

EMPLOYABILITY: national questionnaire Slovenia:

What are the main challenges for you country in terms of employability? Is graduate unemployment a problem? Are there restrictions on access to certain jobs?

In first 7 months of 2007 there were on average 73.509 people unemployed. Among them there was 19,6 % of first-employment seekers and 17,1 % of those under 26 years of age. The structure of unemployed also showed 16,1 % of them being over 25 and under 30 years of age. Considering the education level, there was 5,6 % or 5.139 unemployed that had a higher education degree.

Among different trends of unemployment the share growth of young people, who enter the labour market for the first time after acquiring high levels of education, has been noticed. While unemployment rates are diminishing the share of youth and first-employment-seekers is increasing. This trend has been evident till the year 2004, but is now slowly yet steadily declining.

Unemployment would be even harder for young people have they not searched for solutions in further (tertiary) education. Due to studying a fraction of youth was excluded from the labour force market. However, the effect takes place later in a boosted entry of young employment seekers with tertiary education in the labour market.

A lot of young employment seekers are registered as unemployed because their fixed-time employment or public service jobs have terminated. As expected, among young unemployed graduates the majority has education in a field in which the enrolment rates are high (economy, social science, teaching, law, administration). Also evident is a gender differentiation of studies, because among the young unemployed men prevail in certain occupational groups (electricians, musicians, timber industry, in sport recreation), in other women (graphic arts, clothes design, veterinary).

Analyses show certain groups of young unemployed graduates to be employed with difficulties because their rates among unemployed are higher than their rates among graduates. Reasons are different – fewer available working places or such a massive influx from schools that the economy can not succeed to employ all of them.

Comparing the number of registered demand for workers with tertiary education with a yearly number of young graduates indicates a question whether the employers demand for high qualified work force is big enough to offer employment to all new graduates. At first glance the answer would be positive since the demand exceeds the supply of graduates. But things are more complicated. To the young graduates all other potential employment seekers must be added (older graduates, older unemployed graduates and those switching jobs).

Deficiency occupations on tertiary level are various, but can be summed up in a few areas – engineering, electronics, computer science, chemistry etc. Cause for this lack can be found in a low number of graduates (in contrast to the demand).

We also have to consider the importance of working experience. To be exact, employers perceive the young as a work force without working experience since they

have no working history on basis of which conclusion of one working habits can be drawn. Employers therefore can not assess their working skills and quality. That is why employing them on important positions represents a risk which is often avoided by offering impermanent and flexible forms of employment. Young graduates tend to finish studying without any working experience which makes them less competitive in the labour force market.

Is there a career and guidance service?

Universities and larger single higher education institutions are intensively developing their tutoring and career centres.

On a national level there are Employment services in almost every municipality. They offer information on placement services, vocational guidance, active employment policy programmes, legal affairs and other.

Lately many agencies as well as other private or state centres, guidance services and institutions have emerged.

What would help you most as an output from this working group?

Examples of good practice.

Is there a dialog in your country between higher education institutions and employers? If so, at what level does this take place – national, regional, institutional? What sort of issues does it cover?

Most dialogues takes place at institutional level, but they are vast in their content. When accrediting a study programme (e.g. professional first cycle programmes) a higher education institution (HEI) must provide evidence on organized practical education of students in a working environment. A statement on where the graduates can be employed must also be given.

A tendency is to involve employers in the study process.

Cooperation with employers is a must when HEIs are forming special units for transforming the knowledge and research into practice / economy. Universities are building specialized centres, e.g. patent offices, research institutes, intellectual property services.

The government provides special funds for young researchers in the economy. Funds are *inter alia* intended for covering costs of one's wage and tuition fee – for doctoral students that is, that are simultaneously employed.

Additional funds from the government can be obtained for postgraduate studies (lower tuition fee for a student) if the thesis focuses on a concrete issue of relevance for a company or other institution.

Can you provide two examples of good practice in your country in relation to any of the themes to be covered by the report?

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