



CAREER ADVICES NEEDS SURVEY

Scientific study

1. STUDY SCOPE

In market economy situation youth employment and career development problems are of great importance. That provoked specific study conduction within the country participants in 2002-BG/02/B/F/PP/-132018 project. It concerned the contemporary situation of youth employment/unemployment and career services offered to young people.

STUDY GOAL. Study goal is to examine the contemporary condition of youth employment and career services in the countries participants in the project. (For young people between 15 and 26 years of age)

TARGETS:

- Study and analysis of employment/unemployment situation in the country participants in terms of prediction of the opportunities for youth career development.
- Study on contemporary youth career services.
- Study on accesses to information and services
- Study on the type of youth career services offered (information delivery, consultation, counseling)
- Study on career services directions.
- Quality evaluation of the offered services.

TARGET GROUP – children and youngsters from 15 to 26 years old (boys and girls): students, employed or unemployed, disadvantaged people (minorities, single parents, persons with abnormalities); with primary, secondary or university degree or without any degree; inhabiting urban or rural districts.

PARTICIPANTS

The study is carried out in the countries partners within the project, with the participation of:

Bulgaria – SU “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Faculty of Pedagogic, Sofia

Bulgaria – SCAS (Student computer art society)



Bulgaria – “Young women from the minorities” (non – formal organization)

Greece – FURNOS (Multidynamic communication net)

Spain– YAS (Youth association of Cazalla)

Ireland – FIT (Fast track to information technology)

Italy – Studio e progetto 2, Abasanta

Latvia – NYIC (National Youth Initiative Centre), Riga

Slovakia – University of Presov, Student service centre

Sweden – EDUCTUS, Giottenburg

STUDY PROCEDURE (sample, place and timing, methods)

The sample consists of 1202 people. Bulgaria – 622, Greece – 31, Ireland – 51, Latvia – 34, Slovakia – 281, Sweden – 67, Italy – 33, Spain – 83.

The sample is randomly formed. The number and characteristics of the questioned people guarantee the study representative ness as a whole.

Study terms – February –March 2003. First step – pilot study (February 2003) and final study (February – March 2003)

METHODS:

* Methods for gathering information – for the situation in each country- by e-mail communication; questioning the target group by interviews, electronically, and by written procedures.

* Methods for statistic analysis of the information – SPSS

* Methods for content analysis of the information – depiction, result analysis and synthesis.

QUESTIONNAIRE FORM:

- Introduction

- Basic part -10 questions, closed questions with a number of answers, open questions- answers to be filled in the closed questions; personal identity data – age, educational degree, sex, nationality, social state, residence.(Appendix 1)

The results are analyzed by a team of lectures from SU”Kliment Ohridski”(Faculty if Pedagogic) Sofia, Bulgaria.



2. CONTEMPORARY CONDITION OF YOUTH CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES IN EIGHT EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (BULGARIA, GREECE, IRELAND, SPAIN, ITALY, LATVIA, SLOVAKIA, SWEDEN)

Study and analysis on employment/unemployment situation in the countries participants in terms of its influence on youth career development is based on:

- the idea of employment/unemployment, the specifics of youth employment policy in each country, legislation and institutions for youth employment policy;
- statistic data for youth employment/unemployment
- youth access to the latest information technologies(computers, Internet, e-mail communication)

On the basis of the information given from the project partners, the following conclusions were drawn out: employed persons are those who are aged 15 and more and participate in goods manufacture and services for pay or profit or they are temporary away from their jobs because they are on a short-termed leave or because of illness, pregnancy, nativity, etc.; people in charge of their own business. There are several different statuses:

- employers
- persons who work for their own profit
- employees
- unpaid workers(members of family business)

Occupation may be full-time and partial.

All project partners report for different unemployment rates in their countries. The unemployed people are those who are capable of work but do not have a job and they are actively seeking for a job, they are registrated in the particular institutions and they have not got money enough to satisfy their own needs.(Appendix 2). Youth unemployment level is approximately one third from the general number of unemployed people in each country. It is the lowest percentage at the group of 15 to18 years old (when compared with the group of 20 to 26 years old). This is due to legislative limits for hiring, need of written permission from the adults who take the responsibility for the juvenile, limited allowance for different types of work and labor standards, as well as the activity that predominates juvenile age – education. Appendix 3 consists of information about the percentage of unemployed persons in



each country, youth employment indicators, and “education – employment” connection.

The most endangered individuals to disappear from labour market are (Appendix 3). In all countries the percentage of young people among them who suffer from a number of problems in the process of professional and social realization and integration is high enough.

In all countries **Youth Employment policy** is focused on youth employment problems. It is widely accepted that young people should enjoy special support and services that are: general and vocational education; specific labour standards, relaxation and recreation that is assured and determined; involvement in special youth programs and hiring strategies; access to information about occupation and career development in particular information centers; guaranteed conditions for their effective development and social integration.

Youth Employment policy is part of national employment policy for every country. It is defined as a system of measures for youth protection and their preparation for effective commitment to family, school, and cultural, social, economic and ecological environment. It is based on legislative and material predicates for protection and insurance of the effective youth development (15 to 26 years of age). Youth Employment policy aim is to establish appropriate standards in the sphere of education, training and vocational preparation and to supports youth involvement in economic and social life.

Young people who enjoy social support are mainly from social weak families (single parent families, divorced families, unemployed parents etc.) and there are fully - developed preventive and supportive programmes focused on uncertainty reducing and solving their problems.

Elements of youth policy in each country:

- Creation of legislative and material prerequisites for the proper commitment to the life of democratic society
- Protection of civil rights and freedoms
- Protection against negligence and deprivation, demoralization, violence and other phenomena that endanger healthy moral development of children and young people
- Unemployment prevention
- Youth health care
- General and vocational education and qualification (in that case particular care and support, as well as education for young people with physical disadvantages and social problems)



- Care of the family as the basic educational environment
- Creation of a background for effective use of free time and advancing the gifts and talents in various areas of activity
- Establishment of children and youth organizations
- Youth participation in cultural life
- Youth cross-cultural exchange, mobility and international youth contacts(Appendix 4)

Although most of the countries do not develop a specific youth educational policy (Bulgaria, Ireland, Italy, Greece) in all countries young people rights are defined and determined by numerous formal acts. State policies in relation to young people include protection of the right for education and labour, problems of work continuity (daily or weakly), terms and type of work(at day-time, nightly and excessive), legal conditions for relaxation, payment terms, and protection of physical, psychic and moral health of the young people.

At present there is lack of data for legislation relating young people in some of the countries. Different formal acts concerning Youth Employment Policy are established however:

- Each country civil laws - The constitutions, labour codexes, laws for general and vocational education and training, laws for associations and others
- General state documents(international also), which protects the rights of the young people(right for education and work, granted by all countries; The Human rights Charta, UNO Convention for the rights of the children, refugee rights conventions, conventions for the rights of women, immigrants and disadvantaged people.(Appendix 5)

Care for young people is main objective for numerous **Governmental and Non-governmental institutions**. Governmental institutions determine national policy towards children and young people. They define Youth Employment policy, work on formal documents, plan and co-ordinate specified youth activities and programmes. They execute functions as a coordinating body for other institutions; deliver information and professional consulting in the fields of occupation and employment, help methodically out other institutions involved in activities with children and young people, educational and career development (including



advancing of qualification),take part in consulting and helping employers for the initiation of new working positions and programmes especially for young people, organize youth cross-cultural exchange.

Non-governmental institutions are defined as a system of organizations which differ in number and characteristics and rather aim at social support of youth rights. They deliver services in terms of career advancing, improving the lifestyle of young people, free time activities, protection of young people against cruelty and exploitation, educational programmes bound to employment and working position, supportive activities for working young people, educational programmes for disadvantaged people, specific youth and adult services consistent with local peculiarities and demands, coordination between youth organizations.(Appendix 6).

At present the cotemporary youth services are obliged to delivering **access to the newest information technologies**. Basic domains of that service are:

- possession or access to computer
- abilities for work with the computer
- access to Internet
- abilities for Internet usage
- opportunity for e-mail communication

The study search showed that in almost all of the countries partners young people use these new information and communicative technologies in school, at home or at work, in educational or information centers, in Internet cafes.

Information technologies help young people out when they seek for a job (whether abroad or in their home country). They are information resource for limited career development services, educational programmes and institutions; youth exchange programmes or personal entertainment (computer games mainly). The rate of young people who takes advantage of these services is law however and it depends on the place of residence, working or studying. Unfortunately there is no access to Internet in some districts (villages and cities) and even a computer possession is a privilege for a small number of people (Appendix 7).



3. YOUTH NEEDS FOR CAREER CONSULTING AND ACCESS TO CAREER SREVIVES – STUDY RESULTS*

Population status

Total population – 1202

- **Students** -958(79, 7%)
- **Employed** -100(8, 3%)
- **Unemployed** -129(10, 7%)
- **Educational background:**
- Primary degree- 101(8, 4%)
- Secondary degree- 758(63%)
- University degree- 72(5, 9%)
- **Nationality ****
- Spanish- 83(6, 9%)
- Italian- 32(2, 6%)
- Swedish- 62(5,1%)
- Latvian -23(1, 9%)
- Greek- 31(2,5%)
- Slovakian- 281(23, 3%)
- Bulgarian – 622(51, 7%)
- Irish – 50(4, 15%)
- Other nationality- 18(1,4%)
- **Age**

age	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Sample %	1,5	1,6	3,3	10,6	12,7	7,9	13,8

21	22	23	24	25	26	27
10,3	8,3	10,7	6,7	4,3	4,7	1,3

28	29	30	31	32	33
1,3	1,4	1,1	0,2	0,02	0,5

* Study results from each country are presented in appendix 9 to 16

**other nationality defines people who belong to a different nationality from the country they live in. In Bulgarian sample there are 61(5, 1%) individuals who define themselves with other ethnic nationality.

- **residence :**
- city – 76%
- village – 34%
- **sex:**
- male – 34%
- female – 76%

3.1. Study on the recent information about youth career services(questions 1;3)

The questioned individuals search for information and services about work, education, qualification and career development from:

- Consultants (14, 5%) – 11, 9% - students; 22, 2% - employees; 18, 4% - unemployed individuals(without Slovakia)
- Employment services(21, 6%) – 27, 1% - students; 33, 2% - employees; 36, 5% - unemployed
- Career centers(17, 4%) – 17, 2-students; 28, 4%-employees; 14, 7%-unemployed
- Labour centers(12, 6%) – 7, 6%-students; 24,2-employees; 24%-unemployed
- Television and radio programmes(20%) – 14, 5%-students; 21, 5%-employees; 11, 3%-unemployed
- Newspapers and magazines(51,8%) – 39, 6%-students; 51, 6%-employees; 48, 1%-unemployed
- Internet(45, 1%) – 33, 8%-students; 44, 6%employees; 37%-unemployed
- Friends(44%) – 33, 6%-students; 56, 5%-employees; 42, 4% unemployed
- Parents(27, 9%) – 24,4%-students;27,6%-employees; 16, 8%-unemployed



- **I do not search for that kind of service(3,4%)** – 3, 9-students; 0, 2% employees;0, 8%-unemployed
- **Other information and services sources:** youth and student centers (Spain, Italy, Bulgaria, Slovakia), student employment services (Spain, Bulgaria), school and teachers (Spain, Latvia, Greece and Bulgaria), universities and university catalogues (Sweden, Slovakia, Greece), libraries (Latvia, Bulgaria), National Agency of Education (FAS, Ireland), private companies for student services (Slovakia), meetings with employers and firms (Greece, Bulgaria) and others.

32, 4% from the population are not aware of the existence of career centers, 28, 4% do not know what these centers deal with. 31, 6% use their services.

Conclusion: Individuals` preferences towards information resources when work, education, qualification and career advancing are concerned are ranged as follow: Internet, friends, parents, employment services, television and radio, career centers, consultants, labour centers. Data variation in each country depends on population age, their status (students, employees, unemployed), reliability on technologies (access to computers and Internet), and the existence of well-established career services network (Appendix 9-16). Only in Italy consultant services are of great priority and the results are indicative for their popularity and highly prepared specialists (Appendix 10).

In all countries Internet web is among the most preferable sources of information. Only in Ireland the results reveal low percentage of Internet usage (17, 6%). The reason may be that other career services enjoy greater popularity. Consistent with the natural susceptibility to the latest information and communicative technologies of this age group (aged 15 to 30), the success of a virtual career center as well as teaching and consulting using the electronic network is highly predictable.

In Sweden youth credit is shared among Internet and employment services. Neither of the individuals uses consultants` services. In Latvia consultant and labour centers services are neglected by young people. That particular result may be explained with student domination in the target group and they have not encounter yet the “unemployment” problem.

Young people in Ireland have the greatest approval of career centers (56, 9%), which is indicative for good traditions and experience in that field. While the results in Slovakia revealed the lowest amount of interest towards such career centers and towards consulting services as well.

In Greece newspapers and magazines, friends and Internet, career centers and employment services (about 30%) are equally trusted to, while services from specialized institutions are not chosen (labour and career centers, employment services) which may be due to the size of the sample- predominately students.

Among young people in Bulgaria friends have the greatest influence (53, 4%) while career centers occupy the last place (4, 3%). That reveals the poor distribution of career services which have just started developing at present in the country (not to say lack of established service system).

3.2.STUDY ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES

Questions 3, 4, 8 refer to this information.

Information about education, job and career development is available at employment services, career centers, labour centers, radio and TV, friends and parents, newspapers and magazines, Internet. It is also found at youth (student) centers (Spain, Italy, and Slovakia, Bulgaria), student employment services (Spain, Bulgaria), from school and teachers (Spain, Bulgaria, Latvia and Greece), universities and university catalogues (Sweden, Slovakia and Greece), library (Latvia and Bulgaria), FAS (National training agency, Ireland), private companies for student services (Slovakia), direct contact with employers and firms (Greece and Bulgaria).

Regarding **service access** 28, 6% from the population consider to have wide access to them. According to 26, 1% there are not enough places where career services are found at and 7, 5% assume there is insufficiency of service specialists.

10, 1% have not got access to career services and 21,7% are not aware of such service offering.

Only 4, 5% agree not to need such type of servicing.

31, 6% from the population take advantage of **career centers**. 30, 6% from them are students, 40, 8% employed and 41, 2% unemployed.

32, 4% do not know about the existence and purpose of career centers. 28, 4 are students, 24, 1% -employed, 38, 3%-unemployed.

28, 4% do not know what these centers deal with (35, 4%- students, 28, 2%-employed, 22, 9%-unemployed).

68, 4% from the whole population definitely declare not to use career centers.

Most of the individuals prefer Internet usage – 55, 1% students, 72,4% employed and 46, 4% unemployed.



Only 11% prefer personal contacts from Internet, which is indicative for the high access level to technologies for young people.

The majority has abilities to work with Internet (85, 3%). 13, 8 reckon not to have access to Internet and 2, 8% have financial problems to use it (mainly from the population of students and unemployed persons). 3, 65 can not work with a computer and 8, 5% can not use Internet. Almost all consider Internet as a reliable source of information however (96, 7%).

Conclusion. The limited access to career services (30%) is due to the insufficient information and the lack of established service system.

Young people refer to Internet as a source of information (63, 3%) but some of them are financially restricted or they do not have access to the network.

Most of the young people are capable of using Internet and they refer to the web information as useful and reliable. Only in Bulgaria information received from personal contacts is of greater priority than Internet. The use and access to Internet differs according to the resident place (cities and villages). In small towns access to Internet communications and computers as a whole is considerably restricted. Nevertheless the creation of a virtual career center would be of great use and convenience to most of the young people.

3.3. STUDY ON CAREER CENTERS SERVICES

*** Types of services (consultations, counsels and information) – question 8-preferences:**

- work information is demanded by 61, 53% (54, 5% students, 82, 2% employees, 54, 4% unemployed)
- job interview training – 53, 5% (39, 8% students, 74,4% employees, 46, 6% unemployed)
- preparation of employment formulates – 53, 2% (55,6% students, 64, 9% employees, 58, 5% unemployed)
- extenuation of education – 38, 5% (33, 2% students; 54, 9% employees; 30, 2%unemployed)
- professional guidance – 36, 4% (25, 2% students; 43, 65% employees; 29, 7% unemployed)
- opportunities for career advancing – 31, 6% (55, 6% students; 64, 9% employees; 58,55 unemployed)



- recommendations on behavior when one has just been hired – 23 3% (17, 8% students; 24, 3% employees; 32, 4% unemployed)

*** Users** (questions 7,9 10)

According to the questioned individuals career services should be orientated towards:

- young unemployed people (68,9%)
- young people graduating at the present moment (51%)
- disadvantaged people (40, 6%)
- long-term unemployed people (34, 4%)
- people looking for chances (24, 6%)
- people in a risk of losing their job (21, 5%)

According to 59, 3% of the questioned individuals disadvantaged people need special job information and 22, 7% agree with that need but assume there are not enough competent specialists. 10, 19% of the population consider there is not enough experience in this area.

14, 4 think people with such problems do not have to be separated from the others.

Additionally career centers should be orientated also towards: housewives and illiterates (Spain), “ all who are in need for” (Ireland and Italy), “all who are interested in these services”, “ all who seek for a job”, all people who would retire in the following two years”, “invalids”, “people who cannot find appropriate job”, “people without educational degree (high school or university), “wide range of people” (Slovakia and Bulgaria).

- **focus of career services** (question 6)

- Information about new employment – 66, 9% (61, 1% students; 87, 6% employees; 68,8% unemployed)
- information about obtaining new qualification – 48, 6% (49, 3% students; 65, 9% employees; 40, 8% unemployed)
- information for improving educational level – 40, 4% (37, 7% students; 46,7% employees; 27,6% unemployed)
- additional services: career development services; how a CV has to be written; academic and professional realization, academic career in the field of “ more successful professions” (Spain), advertisement for work and summer educational courses as an additional service(Latvia), “where and how to find a job” (Italy,



Sweden, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Ireland), assessment centers (Sweden), job announcements (Slovakia), information about payment (Greece).

- **service quality** (question 2; 4; 5)

Service quality is defined by the amount of present information, the access levels to these services, it is also influenced by the correspondence between clients' needs and offered services and at last but not the least is the client final contentment.

18, 5% from the population consider the received information as useful. More than half the people (51, 7%) agree with the previous statement but they think the information is not enough and they are looking for another sources. 76, 3% say information is consistent with their demands and 87, 7 % are satisfied by it.

The assessment of quality service is connected with the access people have to these services. The fact that less than 30% of young people have access to that kind of help and 21, 7% have no information about it impedes realistic evaluation of its functioning. The high level of satisfaction is paradox (85, 6%) which could be explained with the fact that 67, 5% have received the information they have demanded.

Service quality depends on the level of competence and human approach of career centers' specialists. 84, 1% find service personnel competent and approve their approach (95, 5%). All of that contributes to the high percentage for confidence people have in these specialists (94, 7%).

SUMMARY: The interpretation of this section demands focusing on the peculiarities of the sample (employees are the smallest numbers of the population, followed by the unemployed people and the students; additionally people with secondary education dominate this sample). That explains why the values for answers' absolute frequencies (according to the number of participants) differ from their percentage equivalent. In other cases (e.g. equal parts of the sample) the results may differ considerably.

The search results showed that young people mainly demand information and consultation of a new job from the career centers. It is Ireland that makes the exception as additional qualification is of greater priority there. Apart from that finding a new job remains the most desired service in all countries.

Most of the participants assume that mainly young unemployed people need special career services (68, 9%) followed by young people who are graduating at the present time(51%) and people in risk of losing their job(21, 5%).

The most mobile status stands for people “ looking for changes”. The statistical ranking of the clients of career services put this status into second place in Ireland, in the last but one in Slovakia and in the last ones in Bulgaria and Greece. An explanation may be that a change in educational, professional or career life is a personal matter and not so greatly essential.

In Latvia the participants assume that the first who need special care are disadvantaged people.

All data supports the idea that disadvantaged people should enjoy specific services. Such services inquire preparation of unique materials in the career centers. The study revealed that Sweden is one of the countries with experience and tradition in this area.

As a matter of fact in all countries there are experienced specialists working with that group of clients. There is need of additional qualification of the personnel however. A good solution would be the development of guidance for career services (professional and educational), which would be offered not only at career centers but at the media and institutions involved in that specific activity. However the ethnical minorities are not considered as disadvantage group of the society.

Young people declare there is need for extending services’ scope and improving their quality. Nevertheless the study showed high levels of contentment from career services functioning (85, 6%).

In all countries service quality is defined by the amount of present information, the access levels to these services, it is also influenced by the correspondence between clients’ needs and offered services and at last but not the least is the client final contentment. The participants consider that the information they have received is sufficient and consistent with their needs (76, 3%). However most of them are not satisfied by only one source of information and that explains the variance of statements (“useful information “and “useful but not sufficient”). In particular, we may summarize that the clients find the information given at the career services rather useful.

Service quality depends on the level of competence and human approach of career centers’ specialists. 84, 1% find service personnel competent and approve



their approach (95, 5%). All of that contributes to the high percentage for confidence people have in these specialists (94, 7%).

In Ireland and Latvia data revealed the maximal levels of satisfaction from career services (100%), while the level of contentment from consultants' work is relatively low. However the level of satisfaction with consultant services is approximately high in all countries may be because of the popularity of that type of services apart from career centers. Another reason is the traditions and experience hat service system has in each country.

The rate of career centers usage is excessively low in Slovakia(1,4%), Greece(3, 2%), Bulgaria(4,3%) which could be explained with the unpopularity of these services in the mentioned countries.

In Slovakia data for the appraisal of career centers turned out controversial. These results are due to the possible confusion of consultations offered at career centers and consultations from acquaintances and other service structures. Thus that data variation does not reject future success of career centers.



4.IMPLICATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF YOUTH CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES:

4.1.Implications

- **Improvement of qualification** of consultants in the sphere of vocational education and career consulting
- **development of specific methods for consulting** in the sphere of career advancing directed to young people and the group of disadvantage people
- **development of the electronically consulting** as a new youth career service
- **development of new teaching technologies** based on on-line and off-line multimedia

4.2.EXPECTATIONS

2002-BG/02/B/F/PP-132018 Project provoked the creation of:

- virtual career center in Internet for electronically teaching and consultations
- multimedia CD “At labour market”
- career development guidance for consultants working with young disadvantage people

4.3. PROJECT INFLUENCES:

- more than 200 trained consultants
- more than 20 000 young people consulted in the sphere of educational and career development
- more possibilities for youth integration on labour market (as well as for young disadvantage people)
- helping young people out at using on-line and off-line multimedia products

5.STUDY CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE LEONARDO PROGRAMME

Study search proved the needs for

- **available career services for all young people**



- **career services independent from career centers and part of different structures involved with young people**
- **competent specialists in the sphere of career services**
- **overcoming prejudice and discrimination of young disadvantage people and formation of equal opportunities**

The study revealed youth as actively seeking for career services and consultations when employment, education and qualification are concerned. The research predicts the possibilities for electronically teaching and consultations in the career formation.

KEY TERMS (APPENDIX 17):

labour market, labour force, labour, work, job, career, employment, unemployment, unemployed, young people, disadvantage people, youth employment policy, legislation about youth employment policy, institutions for youth employment policy, professional and educational guidance, education, professional qualification.