

YOUTH INCLUSION INTO LABOUR MARKET IN LITHUANIA

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Received 10 09 2018; accepted 10 12 2018

DOI: 10.15544/njfcongress.2018.17

Abstract

The analysis of the data, reflecting the situation in labour market during post-crisis period in Lithuania, show the optimistic upward trends, but the situation is improving very slowly and is too fragile to avoid worrying about the future. The continuing demographic problems, intensive emigration, the growth of income disparities between the various groups of the population promotes the development of human resources and the adaptation of their skills in a constantly changing environment. The investigation on these issues is important from both – theoretical and practical points of view. From theoretical point of view analysis of scientific publications and generation of new ideas on proper management of challengers in a constantly changing environment it is important. Practical importance lies in provided proposals for increase of youth inclusion into labour, learning and training activities.

The investigation is based on monographic research of scientific publications, legislation, national and EU legal regulation of human resources and improvement of labour market situation. For empirical research there were used accessible statistical data and data from Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey (GUESSS) made in 2016. In the result of this investigation are proposed measures for youth inclusion into labour, learning and training activities in Lithuania.

Key words: Youth, labour market, employment, inclusion, legal regulation.

JEL Codes: J01, J08, M12.

Introduction

Youth unemployment is the unemployment of young people, defined by the United Nations as 15–24 years old and an unemployed person is defined as someone who does not have a job but is actively seeking work (Youth unemployment..., 2017). In order to qualify as unemployed for official and statistical measurement, the individual must be without employment, willing and able to work, of the officially designated „working age“ and actively searching for a position. Youth unemployment rates are historically four to five times more than the adult rates in every country in the world. There are about 1.2 billion youth in the world aged between 15 and 24, accounting for 17% of the world's population and about 87% of them live in developing countries (World Youth Report, 2012). Youth employment rates are improving in EU countries in recent years, but any case more than 4.2 million young people (aged 15-24 years) were registered as unemployed in 2016 in the EU (Youth Employment, 2018). In addition, in year 2016 more than 6,3 million young people were neither in employment nor in education or training (NEETs) in EU.

The age range defined by the United Nations addresses the period when mandatory schooling ends until the age of 24 (Martin, 2009). This definition remains controversial as it not only impacts unemployment statistics but also plays an important role in the targeted solutions designed by policy makers in the world.

Two main debates are ongoing nowadays. First, the definition of youth age range is not as obvious as it seems. Two theoretical perspectives have dominated this debate. Youth can be seen as a stage in life between adolescence and adulthood or as a socially constructed group with its own sub-culture, making it difficult to establish a comparable age range between countries (Gough, at al., 2013). Second, the definition of unemployment itself leads to the possibility of not inclusion into calculations of a number of young people left out of work. Those, who do not have a job and are not actively seeking work are considered as inactive and therefore are excluded from unemployment statistics (Youth and Skills, 2012).

There are multiple and complex causes behind youth unemployment. Among them, the quality and relevance of education, inflexible labour market and regulations, which in turn create a situation of assistance and dependency, are the main causes discussed today (Youth unemployment, 2017).

Object of research – youth participation in labour, learning and training activities in Lithuania.

The aim of the research – to identify the reasons of insufficient youth participation in labour, learning or training activities and to prepare proposals for increase of youth inclusion into these activities.

Main tasks of research:

1. To make analysis of factors, influencing youth unemployment or early retirement from the school.
2. To make analysis of tendencies of labour market development in Lithuania and neighbouring countries.
3. To make analysis of national and EU policies on labour market regulation.
4. To prepare proposals for increase of youth inclusion into labour, learning or training activities.

Research methods – monographic investigation, logical analysis and synthesis, comparison and summarising.

The main value of the provided research is overview of scientific publications and legal documents of European Commission on reasons and consequences of youth unemployment as well as results of empirical investigation on students' entrepreneurship in 50 countries around the world, including Lithuania.

Data and methods

Monographic analysis of the problem area

The quality and relevance of education is often considered as the first root cause of youth unemployment (Global Agenda, 2014). In 2010, in 25 out of 27 developed countries, the highest unemployment rate was among people with primary education or less (Key Indicators..., 2014). Also, as it is stated in this publication, beyond the necessity to ensure its access to all, education is not adequately tailored to the needs of the labour market, which in turn leads to two consequences: the inability for young people to find jobs and the inability for employers to hire the skills they need. Surveys suggest that up to half of all businesses have open positions for which they are struggling to find suitably qualified people what means a skills crisis resulted in high unemployment rates around the world (City & Guilds Centre..., 2008). According results of global survey it was found that more than 55% of employers worldwide believe there is a "skill crisis" as businesses witness a growing mismatch between the skills students learn in the education system and those required in the workplace, but for many governments, a key question is how they can bridge this gap and ensure that young people are equipped with the skills employers are looking for (Youth unemployment, 2017).

A high level of employment protection regulations causes employers to be cautious about hiring more than a minimum number of workers, since they cannot easily be laid off during a downturn, or fired if a new employee should turn out to be unmotivated or incompetent (Gomez-Salvador, LeinerKillinger, 2008). The development of temporary forms of work such as internships, seasonal jobs and short term contracts have left young workers in precarious situations, because their jobs are temporary contracts and often they are first to be laid off when a company downsizes (Demidova, Marcello, 2011). Youth also are typically not eligible for redundancy payments, because they only worked for a short period of time in the company (Furlong, 2012).

As it is stated by Greenhouse (2013), the purpose of internships is to allow students or recent graduates to acquire work experience and a recommendation letter to add to their curriculum vitae, but many interns have complained that they are simply performing basic grunt-work, rather than learning important knowledge and skills. The internship seems to be the only viable alternative to job placement for the young individual with little to no job growth occurring and the unemployment rate among those fresh out of college and at the later end of the 15-24 aged youth spectrum is approximately 13.2% (Greenhouse, 2013).

Many countries around the world provide income assistance to support unemployed youth until labour market and economic conditions improve (The OECD Action..., 2013). Although this support is strictly related to obligations in terms of active job search and training, it has led to an emerging debate on whether or not it creates dependency among the youth and has a detrimental effect on them (Handbook of Youth..., 2009).

The youth employment rate in the European Union reached an all-time low of 32.9 percent in the first half of 2011 (Furlong, 2013). This result was influenced by the great recession in Europe, which started in year 2009. Ferragina et al. (2016) stated that the gap between labor market „outsiders“ and „insiders“ is widening and youth unemployment across the European Union in year 2013 was still at level of 22.5%. One of the most dramatic possible consequences of this growing divergence could be explained by the disenfranchisement of labour market outsiders, especially young people, from social and political participation (Ferragina et al., 2016).

According Morsy (2012) unemployed youth could be called "a lost generation" due to following reasons: a) productivity loss; b) direct and indirect impact of the long-term unemployment on young people (because young peoples are not able to build up skills or experience during their first years in the labour market). A lower salary can persist for 20 years following the unemployed period before the individual begins earning competitively to their peers (Morsy, 2012). Widespread youth unemployment also leads to a socially excluded generation at great risk for poverty and this effect impacts their families, because young people in many countries now have live at their parents house after graduation (Martin, 2009). In 2008, 46% of 18 to 34 year old population of the most European Union countries lived with at least one parent and those, who left at parents homes were more likely to be unemployed than those who lived separately (The jobless...,2011). This contributes to formation the "full-nest syndrome": when one person becomes unemployed, other members of the family begin looking for or securing employment and this can sometimes take the form of employment in the informal sector when necessary (Cho, Newhouse, 2012). Being unemployed for a long period of time young peoples could lose the life happiness, job satisfaction and other mental health issues (Morsy, 2012). Young people, who are not working and not studying do not have the opportunity to learn and improve their skills and they are progressively marginalised from the labour market and in turn can develop an anti-social behaviour (Youth unemployment, 2017).

Youth unemployment also dramatically increases public spending (direct costs such as benefit payments, lost income-tax revenues and wasted capacity) at times when economies are struggling (The jobless..., 2011). The economic loss from youth unemployment in Europe is estimated at 153 billion Euros or 1.2% of GDP in 2011 (Demistifying Youth..., 2013). Youth unemployment has and indirect costs, for example, emigration, when young people leave their countries in hope to find employment elsewhere (The jobless, 2011). This so called „brain drain“ has significant impact on competitiveness of number of European countries', whose citizens are emigrating.

Finally, the economic crisis has significant impact on a global decrease in competitiveness. There is a great risk of loss of talent and skills since a big amount of university graduates are unable to find a job and to put their knowledge and capabilities into producing innovation and contributing to economic growth (Consequences of high..., 2014). Excluding young people from the labour market means lacking the divergent thinking, creativity and innovation that they naturally offer (Tse et al., 2013). Due to these and a lot of not mentioned reasons the key factor on country's economic performance is fighting youth unemployment.

According Choudhry et al. (2012) results of estimation of the financial crisis impact on the youth unemployment rate inspire discussion which age group was more affected by this crisis – older workers or youth workers and find out that youth unemployment rate was highest in the second and third year after the financial crisis. This finding also confirms that the labour market indicators for young workers with some delay follow the overall trend in unemployment rate (Choudhry et al., 2012).

Draft joint employment report from the Commission and the Council accompanying the Communication from the Commission on the Annual Growth Survey 2017 (Draft joint..., 2016) states that inequalities in educational uptake and outcomes are remaining. More than 40% of all not in employment, education or training (NEET) aged 15-24 were enrolled in the Youth Guarantee action in 2015. In several Member States, the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) played a key role targeting the EU regions that faced the highest youth unemployment rates in 2012 (Draft joint..., 2016). Mentioned above also suggest reforms on promoting resilient and inclusive labour markets must be continued, stimulating job creation and labour market participation while properly combining flexibility and adequate security. In this document also are provided and more detail offers, for example (Draft joint..., 2016):

- a) The Member States have to continue in modernisation of their education and training systems to improve the skills needed for adaptation to labour market needs. In line with the New Skills Agenda for Europe, reform should focus on sustained investment in skills acquisition among youth and adults, better alignment of skills with labour market needs including closer business-education partnerships and by tapping into the potential of apprenticeships;
- b) It is crucial needed effective social dialogue in line with national practices and conditions to ensure fair and efficient reforms and carefully assess their impact on different groups of the population;
- c) Remains a priority for tackling long-term unemployment to be avoided risks of turning cyclical unemployment into structural unemployment and decrease of growth;
- d) Efforts have continued to modernise social protection systems to improve coverage and adequacy of benefits, access, quality and responsiveness of services and actively encourage labour market participation.

Methods used for assessment

The research, provided in this paper, is based on monographic investigation into scientific publications according youth employment and unemployment, inclusion into labour market and other activities such as learning and training, analysis of national and EU legislation, strategic documents and reports on achievements, logical analysis, comparison, summarising and others research methods. For processing of empirical data there were used the method of multivariate statistical analysis and others.

Results and discussion

Lithuania is not isolated country from various points of view, including labour market. Young people are sufficiently fluent in other languages, especially English, so they can quite easily get jobs in the EU and in other countries of the world. The labour market policy, its role on youth employment and institutions involved in support for youth inclusion into active participation in labour market varies a lot from one to another country. Here will be provided in brief some key propositions recently elaborated to facilitate access to employment for youth, which could be implemented in Lithuania.

According the OECD Action Plan for Youth (2013) is need: a) more balanced employment protection for permanent and temporary workers ensuring that young people, who lack work experience can prove their abilities and skills to then progressively transition to regular employment as it could encourage a more equal treatment between permanent and temporary workers and help combat informal employment; b) multiple discussions on flexible contracts to be designed and offered to youth (while some countries consider shifting their support from direct financial assistance to funding apprenticeship, others are increasing their support tying it back to stricter obligations of active search and training); c) role of governmental authorities in progressive involvement of employers and trainers in creation a holistic approach to youth unemployment and preparing an intensive programmes with focus on remedial education, work experience and adult mentoring. In Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP) it is pointed that governments have put attempts on unemployment tackling by directly help unemployed individuals for transition to self-employment (Youth unemployment, 2017). Various pan-

European studies have shown great success of these programs with regards to job creation and overall well-being (Barton, et al., 2013).

The education system plays an essential role to overcome the youth labour market crisis. It means that are necessary changes in studies or teaching content and ways of teaching and training. One prominent approach taken by various educators is to shift teaching from knowledge-centred teaching to skills-centred teaching (Fadel, 2009). According this author (Fadel, 2009) all educational institutions should work towards adopting or creating a suitable skills framework that aligns with the labour market, which is flexible enough for educators to adapt their subject or grade level. Moreover, the communities of the schools and universities have to adopt themselves to these changes according situation in the labour market.

Fundamental skills have to be discussed as key factor on success for young people adaptation at work place. According results of research under programme for international student assessment, almost one of five students do not reach a basic minimum level of skills to able to act successfully in now day's society (The OECD Actions..., 2013). Vocational education could help to avoid this situation, because is dedicated to teaching foundational skills in addition to providing an alternative to general education pathways with on the job training (Youth unemployment, 2017).

A number of studies have shown that young people are not sufficiently advised on work related opportunities, necessary skills and career pathways before they leave educational institution (Youth unemployment, 2017). This fact shows importance for young people to have the access to mention above information they could better prepare themselves for expectations of potential employers. Such information could help young people to make more successful participation in the labour market and better choices of career path. Barton, et al. (2013) has pointed that too much of young people choose to study a field that leads to little or no jobs. Due to this trainers, employers and governmental authorities should have to work together to provide clearer pathways to youth. Study programmes have been improved to be created better conditions for young people to attend labour market and find out their place in it. Especially it is applicable for teaching programs in vocational education, where practical on-the-job training could have positive effect on adaptation in particular job position after graduation of educational institution.

Young people could not imagine their life without use of Internet, which creates new opportunities for various youth activities, including employment (Youth unemployment, 2017). Web applications could be used for creation of environments for virtual communication of job seekers or training volunteers with employers. Young peoples, having skills for use of information and communication technologies and participating in social networks, designed for such kind of communication, could better understood the wishes of employers. The Internet also could be used as tool for redefinition traditional forms of communication among job seekers and employers, because not only young, but and social responsible entrepreneurs are now able to design a job application in new way by using new technology, for example, by providing the introduction of one or few minutes videos, which could be send to potential employer (Youth unemployment, 2017). Using social networks such as Facebook or Twitter young people also could actively build up their informal networks and to discuss on issues of job search experience.

Discussing the need for faster increase of competitiveness through innovation and creativity, recent studies have advocated for entrepreneurship as a viable a solution to youth unemployment (Avoiding a lost..., 2014). With the right structure and facilitated administrative processes, young people could create enterprises as means to find and create new jobs (Jacobs, 2015). According to the OECD, Small and Medium Enterprises are today's main employers with 33% of jobs created over the last ten years (OECD Science, technology..., 2013). It shows that not only big companies, but and small companies are able to create significant number of working places. Due to this it is necessary to prepare young people for participation in entrepreneurship activities. For the persons having communication, teamwork, decision-making, organisational skills and self-confidence this alternative is often regarded as a way to empower young people to take their future into their hands: it means investing in teaching them the leadership and management skills they could become as innovators and entrepreneurs (Rosen, 2013).

In publications of many authors and report of European Commission on employment it is pointed out the importance of entrepreneurship on creation of new working places for youth and youth inclusion into labour market activities, at the second quarter of year 2016 it was organised survey, purpose of which it was to conduct research on the problems of entrepreneurship and employment with participation of youth, studying at higher education institutions at Lithuania. For the investigation it was used the same questionnaire as in the Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey (GUESSS), conducted in 50 countries around the world. The questionnaire correctly fulfilled 426 respondents from Lithuania. The total number of respondents from 50 countries, who answers there were included into calculations, it was 122509. Students from all Universities and Colleges registered in Lithuania participated in the survey, due to this this survey is sufficiently representative.

Students, participated in the survey, were asked about their intentions to participate in labour market right after studies and 5 years later. The summarised results on answers to this question are presented in table 1.

The share of respondents, already involved in their own business or intend to create own business in percent is quite the same in Lithuania and other countries, participated in the survey – little bit more than one

third of survey participants. Quite the same number of respondents in Lithuania and other countries have intention to work as employees in business or public sector. Less share of respondents from Lithuania have intention to works in large business, but, expectable, it is due to relatively small number of such enterprises in Lithuania.

Table 1 Career choice intentions by respondents participated in the survey in Lithuania and totally in 50 countries (Source: database of GUESS survey)

I want to be...	Lithuania (n=426)				50 countries (n=122509)			
	Right after studies		5 years later		Right after studies		5 years later	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
An employee... ... in a small business (1-49 employees)	92	21.60	16	3.76	18254	14.9	4202	3.4
... in a medium-sized business (50-249 employees)	86	20.19	23	5.40	24811	20.3	8591	7.0
...in a large business (250 or more employees)	72	16.90	67	15.73	29149	23,8	21564	17,6
...in a non-profit organization	17	3,99	11	2,58	4254	3,5	3625	3,0
...in academia (academic career path)	37	8,69	26	6,10	8484	6,9	7411	6,1
...in public service	39	9,15	26	6,10	13313	10,9	11658	9,5
A founder (entrepreneur) ...working in my own business	31	7,28	161	37,97	10804	8,8	46755	38.2
A successor... ...in my parents'/family's business	3	0.70	11	2.58	2352	1.9	2876	2.4
...in another business	2	0.47	12	2.82	896	0.7	3036	2.5
Other / do not know yet	47	11.03	73	17.14	9997	8.2	12593	10.3

The respondents, participated in the survey, identified the economic sectors, in which they are running or are going to run their own business. The classification of economic sectors is based on NACE and results are presented in table 2.

Table 2 Economic sector is which students from Lithuania and other countries, participated in the survey, are running or are going to run own business (Source: database of GUESS survey)

Titles of economic sectors, based on NACE	Lithuania in figures (in total n=58)		50 countries in percent	
	running	are going to run	running (n=10335)	are going to run (n=18663)
Advertising / Design / Marketing	7	2	12.0	11.3
Architecture and Engineering	0	0	4.7	7.1
Constructions	0	1	4.0	2.8
Consulting (HR. law. management. tax)	3	2	6.3	7.5
Education and training	2	1	5.8	5.8
Financial services (including banking. insurance. investment)	1	1	3.8	5.1
Human health and social work activities	1	0	4.0	6.2
Information Technology (IT) and communication	1	4	8.3	10.2
Manufacturing	4	2	5.5	6.5
Tourism and leisure	1	3	4.6	8.5
Trade (wholesale/retail)	5	6	17.8	13.7
Other service (e.g.. transportation)	2	3	4.5	3.8
Other	5	1	18.7	11.4

According data, presented in table 2, six most attractive sectors for running own business for students from Lithuania are: a) Trade; b) Advertising, design or marketing; c) Manufacturing; d) Consulting; e) Information Technology and f) Other service. Most attractive sectors for running own business for students from other countries are: a) Trade; b) Advertising, design or marketing; c) Information Technology; d) Consulting and e) Tourism or leisure. So, first two choices – Trade and Advertising, design or marketing are the same for students from Lithuania and other countries. Consulting and Information Technology are also among the leading choices both cases.

Possible sustainability of respondents' choice is reflected by level of satisfaction of students on their own business. The level of satisfaction of respondents on running their own business in Lithuania and in other countries, participated in the survey, shown in table 3.

The data, presented in table 3, the respondents from other countries reflect higher level of satisfaction on own business in comparison with respondents from Lithuania. But these differences are not so important to be worth to discuss the reasons of that.

Table 3. Level of satisfaction of respondents from Lithuania and other countries on their own business (Source: database of GUESS survey)

The statement		The share of respondents indicated appropriate level of satisfaction on their own business in percent						
		1 point	2 points	3 points	4 points	5 points	6 points	7 points
I am satisfied with my entrepreneurial career	LT	3.3	6.7	6.7	23.3	30.0	16.7	13.3
	50	3.9	4.5	8.1	15.9	20.3	19.8	27.4
Overall. I am very satisfied with my business	LT	3.3	3.3	6.7	16.7	26.7	23.3	20.0
	50	3.1	4.4	8.0	16.3	21.5	21.5	25.2
I would be willing to start the same business again	LT	6.7	0.0	3.3	13.3	13.3	20.0	43.3
	50	5.1	3.8	5.3	12.1	15.2	22.2	36.3
All things considered. I am satisfied with my life as an entrepreneur	LT	3.2	9.7	9.5	12.9	25.8	16.1	25.8
	50	3.3	3.7	5.8	14.9	18.2	22.2	31.6

The results of an empirical research on student's intentions to develop or their success in development of their own business show importance on promotion and training of youth entrepreneurship, but cannot be regarded as leading way for solving of unemployment problem among young people.

Conclusions

On the base of the results of monographic research and empirical investigation provided in process of preparation of this paper it could be made the following conclusions:

1. Promotion of entrepreneurship among young peoples, especially among students, is crucial factor having impact not only on new working places creation, but also on increase of youth activity and utilisation of youth ideas and initiatives, but for other two thirds of students, who are intended to work in position of employee, are important other measures, find out in scientific publications.
2. By paying more attention on skills formation in teaching process and allowing to obtain the most important fundamental knowledge and foundational skills on the job training could be created possibilities for young people, especially for graduates from higher or vocational schools to adopt themselves in particular working place in shorter period of time.
3. Use of flexible contracts designed and offered to youth foreseeing necessary employment protection for permanent and temporary employees could help to avoid negative consequences of youth adaptation in labour market including stay without job, training or other activities.
4. Creation of new web applications for communication among job seekers and potential employers could increase mutual understanding and make shorter time for young people to find out acceptable work place.

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