



Overall Needs Analysis Report

WP2 – Preparation to Transfer: Further Research and Needs Analysis of
Young Disadvantaged NEET's

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Introduction

This research was developed within the Youth2Work: Career Support for Unemployed Youth in Europe (Y2W) Project. Targeting young people not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) is a central focus of the Guidelines for Economic and Employment Policies proposed by the EC. Y2W aims to improve European VET opportunities for young, disadvantaged NEETs in order to empower them to develop their employability by support soft skills development of self efficacy, regaining confidence and motivation for work. The problem of unemployment has become a key issue in economies European and particularly youth unemployment that has been rising so quickly.

The economic downturn across the Europe is having a strong effect on young people and has potential to affect their long term future, making it essential to provide high quality, targeted support to prevent a “lost generation”. Youth unemployment is a significant concern for all partners’ countries. Although the rates vary between countries from 36% in EL, 27.8% in PT to 9.6 in AT and 4.3 in CH, all youth rates is significantly higher than general rates and have been identified as problematic.

This second workpackage aims to investigate further the current situation for disadvantaged NEET Young People with regards to unemployment figures and the training /support available within each of the partners’ countries, to further analyses the training needs of the target group in each country and identify gaps in provision and to further understand the needs of the target group in terms of the support they need to enter employment or return to vocational training so that the Career Circle Methodology can be appropriately for the new audience in each country.

1- Background Information

Switzerland

Switzerland has a population of about 7.95 million. Foreigners account for around 22.7% of the resident population. The average age is increasing, as people live longer and have fewer children. Lifestyles are changing as the Swiss adapt to new demands.

Switzerland prides itself on its high standard of publicly-funded education. As a country with few natural resources, its prosperity depends to a large extent on its brain power. Most people continue studying after the years of compulsory education, and many take further courses throughout their lives. At the same time, the education system has to deal with new challenges in the face of changes in society and the world such as the teaching foreign languages at an early age or the teaching of religious knowledge as a compulsory subject.

Switzerland's economy is based on a highly qualified labour force performing highly skilled work. The service sector now employs the greatest number of people. Most of the people working in Switzerland are employed by small and medium-sized enterprises, which play an extremely important role in the Swiss economy. The Swiss are concerned that economic activity should have as little impact as possible on the environment. Switzerland's energy and transport policies aim to be environmentally friendly. The age of unlimited economic growth in Switzerland is over.

For a number of years unemployment, at less than 1%, was hardly an issue in Switzerland. Several reasons have been suggested for this stability: Foreign workers with short-term permits absorbed the impact when economic times were bad. Businesses did their best not to make workers redundant during periods of crisis, in order not to endanger the agreements ensuring social peace. There are few "problem" industries (mining, metallurgy) in Switzerland. However, during the economic recession of the 1990s, the number of jobless rose dramatically, reaching the record level of 5.7% in February 1997 as corporate restructuring led to staff cuts. A gradual upturn in the economy at the end of the 90s, and a change in the way the figures were calculated, caused the level of registered unemployed to fall to 1.7% in 2001. Since then the rate has fluctuated. At the end of 2007 it stood at 2.8%. Unemployment rates vary according to region: the French and Italian speaking areas have higher rates than the German-speaking ones. Women tend to be worse affected than men and foreigners worse affected than Swiss.

United Kingdom

The economy of the United Kingdom is the seventh-largest national economy in the world and also the third-largest in Europe (measured by nominal GDP). The labour force by occupation is as follows: agriculture: 1.4%, industry: 18.2%, services: 80.4% (2006 EST.).¹

Due to the recession in the late 2000s, the economy has been weak in recent years. From the end of 2011 to the second quarter of 2012, the UK faced a double dip recession that has been seen as the longest and deepest in 50 years. Furthermore, the UK is facing inflation above the government's target. The government took several steps to reduce the burden of government borrowing. It is probable that these spending cuts and tax rises keep the economic recovery just at a modest pace. For example, the UK economy started growing again by 1% in Q3 2012, which is the fastest rate of GDP growth since Q3 2007.²

According to the numbers of the most recent census (2011), 62.3 million people live in the United Kingdom.³ The unemployment rate for July to September 2012 fell to 7.8 per cent of the economically active population which is the lowest for one year.⁴ In total, 2.51 million people in the UK are currently facing unemployment. In comparison to the European development of unemployment, the UK figure remains lower than the European average (compare two diagrams below).

Austria

In 2011, Austria had a population of 8 420 900, of which 20.4% were in the age-group 0-19, 61.6% in the age-group 20-64, and 17.7% in the age-group 65+.⁵ Austria's GDP in 2012 was 308.5 billion Euros which indicates a rise of 0.6 points in comparison to 2011⁶. Austria's economy therefore grew slightly in 2012⁷. Austria's labour market turned slightly upwards from 2010 to 2011, with an unemployment rate of 4.4% in 2010 and 4.2% in 2011⁸. In the third quarter of 2012, however, the general unemployment rate rose slightly to 4.3%.⁹

In contrast to the general unemployment rate, which was 4,5% in December 2012, the youth unemployment rate (15-24 years) in December 2012 reached 9%, which is double the

¹ http://www.indexmundi.com/united_kingdom/labor_force_by_occupation.html

² <http://www.economicshelp.org/blog/2558/economics/uk-economy-2011/>

³ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-20757480>

⁴ <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lms/labour-market-statistics/november-2012/index.html>

⁵ Cf. http://www.statistik.gv.at/web_de/statistiken/bevoelkerung/index.html [121212]

⁶ Cf. <http://wko.at/statistik/prognose/bip.pdf> [121212]

⁷ Cf. <http://wko.at/statistik/prognose/text-PDF.pdf> [121212]

⁸ Cf. http://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/arbeitsmarkt/index.html [121212]

⁹ Cf. http://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/arbeitsmarkt/index.html [160113]

percentage of the general unemployment rate for the ages of 25 years and above.¹⁰ Among this, in comparison to adults, much bigger number of unemployed youngsters, the greatest part is the low-qualified NEETS.

Between 2008 and 2010, the Austrian Employment Agency started to count the number of NEETS among all unemployed youngsters (15-24 years) in Austria: the average number of NEETS in this period is 75.000 youngsters, which amounts to 8.2%.¹¹ The study of NEETS in Austria furthermore shows that the percentage of young women among the NEETS is higher than that of young men, i.e. 8.9% of all young women in this age group and 7.5% of male youngsters. For youngsters with migration background, the number is even threefold with 18.5% being considered NEETS.¹²

Portugal

Portugal have a population of 10 562 178 (2011 census), of which 12.60 % of the population were in the age group of 15-24 years old. Over the period 2001-2009, Portugal experienced a population growth at a weak and decreasing rate. This growth results almost exclusively of the net migration, since the natural change is very low, becoming, in average, negative in last three years. Fertility remains at levels far below those needed to renew the generations, longevity increases, and both these factors strengthen the process of demographic ageing. The new family models in Portugal are the result of the significant fall in the number of marriages and the strong rise of the number of wedlock births, the number of divorces and the average age at marriage. The problem of unemployment has become a key issue in European economies and particularly youth unemployment that has risen so rampant. A study published by a European Union Agency estimates about 14 million of young Europeans aged between 15 and 29 years, who are out of the education system and had no place in the labour market. In Portugal they are about 260.000, a high record that the economic crisis and the erosion of employment only tend to aggravate.

Greece

The population of Greece was calculated as 10.787.690 (2011 census). 18-35 years old make up 28% of the population (2001 census). In this age group, 52% are male and 48% female; 79% live in urban areas, constituting 29% of the total urban population and 21% in rural area, which represents 24% of the rural population.

¹⁰ Cf.

http://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/arbeitsmarkt/arbeitslose_arbeitssuchende/arbeitslose_int_definitionen_ms/index.html [access date: 140113]

¹¹ http://www.arbeiterkammer.com/bilder/d172/AM_Quartalsanalyse_2012_1.pdf [150113]

¹² Cf. <http://www.arbeiterkammer.com/online/jugendliche-ohne-ausbildung-und-job-66046.html> [150113]

Regarding to the economy, Greece finds itself in 2012 in the 4th year of recession (negative growth). 2011 GDP (EURO 208 bn) is down 11% compared to 2008. In the 3rd quarter of 2012, unemployment rate stood at 24.8% (up 1.4% vs. 2nd quarter and 8.3% vs. 3rd quarter 2011). The number of unemployed people increased by 40.2% compared to 3rd quarter 2011. In the 15-24 year-old age group, the unemployment rate is 56.6% and in the age group 25-29 at 38%. Women demonstrate a much higher unemployment rate than men; 65.4% vs. 48.9% in the 15-24 age group and 41.4% vs. 35.2% in the 25-29 age group.

2- General information on NEET's

Switzerland

VET in Switzerland is highly regarded and recognised as being of high quality. Switzerland has a strong dual apprenticeship system, with 65% of young people opting for IVET (OECD, Learning for Jobs, OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training, Switzerland, 2009). Most VET initial qualifications take 3 or 4 years, with young people attending VET school one or two days a week. 80% of young people opt for VET/PET (including tertiary VET) (CDIP, Projet transition, rapport final, January 2011-Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK/CDIP), Transition Project Final Report).

While Switzerland has low levels of unemployment compared to many EU countries, the unemployment rate for young people has been increasing over the last few years, a situation which has led to moves to put in place new initiatives targeted specifically at young people in transition (between compulsory education and VET or work) and at young people entering the labour market more generally. The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) rang the alarm bells in April 2009 when the number of young unemployed increased by 38% on the previous year. (www.seco.admin.ch). Young people are disproportionately affected by unemployment.

The current crisis has not helped, with a 9% increase in young people's unemployment between August 2011 and August 2012. However, official figures are based on people who are registered unemployed, and do not reflect the whole story. A recent change in the law (2011) concerning unemployment means that young people now have a 6 month "waiting time" before they have any rights to unemployment benefit and thus many do not appear in the official figures. Indeed, Federal Office for Statistics (OFS) data (from the 2004 household survey) reveals that actual unemployment is twice as high as the official figures. In addition, there is an increasing casualisation of the labour market affecting young people: a third of temporary workers placed by temping agencies are less than 26 years old, but they represent only 10% of the population.

75% of Swiss school leavers go into training or education, 16 % into "transitory – intermediary solutions" (e.g., extra school « bridge » year, a year of career advice, year of pre-VET, labour market integration courses). It is difficult to establish the exact numbers of young "NEETs", and to follow the path of young people in "transitory solutions" as they are no longer in the education system (and the statistics produced therein) or in the unemployment system. (CDIP, Projet transition, rapport final, January 2011 – Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK/CDIP), Transition Project Final Report). 11% of young people disappear from the statistics, destination unknown.

Debt is a growing problem among the young. The Radar 2011 study¹³ conducted by credit management services company *Intrum Justitia* has found that one-third of people in debt in Switzerland are aged 18-25 and almost half of 18-25-year-olds who were in debt in 2006 still are. Top area for unpaid loans is telecommunications, followed by health and e-commerce. In addition, 44 per cent of people who receive social security benefits are in the same 18-25 age-group, according to the Federal Commission for Childhood and Youth¹⁴.

United Kingdom

NEET is a government acronym first used in the UK for people aged between 16 and 24 who are currently Not in Education, Employment, or Training. Before 1999, it was common to use the term "status zero". But because it was negatively connoted, the Social Exclusion Unit used NEET for the first time in one of their reports in 1999. Soon, the term spread also to other countries, like Japan, China, and South Korea. For the purpose of the project, it was decided to focus on NEETs aged 18 to 28 due to the fact that different European countries are involved in Youth 2 Work and they all have different definitions regarding the age of NEETs.

During the recession, youth unemployment rose faster than the main unemployment rate. The highest rate of 20% was reached in early 2012, after which youth unemployment fell to 18.5%¹⁵. To compare this with the current unemployment rate for the whole of the economically active population of 7.8%, it can be seen that youth unemployment is significantly higher

The Trade Union Congress (a federation of trade unions in the United Kingdom, representing the majority of trade unions) stated that the number of NEETs is currently the highest since October 1994¹⁶. This is why some politicians and media commentators talk of a "lost generation"¹⁷.

Research shows that youth unemployment is highest amongst ethnic minority groups. Statistics from the Institute for Public Policy Research show that youth unemployment is highest among black communities.¹⁸ In terms of gender, 18.5% of boys aged 18 and 15.3% of girls are NEET¹⁹.

Looking at the youth unemployment rates in a European context one can easily see that almost all European countries are struggling with youth unemployment. In comparison to other countries, you can find the UK in the middle, between countries like Spain and Greece,

¹³ <http://www.intrum.com/ch/fr/radar2011/>

¹⁴ http://www.bsv.admin.ch/themen/kinder_jugend_alter/00070/index.html?lang=en

¹⁵ <http://www.economicshelp.org/blog/517/economics/reasons-for-youth-unemployment/>

¹⁶ <http://www.cypnow.co.uk/cyp/news/1074294/young-people-worst-prospects-1994-tuc>

¹⁷ http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/jane-scott-paul/youth-unemployment-and-th_1_b_1448982.html

¹⁸ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/8468308.stm>

¹⁹ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1288655/One-18-year-old-boys-living-benefits-number-Neets-soars-highest-25-years.html>

who have a youth unemployment rate of around 50%, Portugal, Hungary, Ireland (between 25% and 35%) and Germany, Austria and the Netherlands (under 10%).²⁰

Economicshelp.org summarized several reasons for youth unemployment:

Lack of Qualifications: Young people lacking skills are much more likely to be unemployed (structural unemployment). To some extent the service sector has offered more unskilled jobs such as bar work, supermarket checkout operators and waiting staff. However, the nature of the labour market is that many young people lack the necessary skills and training to impress employers.

Geographical Unemployment: Youth unemployment is often focused in certain areas – usually inner cities where there is often a cycle of low achievement and low expectations. For example, the employment rate for 16-24 year olds is only 64% in the North East compared to a national average of 70%.

Cyclical Unemployment: The biggest cause of unemployment in the UK is often cyclical or demand-deficient unemployment. This is unemployment caused by the falling output which occurs during the recession. During the 2008 recession, youth unemployment increased at a faster rate than the actual unemployment rate. It is often young workers who are more likely to experience unemployment because with the least experience they are the easiest to remove. Also, firms often don't sack workers, but they do stop taking on new (young) workers.

Length of Time to Find Work: School leavers may just take time to find the right work for them.

Cultural / Social Factors: Youth unemployment is often highest amongst deprived areas where there is pessimism over job prospects. Youth unemployment is often higher among people who have history of broken families, drug use or a criminal record.

Underground Economy: Unofficial employment may occur in areas where there is a thriving black market economy. I.e. there are unofficial jobs for people to take. These jobs may be illegal such as dealing in soft drugs. However, it is hard to ascertain the extent of these unofficial jobs and it is easy to make sweeping generalisations about deprived areas.

Effects of Former Unemployment: Past unemployment trends are likely to cause future unemployment. If young people have been unemployed in the past, it becomes increasingly difficult to get a job. This is because lack of jobs may cause young workers to become demotivated; a lack of past employment may cause firms to be unwilling to hire in the first place; unemployment means workers don't have the opportunity to learn skills and 'on the job' training.

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http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php?title=File:Youth_unemployment,_2011Q4_%28%25%29.png&filetimestamp=20120502094632

Austria

In December 2012, the youth unemployment rate in Austria was 9.0%²¹. From 2009 to 2011, youth unemployment was in a steady decline with 10.0% in 2009 and 8.3% in 2011. Youth unemployment in Austria was reduced at a higher rate than general unemployment in 2011.²² The youth unemployment rate dropped drastically since the economic crisis, because Austria has implemented a number of programmes that support this social group in their qualification for and search of labour (see below).

The socio-economic situation of NEETS in Austria before they receive help through various programmes is very bleak – it is characterized by a series of casual jobs, financial support of parents (as far as this is possible, in most cases, also the parents had poor access to education), and social support.

In Austria, different agents support young NEETS in finding their way back into vocational education and training and the labour market: the Austrian Employment Agency, which provides educational programmes that do not only provide the young NEETS with needed knowledge and skills for the labour market, but also enables and empowers them to act within the labour market in a self-determined way and achieve a career and lifelong learning. Within many programmes, there are company contactors which act as a link between the NEETS, the HR-managers and trainers/coaches in a personalized and individualized manner. This means that they also provide career support for NEETS on the side of companies, to HR-managers.

Portugal

According to *Eurostat*, there are over 94 million young people aged between 15 and 29 years in Europe. This amounts to an incredible resource for society. However, if countries want to fully exploit the potential of young people, they need to be productively employed and integrated into society. In the past few years, the Portuguese economy has suffered a deep recession and rising unemployment.

On joining the Euro, Portuguese national debt was below the 60% limit set by the Euro Convergence Criteria (Maastricht criteria). By the start of the debt crisis in 2009, the level of public sector debt had edged up to 70% of GDP. However, the recession of 2009-12, has seen a rapid increase in the level of debt, despite efforts to reduce public spending and austerity measures pursued by the government.

²¹ Cf.

http://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/arbeitsmarkt/arbeitslose_arbeitssuchende/arbeitslose_int_definitionen_ms/index.html [140113]

²² Cf.

http://www.bmask.gv.at/cms/site/attachments/7/6/7/CH2124/CMS1249976411510/jugend_und_arbeit_2012.pdf [121212]

With the rapid drop in real GDP, and austerity measures, the Portuguese unemployment rate has increased at one of the fastest rates in the EU. Effectively there are a number of factors that made it essential to deepen the knowledge of the unemployment problem but also or even mainly all mechanisms that lead to more and younger people falling into situations that allow them to border labor markets, training or education system:

Greece

Unemployment and education: Unemployment rates are higher both among persons who have only completed compulsory education (41.0%), and among those who have completed tertiary and post secondary vocational education (28.0%). In addition, lifelong learning is still not widespread in Greece. In fact, Greece shares the bottom position with Portugal in the EU25 rankings as regards participation of citizens aged 25-64 in lifelong learning programmes (2% in 2004, compared to an EU25 average of 9.9%).

Poverty: Greece is ranked among the countries with the highest rates of poverty. Around 20% of the Greek population is living below the poverty line. The main causes of poverty include low educational status, residing in rural areas and lack of work opportunities.²³

Disability and employment: Unemployment is particularly acute among disabled and members of other vulnerable groups. More specifically, persons with disabilities (PwD) remain outside the labour market at a much higher rate than the general population. In Greece, according to the findings of the Labour Force Survey on individuals with Long Standing Health Problem or Disability (LSHPD), 84% are economically inactive, compared to 58% of the general population of the country. The percentage of the working-age population with LSHPD is in Greece 10.3%²⁴ (Eurostat, 2003, pp. 1-3)

About 50% of disabled employees face problems in their working environment. 40% of the disabled claim to be victims of social exclusion, owing to insufficient income, unemployment and the inadequacy of social services. Disabled persons who do manage to enter the labour market usually find themselves in low-skill, low-pay jobs.²⁵

²³ Yfantopoulos, J. N., 2007, Demographic trends and socio-economic indicators in EU and Greece". In "About Greece" Editor Metaxas A. J. D. General Secretariat of Communication pp.65-78

²⁴ Eurostat, 2003, "Employment of disabled people in Europe in 2002", p.. 1-3.

²⁵ G. Magopoulios, A. Trichopoulou, Employment status for people with disabilities in Greece), South-Eastern Europe Journal of Economics 1 (2012), p. 25-40

3- Measure and assess of NEET's soft Skills

In order to start measuring and assessing the soft skills of disadvantaged young people, we have undertaken primary research with the target group.

Switzerland

A survey has been completed which used 32 statements to assess the resilience and employability aptitude of the target group by gauging their opinion on how they deal with challenges and new situations in their lives. The questionnaire was completed on the 4th February 2013 by 3 young men aged between 19 and 22. The research showed that respondents are confident and believe in themselves and in their skills. This is shown for example by the assessment of statements 1 and 26 where all 3 said that they think to have the knowledge, skills and experience to deal with almost anything that happens to them and that they are able to take control of the situation when they face new challenges.

Some statements revealed dimensions where respondents may need support like organisation and goal setting. Goals focus attention toward goal-relevant activities and away from goal-irrelevant activities, serve as an energizer, affect persistence and activate cognitive knowledge and strategies that help an individual cope with the situation at hand. These are important findings that could be focused on in the career circles as parts of the project.

In addition to the questionnaire, a focus group was held on the 4th February 2013. The focus group was completed with 3 young people who are currently not in education, employment or training but who are receiving support from the regional unemployment office of Sion-Hérens-Contthey in their job research. The young people involved all faced a specific barrier in finding employment in that none of them were able to finish their vocational training (apprenticeship). They had been "NEETs" for between 6 and 12 months. The aim of the session was to complement the survey by gaining more qualitative information about the feelings of the target group with regards to their unemployment situation. The session helped to explore some of the barriers young people are facing in finding a job, find out what training and support they were currently receiving and identify any gaps in provision in terms of what support young people feels they need which is not currently offered.

United Kingdom

An online survey has been completed which used 31 questions to assess the resilience and employability of the target group by gauging their opinions on how they deal with challenges and new situations in their lives. An example of the questionnaire can be seen in Annex 1.

The online questionnaire was completed between 14th of December 2012 and 8th of January 2013 by 11 people. The research showed that the majority of the asked unemployed people are confident and believe in themselves and their skills. This is shown for example by the answers for questions 4 and 26 where 80-100% said that they strongly agree or agree when asked if they can take control of the situation when faced with a new challenge and if they know what they want to achieve in their lives. To face challenges positively and keep an overview of all tasks that has to be done it is important to write things down and check what you already achieved and what needs to be worked on. Being organised and meeting all deadlines are core assets to appear as a reliable person and getting employed in almost all sectors. According to the questionnaires, these are areas that could be improved because around half of the interviewees don't keep track of their tasks. Some questions revealed areas which could be improved to increase their confidence and problem-solving skills.

Furthermore, the survey showed that young people have sometimes problems when it comes to difficult challenges. Almost half of the interviewees did not agree that they maintain confidence in their own ability to overcome the challenge. Also, over 60% think that they are not able to turn an unwelcome challenge into a benefit for themselves. These are being important facts that could be focused in the career circles as parts of the project.

As well as the online questionnaire, a focus group was held on the 20th December 2012. 5 people attended the group including NEET young people and support workers. The aim of the session was to complement the survey by gaining more qualitative information about the feelings of the target group with regards to their employment situation. The sessions gained information on the real life experiences of the group as they have been searching for work, their feelings about the support they have received and their opinions on what type of training they feel would be most useful for them and other young people in order to increase their chances of finding work.

Austria

To begin with, let us look at the soft-skill requirements from the perspective of HR-managers. In Austria (region of Vienna), a survey with ten enterprises from different sectors was conducted to find out more about soft skills and personal attributes young adults need to pertain in the world of labour. In general terms, the enterprises ranked 'personal qualities and attributes' (3.63 on a scale where 4 is 'most important' and 1 is 'not important') as most important, closely followed by communication skills (3.43) and interpersonal skills (3.30).

Within the field of personal skills and attributes, 'willingness and desire to work and learn' (4.0), 'word keeping – reliability on colleagues' and 'responsibility' (both 3.86) and 'reflexivity, self-awareness and self-confidence' (3.71) were ranked as the most important skills by entrepreneurs.

Within communication skills, 'written oral expression and understanding' (3.57) and 'communication of own ideas and agreement and disagreement' (3.57) were the most important skills, while 'communication in foreign languages' was the least important (3.14), this however, may differ within sectors.

Within HR and interpersonal skills, 'cooperation and team working' (3.86), 'dealing with conflicts' and 'satisfying customer needs' (both 3.71) were identified by the most important skills, followed by 'interaction with people with different cultural backgrounds', 'respect for and understanding of diverse points of view', 'interaction and collaboration with peers', 'not abusing power and authority' and 'motivating oneself and others' (all 3.57).

Within research and planning skills, 'managing time and respect deadlines' (3.86) was ranked as the most important skill by entrepreneurs, closely followed by 'acting proactively' (3.71). Within leadership and management skills, 'stress management' (3.71) and 'overcoming difficulties – flexibility' (3.57) were found to be the most important skills.

From the point of view of education providers and vocational education and training providers, there is a consensus that the target group of NEETS is characterized by a striking lack of social skills. These include, among others, communication and communication skills, conflict management and team work. Hence the target group of NEETS exhibits the paramount need to develop these skills within non-formal training programmes and projects.

While a number of new initiatives have already been created and implemented, they are still in their infancy and need to be developed further and implemented on a larger scale to reach more NEETS. Furthermore, an issue which has yet to be resolved is how to measure soft skills objectively and not only through personal assessment. Also evaluation and benchmarking tools need to be established to ensure a qualitatively high level of measurement of soft skills all over Austria.

Portugal

The focus group was held on 14th January 2013. A group of 3 people attended including NEET young people and support workers, aiming to gaining more qualitative information about the target group with regards to their employment situation. The main goal of this activity was to gain information on the real life experiences of the group as they have been searching for work, the support they have received and their opinions on what type of training they feel would be most useful for them and other young people in order to increase their chances of finding work.

Regarding to the focus group session organized By SPI with collaboration of *Espaço T* in Porto, the initial number of people enrolled in the session was 7, but only 3 people attended to the Focus Group. The group was especially concerned with the difficulty in finding job offers adequate to their base training/education field or finding affordable training in order to

complete or acquire the skills they are lacking. They had identified some of the main barriers, such as lacking job offers in specific fields. The selection criteria are hard to understand. Some employers ask for polyvalence from a specialized worker and others ask special skills when hiring workers that are not able to have them. Less honest job offers (under paid, excessive work hours) not much financed training, especial for people with higher degrees (12^o grade, university)

Greece

The main findings and tendencies drawn from the questionnaires implemented (with the scores per individual shown in the table below), indicated great variations within the target group – NEETs with a light mental disorder. This is mainly explained by the wide range of disorders, as well as different levels of psychological ill health among persons in the group. The average score indicates that considerable resilience needs to be built up within the group in several dimensions measured. In particular, self-efficacy is rated low in most respondents, with one exception, where the individual in question rated herself high on all aspects. The area where the group collectively scored relatively high (with one exception) relates to social connections. Given the fact that Greek society is traditionally characterised by strong social networks - a feature that remains strong – is benefiting the target group in a positive way. Another explanation of the latter finding is that the NEETs who completed the questionnaires are long-term members of the day care center, where they can socialize themselves and form strong friendships.

4- Legislation Framework

Switzerland

The Swiss welfare system was developed only in the second half of the 20th century. Until then, the social security was dependent on private initiatives of trade unions and employers and to certain extends of the cantons and the local communes. From the 1960s on, the Federal State started to play a major role in social policy and developed a complex system of social security with compulsory insurances for old-age, invalidity, health, accidents and unemployment.

The field of unemployment policy is marked by three major institutions: the main institution is the unemployment insurance, based on the federal law on mandatory unemployment insurance and compensation for insolvency (LACI26), which provides compensation in case of unemployment. It is based on mandatory contributions in relation to the salary. Those people who are not insured by the unemployment insurance or do no longer fulfil the requirements for benefits, are taken in charge by the social aid. According to the federal law in matter of assistance of people in need (LAS) the cantons are competent to assist people in need who are living in one if its communes. The social aid is hence financed by the cantons which have all its different practices. A third institution, which is not directly linked to the unemployed, often occurs in discussions about unemployment. It is the invalidity insurance that provides financial compensation in case of invalidity. All these institutions have as a common objective the professional reintegration and to prevent social exclusion. But we can observe a lack of coordination between those three institutions. Long-term unemployed are sometimes pushed from one institution to another. As the three institutions are financed by different means on different levels of the organisation of the State, this poses a major problem. One of the big challenges in the field of unemployment is to ensure coherence within that policy field and to coordinate the different institutions.

United Kigdom

At a national level, no agency tracks or has responsibility for young people as they leave compulsory education and the remit of the Department for Education and enter work, further or higher education (where the responsible ministry is often the Department for Business Innovation and Skills) or unemployment and inactivity (the remit of the Department for Work and Pensions). This means policy is not sufficiently joined up nationally, and there is no minister with a remit specifically looking at the issue of youth employment²⁷.

²⁶ The Federal Law on Compulsory Unemployment Insurance and Allowances in case of Insolvency of June 25, 1982 (LACI)

²⁷ <http://www.workinglinks.co.uk/pdf/Learning%20a%20Living.pdf>

One of the most important laws in the UK is the labour law. One part of this is the employment equality law that legislates against prejudice-based actions in the workplace. According to that, it is “unlawful to discriminate against a person because they have one of the ‘protected characteristics’, which are, age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. The primary legislation is the Equality Act 2010, which outlaws discrimination in access to education, public services, private goods and services or premises in addition to employment.” This means that young unemployed people who applied for a job cannot be rejected because of their age.²⁸

Several schemes and ideas were developed under the Labour Government prior to 2010 in order to reduce the number of NEET young people. The main scheme introduced an allowance for young people continuing in education past compulsory age; “As part of the 2004 Spending Review, the Department for Education and Skills had a public service agreement to reduce the proportion of NEETs from 9.6 percent in 2004 to 7.6 percent in 2010. Introduced in 2004–2005 the UK-wide Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) offered a means-tested weekly payment of up to £30 to young people continuing education past secondary school. In 2007 the government implemented a “September guarantee” that guaranteed all 16-year-old school leavers a suitable learning place, extended to 17-year-olds the following year. The ‘Young Person’s Guarantee’ was announced in the 2009 budget, offering a guaranteed job, training, or work experience to 18–24-year-olds who have been on Jobseeker’s Allowance for six months.” However, following the change of government in 2010, the scheme was officially ended in March 2012. The ‘Education and Skills Act 2008’ will increase the school leaving age in England to 17 in 2013, and to 18 in 2015 which will of course reduce the number of NEET young people in the UK.

Although the most recent Government has ended the majority of the support services introduced by their predecessors, different measures to reduce youth unemployment have been put in place. One such measure is the politically controversial ‘Workfare’ scheme. It refers to government workfare policies whereby individuals must undertake voluntary work in return for their benefit payments in order to not lose them. There have been a lot of discussions about the Workfare. On the one side, supporters argue that such policies support people to move off welfare and into employment and provide them with experience which will help them get a foot on the ladder. On the other hand, critics such as the Trade Union Congress argue that they are “being used to provide unpaid labour and it is very unlikely that it does anything to help them get real jobs.”²⁹ In 2011, the Prime Minister’s Office announced proposals “under which Jobseeker’s Allowance claimants who haven’t found a job once they have been through a work programme will do a 26 week placement in the community for 30 hours a week.” According to The Guardian in 2012, under the Government’s Community

²⁸ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-act/age-discrimination/>

²⁹ <http://www.tuc.org.uk/economy/tuc-21054-f0.cfm>

Action Programme people who have been out of work for a number of years must work for six months unpaid, including at profit-making businesses, in order to keep their benefits.³⁰

The Government published its approach in response to rising youth unemployment figures because of a growing public debate in this area. “The Government outlined its five key priorities for action, which included: raising attainment and ensuring that young people have the right skills, support for young people that risk falling through the net, encouraging employers to offer more work experience, internships and apprenticeships, promoting responsibility and ensuring that work pays and creating conditions for growth include: offering employers wage incentives to recruit young jobseekers, support for work experience placements, incentive payments for employers to take on apprentices and additional support for the most disengaged 16–17-year-olds.”³¹ To implement some of these priorities, the Government launched the Youth Contract in April 2012, a package of policy options to tackle short-term issues of youth unemployment. The action points of this Youth Contract were outlined in the Autumn Statement 2011 (for details, see Annex 2). It is stated that the £1 billion Youth Contract will provide at least 410,000 new work places for 18 to 24 year olds over a three-year period. “The new programme will help the most disengaged 16 and 17 year olds by getting them back to school or college, onto an apprenticeship or into a job with training. The Youth Contract is open to all businesses, including those that already employ large numbers of young people (like retail and construction) and emerging sectors (like the green economy, creative industries and ICT).”³²

This programme articulates the actions that the Government is taking to address the major structural reform challenges facing the UK identified by the European Council in June 2011. The National Reform Programme is presented under the Europe 2020 Strategy. All the information stated in the paragraphs above, are summarized and listed in that report.³³

Another suggestion has been to reinstate the Future Jobs Fund (FJF). “The FJF was a programme to create temporary but ‘real’ jobs to help unemployed young people in a difficult labour market. It provided a subsidy (up to £6,500) for jobs that were full-time (at least 25 hours a week), additional, and which provided a benefit to the community. An independent evaluation of the policy suggested it had a number of benefits for individuals, it benefited the hard-to-help and it had strong job sustainment.”³⁴

On a local scale it can be said, that Sheffield is being affected by rising youth unemployment. In November 2011 there were 5,800 young people claiming Job Seekers Allowance.³⁵ One

³⁰ <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/community-work-for-job-seekers/>

³¹ <http://www.cipd.co.uk/binaries/5835%20Learning%20to%20work%20%28WEB%29.pdf>

³² <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/1-billion-youth-contract>

³³ http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/national_reform_programme_2012.PDF

³⁴ http://www.theworkfoundation.com/DownloadPublication/Report/314_short-term%20crisis_long_term_problem.pdf

³⁵ <http://www.sheffieldlibdems.org.uk/2011/11/25/up-to-5800-young-sheffielders-to-benefit-from-new-1-billion-fund/>

measure to reduce this rate was proposed in the Sheffield City Region's 'City Deal' (included in the MADE deal). "Our proposal has two clear (but closely linked) elements. Firstly we will create an SCR apprenticeship model to tackle youth unemployment and provide young people with the opportunities to obtain the skills which will empower them to have prosperous futures in a high skilled SCR economy. We have identified three opportunities which will create at least 4,000 additional apprenticeships that can be delivered within a three-year timeframe"

Austria

Historical development - The dual vocational education system in Austria ('apprenticeship') was developed and implemented in the early 1960s. If youngsters did not choose secondary II education academic schools, colleges or three-to-four year schools, they could either complete an apprenticeship or drop out. Those who did not complete (or even start) an apprenticeship completely dropped out of the education system; there were no programmes or measures to keep these NEETS in the education or labour market, i.e. there was no other possibility for education.

In the late 1980s, the Youth Department of the Austrian Employment Service developed programmes for young adults who dropped out of the formal education system. These programmes function within the realm of non-formal and labour-market oriented education (further education and non-formal VET). The responsible ministries are either the Ministry of Social Affairs and Family, or the Ministry of Economy, depending on the current political situation. These ministries are responsible for the management of labour market policies and further training courses. In Austria, this is not only an educational policy matter, but has become a socio-political mission. These projects do not only provide the NEETS with needed education and knowledge in various areas, but the overall objective of the projects is recruitment and employment of youngsters (especially through company contacters who are employed specifically to support the youngsters in entering the labour market). The guiding principle for the programmes or projects is 'from the course room to the work place', i.e. NEETS should have the skills and knowledge as well as the possibilities to start working immediately after having completed such a programme. In some cases, NEETS can already start their application process during the initial clearing phase of the programme, where the aim is to find out what the NEETS' strengths and interests are and to start working on their personal situations.

Current legal situation - In Austria, the most comprehensive legislation concerning the recruitment of disadvantaged young NEETS is the 'Berufsausbildungsgesetz (BAG)' ('Vocational Training Act'): the BAG regulates what is called the 'integrative vocational training' which young disadvantaged people can make use of. Integrative vocational training can be up to one year longer than general dual vocational training ('apprenticeship') and the young adults are accompanied by vocational training assistance which supports them in their special needs (socio-pedagogical, psychological or didactic). In integrative vocational training, the training contents are adapted to the young peoples' specific needs and abilities. Youngsters need to apply for an integrative vocational training at the Austrian Employment Service, and there are

no restrictions as to which fields of apprenticeship can be converted into such a mode of vocational training. These trainings can also be completed as inter-company training. Furthermore, the BAG regulates financial grants for apprenticeships for companies to render apprenticeships more attractive.³⁶

The 'Behinderteneinstellungsgesetz (BEinstG)' (Employment Act for the disabled) regulates that from a certain number of employees on, companies have to employ a disabled person. In Austria, NEETS legally also belong to the category of disabled persons. The law about employing a disabled person in Austria is very strict and if companies do not adhere to the law, companies have to pay a fine.³⁷

Furthermore, there are 'Guidelines for Youth Coaching' which legally regulate the implementation of youth coaching measures and the prerequisites for financial grants.³⁸

Particular programmes to support young NEETS are the programme 'Ausbildungsgarantie' ('Training Guarantee') up to the age of 18, 'Jugendcoaching' ('Youth Coaching') or 'Aktion Zukunft Jugend' ('Initiative for the Future of the Youth'). These programmes, among others, are responsible for the low youth unemployment rates in Austria. Yet another programme which offers support specifically to NEETS are the 'Produktionsschulen' ('Production schools'): production schools offer a combination of crafting work in workshops, creativity methods and support by social workers. Production schools aim at long-term labour market insertion and personal stabilization of NEETS.³⁹

The different programmes constitute a cooperation between the communities, education providers and Employers' Associations and via company contacters provide support to HR-managers who want to employ a NEET. It is exactly this cooperation which renders them an effective tool in providing support to NEETS.

Portugal

Several measures were taken to alleviate the negative impact of the crisis on youth employment. Employment subsidies has been introduced for hiring young people (eg contribution to the salary, exemptions from social security contributions, tax benefits), or

³⁶ Cf.

<http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10006276>
[141212]

³⁷ Cf.

<http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10008253>
[141212]

³⁸ Cf.

http://www.bundessozialamt.gv.at/cms/basb/attachments/6/1/8/CH0013/CMS1342425557575/rl_jugendcoaching.pdf

³⁹ Cf.

http://www.bmask.gv.at/site/Arbeit/Arbeitsmarkt/Arbeitsmarktpolitik_in_Oesterreich/Schwerpunkt_Jugendbeschaeftigung [131212]

specific awards to transform temporary contracts into permanent, aiming to keep looking for work on young workers. Incentives were used to promote youth entrepreneurship - training and access to financial and non-financial services to create jobs. Some governments have increased funding for programs that offer paid summer jobs while others supported youth employment through large public works programs and of community work to improve infrastructure and the environment, as well as to provide income support. Additional resources were allocated to public employment services for job search assistance and other services of the labour market. During the crisis, many countries sponsored programs to develop skills to improve employability of disadvantaged youth, including through skills in emerging professions. Employers were encouraged to provide internships and other programs of professional experience, through bonuses and other incentives. Unemployment benefits and social assistance were granted to protect the income of young people or help them stay in school through scholarships and other conditional cash transfers.

Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP) - Policies and programs of active labour market may significantly ease entry and reintegration of young people into the labour market. If properly targeted and implemented, ALMPs may actually benefit disadvantaged youth mitigating gaps and training work market and promoting efficiency, growth and social justice. In many countries, Young people are the main beneficiaries of ALMPs, as it is also an important tool to mitigate the current crisis youth employment. ALMPs targeted at young people include a number of measures: some aim facilitate the transition to active life, while others focus on the disadvantages specific groups among the young and/or seek to prevent his removal of labour markets and the loss of skills in periods when the demand for work is reduced, as the current crisis context. Other measures include employment subsidies to increase incentives to hire young workers, programs of direct public job creation, and programs to promote self-employment.

Medida Estímulo 2012 (stimulus measures program) - Aims to enhance the return to the labor market of unemployed with higher integration difficulties, empowering them with the training and skills adapted to the workplace and simultaneously promote improved productivity and competitiveness.

Employment services - One of the barriers to adjustment between supply and demand for youth labour is the lack of information on the labour market and appropriate techniques job search. Employment services play this intermediation function, seen as the primary agent for the provision of services and policies on the labour market. These services generally include the registration of persons seeking Unemployment and referral programs for active labour market. However, the organizational structure, scope, and effectiveness of providing funding these services varies from country to country.⁵⁵ Experience shows that services employment should focus in particular groups of young people who most need assistance and tailor services to fit your specific needs and its disadvantages in the labour market. Systems of analysis which identify the specific difficulties faced by young people seeking employment can be very valuable in the development of effective and well-targeted promoting rapid interventions.

Greece

Social inclusion - Article 21 paragraph 6 of the Greek constitution reg. social inclusion of PwD
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was ratified by the Greek Parliament on
10 April 2012.

Education - Primary and Secondary education – Law N.3699/08, regarding the educational
needs of PwD Relevant legislation for higher education (Law N.3794/09) focuses on quotas for
PwD entering the higher education institutions and not on their specific educational needs;
Law 3879/10 provides for the accessibility of PwD to lifelong learning programmes and offers
incentives to participate in such programmes.

Labour - Article 22 of the Greek Constitution: rights of PwD to work and the protection of their
work such as work conditions, remuneration, promotions, further education and training, and
the prohibition of discrimination against the disabled; Law 2643/1998 and Law 3454/2006
preview the criteria for the objective recruitment of employees (quotas).

5- Main social actors

Switzerland

Despite the federal system there is a tendency in Switzerland towards an enforcement of the role of the Federal State as organiser of the welfare state. In the field of unemployment, the Federal State plays a major role in developing the law concerning unemployment insurance, control mechanisms and managing the compensation fund. But due to the federal system and the evolution of the unemployment security system, which was first developed at local level, with trade union playing a significant role, a variety of different actors are dealing with the unemployment issue in Switzerland.

The cantons are competent in adapting the federal law within their territory. Cantons define their own employment policies and have their own unemployment funds. With the introduction of the Regional Job Placement Offices (ORP, www.espace-emploi.ch), the importance of the harmonisation of the cantonal practices increased. Inter-cantonal institutions such as the Association of the Swiss Employment Offices (AOST, www.vsa.ch) gained of importance.

Overview on actors in employment policy field

	Employment policy	Unemployment insurance	Interest-groups
FEDERAL	Federal Council (government)	Swiss Federal Social Insurance Office	Employers Organisations (economiesuisse, Swiss Employers Union, Swiss Union of arts and crafts)
	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO	Commission for supervising of the compensation funds of unemployment insurance	Trade Unions (Union of Swiss Trade Unions, travail.suisse)
		Parliamentary Committee for Economic Affairs and Taxation	Political parties (Socialist party, Swiss people’s party, Free democratic party, Christian-democratic party, Ecology party)
		Swiss Social Action Institutions Conferences	

INTER-CANTONAL		Association of Swiss employment offices (AOST)	
		Association of organisers of active labor market measures (AOMAS)	
CANTON / LOCAL COMMUNES	Cantonal Department of Economic Affairs / employment offices	Regional Job Placement Offices (ORP)	Unemployed Organisations
	Cantonal Department of Social Affairs	Active Labor Market Measure's organisations	
		Tripartite commission	
		Public Unemployment insurance fund	
		Unemployment insurance fund of Trade Unions and Employers Organisations	

United Kingdom

Steps Ahead Mentoring: “The Steps Ahead Mentoring initiative is designed to help young people to improve their employability skills and step closer to their dream job. It offers young people, most of who have never worked before, up to six one-to-one mentoring sessions to help them improve their employability, boost their confidence and find work.”⁴⁰

Commission on Youth Unemployment: The Commission on Youth Unemployment was set up in September 2011 by ACEVO (the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations) in response to widespread concern amongst voluntary sector leaders about youth unemployment.⁴¹

Filton College: “Filton College provides courses in South Gloucestershire and Bristol for local, regional, national and international learners, educating approximately 12,000 students. The

⁴⁰ <http://www.cipd.co.uk/publicpolicy/mentoring-steps-ahead-initiative.aspx>

⁴¹ http://www.cesi.org.uk/sites/default/files/event_downloads/ACEVO_report.pdf

College wanted to target their local NEETs in the 16-22 age group with the aim of promoting their very clever initiative to get young people studying and working.”⁴²

CIPD: The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development is a Chartered HR and development professional body. As an internationally recognised brand with members across 120 countries it supports and develops those who are responsible for the management and development of people within organisations. This Institute is involved in several research projects and campaigns about youth unemployment in the UK like ‘Learning to Work’ (for more information see also chapter 6).⁴³

UKCES: “UKCES is a social partnership, led by Commissioners from large and small employers, trade unions and the voluntary sector.” Its overall mission is to raise skill levels to help drive enterprise, create more and better jobs and economic growth. In particular, one of its aims includes providing more career opportunities for young people.⁴⁴

Connexions: “Connexions is an advice and guidance service for all 13 to 19-year-olds. It is intended to provide an improved universal career service and give teenagers extra support.” There are Connexions Centres around the country - usually several in each region - which offer support and advice on topics including education, housing, health, relationships, drugs, and finance.⁴⁵

Remploy: In general, Remploy’s mission is to transform the lives of disabled people and those who experience complex barriers to work by providing sustainable employment opportunities. In response to the high youth unemployment rate, Remploy is supporting the Government’s Wage Incentive Scheme, a project that provides financial support to help employers reduce the cost of recruiting a young person, with the aim of creating more work opportunities for young jobless disabled people. Under the scheme, employers can receive up to £2,275 for each eligible individual that they recruit on a full-time basis or up to £1,137.50 for those working part-time.⁴⁶

Job Centre Plus: Job Centre Plus is part of the Department for Work and Pensions. It provides services that support people of working age from welfare into work, and helps employers to fill their vacancies. In their priorities for 2010 to 2011, they focused specifically on supporting young unemployed people with the aim to reduce unemployment. To read about their full range of priorities, please visit <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/jpbbp-1011.pdf>. Furthermore, they support a government-led initiative, ‘Backing Young Britain’ which aims to counter-balance the impact of the economic downturn on the job prospects of young people. This

⁴² <http://www.netnatives.com/our-work/needs/>

⁴³ <http://www.cipd.co.uk/cipd-hr-profession/about-us/>

⁴⁴ <http://www.ukces.org.uk/about-us>

⁴⁵ <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=345146>

⁴⁶ <http://www.remploy.co.uk/employment-services/employers/wage-incentive-scheme.ashx>

project brings together businesses, public sector organisations and the voluntary sector to provide more opportunities for young people.⁴⁷

National Careers Service: “The National Careers Service provides information, advice and guidance to help people make decisions on learning, training and work opportunities.”⁴⁸

Prospects: Graduate Prospects is the UK’s leading provider of information, advice and opportunities to all students and graduates.⁴⁹

Although the desk research presented here shows a number of agencies supporting the target group, only half are focused solely on the target group and none are focusing on the ‘soft skills’ which the online survey and focus group suggest are important to young people. This suggests a major gap in the market within the UK, which could be filled by the type of training being proposed in Youth to Work.

Austria

The main social actor to support the recruitment of unemployed disadvantaged young adults is the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS). The AMS offers legal advice and support during the job search, training measures in different areas (such as job orientation courses, internships in companies, and programmes to up-skill young adults to level out missing school education), information materials on many job-related issues, counseling, and vocational aptitude tests. The website arbeitszimmer.cc was founded to support young unemployed adults.⁵⁰ It contains information on VET issues, topics and issues that evolve around the job-search, legal issues, job qualifications, career options and career paths.

The AMS further offers ‘EQUAL’-projects which target disadvantages young adults who cannot find access to the labour market or other training courses which would provide necessary education to enter the labour market. Examples of EQUAL-projects are ‘Spacelab’ and ‘hipopera’. Spacelab is set within the topic of private and public open spaces (parks, playgrounds, etc.) and aims at developing key qualifications, as well as qualifications within the areas of open space management and event management. Hiphopera is targeted at youngsters who dropped out of other non-formal education programmes. In this programme, they develop a stage show and in this process, learn about various professions⁵¹ Furthermore, the AMS offers specific counseling services for girls⁵², specific programmes for girls, such as

⁴⁷ http://www.eoeworklife.nhs.uk/spring-10/news/backing_young_britain.aspx

⁴⁸ <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/aboutus/Pages/default.aspx>

⁴⁹ http://www.prospects.ac.uk/about_us.htm

⁵⁰ Cf. <http://www.ams.at/wien/sfa/14343.html> [131212]

⁵¹ Cf. <http://www.forschungsnetzwerk.at/downloadpub/AMSreport59.pdf> [131212]

⁵² Cf. <http://www.ams.at/sfa/14736.html> [150113]

'Frauen in Handwerk und Technik' (Women in Trade and Engineering)⁵³, where girls can acquire skills and knowledge needed for trade and engineering, and about occupations within these fields to open new perspectives they may not have considered before. Furthermore, specific vocational information centres for girls are offered and⁵⁴, and generally a variety of services which youngsters may need to find out what their interests are, and to foster their interest in returning to vocational education or training and finding the appropriate measures.

Various Austrian NGOs are engaged by the Social Ministry (or the Ministry of Economy, again depending on the political situation) to provide vocational training or jobs to NEETS. The Social Ministry (or Ministry of Economy) provides the financial background to these operations. In Austria, educational programmes for NEETS are not only aimed at providing needed up-skilling and education, but also foster social inclusion and inclusion into the labour market. As such, they have become a socio-political mission.

Portugal

There are some social actors concerned with the target group, providing support, information and the possibility to find a job as listed below:

IEFP – Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional, IP, created in 1979 is a state organization and the national employment public service whose mission is to promote the creation and quality of employment and tackle unemployment, by elaborating active employment policies especially vocational training. This organization provides information and several internship programs giving financial advantages for companies who recruit young people.⁵⁵

Agência Nacional para a Qualificação e o Ensino Profissional, I.P. (ANQEP) has as its mission to coordinate and execute the educational and vocational training policies and to ensure the development and management of the recognition, validation and certification of skills system.⁵⁶

Portal da Juventude, is a project from the Secretariat of State for Youth and Sports with the aim of providing young people with various information, which are useful in their daily lives and that mobilize to participate in all areas of life, including help and tips on how to find a job or presenting training programs to boost knowledge and employability.⁵⁷

Unidade de Orientação e Integração da Universidade do Porto - The *Unidade de Orientação e Integração* (guidance and integration unit) pursues its activity within the student support and the promotion of academic success, including the responsibility for: develop and implement

⁵³ Cf. <http://www.ams.at/sfa/14090.html> [150113]

⁵⁴ Cf. <http://www.ams.at/buw/biz.html> [150113]

⁵⁵ <http://www.iefp.pt>

⁵⁶ <http://www.anqep.gov.pt/default.aspx>

⁵⁷ <http://www.juventude.gov.pt/Paginas/default.aspx>

studies that support integration actions and the student's success; to promote, coordinate and develop actions that promote the integration of students in school and their academic success; assist individual students in solving problems of the psychological scope; advise students on personal, social and academic issues; promote the development of skills and attitudes, interpersonal and professional; and encourage and promote actions to address and integrate different minorities in school.

This type of service is also provided by other public and private universities.

Espaço T, is a NGO trying to give disadvantaged persons the opportunity to improve their daily lives (not only "normal" persons but also with mental problems, addicts or seropositive) through giving them formation on different areas, thus promoting the fight against social exclusion. It is also an associated partner on this project.

Greece

Apart from a number of rehabilitation centres and mental health centres that exist all over Greece, there are also certain social actors that support people with disabilities and/or their families, which also stretches to the field of employment. The main actors include the following:

- National Federation of Organisation Associations for Mental Health (POSOPSI)
- National Federation of Family Associations for Mental Health
- National Confederation of Disabled Persons (ESAMEA)
- Panhellenic Association of Blinds
- Greek Federation of Deaf persons
- National Federation of Kinetic disabled
- National Federation of the blind
- Panhellenic Federation of parents of persons with disabilities

In addition, there is also a number of NGOs supporting people with disabilities, such as *Disability NOW*.

6- Support structures and implementation sources

Switzerland

The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO (www.seco.admin.ch) is the federal government's centre of expertise for all core issues relating to economic policy. Its aim is to ensure sustainable economic growth by putting in place the necessary regulatory and economic policy conditions. Employers and employees should be able to benefit from growth-oriented policies, the removal of barriers to trade, and the reduction of Switzerland's relatively high prices. On the domestic front, SECO acts as an interface between business, social partners and government. It supports the regionally and structurally balanced development of the economy and ensures the protection of employees. Through its labour market policy, it contributes to the prevention and tackling of unemployment and consequently to upholding social peace. SECO also helps to ensure access to all markets for Swiss goods and services and investment. In terms of foreign trade policy, SECO is active in the formulating of efficient, fair and transparent rules for the world economy.

Cantonal Employment offices (<http://www.vsaa.ch>) provide support and coordinate technical assistance to unemployed people in each canton. They also provide a service to find available jobs or recruit unemployed people: www.job-room.ch

Regional Job Placement Offices ORP (www.espace-emploi.ch) contributes to the reinsertion of the registered job seekers in the fastest and most lasting way possible. Concretely, these offices must advise job seekers and employees about the choice concerning the position to hold or the person to hire and make all they possibly can to find a job for the unemployed and fill the vacant posts in an appropriate way, taking into account, when possible, people's aspiration and their general profile (an appraisal of competencies and a professional project must be undertaken). The ORPs must also provide information on the possible ways of perfecting or retaining and sanction those who oppose to it. The ORPs carry the responsibility of helping the unemployed in their procedures. They collaborate closely with private placing companies and with different specialised institutions (professional orientation offices, psychologist offices, social services).

Tripartite Commissions: these commissions instituted in each canton, equally composed of representatives of workers and employers organisations and of competent authorities in matters of labor market, advice ORPs. Their approval is necessary when a decision is taken in the ORPs.

Active labor market measures' logistic (LMMT) finances appropriate measures provided by local NGOs and welfare organisations such as courses, training allowances, internships, work stations in a training firm, allowance for initiation to work, motivational semesters, work

station within the framework of a temporary employment programme, encouragement to independent activity.

United Kingdom

Supporting young unemployed people is one side of the process. But the application-recruitment process always has at least two main actors, so helping employers and those who are responsible for recruitment is also important. While researching this, one recognizes that there obviously exist fewer opportunities for HR managers and employers to receive support in coping with the current labour situation. Nevertheless, there are some organizations and institutions that aim to support HR Managers and employers and support them in recruiting young, unemployed people. Three of these institutions are listed below to give a short insight into the support available.

CIPD: CIPID launched a new campaign called ‘Learning to Work’, which aims to encourage employers to help prepare young people for the world of work whilst at the same time making the world of work more youth-friendly. They want to achieve a shift in employer perceptions of, and engagement with, young people by:

- “Raising awareness and an understanding of the role that HR professionals and employers can play in supporting young people in their transition from education to working life.
- Helping HR professionals to understand the business case for employing young people and to articulate this to senior management and the rest of the workforce.
- Developing and promoting a package of options for employers that can help prepare young people for work and make the labour market more youth-friendly.”⁵⁸

A new scheme that was announced by Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg will offer businesses financial incentives to take on unemployed 16-17 year olds. The programme is aimed at improving the employment prospects of NEET young people. Firms will be able to apply for contracts worth £2,200 for each individual they take on, with an initial up-front payment followed by further funding if they employ the young person for 12 months.⁵⁹

Education and Employers Task Force: The Education and Employers Task Force, a charity playing a key role in linking education and employers, has developed an initiative called ‘Inspiring the Future’, matching volunteers with state schools and colleges. Employee volunteers go into schools to talk about the job they do, the education and training route they

⁵⁸ <http://www.cipd.co.uk/binaries/5835%20Learning%20to%20work%20%28WEB%29.pdf>

⁵⁹ <http://www.relocatemagazine.com/relocation-news-blog-format/139-employment-news/3794-uk-companies-offered-financial-incentives-to-recruit-neets>

took and the careers in their sector. It's a free service, for employers of all size and sector, and for staff at all levels, from apprentices and graduate recruits to CEOs.⁶⁰

Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion: The Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion is the UK's leading not-for-profit company dedicated to tackling disadvantage and promoting social inclusion in the labour market. The Centre delivers robust research and works consistently to challenge and support policy and decision makers.⁶¹

Austria

As a first instance, for (financial) support and information, the HR managers can contact the AMS, to be more specific the Youth Employment Service, as well as Arbeiterkammer (Chamber of Labour) on the side of the (potential) employees, and the Wirtschaftskammer Österreich (Chamber of Commerce) on the side of the employer. These two institutions are the direct contact points for such issues, and also offer legal advice about such topics.

On a more personalized level, the company contacters who work for non-formal education programmes for NEETS form a well established support structure for HR-managers: they cooperate with NEETS themselves and their trainers to find suitable positions which are of interest to the youngsters and contact the companies who offer openings directly via the education and training providers. Company contacters work for every vocational education and training provider and can also be contacted by HR-managers who search staff for a specific opening and want to give NEETS a chance. They know the youngsters in the programmes as well as their strengths and interests and can refer the HR-managers to youngsters who fit their needs.

Portugal

The main focus is on support structures and information sources available in each country with particular regard of support and information services available to HR managers concerned with the recruitment of disadvantaged young NEET's.

IEFP provides a website⁶² giving HR managers the chance to add job opportunities (and registered applicants the possibility to reply), search a candidates CV database and another website⁶³ providing information about a program called Professional Internships.

⁶⁰ <http://www.inspiringthefuture.org/>

⁶¹ <http://www.cesi.org.uk/policy>

⁶² <http://www.netemprego.gov.pt/IEFP/index.jsp>

⁶³

http://www.portaldaempresa.pt/CVE/pt/AreasdeInteresse/RecursosHumanos/RecrutamentoContratacao/SER_estagios+profissionais.htm

Observatório do Emprego e Formação Profissional is IEFP’s consulting department intending to diagnose, prevent and solve problems related to work and vocational training namely:

- Socio-professional insertion and reintegration
- Detect and monitor situations of declared or predictable crisis
- Imbalances between demand and jobs⁶⁴

Greece

According to Greek law, people with disabilities, who can exercise the right to certain benefits, are those that have a 67% disability. These need to be formally assessed and verified by the Prefecture in which they reside. Benefits include a monthly allowance depending on the severity of the disability, public transport passes of 50% or 100% discount on normal fare, considerable tax exemptions, special parking facilities, reduced prices in places of cultural and scientific interest etc. Lately, some municipalities have introduced discounts on their taxes to people with disabilities and their families, as applied to electricity and/or water supply and sewerage bills.

The support services provided for people with disabilities - also serving to aid HR managers engaged in recruiting young, disabled NEETs – include the following:

- inclusion in vocational training programs;
- actions facilitating accessibility and rehabilitation in the labour market;
- subsidizing of employment through the provision of specific incentives;
- subsidies to young professionals who set up small businesses or form partnerships.

In addition, companies employing more than 50 people are obliged to have 5% of their positions occupied by disabled people (Law N.648/86 and Law N.2643/98). In cases of competitive recruitment of staff in the public sector - on national as well as municipal level - people with disabilities are given priority to obtain a job.

Information sources

Government	NGO’s	Other
www.ypakp.gr www.minedu.gov.gr www.oaed.gr	www.keepea.gr www.arsis.gr www.e-isotis.org www.chrysallis.eu www.disabled.gr	www.cityofathens

⁶⁴ <http://www.oefp.iefp.pt/>

	www.e-accessibility.gr www.eoka.y2.org www.pasipka.gr www.autismhellas.gr/ www.pst.gr/ www.the-wolves.org	
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7- Training opportunities

Switzerland

According to an in depth study on transitory measures between school and VET, 2 groups of young people have greatest difficulty in finding either training or employment: 1) young people with low school achievement and difficult personal/social circumstances who ARE motivated to go into VET and 2) young people with low school achievement and personal/social circumstances and who are NOT motivated to go into VET. The proportion of these young people from a migrant background is approximately 40% (overall migrant community in Switzerland approximately 20%).

The study concludes that there exist no appropriate, relevant initiatives or measures for young people facing multiple issues when leaving school. Indeed, with the exception of “Motivation Semesters” most NEETS are in fact excluded from these initiatives, which focus on young people with lesser problems integrating VET. (State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI, Egger, Drechner & Partner, April 2007)

At the federal level, in 2011 an initiative was put in place to encourage school leavers into training (impact not yet known) and individual cantons also put initiatives in place, but information as to their effectiveness is not yet available. Nevertheless, the issue of NEETS remains: “We have many young people not eligible to register as unemployed, who have left their apprenticeships or dropped out; we don’t know what to do with them, we don’t have anything to offer” (Head of the Sion Unemployment Office, telephone conversation on December 20th, 2012).

Foundations like Speranza (www.stiftungsperanza.ch) and Infoklick (www.infoklick.ch) can also be mentioned. They have close ties to private industry and some companies that train apprentices. They offer young people with a wide range of interests and abilities hands-on training days in different companies – even if these abilities are still hidden talents. They also help young unemployed persons use their time constructively before they start a new job by offering them further training on a volunteer basis that helps them earn a certification. This type of certification, but also contact to potential employers, can open new doors to the employment market.

United Kingdom

Research revealed that there doesn't seem to be any training opportunities available for HR managers with a particular focus on recruiting NEET young people. Although a lot of articles could be found, which state that it is necessary to give a chance to young unemployed people in order to decrease the rate of youth unemployment, there is no practical information or advice available about how to reach and recruit this target group.

Nevertheless, there are many opportunities to take part in many different courses and training on recruitment strategies, interview techniques and everything related to HR management. Hotcourses.com and CIPD are just two examples of course providers.

Hotcourses.com provides several links to online trainings concerning the recruitment of new employees (see <http://bit.ly/ZOzpbS>).

Another organisation that offers training courses related to the field of HR is CIPD. To get an impression of the kind of training they offer, see <http://www.cipd.co.uk/cipd-training/courses-qualifications/human-resources/resources-recruitment-talent>

Austria

To current knowledge, there are no training services for HR managers with this purpose. The only trainings offered are specifically for Ministries when they want to employ young disabled persons, to which NEETS also belong legally in Austria.

The Bundessozialamt (Federal Social Office) acts as an interface between enterprises and the AMS and gives information about support measures and grants for enterprises as well as (potential) employees.

Portugal

The desk research only returned two concrete courses regarding the recruitment of disadvantaged young NEET's (called *Trofa Comunidade de Aprendentes* and *Impulso Jovem*), but it presented a lot of Recruitment and Selection courses. Some of these, besides being available to HR managers and technicians, are also available to everybody pretending to develop their knowledge on the theme. Some of these are presented below:

*Trofa Comunidade de Aprendentes*⁶⁵ is a course funded by the European Social Fund that aims to support interaction between the target group and the labor market, the education system and lifelong learning involving local institutions, thus promoting social inclusion.

⁶⁵ <http://www.qren.pt/np4/2998.html>

*Impulso Jovem*⁶⁶ is a program funded by the European Social Fund pretending to give both young NEET's and HR manager's job/recruitment opportunities through three different axes: Professional Internships, Hiring and entrepreneurship support and investment support.

Greece

There are a number of privately owned training centres, in addition to the state-owned facilities providing training opportunities. Specifically for PwD, organizations such as KEEPEA (www.keepea.gr) offer training, which is also a source for HR managers seeking to recruit young disabled NEETs.

⁶⁶ <http://www.impulsojovemportugal.pt/>

Conclusion

Youth unemployment is one of the most discussed problems in Europe during recent years. Although the rates of youth unemployment are very different in each country, it is a huge common concern for the Europe. As the research has revealed, there seems to be some support for NEET young people as well as help for those employers who are considering hiring young people in this group. However, steadily increasing unemployment figures during the last few years show that the available schemes and programmes are not as effective as they were predicted to be. Existing programmes focus more on improving hard skills than developing soft skills. Young unemployed people who have been repeatedly rejected by employers and who can obviously not offer the level of experience of older people often lack confidence in themselves and their skills. Self confidence is essential when applying for jobs; the chances of succeeding are a lot higher when people believe in themselves and value the skills that they do have rather than focusing on those they lack. The research therefore strongly suggests that there is a gap in the market for soft skills training that focuses on strengths based training and developing self-confidence in NEET young people. We therefore suggest that Youth2Work focuses on these areas in developing the Career Circles in Work Package 4.

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