter code for each type contains the specific information for responder by using four different scales:

1. Extraversion (E) - Introversion (I)
2. Sensing (S) - Intuition (N)
3. Thinking (T) - Feeling (F)

#### 4. Judging (J) - Perceiving (P)

The extraversion-introversion dichotomy aims to describe how people respond and interact with the world around them. “Sensing – Intuition” scale looking at how people gather information from the world around them. The third scale focuses on how people make decisions based on the information that they gathered from their sensing or intuition functions. The final scale – “Judging – Perceiving” - involves how people tend to deal with the outside world.

Because the Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator is relatively easy to use, it has become one of the most popular psychological instruments currently in use today. There are many versions of the MBTI available online. One of the most popular personality tests this days, which is available online – 16personalities<sup>7</sup> – is based on Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator.

#### **Holland Codes career tests/ RIASEC**

The theory behind the codes was developed by John L. Holland over the course of his career, starting in the 1950s to 1970s. It is a set of personality types and is one of the most popular models used for career tests today. John L. Holland believed that the choice of a vocation is an expression of personality and people work best in work environments that match their preferences. The purpose of the Holland Codes is to help people make their career and vocational choice. Work environments also could be typifying by the Codes so it is how the test calculate matches between responders and job positions.

A variety of filling methods for the test can be found online. One of them is used by Career aptitude test on <https://www.123test.com/career-test/>. It takes five to ten minutes to be completed. Variety of specific work activities are split into fifteen sets of four pictures that show it. The responder should pick only one work activity that appeals to him the most and one that appeals the least. Each picture depicted work associated with a specific type of personality.

The result of the test is the compiled personal Holland Code. It contains the specific personal combination of first letters of the six personality types in Holland's model. The Code is composed depending on how strongly is favored any specific type of work. There are six personality types in Holland's model and most people fit into a few of the categories:

- Realistic: practical, physical, concrete, hands-on, machine, and tool-oriented
- Investigative: analytical, intellectual, scientific, explorative, thinker

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.16personalities.com/>

- Artistic: creative, original, independent, chaotic, inventive, media, graphics, and text
- Social: cooperative, supporting, helping, healing/nurturing, teaching
- Enterprising: competitive environments, leadership, persuading, status
- Conventional: detail-oriented, organizing, clerical

The combination and ranking of the types is specific to each person. It also has matter how the letters are linked (the specific order of letters). The theory argue that it has 720 different combinations possible. However, only two or three letters are necessary to create a useful description to be chosen a suitable occupation.

### **The MAPP™ Career Assessment Test**

The Motivational Appraisal of Personal Potential (MAPP) career assessment test was established in 1995. It is the first and most comprehensive career test online for consumers. The MAPP test offers people new insights into what they're naturally drawn toward and how they can develop this into a career.

The length of time to take the MAPP is approximately 22 minutes. The test contains 71 different questions regarding person's "likes" and "dislikes". It should be selected from three answers - which one is "most preferred" and which one is "least preferred". Questions are designed to offer information regarding temperament, vocational interests, aptitude, and preferences in learning style.

The function of a career assessment test is to answer important questions about the person's skills and interests. It could be used by high school graduates to deciding on college or employment. The test could be useful for those seeking to find a more fulfilling career. Career coaches may use it to provide clients points of discussion, including areas for improvement, educational needs, and enhancing current skills. Employers can profile job openings and matching employees by by applying the MAPP Career Assessment Test.

The MAPP test has undergone extensive validity and reliability testing by a number of psychologists. It has passed three of the standard testing measures for validity and reliability, the Reliability Study, the Construct Validity Study and the Strong.

The personal test results are scored against over 1000 jobs and gives information about what jobs are the best fit along with the education needed and career outlook for the particular tested person.

According to information by official web site of the MAPP Career Assessment Test – “more than 8 million people in nearly every country in the world have taken the MAPP test since its inception in 1995”.<sup>8</sup>

The test observes 9 bigger topics:

- INTEREST IN JOB CONTENTS (Those tasks you want to perform)
- TEMPERAMENT FOR THE JOB (How you prefer to perform tasks)
- APTITUDE FOR THE JOB (Expression of performing tasks)
- PEOPLE (How you relate to people, in priority order)
- THINGS (How you relate to things, in priority order)
- DATA (How you relate to data, in priority order)
- REASONING (How you relate to reasoning, in priority order)
- MATHEMATICAL CAPACITY (How you relate to the applied usage of math)
- LANGUAGE CAPACITY (How you relate to the usage of language)

Questions related to such topics as:

*v General preferences toward work in relation to people, creativity, social activities, routine, tools, equipment and more:*

- Motivation for leading, managing, coordinating, manipulating, or administratively controlling processes
- Responsibility for organizational, operational, or administrative management
- Responsibility for exercising options, decisions, and actions relative to future
- Leadership skills
- Need for and motivation by recognition, status, or competitive gain
- Supported organizational position and role
- Associating and interacting with people or independence - work in teams or independently
- Work with facts and tangibles or with intangibles, abstract ideas and concepts, theories and hypotheses

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.assessment.com/AboutMAPP>

- Logic based work
- Sameness and routine vs. lots of change and variety
- Motivation by deadlines
- Interest in scientific research of a technical nature or in technical systems
- Benevolent, voluntarily giving of self to help others
- Open-minded, curious, creativity
- Motivation to persuade
- Interests in work about evaluating and analyzing
- Attention to detail
- Problem solving style
- Tact and diplomacy
- Work dedicated to art
- Work dedicated to technology
- Work dedicated to nature and wildlife
- Physically working with things and objects
- Preferences for beauty, color, and spatial measure: size, shape, etc.
- Comfortness of being "on stage"
- Preferences for outdoor or indoor activities
- Preference for the surrounding environment - rural community, small city, large, active city

*v Topics related to working with PEOPLE - Activities related to the interaction of a person with other persons:*

- Is it privilege or responsibility to use communication
- Awareness of the hurts, needs, problems, and wishes of others
- Motivation for being "on stage" in order to pleasantly influence others
- Motivation to educate and share knowledge
- Level of influence on others



- Assuming the responsibilities for planning, assigning, directing, supervising
- Preference for having the responsibility for, or involvement in, negotiating activities

v *Topics related to working with “THINGS” - How you relate to things, in priority order:*

- “Workbench” activity where a person manually (primarily arms, hands, fingers)
- Working with things, manipulation of materials and processes
- Cognizance of operational and mechanical forces or objects

v *Topics related to working with DATA and work including REASONING:*

- Preferences, motivations and priorities for certain kinds of mental activities
- Intellectual and/or analytical activities
- Intellectual, academic, scholarly, scientific, mathematical, or professional interests
- Working with data

v *Observing of mathematical capacity - talent for math:*

- Interests in theoretical, abstract math
- Management responsibility based on mathematical calculations and decisions
- Routine, basic mathematic-oriented activities
- Statistical and/or investigative kinds of math

v *Observing of language capacity - usage of language, preferences for:*

- Activities as gathering, processing, recording, transmitting, filing, and/or retrieving information
- Writing and spokesperson activities

Online could be found these modern implementations of the reviewed theories:

<https://www.16personalities.com/> (based on Myers-Briggs Type Indicator)

<https://www.123test.com/career-test/> (based on Holland Codes career tests/ RIASEC)

<https://www.assessment.com/> (The MAPPTM Career Assessment Test)

## Good practices in existing training modules for youth organizations with representatives from business and civil society

### a. educational practices for career orientation in the partner countries

As mentioned earlier in Bulgaria, at national level, youth unemployment policies and the career opportunities of young people are implemented through specially designed measures and interventions managed mostly by The Ministry of youth and sports, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (through the Employment Agency) and The Ministry of Education and Science.

The key legislative basis for career counselling in Bulgaria is set out in the following acts and documents:

- The National Education Act - regulates the structure, functions and management of the system of national education;
- The Vocational Education and Training Act - creates and maintaining flexible systems for high-quality education and training to meet the current and future requirements and needs of the national and European labour markets;
- The Employment Promotion Act - regulates social relations upon employment promotion and employment security and career guidance and adult training;
- The National Strategy for lifelong learning (LLG) for the period 2014-2020 (in Bulgarian)
- The Strategy for development of higher education in the Republic of Bulgaria 2014-2020 and action plan (in Bulgarian)
- The Strategy for the development of vocational education and training in the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2015-2020

Guidance of young citizens is one of key priorities in National Strategy for Lifelong learning (2014-2020), National Youth Strategy (2010-2020), National Strategy for the Child (2008-2018). The LLG strategy identifies four main priorities aimed at:

- Implementing an educational approach that supports the development of all learners and contributes to the development of thinking, capable and proactive people capable of coping with change and insecurity;
- Improving the quality of education and training;
- Providing an educational environment for equal access to lifelong learning, active social inclusion and active citizenship;
- Stimulating education and training tailored to the needs of the economy and changes in the labour market.

In this regard, different institutions provide educational practices for career orientation and guidance services in the country and they are jointly organized by the three main sectors.

- **Career Guidance in School Education:** The main providers of career guidance at school level are the pedagogical advisers. They are supported by career counsellors from the non-governmental sector. In the period 2017-2018 a network of 29 career guidance centres has been funded under the Operational Programme Human Resources Development (2014 – 2020). The centres provide information and counselling related to individual education and career planning and support in implementation of individual plans to users.
- **Career Guidance in Higher Education:** The Career centres operate in the higher education system. The Career centres in the universities assist in the establishment of close link between the training and practice of students, the improvement of the training programmes, which provide information on practical training and the implementation of projects, on the conditions of the labour market in Bulgaria and the areas of professional development of the graduates.
- **Career Guidance for Employees and the Unemployed:** The services for information, guidance and counselling of unemployed, youth and adults are mainly provided in the framework of the National Employment Agency and territorial units of the Agency, employment offices. The non-governmental organizations (NGO) are active with providing different type of projects in the field of career guidance and developing web portals which support young people's choice of educational and professional development. The network of Youth information centres was created to support young people's motivation for further development through formal and non-formal education activities.

Meanwhile, several good examples of career guidance services and training modules for different groups of young people stand out in the country, which include not only pupils, students and young people, but also career guidance experts, trainers and mentors, representatives of enterprises, -government organizations, etc.

**„A journey through the indian lands“** - Journey through the Indian Lands is an educational game based on experiential learning and group career counseling. It is aimed at young people aged 15-25 and aims to help develop their career management skills, flexibility and suitability to start a job. The intervention covers the following target groups: high school students, young people aged 15-24 and students.

The journey is structured in two parts. In the first part, the participants form teams of "travelers" who take part in an expedition to a hidden treasure. Throughout the journey, participants are actively involved - they look for clues and resources, discuss and

negotiate, make difficult decisions for a limited time, go through various trials of fate on their way to the final destination. After the game, the facilitator initiates a group discussion - an internal journey that encourages participants to share their experiences and emotions. They reflect on how their decisions, strategies, approach and performance have contributed to the results achieved. The simulation provokes fruitful self-analysis and conclusions about career development.

**„Career with a cause”** – This is an intervention aimed specifically at unemployed young people. This is the first forum of its kind, designed to offer volunteering, internships and professional realization in the non-governmental sector. During the event, interns or job seekers, as well as volunteer candidates, get acquainted with vacancies in non-governmental organizations with various fields of activity. The forum is established in an annual platform that promotes the non-governmental sector as a reliable employer and supports the development of civil society in Bulgaria. The event annually presents dozens of organizations operating in public spheres such as human rights, social services, charity, education, ecology, civil society development, healthcare, culture and tourism, human resources and others.

**„JobTiger TV”** - JobTiger.tv is a specialized innovative online media, created in 2011, which aims to raise public awareness on career-related topics and to support successful personal and professional development. The platform is intended to benefit both students and young people, as well as adults, unemployed and employed, people at risk and others, including managers and human resources management experts.

The website is aimed at a wide range of groups and systematically covers news and events in the field of human resources, higher and vocational education and training, the labor market and social policy, as well as current topics related to them. Career development and personal realization, professional standards and good practices, leadership, etc. - are part of the topics in which the publications are focused. The site contains various sections. In News feed, visitors can find up-to-date information on education, the labor market, career development, human resources and more. The "Events" section presents career days, exhibitions, seminars, conferences, projects, etc. significant activities in the field of career development and human resources management. The „Consultant" has published interviews with experts, renowned professionals and inspiring speakers on a variety of career topics, from practical tips for writing an effective CV to trend and policy analysis.

The „Professional" section contains articles and interviews that relate to various professional fields.

In general, the website [www.jobtiger.bg](http://www.jobtiger.bg) launched in 2000 offers integrated internet-based career services for job-seekers. The website provides job adverts and training opportunities, labour market information and analysis, jobsearch support and tips; as well as HR services-recruitment, training, career guidance and employer branding. Job-seekers can post a CV online and apply directly to an advert. They can find average salaries for different sectors and positions. JobTiger organises the National Careers Days and is very active on social networks with its blog, Facebook profile and online TV channel.

**“Career guidance program through coaching”** - The program aims to counteract the lack of motivation, desire for development, orientation for education, professional field of activity and realization of young people and adults, leading to a series of wrong decisions, job dissatisfaction, lack of adequate education, unemployment and shortage of staff.

The program was created in 2015 in order to inspire children, pupils, students, young people and adults to develop their potential, to form themselves as individuals and to follow the path to the desired professional realization. The program does not impose ready-made solutions, but helps to build your own and individual, putting a person in the challenge to go beyond their comfort zone and motivating him to find his dream career.

With the help of the program, participants discover and develop their strengths, focus on the right profession and field of development, expand their comfort zone, improve their skills, reveal their personal potential, learn to set goals and build a clear and a detailed action plan. They make their decisions consciously and independently, which increases their motivation and satisfaction with the achieved results. Through the program, participants invest in themselves, in their future, in a secure investment with a high return.

**“Learn, work, travel”** - This is an initiative dedicated to career guidance and education of young people, providing up-to-date and comprehensive information on the topic. It started with a series of events aimed at supporting the professional and personal development of young people, supporting them on their path to successful career development.

The initiative includes information events, seminars, workshops, presentations and exhibitions dedicated to education and careers, adapted for different ages.

The measure brings together educational institutions from around the world, non-governmental organizations in the youth and education sectors, volunteer, exchange and mentoring programs, entrepreneurial activities and other opportunities for professional and personal development. The career counselors involved in the initiative assist young people in choosing a specialty, education and career path, taking care of their awareness and assist

in gaining international experience by helping them with the preparation of documents and other necessary for education or work in another country. LearningWorksTravel has its own youth network, consisting of active young people, volunteers for various activities, wishing to gain practical experience and take part in the programs of the initiative.

b. educational practices for career orientation on European and national documents.

Career guidance **in Estonia**, standing in three pillars – career education, career counselling and career information provision, is provided by both education and employment systems. Career education is integrated in curricula at different education levels and has a long tradition. However, career information provision and career counselling outside school has been organised differently over the years and been often influenced by resources available.

Foundation Innove established its regional Rajaleidja centres (Pathfinder centre in English) in 2014 at the service of young people (age 7 – 26) and focusing on the needs of pupils in lower and upper secondary education (age 15 – 19). Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (Eesti Töötukassa, the public employment service – PES) supported unemployed, inactive and employed people. In addition, as part of Youth Guarantee there was an extra initiative to support young people while entering the labour market and coping there and to bring those not in education or in employment (NEETs) back to education.

Starting from 2019 career information and career counselling services are offered by and developed in the PES. In practical terms, it means that the career guidance personnel from Rajaleidja centres were transferred to PES. In line with making the most efficient use of the resources, the reform also aims at joining together expert knowledge about labour market and education.

In 2014, Foundation Innove initiated 15 public centres called Rajaleidja (*Pathfinder* in English). Centres are located in every county and provide support for young people in their studies and career related issues. In addition, the counselling committees make recommendations to schools on more complex educational measures. Integrated services provided by the centres are career counselling, career information provision, socio-pedagogical counselling, special educational counselling, psychological counselling and speech therapy.

The Pathfinder is also accessible online ([www.rajaleidja.ee](http://www.rajaleidja.ee) in Estonian), offering career information and online chat for youngsters, parents, teachers and career specialists. Estonia's largest career portal facilitates career planning by means of providing tools for self-evaluation, as well as information about work, occupations and educational opportunities. It also features materials and methodology of guidance professionals. The database of occupations contains videos, descriptions, study opportunities, and labour market options,



including information about salary range. The career game serves as a fun and engaging way of delivering labour market information that leverages gamification elements in order to stimulate the interest of and better resonate with the younger audience. Rajaleidja chat-service enables people to start an online discussion directly with a guidance practitioner. No login or identification is needed, although the client can provide their e-mail address to start or continue the conversation at a later date. Rajaleidja chat has become a very popular service among young people and school personnel.

Practitioners use a variety of electronically administered tests and evaluation tools, including personality tests, career choice tests, etc. The online tests have been standardized on norm groups comprising of Estonian school children and adults. In addition, versatile technical environments for information exchange and group counselling are in use.

There are also several ICT tools for internal management purposes. The customer management system is meant for the storage of customer data and the gathering of statistical data. The Recommy allows feedback from customers in the electronic format and customer satisfaction to be evaluated.

Euroguidance Estonia contributes intensively to the competence development of guidance practitioners, including digital skills. The results of our study among guidance practitioners in 2017 shows that the rapid development of the ICT field has also had a significant impact on the provision of guidance in Rajaleidja centres. As a result of the development of ICT communication with the customers has changed, the organisations are better managed, and the interactions done in cooperation with partners have improved. Additionally, it has significantly diversified the available information on distribution channels.

Provision of educational and vocational guidance for young people is given high priority in **Denmark**. The Ministry of Children and Education and the Ministry of Higher Education and Science are responsible for the policy regarding guidance and have a controlling and coordinating role in relation to the guidance system. The Ministry of Children and Education is responsible for the policy concerning: The youth guidance units, eGuidance and the national Guidance Portal (ug.dk), whereas the Ministry of Higher Education and Science is responsible for Study and Career Guidance Denmark.

The act on guidance supports the Danish Government's declared goal that by 2030 90% of all young people should complete a youth education programme before their 25th birthday. The Government wishes to make it easier for citizens to make realistic decisions about learning opportunities and careers - for the individual's own sake and for the good of society as a whole.

Youth guidance units ("Den kommunale Ungeindsats") in Denmark is a full-time guidance practitioners at the 56 municipal youth guidance centres provide guidance in relation to the transition from compulsory education to youth education. Target groups are: pupils in lower secondary school from form 7 to form 9, pupils in the voluntary 10th form and young people under the age of 25 not involved in education, training or employment.

The other example is Study and Career Guidance Denmark ("Studievalg Danmark") where guidance is provided by full-time guidance practitioners at the seven regional guidance centres in the transition from youth education to higher education. Clients are students in youth education programmes, and young people and adults wishing to enter a higher education programme. In 2018, a new structure called Studievalg Danmark has been established, with a director and a secretariat as part of the Ministry of Higher Education and Science, coordinating the work of all seven guidance centres.

Vocational guidance counsellors and job consultants provide guidance at the 91 job centres (Public Employment Service, PES). The guidance is aimed at all individuals over the age of 18 as well as unemployed adults (through job centres) and the portal: [www.jobnet.dk](http://www.jobnet.dk) (in Danish only). This service is for all jobseekers and employers and provides information on job-seeking, education and looking for new employees. It contains a job-bank and a CV-bank as a help to find new employees or a new job.

Several additional online services have been developed as eGuidance, which was launched in 2011 and provides individual and personal guidance to all via various virtual communication channels: chat, telephone, text message, e-mail, webinars and Facebook. It is for all citizens and can be reached seven days a week from morning to evening.

The national guidance portal, launched by the Ministry of Education, is an ICT-based careers information and guidance portal, provides citizens with substantial careers information in order for them to make qualified decisions about education, training and careers. At the same time Uddannelseszoom - this national guidance portal, launched by the Ministry of Higher Education and Science enables the comparison of information on VET and HE across different parameters. It is a tool to support the process of choosing an education. This is done by disseminating data on the quality of the educations and their relevance in relation to the job opportunities of the labour market.

In Demark there is a couple tools such as the Programme for Career Counselling, VIA University College and The Danish Centre for Youth Research (Center for Ungdomsforskning, CEFU) which are focusing on career, including career guidance measures in compulsory school, in upper secondary education and vocational education and training, in higher education and the transition between these, and from education to occupation. Furthermore,



the programme focuses on career guidance for adults in employment and outside the labour market.

### Identification of best practices adequate for establishing the necessary capacity

All measures and interventions considered so far, at national and regional level, aim to improve and increase the capacity of young people in general. They take into account the contextual and other specifics of each of the target groups for which they are intended. Accordingly, each of the measures contributes to a specific area related to increasing the knowledge, skills and participation of young people in various social processes and problems, as part of the implementation of projects involving youths. Capacity development as a separate priority remains peripheral, but invariably included in all activities and measures. In turn, this inevitably affects the building and upgrading of the capacity and capabilities of youth organizations and formations, which remains difficult to identify in the Bulgarian context.

However, in order to reach this stage, special attention is needed to each group of young people and targeted measures to overcome specific problem areas in front of them. Based on the considered documents and sources of information, the following measures should be considered, which would contribute to building the necessary capacity:

Young people who have  
just graduated

### **Lack of experience**

- Trainings
- Internships
- Entrepreneurship training
- Career guidance
- Assessment of skills

Young people who have  
just graduated

### **Unrealistic expectations**

- Motivational seminars
- Entrepreneurship training
- Career guidance
- Assessment of skills

Young people with  
secondary general education

### **Lack of specific qualification**

- Trainings
- Internships
- Entrepreneurship training
- Career guidance
- Assessment of skills

Young people with low  
education

### **Lack of necessary skills and knowledge**

- Trainings
- Internships
- Entrepreneurship training
- Career guidance
- Assessment of skills
- Motivational seminars for going  
back to education

Young people at risk of  
dropping out

**Lack of necessary skills and knowledge**

- Trainings
- Internships
- Entrepreneurship training
- Motivational seminars

Young people with disability  
or young people from

**Constrained opportunities/  
discrimination**

- Trainings
- Internships
- Entrepreneurship training
- Career guidance
- Assessment of skills
- Working with employers to change

There are positive trends in youth employment and unemployment. There is increase in the share of employed young people aged 15-24. At the same time there is a decrease in the share of young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex, age and labour status (NEET rates) aged 15-24. Another positive trend is the increasing share of young people aged 15-24 participating in formal and non-formal education and training. These trends show that the different projects and program implemented and targeting young people are having a positive effect.

However, there are certain circumstances causing the youth unemployment and that programs and projects have to continue to address. Having in mind this circumstances (presented in 1st part of this analysis) the following recommendations can be made:

- Development of measures aimed at providing various trainings to compensate for the gaps in education and thus increase the competitiveness of young people that have lower education.
- Providing vocational trainings to compensate for the lack of experience and qualifications
- Providing training on specific key competencies/ skills that are important for ensuring sustainable employment
- Development of different internship programs that will allow young people to gain experience in a real work environment and to development their skills
- Providing motivational support to young people in order to motivate them to search for employment opportunities
- Innovative and interactive advertising of employment opportunities

- Organizing events where young people can meet with potential employers and obtain information about the situation on the labor market and employment opportunities
- Working with young people on their unrealistic expectations regarding employment by presenting them the key trends on the labor market and the possibilities they have depending on their education, skills, experience, etc.
- Providing career orientation

The considered youth unemployment policies and the career opportunities of young people, show that most of the interventions performed **are implemented based on a partnership approach**, where responsible state institutions, social partners, and local authorities and youth organizations implement interventions. The latter are usually involved in conducting an information campaign and contributing to the identification and activation of young people from different target groups.

However, in Bulgarian context, there is no information available to what extent and to what activities the youth formations are involved in the interventions carried out. Therefore, measuring the degree of participation and capacity development of this type of formation becomes extremely difficult. This makes it possible to focus on additional work to increase the capacity of youth groups, organizations and expand the network of youth units, as well as to increase the services provided by and for them.

The practices in existing training modules for youth organizations show that there are good examples and practices for orientation in the partner countries. In the educational sector, most often schools implement guidance activities as a part of teaching curricula or as extra-curricular activities. Existing career centers and Local Youth Offices provide career information and organize educational activities related to career management, such as seminars, lectures and training courses for students, as well as provide individual guidance and counseling both on site and online. Several additional online services provide provision of self-assessment tools, career and educational information in guidance, and online counselling.

In this regard, the recommendations in the direction of career development and orientation can be related to enhanced provision of career information and career counseling outside school. In addition to expanding the centers at the local level, it is necessary to use innovative and easily accessible methods for young people to promote job opportunities or improve skills. This shows the need for more platforms available online that offer career information through familiar accessible and interactive methods (chat messages, animated videos) that are accessible to young people, parents, teachers and career professionals.

Development of Module with Entrance tests and Job Expectations of young people looking for employment should be based on methods and theories that are validated in practice. Such recognizable and widely used in practice methods were reviewed in this part. The experience by using of these tools should be incorporated for the purpose of the Entrance test for consulting and providing a help for young people to find the correct job occupation for them.

The Entrance test should involve questions that gives a view on:

- Which are the areas of work that the respondent feels comfortable?
- What kind of activities make the respondent feel satisfied with his work?
- What skills does the respondent have?
- In which kind of activities the respondent feels prepared?

These topics are commonly used and already developed in the practice of career consulting. The new upgrade that needs to be introduced is the focus on expectations of young people looking for employment. It is necessary to investigate for example:

- The previous experience of the respondent
- Respondent's expectations for the type of work that he will practice
- Respondent's expectations for the salary for this job
- Respondent's expectations for the capacity of the company – if he prefers to work at big international company or prefers for example small local organization

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## SERBIA

### Introduction

The following analysis is focused on the deficits and the barriers to youth employment in Serbia. In the first part of analysis we try to summarize all data that shows economic situation of the country regarding employment especially youth employment. We have looked at all circumstances causing the youth unemployment; impact of youth organizations; labour market requirements, educational practices for career orientation in Serbia and on European and national documents.

In the second part of analysis we present successful models of cooperation of all important actors in the field of employment, good practice of existing training models and best practice for establishing the necessary capacity of youth organizations.

In the end you will find our recommendations for adequate trainings of youth for successful realization on the labour market as well as recommendation for establishing model of cooperation of stakeholders on the local level. with focus on youth employment/unemployment in the country

Unemployment is one of the biggest challenges almost all countries around the world are facing. Unemployment as a global problem is influenced on the one hand by structural changes in the labor market caused by globalization and modern technology, which is developing rapidly, and on the other hand by financial and economic crises and aging populations. According to data, unemployment has reached a much higher level in recent decades than in any period after the WWII.

In Serbia, the problem of unemployment is one of the biggest economic and social problems. Serbia ranks among the top European countries in terms of unemployment, together with Greece, Spain and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

One country unemployment is measured by the unemployment rate. The tolerable unemployment rate is one that ranges between a hypothetical zero percent and 5%. This

### Description of economic situation of the country and key features of labour market

means that the majority of the working age population has a job that provides at least the minimum conditions for their existence, if they lose their job, they can easily find a new job.

The unemployment rate, that is between 5% and 10%, is alarming. Such high unemployment already indicates a disturbance in the relationship between supply and demand for working

labor on the labor market, a decline in economic activity, a slow process of new jobs creation, non-competitiveness of the economy, etc.

A society with an unemployment rate above 15%, and especially above 20%, is already a severely stratified and socially divided society, in which a sense of social injustice prevails, and a large number of people have almost no chance to perform their right to work, said other way – to provide conditions of their own survival.

In Serbia, according to the data of the Republic Statistical Office, in the fourth quarter of 2019, the unemployment rate was 9.7%. According to official data, the unemployment rate in Serbia is decreasing from year to year, but this does not present the real picture of employment. In addition to the absolute increase of employees, the unemployment rate is also affected by other factors that are not taken into account when analyzing the labor market, such as: migration abroad, negative natural increase, changed employment rate measurement methodology (Employed are also those who work a few hours a day, which was not the case a few years ago). Apart from the problems with the interpretation of statistical data from which conclusions about the enormous fall in the unemployment rate in a situation of very modest GDP growth are completely wrong, no official national survey measures the quality of (especially new) employment according to the criteria of decent work prescribed by the International Labor Organization. How far Serbia is from the qualitative measurement of decent work is also shown by the fact that employment growth rates, in official statistics, never intersect with data on the level of wages, as a basic indicator of decent work.

The causes of unemployment are very complex and, most often, are the result of low productivity, over-population, low level of education, underdeveloped infrastructure, underdeveloped and imperfect labor market, mismatch of labor supply and demand and immobility of labor. Also, a new challenge facing the global labor market is digitalisation. In this field, Serbia faces problems with outdated educational programs, insufficient funding for the higher education system and a very low level of cooperation between the business and academic communities.

In Serbia, the most critical period was the transition period between 2003. and 2006. when the process of decreasing number of employees during the process of restructuring and privatization was noticed. Unemployment rate was 28.2%, which is an extremely high unemployment rate. A particularly unfavorable feature of unemployment in Serbia is long-term unemployment: as many as two-fifths of the unemployed do not work for more than five years, and only a quarter for less than a year. This means that in Serbia it is not a question of cyclical, but structural unemployment, where the chances for re-employment are less and less. Negative transition conditions are a consequence of the decline in gross domestic



product and standards of citizens during the 1990s, the policy of the former authoritarian regime, international isolation of the country, severe economic sanctions, the negative economic consequences of the war of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and NATO intervention in 1999, during which a significant part of infrastructure and production activities were destroyed. The economic policy pursued between 1990 and 1999 led to hyperinflation, which contributed to the great impoverishment of the population and the expansion of the gray economy, which became the main way of survival of a large part of the population and attempts to regenerate economy after 2000 are marked with lack of sustainable development strategies, mistakes in the privatization process, the consequences of the global economic crisis of 2008.

In the last few years, Serbia has recorded a decrease in unemployment rate, and it is evident, although it is also influenced by other factors that we mentioned in the previous text.

Despite the fact that the unemployment rate has been decreasing in the last few years, youth unemployment remains high, and their unenviable position on the labor market is not progressing, despite the existence of the National Youth Strategy and measures envisaged for that purpose. " According to the latest data (2019), youth unemployment in Serbia is twice as high as general unemployment and it is 21.5% and it is 3% lower than in 2018. The NEET rate, the participation of young people who are not employed and are not in any of the training or education program, in the total number of young people is 18.9% and is lower by 1.2 pp compared to 2018.

The position of youth as one of the most sensitive categories on the gloomy labor market of Serbia is very unfavorable, especially when it comes to multiple vulnerable young people, such as young women, young people with disabilities, young people without qualifications from rural households, etc.

Also, big problem in Serbia is the high degree of inactivity of young people considering the structure of unemployed people, and it says about the distrust of young people in the system and the lack of hope to find a decent job in Serbia. This is the main cause of the outflow of young people from our country, especially the enormous outflow of highly educated labor force. According to the OSCE, about 654,000 people have left Serbia since the beginning of this century, mostly young people between the ages of 15 and 24. The number of inactive young people in 2019 is 599,300, which is 2100 more than in 2018.



## Youth Indicators on the labor market

| Youth 15-29       | 2018. - average | 2019. - average | Changes 2019/2018<br>(per percentage point) |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Activity rate     | 48,1%           | 47,0%           | -1,1                                        |
| Employment rate   | 36,3%           | 36,9%           | 0,6                                         |
| Unemployment rate | 24,5%           | 21,5%           | -3,0                                        |
| Inactivity rate   | 51,9%           | 53,0%           | 1,1                                         |
| <b>NEET rate</b>  | 20,1%           | 18,9%           | -1,2                                        |

**Source: APC, P3C**

Young people are particularly affected by the above-mentioned problem that affects unemployment - the problem of outdated educational programs, insufficient funding of higher and secondary education systems and a very low level of cooperation between the business and academic community. The lack of an effective model of career counseling and guidance as well as the impossibility of acquiring practical knowledge during schooling reduces the chances of young people to position themselves on the labor market. This causes a mismatch between supply and demand for labor in the labor market. On the one hand we have a high unemployment rate and on the other hand employers are not able to find workers with the right qualifications.

For young people in Serbia, education is not a guarantee for employment. It will be equally difficult for both non-qualified and highly qualified ones to get a job. The educational structure of young people places Serbia in the lower half of European countries on the hierarchical ladder of Eurostat. The largest number of young people finished secondary education (69.7%), 22.7% have higher education (BA or MA), while 6.5% of young people have only primary school. However, a large percentage of young people in Serbia can fit into the category of underemployment. More than half of employees work temporary jobs (51.6%) and almost half of employees permanent jobs (41.3%) works on positions that require lower qualifications that they have, which testifies to the quality of jobs available to young people in the labor market. Only 15% got job positions that require higher qualifications

Young people are also most affected by increasing 'gray\black' labour market. According to the results of a survey conducted by the Union of Employers of Serbia from 2013, only 15% of young people said they would not accept undeclared work. The situation is getting worse by the fact that about 30% of young people are not aware of the rights they can exercise in the labor market. There is also a belief among young people that only way possible to get a job is through a "significant links" (81.86%) or joining political parties.

Having in mind the above data, the state is taking a set of measures to improve the situation on the labor market and improve the position of young people in it. By adopting laws and strategies that regulate this area and involving various actors in solving this problem, Serbia is working to reduce unemployment in the country. The ongoing education reform should have a positive impact on matching labor supply with demand and thus an impact on increasing employment.

### [Diagnostics on required skills of young people for sustainable employment opportunities considering innovation and digital society, review on gap of policies and capacity building of youth organizations](#)

Sustainable employability among young people in Serbia in the last few years implies the acquisition of competencies and skills that can be upgraded and being used in career development in various directions. For decades, labor market tendencies in Serbia have forced young people to adapt their professions to the current jobs they working at that moment, sometimes putting aside their basic profession. Partly, this situation is caused by the lack of job opportunities for certain occupations, but also by changes in the technological sense when it comes to even classic jobs. Only fifteen years ago, it was possible to imagine that administrative tasks were performed in the traditional way without the explicit use of modern communication tools related to the Internet and computers. However, the digital revolution has inevitably affected literally all occupations, and it is impossible to imagine that modern channels of communication and innovation in the digital sphere are not used in everyday work today. With the advent and wider use of computers, the educational system in Serbia tried to respond to subjects that were related to technological progress and were called computing and informatics. However, it seems that the programs of these subjects were lagging behind the general development and innovations that appeared in the world. On the other hand, the labor market and employers required knowledge of the achievements related to the digital development of individuals, so young people often had to seek informal training in this area. These trainings sometimes came from certified institutions, but it is also a big case of those who acquired these skills on their own via the Internet or in an extremely informal way. However, the labor market has also given way in that sense, so lately, only knowledge or knowledge of certain areas within digital literacy is often required, and not the official confirmation of a certain institution. Employers usually check what's already said/written in application form of the applicants' through short tests and, based on problem tasks, assess competencies in certain areas. Thus, the dynamics of employment on the labor market has quite a bit changed, and with a more liberal approach instead of a strict form, employers have opened their doors to those who, without formal certificates and with real knowledge, stand in line with those whose skills were previously recognize/certificated.

The individual is expected to fit into the digital and networked and on knowledge-based society by being and becoming digitally literate and following the development of the digital world that occupies bigger and bigger space of our life and work. The claim that digital literacy is the most important condition for living and working in the 21st century can be heard more and more often. Many strategic documents in the field of education in the world emphasize the importance of digital literacy in the process of lifelong learning and give priority to these competencies over others. According to the European Competences for Lifelong Learning (European Reference Framework), adopted by the European Union in 2006, digital competence is one of the eight key competences for lifelong learning and active participation in society (European Parliament and the Council, 2006). It is defined as the ability to critically and safely use technology at work, in leisure time and in communication. As a general, cross-curricular competence, digital competence enables the acquisition of other key competences (language, mathematics, mastery of learning skills, cultural awareness and expression) (Punie & Ala-Mutka, 2007).

Considering the fact that young people are „the backbone“ of today's information society - according to the latest data, over 80% of young people between the ages of 15 and 24, from approximately one hundred countries, use the Internet (ITU, 2017) - and that digital technology users are more and more people under the age of 18, it is launched a global initiative to protect the rights of children and young people in the digital age (Livingstone & Bulger, 2014).

Generations that were born and raised in the the Internet era are called by various names that indicate that digital literacy is the default thing. So we can find names like: digital natives, net generation, millennials, google generation, new millennium students, etc. However, it is necessary to investigate and find out whether it is a myth or a reality. Is the fact that someone was born and grows up in the age of innovation and progress of digital technology enough to recognize their digital literacy and to imply certain skills.

On the other hand, it is necessary to define what types of competencies are needed for sustainable employment or career promotion. It is logical that different professions and occupations require different levels of competencies that are needed in the digital sphere and innovations. However, there is also basic knowledge that is generally accepted for the majority of jobs\tasks performed in most occupations. Undoubtedly, knowledge of Microsoft office (word ppt, excel) is something that is universally required and is generally accepted by most employers. It should be emphasized that even within these requirements, there is a difference in knowlegde in using applications, through wide use to professional approach to them and professional use. Also, business communication via e-mail (google, yahoo, outlook) is an important skill that is needed for most occupations. Especially important is the use of

storage and memory that are on the network (google drive, dropbox ...) as well as documents that are shared and exchanged via networks. Using language, especially knowledge of English which is universal for most applications, is as important as the use of these mentioned tools.

1. Young people gain this knowledge within the framework of regular education, and those older or those who have not mastered the programs at a sufficient level, they are gaining missing knowledge later. This additional knowledge is very often found within the framework of non-formal education outside the employer's area with a certified training provider or with those service providers where knowledge and experience are gained at trainings but without a certificate. It is not a rare example that certain employers (especially larger multinational companies) perform trainings and additional education for their new employees within their capacities. This is especially useful because employees are trained exclusively for those skills that will be useful to them later. It is not uncommon for the company itself to outsource this type of activity and entrust it to a training provider who will focus on transferring the knowledge and skills needed by the employer. Finally, we should mention the work based learning programs that are being more and more implemented in Serbia and are based on learning and working with the employer in a certain period accompanied by a mentor where after completing the internship and passing the professional exam the student, trained according to the requirements of the employer, is being hired.
2. Regardless of all these methods of acquiring knowledge, it is important to protect the awareness of lifelong learning in each individual, and the awareness includes the concept of adapting to change and acquiring the necessary knowledge, parallel with the development of technologies and innovations. The predictions themselves show that in twenty years, half of the official occupations will not exist, so it is logical for young people in particular to position themselves as someone who will change their occupations and careers, regardless of the formal education they have. Especially when it is about following trends in the digital sphere and innovation.

### Review on gap of policies and capacity building of youth organizations

Youth organizations in the Republic of Serbia have existed for a long time. Even in the time of the old SFRY Yugoslavia, young people were in the focus of society and the policy related to youth was based exclusively on parties within the systemic support, which often had to be ideologically defined in a one-party system. The most known support was through youth councils whose contents and organization were strictly controlled by the authorities. Later, since 1990, with the disintegration of the old Yugoslavia, the form of youth organizations has changed and a war and material crisis gap was created and within the gap systemic youth support was not a priority. By the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the

twenty-first century, associations of citizens popularly called non-governmental organizations appeared sporadically. Within these non-governmental organizations and their goals, caring for youth slowly became one of social priorities. Thus, already in 2007, with the help of the non-governmental sector and a large number of volunteers, the action at the national level put pressure on the Republic of Serbia for the first time to get a line ministry that will take care of Youth. In 2008, as the result of „Youth win“, The Ministry of Youth and Sports was created, which has a youth sector that still functions today. The creation of this ministry by no means meant reducing the influence of youth organizations on youth policy. On the contrary, this ministry received funds intended for the support of youth organizations and the creation of quality content for young people in the Republic of Serbia. Then there was an initiative from the ministry itself to make a register - a record of organizations that work with and for youth and for young. A rulebook for registration has been adopted, which so far has 1457 associations at the country level. Those years could also be described as the time when Youth institutions were created. Thus, the National Council for Youth was established, and provincial councils for youth as well as councils within local self-government units began to be formed. These are advisory bodies that serve to encourage and coordinate activities related to the implementation and enforcement of youth policy. In the same year, 2008, the establishment of the Youth Offices began.

In order to provide conditions for active involvement of young people in the life and work of the community, empowerment of young people, support for organizing various social activities of young people, learning and creative expression of youth needs, local governments may, within their powers, needs and opportunities, establish a youth office. Youth offices are designed as part of municipal and city administrations that are funded from local budgets and help create and implement youth policy at the local level. The Youth Offices themselves were established and developed differently depending on the support of the local governments that founded them. The establishment of the National Association of Youth Offices, which is responsible for the introduction of many standards in the work of these youth organizations, especially contributed to their work. Members of the National Association of Youth Offices are municipalities and cities that have established a youth office.

Considering the strategic documents adopted at the national level, the National Youth Strategy and Action Plan, which were first adopted in the Republic of Serbia in 2009 and represented the strategic basis for the development of youth policy, undoubtedly occupy the most important place. The first National Strategy for Youth was set for a five-year period and contained 11 strategic goals, and the goal of stimulating all forms of employment and self-employment and entrepreneurship of young people got an important place. The second National Youth Strategy is set for the period from 2015 to 2022. In this document, youth employment and entrepreneurship took first place among the strategic goals, bearing in



mind the fact that in 2014, youth unemployment aged 15 to 24 was at the EU level 23, 4% and at the level of Serbia as much as 41.7%. Due to this alarming fact, this area has become the focus of youth policy at both the national and local levels.

One of the most important documents in youth policy in Serbia is certainly a legal document that defines the factors - holders of youth policy and actions within youth policy. The Law on Youth was adopted in 2011 in a transparent process in which most relevant actors participated in the implementation of youth policy. The 29 articles mentioned in the law describe youth policy and the youth sector, principles in youth policy, the National Youth Strategy, associations that carry out youth activities (youth associations and youth associations), record keeping, council and youth agency, Office for youth and youth agencies, youth policy funding and other important things for youth policy implementation.

In March 2010, at the proposal of the Ministry of Sports and Youth, the Government of the RS adopted the Strategy for Career Guidance and Counseling in the Republic of Serbia (SCGC), with an action plan for its implementation in the period from 2010 to 2014. With the adoption of the SCGC, conditions have been achieved in the Republic of Serbia for defining mechanisms for establishing a system of career guidance and counseling in the RS, all with the aim of better use of human resources and creating a clear link between the education system and the labor market. Career guidance and counseling are one of the basic instruments of human resources development which achieve both educational goals and the goals of economic development and the goals of social equality and inclusion. The concept of career guidance and counseling is especially important for young people and the development of their potential.

Besides all the legal and strategic solutions that were set, youth work had to be regulated both in youth organizations and in youth offices throughout Serbia. In that sense, the Ministry of Youth and Sports has issued official guidelines for the implementation of the National Youth Strategy at the local level and the standards of work of youth offices and the competencies of coordinators. Of course, youth organizations adopted youth work standards differently and developed themselves according to conditions that were tied to the moment. So in 2019 youth work became a recognized profession.

As from January 1, the occupation of youth worker has its own code in the Unified Code of Codes for the records of the National Employment Service: 3412.03.

A youth worker is a professional person, engaged in civil society organizations / institutions / local self-government, who conducts youth work activities, and whose competencies are defined by occupational standards in the field of youth work. Competences can be acquired through formal, non-formal and informal education and learning.

All youth workers have an obligation to respect the Code of Ethics for Youth Workers.

As far as the capacities of youth organizations are concerned, they differ from case to case as well as from the environment in which they operate. Even if there is no declarative difference in the status and activities of youth organizations, the working conditions of these organizations in large cities and small communities cannot be compared. The capacities of youth workers can be acquired formally and informally. Even if there are working standards for youth workers, there is no official institution and body that would check those standards. There is a certain certification but it is implemented by the association and is not of a formal type. Youth workers usually gain knowledge and experience in youth work itself and their progress depends exclusively on the interest and persistence of the individual. On the other hand, every youth organization, in addition to the classic youth workers, must also have administrative capacities as well as persons in charge of the management and sustainability of the organizations themselves. Due to all that, the largest number of organizations that deal with youth work actually deal with other areas of activity in order to survive in their work. Of the many youth associations and organizations, few are those that really specialize exclusively in youth work.

Such organizations, if they survive the first few years of work, have become important in the implementation of youth policy and set further standards in their work in their communities. One of the main problems of youth organizations is reflected in financial unsustainability. As a matter of fact, even if the National Strategy defines that the Ministry of Youth and Sports finances projects important for the implementation of youth policy at the local level, and if it is predicted that local government units finance youth activities locally through Youth Offices and citizens' associations, these funds are not enough for financing and continuous work of youth organizations in Serbia. Because of all this, more developed organizations are trying to create conditions for such sustainability by cooperating with various donors. Here we return to the capacities of youth workers and employees in organizations where exceptional creativity and experience are required in order to recognize the priorities of donors and connect them with work in the youth sector. Language skills, partner organizations, donors, their priorities and modes of action as well as advocacy and lobbying skills are very important competencies of workers in the youth sector.

Serbia is a country that formally takes care of the youth through the institutions of the system. In Serbia, the youth sector is developing according to the principles and standards of developed countries and international declarations and conventions. However, much more needs to be done to find the ideal balance between the strategic documents, the legal framework and the work practice of youth organizations, and thus youth policy gets its place in society.

## Skills based profiling and matching

Today, all societies on a global level are facing major changes in the labor market and the problem of unemployment. Of all types of unemployment, the most widespread is structural unemployment, which represents a gap between the supply and demand of labor. It points to the phenomenon of unemployment on the one hand and unfilled job positions on the other. The main cause of this discrepancy lies in the lack of appropriate competencies among young people that labor market needs.

At the very beginning, it is necessary to define, on the one hand, the competencies that employers require for performing certain jobs. On the other hand, it is necessary to identify which competencies the job seeker possesses and which competencies are missing in order to meet the needs of employers. In that way, the necessary trainings for acquiring the missing competencies would be defined and the process of connecting the unemployed people and employers would be easier.

In that sense, it is necessary to use models that would fully assess the potential of the individual, as opposed to just collecting basic information (personal data, level of education, previous work experience ...) about the individual - a job seeker.

Such is the Skills-based profiling and matching model that helps to better identify the strengths and weaknesses of job seekers and to define job search action plans. With this method, the candidate himself becomes aware of his competencies, as well as the need for further development, often more realistically assessing themselves if they have enough requirements of a particular job position / occupation / training.

The use of this model brings benefits for all parties: job seekers, economy / education system, as well as for career practitioners or other employment intermediaries:

**Employers and the education system** get candidates who will be more able to respond to the requirements of the job position\certain occupation. Even if someone else makes the final selection of candidates (as do psychologists at the National Employment Service, or the human resources sector in companies or employment agencies), it is very important that the best (most adequate) candidates are selected for that shortlist of selection.

### Job seekers

They get help to define their skills based on their education background. Their individual achievements are being evaluated and their self-confidence is being increased. They get help to identify job options, explore a wider range of options, or define more realistic options based on their current skills. Recognizing missing skills supports further learning and helps define action plans.



## Career practitioners and employment intermediaries

They get better information about the potential candidates they recommend to employers afterwards. Speed, efficiency and success in comparing candidates with competitions are ensured. Employment outcomes are improving through better matching of candidates and vacancies. Employer service / satisfaction is improved through better matching with candidates. Target groups for active labor market policies and services are better defined.

Different tools can be used within this model, but they all represent an interactive process and their purpose is to better profile the candidate and match with the available vacancy. We used a competency-based interview (using competency cards) and a competency test in our work.

## Skills-based profiling needs to be implemented in several stages

- 1) **Identification of competencies that will be tested.** In this process, it is necessary to cooperate with the economy, which plays a key role in defining the needs for certain competencies. It is necessary to create detailed occupational profiles, or job descriptions. They contain all the necessary and desirable characteristics and competencies of the person who should come to the vacant job. Descriptions must be specific and shaped to the specific job, so they should be made for each job separately. One of the methods of determining competencies is the SKA analysis, which will be discussed in more detail below.
- 2) **Preparation of questions that will examine certain competencies.** The questions must be formulated in a way that will enable the identification of the competencies we are focused on. Competence cards can also be used as a significant resource in the formulation of questions. Competency cards consist of 49 cards classified into three areas: social competencies; personal competencies; professional and methodological competencies, 11 cards of interest and 10 cards with detailed tasks for checking certain competencies.

Competency cards provide a systematic examination of user competencies, contributing to focused and structured work. It is recommended that indicators of the existence of a certain competence be defined at this stage. These are the actions that will indicate to us that the competence is present in the client we work with (positive indicators) or not present (negative indicators). It is often possible to find competence indicators in well-defined occupational profiles or training programs.

### 3) Conducting an interview or test

### 4) Interpretation and evaluation of answers

Based on the responses received from the client, it is assessed whether he has developed competence that is subject to verification or not, and to what extent. It is necessary to focus on the client's behaviour in the described situation and check whether it is an indicator of the existence of the competence being checked. If there are defined indicators, the process is greatly facilitated.

Such profiling of candidates largely enables easier realization of the pairing process with companies. It is much easier when there is a standardization of occupational qualifications, but when this is not the case, communication and cooperation of all parties around the definition of competencies for a particular job is of great importance.

The development of skills-based profiling and matching tools constitutes a key element of such approaches insofar as it has the potential to better target services for individual jobseekers and allocate resources more effectively and efficiently.

### Recommendations for development of Module with Entrance tests and Job Expectations of young people looking for employment

In the successful harmonization of supply and demand for labor in the labor market, on the one hand, there is career guidance and guidance of young people, and on the other hand, designing trainings based on the real requirements of employers. The necessary competencies for one job are the essence of the problem. Young people should be directed towards deficient occupations and develop the necessary competencies to perform them, and on the other hand, by considering the needs of employers, educational modules are developed that develop the necessary competencies in young people. In order for the educational module to be suitable to the requirements of employers, it must be developed solely based on the real needs of the workplace. Modules should be narrowly specified, with an emphasis on practical work, and address only areas that develop specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes in individuals. In addition to the content of the modules and the methodology of module development (which will be discussed later), a decisive influence on the success of the training has a successful selection of candidates who will be motivated to successfully adopt new knowledge and skills. In our work on this topic so far, the induction of the entrance test has proven to be a good method of selecting candidates for some trainings. It is recommended that the test on the one hand assess the necessary minimum knowledge that the candidate should have for a particular profession, and on the other hand, to assess the general competencies of candidates and their ability to successfully perform the job for which they are trained. The minimum of knowledge can be assessed through theoretical and practical testing, depending on the training in question, and competencies can be assessed by a competency test that already exists as a developed tool on the market. The competency test we use in our work is a Swiss competency test that has proven to be a

very good tool in everyday work. Some countries have standardized competencies for all available occupations, so assessing competencies as well as matching test results in that case is easier. However, countries that do not yet have standardized competencies must provide conditions for close cooperation between training providers and the economy. The economy is crucial in defining the necessary competencies for a certain occupation, and only by properly defining and matching can a successful selection of candidates be made.

On the other hand, we must not neglect career guidance and counseling as the key to successful selection of candidates for training. In addition to the need for early career guidance and active involvement in this topic, for the specific selection of candidates to participate in a training, the following tools are of great importance: get to know the profession, practice test and job shadowing. By getting to know the profession, the candidate can also self-assess whether he is capable and whether he wants to pursue the profession. This reduces the percentage of drop ups during the trainings themselves. In order to ensure the quality of these actions, it has been shown that the training institution itself is an access point to all parties involved in the training and that it provides all the services that may be needed during the process. In Serbia in particular, career guidance is legally regulated, but its practical application has been called into question due to the inconsistency of the work of entities dealing with it and inadequate staff, as well as the quality of career services. Based on these shortcomings, as well as the need, services have been developed that represent a link between all actors in the labor market and enable quality matching of supply and demand. Such entities are mainly developed in the non-governmental sector and one of them is the Job Info Center, which is managed by our association. The work of the Job Info Center will be described in detail later. In this section, we emphasize only the activities related to the selection of candidates for training.

Job info center in close cooperation with employers develops a training curriculum for a particular occupation. Based on the needs of the employer, the necessary knowledge and competencies of the candidates who would eventually be included in the training are defined. Candidates are animated and invited through our channels and are recorded in a database. Candidates are given workshops "get to know the profession" so that the candidates themselves can initially assess their desire and motivation and willingness to engage in a specific job, and their expectations from future work. After that, the selection of candidates is approached on the basis of tests of knowledge and competencies that are designed in cooperation with the economy. After obtaining the results and matching the required competencies, there is an interview with the employers themselves, so that they make the final selection of candidates (employers are involved in the training itself by doing the practical part of the training in companies, so this selection they choose people who will be part of their companies for a certain period of time). This complete process of selecting

candidates with an entrance test and assessment of expectations ensures a realistic selection of training participants, which ensures the quality of training and then the quality of workers.

### Good practices in existing training modules for youth organizations with representatives from business and civil society

The position of young people in Serbia is conditioned by a systematic view of their problems, and the state itself in recent years, by intervening in many areas, is trying to improve that position.

However, when it comes to young people, youth organizations dealing with youth policy are of great importance. These youth organizations operate in various areas of young people's lives and thus have different impacts on young people's lives. A special place is occupied by those youth organizations that deal with youth employment and career planning, i.e. career counselling of young people. It is necessary to say that these youth organizations have different human and material capacities, and that they are determined differently in their development. Their development is conditioned by various factors (what they do, where they are, who they work with, how much they exist), but it is clear that they all strive to reach some standards that are needed to make their services better and more effective.

One of the most important things for the work of youth organizations is their cooperation with official state authorities (institutions, institutions), in order to make their work more visible and ultimately more recognizable to the public.

When it comes to employment, there is large number of youth organizations that deal with this topic. However, there are no special standards and there are few organizations with a developed model that has been applied for a long time and reaches certain standards, but they are primarily with ad hoc projects that have very limited time and space. Two things usually cause this. The first thing is insufficient human capacities of organizations, i.e. insufficiently trained staff with professional knowledge within a certain area. When it comes to employment, there may be insufficiently trained trainers, career counsellors, mentors, etc. Most of the projects that are being implemented are based on the models outlined by the donor and lack the much-needed innovation that would cause a positive change in the existing situation that the project seeks to change.

Another very important thing is the non-existence of a network of associates, i.e. stakeholders with whom it cooperates on certain projects. Public institutions still have a certain amount of reservations about civil society organizations that are not recognized as an equal factor in the systemic development of society. Only through joint efforts and cooperation of official bodies and civil society is it possible to make the expected change in the lives of young people.

An ideal example that illustrates this situation is the system of career counselling in the Republic of Serbia. This system is conceived as a synergistic performance of civil society organizations, educational institutions and the business sector. This is the only way to intervene in a complex area such as youth employment and career planning. The good fact is that in Serbia, through the Strategy of Career Guidance and Counseling, the inclusion of young generations in economic flows is envisaged. Career guidance and counseling is only one of the aspects of connecting the economy and the school, i.e. educational institutions with the world of work. Career guidance and counseling is an important stage in reforming the entire education system in Serbia. Through project, strategic and legal measures, Serbia has been working on career counseling for two decades. However, we are still far from the full coverage of young people, the representation of career counseling in schools is already partial, which limits access to some young people. The Law on Secondary Education from 2013 envisages career counseling in schools, but teams have not yet been established in all schools that would systematically deal with this important topic. The problem of lack of knowledge, skills and guidelines for the implementation of this procedure is the main obstacle to the full capacity of career counseling in the entire territory of the Republic of Serbia.

Since 2002, Serbia has approached the modern concept of understanding and applying career counseling. Based on this concept, career guidance and counseling is: "A series of activities that enable individuals of any age, at any time in their lives, to identify their own abilities, competencies and interests, to make decisions concerning their education, training and profession and to manage the course of their lives in the field of learning, work and other areas in which they can acquire and apply abilities and competencies" (EU Council of Ministers Resolution, 2004).

The first strategic document that placed career guidance and counseling in a systemic framework is the Career Guidance and Counseling Strategy, which was adopted in 2010 at the proposal of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. This document was created in the context and based on the following regulations: Labor Law, Law on Employment and Insurance, Law on Secondary School, National Employment Action Plan, Law on Fundamentals of the Education System and Action Plan for Implementation of the National Youth Strategy.

This document tried to present the career guidance system as a unique system that is realized in the fields of education and employment, and is based on common standards. This strategic document laid the foundation for the systematic development of career guidance and counseling, however the implementation of this strategy could seem to yield better results. If the system of financing career guidance and counseling is clearly defined, it is clear that the state itself must invest more funds that will be used for this purpose. What is certainly good

is the clearly defined action plan that accompanies this strategy, and based on when many initiatives and programs were born that contributed to the development of career guidance and counseling in Serbia.

Career centers aimed at different users are envisaged as the most important bearers of realization, so career centers in primary and secondary schools, career centers in higher education institutions, at the university level, career centers for adult education, career centers within citizens' associations (youth organizations) and career centers at youth offices. The last two are especially important, because they are largely focused on young users, and there is a satisfactory number of them. It should be said that the Republic of Serbia itself helped in the establishment of career centers in youth offices, and that had a certain effect immediately after the adoption of the strategy of career guidance and counseling. Of course, these centers are not sustainable, because the youth office itself deals with other things, and the lack of human capacity has contributed simply, either to shutting down the service, or just one type of support, to career counseling conducted by other entities. On the other hand, the situation is somewhat better with some youth organizations. This is primarily because youth organizations with associates who do not have to be permanently employed reach certain standards in career counseling and by participating in longer-term projects can achieve significant progress in the environment in which they operate.

The biggest challenge in career counseling is the discontinuity of strategic and cross-sectoral coordinated support for the development of a lifelong career guidance and counseling system in Serbia, which threatens to jeopardize the improvement of a sustainable, accessible and quality CCG system in secondary education. In addition, there is no adequate by-law governing the area of lifelong career guidance and counseling.

In the end, it should be emphasized that the system of career guidance and counseling has come to life in the Republic of Serbia, but that this system should be nurtured by training all actors and cooperation of business, schools and youth organizations at a much higher level than it is now. In this sense, any initiative that focuses on strengthening the capacity and cooperation of stakeholders in the field of career guidance and counseling makes a great contribution to this area and is a pioneering endeavor that will later yield visible changes and results.



## Identification of best practices adequate for establishing the necessary capacity

From the previous text, we have seen that the institutions that provide career services, as well as services and tools for the effective implementation of career guidance are constantly evolving. At the local level, the existence of various services and institutions dealing with this topic can be best seen. Through the formal education system, career guidance is implemented as a legal obligation, by the activities of career teams. The National Employment Service also provides services in this area, as well as non-governmental organizations that sporadically and by projects deal with this topic. Due to the actions of different actors, without coordination and with limited capacities (insufficiently trained staff, dealing with additional jobs, etc.), there is a situation that many activities are repeated at the local level, and the effects are minimized, there is a form without essence. Therefore, it proved necessary to have an organization at the local level that will serve as a bridge between all institutions that will connect the capacities of all actors and act in places where there is a need for intervention.

Through practice, it has been noticed that it is best for the organization to be in a form such as e.g. NGO, because in that case the organization can flexibly respond to changed circumstances, if necessary, without a rigid scheme of decision-making and action. The organization establishes cooperation with all actors in the local labor market and must have the technical, spatial and human capacity for successful implementation of career counseling and guidance.

It turned out to be the best model is organizations (career centers, associations, youth offices), which as mentioned above represents a bridge between clients, public administration, education and business sector and is able to mobilize all their resources in order to reduce the gap between labor supply and demand.

The main task of the organization in that sense is to help young people at the local level to get all the support from school to work in one place, to increase their capacities, get involved in the labor market and find a job easier.

Services for young people, career guidance and counseling on the one hand, and connecting with the economy and organizing trainings for acquiring knowledge and skills required on the labor market on the other hand, are being established.

Through career counseling, young people are helped to identify their own abilities, competencies and interests, to make decisions concerning their education, training and profession. The organization can obtain all the necessary information and advice, but can also direct them to institutions and experts who can be additional support in areas that go beyond the domain of the organization.

In order for the support to young people to be complete, close cooperation with the economy is established through constant communication and organization of sectoral working groups, within which the potentials and difficulties of individual sectors are defined. The best way to match the needs of employers with young people is a model of on-the-job training or work-based learning. In this way, companies have the opportunity to get a new, young, tailor-made workforce, and for young people a chance to get a job and improve their position in the labor market.

On-the-job training is an innovative model for raising the employability of young people, which combines theory and practice, and represents a model of acquiring certain knowledge and skills through working directly in the workplace, in a company with experienced mentors who transfer their knowledge. This allows participants to learn in a real work environment, become part of the company, and work culture. The training process is realized through several phases:

1. Identifying the needs of employers and networking
2. SKA analysis (analysis of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for a specific occupation)
3. Development of a training program according to which the training will be realized
4. Definition of the required candidate profile
5. Mobilization of interested candidates and their preparation for inclusion in the training program
6. Training of mentors to work with trainees
7. Realization of the training program in companies

The training itself requires good coordination and networking of all stakeholders, and the Organization has a very important role in this process.

This model of youth career guidance has been tested at the local level within the national project Education to Employment, and after 4 years of implementation has proven to be a model that gives very good results, and is desirable for both young people and companies. In addition, this model requires large capacities of both the organization and the employees, so constant education in that field is necessary.

In Serbia, there is no formal education for career counselors and the acquisition of comprehensive necessary competencies of youth organizations, and their education is done through non-formal education through sporadic training in various fields.



In order to avoid the issue of the quality of training for capacity building of organizations, some kind of standardization and design of training models for youth organizations is necessary, which would cover all topics and reach the necessary capacity to provide these services.

### General recommendations

Research on the supply and demand of labor leads to the conclusion that the direction in which the supply of labor is moving is not always the same as the direction in which the needs of employers are moving. This means that there is a possibility to influence young people in their choice of educational path and occupation, primarily through the process of career guidance and counseling conducted by youth organizations.

It is also necessary to influence the potential workforce by organizing various programs outside the formal education system.

Emphasis should be placed on the development of digital skills considering innovation and digital society, as well as on the development of practical skills through work in order to acquire the knowledge and skills needed by employers and thus ensure sustainable employability.

Also, our recommendation is to work on establishing a stronger connection between employers, educational institutions, as well as institutions that deal with career counseling. In this way, better coordination between these sectors would be achieved, and thus a more harmonized relationship between supply and demand in the labor market. The model of such cooperation, which has been tested in practice, is described in the analysis. Our recommendation is that such structures be established at the local level in order to improve the impact on increasing youth employability.

## ROMANIA

### Introduction

Today's young generation is facing new and diverse challenges of social, cultural, and work integration kind. More than ever labour market became more European than national, new job opportunities aroused in different EU countries, and working force mobility seems to be the best way to fill the job vacancies that cannot be occupied by local young talents. Besides, young workers are the most vulnerable category in terms of unemployment.

The International Labour Organization(ILO) mentions in the report *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020*<sup>9</sup> that the labour force participation rate of young people (aged 15–24) has continued to decline and the continuing decline in young people's engagement in the labour market reflects not only the increasing enrolment in education but also the persistence of the youth NEET challenge, especially among young women. Current ILO statistics show that young people are three times as likely as adults (25 years and older) to be unemployed. Globally, the youth is considered as a significant potential supply for the labour market, with regional variation. Still, one-fifth of young people worldwide currently have NEET status, which means they are neither gaining experience in the labour market, nor receiving an income from work, nor enhancing their education and skills. The ILO report also shows the young people's concerns about the possibility of their jobs being replaced by robots and artificial intelligence, despite being early adopters of new technologies. Worldwide, the increase in the demand for skills caused by the emergence of new technologies is welcome, as are the rising levels of educational attainment among young people. Both would generate increases in productivity. New technologies are disrupting labour markets across the world by both destroying and creating jobs.

Moreover, according to the findings of a survey conducted on a significant number of young people, employers and post-secondary education providers across eight countries considers that the main reason for youth unemployment is not, as expected, the scarcity of jobs, but the lack of skills required by the employers. It is as if employers, education providers, and the young lived in parallel universes, unable to connect with each other<sup>10</sup>. The conclusions of the

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<sup>9</sup> ILO 2020 - *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020: Technology and the future of jobs* , International Labour Office, Geneva, 2020

<sup>10</sup> McKinsey Center for Government (2012). *Education to employment: Getting Europe's youth into work*  
[http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/social\\_sector/converting\\_education\\_to\\_employment\\_in\\_europe](http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/social_sector/converting_education_to_employment_in_europe)

survey are in line with what other studies have found. An EU report<sup>11</sup>, for example, highlights the skill shortage in Europe and mentions the strategies of certain employers to address it: on-the-job training and hiring people with potential rather than certified skills.

Looking at the causes of youth unemployment only a few consistent studies have been published in Romania, but the findings were in line with the McKinsey survey concerning the mismatch between young people skills and what employers are looking for. Romanian young people entering the job market perceived their skills and competencies as being adequate based on the grades that they obtained during the school years and they hardly accept the fact that employers are looking for different kinds of skills, more applied ones<sup>12</sup>.

Also, a report released by the World Economic Forum<sup>13</sup> mentioned that some job categories will decline, while others will register a visible growth. Jobs in the field of business and financial operations will grow significantly, while routine-based jobs, such as in offices and administration, will sharply decline. New occupations and fields of specialization are expected to emerge in cutting-edge industries.

More than half of Europe's workforce will face significant transitions. Automation will require all workers to acquire new skills. About 94 million workers may not need to change occupations but will especially need retraining, as technology handles 20 percent of their current activities. While some workers in declining occupations may be able to find similar types of work, 21 million may need to change occupations by 2030. Most of them lack tertiary education<sup>14</sup>. Newly created jobs will require more sophisticated skills that are already scarce today. It is foreseen that other occupations will become obsolete over the coming years up to 2030. Major skills disruptions are already evident: 35% of nowadays' core skills will have changed by 2030. The analysis of the top 10 skills in 2015 and 2020 shows that, while complex problem solving still occupies the first position, second and third positions will no longer be held by coordinating with others and by people management, but, instead, by critical thinking and creativity. In 2015, the same organization, together with Boston

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<sup>11</sup> European Commission(2016). *Skills Challenges in Europe*. EU Skills Panorama. Retrieved March 12, 2020, from [https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/analytical\\_highlights/skills-challenges-europe-2016](https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/analytical_highlights/skills-challenges-europe-2016)

<sup>12</sup> Epure, M., & Vasilescu, R. (2016). A Comparative Study on Students and Employers' Perception on Competencies and Skills Acquired to Access the Job Market. *Revista de pedagogie*, 1/2016. Bucuresti: Institutul de Stiinte ale Educatiei

<sup>13</sup> World Economic Forum. (2016). *The Future of Jobs. Employment, Skills, and Workforce Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution*. Retrieved May 2020 from [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_FOJ\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_Jobs.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_FOJ_Executive_Summary_Jobs.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Smit, S., Tacke, T., Lund S., Manyika, J., Thiel, L.(2020) –*The future of work in Europe: Automation, workforce transition, and the shifting geography of employment*, McKinsey Global Institute

Consulting Group, released another report on *New vision for Education*<sup>15</sup>. The study offers a more thorough analysis of the skills needed by a job candidate to compete in the twenty-first century. The buzzword seems to be non-routine, both interpersonal and analytical skills.

Recent developments in the labour market, at the global scale and inside EU, reveal an ugly truth: youth unemployment is one of the most significant societal challenges of the twenty-first century.

Current statistics report that in the EU-27 in 2019 were 2.8 million unemployed persons aged 15-24 and 18.2 million persons of that age group in the labour market, according to the EU labour force survey. This gives a youth unemployment rate of 15.1 %. Recently, EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 has been introduced with 11 European Youth Goals, among them quality employment set as one of the objectives. Therefore, is the time that every EU country, Romania as well, to make considerable efforts to achieve these goals. Young human capital needs to be “nourished”, protected by appropriate policies and empowered with skills and competencies that are matching the labor market requirements.

The current country report is looking at youth employment issues as they have been identified by authors or highlighted by governmental institutions. An integrated policy framework to support young people in securing decent jobs in the current context is critical for the future socio-economic progress of Romania. Policies are required to generate a sufficient number of decent jobs, to equip young people with the skills required for those jobs, to ensure that they enjoy social protection and have rights at work.

### Description of economic situation of the country and key features of labour market with focus on youth employment/ unemployment in the country

#### **Including:**

- c. The circumstances causing the youth unemployment;
- d. Key trends in youth employment/ unemployment

#### **Romania – the economic landscape**

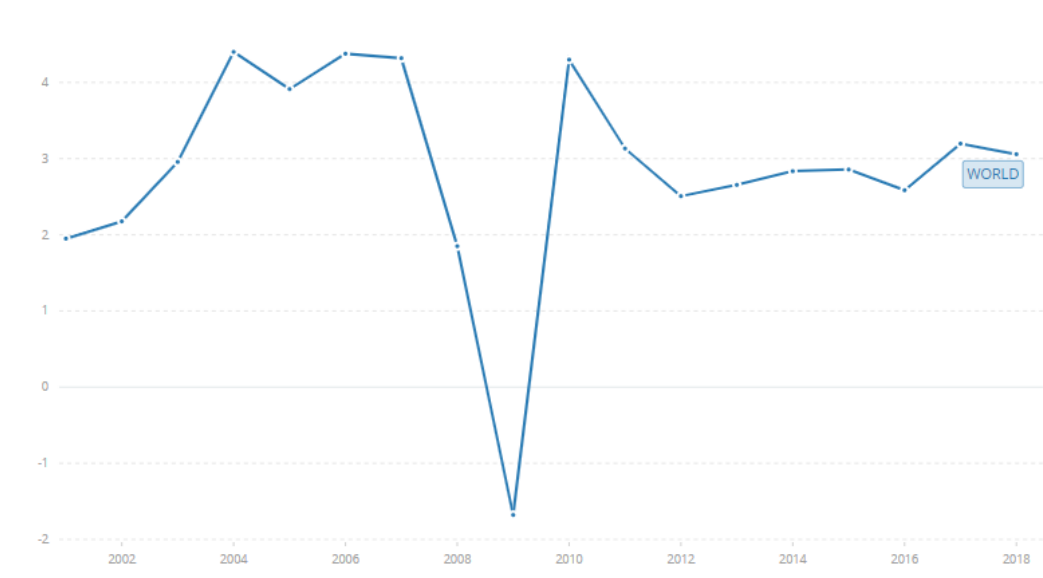
Economic globalization has led to a more connected world with far-reaching impact on production arrangements, international trade, and foreign investment, economic growth, labor market, and many other sectors of the economy.

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<sup>15</sup> World Economic Forum. (2015). *New vision for Education:Unlocking the Potential of Technology - World Economic Forum in collaboration with BCG*. Retrieved May 8, 2020, from [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEFUSA\\_NewVisionforEducation\\_Report2015.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEFUSA_NewVisionforEducation_Report2015.pdf)

However, the global trends of the past decade shown a continuous economic growth<sup>16</sup>(Fig 1), the euro-zone economies have also experienced economic growth (Fig.2) but the rhythm decreased from 2015 to 2018 as a consequence of the influence of internal unfavourable factors, quite different as an origin.

Romania's economy had experienced a slow growth in the past five years <sup>17</sup>, the annual variation of GDP indicate a relative recovery during 2014-2017 with an important decrease in 2018. Looking at Romania's performance, according to the same indicator, one can see steady growth with a significant pick in 2017 of 7,1% annual growth rate.



World GDP growth (annual %)

(Source: World Bank Database)

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?end=2018&locations=1W-RO&start=2001>

<sup>16</sup> World Bank Database

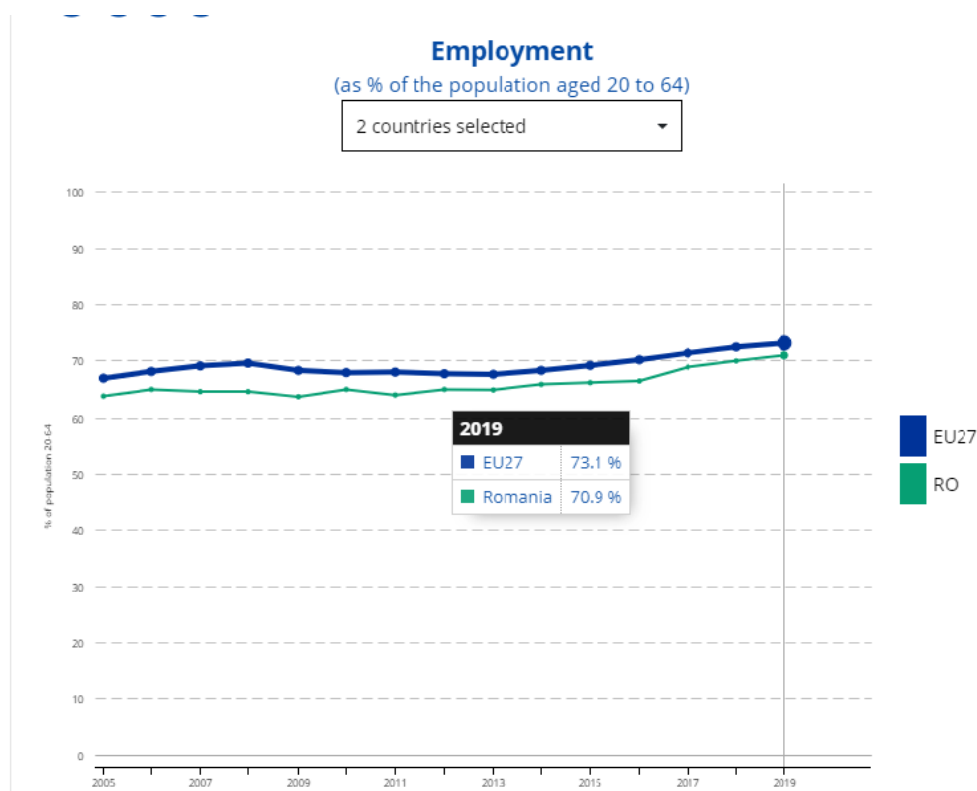
<sup>17</sup> World Bank Database <https://data.worldbank.org/country/romania> accessed at 14 May 2020



GDP annual growth rate – Romania in comparison to EU and World  
(source: World Bank Database)

Romania's economic growth model is based on consumer spending which can affect the country's ability to reach EU living standards in a sustainable way. The 2008-2009 economic crisis affected the world economy and as a consequence, the Romanian economy registered a negative GDP annual growth rate (Fig. 2). The world crisis generated economic downsizing, unemployment, with unprecedented figures in youth unemployment in the European region and Romania share the same trends. The euro-zone economy has been rather resilient being supported by the labour market revival. The employed population has raised, the highest EU employment rate (for persons aged 20 to 64) since 2005 was recorded in 2019 at 73.1 % and the unemployment rate has dropped recording the lowest value since 2008.<sup>18</sup>

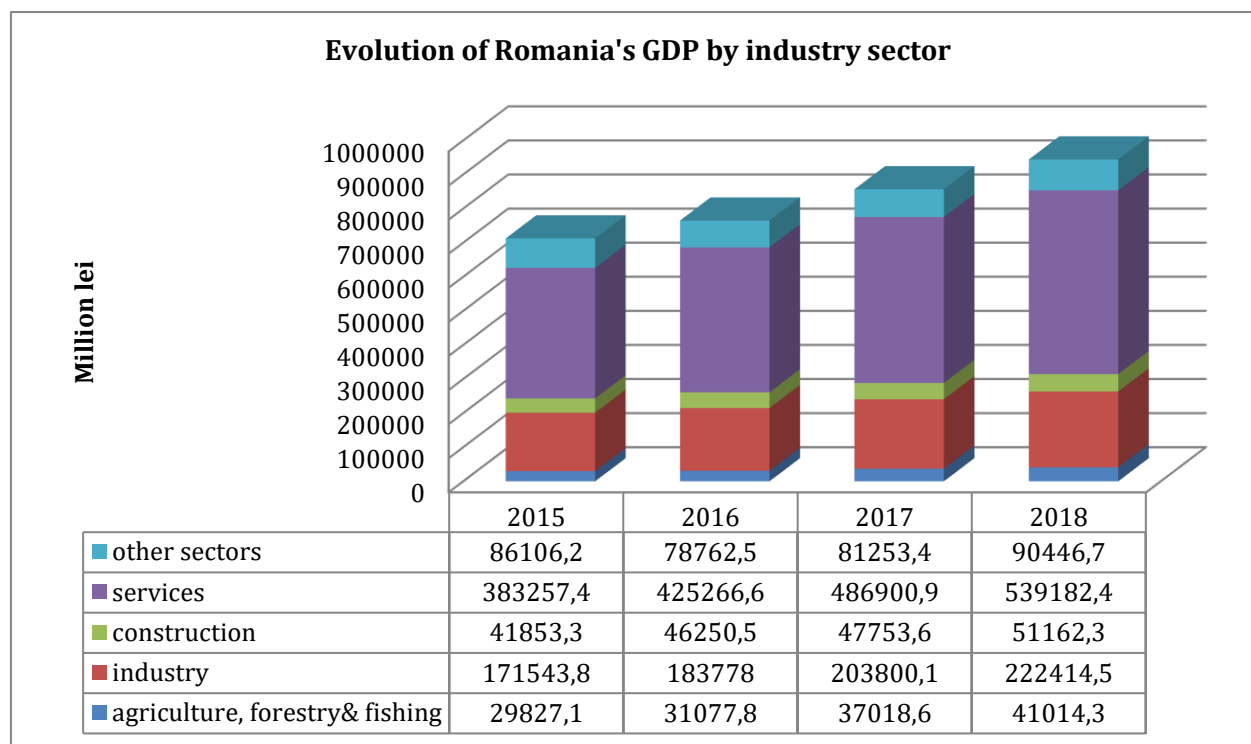
<sup>18</sup> EU employment statistics



Employment (total, female, male, youth and senior),  
2005-2019 (% of the population aged 20 to 64)  
*Source: Eurostat*

The evolution of GDP indicates a slow growth in the past years (Fig. 4) with some industry sectors growing faster than others (services comparing with industry).





Romania's GDP trends by industry sector

(Source: authors' contribution based on National Statistics)

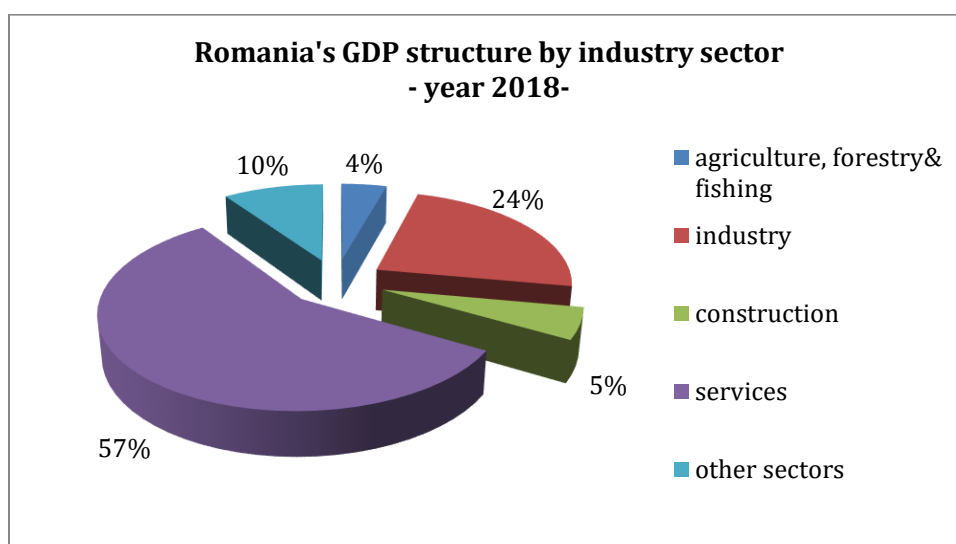
In 2018, the structure of the gross domestic product by activity sector (Fig. 5) was:

- services had the highest contribution to GDP formation with a percentage of 57.1% of the total;
- industry contributed with 23.6% to GDP formation positioning on the second place;
- construction represented 5.4% to GDP formation;
- and agriculture, forestry, and fishing contributed with 4.3% to the GDP.

The agriculture represents 4.3% of Romania's GDP and employs 22% of the country's active population<sup>19</sup>. The main resources and agricultural production in Romania are cereals, sugar beets and potatoes. However, production remains very low in comparison with the country's

<sup>19</sup> World Bank (2020) – Romania –global outlook

potential capacity (more than one-third of the land is arable). About 25% of the country is covered by forest (especially around Transylvania), and the logging industry is developing very fast and is generating significant ecological concerns. Romania has a limited energy dependence thanks to coal, oil, gas, and uranium reserves.



GDP Structure by industry sectors in 2018  
(source: authors' contribution using the INSSE data)

The GDP structure indicates a consistent contribution of the services sector (from 53,8% in 2015 to 57,1% in 2018), followed by industry (e.g. manufacturing etc.) of which contribution declined from 24% in 2015 to 23,6 % in 2018. It seems that Romania's economy is mainly centered on the services sector, representing 57% of the GDP and employs nearly 48% of the nation's workforce. The technology sector has also seen immense growth in recent years, due to the emergence of a high-qualified workforce whose cost is lower than the European average. Romania's ICT sector reached 6.2% of GDP in 2017 and the ICT services exports exceeded EUR 4.5 billion in 2018<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Ciucea, A et.al - Romania in figures, National Institute of Statistics, Bucharest, 2019

Looking at Romanian industry sector evolution, one can see that the agricultural sector represents a basic branch of the national economy which has significant economic and social importance and implications. With an agricultural area of nearly 16 million hectares, Romania could be (after Poland with 17 million hectares of the agricultural area) the second largest producer of agricultural products in the CEE region. Romania has the biggest agricultural area of EU and is among the ten big players in world exports of grain and corn, but the agricultural sector is facing difficulties as poor mechanization and land fragmentation, the lack of capital and irrigations as well as lack of professional training of the agriculture workers. Within the structure of agricultural production, crop production is prevalent, with a 70.3% share in the total production in 2018, as compared to 28.3% for animal production and 1.4% for agricultural services.

### **Romania's labor market characteristics**

Romania performs poorly on most of the indicators of the Social Scoreboard supporting the European Pillar of Social Rights. The high economic growth has translated into better job prospects and increased household disposable incomes. However, Romania still has a high number of early school leavers and, although decreasing, a high number of young people not in education, employment or training. This raises concerns about equal opportunities and access to employment. Romania has not yet achieved a mature social dialogue, and its Social Scoreboard performance indicates a critical situation on reducing poverty.<sup>21</sup>

The labour market is under increasing stress. The lowest unemployment rate in a decade (3.8 % in 2018), a declining labour force and persistent skills shortages have brought Romania close to full employment, which makes recruitment difficult and drives wage growth. Employees' earnings are low compared to the EU average but the strong growth since 2016, also driven by hikes in the minimum wage and public-sector wages, risk putting pressure on competitiveness if not accompanied by corresponding productivity increases.

On January 1st, 2018, Romania's usually resident population was 19 530,6 thousand inhabitants, of which 10,0 million women (51.1%)<sup>22</sup>. The population is 56,4 % urban and 43,6% rural.

In 2018, the economically active population was 9.069 thousand persons (decreasing as compared to the previous year), out of which 96,6% belonged to the working-age group (15-64 years).

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<sup>21</sup> EU-Country Report Romania, 2019

<sup>22</sup> National Statistics Institute, [www.insse.ro](http://www.insse.ro)

*Economically active population, employment and unemployment<sup>23</sup>*

*-thousands persons-*

|                                               | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|-----------------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| <b>Economically active population - total</b> | 9159 | 8979 | 9120 | 9069 |
| Female                                        | 3916 | 3834 | 3936 | 3883 |
| Urban                                         | 5013 | 4962 | 4994 | 4955 |
| <b>Employment - total</b>                     | 8535 | 8449 | 8671 | 8689 |
| Female                                        | 3687 | 3643 | 3777 | 3748 |
| Urban                                         | 4662 | 4684 | 4769 | 4769 |
| <b>ILO<sup>1)</sup> unemployed - total</b>    | 624  | 530  | 449  | 380  |
| Female                                        | 229  | 191  | 159  | 135  |
| Urban                                         | 351  | 278  | 225  | 186  |

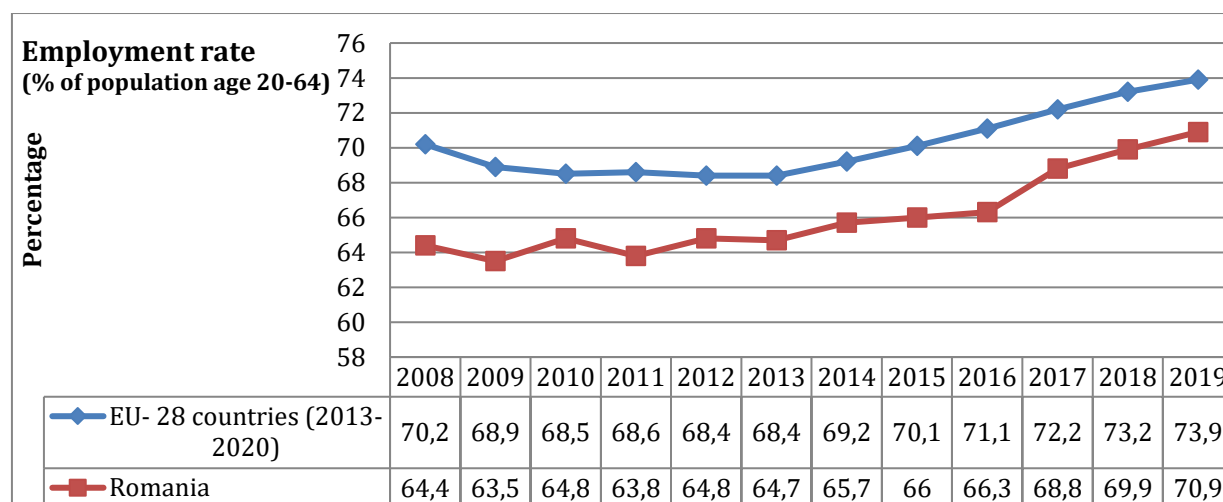
*<sup>1)</sup>according to the international definition of International Labour Office*

Economically active population is 57,2 % male and 54,6 % is situated in the urban area. Employment increased over recent years, reaching 8.689 thousand persons in 2018 (as compared to 8.671 thousand persons in 2017 and 8.449 thousand persons in 2016).

The number of unemployed registered with the National Agency for Employment (ANOFM) had a downward evolution since 2015, reaching 380 thousand persons at the end of 2018. The registered unemployment rate showed the same evolution during 2015-2018 (accounting for 5.0% at the end of 2015, 4.8% in 2016, 4.0% in 2017, falling to 3.3% at the end of 2018).

<sup>23</sup> Ciurea A et al.- Romania in figures, National Institute of Statistics, 2019

The evolution of the employment rate in Romania is presented below in comparison to EU-28 countries in 2008-2019, and the trend is similar.



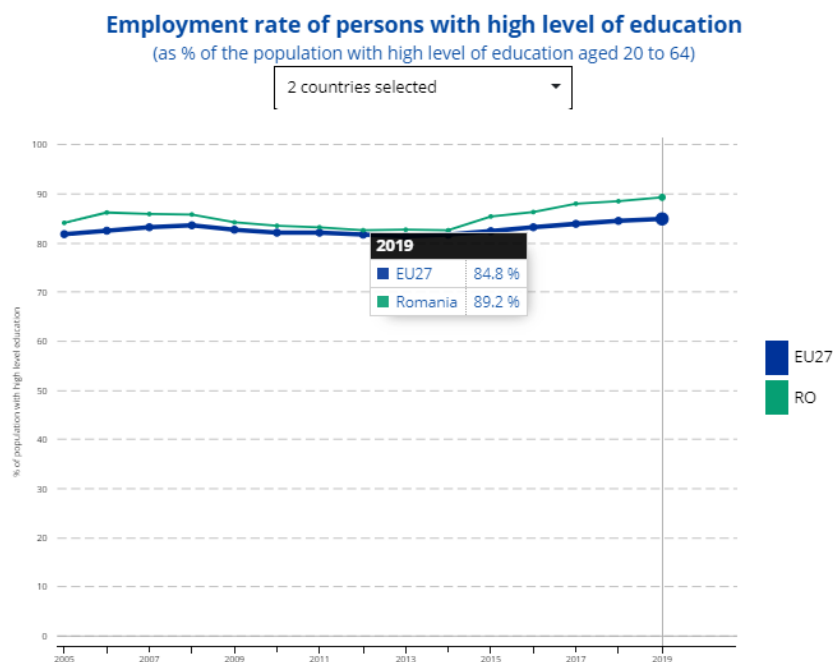
Employment rate trend

(source: authors' contribution using EUROSTAT data)

In 2010, the European Council adopted the Europe 2020 strategy in attempt to reinforce the EU economy. One of the strategy's main target is to raise the employment rate of the population aged 20-64 to at least 75%, and it is almost achieved, Romania having 73,1% employment rate at the end of 2019.<sup>24</sup> At EU-27 level, the gender employment gap has decreased since 2005 but the employment rate in 2019 was still 11.7 % higher for men than for women, in Romania the men employment is 13,8 % higher than women employment. Until 2002, most of employment was in rural area. Beginning with 2003, most of the employed persons had their permanent residence in urban area (54.9% in 2018). The category of employees prevails among employed persons (74.8% in 2018). The level of educational attainment affect employment rates considerably. The employment rate of persons (aged 20-64) who had completed education at high level, i.e. short-cycle tertiary, bachelor's, master's or doctoral levels (or equivalents)(ISCED levels 5-8) was 84.8 % at EU level and 89,2 % in Romania in 2019 <sup>25</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Eurostat

<sup>25</sup> Eurostat



Employment rate by level of education, 2005-2019  
(% of the population with low/medium/high level of education aged 20 to 64)  
*Source: Eurostat<sup>26</sup>*

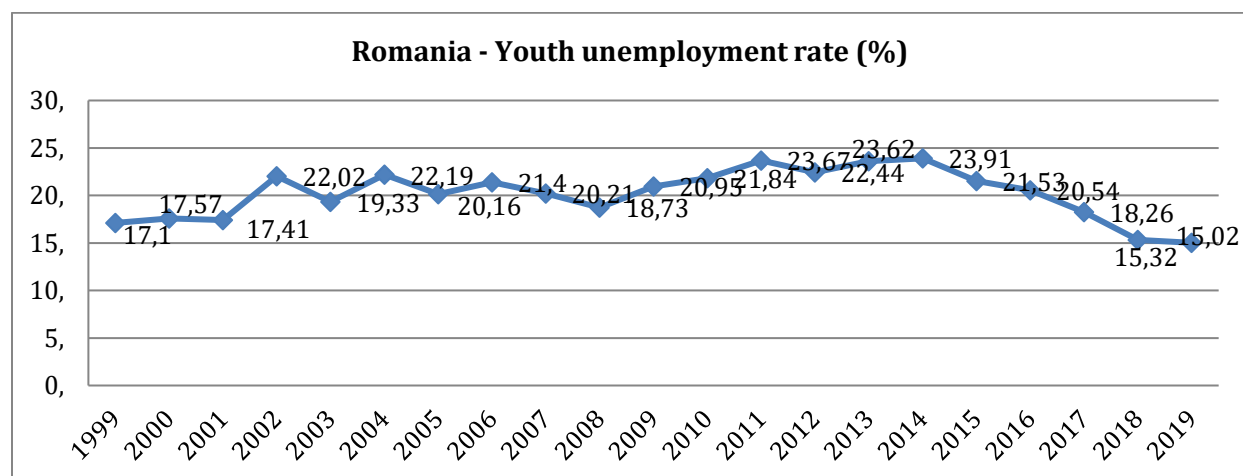
In the attempt to decrease unemployment in EU countries, in the post-crisis period, the European Commission in 2012 made a set of proposals for measures to boost jobs through a dedicated employment package. The proposals among others targeted the demand-side of job creation, encouraging hiring by reducing labor taxation and supporting business start-ups. Moreover, the proposals aimed to identify economic areas with potential for job creation, such as green economy, health services and ICT.

Unemployment rates vary significantly across regions. The capital region and the metropolitan areas in the Vest and Nord-Vest are service-driven regions which offer better labour market opportunities and attract more qualified workers. In contrast, in the regions with a manufacturing economic base, the urban industrial centres attract mainly unqualified workers from the neighbouring rural areas. The impressive economic growth Romania has been experiencing during the last few years has put increasing pressure on employers to find skilled workers in order to expand their businesses but the latest official data show that

<sup>26</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Employment\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Employment_statistics)

Romania is far from being considered to be in a severe “workforce crisis” situation. According to official data, workforce shortage is concentrated in some areas like services (3.4 percent job vacancy rate in Q4 2018), transport (1.9 percent) and IT (1.8 percent), a consequence of the fact that much of the economic growth in Romania is the product of a consumer bonanza, stimulated by years of wage-led growth government policy. In fact, Romania ranks among the EU member states with low job vacancy rates despite claims of a widespread workforce crisis. The number of unoccupied jobs in Romania rose by 4,147 year-on-year, to 58,810 in the last quarter of 2018.

Despite all these European and national measures, In the last quarter of last year, 16.2 percent of young people in Romania were considered unemployed, compared with a national unemployment rate of 4.2 percent, according to fresh official data. *“The rate young people neither in employment nor in education or training in Romania signals difficulties in transitioning from the education system to the labour market and the problems connected to employment for the young population, outside the education system,”* said the National Institute of Statistics (INS) in a recent study<sup>27</sup>. The unemployment rate among the young people in Romania aged 15-24 years maintains at a high level despite widespread workforce crisis suggesting difficulties in the transition from the education system to the labour market.



Romania- the evolution of the youth unemployment rate, period 1999-2019

(source: World Bank, Survey name: World Development indicators, [worldbank.org](http://worldbank.org).released at Dec.2019)

<sup>27</sup> National Institute of statistics – Romania in figures, 2019



The situation is even worse considering the young people in Romania aged between 20 and 34 years. In Romania, 21.4 percent of youth aged 20-34 years were neither in employment, nor in education or training in 2017 and the rate is higher in the case of women. The rate young people neither in employment nor in education or training shows wide variations between regions in Romania. In 2017, the highest value of the indicator for the young people aged 15-24 years was recorded in southern Transylvania / Centru region (22.3 percent), followed by Sud-Est (20.5 percent) and Sud-Muntenia (19.6 percent).

Youth unemployment causes are various:

- low flexibility of the labour market;
- low interest for higher education and the temptation to leave the country without a diploma;
- lack of early work experience for young people entering the labor market;
- education - in Romania, education seems to be part of the problem not part of the solution when we are studying youth unemployment<sup>28</sup> . Romania has the lowest percentage of tertiary education graduates from the EU, with 26.3% for the age segment of 30 – 34 years (Eurostat, 2018a)
- the available skills are not keeping up with the needs of the labour market and future work patterns
- the lack of basic competences among the Roma and people in vulnerable situations do not allow them to fully benefit from economic expansion and to gain a foothold in the labour market.<sup>29</sup>
- insufficient supply of skills which also contribute to determining the quality of work, above-all through its impact on wages;
- youth wages - wages are likely to have a negative impact on youth employment in as much as, the higher are the relative wages of youth with respect to those of adults the more incentives there are to employ adults as opposed to youths
- migration – young Romanians think that leaving the country is one way to fight with unemployment. Approximately 3.4 million Romanians live abroad. In 2015 Romania entered the Top 20 countries that became the source of migration at international level.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Marginean, S- Youth Unemployment in Romania: Post-Crisis Challenges *Procedia Economics and Finance* 16 ( 2014 ) 613 – 620

<sup>29</sup> EU Commission Communication to the EU Parliament - Country Report Romania 2019 Including an In-Depth Review on the prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances, Brussels, 27.02.2019

<sup>30</sup> United Nations. (2016). International Migration Report 2015: Highlights. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division.

- aggregate demand - A fall in aggregate demand will lead to a fall in the demand for labour in general and consequently for young labour as well as adult workers<sup>31</sup>

Youth need specific preparation to enter the labour market, and is not about the professional skills and competencies that schools/universities provide through educational programs but mostly about basic skills of a twenty-one century : digital literacy, ICT communication skills, etc. Unfortunately, youth Romanians tend to solve unemployment seeing the migration to western developed countries as a solution. Migration generates shortages in workforce in some industries , therefore Romanian employers import workers from outside EU, especially from asian countries like Vietnam, Bangladesh, India.

**Diagnostics on required skills of young people for sustainable employment opportunities considering innovation and digital society, review on the gap of policies and capacity building of youth organizations**

**Including:**

- c. labour market requirements,
- d. impact of youth organizations;

As in all the other European countries, also in Romania, a strong digital economy is vital for innovation, growth, jobs, and competitiveness. The spread of digital is having a significant impact on the labour market and the type of skills needed in the economy and society. In June 2016, the European Commission published a new Skills Agenda for Europe, to strengthen human capital, employability, and competitiveness and to present some actions and initiatives with the ambition to tackle the digital skills deficit in Europe. This agenda sets out to improve the quality and relevance of skills formation, to make skills and qualifications more visible and comparable and advancing skills intelligence, documentation, and informed career choices. The European Commission has been monitoring Member States' digital competitiveness with the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI)<sup>32</sup> reports since 2015.

**a. Romania in the Digital Economy and Society**

**According to Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) 2019, Romania ranks 27th out of the 28 EU Member States** in the European Commission. Although Romania shows slight improvements in performance in almost all of the DESI dimensions measured, its ranking

<sup>31</sup> O'Higgins, N. – The challenge of youth unemployment, International Labour Office, Geneva, 1997

<sup>32</sup> DESI covers 5G readiness, Above basic digital skills, At least basic software skills, Female ICT specialists, ICT graduates, People who never used the Internet, Professional social networks, Doing an online course, Online consultations and voting, Individuals selling online, Big data, Medical data exchange, and e-Prescriptions.

remained stable, given that the overall progress was slow. Romania performs best in the Connectivity dimension, thanks to the wide availability of fast and ultrafast fixed broadband networks (especially in urban areas). However, digitization of the economy is lagging behind, more than one-fifth of Romanians have never used the Internet, and fewer than a third have basic digital skills.

**As regards the Human capital dimension, Romania ranks 27th among EU countries, well below the EU average.**

**Basic and advanced digital skills** levels remain the lowest among the EU Member States. Only 29 % of people aged between 16 and 74 have basic digital skills (57 % in the EU as a whole), and 10 % have advanced digital skills (against an EU average of 31 %).

Despite the increase in the **percentage of ICT specialists** from last year, they represent a lower proportion of the workforce by comparison with the EU as a whole (2.1 % against an EU average of 3.7 %).

When it comes to **ICT graduates**, Romania is performing well, as the country ranks 6th among the EU Member States, with 4.9 % of all graduates.

As regards **female ICT specialists**, Romania ranks 16th, as they represent 1.3 % of Romanian women in employment, which is just slightly below the EU average of 1.4 %. Romania has the third-highest share of women among all ICT specialists (25.7 % in 2017, against an EU average of 17.2 %)<sup>6</sup>. Romania ranks 11th in terms of the gender pay gap, with a 16 % difference in pay<sup>7</sup>.

Given that the number of ICT places at universities is limited and there is a lack of **ICT graduates**, there are several private companies investing in digital skills, offering IT specialization programmes. Several Romanian universities have started offering online courses (MOOC). The tax exemption provided for IT professionals in the country helps fill the high number of IT vacancies.

Concerning gender balance, **according to Women in Digital Scoreboard 2019, Romania is ranked 27 and scored 34.6 (EU: 50.0)**. Considering the use of the Internet and Internet users' skills, Romania is ranked 26, scored 34,7 (EU: 53,1), respectively, is ranked 28 and scored 24,5 (EU: 53,1). However, the situation is different when referring to Specialist skills and employment, where is ranked 13, scored 44,6 (EU: 43.9).

### **Labour market requirements**

In Romania, the number of jobs requiring digital skills available on the market is significantly higher than the supply. The 7,000 graduates of specialized faculties do not cover the annual needs of employers in the ITC sector, which slightly exceeds 15,000. Given the dynamics of

the ICT sector in Romania, the demand for staff in this field will grow in the coming years. This fact is also outlined by Skills Panorama CEDEFOP, when identifying a number of occupations as **mismatch priority occupations for Romania**, i.e., they are either in shortage or surplus.



Skills Panorama – mismatch priority occupations

As we can see in the above figure, ICT professionals belong to a high shortage of occupations for Romania.

An effective **assessment of the level of digital literacy requested by the Romanian employers** is presented in a recent academic study elaborated by Ulrike Stefanie Foerster-Pastor and Nina Golowko<sup>33</sup>. The results of their study show that from 91 job advertisements analyzed, 75% demanded IT skills. The level of digital literacy requested varied from medium to expert knowledge. The demand for higher literacy levels despite entry-level positions can be explained due to the high percentage job descriptions dedicated to IT services, which

<sup>33</sup> Foerster-Pastor, U.S., and Golowko, N. (2018), "The need for digital and soft skills in the Romanian business service industry", *Management & Marketing. Challenges for the Knowledge Society*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 831-847, DOI: 10.2478/mmcks-2018-0008.

could be addressed to students coming from the IT and Science field who are expected to have this high degree of literacy.

Considering the number of mentions by digital skill category, it is worth mentioning that out of 91 analyzed job descriptions 89 did mention at least one of the analyzed IT skill categories: **office application suits** – 39 mentions, **development environments** – 24 mentions, **network protocols** - 18 mentions, **programming languages** – 11 mentions, **service desk management** – 8 mentions, **social media** – 7 mentions, **operating systems** – 5 mentions, **ERP** – 4 mentions.

The highest demand for IT skills required is office suits literacy, which is not surprising as this still is the primary communication channel dictated by the professional work environment. The incremental importance of working within software development environments shows the growing need to bring this topic closer to a broader population of future talent, which may be explained by the increased automation within the BPO industry.

### **Public policies concerning digital skills and skills for innovation in Romania**

- ***National Strategy on the Digital Agenda for Romania for 2020***

Romania adopted its National Strategy on the Digital Agenda for Romania for 2020 (SNADR) in February 2015. The SNADR is the steering document for all digital matters, including digital skills. The strategy focuses on providing ICT infrastructure in schools; developing pupils' and teachers' digital skills; using ICT in the learning process and in lifelong learning; updating the ICT skills of public administration staff, and ensuring e-inclusion by developing digital skills and e-skills.

- ***National Coalition for Digital Skills and Jobs***

Romania has a National Coalition for Digital Skills and Jobs - Skills4IT<sup>34</sup>. The Romanian National Coalition (Skills4IT) is an open platform that includes a variety of stakeholders: policymakers, ICT companies, associations, training providers, and NGOs involved in the digital transformation. The Coordinator is APDETIC - Association of Producers and Dealers of ICT equipment. The main partners are Ministry of Communications and Information Society, Ministry of National Education, Union of IT teachers of Romania Informal School for IT, Association of Librarians, and Public Libraries (ANBPR), HP Inc. Romania, Magway IBM, and Junior Achievement.

Activities are focusing on rolling out coding and IT classes in schools, organizing cybersecurity courses, and educational events. The coalition also provides training to

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<sup>34</sup> More information available at <http://coalitiait.ro/>

upgrade the digital skills of the labour force. Romania actively participated in EU Code Week in 2018, a grassroots movement to encourage people of all ages to code. There were 458 activities organised around the country, with an estimated number of 25,400 participants.

- ***'Wireless Campus' - an integrated national platform***

In 2018, the Romanian Government launched the project entitled 'Wireless Campus' - an integrated national platform that provides wireless Internet in 4,500 state-run schools. The objective of the project was to create an integrated national campus platform that will provide, with priority in middle schools, the service of wireless access to interconnected open data networks, including the Internet. The results provided by the project implementation are 4500 schools that will benefit from wireless equipment, one wireless campus platform installed, 54 persons trained for the administration and use of the infrastructure. The project was co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund through the Competitiveness Operational Program 2014-2020, Priority Axis 2 "Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for a competitive digital economy".

- ***The National Strategy for Research Development and Innovation (2014-2020)***

The strategy states the fact that Romania spends almost 20 times less than the European average on research and development and establishes as the objective for 2020, transforming Romania competitive at the regional and global levels through innovation fed by research and development, generating wealth for citizens. For the formal education system, the strategy is targeting education in science and technology and communication of science.

The strategy supports measures to attract young people to science, in formal education and beyond, through measures such as<sup>35</sup>:

- ✓ Attracting talented young people to the research career by organizing competitions with prizes for innovative solutions.
- ✓ Establish a Science City in the proximity of an innovation cluster or major infrastructure.
- ✓ Organizing tours, exhibitions, open days, to promote science to the public, including and promoting the outstanding results of Romanian research.
- ✓ Promote interest in science and innovation in pre-university education by including recent findings in textbooks and electronic didactic materials by including in the curriculum some elements of education on innovation-based

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<sup>35</sup> European Commission (2017), Youth Wiki national description, Youth policies in Romania, p. 77; available online <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/sites/youthwiki/files/gdlromania.pdf>



entrepreneurship through collaboration with technical magazines addressed to pupils and publications popularization of science.

- ***Private sector initiatives (including NGOs) for youth. Examples.***

- ✓ **Google initiatives**

**Google launched The Digital Workshop** in order to help people develop their digital skills so they could advance in their careers or find a job. Now, Google is expanding the program to target software developers and will also set up a start-up incubator.

**The Digital Workshop for Programmers** is launched **in collaboration with The University of Bucharest and universities from Cluj-Napoca and Timisoara**. It is a premiere for a humanities-focused university to host and develop such a program, but as Mircea Dumitru, the Rector of University of Bucharest, said: “today’s digital technologies are not just about mathematics, but also about humanities.”

- ✓ **The Skill IT for Youth – Integrating Digital and Future Skills into Youth Work project.**

This project aims to increase the quality of youth work, combining higher levels of excellence and attractiveness in services, obtained through the digitalization of youth work, with increased opportunities for young people. Through this Erasmus + project, implemented in Romania by Danis Foundation, the partners’ main goal was to equip youth workers with the digital knowledge, skills, and confidence to enhance young people's futures in the 21st Century. In The Skill IT Romania National Report<sup>36</sup> prepared by Fundația Danis team, some important remarks about the role that NGOs can have in developing digital skills in young people are outlined and analyzed. The report revealed that NGOs could intervene in teaching the professors new methods and tools for developing the right digital skills of young people, and they might also contribute with ICT equipment for schools, by bringing in sponsorships from technology companies. NGOs can play the roles of mediators among families, schools and youth people and can validate or refine the skills that young people acquire elsewhere. Providing training for those who need improvement of digital skills (teachers, youth) looks like a contribution favored by many senior managers. According to the report, there are few programs and services that are intentionally developed for the purpose of enhancing digital skills among young people. Nonetheless, youth workers are aware of their role in digitizing

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<sup>36</sup> Skill IT for Youth Project & Fundatia Danis, 2018, Skill IT Study. Romania National Report on Digital Skills and Youth Work, available at [https://digipathways.io/content/uploads/2018/12/RO\\_NationalReport\\_IO1\\_SkillIT.pdf](https://digipathways.io/content/uploads/2018/12/RO_NationalReport_IO1_SkillIT.pdf).



the future generation and seem to be open to the idea of sketching and delivering in the future more programs and services aiming to develop young people's digital skills.

### ✓ **JA Romania: Digital and Entrepreneurial Skills for Girls**

The aim of the Digital and Entrepreneurial Skills for Girls project is to increase the number of young women interested in professions in fields dedicated to innovation and technology. During 2019, Junior Achievement, together with partner companies, organizes four such sessions dedicated to high school students. The program is supported by the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) and takes place in Bulgaria, Greece, Lithuania, Serbia, and Romania.

As it is stated in a recent Europuls - Centre of European Expertise Policy Brief<sup>37</sup>, in this era of rapid technological changes, the education systems need to adapt and find innovative means to train the next generation of workers effectively. Some important points to address are outlined:

- ✚ While efforts are being deployed through the use of European funds and a national strategy that focuses on ICT in education and training, more sustained policies and actions are required.
- ✚ Very early in school, the curriculum should incorporate digital literacy, ICT and programming skills, and targeted extra-curricular activities, while teachers should be supported to adapt and retrain for this new curriculum.
- ✚ Romania should embark on an ambitious and committed journey of upskilling and reskilling its workforce, and the private sector should also contribute by actively driving this training. Accordingly, in the medium term, there is a strong need for Romania to realign its educational institutions with industry to meet the realities of the industrial Internet.
- ✚ For a sustainable impact, the Romanian National Coalition for digital jobs should be endorsed at the highest political level, be supported to scale up and spread to other ICT-using industries. Incentives like tax benefits could encourage companies to invest in human capital. Students could benefit from improved career guidance, and mentorship focused on digital careers and lifelong learning opportunities.
- ✚ It is crucial that actors from both the private and public sector, civil society, NGOs, think-tanks, and academia focus on the imperative common goal of

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<sup>37</sup> Europuls - Centre of European Expertise, Anchoring Romania on the path to digital transformation, Policy Brief 2019, p.4

decreasing Romania's digital skills' deficit and retaining the ICT specialists who leave the country to work abroad.

### Skills-based profiling and matching

#### Including:

- b. identification of the missing competencies and skills, training needs analysis.

### 3.1. Digital Skills

ICT professionals belong to high shortage occupations for Romania according to Skills Panorama CEDEFOP<sup>38</sup>. First, high-skilled graduates are mainly employed abroad ("headhunting" of tertiary education graduates is particularly wide-spread). The share of ICT specialists with tertiary education (EQF levels 5-8) decreased mainly due to external mobility for better jobs. Second, updates in learning curricula do not keep up with technological advancements. Third, there exist outdated teaching methods and the scarcity of trained teachers. Fourth, there are low levels of non-cognitive skills that are required to boost entrepreneurship and efficient management (risk assessment, strategic approach, etc.). Besides, pre-university education (second level and post-second) does not deliver the necessary skills for graduates to be employed in the sector. There is a need for supplementary training on the job and lifelong learning courses.

#### **Identification of the main missing digital skills and competencies:**

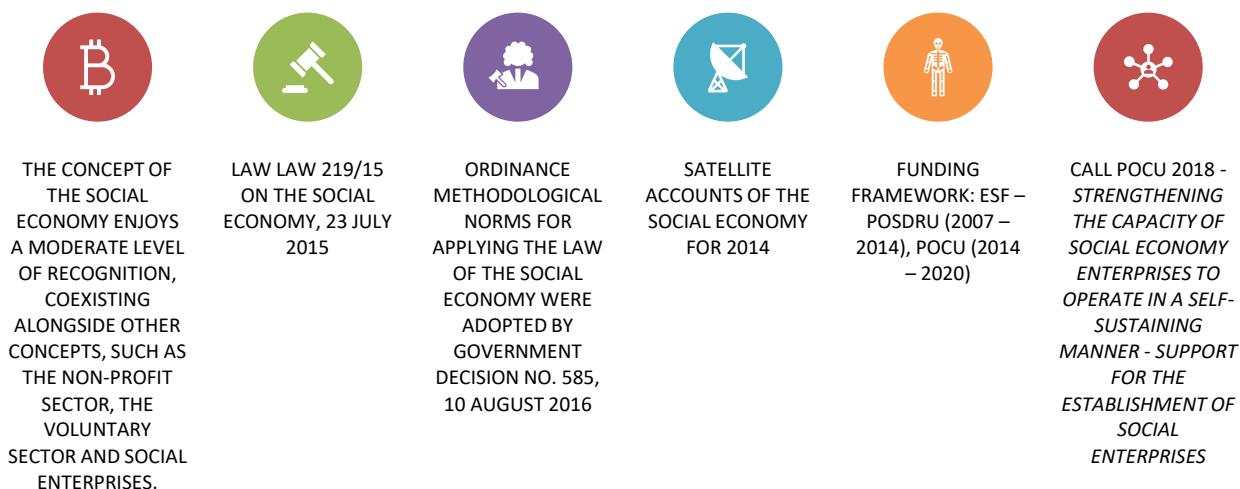
- **Basic Digital Skills** (lifelong learning courses for youth and adults, especially in rural areas)
- **Advanced Digital Skills** (training on the job courses)
- **Digital Skills for teachers** (training in using educational platforms, such as Google Classroom, Zoom etc, especially in the context Covid-19 pandemic crises when education was forced to function only online)
- **Digital Skills for social care workers** (training in implementing digitalization in the formal and non-formal social care sector, considering the recent technological developments in assisting living for elderly people)

<sup>38</sup> [https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/analytical\\_highlights/romania-mismatch-priority-occupations](https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/analytical_highlights/romania-mismatch-priority-occupations)

## Social Entrepreneurship Skills

Social Entrepreneurship (Social Economy) is an emerging sector in Romania. According to CIRIEC International report (2017)<sup>39</sup>, the Romanian social economy provides under 2% of the working population – 136.385 paid employment. There are 42.707 associations, foundations and other similar accepted forms, which provide 99.774 jobs, and 4934 cooperatives and other similar accepted forms which provide 31.573 jobs 4934 and have 3.032.000 members (including credit unions).

The Figure bellow shows a short overview for Romanian social economy.



More and more young people are embracing the idea of being social entrepreneurs and establishing social enterprises which create sustainable impact in their communities. They like to be social innovators, change makers creating positive change in their society. Romania also face the positive context of available funding for social entrepreneurship under the European Social Fund, Human Capital Operational Programme 2014 – 2020. Consequently, social entrepreneurship skills are necessary at present, for applying successfully in competitions for funding, and for managing effectively the social enterprises.

<sup>39</sup> EESC (2017), Recent evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union, by CIRIEC-International - Centre international de recherches et d'information sur l'économie publique, sociale et coopérative, Jose Luis Monzón & Rafael Chaves (Directors)

**Identification of the main missing social entrepreneurship skills and competencies:**

- ***Social Entrepreneurship competences*** (training for the Occupational Standard Entrepreneur in Social Economy)
- ***Management of Social Enterprise competencies*** (training for the Occupational Standard Manager of Social Enterprise)
- ***Specialist in Social Economy competencies*** (training on the job for the Occupational Standard Specialist in Social Economy)
- ***Special skills for Work Integration Social Enterprises employees/workers*** (special training on the job in the context in which WISE is currently the most spread model of social enterprise in Romania)
- ***Social Impact Measurement competencies*** (training in SROI or in other social impact methods)

**Recommendations for the development of Module with Entrance tests and Job Expectations of young people looking for employment**

**Including:**

- Examples and good practices in this field

*“Investing today in the employment of young people means investing in the present and future of our societies,” said Guy Ryder, ILO Director-General and we agree with it.*

Young people need support in their efforts of looking for employment, but the role of schools, universities ends at graduation. What happens next? Is the question that needs answers coming from various actors such as employers, youth organizations, training providers etc. In Romania, one of five young people is not in employment, not in education, or other training programs (NEET), which means that it is a waste of labor force that is not contributing to the country’s GDP growth. Therefore, we believe that interventions to improve access to youth at the labor market are necessary and can produce good results.

The recently released systematic review on “Interventions to improve the labour market outcomes of youth”<sup>40</sup> identified 113 rigorous evaluation reports to include in its meta-analysis, 74 of which have been released since 2010. The main findings of the review were also encouraging: overall, youth employment interventions can produce positive job and income effects for young people.<sup>41</sup>

### ***Example of good practices in Romania:***

Supporting young people entering the labour market has been done by different actors that have implemented youth policies, EU funded projects, and training companies acting as intermediaries in the process. Some of these initiatives are detailed bellow.

- National Agency for Employment - ANOFM – startes in May 2019 the implementation of a 60 months-project dedicated to NEETS youth – ACTIMOB 3 RMPD „Activation and mobility for NEETs youth” –providing training, consultancy to a special target group of young people. The projects aim to support 11.146 young people seeking employment
- Romanian Agency for Regional Development (public authority) – South Muntenia implemented the project „**NoNEETs – Permanent Training and Assessment Programme to NEETs Young Adults for their inclusion in the labour market and EU society**” from Nov.2013 – Oct.2015, financed by LifeLong Learning Program<sup>42</sup>
- Adapt2jobs<sup>43</sup> - an 18 months (2014-2015) project financed by the POSDRU – Romanian program for the development of the human resources – aims to redesign academic curricula according to labour market requirements<sup>44</sup>. A representative sample of employers has been interviewed to identify the basic skills and competencies required at the young graduates seeking their first employment.
- LifeInJobs <http://www.lifeinjob.ro/en/index.php> offers: recruitment and selection for companies, leasing of personnel, training for candidates and trainers ( psychological testing, job description, CV, preparation for interviews etc).The training courses offered are :

<sup>40</sup> Kluve, J.; Puerto, S.; Robalino, D.; Romero, J.M.; Rother, F.; Stöterau, J.; Weidenkaff, F.; Witte, M. 2017. *Interventions to improve the labour market outcomes of youth: A systematic review of training, entrepreneurship promotion, employment services, and subsidized employment interventions*, Campbell Systematic Reviews 2017:12

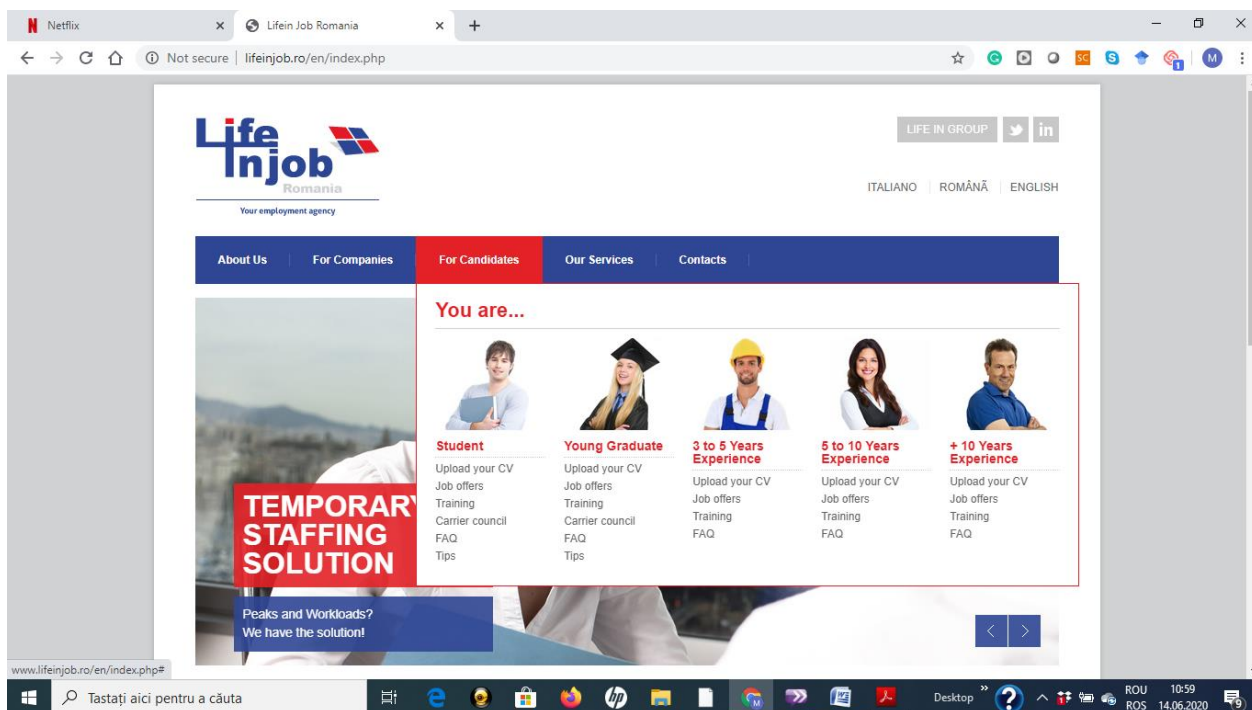
<sup>41</sup> *Guide on Measuring Decent Jobs for Youth - Monitoring, evaluation and learning in labour market programmes, Overview*, International Labour Office. Geneva, 2018.

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.adrmuntenia.ro/proiectul-noneets-destinat-tinerilor-neincadrati-pe-piata-forței-de-munca-a-ajun/static/882>

<sup>43</sup> Epure, M., & Vasilescu, R. E. (2016). A comparative study on students’ and employers’ perception on competencies and skills acquired to access the job market. *Revista de Pedagogie, year LXIV*, (1), 111-126.

<sup>44</sup> Epure, M., Vasilescu, R., & Mihaes, L. (2015). Adapt2jobs-a new learning ecosystem. In *The International Scientific Conference eLearning and Software for Education* (Vol. 1, p. 53). " Carol I" National Defence University.

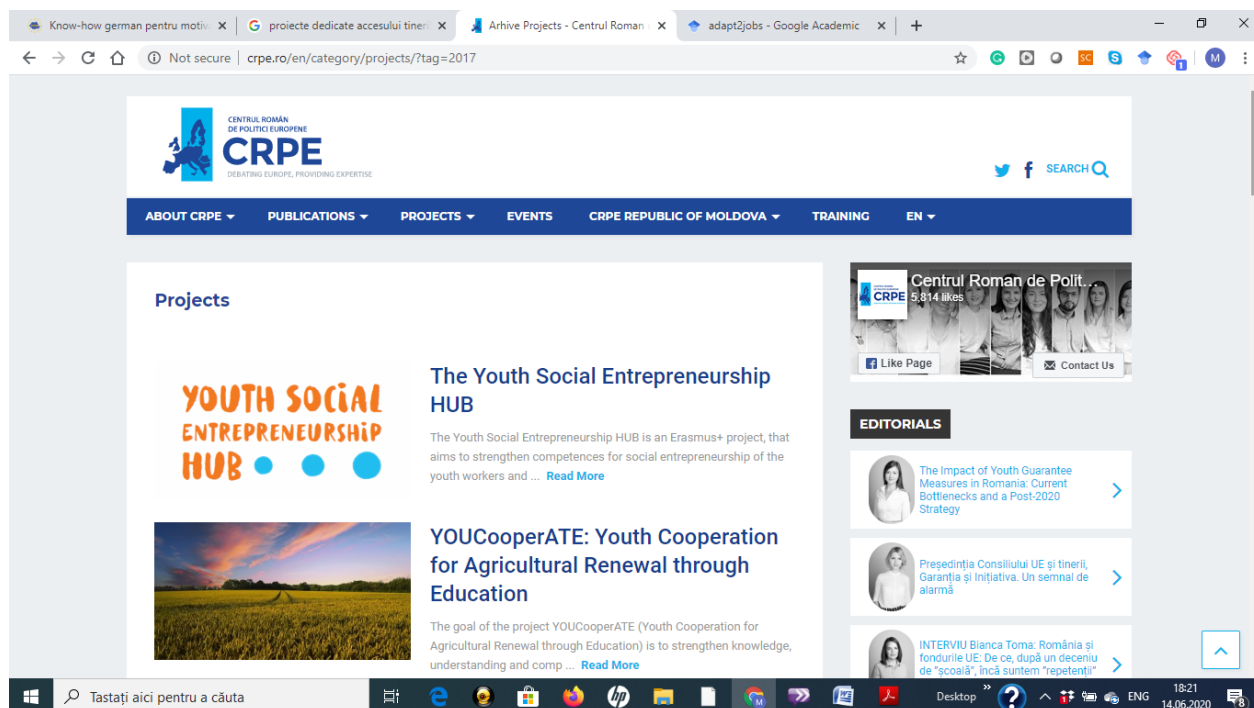
- Time management
- Efficiency in communication
- Work ethics
- Leadership



LifeInJob website – tailored services for young candidates as well as for companies

- Centrul Roman de Politici Europene ([www.crpe.ro](http://www.crpe.ro)) Romanian Center for EU policies – developed projects dedicated youth entering the labor market , a recent implemented project refers to Social Entrepreneurship.





Romanian Center for European Policies – projects dedicated to young people  
(Source: [www.crpe.ro](http://www.crpe.ro))

A wide range of projects have been implemented and are still under implementation targeting the vulnerable category of youth unemployed. All these projects have two basic components: counseling & career advice and training. The success of each project is measured through the final results, eg. significant decreasing rate of youth unemployment.

The main questions that arise are:

1. Do we have good knowledge about the needs of the people we are trying to support?
2. Do we understand why certain conditions, such as youth unemployment, exist?
3. Do we have a clear objective of what we want to achieve?
4. Are we building on existing experience and evidence when designing our training course to fulfill this objective?



## **Step. 1 Diagnosis – Understanding the labour market constraints faced by young people**

**How?** Before being accepted at a training course, a young person should take a survey on “**Job seekers’ perception of labour market constraints**”. Also, based on country reports findings, a set of entry barriers that young job seekers need to overcome can be identified. Assessing the local labor market allowed a better understanding of what employers are looking for in terms of skills, competencies, personality types of entry-level employees. Matching information from both, a training course curriculum can be developed accordingly, emphasizing the practical aspects which enable youth to perform better in seeking and getting a job, such as better communication skills at interviews, or drafting CV with highlights on specific skills that help them better.

**Who needs what? Setup a tool for stakeholders’ consultation** – a survey for example to be conducted periodically among employers for better understanding of what are their current requirements for entry-level jobs. What and when internships can be provided and followed with employment offers for the best young interns.

So, based on survey’ results, new training courses can be developed tailored to what is needed locally, in general, and in particular areas of job vacancies.

**Step.2 Training curriculum design** - experienced trainers, HR specialists and academics can work together in designing the curriculum for short-term training courses depending on what is relevant at the moment on labour market.

**Why?** Labour supply can be defined as the attributes that determine young people’s employability – education, skills, health, cognitive abilities, etc. – and their ability to access productive employment<sup>45</sup>.

Therefore, we suggest **two training modules** for entry-level job seekers:

***Interpersonal Communication and Social entrepreneurship;***

**Interpersonal Communication** module will provide basic knowledge on who to present yourself at interview, how different personalities can overcome emotions, how to find the right answer in a stressful situation. Interpersonal communication is not just about what is actually said - the language used - but how it is said and the non-verbal messages sent through tone of voice, facial expressions, gestures, and body language. The module aims to build skills related to personal communication and marketing communication to enable young candidates with useful knowledge to be successful. An entry test – designed by a

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<sup>45</sup> *Guide on Measuring Decent Jobs for Youth - Monitoring, evaluation and learning in labour market programmes, Overview*, International Labour Office. Geneva, 2018, p.38

psychologist will assess the initial level of communication skills of each trainee and will allow a better course orientation. The module will cover the following topics:

- The process of communication
- The message
- The communicators – interactions, personalities
- The distortions – the noise has special meaning in the communication process
- Cultural differences in communication
- The feedback
- The context of communication

### **Social Entrepreneurship Training Module**

#### ***The learning outcomes:***

- Knowledge of the concepts of social entrepreneur, social entrepreneurship, social economy, social enterprise, social responsibility.
- Knowledge of economic and social criteria and indicators specific to a social business, the mechanisms of operation in practice of a social enterprise.
- Elaboration of a social business plan model to achieve the strategic organizational objectives of a social enterprise.
- Analysis of the impact of social enterprises on the economy and society.

#### ***Linkage:***

This module is underpinned by: Entrepreneurship Training Module.

#### ***Contents:***

- Social enterprise - definition, economic and social characteristics.
- Social enterprises - mission, principles, and values.
- The main business models for social enterprises.
- Strategic planning of social enterprises. Social enterprises - possible legal forms.
- Business plan - the phases of developing a social business.
- Social enterprise in the context of the community - the relationship with the stakeholders. Social responsibility and social balance.
- Social entrepreneurship in the European Union - current general trends, European public policies. Networks, coalitions, umbrella organizations.

### **Step 3 Preparing the course materials**

Training process means for both modules the preparation of the course materials and the assessment of the learning efforts in acquiring the necessary skills from both Interpersonal

communication and social entrepreneurship. The course package will be available in English and will be accompanied by instructions for trainers to make it replicable during the YouthCAP implementation and beyond.

#### **Step 4 Training sessions**

The suggested modules will be included in training sessions as YouthCAP project established. Each training session will be ended with a test tailored to measure the learning outcomes.

#### **Step 5 Feedback**

A feedback survey will be conducted among beneficiaries to assess the learning experience: what they learned, how to apply, what new skills were acquired and how can be used in future life situation (e.g. at interview)

Good practices in existing training modules for youth organizations with representatives from business and civil society

#### **Including:**


- c. impact of youth organizations;
- d. educational practices for career orientation in the partner countries and
- e. educational practices for career orientation on European and national documents.

#### **Educational practices for career orientation developed by youth organizations**

- ***School of Values***

School of Values is a Romanian youth NGO, a community that believes in the power that healthy values and principles have in the lives of young people concerned with progressing through perseverance and constant investment in their own potential. Their mission is the education centered on values. Through their programs they had impact over 49746 young people (pupils & students), 218 professors, 832 educational units (schools & high schools), and 60 locations.

School of Values has developed a list of extremely useful education resources for youth concerning career orientation, and also educational projects, such as:

-  Employability kit for youth (materials created in the framework of the project Your First Job, implemented by HR Club and the School of Values). This kit is composed by two materials (You can't spell 'Hero' without 'HR' and Your First Job – Employer with labour contract – Beginning your official relation with the employer), and five six videos clips (What matters most when you apply for a job: skills or diplomas?, What are the expectations of employers when applying

for the first job?, How to prepare for a job interview?, The role of passion when you want to get a job, How to find your vocation, Who is and what does the HR specialist do in a company). All the resources are available online at <https://scoaladevalori.ro/resurse/kit-de-angajabilitate-pentru-tineri/>

- ✚ Two handbooks (Generation Z Handbook for HR, Onboarding guide for Generation Z), and two video clips (The ideal first day for the new job, in the Generation Z version, Wish list for the first job - from Generation Z for human resources specialists), available online at <https://scoaladevalori.ro/resurse/manualul-generatiei-z-pentru-hr/>
- ✚ Holcim Academy – Câmpulung 2017. Between July 10-12, 27 students from technical universities in Bucharest, Ploiești and Pitești, were the protagonists of the 2017 edition of the project Academia Holcim - Câmpulung Muscel. Students from Bucharest, Pitesti and Ploiesti, participants in the Holcim - Câmpulung Muscel Academy, attended the courses of the following faculties: Technical University of Constructions of Bucharest - Faculty of Civil Engineering, Faculty of Installation Engineering, Faculty of Civil Constructions and Faculty of Building Engineering, Polytechnic University of Bucharest - Faculty of Mechanics and Mechatronics, University of Pitesti - Faculty of Electromechanics University of Oil and Gas Ploiești - Faculty of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, Faculty of Automation and Applied Informatics. Students participated in a three-day learning experience, which included: two days of non-formal education workshops, intertwined with a day visit to the Holcim - Câmpulung Muscel factory. More information about Holcim Academy are available online at <https://scoaladevalori.ro/academia-holcim-campulung-studentii-de-la-universitatile-tehnice-din-bucuresti-ploiesti-si-pitesti-si-au-cimentat-drumul-spre-viitoarea-cariera/>

- **National practices for career orientation in Romania**

According to Youth Wiki national description (European Commission, 2017)<sup>46</sup>, a central role in Romania in youth career orientation is played by The National Employment Agency, followed by the formal education institution, and by the centres organised by the county offices of the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

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<sup>46</sup> European Commission (2017), Youth Wiki national description, Youth policies in Romania, p. 33; available online <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/sites/youthwiki/files/gdlromania.pdf>

**The National Employment Agency** functioning under the Ministry of Work and Social Justice, offers through its local offices career guidance and counselling services for each unemployed person, including for young people. These counselling services targeting young unemployed people have been included in the **Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan**, and therefore there are closely monitored, being reinforced by this plan and supplementary monitoring. Career guidance and counselling services are also provided for young people in education and training.

#### **Public career guidance and counselling services targeting young people take place:**

- Mainly, ***within the premises of local offices of the National Employment Agency***, for young unemployed people through providing information regarding the available schemes: Youth Guarantee, career counselling, internship opportunities.

- Secondary, ***within the formal education institutions***, if a counsellor is employed by the local council for the school and by the universities. The counsellor is an education specialist who plans and carries out counselling individual or group education aimed at adapting the pupil to specific problems in school environment; implements career education programs for the purpose of training competencies in the fields covered by the curricular area 'Counselling and guidance'; organises programs extracurricular of vocational orientation; promotes and implements education programs for health care aimed at training and developing students' lifestyle management skills.

- Tertiary, ***within the information and counselling centres organised by the county offices of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, if qualified staff is employed by these county offices for counselling youth on career***. However, for this type of counselling, there is no formal or systematic informal cooperation between the Youth and Sports County Offices and the County and Local Employment Agency Offices. There is no specific group in the youth population targeted by career and job search guidance. However, ***for young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) special funding is available*** for these services provided by the local offices of the National Employment Agency, making this target group one of the most important.

#### **Identification of best practices adequate for establishing the necessary capacity**

- **Techsoup Association** (winner of Digital Skills in Education Award, European Digital Skills Awards 2017)

An independent non-profit organization founded in 2010, Techsoup Association is a capacity-building non-profit organisation that provides technology resources and inspiration to non-profits, educators, and youth.

Techsoup Association gained Digital Skills in Education Award, European Digital Skills Awards 2017 created by the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, EU Commission for Opening Opportunities.

Techsoup Association builds ***technology-enabled capacity building programs for Romanian NGOs***, empowering a growing community of +3,500 NGOs to tackle civic and social problems:

- ✚ **Techsoup Romania program** - +3,500 nonprofit organizations can benefit from professional software and cloud services from global and local tech partners. It is an ongoing program since 2009, a joint partnership between TechSoup and Asociatia Techsoup in Romania.
- ✚ **Techsoup Moldova program** - supporting NGOs in the Republic of Moldova with technology tools for their work. It is an ongoing program since 2015, a joint partnership between TechSoup and Asociatia Techsoup in Romania.
- ✚ **ONG Online program** - the first digital school created exclusively for NGOs employees and volunteers, with webinars and courses taught by the best tech and online experts in Romania and abroad. It is an ongoing program since 2015. The first edition of the program, 2015-2016, was funded by EEA Grants and the NGO Fund in Romania. Since 2016 the program is self-funded by the TechSoup Romania Program with contributions from volunteer trainers.

Also, the association developed ***research-based educational programs for educators and their students, enabled by sound pedagogy, digital skills and applied computer science competences***:

- ✚ **Predau Viitor (Teach Future program)** - a transformational program for Computer Science teachers to support them to add project-based learning and product development skills to their teaching. It is an ongoing program since 2016 created with the support and strategic funding of Romanian American Foundation. In 2019-2020 Predau Viitor is also supported by Societe Generale - European Business Services and Google.
- ✚ **Indreptar Digital (Digital Handbook program)** - a professional development program for primary school teachers in rural and small urban areas of Romania to train them to use digital tools and skills to build a more effective educational experience for their students. It is ongoing program since 2017 supported by the Google Foundation of Tides Foundation.
- ✚ **Meet and Code program** - micro-granting for NGOs to build technology and coding events during the Europe Code Week grassroots movement and



encourage children and youth to develop the 21st century skills they need. It is an ongoing program since 2017 initiated and financed by SAP in partnership with Stifter-helfen IT-Portal and TechSoup Europe partners.

More details about Techsoup Association programs are available online at <https://www.asociatiechsoup.ro/>.

### General recommendations

As suggested by CEDEFOP Skills Panorama<sup>47</sup>, some crucial points could also be followed in Romania, as general recommendations:

- Skills anticipation and matching systems and effective governance processes that can indicate to job seekers the types of skills and associated qualifications for which there is both a current and expected future demand in the labor market. This relates to both jobs specific and generic/transversal skills.
- Responsive initial vocational education and training that can bridge the gap and coordination failures between the worlds of education and work. This requires strengthening and integrating work-based learning systems within upper secondary and continuing education and training systems and facilitating stakeholder collaboration in curricula design and implementation. Education and training systems must also respond to and reinforce the economic development potential of (local) economies.
- The role of continuing vocational education and training in ensuring that people's skills do not become obsolete and that employers have the skills they need to develop their businesses. Employers, individuals, and the state all have a role to play in this regard.

In the base of this analysis, specific recommendations could arise:

- Developing training programs for the main missing digital skills and competencies: Basic Digital Skills (lifelong learning courses for youth and adults, especially in the rural areas), Advanced Digital Skills (training on the job courses), Digital Skills for teachers (training in using educational platforms, such as Google Classroom, Zoom etc, especially in the context Covid-19 pandemic crises when education was forced to function only online), Digital Skills for social care workers (training in implementing digitalization in the

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<sup>47</sup> CEDEFOP (2016), ANALYTICAL HIGHLIGHT FOCUS ON Skills challenges in Europe Key messages, p.6, available online at [https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2016\\_Skills\\_Challenges\\_AH.pdf](https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2016_Skills_Challenges_AH.pdf)



formal and non-formal social care sector, considering the recent technological developments in assisting living for elderly people).

- Developing training programs for the main missing social entrepreneurship skills and competencies (Social Entrepreneurship competences, Management of Social Enterprises competences, Specialist in Social Economy competencies, Special skills for Work Integration Social Enterprises employees/workers (special training on the job in the context in which WISE is currently the most spread model of social enterprise in Romania), Social Impact Measurement competencies (training in SROI or in other social impact methods).
- Technology-enabled educational capacity building programs have to be actively developed, including for youth organizations.

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## TURKEY

### Introduction

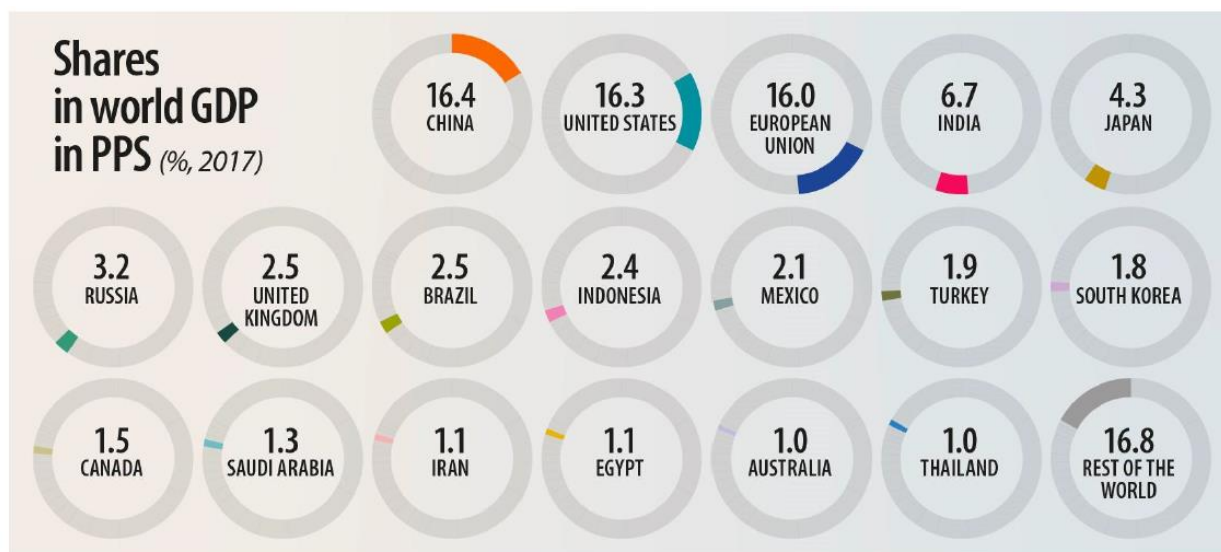
The country analysis of Turkey prepared by the interdisciplinary team of the Istanbul Technical University's Alumni Association is a result of a strenuous work on primary and secondary data. An exploration into statistics by Eurostat and literature has been the essential side of the desk research, which has been complemented by active field studies. Surveys to university students and graduates as well as employers have been distributed. Based on the results, an analysis has been drawn and selected participants in the survey have been invited to focus group discussions to further dive into their answers. The respondents' input has been immensely useful in further shaping the research and completing the study report in a comprehensive manner. Thus, the successful achievement of this analysis is the result of the contributions of the alumni association's team, university students, graduates and employers that have dedicated a large proportion of their time engaging in the data collection activities.

### Description of economic situation of the country and key features of labour market with focus on youth employment/ unemployment in the country

#### **Including:**

- e. The circumstances causing the youth unemployment;
- f. Key trends in youth employment/ unemployment

In 2017, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the European Union with 27 Member States (EU) represented 16.0% of world GDP, expressed in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS). China and the United States were the two largest economies, with shares of 16.4% and 16.3% respectively. Turkey as a candidate country performs below the EU average with GDP of 1,9% of the global GDP and is among the countries (outside the EU) with a share larger than 1% are shown in the visual below (19 May 2020, Eurostat). Countries with similar macroeconomic performance are Mexico (2,1% of the global GDP) and South Korea (1,8% of the global GDP).

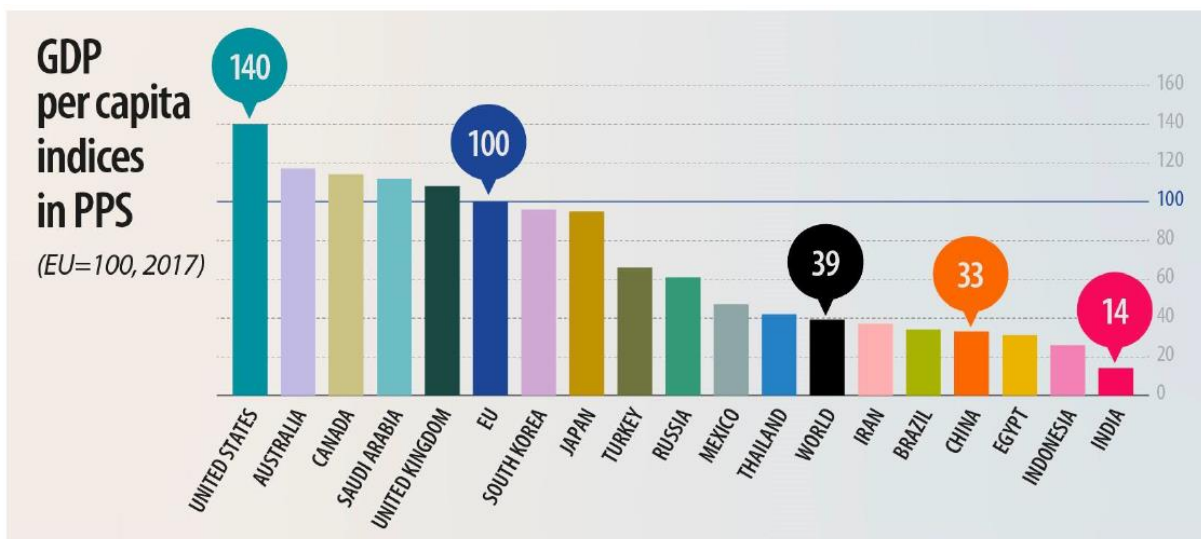


*Note: The European Union represents the European Union with 27 Member States after 1 February 2020.*

[ec.europa.eu/eurostat](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat) 

### Turkey's share in the global GDP (data by Eurostat, 19 May 2020)

While the US and China are about the same size with the EU in terms of GDP in PPS, their respective GDP in PPS differs by a factor of four, as shown below. Turkey stands on the 11<sup>th</sup> place in the GDP per PPS, according to the latest statistical integrated report for the global economy dated 2017. Russia performs similarly to Turkey in terms of GDP in PPS.



Note: The EU represents the European Union with 27 Member States after 1 February 2020.

[ec.europa.eu/eurostat](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat)

### Turkey's GDP per PPS and the world (data by Eurostat, 19 May 2020)

In numeric terms, the latest consolidated data for the global GDP, as per the Eurostat-backed International Comparison Program 2017 of the global leading economies demonstrates a few surprising finding about Turkey's economy:

- The country's GDP measured in billions of PPS is 1549 that constitutes an equivalent of 755 euro.
- Turkey's GDP per capita is 19 277 in PSS and 9 398 in euro.
- The price level, within the EU pricing reference of EU=100, is 49, or nearly half of the EU average.
- GDP's share of the world economy is 1.9%;
- GDP's share of the world economy is 1.1 euro.
- Turkey's population as a share of the world economy is 1.1%.
- Turkey is now the 11<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world, preceded in a sequence of macroeconomic volumes by 1) China, 2) USA, 3) the EU-27 (excluding the UK), 4) India, 5) Japan, 6) Russia, 7) the UK, 8) Brazil, 9) Indonesia, and 10) Mexico.

The findings of the International Comparison Program (ICP) at the World Bank are the result of the 2017 round of the ICP. The ICP is a worldwide statistical partnership to collect

comparative price data and compile detailed expenditure values of countries' GDP, and to estimate purchasing power parities (PPPs) for the world's economies. Eurostat as the EU statistical office has also contributed to the ICP.

| Largest economies of the world | GDP             |                  | GDP per capita |         | Price level indices (EU = 100) | GDP per capita indices |         | Shares in World total, % |         |            | PPPs (1 € = ) | Reference data          |                       |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|---------|--------------------------------|------------------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|------------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
|                                | billions of PPS | billions of euro | in PPS         | in euro |                                | EU = 100               |         | GDP                      |         | Population |               | Exchange rates (1 € = ) | Population (millions) |
|                                |                 |                  |                |         |                                | in PPS                 | in euro | in PPS                   | in euro |            |               |                         |                       |
|                                |                 |                  |                |         |                                |                        |         |                          |         |            |               |                         |                       |
|                                | (1)             | (2)              | (3)            | (4)     | (5)                            | (6)                    | (7)     | (8)                      | (9)     | (10)       | (11)          | (12)                    | (13)                  |
| World*                         | 81 696          | 70 563           | 11 341         | 9 796   | 86                             | 39                     | 34      | 100.0                    | 100.0   | 100.0      |               |                         | 7 203.6               |
| China                          | 13 406          | 10 749           | 9 670          | 7 753   | 80                             | 33                     | 27      | 16.4                     | 15.2    | 19.2       | 6.12          | 7.64                    | 1 386.4               |
| United States                  | 13 339          | 17 278           | 40 992         | 53 097  | 130                            | 140                    | 182     | 16.3                     | 24.5    | 4.5        | 1.46          | 1.13                    | 325.4                 |
| EU**                           | 13 047          | 13 047           | 29 227         | 29 227  | 100                            | 100                    | 100     | 16.0                     | 18.5    | 6.2        | 1.00          | 1.00                    | 446.4                 |
| India                          | 5 502           | 2 259            | 4 202          | 1 726   | 41                             | 14                     | 6       | 6.7                      | 3.2     | 18.2       | 30.21         | 73.57                   | 1 309.2               |
| Japan                          | 3 535           | 4 302            | 27 900         | 33 952  | 122                            | 95                     | 116     | 4.3                      | 6.1     | 1.8        | 154.20        | 126.71                  | 126.7                 |
| Russia                         | 2 617           | 1 397            | 17 822         | 9 516   | 53                             | 61                     | 33      | 3.2                      | 2.0     | 2.0        | 35.19         | 65.91                   | 146.8                 |
| United Kingdom                 | 2 075           | 2 363            | 31 427         | 35 783  | 114                            | 108                    | 122     | 2.5                      | 3.3     | 0.9        | 1.00          | 0.88                    | 66.0                  |
| Brazil                         | 2 062           | 1 826            | 9 923          | 8 786   | 89                             | 34                     | 30      | 2.5                      | 2.6     | 2.9        | 3.19          | 3.61                    | 207.8                 |
| Indonesia                      | 1 977           | 899              | 7 551          | 3 432   | 45                             | 26                     | 12      | 2.4                      | 1.3     | 3.6        | 6 871.22      | 15 116.37               | 261.9                 |
| Mexico                         | 1 688           | 1 025            | 13 683         | 8 307   | 61                             | 47                     | 28      | 2.1                      | 1.5     | 1.7        | 12.98         | 21.38                   | 123.4                 |
| Turkey                         | 1 548           | 759              | 19 277         | 9 398   | 49                             | 66                     | 32      | 1.9                      | 1.1     | 1.1        | 2.01          | 4.12                    | 80.3                  |
| South Korea                    | 1 439           | 1 437            | 28 019         | 27 987  | 100                            | 96                     | 96      | 1.8                      | 2.0     | 0.7        | 1 275.56      | 1 277.04                | 51.4                  |
| Canada                         | 1 215           | 1 461            | 33 252         | 39 985  | 120                            | 114                    | 137     | 1.5                      | 2.1     | 0.5        | 1.76          | 1.47                    | 36.5                  |
| Saudi Arabia                   | 1 070           | 610              | 32 812         | 18 690  | 57                             | 112                    | 64      | 1.3                      | 0.9     | 0.5        | 2.41          | 4.24                    | 32.6                  |
| Iran                           | 887             | 452              | 10 942         | 5 572   | 51                             | 37                     | 19      | 1.1                      | 0.6     | 1.1        | 19 112.76     | 37 535.75               | 81.1                  |
| Egypt                          | 863             | 205              | 9 108          | 2 159   | 24                             | 31                     | 7       | 1.1                      | 0.3     | 1.3        | 4.78          | 20.16                   | 94.8                  |
| Australia                      | 843             | 1 227            | 34 273         | 49 875  | 146                            | 117                    | 171     | 1.0                      | 1.7     | 0.3        | 2.14          | 1.47                    | 24.6                  |
| Thailand                       | 822             | 403              | 12 151         | 5 957   | 49                             | 42                     | 20      | 1.0                      | 0.6     | 0.9        | 18.80         | 38.34                   | 67.7                  |

\* "World" includes all 176 countries participating in the 2017 round of the ICP, representing 96% of the total world population.

\*\* EU represents the European Union with 27 Member States after 1 February 2020.

### Major macroeconomic findings about Turkey's economy (Eurostat 19 May 2020)

Demographic factors influencing the standing of Turkey in the global economy vis-à-vis the EU and candidate countries shows that Turkey has a wide share of youth population (23,4% under the age of 15), limited share of ageing population (8,8%) and a close-to-average population density and life expectancy compared to the EU -27 (without the UK). This gives its economy a significant advantage compared to other candidate countries; results are summarised in the 2020 findings of Eurostat summarized below:



|                                       | Total population (millions) | Share of age group in total population (%) |      | Population density (inhab./km <sup>2</sup> ) | Life expectancy at birth (years) |        |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------|
|                                       |                             | < 15                                       | ≥ 65 |                                              | Male                             | Female |
|                                       |                             | 1 January 2019                             |      |                                              | 2018                             | 2018   |
| EU-27                                 | 446.8                       | 15.5                                       | 20.0 | 108.8                                        | 78.2                             | 83.7   |
| Montenegro                            | 0.6                         | 18.0                                       | 15.2 | 45.1                                         | 74.5                             | 79.3   |
| North Macedonia                       | 2.1                         | 16.4                                       | 14.1 | 80.7                                         | 74.6                             | 78.8   |
| Albania                               | 2.9                         | 17.2                                       | 14.1 | 99.8                                         | 77.4                             | 80.5   |
| Serbia                                | 7.0                         | 14.3                                       | 20.4 | 90.2                                         | 73.5                             | 78.4   |
| Turkey                                | 82.0                        | 23.4                                       | 8.8  | 105.0                                        | 76.2                             | 81.6   |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina <sup>(1)</sup> | 3.5                         | :                                          | :    | 68.4                                         | :                                | :      |
| Kosovo <sup>(2)</sup>                 | 1.8                         | 25.0                                       | 8.1  | 164.6                                        | 75.9                             | 81.6   |

### Major demographic findings about Turkey

In a comparative manner, across the past decade, the employment and unemployment rates and gender distribution in Turkey have changed immensely. While the employment rate has increased from 53,4% in 2013 to 55,6% in 2018, similarly unemployment rates have been on the rise – from 8,8 in 2013 to 10,9% in 2018. Female unemployment is far much (13,8%) than male unemployment (9,5%) in 2018, both being above the EU-27 average. Youth (15-24) unemployment in 2018 is 20,1% which is also above the EU average. With the exception of female employment, Turkey stands higher in terms of overall domestic employment indicators as compared to Kosovo, Serbia, North Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro.

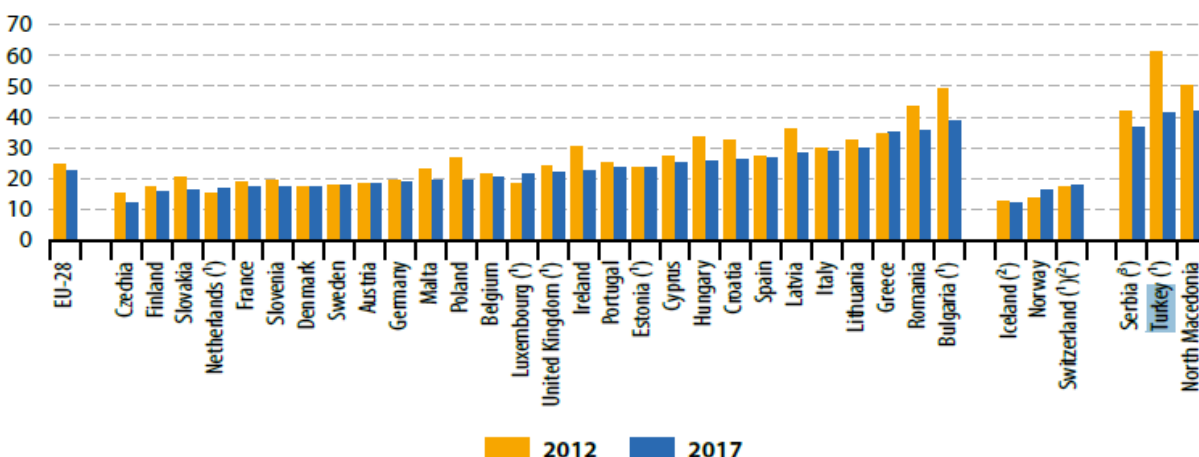
However, Turkey performs much lower compared to Western Balkan countries when it comes to income distribution. It has much higher amounts of early education leavers (approximately 6 times more than Bosnia, and Montenegro). Equally shocking is the ratio of students engaged in tertiary education is 2,7 in 100 as per the 2018 data of Eurostat, which is at the level of North Macedonia, the worst among Western Balkan countries. The findings are summarised below:



|                           | Inequality of income distribution (income quintile share ratio) |      | Early leavers from education and training (%) <sup>(1)</sup> |      |      | Tertiary educational attainment (%) <sup>(2)</sup> |      | Ratio of students enrolled in tertiary education (per 100 inhabitants) |      |        |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|----------------------------------------------------|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------|
|                           |                                                                 |      | Total                                                        |      | Male |                                                    |      |                                                                        |      | Female |
|                           | 2013                                                            | 2018 | 2013                                                         | 2018 | 2018 |                                                    | 2013 | 2018                                                                   | 2013 | 2018   |
| EU-27 <sup>(3)</sup>      | 5.1                                                             | 5.1  | 11.8                                                         | 10.5 | 12.2 | 8.8                                                | 35.6 | 39.4                                                                   | 3.8  | 3.9    |
| Montenegro <sup>(4)</sup> | 8.5                                                             | 7.4  | 5.8                                                          | 4.6  | 4.4  | 4.9                                                | 28.0 | 32.4                                                                   | 4.2  | 3.6    |
| North Macedonia           | 8.4                                                             | 6.2  | 11.4                                                         | 7.1  | 5.6  | 8.5                                                | 23.1 | 33.2                                                                   | 2.9  | 2.9    |
| Albania <sup>(5)</sup>    | :                                                               | 7.0  | 30.6                                                         | 17.4 | 18.3 | 16.4                                               | 15.7 | 27.3                                                                   | 6.0  | 4.6    |
| Serbia <sup>(6)</sup>     | 8.6                                                             | 8.6  | 8.9                                                          | 6.8  | 6.8  | 6.8                                                | 25.4 | 32.8                                                                   | 3.4  | 3.6    |
| Turkey <sup>(7)</sup>     | 8.7                                                             | 8.7  | 37.6                                                         | 31.1 | 30.4 | 31.7                                               | 19.5 | 28.8                                                                   | 7.2  | 9.6    |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina    | :                                                               | :    | 6.7                                                          | 5.4  | 5.6  | 5.2                                                | 15.7 | 23.5                                                                   | 2.9  | 2.7    |
| Kosovo <sup>(8)</sup>     | :                                                               | :    | 18.4                                                         | 9.6  | :    | :                                                  | :    | :                                                                      | 3.9  | 6.1    |

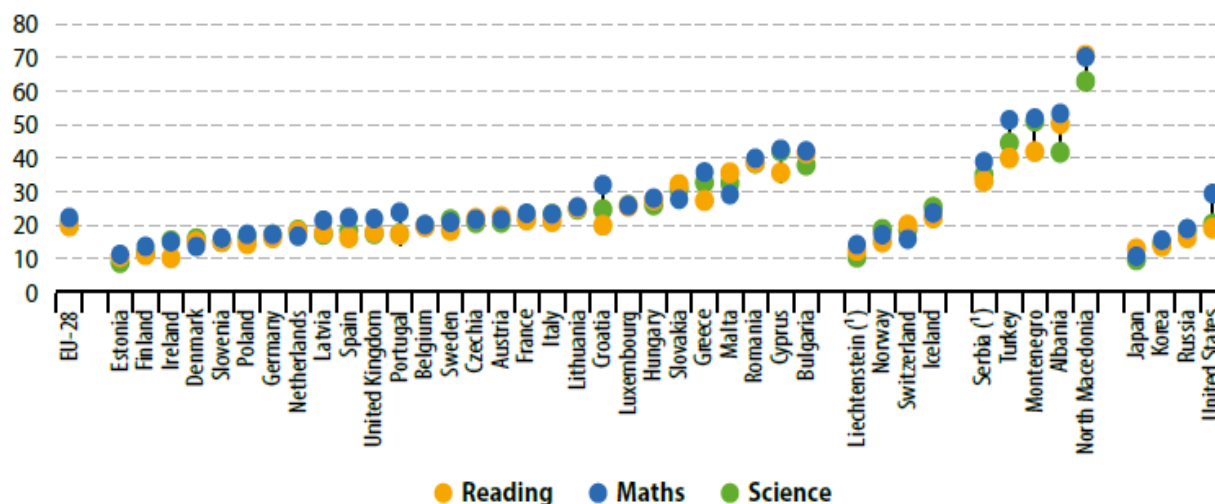
### Education factors for labour market in Turkey (Eurostat 19 May 2020)

As a percentage of the population, there is a much higher group of people in Turkey at the risk of poverty and social exclusion than the EU average that is comparable to the levels of Bulgaria and Romania but still far above the poverty levels in Western Balkan countries. This is proven by 2017 findings that show certain improvement of the situation as compared to 2012.



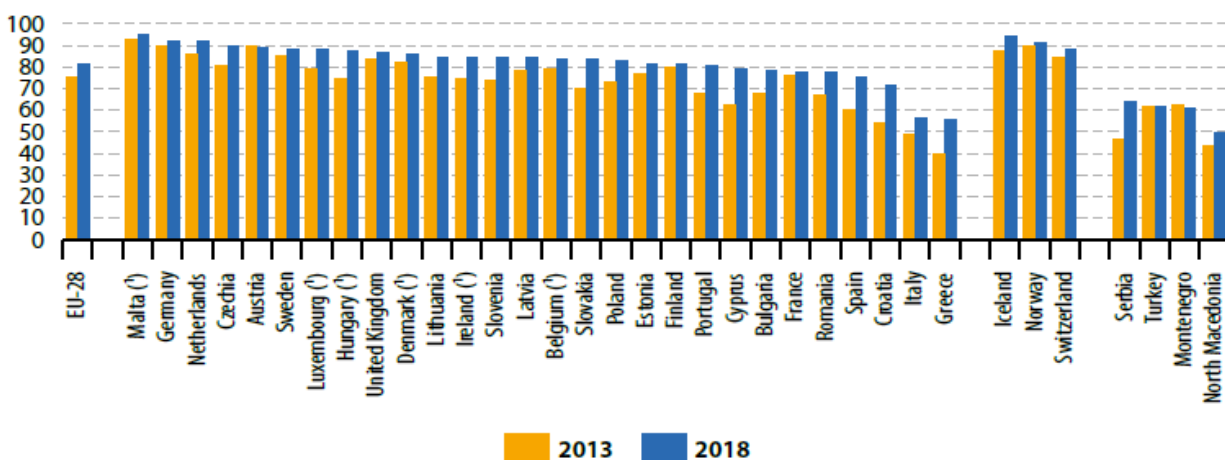
### People at risk of poverty or social exclusion in Turkey and other countries (Eurostat 2017)

The problems with (youth) employment in Turkey are also determined by the under-achievement of Turkish people in PISA with regards to reading, maths and science according to 2018 statistical data summarised by Eurostat. Levels are far lower than the EU average, and just lower compared to North Macedonia.



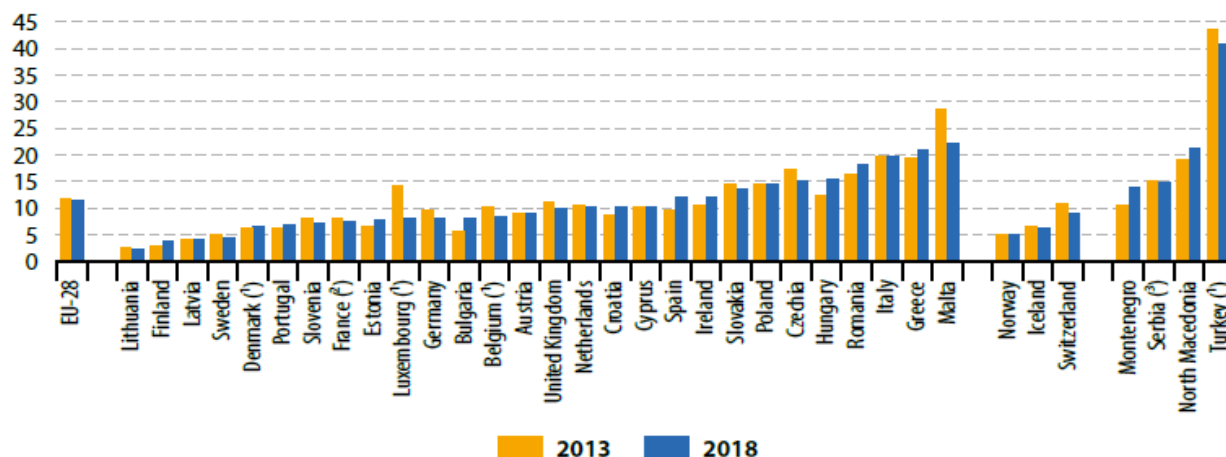
Underachievement about PISA (Eurostat 2018 data)

When it comes to the employment rate of young people aged 20-34 in the period of 2013 and 2018, Eurostat observes that the employment rate in Turkey is far lower than the EU average but still the same or nearly the same as some EU countries with weak economies such as Italy and Greece. It is relatively similar to the employment rate of youth in Western Balkan countries.



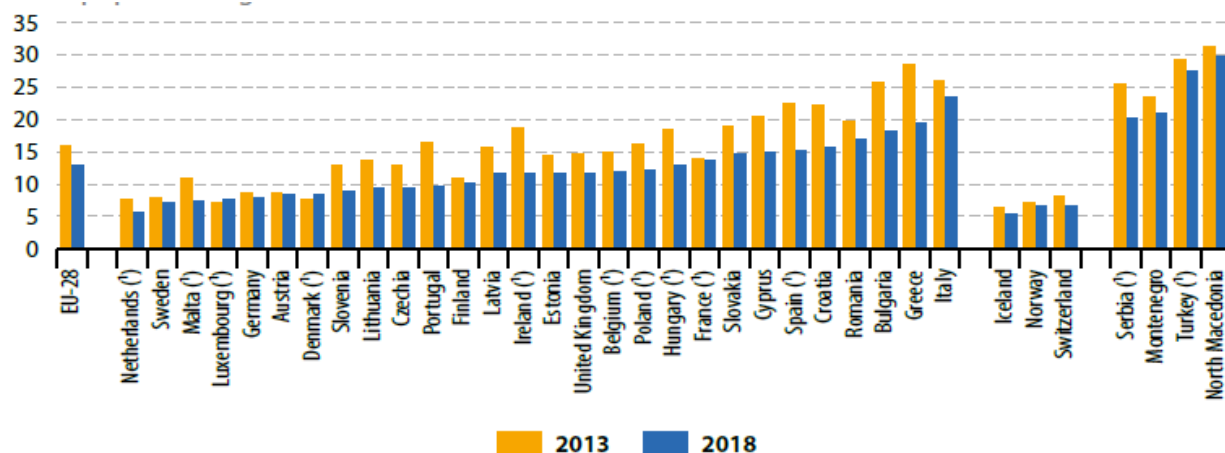
Employment rates in youth (age 20-34) as per Eurostat 2018

The gender employment gap among young people is the highest in Turkey as compared to the EU and Western Balkan countries. This is a shocking finding by Eurostat, and has not changed particularly from 2013 to 2018.



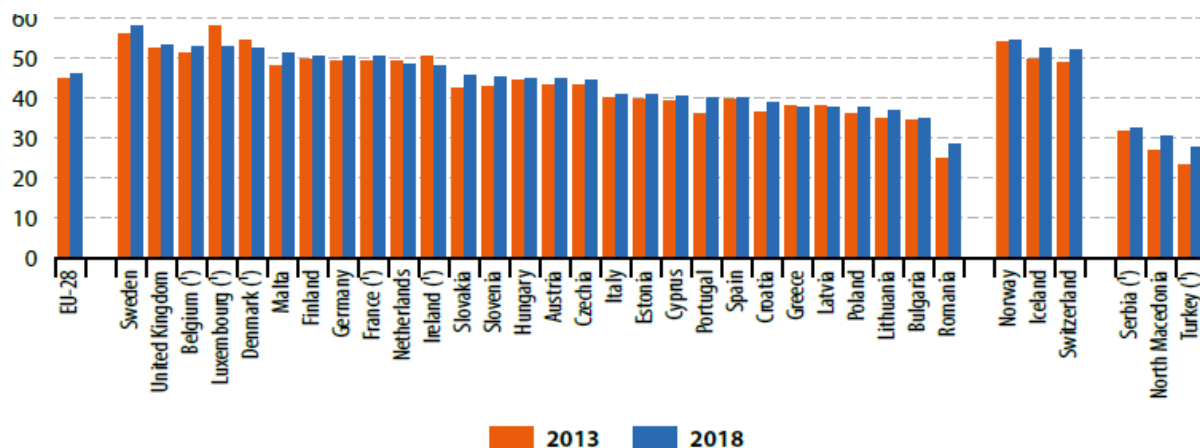
#### Unemployment pay gap in youth (age 20-34) by Eurostat 2018

The findings about young people (15-29) neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET) as per Eurostat findings in 2018 demonstrates that the percentage of NEET youth from the whole population is relatively the same in Turkey as in Romania, Bulgaria, Greece (among EU members) and all Western Balkan countries. This is nearly 30% even though it has slowly dropped with 1,2% from 2013 to 2018. It is still far higher than the EU average of 15,3% and six time higher than Scandinavian countries.



Population percentage of NEET youth (age 18-29), data by Eurostat 2018

This finding is related to the fact that the percentage of the labour force involved in high- and medium-tech companies in Turkey is at the level of Western Balkan countries, as well as Bulgaria and Romania, but far below the level of the EU average, as per 2018 data of Eurostat. It is slightly growing from 2013.



Employment in high- and medium-technology companies (Eurostat 2018)

Lastly, Turkey's economy is characterised by a high number of part-time employed people (2508K), and the highest average actual hours of work per week for the labour force. Not even a single one among Western Balkan countries has this alerting values in their economy (data as per 2018).

|                 | Number of<br>employed (age<br>group 20-64)<br>(in thousands) | Employment<br>rate as a<br>percentage of<br>the population<br>(age group<br>20-64) (%) | Number of part-time<br>employed persons<br>(age group 20-64)<br>(in thousands) | Average actual<br>hours of work<br>per week (age<br>group 20-64)( <sup>1</sup> )<br>(Hrs.) |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| EU-28           | 220 034 ±308                                                 | 73.1 ±0.1                                                                              | 40 755 ±170                                                                    | 37.1 ±0.0                                                                                  |
| Belgium         | 4 646 ±25                                                    | 69.7 ±0.4                                                                              | 1 115 ±20                                                                      | 36.9 ±0.2                                                                                  |
| Bulgaria        | 3 055 ±60                                                    | 72.4 ±1.4                                                                              | 55 ± 6                                                                         | 40.0 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| Czechia         | 5 124 ±26                                                    | 79.9 ±0.8                                                                              | 317 ±14                                                                        | 39.3 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| Denmark         | 2 601 ± 9                                                    | 77.5 ±0.3                                                                              | 537 ±10                                                                        | 35.7 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| Germany         | 39 551 ±101                                                  | 79.9 ±0.1                                                                              | 10 610 ±62                                                                     | 35.7 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| Estonia         | 622 ±10                                                      | 79.5 ±0.8                                                                              | 66 ± 5                                                                         | 38.5 ±0.3                                                                                  |
| Ireland         | 2 120 ±12                                                    | 74.1 ±0.4                                                                              | 384 ± 8                                                                        | 37.1 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| Greece          | 3 737 ±67                                                    | 59.5 ±0.6                                                                              | 336 ±18                                                                        | 40.9 ±0.2                                                                                  |
| Spain           | 19 002 ±104                                                  | 67.0 ±0.4                                                                              | 2 708 ±55                                                                      | 37.5 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| France          | 26 316 ±119                                                  | 71.3 ±0.3                                                                              | 4 692 ±87                                                                      | 36.6 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| Croatia         | 1 610 ±61                                                    | 65.2 ±0.9                                                                              | 80 ± 9                                                                         | 38.8 ±0.3                                                                                  |
| Italy           | 22 480 ±79                                                   | 63.0 ±0.2                                                                              | 4 112 ±58                                                                      | 36.9 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| Cyprus          | 387 ± 5                                                      | 73.9 ±0.9                                                                              | 41 ± 3                                                                         | 38.4 ±0.3                                                                                  |
| Latvia          | 868 ± 5                                                      | 76.8 ±0.5                                                                              | 61 ± 4                                                                         | 39.2 ±0.2                                                                                  |
| Lithuania       | 1 313 ±38                                                    | 77.8 ±1.1                                                                              | 90 ±10                                                                         | 38.8 ±0.4                                                                                  |
| Luxembourg      | 275 ± 7                                                      | 72.1 ±1.2                                                                              | 48 ± 3                                                                         | 38.0 ±0.4                                                                                  |
| Hungary         | 4 383 ±21                                                    | 74.4 ±0.4                                                                              | 184 ±10                                                                        | 38.3 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| Malta           | 229 ± 3                                                      | 75.5 ±0.9                                                                              | 28 ± 2                                                                         | 38.5 ±0.4                                                                                  |
| Netherlands     | 7 949 ±22                                                    | 79.2 ±0.2                                                                              | 3 719 ±27                                                                      | 33.9 ±0.0                                                                                  |
| Austria         | 4 102 ±14                                                    | 76.2 ±0.3                                                                              | 1 134 ±20                                                                      | 36.0 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| Poland          | 16 051 ±79                                                   | 72.2 ±0.4                                                                              | 1 000 ±39                                                                      | 39.8 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| Portugal        | 4 575 ±33                                                    | 75.4 ±0.5                                                                              | 356 ±18                                                                        | 39.1 ±0.8                                                                                  |
| Romania         | 8 294 ±151                                                   | 69.9 ±0.8                                                                              | 518 ±44                                                                        | 39.4 ±0.2                                                                                  |
| Slovenia        | 950 ±13                                                      | 75.4 ±0.6                                                                              | 86 ± 4                                                                         | 38.9 ±0.2                                                                                  |
| Slovakia        | 2 519 ±22                                                    | 72.4 ±0.6                                                                              | 121 ± 8                                                                        | 38.9 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| Finland         | 2 392 ±14                                                    | 76.3 ±0.4                                                                              | 326 ±10                                                                        | 36.7 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| Sweden          | 4 784 ±15                                                    | 82.6 ±0.3                                                                              | 1 019 ±18                                                                      | 36.8 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| United Kingdom  | 30 098 ±77                                                   | 78.7 ±0.2                                                                              | 7 010 ±65                                                                      | 36.6 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| Iceland         | 176 ± 0                                                      | 86.5 ±0.0                                                                              | 32 ± 0                                                                         | 40.7 ±0.0                                                                                  |
| Norway          | 2 489 ± 9                                                    | 79.2 ±0.3                                                                              | 592 ±12                                                                        | 35.0 ±0.2                                                                                  |
| Switzerland     | 4 276 ±16                                                    | 82.5 ±0.3                                                                              | 1 647 ±21                                                                      | 37.3 ±0.1                                                                                  |
| Montenegro      | 227 ± 5                                                      | 59.8 ±0.9                                                                              | 10 ± 1                                                                         | 43.5 ±0.3                                                                                  |
| North Macedonia | 743 ±27                                                      | 56.1 ±2.1                                                                              | 25 ± 2                                                                         | 41.9 ±0.4                                                                                  |
| Serbia          | 2 667 ±18                                                    | 63.1 ±0.4                                                                              | 243 ± 9                                                                        | 43.1 ±0.2                                                                                  |
| Turkey          | 26395 ±155                                                   | 55.6 ±0.3                                                                              | 2 508 ±64                                                                      | 45.7 ±0.2                                                                                  |

Turkey's employment (Eurostat 2018)

Diagnostics on required skills of young people for sustainable employment opportunities considering innovation and digital society, review on gap of policies and capacity building of youth organizations

**Including:**

- e. labour market requirements,
- f. impact of youth organizations;

One of the major diagnostic tools is the cognizance of legislation and protection tools of the domestic labour market in Turkey. While Turkey's constitutional and legislative framework explicitly avoids providing any definition or categorisation based on ethnicity, race or religion, there are a number of relevant laws and policies where equivalent definitions and categorisations are made which cause direct or indirect discrimination on grounds of religion. There is also case law (the European Court of Justice's judgment in the case of Ring and Skouboe Werge) concerning the definition of religion in general and of Islam/Muslims in particular. The Court of Cassation decided that some belief systems are ineligible as a religion and defined others in ways contrary to those of the holders of such beliefs. In both cases, the Court based its judgments on the advisory opinion of the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, Diyanet), a constitutionally endorsed public body which regulates affairs between the state and Islam.

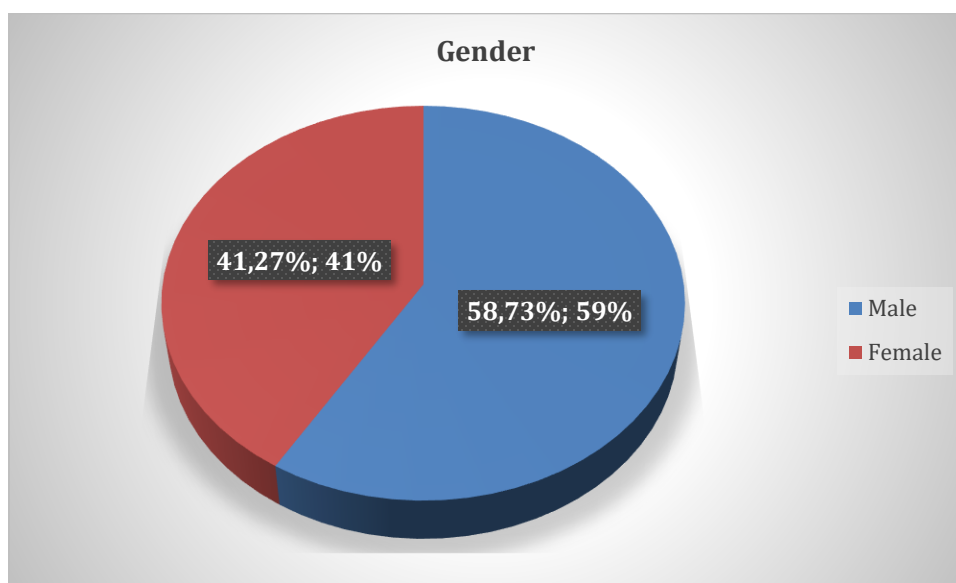
The national legal framework about labour and employment is completely blind on sexual orientation, as evident also in the absence of any provision criminalising homosexual, bisexual or transsexual conduct. However, there is widespread and systematic discrimination against LGBTI people, stemming from either the blatantly discriminatory texts of the laws and regulations and/or their discriminatory interpretation and application by the judiciary. The principal way in which laws are applied in a discriminatory way against LGBTI people is through the judicial interpretation of terms such as 'morality,' 'indecent behaviour' and 'dishonourable behaviour'. These could be conditions upon which LGBTI segments of youth can be discriminated, including in the employment context, and the discrimination can be justified in judicial proceedings. Although not designated as positive action by the legislation (the Labour Law, the Law on Persons with Disabilities, the Penal Code, the Law on national Education), there are a several laws and regulations stipulating positive measures in the areas of education, employment and a number of services (social insurance, transportation etc.), including employment quotas for (young) persons with disabilities.



Another factor from the labour market in Turkey is related to employment discrimination to young workers. In these cases, young people are often not well aware of the legal opportunity or do not wish to pursue compensation by law: employers are subject to a fine and employees may demand compensation of up to four months' wages plus claims for other benefits of which they have been deprived. In cases of unlawful termination of an employment contract (among other reasons, due to discrimination), the (young) employer must re-instate the employee in work within one month. If not, the employee is entitled to compensation of between four and eight months' wages. Where discrimination in violation of the Penal Code is committed, then the sanction is up to three years' imprisonment with no possibility of conversion to a fine. In addition, labour inspectors, insurance inspectors and school inspectors, as well as executive officials (in the area of consumer protection), can issue administrative and monetary sanctions. Despite these multiple stakeholders in the system, employment is still precarious and young people in Turkey have to be equipped with knowledge to seek justice as well as have access to improved litigation when it comes to employment discrimination on the grounds of their age or level of experience.

An in-depth analysis onto the market requirements is two-fold. The empirical data collected within the field study (surveys and focus groups) with students, graduates and employers gives two perspectives, ie the axis of self-reflected gaps among the youth labour force in Turkey and the expectations by the business.

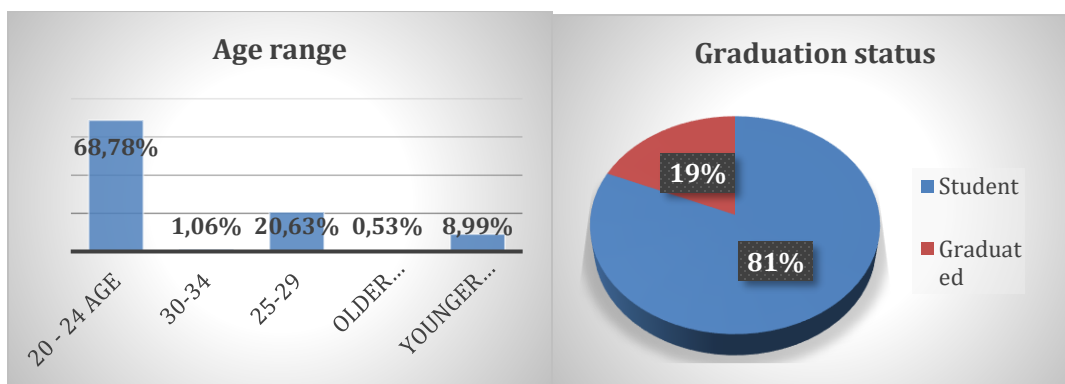
### Labour market demand from the perspective of the young employee



Employee respondents distribution by gender

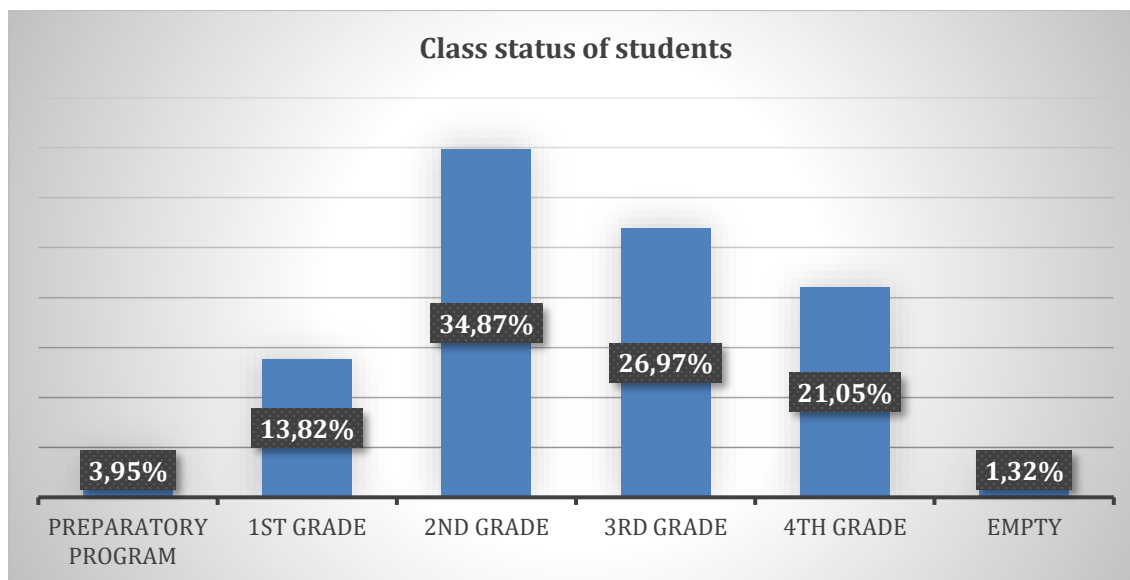


There has been an almost equal representation of both female and male respondents. No one wished to identify themselves as a gender minority or skip the answer to the question.



Age and status of job-seekers

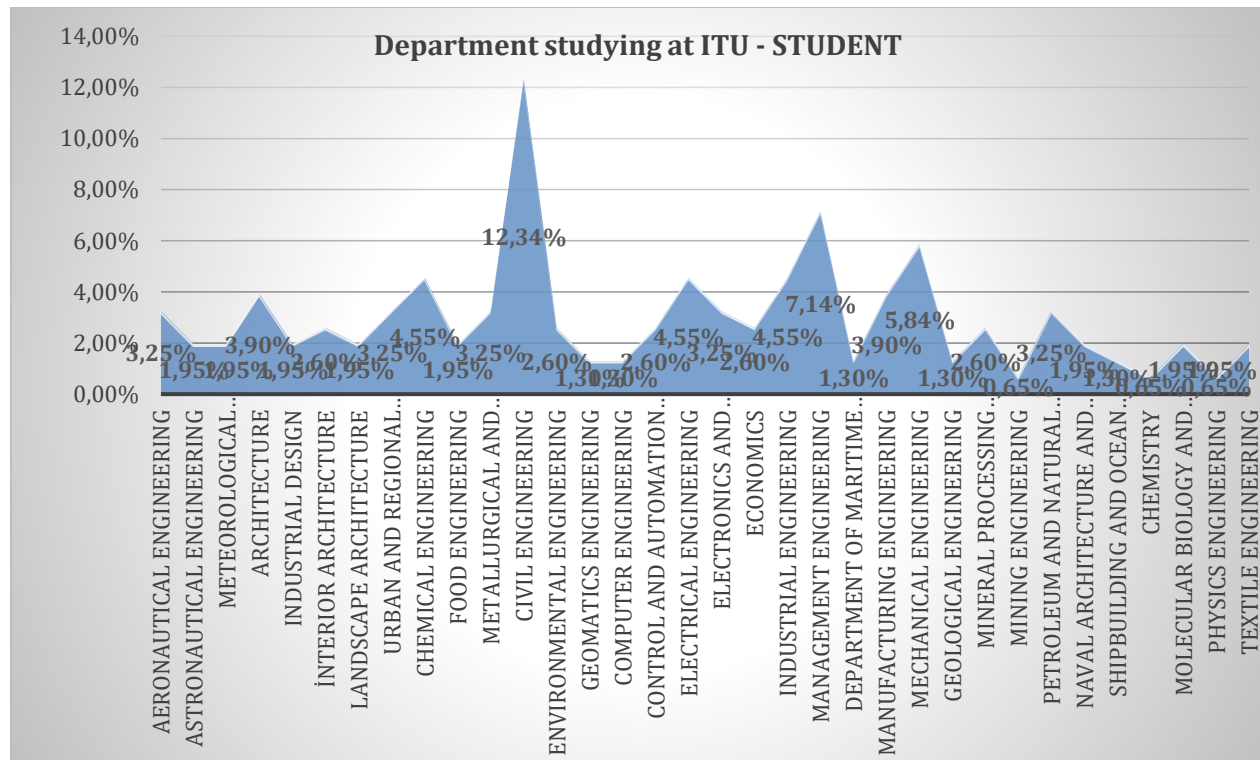
According to our findings, youth aged 20-24 and students (81%) are among the most active job seekers. They seem to be actively interested in employment and self-employment options.



Career planning and class status

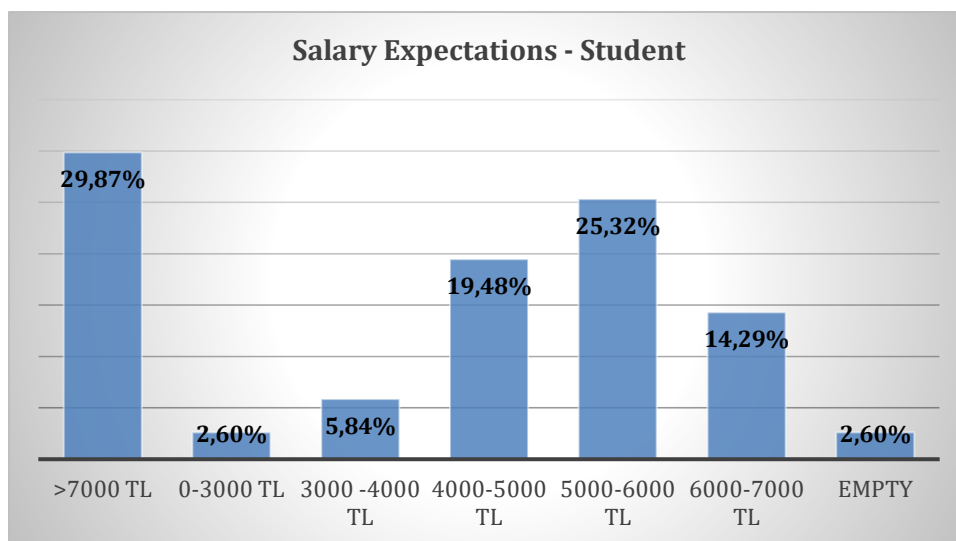
University 2<sup>nd</sup> grade bachelor students seem to be actively involved in career planning, followed by 3<sup>rd</sup> year students and 3<sup>rd</sup>-year students. The orientation of students to a job and the market conditions should start as early as possible – and to the opposite of our

expectations, the majority of career planning youth is not at the earliest stage of their university time (prep years) but in the very advanced and late stages.



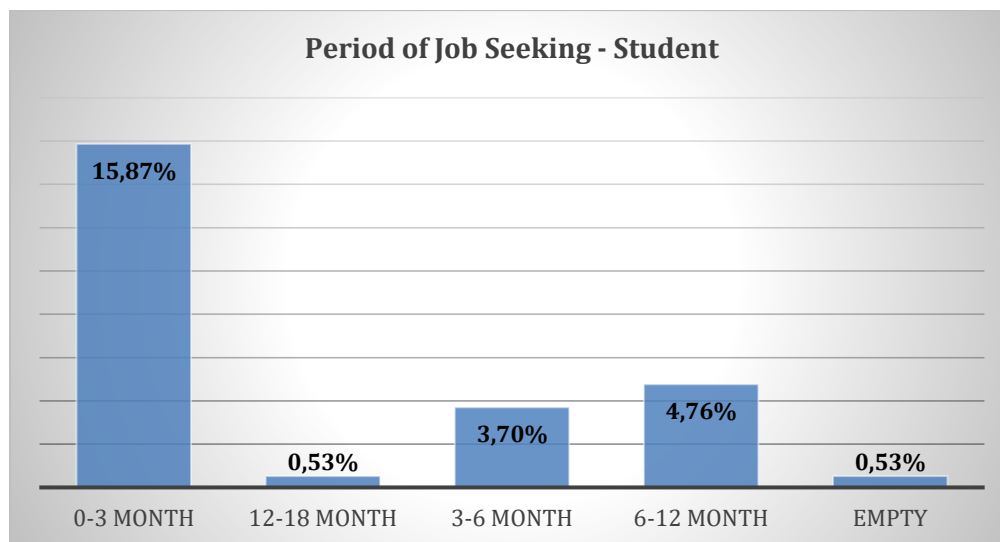
#### Distribution of job seeking students by department

The majority of job-seeking young people is from engineering fields, with fields such as civil engineering, industrial engineering and mechanical engineering being most market-oriented. Yet, areas such as mining seem to be less job-related in the minds of students. This is especially alarming regarding the current market status.



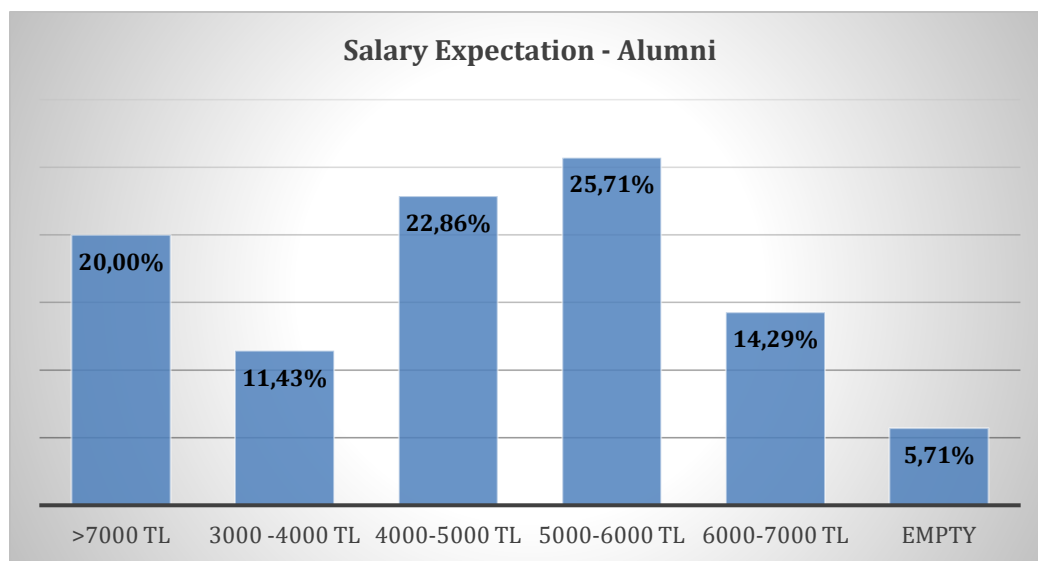
Salary expectations of students

Almost 5 times the minimum statutory salary in Turkey is the starting salary that students expect from their first job. This expectation is followed by other high amounts above 4 000 TL, or 2,5 times the minimum salary. The market is unable to offer these opportunities to students/fresh graduates and this is a remarkable mismatch of expectations and market demand to be taken notice of.



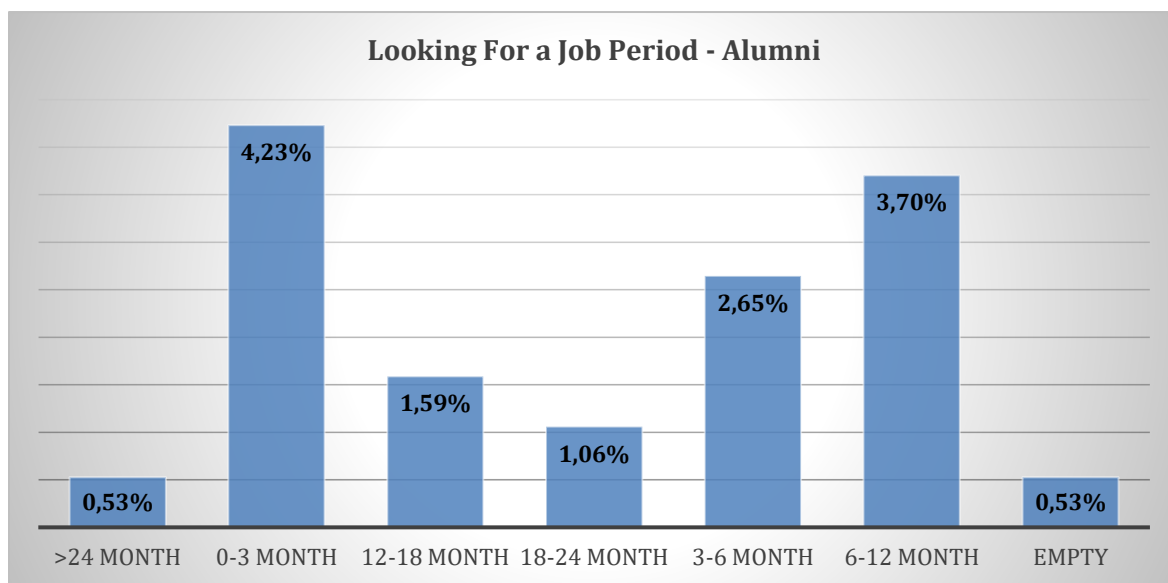
Job-seeking period of students

After a relatively limited period of job-seeking (0-3 months) students land employment. Longer-term job seekers (3-6 months and 6-12 months) form a significant group of students (3,7% and 4,76%).



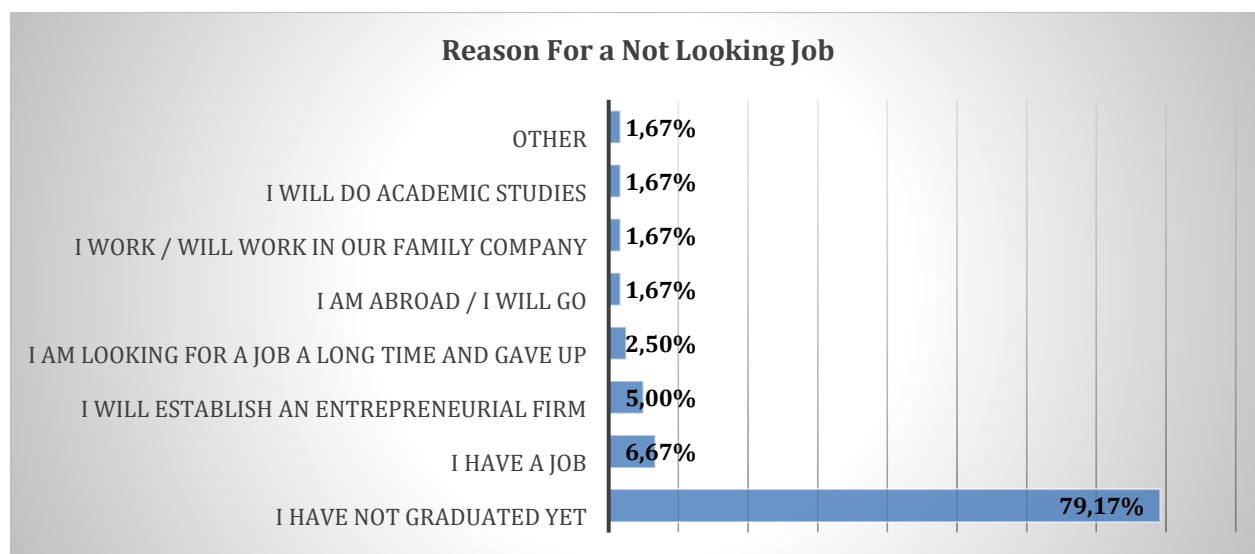
#### Salary expectations of graduates

The salary expectations of graduates are relatively lower, as compared to students. Yet, their starting expectation is 5000-6000TL which is close to the expectation of most students. Still, it is far above the salary opportunities in the job market at present.



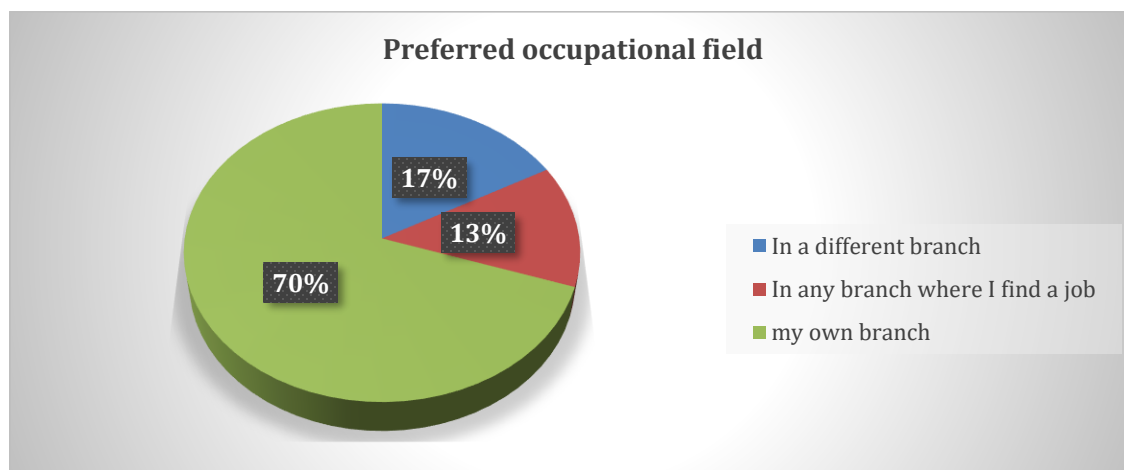
#### Job-seeking periods of graduates

The job-seeking period of graduates is very similar to the one of students. It is still astounding that graduates can instantly find a job. Yet, long-term job-seekers' group is larger than that of students.



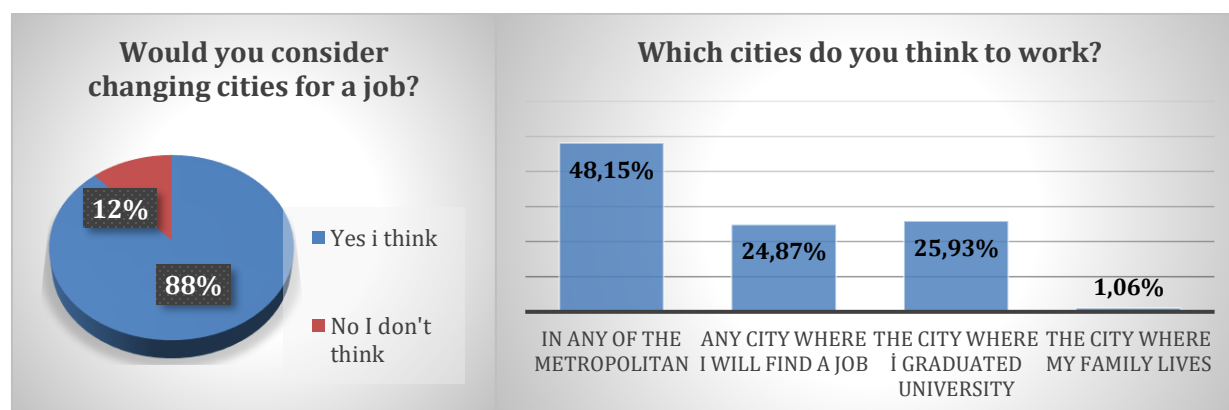
#### Non-job-seeking reasons

Taken together, students that are not looking for a job right now are driven by the reason that they are still studying (79,17%). Among students and graduates who are not looking for a job are already employed (6,67%) or planning to start a business (5%). Some have given up after a long period of job-seeking, are going abroad, or planning to work in a family-owned business. An academic career seems attractive to less than 2%.



Preferred occupational field

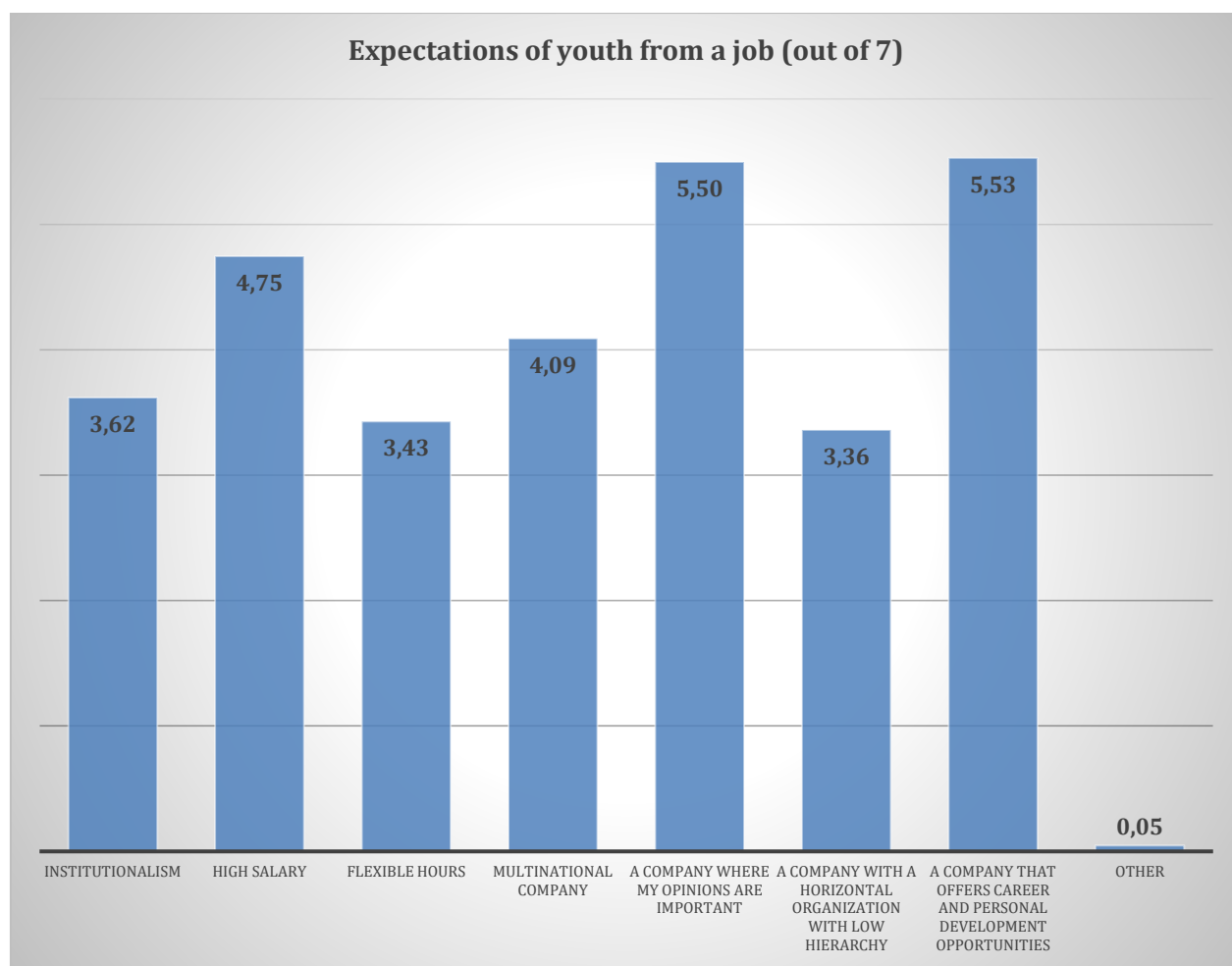
More than two-thirds of all young people surveyed are interested to continue working in the same field that they have been educated about in their university years. Nearly half of the rest is divided between another branch and any other job field where jobs are available.



Relocatio due to a job

While 88% of students and graduates would prefer to stay in the same city, from this amount of them the majority would be inclined to relocated to another major metropolitan city in

Turkey. A quarter of the youth population is open to move to any other city where they have found a job, or live in the same city where they have graduated. Family reasons remain insignificant.

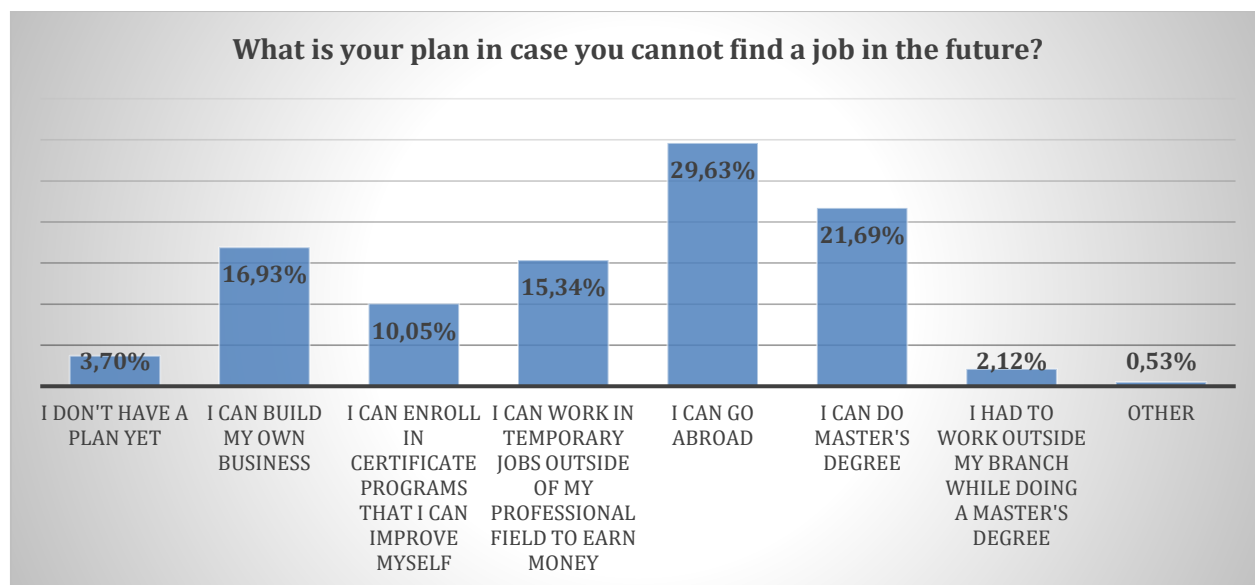


### Job expectations of youth

Students and graduates are mostly interested in companies that provide them opportunities for career and personal development. Secondly, they are in pursuit of a job environment that gives value to their opinions. Salary comes in the third place, followed by the opportunity to work in an international company. Institutionalism, flexible working hours, horizontal

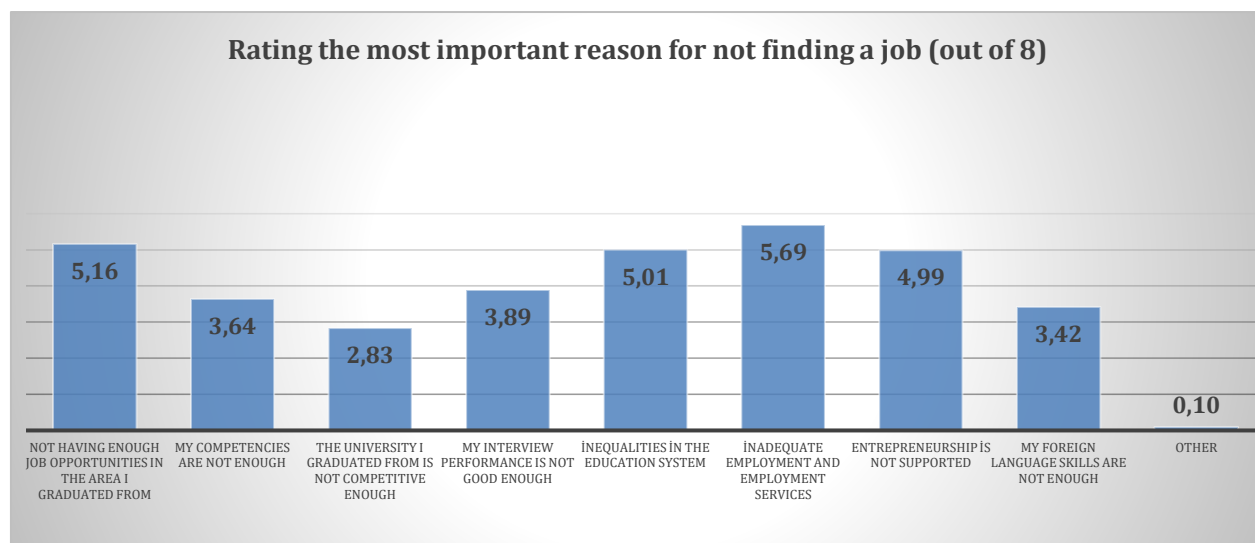


organisation/low hierarchy are the next determinants. Other reasons such as friendly atmosphere are least important for a young job-seeker in Turkey.



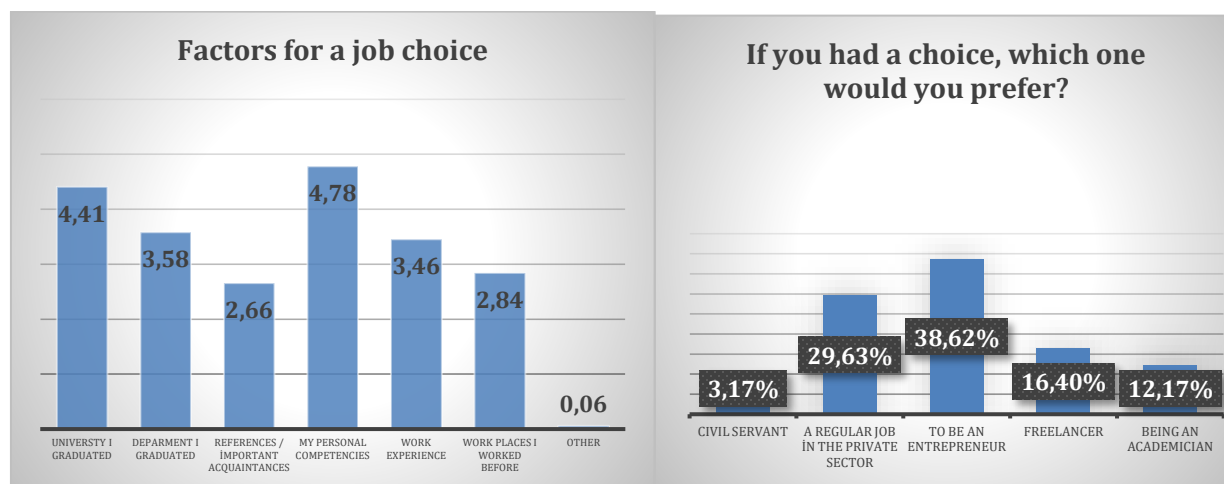
#### Alternatives to unemployment

When it comes to alternatives to unemployment, young people are mostly considering going abroad (29,63%). Of the remaining students and graduates, going for a master degree is considered an alternative (21,69%) followed by starting an own business in the third place (16,93%). Other education opportunities such as certificate programmes and temporary jobs to make a living are the next alternatives. Very few young people have no plan (3,7%) and 0,53% given unclear answers, which is close to having no particular plan. This picture is significantly alerting due to the brain drain risk for young people that cannot find a job in Turkey: one in three would immigrate in a search for employment abroad.



### Reasons for not finding a job

Young people understand their joblessness as a result of the inadequate employment and rated services (5,69%). Secondly, limited job opportunities in the education field is pointed out as another important impediment, followed by inequalities in the education system and lack of incentives for entrepreneurship. Interview techniques, lack of strong competences and low skills in foreign languages is given as other reasons for the unemployed status of youth.



### Job choice

Among the factors determining youth's choice of a job, students and graduates point out personal competences and the university of graduation as the most important factors. Third place is for department of graduation and almost equally work experience. Among 5 job options, being an entrepreneur seems most important to young people (38,62%) followed by a steady job in the private sector (29,63%) and free-lancing (16,40%). Jobs in public administration are no longer so attractive for the present generation of youth.

When applying the global recruiter Manpower's SkillsInsight methodology to the same target audience of youth, the largest groups of them are classified in the groups of 'Ability' and 'Persuader', and the least fall in the skill group 'Driver'.



SkillInsight Findings  
about Youth

'Ability' youths define themselves as those that are mostly able to resolve complex questions and discern subtle relationships among complex situations, events and objects. 'Persuader' youth would be best in influencing, selling or persuasion, with their self-confidence. Far-sighted thinkers and pragmatists are those gathered in the self-identification group of 'Driver'.

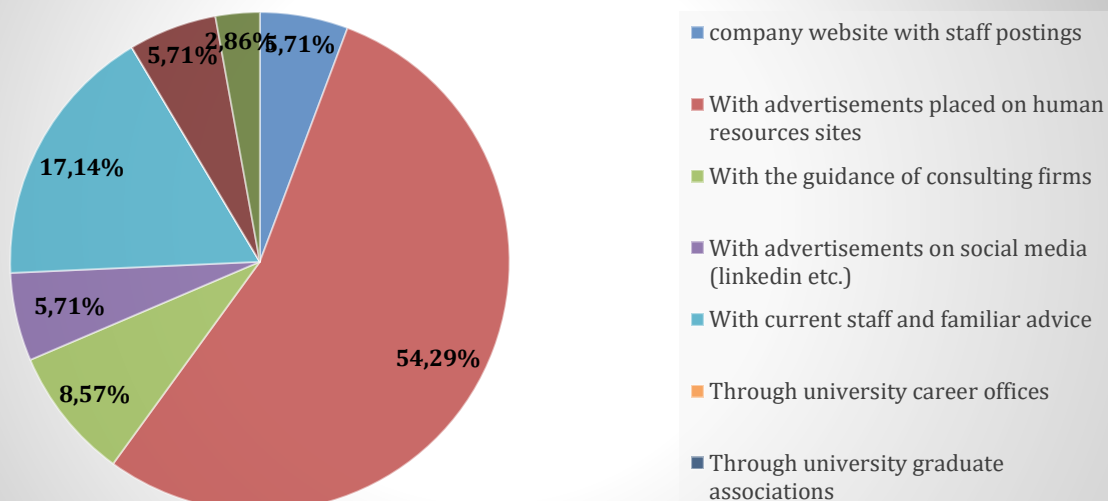
## Labour market requirement from the perspective of the employer



### Factors in recruitment of youth labour force

Employers seem to be mostly interested in the personal competences. The field of education, followed by the job expertise and awareness of foreign languages are also amongst the most important factors. Less importance is given to references from previous jobs or university teachers, as well as the track record of a young person (their GPA at the university).

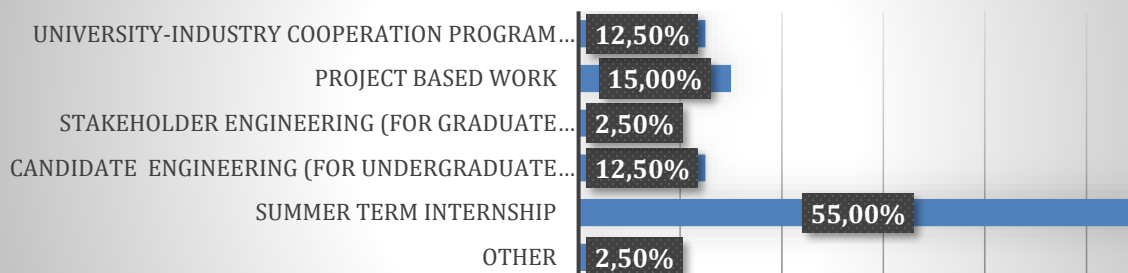
### In which ways is recruitment of youth personnel from external sources performed?



### Means of recruitment of youth personnel

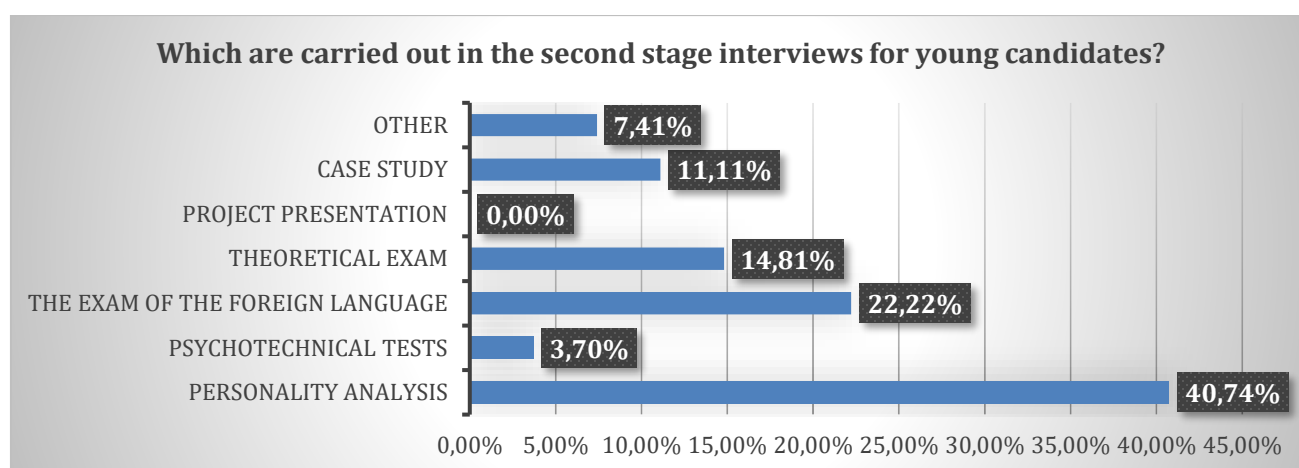
When looking for youth employees, employers are mostly interested to recruit students or graduates through specialised human resources sites, followed by posting an ad on their own website. Consultant firms in human resources are also frequently used. Surprisingly, university graduate associations, university career offices and specialised government services such as İŞKUR in Turkey seem to be of limited help, according to the opinions of respondent employer representatives.

### What programs do you have for an university students/graduates?



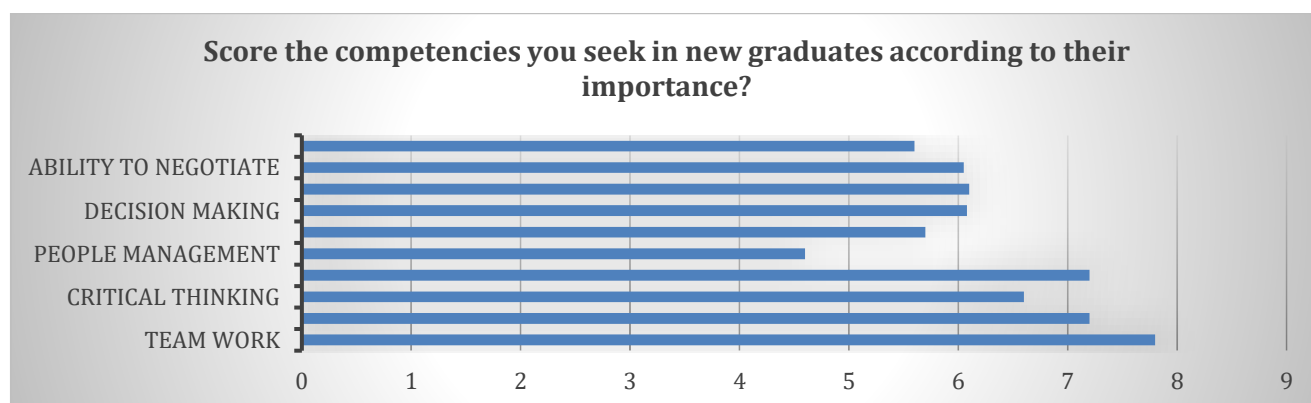
### Opportunities offered to youth

Most employers would prefer to employ youth through short-term internships during the summer when their workload is low, employees are on holidays, or students are on their term breaks. Project-based work to resolve cases related to the company field, and university-industry cooperation (Co-Op programmes) are the next preferred choices. In other employers list least wanted opportunities such as government-incentivised opportunities.



#### Second-stage interviews

After the initial conversation to filter candidates based on their expectations and general abilities, employers come to the second stage of recruitment. They prefer to do a personality analysis of young job candidates (40,74%), followed by a foreign language exam (22,22%) and a theoretical exam (14,81). A case study is rated only as the fourth most used approach in the second stage.



#### Desired competences in graduates

When recruiting graduates, employers are mostly looking for team work, complex problem solving and creativity. Least important seem to be rather technical competences such as people management. Service orientation, critical thinking and decision-making skills are considered equally vital.

The expectations of employers in Turkey are also aligned with the most sought competences in the global job market in the transition to a fully digitalised economy. World Economic Forum's Most Wanted Jobs lists the trend for professional competences in which Turkey's job market and its youth is unavoidably falling:

1. Complex Problem Solving
2. Critical Thinking
3. Creativity
4. People management
5. Team work
6. Emotional intelligence
7. To decide
8. Service Orientation
9. Discussion
10. Cognitive Flexibility

### **Some of the major youth organisations working in Turkey on the field:**

First introduced in 2003 as "Turkey National Youth Council Initiative-TUGEK", Youth Organisations Forum (YOF) suspended its work after the preparation of an inclusive national youth policy document at the beginning of 2000s. After about a decade, YOF re-initiated its work with the gathering of 7 youth organisations. The main aim of the Forum is to advocate the rights of young people in Turkey as well as preparing a youth policy including all young people regardless of their backgrounds and monitoring the implementation of the policy. The forum is consisted of youth NGOs. Although there isn't any member from Universities or research community, most of the forum members are in close relations with Universities and conduct joint projects. The Forum keeps developing and enlarging through the local and national meetings it has been organising since the beginning of 2013.

On the other hand, on 19 May 2004, the Youth Councils around Turkey founded National Youth Parliament. Habitat Turkey is holding the secretariat of the Parliament. In 2012, the Parliament concerted to accept the youth organisations other than the youth councils. Since



then, the parliament has members from 54 cities, including 21 Youth Councils, 45 Youth NGOs and 62 University clubs.

Organisations with specific focus to youth entrepreneurship are mostly related to universities:

| Organisation / initiative                                                                                                                                        | Year of foundation | Website                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sogla Academy (Social Entrepreneur Young Leaders Academy)                                                                                                        | 2009               | <a href="http://www.sogla.org/">http://www.sogla.org/</a>                                                                                                                                   |
| Bilgi Young Social Entrepreneur Award (initiated by Istanbul Bilgi University in cooperation with International Youth Foundation and Sylvan Laureate Foundation) | 2010               | <a href="http://www.bilgiigo.org/">http://www.bilgiigo.org/</a>                                                                                                                             |
| Istanbul Okan University Centre of Social Entrepreneurship                                                                                                       | 2011               | <a href="https://www.okan.edu.tr/osgm/">https://www.okan.edu.tr/osgm/</a>                                                                                                                   |
| Özyeğin University Centre for Entrepreneurship                                                                                                                   | 2011               | <a href="https://www.ozyegin.edu.tr/en/center-entrepreneurship/center-entrepreneurship/about-us">https://www.ozyegin.edu.tr/en/center-entrepreneurship/center-entrepreneurship/about-us</a> |
| Koç University Social Impact Forum (KUSIF)                                                                                                                       | 2012               | <a href="https://kusif.ku.edu.tr/">https://kusif.ku.edu.tr/</a>                                                                                                                             |
| Female Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award (initiated by KAGIDER, Women Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey in cooperation with Garanti Bank and Ekonomist)    | 2014               | <a href="http://www.kagider.org/en">http://www.kagider.org/en</a>                                                                                                                           |

#### Organisations promoting youth entrepreneurship in Turkey

As the mapping of youth organisations reveals, the majority of them are not working explicitly on youth employment or entrepreneurship, and the very few specialised organisations are hybrid NGOs, ie they are affiliated with universities and dependent on their resources to pursue the agenda.

## Skills based profiling and matching

### Including:

- c. identification of the missing competencies and skills, training needs analysis.

The missing skills and competences have been evaluated in a comprehensive report commissioned by the European Commission (JRC Science for Policy Report by Stefania Bocconi et al, 2016) that is summarized in the table below. Digital skills are positioned within the gap of a number of other related skills.

|                                                | Austria | Czech Republic <sup>7</sup> | Denmark | Finland | France | Greece | Hungary | Italy | Lithuania | Poland | Portugal | Switzerland | Turkey |
|------------------------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|---------|---------|--------|--------|---------|-------|-----------|--------|----------|-------------|--------|
| Fostering logical thinking skills              |         |                             |         |         |        |        |         |       |           |        |          |             |        |
| Fostering problem-solving skills               |         |                             |         |         |        |        |         |       |           |        |          |             |        |
| Fostering other key competences                |         |                             |         |         |        |        |         |       |           |        |          |             |        |
| Attracting more students into Computer Science |         |                             |         |         |        |        |         |       |           |        |          |             |        |
| Fostering coding and programming skills        |         |                             |         |         |        |        |         |       |           |        |          |             |        |
| Fostering employability in the ICT sector      |         |                             |         |         |        |        |         |       |           |        |          |             |        |

### Digital skills gap in Turkey (JRC Science for Policy Report by Stefania Bocconi et al, 2016)

The missing competences that are established at the university level actually stem from lack of integration of courses that teach digital skills in the earlier stages of the education system in Turkey. Most of the EU countries enable earlier provision of classes in IT and digital matters, some of them such as Finland and Poland from the earliest stages of child development. In this respect Turkey significantly lags behind and the shortcomings in digital skills due to late learning about it within the educational curricula has a domino effect that leads to an ever-increasing gap in digital skills when the Turkish young person arrives in the university settings. The comparison is illustrated in the figure below.

| Country            | Within a subject                                                                         | Across all subjects                                           | Depends on regional or school curricula |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>Austria</b>     | Informatics (upper secondary level)                                                      |                                                               |                                         |
| <b>Denmark</b>     | Information/technology (in grades 10-12)                                                 | (in grades 0-9)                                               | X                                       |
| <b>Finland</b>     | Mathematics (grades 1-9)<br>Crafts (grades 7-9)                                          | Transversal competences (e.g. ICT competences)                | X                                       |
| <b>France</b>      | Mathematics (Cycle 2-3, primary level)<br>Math and Technology (Cycle 4- lower secondary) |                                                               |                                         |
| <b>Hungary</b>     | Information technology (grades 1-4; and grades 9-12)                                     |                                                               | X                                       |
| <b>Italy</b>       | Informatics/ technology<br>IT Curriculum - Applied Science                               | X                                                             | X                                       |
| <b>Israel</b>      | Computer Science                                                                         |                                                               | X                                       |
| <b>Lithuania</b>   | Informatics and Information Technology (IT) (grades 5 -12)                               |                                                               |                                         |
| <b>Malta</b>       | ICT subject                                                                              | Part of Digital Literacy (primary level)                      | X                                       |
| <b>Poland</b>      | Informatics (grades 0-12)                                                                | X                                                             |                                         |
| <b>Portugal</b>    | - ICT subject (grades 7-8)<br>- Informatics (grades 10-12)                               |                                                               |                                         |
| <b>Switzerland</b> | X                                                                                        | X (primary and lower secondary level German speaking schools) |                                         |
| <b>Turkey</b>      | ICT and Informatics (grade 5-6)                                                          |                                                               |                                         |

### Late teaching of digital skills Turkey

(JRC Science for Policy Report, Stefania Bocconi et al, 2016)

The lack of knowledge of ICT and its integration in career planning and entrepreneurship is related to the dependence on informal economy and engagement of certain young people in friendship/family-type of business transactions. It turns out that this number is not low. Informal work among the self-employed youth is quite common: available data from 2017 indicate that only 44% were fully up-to-date with their contribution payments, whereas 33% were in arrears. Moreover, the remaining 23% had never paid any contributions after registering.

The findings from this cross-country study commissioned by the European Commission (Slavina Spassova et al, 'Access to social protection for people working on non-standard contracts and as self-employed in Europe', 2017) have focused on core, hard skills wanted at the European level, but fail to take into consideration other dimensions.

Based on the empirical research within this study in Turkey, team work, complex problem solving, languages and a pragmatic approach to problems are where expectations of employers and employees are in discrepancy. The inconsistency results on the inability of the educational system in the country to teach these skills, as it adopts teacher-centred formalism and individual assignments. Group assignments, industry-oriented use cases and demand-driven homework are still not integrated widely in the educational curricula. Universities still fail to teach soft skills, but rather focus on the technical, field-specific 'hard' skills that most employers are not seeking as the primary reasons in recruitment. Modern companies are looking for adaptive self-learners that would join their team with less theoretical knowledge than an application-driven approach in a dynamic company. These skill needs are not well covered by comprehensive studies at the EU or the national level and mostly industrial organisations or recruiters give publicity to these vacuous skills in youth labour force. Manpower and the World Economic Forum's findings that have been cited in the previous chapter also consistent with our conclusions about the training needs in Turkey.

### Recommendations for development of Module with Entrance tests and Job Expectations of young people looking for employment

#### **Including:**

- Examples and good practices in this field

Modules with Entrance Tests and Job Expectations have to be developed in a comprehensive and inclusive manner that includes educators but also representatives of employer organisations and recruiter companies. Along with surveying the professional skills related to the specific field of graduation of the student and their desired job, soft skills, emotional intelligence and auxiliary competences have to be evaluated. It is possible that one metric does not match all employers or professional fields, therefore, certain flexibility and abstaining from pure quantitative measurement should also be explored.

Examples of youth organisations working successfully on matching the job expectations of young people looking for employment in Turkey are still limited, but could be widely studied and multiplied country-wide or in another similar national context.

One of the interesting examples of organisations promoting youth employment and entrepreneurship is a women-led cooperative in Turkey. Tomurcuk is a women's cooperative founded in 2006 by a female co-operator called Gülser Özkan and 23 mothers raising mentally challenged children and youth. Founders organised their efforts into a cooperative as they considered freedom of action, solidarity, self-responsibility, democratic decision-making and an ideology-free environment essential for their aim. The cooperative aims to integrate mentally challenged individuals into work through education and skills

development in Istanbul. The work and rehabilitation programmes offered by the cooperative are carried out in workshops and an education centre. In the workshops, children work with their mothers or teachers and produce marketable handcrafts. The education centre offers special education, family guidance and counselling, along with rehabilitation services such as sport and music therapy. In 2007 the cooperative established a private school, the Yeni Tomurcuk Special Education and Rehabilitation Centre (*Yeni Tomurcuk Özel Eğitim ve Rehabilitasyon Merkezi*) in order to generate income to sustain the services offered by the cooperative. The cooperative has also established an association, Yeni Tomurcuk Culture, Art, Youth and Sport Club Association (*Yeni Tomurcuk Kültür Sanat Gençlik ve Spor Kulübü Derneği*), where students talented in certain sports can become licenced members of the federation and participate in contests. The cooperative enjoys a band, the Bremen Percussion Band, comprised of students from the centre. The band rehearses with the volunteer rhythm educator Yaşar Morpınar and has given more than 280 concerts so far. In addition to these initiatives, the cooperative owns a café used as an application centre for the children. To date, more than 500 children have benefitted from the services of the cooperative, with more than 60 students currently registered.

Another example that goes further to ignite leadership in Turkish youth, including entrepreneurship, is the Young Guru Academy (YGA). It is an international non-profit established in 2000 in Turkey. The organization aims to raise the leaders of the future who combine compassion with innovation. Its volunteers develop international projects to help solve the problems their communities face. The innovations, alongside the climate of cooperation, that they create makes them role models.

Over 50 thousand university and high school students apply to YGA every year. After a 5-step process, 50 chosen students are admitted to the program. Scientists, innovators, and leaders such as Prof. Aziz Sancar, Ali Koç, Faruk Eczacıbaşı, Prof. Mehmet Toner, Prof. Kristi Raube, and Prof. Doğan Cüceloğlu train these admitted volunteers. Over 5000 hours of volunteer work and education allows the knowledge to be implemented in their lives. YGA's global partners such as Harvard, MIT, Columbia, Brown, Technical University of Munich, Polytechnic of Turin, London Business School and UC Berkeley allows students from those institutions to join YGA volunteers in the field.

Good practices in existing training modules for youth organizations with representatives from business and civil society

**Including:**

- f. impact of youth organizations;
- g. educational practices for career orientation in the partner countries and

h. educational practices for career orientation on European and national documents.

The impact of youth organisations is still not omnipresent in Turkey. Traditional organisations that represent young people in local and national decision-making are of limited participation in fostering the dialogue between the business and society, especially when it comes to developing training modules. Perhaps the most outstanding example about educational practices in Turkey, fully aligned with European practices (the European Youth Strategy, and Turkey's Development Plan 2023) is the multi-fated, country-wide work of the Young Guru Academy (YGA).

More than 50 thousand high school and university students apply to YGA every year. 50 are selected after 5-phased interviews. They receive training from YGA Dream Partners composed of scientists, academicians and senior managers that builds upon their employment and leadership related skills designed specifically to the learning needs of the most promising young gurus. Furthermore, they work as volunteers in the Science Movement and social innovations initiated by YGA to make children love science. And not just the students in Turkey, the students of universities such as Harvard, MIT, Columbia, Brown, Berkeley, London Business School, Technical University of Munich, Polytechnic University of Turin come and take roles in YGA projects thanks to the strategic partnerships established with these universities.

In this way performance of children in science is improved, cross-national cooperation and related skills bring youth of Turkey to the global standards of education and equips them with competences of an increasingly demanding world.

### Identification of best practices adequate for establishing the necessary capacity

One of the most adequate practice for establishing the necessary capacity is the mentor programme. The programme developed by İstanbul Technical University's Alumni Association is aligned with the best practices worldwide and is fully adapted to the Turkish context of education and labour market. Alumni that are already settled in their career as employees or entrepreneurs share their inspiration and knowledge with university students or graduates. Through regular contact (twice a month), interactive training online, workshops and various pairing and networking activities the fusion of experience is achieved. Young mentees are well prepared to enter their career, feeling more confident and better connected to the demands of the business world. They would overcome fears of the first job, and gradually build soft skills through exchanges with their mentors and other mentees. Over the years some mentors would continue mentoring, but they would be joined by former mentees who have established themselves well in the professional field and have gathered enough experience to share with younger peers. Just in the past year, the



programme has reached out to over 1600 mentees of various educational fields and the programme is becoming more ambitious for the years to come. Other universities and youth organisations are increasingly and more actively seeking to transplant the model or adapt it to the context of their environment in other cities across the country.

|              |                     |             |                           |
|--------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| 2019<br>2020 | 12 Recurring Mentor | 200 Mentors | 650 Mentees + 350 Mentees |
| 2018<br>2019 | 10 Recurring Mentor | 200 Mentors | 600 Mentees               |

When exploring other educational practices Turkey-wide and abroad, the means for identification in the EU-level White Paper on Youth and the national strategic documents of Turkey are to be observed. However, the dynamic requirements of the market necessitate a less formal and more flexible approach that combines the informal contact of students and graduates with professionals and entrepreneurs, in a friendly, non-institutional manner. Some of these best practices have also been identified through the empirical study, such as internships, project assignments and Co-Op education programmes (jointly offered by the university and industry).

### General recommendations

In light of the aforesaid findings from the desk research and the empirical research, there are several key recommendations to be made:

- b. **Career counselling and fostering of soft skills** for young people in Turkey should be initiated at the initial stages of the university education – and preferably even before that, in earlier stages of education.
- c. **A cross-sectorial approach** in preparing young people for the job market would require less theoretical, teacher-centred education and more use-case assignments and cooperation with the industry. Group assignments would also foster competences in team work.
- d. **Integrating digital skills** through ICT-enabled teaching and learning, use of augmented and virtual reality, holograms and other contemporary tools could education more immersive but also closer to reality, especially when demonstrating topics visually. It stimulates creativity which is also a skill commonly sought in the job market.
- e. **Preventing and mitigating gender-based inequality**, including discrimination of LGBTI, has to be not only encouraged by statutory measures aligned with the



approximation with EU law, but also by positive discrimination measures applied in the industry and encouraging the business with tax incentives and grants for hiring young women.

- f. **Promoting entrepreneurship** as a culture that is based on risk taking and accepting failure as a natural way of growth. Success stories but also lessons learned from bankrupt start-ups should be integrated in various extracurricular events or elective courses in the university. Grants and tax incentives for young entrepreneurs have to be increased.
- g. **Fostering international cooperation in education** as an effective way of learning languages, better understanding about foreign cultures and the challenges in foreign markets, gaining team skills and solving complex problems is an effective way to increase the employability of young people and prevent brain drain.
- h. **Nurturing mentorship** across professional fields and industries to stimulate young people's learning from more experienced, seniors should be organised informally, beyond barriers of institutionalised education. Industry organisations, alumni organisations and university career centres should be actively encouraged to further mentorship country-wide.
- i. **Increasing the role of youth organisations** as an integral part of the education-career linkage, by engaging massively young people in them, promoting a culture of civil society and participation in public life. Examples of successful youth organisations should be multiplied.

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION FROM THE PROJECT

YOUTHCAP aims at a successful model integration between associations, institutions, business and other value-chain actors to support higher employability and skill development of young people. The partnership is based on mutual economic, social and training benefits and empowers the participants to function as competent integrated system for the sustainable improvement of livelihoods of young people, considering both the local characteristics and the EU cohesion in progress. Our ambition is to support the occupational adaptation and professional development of youth through career guidance and capacity building of new sector-driven knowledge and skills.

Given volatile markets and the unstable economic underpinnings, a focus on innovation and management is relevant. E-platform for Youth Career Guidance and Employability based on the transnational cooperation represents a well-designed pathway from school to work that will help youth organizations to improve their performance and young people to find their professional realization. The consortium has the ambition to support the occupational adaptation and professional development of youth and to achieve it through career guidance and capacity development of new sector driven knowledge and skills in various private public sectors. We will produce extensive studies and analysis on the deficits and the barriers to youth employment and achievement of the European policy priorities in this field. The dynamic network of partners and stakeholders in youth cooperation, higher education, public administration, business and civil society guarantees the synergy of the structural elements for building youth capacity.

EU 2020 Strategy aims at developing youth potential and unleashing youth capacity. Increased policy awareness creating synergies between upgrading youth skills, employability and matching competencies to business needs has brought practical mechanisms enabling young people to find

successful path from initial education to further qualification and job. Training and financial schemes link education and labour markets, local conditions and promotion of youth entrepreneurial spirit. At national, regional and local level is improved the framework to adopt entrepreneurial learning. Knowledge economy needs to invest more in youth capacity, social capital and integrity and to seek efficiency and flexibility in systematic reforms empowering conscious youth participation.

The aim of the project is to promote the regeneration of communities via development, transfer, and exchange of innovative practices supporting capacity building for youth.

YOUTHCAP will develop framework to align economic and social priorities of youth organizations to the regional and international environment as key step in overcoming the

one-off initiatives and will set the ground for youth capacity and entrepreneurial capability with strong commitment for regional and international development. The project offers access to practice-oriented training, delivered by experts in the field. Inter-disciplinary approach and peer-to-peer learning will foster better culture for innovation in youth organizations and creativity among young people. Solving youth employment problems will be result from applied and enriched successful EU practices, initiatives (ESCO), social integration, access to innovative training, business involvement. Trainees will build competence in modern economic activities. Regional cooperation and shared experience will formulate a model for cohesive inclusion of unemployed in the EU countries suffering from lack of young human resources.

The project aims at increasing the capacity of youth organizations and young people for successful realization on the labour market by providing courses for extra qualification coordinated dynamically with network of stakeholders. The idea is based on preliminary research and analysis made by the partners on the circumstances causing the youth unemployment; impact of youth organizations; labour market requirements, educational practices for career orientation in the partner countries and on European and national documents. The creation and development and maintenance of the E-platform for Youth Career Guidance and Employability is an efficient instrument for achieving this goal.

The mission and the vision of the E-platform are based on the close strategic partnership between youth associations, science, business and education in order to expand the practical sector knowledge on the principle of inclusive education. The main idea of the project is to build up knowledge and skills for students and young professionals using dynamic network of youth organizations and stakeholders through sector-specific educational modules.

This will stimulate the professional realization of the young people in business, public administration, NGOs. Through career guidance and innovative education, a lasting interest will be formed in young people for deepening their knowledge and continuous training thus meeting the requirements for professional development in the sectors corresponding to their profiles - abilities and interests. The intersection between the adequate knowledge, skills and competences and the sector that is best for a young person career is probably one of the best ways to tackle youth unemployment.

The specific objectives and tasks of the E-platform for youth career guidance and capacity building are:

- Building a dynamic network of partners, youth organizations and stakeholders through strategic cross-sector partnership between universities, business and NGOs;
- Supporting bettering youth organisations of CB via tailored tools



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- Applying of innovative approaches to target groups by providing more attractive programs for education and training in accordance with the needs and expectations.
- Preventing youth unemployment through motivation for continuing education based on labour market requirements in preferred sector;
- Increasing interest in entrepreneurship and proactive behaviour in young people;
- Improving the skills for project management of innovation in business, public administration and non-profit organizations;
- Increasing trainers' professional competence.



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**“SKILL GAP ANALYSIS ON CAPACITY  
OF YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS AND IDENTIFYING KNOWLEDGE  
REQUIRED FOR YOUTH PROFESSIONAL REALIZATION”**

**Countries’ analysis**

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