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The PFG project comes to an end with the launch of the training course in Poland

The Pathways for Graduates Project comes to an end after two years of intense work. The final platform launch presentation took place at the Polish University of Szczecin last November. The presentation of the training course for young graduates brings to a close the collaboration of organisations from five countries aimed to promote the employment of young graduates upon completion of their training process. The platform presented is focused on young graduates coming from universities and VET providers.

The final project launch in Poland was implemented as part of the graduation ceremony of University of Szczecin students. In addition to the ceremony, an Employment Fair was organised at a business exhibition area where company representatives met with new graduates who could submit their CV's and talk about possible job offers.

The training course for young graduates, which is available for free and in four languages on the project website (pathwaysforgraduates.info), includes ten modules, structured as follows:

- Module 1: Building personal confidence & self-awareness
- Module 2: Developing teamwork & communication skills
- Module 3: How to prepare for work / live abroad
- Module 4: Know your employment rights
- Module 5: Career Preparation
- Module 6: Job search and interview techniques
- Module 7: Money Management
- Module 8: Presentation Skills
- Module 9: Labour market trends & needs
- Module 10: Practicalities of getting a job

Each module has several sub-modules which are available to graduates and professionals, providing the necessary tools to be successful in the job search.

Research report

During the two-year project implementation, the partnership developed the research report "Training needs of young graduates", which highlighted the barriers that graduates face in finding a job and when they start working.

According to the results of the survey and based on the high rates of unemployment among young graduates of partner countries, competition is the strongest perceived barrier to employment of young graduates in all countries.

Competition is followed in the overall ranking by **presentation skills, career orientation, correct expectations regarding specific jobs** and correct understanding of **market needs and trends**. Another important barrier for young graduates is the lack of knowledge about **qualification procedures, interviews and self-presentation**.

Apart from the aforementioned barriers, the target group of young graduates also mentioned a lack of soft skills including productive **teamwork**, **communication** and **social skills**. These skills should also be addressed by the Pathways for Graduates Project.

Despite the high level of competition in the respective labour markets of the partner regions (due to the financial crisis), the experts in the focus group put a strong emphasis on the **mismatch between education and labour market needs**. In particular, companies feel that young graduates are not sufficiently prepared to meet labour market needs.

This is, in fact, the responsibility of the respective governments and cannot be solved by the Pathways for Graduates Project. On the other hand, young graduates need to be aware of the current labour market needs and should choose their **career paths** accordingly.

Another important barrier perceived by all the groups of experts is the lack of practical experience. Educational systems should place stronger emphasis on the balance between theoretical and practical knowledge. In particular, company representatives put a clear emphasis on employment costs. Those are directly connected to **employment rights and obligations** as well as **bureaucracy procedures** as they directly influence the employability of young graduates and the speed of employment procedures.

Young graduates need additional resources like training, courses or face-to-face counselling to activate their potential and find a job that corresponds to their educational level.

A considerable part of the young graduates believes that training can improve their position in the labour market and is willing to complete training courses.

The Project

The Pathways for Graduates (PfG) Project, a European Union Leonardo da Vinci funded initiative, aims to increase the integration of young graduates into the labour market by producing a multilingual, multicultural training course which will allow them to acquire the competencies and transferable work skills needed to open up progression opportunities either directly into employment and/or to further vocational qualifications.

Five different organisations located in four different EU countries (Germany, Poland, Spain and United Kingdom) are involved in the project. Core partners are: The University of Szczecin (Poland), Fundación Laboral del Metal (Spain), Canice Consulting (UK), Springboard Opportunities Ltd (UK) and Univations GmbH Institut für Wissens- und Technologietransfer an der Martin- Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg (Germany).

PARTNERS:



- Led the Project: University of Szczecin (Poland); www.univ.szczecin.pl



- Springboard Opportunities Limited (UK); www.springboard-opps.org



- Univations GmbH Institut für Wissens- und Technologietransfer an der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg (Germany); www.univations.de



- Canice Consulting (UK); www.caniceconsulting.com



- Fundación Laboral del Metal (Spain); www.fundacionlaboraldelmetal.es

PROJECT WEBSITE:

www.pathwaysforgraduates.info