

TRANSITION FROM THE EDUCATION SYSTEM TO LABOUR MARKET: CHALLENGES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Employers' Expectations and Young Workers Selection Criteria in Lithuania

Ruta Braziene, Gediminas Merkys and Inga Mikutaviciene

*Kaunas University of Technology
K. Donelaicio str. 73, LT-44029 Kaunas, Lithuania*

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Abstract

This article presents analysis of employer's expectation and young workers selection criteria in Lithuania¹. It discusses the research data of employers' survey in Lithuania. The purpose of the article is to disclose employer's expectations and young workers selection criteria in Lithuania. Representative employers' survey data was carried out in 2013. The employers (N=829) representing private, public sector, and nongovernmental organisations were participated in the survey. The survey results revealed, that employers prefer to hire younger employees, who in addition to the standard package of necessary employability characteristics (higher education or vocational education diploma, knowledge of foreign languages, ICT skills, working experience, etc.) also possess the following strong personal characteristics e.g. intelligence, social competence, motivation, autonomy, creativity and an ability to learn rapidly at the workplace.

Keywords: youth, labour market, employers' expectations, young workers selection criteria.

Introduction

For many young people transition from education to the labour market is not a straightforward matter. Expansion of higher education, changing nature of labour markets, increasing mismatch between labour market demands and skills required by the young people conditioned that the duration of transition period from education to the labour market is increasing. The issue of transitions from education/schooling into the labour market and employment has been a focus of policy concern across the OECD for at least the last 30 years. Youth employment remains a significant problem in most European countries.

Young people generally face much higher risks of being unemployed than adults: youth does not have practical experience and knowledge related to work, lack necessary skills for appropriate working position. According to the information provided by the Eurostat, the current recession has meant that the problems associated with the move from learning to earning have tended to worsen quite significantly in Europe (where youth unemployment in some countries has reached alarming levels, for example Greece, Spain, where the unemployment rate for the 16-24 population is approximately 50 percentage points). The current trends in European labour markets disclose the difficulties the young person's face entering the labour market.

According to the information provided by the International Labour Organisation (TDO), the weakening of the global recovery in 2012 and 2013 has further aggravated the youth jobs crisis and the queues for available jobs have become longer and longer for some unfortunate young jobseekers. In the vast majority of countries the transition from education to the labour market is between 18 and 24 years. The EU average is 20 years (Youth in Europe. A Statistical portrait, 2009). It is important to note that this indicator has been increasing since 2009. First of all, this is determined by the world economic crisis and changing labour market situation. Youth started to seek more actively other, alternative forms of activity (longer studies, gaining new qualifications, etc.). There are also gender differences. Despite the fact that younger women maintain higher levels of education, they are entering the labour market at an older age than men.

A successful youth transition from education to the labour market and decent employment of young people remains a significant problem in Lithuania. According to the European Commission (2009), there is a disadvantage in the youth labour market in this country. The most recent data from the Lithuanian Department of Statistics show that in the first quarter of 2014 the youth employment rate was only 25.9 percent, and the unemployment rate was 21.2 percent. This is well ahead of all other age groups,

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even the oldest of unemployment. Lithuania is assigned to a group of countries (together with the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Slovakia, Cyprus, Malta, Romania, Bulgaria), dominated by the structural causes of unemployment, which means low youth employment rate is determined by the high skills and qualifications mismatch of the labour market/employers' needs (the European Commission, 2009). The main criticism of the employers in relation to the graduates, especially high school students, is a lack of practical skills, which complicates the integration of graduates into the labour market, longer adaptation at the workplace, etc. (Sunelyte and Zydziunaite, 2013).

Staff Management Professionals Association (PVPA) in the study 'The Working-Class Workforce Training' (2007) revealed that 68 percent of employers indicated vocational training institutions did not meet the full needs of companies and the market situation, whereas 87 percent of employers in the survey said that they have to re-train new employees (Jackson et al., 2007).

Successful youth transition from education to the labour market is highly dependant on employers' attitudes. There are further discussions on the measures applied for the reconciliation of by the employee's acquired skills and the demands of the employers (Gleeson and Keep, 2004; Livingstone, 2010). The area where employer behaviour impacts on transitions is through their recruitment and selection policies and processes. Research in most Western European countries about the employers' expectations towards applicants resolves around the following topics: employability of young people, employers dissatisfaction with the education system's products, demand of the labour market and skills mismatch, lack of working experience by the applicants, etc.

However, in Central and Eastern Europe and Lithuania as well, the analysis of employer's expectations and young workers selection criteria issues is rather limited. The problems of Lithuanian youth integration into the labour market more actively dealing with only for last 10-15 years. The research carried out by the Lithuanian scientists is mainly focused on the integration of young people into the labour market (Ratkeviciene, 2005; Beresneviciute and Poviliunas, 2007; Okuneviciute-Neverauskienė and Moskvina, 2008; Okuneviciute-Neverauskienė and Slekiene, 2008; Pocius, 2012). There is a number of current studies providing analysis on youth transition from education to the labour market (Braziene, Dorelaitiene and Zalkauskaite, 2013; Braziene and Merkys, 2013; Braziene and Mikutaviciene, 2013). There is a particular lack of research on employers' expectations, young workers selection criteria (employability characteristics) by employing youth in Lithuania.

The research problem may be defined by the following questions: what are the main employers' expectations and young workers selection criteria in employing youth in Lithuania?

The aim of this paper is to disclose the employers' expectations and young workers selection criteria in Lithuania. It draws on the methods of research literature analysis, survey research and statistical data analysis.

Theoretical considerations

Looking at the available research on employers' views of skills needed by young people entering the workplace, relatively little research has been found (especially in Lithuania and other Eastern European countries). The role and actions of employers are very important to successful transitions. This means that the shape and size of the youth labour market matters, as to do job quality and the willingness and capacity of employers to offer high quality opportunities for work experience, training and progression. If employers simply act as more or less passive consumers of the outputs of the education system, then there will be problems. Employee's recruitment and selection methods and criteria also matter. It is understandable that employers prefer to recruit workers that are more experienced, have all necessary skills and abilities and etc.

Lindberg (2008) identifies the following types of transition: 1) Standard or traditional, characterized by a short job search and substantial returns to education in terms of wages and socio-economic prestige, 2) involuntary deviation from the standard featuring prolongation of job search and lowered expectations about the quality of jobs and returning to studies as an alternative to being unemployed, 3) voluntary deviation from standard associated with return to studies after completing the first degree in order to enhance career opportunities or acquire new skills for a career change, 4) deviation from standard due to relative disadvantage characterized by a lack of formal and/or informal connections with working life; misguided job search strategies; becoming an 'eternal' student. According to (CIPD, 2012) 'young people lack the experience of the workplace and the job specific skills that employers ask for and such constitute a 'risk', as employers worry about the level of training and support they need to provide' (CIPD, 2012). Based on the analysis of research literature, the main issues appearing in successful youth transitions appear to be:

- bias against young people and a preference for older and more experienced workers;
- problems of credentialism by employers at the upper and of the labour occupational ladder (Wolf, 2011), which has significant knock-on effects on those youngsters not entering higher education;
- employer dissatisfaction with the education system's products (mostly concerning technical and social skills; lack of working experience);
- changing labour markets vs. changing labour market demands (limited working places, attitudes towards young employees, etc.).

There is a significant field of research about the criteria that employers use when recruiting graduates (Fergus, 1981; Caswell, 1983; Gordon, 1983; Brennan et al., 1996; Dunne et al., 2000; Baily, 2008; Keep and James, 2010; Hichliffe and Jolly, 2011; Ruiz et al., 2012). The authors provide various lists of skills and abilities that employers want from graduates. In general, there is a considerable agreement about a core set of desirable skills. The core set consists of communication skills,

interpersonal skills, team working. Personal attributes include intellect and problem solving, analytic, critical and reflective ability, willingness to learn and continue learning flexibility and adaptability and etc. According to Teichler (2009), 'Employers want people who have bright ideas, who are able to communicate them to others, develop them in terms and persuade colleagues to attempt new approaches: adaptable people'. A high number of analytical studies have indicated that there is a gap of skills between the labour market requirements and the outputs from the education system (Teichler, 1989; Teichler, 2009).

International Labour Organization² in the report *Global employment trends for youth states that skills mismatch on youth labour markets has become a persistent and growing trend. Over education and over-skilling coexist with under education and under-skilling, and increasingly with skills obsolescence brought about by long-term unemployment.* Besides the skills mismatch, ILO distinguishes the following factors important for successful youth employment:

1. slow increase of workplaces, discrimination of employees, lack of human and social capital and etc.
2. lack of working experience. Work experience is highly valued by the employers and the lack of such experience constitutes a major obstacle for first-time jobseekers/labour market entrants.

Many young people are trapped in a vicious circle: they are unable to acquire work experience because they cannot find a first job, but they cannot obtain a job because they do not have work experience. Apprenticeships are a proven system for achieving large-scale impact in youth employment promotion and are a major reason for the low levels of youth unemployment achieved by some European countries for example Germany, Austria, Switzerland, etc.

The research results (Jackson et al., 2007; Gregory et al., 2009; Hinchliffe and Jolly, 2011; Ruiz et al., 2012) revealed that by evaluating the graduates' preparedness for a particular work place, general competencies and personal qualities are on increase for the employers.

Looking at the social and employment policy agenda, there are a number of measures on European level to promote young people employability. In 2008 *The New Skills for New Jobs initiative* sets out to: 1) Promote better anticipation of future skills needs; 2) Develop better matching between skills and labour market needs; 3) Bridge the gap between the worlds of education and work. There are also a number of practical measures applied. There are forecasts by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) and analysis of emerging trends at sectors level and the development of sectors skills councils; European Framework for key competences for lifelong learning – defines the eight key competences that everyone should have to thrive in a knowledge society; ESCO - Classification of European Skills/Competences, qualifications and Occupations – currently under development describes the most relevant skills,

competences and qualifications of occupations. European Qualifications Framework defines qualifications on the basis of learning outcomes so everyone can understand what they mean in practical terms and etc.

The concept of employability

Currently there is a global tendency that the employability of graduates is used as a benchmark to measure the quality of higher education, hence the concept gaining importance in higher education policies and strategies (Teichler, 2009, p. 15-16). In general terms, employability is defined as having the skills and abilities to find employment, remain in employment or obtain new employment as, and when, required (Crossman and Clarke, 2010, p. 602). As Hillage and Pollard argue, the term employability refers to a short term skill needs of employers of the economy (Hillage and Pollard, 1998). In a study aimed at defining employability and developing a framework for policy analysis, Hillage and Pollard (1998) concurred that employability is about being capable of getting and fulfilling work... 'the capability to move self-sufficiently within the labour market to realize potential through sustainable employment'. According to Hillage and Pollard (1998), for the individual employability depends on the knowledge, skills and attitudes they possess; the way they use and deploy those assets and present them to employers; and the context (e.g. personal circumstances and labour market environment) within which they seek work. Hillage and Pollard (1998) also summarized a number of factors according to them affecting employability (Table 1).

Studies of employer demand for graduates have found that appropriate work experience rank highly as selection criteria because of commercial pressures to seek graduates who will not require long 'learning curves' when they start employment. Also a number of studies and reports issued by employers' associations urged universities to make more explicit efforts to develop the 'key', 'core', 'transferable' and/or 'generic' skills needed in many types of high level employment (AGR, 1993, 1995; Baily, 2008; Keep and James, 2010; Hinchliffe and Jolly, 2011; Ruiz et al., 2012; etc.).

There have been many attempts to define and measure employability as an indication of quality of individual institutions as well as the social relevance of higher education as a whole (Lindberg, 2008). The concept of employability is closely linked to professional success, which can be described by a number of subjective and objective indicators such as: a) the smoothness of transition from higher education to the labour market (duration of job search); b) income and socio-economic status; c) a position appropriate to the level of educational attainment; d) desirable employment conditions (independent, demanding and responsible work); and e) a high degree of job satisfaction (Pavlin, 2010).

With reference to the concept of employability, there is a list of generic attributes that every graduate should ideally have:

² http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_212423.pdf

Table 1

Factors affecting employability

Assets	Deployment	Presentation	Context
Knowledge (i.e. what they know)	Career management skills	Presentation of CVs	Gender, Age and type of degree obtained
Skills (what they do with what they know) and includes: -Traditional academic skills; -Personal development skills; and -Enterprise or business skills.	Job search skills	Qualifications possessed, references and testimonials	Labour market demand for the individual's skills and knowledge, labour market regulation and employer recruitment and selection behaviour.
Attitudes (how they do it)	Strategic approach	Interview technique, work experience and track record	Individual's responsibilities and household status

Sources: Hillage and Pollard (1998). *Employability: Developing a Framework for Policy Analysis*, Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) Research Report no RR85 (London, DfEE).

- The capacity for critical, conceptual and reflective thinking in all aspects of intellectual and practical activity;
- Technical competence and an understanding of the broad conceptual and theoretical elements of his or her fields of specialisation;
- Intellectual openness and curiosity, and an appreciation of the interconnectedness, and areas of uncertainty, in current human knowledge;
- Effective communication skills in all domains (reading, writing, speaking and listening);
- Research, discovery and information retrieval skills and a general capacity to use information;
- Multifaceted problem solving skills and the capacity for team work;
- High ethical standards in personal and professional life underpinned by a capacity of self-directed activity (Deetya, 1998).

It is important to point out that conventionally the relations between education attainment and labour market outcomes and transition, have been studied by applying human capital theory (Schultz, 1961; Becker, 1964) or job market signalling theory (Arrow, 1973; Spence, 1973). Human capital theory argues that education increases individuals' productivity, which consequently enhances job performance and leads to higher salaries. However, our research is mainly based on the employability concept containing a set of necessary skills and abilities for successful transition and integration into labour market.

Sample and method

Data characteristics and population sampling

Representative employer's survey data was carried out in 2013. The total number of (N=829) employers representing private, public sector, and nongovernmental organisations were participated in the survey. Data has been gathered using both online and printed questionnaires.

Socio demographic characteristics of the respondents

In the study participated 49,9 % of males and 50,1 % of females). Average age of the respondents was 40,

median - 39. Received distribution is multimodal with most of frequencies gathered around 25 and 40 years age mark. The youngest respondent was 18 years old, whereas the oldest – 72. Concerning the income of the respondents, over 60% indicated that they have salary higher than average salary in Lithuania. The respondents who indicated that their salary is higher than the Lithuanian average constituted 8 % of all the respondents. Moreover, it is important to point out that the regional (urban and rural) dimension was in the survey sample. All administrative units of Lithuania are equally represented in the survey: 19,1 % of organisations are located in the capital city, 17 % in villages and towns and 18,6 % in regional centres.

The survey involved 57 % different types of business organisations, 27 % governmental organisations, 10 % of public organisations and 7 % NGOs.

Considering the size of organizations, about 2/3 had up to 49 employees, 24 % had from 50 up to 249 employees, while rest of the organisations had more than 250 employees. These figures correspond to the realities of the Lithuanian labour markets where large companies are quite rare.

When applying maximal dispersion method ($p \leq 0,05$), error of results reaches about 3 %. Formed sample represents the aim of research.

The structure of research instrument (survey questionnaire) consists of the following dimensions: profile of organisation, organisation activity characteristics, profile of the general manager, social demographic structure of organisation, the strategy of the new employees' selection and recruitment and main employability characteristics of young workers/future employees. For the further analysis 27 primary indicators were selected (Table 2). Five-categories Likert scale (Babbie, 2013) has been used. Indicators reflect the following: a) different requirements of employers for potential employees; b) employer's selection criteria. Secondary statistical matrix has been formed using Likert scale frequencies in percentages. Out of the total data matrix 27 variables have been selected for further analysis (Table 2).

Table 2

Results of hierarchical cluster analysis

Indicators	Fully agree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Absolutely, disagree	5 Clusters model	Average approval with the statements	3 Clusters Model	Average approval with the statements	2 Clusters Model	Average approval with the statements
Future employee should be autonomous	82,3	15,3	2,4	1	80,4	1	82,5	1	64,9
The applicant's will and motivation are important for us	81,7	16	2,3	1					
It is important for an employee to be able to learn rapidly in the workplace	80,8	14,6	4,6	1					
It is important that the applicants are creative, generate ideas, not only to work by a template	79,7	15,5	4,8	1					
ICT skills	77,5	16	6,5	1					
We wish the applicants to know foreign languages, to have computer literacy skills and a driving licence	66,6	24,1	9,2	2	63,4	2	55,8	1	
We are interested in the applicant's personality, diplomas and work experience	65,7	24,9	9,4	2					
We are interested in the applicant's interests, demands and expectations	61,8	28,3	9,9	2					
We are interested in the applicant's competence, ability to carry out tasks faster than others	60,9	29,9	9,2	2					
Knowledge of foreign languages	72	20,6	7,4	2					
Diploma of higher education	63,6	24,4	12	2					
Work experience	59,3	26,5	14,2	2					
Personal ambitions	57,4	29,7	12,9	2					
It is important that the employee is loyal to the organisation, will agree to work overtime	44,2	34,5	11,3	3					
We are not interested in diplomas; the actual skills of future employees are the most important	47,4	25,4	27,2	3					
It is important for an applicant to have recommendations from persons and organisations	40,2	40,7	19,1	3	47,2	2	1		
Leadership	52	35,9	12,1	3		2	1		
Profession	51,7	28,4	19,9	3		2	1		
Entrepreneurship skills	50,5	36,8	12,7	3		2	1		
Representative appearance	44,5	37,1	18,4	3		2	1		
Communication skills	91,2	6,5	2,2	4		84,6	1	1	
Teamwork skills	88,8	8,5	2,7	4			1	1	
Professional qualification and competence	73,9	19,2	6,9	4	1		1		
Age	19,2	37,1	43,7	5	13,0	3	13,0	2	
Marital status	11,6	28,4	59,9	5		3		2	
Gender	11,3	25,9	62,8	5		3		2	
Number of children	10,2	27,1	62,7	5		3		2	

Results and discussion

The results of cluster analysis based on the 27 indicators (with acceptance percentages ranging from 91,2 % to 10,2 % (Table 2), reveals contrasting and highly varied priorities of employers while selecting potential young employees. In rating, the following indicator estimates (averages, acceptance percentages) confidence intervals are systematically overlapped. This means that it is difficult to 'slice' and meaningfully interpret this kind of rating. Hierarchical cluster analysis is used to solve this problem.

As a result, characteristic dendrogram has been generated. This dendrogram shows that it is reasonable to discuss two, three or five cluster models (Table 2). Standard scale of cluster distances uncovers the clear structure of dendrogram.

One of the clusters keeps its stable structure in all three models. This is related to socio-demographic characteristics of individuals: age, sex, family status and number of the children. This is a so-called low-priority cluster. Average acceptance percentage in this cluster is 13,1 %. All of 23 primary variables are included in the second cluster in a two clusters model. This cluster consists of more or less important employee selecting criteria and expectations towards potential employees; 65 % of average acceptance percentage inside this cluster verifies importance of this cluster. Three clusters model is also fairly characteristic and suitable for interpretations. Despite the constant low priority socio-demographic cluster it also consists of two more clusters which are average level (56 % on average acceptance) and high priority clusters (82 % of average acceptance).

The most informative is the five clusters model. Again, low priority cluster appears in this model. Two clusters of high priority with 85 % and 80 % of average acceptance percentage points exist in this model. There are also two medium level clusters with 47 % and 63 % of average acceptance percentage points. The most of all, employers are looking for employees with good communicational and teamwork skills, sense of autonomy and will. What is more, employee with motivation, creativity and fast learning abilities are wanted most.

As a result was obtained the rating of employers' priorities where the highest and lowest rated priority is as high as more than 80 percentage points. The cluster analysis was applied for structuring of identified ratings. Despite for, the initial long lists of features (requirements, criteria) were divided into homogeneous groups. So the different levels of employers' young workers selection and recruitment priorities were identified. Important requirements and criteria for the selection of candidates, namely: 1) higher education or vocational diploma, 2) knowledge of foreign languages, and 3) ICT skills 4) work experience and so on is perceived as a mandatory standard package. However, these exceptionally important, according to the rating parameters and cluster analysis of the results, at best, only fall into the 'average' level of significance priorities. It turns out there is a whole set of features (8 features of the investigated 27) that are more important for employers than the above standard of requirements. It unites these quite different characteristics,

criteria, which are in the top rank of priorities. It appears that employers prefer younger employees, who in addition to the standard package of features have stronger, expressive personality-charge, i.e. emotional intelligence, social competence, motivation and will, autonomy, creativity and the ability to rapidly learn in the workplace, professional competence. All listed properties, except perhaps only professional competence are the qualities, which, unfortunately, are not easily formed in formal education institutions-universities, colleges, vocational. Another important observation is the fact that some of the important features in any way attributable to cognitive skills domain. Discussed features are typical deep constructs likely to be partly generic condition and at least formed during all ontogenesis biography of personality. Our research results correspond to the study conducted to understand employability of university graduates (Finch et al., 2013). The results of the study demonstrated that 27 employability factors could be clustered into five higher order composite categories. In addition, findings illustrate that, when hiring new graduates, employers place the highest importance on soft-skills and lowest importance on academic reputation. Our findings suggest that in order to increase new graduated employability, university and other programmes and courses should focus on learning outcomes linked to the development of soft skills.

Lecturing at the Lithuanian universities partly reasonably criticized for excessive academicism, due to the weak link theory and practice, bridging the gap between the real world of work and the contemporary work organizations. Only recently, Lithuania attempted to further reform of the educational practice system in higher education. Until now, it was either simulation or it was purely academic didactic activities continuation, with little connection with young man efforts to adapt in real work organization, actually to become involved into the number of operational and professional roles.

The legal and institutional background has been started to develop for an effective student internship system. The employers constantly criticize the Lithuanian educational system because graduates lack practical abilities, teamwork skills, creativity, autonomy, motivation and etc. As Hillage and Pollard (1998) argue, a considerable part of young people lack skills for getting and fulfilling work.

Conclusions

The analysis of the research literature and empirical data allows concluding the following:

- The research has distinguished different sets of employability characteristics and the main obstacles for successful youth transition from education to the labour market: slow increase of workplaces, discrimination of employees, lack of human and social capital, lack of work experience, etc.
- Due to the changing labour situation at the European level and also in Lithuania, employer's requirements for the future employees are increasing. Despite the core set (higher education or vocational diploma, knowledge of foreign languages, ICT skills, work experience, etc.) of desirable skills, there is an

increasing demand for the so called social skills, e.g. communication skills, interpersonal skills, team work, etc. However, the development of these skills is rather limited, especially concerning the institutions of higher education.

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R. Brazienė, G. Merkys, I. Mikutavičienė

Darbdavių lūkesčiai ir jaunų darbuotojų atrankos kriterijai Lietuvoje

Santrauka

Jaunimo nedarbo problema aktuali daugelyje Europos šalių. Jauni žmonės susiduria su didesne nedarbo rizika nei suaugusieji: jaunimas neturi su darbu susijusios patirties, konkrečios darbo vietos reikalavimus atitinkančių gebėjimų ir žinių. Daugumoje šalių perėjimas iš švietimo sistemos į darbo rinką vyksta tarp 18 ir 24 metų. ES šalių vidurkis yra 20 metų (Youth in Europe. A Statistical portrait, 2009). Pažymėtina tai, kad 2008 ir 2009 metais šitas rodiklis pradėjo didėti. Pirmiausiai tai sąlygota pasaulinės ekonominės krizės ir pasikeitusios situacijos darbo rinkoje. Jaunimas ėmė aktyviau ieškoti alternatyvių užimtumo formų (tęsia studijas, persikvalifikuoja, kuria šeimas ir t.t.). Jaunos moterys paprastai pradeda dirbti vėliau nei jauni vyrai. Iš dalies tai yra susiję dar ir su tuo, kad moterys ilgiau mokosi, yra įgiję aukštesnį išsimokslinimo lygį.

Sėkmingas jaunimo perėjimas iš švietimo sistemos į darbo rinką bei tinkamo darbo jaunimui užtikrinimas tebėra aktuali problema Lietuvoje. Remiantis Europos Komisija (2009), Lietuvos darbo rinka yra nepalanki jaunimui. Remiantis naujausiais Lietuvos statistikos departamento duomenimis, pirmąjį 2014 m. ketvirtį jaunimo užimtumo lygis buvo tik 25,9 proc., o nedarbo lygis siekė 21,2 proc.

Šis rodiklis yra gerokai didesnis nei kitose amžiaus grupėse, netgi vyriausio amžiaus bedarbių grupėje. Lietuva priskiriama prie šalių (kartu su Čekijos Respublika, Estija, Latvija, Vengrija, Slovakija, Kipru, Malta, Rumunija, Bulgarija) grupei, kurioje dominuoja struktūrinis nedarbo priežastys, vadinasi, mažas jaunimo užimtumas yra sąlygojamas įgūdžių ir kvalifikacijos neatitikimo darbo rinkos / darbdavių poreikiams (Europos Komisija, 2009). Pagrindinė darbdavių kritika, skirta ypač aukštųjų mokyklų absolventams, susijusi su praktinių įgūdžių trūkumu, kas apsunkina absolventų integraciją į darbo rinką, lemia ilgesnę adaptaciją darbo vietoje ir pan. (Sūnelytė, Žydžiūnaitė, 2013). Personalo

valdymo specialistų asociacijos (PVPA) 2007 m. atliktame tyrime „Darbininkų klasės darbo jėgos rengimas“ atskleidė, kad 68 proc. darbdavių nurodė, jog profesinių mokyklų absolventų žinios ir įgūdžiai neatitinka įmonių poreikių ir darbo rinkos situacijos, o 87 proc. apklaustų darbdavių teigė, jog jie turi iš naujo apmokyti naujus darbuotojus (Jackson et al., 2007).

Jaunimo perėjimo iš švietimo sistemos į darbo rinką procese reikšmingą vaidmenį atlieka darbdavių požiūris. Vis plačiau diskutuojama, kaip suderinti darbuotojo ir darbdavio interesus, kad būsimas darbuotojas (pretendentas), pasižymėtų tokiomis savybėmis, kurios būtų patrauklios darbdaviui. Tačiau Vidurio bei Rytų Europoje, ir Lietuvoje taip pat, darbdavių lūkesčiai bei jaunų darbuotojų atrankos kriterijų klausimai analizuojami labai ribotai. Lietuvos jaunimo integracijos problemos į darbo rinką aktyviau tyrinėti pradėti tik pastaruosius 10-15 metų. Lietuvos mokslininkų atliekami tyrimai daugiausia orientuoti į jaunų žmonių integraciją į darbo rinką (Ratkevičienė, 2005; Beresnevičiūtė, Poviliūnas 2007; Okunevičiūtė-Neveauskienė, Moskva 2008; Okunevičiūtė-Neveauskienė, Šlekienė, 2008; Pocius, 2012; ir t.t.). Taip pat yra keletas tyrimų, analizuojančių jaunimo perėjimą iš švietimo sistemos į darbo rinką (Brazienė, Dorelaičienė, Žalkauskaitė, 2013, Brazienė, Merkys, 2013, Brazienė, Mikutavičienė, 2013 ir t.t.). Straipsnio mokslinę problemą sudaro šie klausimai: kokie yra pagrindiniai darbdavių lūkesčiai bei jaunų darbuotojų atrankos kriterijai įdarbinant jaunimą Lietuvoje? Straipsnio tikslas – atskleisti Lietuvos darbdavių lūkesčius ir jaunų darbuotojų atrankos kriterijus. Straipsnyje pristatomame tyrime taikyti šie metodai: mokslinių šaltinių analizė, darbdavių stuktūrizuota apklausa raštu, statistinė duomenų analizė (klasterinė analizė).

Remiantis mokslinių šaltinių analize, galima išskirti pagrindines sėkmingo perėjimo iš švietimo sistemos į darbo rinką problemas: dažniausiai darbdaviai pirmenybę teikia vyresnio amžiaus ir labiau patyrusiems darbuotojams, darbdaviai nėra patenkinti švietimo sistemos „produktais“ (labiausiai dėl techninių ir socialinių įgūdžių, darbo patirties stokos ir kt.). Reikšmingą įtaką turi darbo rinkų pokyčiai bei nuolat kintantys darbo rinkos poreikiai, mažėjantis darbo vietų skaičius ir pan.)

Tarptautinė darbo organizacija pranešime apie globalias jaunimo užimtumo tendencijas, teigia, jog jaunimo įgūdžių neatitikimas darbo rinkos poreikiams tampa nuolatinė ir vis labiau plintančia tendencija. Per aukštas darbo jėgos išsilavinimas bei kvalifikacija yra tokia pati problema kaip ir nepakankamas išsilavinimas ar kvalifikacijos neįgijimas bei dequalifikacija ilgalaikio nedarbo atveju. Jaunimo užimtumui taip pat įtakos turi lėtas darbo vietų skaičiaus augimas, darbuotojų diskriminacija, socialinio ir žmogiškojo kapitalo trūkumas, darbo patirties neturėjimas. Darbo patirtis yra labai vertinama darbdavių ir jos stoka yra pagrindinė kliūtis susirasti pirmąjį darbą. Tokiu būdu dauguma jaunų žmonių tampa įstrigę uždarame rate: jie negali įgyti darbo patirties, nes negali rasti pirmojo darbo, bet jie negali gauti darbo, nes neturi darbo patirties.

Yra atlikta pakankamai daug tyrimų, analizuojančių darbdavių taikomus absolventų atrankos kriterijus (Dunne et al., 2000; Baily, 2008; Ruiz et al., 2012; ir kt.). Dažniausiai darbdavių lūkesčiai yra susiję su gerais bendravimo, tarpasmeniniais bei komandinio darbo įgūdžiais. Taip pat svarbūs ir tokie asmeniniai atributai: intelektas ir problemų sprendimo, analizės, kritinio mąstymo bei refleksyvumo gebėjimai, noras mokytis, lankstumas, adaptyvumas ir t.t. Tyrimo rezultatai (Jackson et al., 2007; Gregory et al., 2009; Hinchliffe, Jolly, 2011; Ruiz et al., 2012) parodė, jog vertinant absolventų pasirėngimą konkrečiai darbo vietai, bendrųjų kompetencijų bei asmeninių savybių svarba darbdaviams nuolat didėja.

Straipsnyje pristatomo tyrimo empirinę bazę sudaro Lietuvos mokslo tarybos finansuojamo projekto „Lietuvos 16-29 m. jaunimo perėjimas iš švietimo sistemos į darbo rinką: stebėsenos sistemos parengimas“ (TRANSMONITOR) 2013 m. atliktos darbdavių apklausos duomenys. Jos metu buvo apklausti 825 organizacijų vadovai (organizacijų vadovais laikomi organizacijų vadovai, jų pavaduotojai, taip pat padalinii, departamentų, filialų ir pan. vadovai).

Atlikus klasterinę analizę, konstatuota, kad 27 pasirinkti rodikliai sudaro stipriai išreikštą reitingo dėsninumą, kuriame pritarimo procentai skiriasi per 80 punktų ir svyruoja nuo 91,2 iki 10,2 proc. Toks reitingas leidžia kalbėti apie ženkliai varijuojančius, kontrastingus darbdavių prioritetus, atsižvelgiant darbuotojus. Atlikus klasterinę analizę, buvo gauta dendrograma, rodanti tris skirtingus dviejų, trijų ir penkių klasterių modelius. Pats informatyviausias yra 5 klasterių modelis. Jame figūruoja stabilusis klasteris, kuris ryškus visuose modeliuose. Išryškėjo ir du aukštų prioritetų klasteriai, kurių vidutinio pritarimo procentas siekia 85 proc. ir 80 proc. Taip pat yra du vidutinio lygmens prioritetų klasteriai, kurių analogiški rodikliai siekia 47 proc. ir 63 proc.

Svarbūs reikalavimai ir pretendentų atrankos kriterijai: 1) aukštojo mokslo ar profesijos diplomas; 2) užsienio kalbų mokėjimas; 3) IKT gebėjimai; 4) darbo patirtis ir kt. yra suvokiami kaip privalomas standartinis paketas, ir visgi šie išskirtinai svarbūs, pasak reitingo rodmenų ir klasterinės analizės rezultatų, kriterijai geriausiu atveju patenka tik į „vidutinio“ reikšmingumo prioritetų lygmenį. Išryškėjo savybių rinkinys (8 savybės iš tirtų 27), kurios darbdaviams yra dar svarbesnės nei minėtas standartinis reikalavimų paketas. Darbdaviai pageidauja jaunų darbuotojų, kurie greta standartinio paketo savybių, dar pasižymėtų ir stipriai „asmenybinu užtaisu“, t.y. emociine inteligencija, socialine kompetencija, motyvacija ir valia, autonomija, kūrybiškumu, gebėjimu sparčiai mokytis darbo vietoje, profesine kompetencija.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: jaunimas, darbo rinka, darbdavių lūkesčiai, jaunų darbuotojų atrankos kriterijai.

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