

In the years after the beginning of the world economic and financial crisis, the successful inclusion of the young people on the labour market and the assurance of an easy transition between education and employment have become the main challenges in front of the stable development and growth of the labour market and the social systems. This process is of high significance for the European Union (EU) and Bulgaria in particular, as for its negative demographic processes, which are being carried out on the Old Continent, so as for the challenge before which the European social model is placed in the condition of high public indebtedness and low economic growth. The dynamic nature of the modern labour markets increases the necessity of an early integration of the youth cadres. Exactly their inclusion on the labour market is viewed upon as a leading premise for the successful decrease in perspective of the portion of people, living in a risk of poverty, material destitution or in a high dependence according to the systems for social aid. In a medium time plan the decrease of the unemployment and the increase of employment amongst the young people is viewed as the leading factor for the accomplishing of the goals, placed in the Europe 2020 strategy. The core of the “youth unemployment” problem requires a complex approach, which includes reforms in the social help system, the educational system, the labour market, the tax system and the institutional structure, on which the politics carried out in these spheres are based upon.

Many people in the entire European Union have graduated a university degree, but despite that fact, they are still forced to work jobs, which don't fit their degree of qualification. They exchange one temporary position with another in spheres, such as construction, the food business, or light manufacture. They often include themselves in educations for over-qualification and re-qualification, with the idea of this improving their chances on the labour market.

To aid the unemployed young people, the European parliament has demanded for the introduction of the European guarantee for the young people. The deputies also talked agreed on larger financing in the European budget for the 2014-2020 period for the fight with youth unemployment.

The youth guarantee is an initiative of the EU, called upon to help the young Europeans without a job, which over come in at just over 5 million people. The deputies in the European parliament searched for answers from the Commission and the Council for the application of the initiative in the member states.

The youth guarantee places as its core value to have a position offered to all the unemployed young people, additional education or an internship within 4 months of the end of their education. The scheme is financed mainly on a national level, but the EU will also contribute through the European Social Fund and through the Initiative For Youth Employment, aimed at regions with youth unemployment over 25%.

Most of the European countries have submitted their national plans in front of the European Commission. One of the main instruments of the EU in the fight with the problem of “youth unemployment” is the European Social Fund. On the 23rd of April, 2013 the parliamentary commission on employment and social question voted a project for the activity of the fund for the 2014-2020 period, with which it helped and at the same time expanded the application of the new initiative of the EU for guaranteeing of youth employment.

With the made changes, the deputies included in the reach of the initiative all young people between the ages of 15 and 30, which are unemployed, are not studying or going through an internship. Another target audience of the resources of the fund will be the regions, in which the youth unemployment overthrows 20%. The aim is to guarantee that the young people which do not have a job for more than four months will receive an offer for one, education or an internship.

The European Social Fund is the instrument of the EU for the stimulating of employment, the raising of the productivity and the quality of work, the increasing of the mobility of the workers within Europe, and also the improvement of the education and the social integration.

The challenges and perspectives in front of the youth employment

The topic of the youth employment, or as it is more often commented on as the youth unemployment, is an especially discussed one and is among the most current problems, as for Bulgaria, so as for Europe as a whole. The worrying statistics show an increase in the youth unemployment – towards the month of December 2015 the registered unemployed young people in the country were around 50 000, as one has to take in account that these are only the people between the ages of 18 and 29. The reasons and causes for this worrying statistic and even-more-dreadful forecasts of experts (according to current data, the youth unemployment is three times higher than the official for the country and an increase in this category is expected) are complex, but can be summarized in the following groups:

1) Cause – Ill-aimed educational system:

The educational system in its current state cannot prepare well enough the future cadres. It is primarily stressed upon the teaching of theoretical knowledge and its remembrance as well its almost mechanical reproduction, without actually showing the causal connections between the separate facts and their application in real life. Also on a very low level is the relationship between the schools and universities on one side and the employers on the other for the negotiation of internships, educations and trainings and practices, as a part of the educational process. There is lack of enough preparation on the topic of social orientation and future career development of the young people. Another serious drawback is that the education, acquired from different educational institutions, does not meet the expectations and requirements of the business, which forces the employers to prefer people with experience, devaluating to a large extent the achievements in the educational system. Particular victims of this are the young people with secondary education, which are most often forced to unregulated conditions of labour, low pay and insurance defrauding. A large percent of the unemployed young people has graduated a university degree and have a bachelor's or a master's qualification degree, but there is no demand for such a large number of specialists in certain spheres, compensating for the heightened demand for specialists in other ones. The education, acquired at some university in Bulgaria, proves to often be less

than the demanded experience and knowledge from the business spheres, either from old and worn out methods of education, a lack of a material-technical base or the incoherence between the achievements in the scientific spheres and the private business.

2) **Cause – The emigration of a large portion of the well-prepared young specialists**

The lack of a wholesome policy for the assurance of professional development and growth demotivates many of the youth people, who are searching for a job in Bulgaria.

3) **Cause – The lack of initiative for the young people's side**

Often, for the young people the solution to the problem with employment is expected to be found by third-party organs, without their initiation. The lack of labour education as a main moral value and a way for everyone to be useful to their society proves to be disastrous for the initiative and entrepreneurship of the youth in Europe. No active involvement in the political and social life of the country from this group can be found as well, because of a list of reasons, the main ones from which are the desperation from the current state of the country, a lack of a desire for change at the cost of personal means and a changed value system.

4. Cause – The inadequate flexibility and understanding from the employer's side towards youth employment, and frequent violation of the labour conditions as well

All these factors lead to a bewitched cycle in the youth unemployment – the young people cannot begin a job, because of the lack of experience and cannot acquire any experience because of the lack of work. The consequences of this negative cycle are adverse as from an economic standpoint, so as from a psychological respect for the youth people, who have fallen in it. The lack of work and respectively income leads to the

decrease in self-esteem, self-respect and perspective. Even when they have found a job, as most unexperienced, the young people are often with potentially the highest risk of being sacked. This leaves the youth feeling confused and lied to and often fall into apathies, depressions and an unwillingness for socializing. Very often, the fear and unsafety grow into aggression, which leads to the increase in crimes, carried out by young people. Another kind of a reaction to the problem is emigration, which threatens the otherwise negative demographic tendency and can lead to a demographic crash in the years to come. The solution to the problem with youth unemployment requires a targeted and long-time conduct of state politics. The difficulties before the youth employment and their integration in society can be lowered in:

1) An effective change of the educational system

The educational system has to encourage individuality of the individual students, complying to the modern requirements of the labour market. The preparation as for the entry into labour relationships, so as to constant improvement and increase of the qualification with the goal of adapting to the ever-changing requirements. It is necessary to encourage projects for relationships between the educational institutions and the private firms/state administrations with the goal of the conduction of educations and internships, aiding both sides in the labour negotiations to take the optimal decision in the choice of a career or employee. The state regulation of the positions – a government contract after the consultations with leading firms in the different branches, where both the state and the private sector have to declare the required number of experts, which would contribute to the more rational use of the existing labour resource and the higher real value of the acquired qualification degree. A higher degree of cooperation between the universities and specialized firms when working on massive projects, including student participation.

A year ago the European Commission published a reported, which traced what were the main difficulties in the wholesome participation of the young people between the ages of 15 and 24 on the labour market. The researched showed that less than a third of the work force within the 15-24-year mark succeed in including themselves among the employed, and the ones who have succeeded to find a job, often fail to stay at that position.

The report shows that the reason for this statistic is most often rooted in the education, which the young people are being given. In Bulgaria the problem is analogic and the data of the Employment Agency confirms the shortcomings in the educational system – in the last five years more and more is the partition of university graduates amongst the unemployed increased. In this relation, the accent has to be placed upon the quality of the education, which fits the requirements of the labour market. This can happen through the assurance of a higher level of competition and rivalry between the universities in the decrease or even removal of the subsidies for the specialties that there is no demand for on the labour market or whose educational product is not of high-enough quality (i.e. the graduates cannot realize themselves successfully in their degree).

The present model for state financing of higher education doesn't stimulate the conduct of high-quality education, in fact, it does the opposite – it finances the attraction and the keeping of a large number of students without any view on their skills and knowledge, and consequent realization.

2) It is mandatory to have stimulation especially of the private firms to hire young people

The stimulating of the employers can be done in two general ways. To initially relieve the procedure of hiring young people, especially ones that have not yet reached maturity, but are in active working age, as the relieved administrative procedure will significantly improve the chances of the young candidates of getting a job. The main stimulation can be done through financial stimulation and reliefs for the employer towards the state, as the given funds will be controlled to serve for the increase of the qualification of the hired personnel, which subsequently to be bound by a term contract, guaranteeing the return of the investment from the employer's point of view.

- 3) The employers have to be regulated for the conscientious following of the labour conditions and the correct insurance of the staff
- 4) There have to be divided more work places with a possibility of a fluid work time because of the necessity for young families to tend to their children
- 5) There also have to be created properly working youth organizations, interest clubs, and offices for professional orientation, helping the youth people to be integrated in society as complete citizens.
- 6) Vicious practices have to be completely abolished, which prevent the normal conduct of the market mechanisms – corruption, lobbying and so forth.
- 7) The regulations on hiring and firing staff have to be relieved.

This is an important condition, when the labour market is still under the effect from the negatives of the crisis. Even the chairmen of companies which are gradually recovering will be faced with the dilemma of whether to hire new workers, if in a potential following negative growth they will face serious difficulties with their firing.

The expensive and tedious procedures when hiring and firing are also a reason for the employers to be especially careful with the hiring of young people, as well as low-qualified ones. One of the most affected groups is the one of women with small children, who are protected from the law and practically cannot be fired, which often is the reason for them to not be hired in the first place.

All this proves that the state cannot stay away from the labour market, but has to search for ways to relieve and ease.

The youth employment has to be a task of high priority, the solution to which requires efforts of all sides for every young person with means, dedication and labour to be able to grow and develop himself, his family, his society, and consequently his country.

The position of the young people on the labour market is very specific. After the completion of their education they are included in the labour market, given that in most scenarios they do not have any work experience on their specialty. They often lack the required information and contacts to find a job. In a variety of cases the employers cancel to hire them on work, because they lack work experience and consequently professional competence and required labour habits. At the same time, they have acquired the newest and highest in the field of their acquired profession, but cannot apply it. These two characteristics clearly stand out in the position of the graduation young people.

A key moment in the creation of opportunities for the young people to find their place in society, to reach economic independence and to grow, is finding the right workplace. Society has to offer opportunities for realization on the labour market for the young people, for the prevention of constant unemployment, marginalization and the social exclusion. Through the realization of different opportunities for the young people for access to the labour market, a contribution towards to reaching of social coherency is made. This, on its own, is a premise for the achievement of economic growth.

A few following governments dedicate significant attention and means for the decrease of unemployment amongst young people through different programs and regulatory changes.

The youth unemployment goes hand-in-hand with the unemployment amongst all other age groups and reflects the current state of the labour market. In this age relation, it must not be viewed as a separate phenomenon, because when the economy is grown and the overall employment begins to gradually grow, the employment amongst the young people is also increased.

For the problem in my country, I can summarize:

Nearly 300 thousand young people in Bulgaria do not work or study.

Most of the young people do not want to begin a job for under 1000 leva per month payment, and the employers have been led to the introduction of bonuses for the “proper everyday attendance to work” to make the young people come to work on time daily. It is not the demographic situation in

the country, but more the sad conclusion that labour is no longer a value for the young people that is the bigger problem for the development of entrepreneurship in Bulgaria. The young who do not work, nor study, in Bulgaria are probably about 300 thousand. From this fact, the losses for our economy are very large. The losses cannot be compared even to those from emigration.

There is data, according to which two thirds of the depopulation in the country is because of the preponderance of the death rate over the birth rate, and the emigration – only one third.

This data can be acknowledged to mean that we have enough population, but the problem is the low economic activity of the population of work age and the great amount of people who neither study, nor work. These young people are primarily supported by their parents abroad, in most cases. They experience fear that, if they start to work, they will lose their parents' allowance, which is usually higher than the salary, which they would eventually be receiving.

In Bulgaria, the secondary education “produces” unprepared for the labour conditions children, with no motivation to study, to grow, because someone is supporting them and giving them allowance and they refuse to work for salaries of 500 or 600 leva, and that is a serious problem, because, when someone decides to pick up entrepreneurship, there are no available cadres.

The main conclusion is that the dynamic of the youth unemployment in Bulgaria follows to overall Europe tendencies. In the same time, a variety of other factors, deriving from the structural problems of the labour market in the country, the lowly-reformed educational system, the anarchic labour law and some cultural oddities prefer the lower economic activity amongst the young Bulgarians and a more difficult inclusion in the labour market.

Youth guarantee

What's it all about?

The youth guarantee is a new approach to fight youth unemployment, which guarantees that all young people below the age of 25 – regardless of them being registered or not in the employment offices – receive a quality and correct offer within 4 months, after they have left their formal education and have been left without a job.

This offer has to be either for work, apprenticeship, internship or a continuing education and has to be in compliance with the needs and current situation with everyone.

The member states of the EU supported the principle of the youth guarantee in April 2013.

How are the schemes for the youth guarantee created?

For the development and the establishments of the schemes for the youth guarantee in the entire EU it is necessary to have a strong companionship between all the interested sides: the public organs, employment offices, centers for professional orientation, educational institutions, offices for helping young people, firms and companies, employers, professional unions and etc.

The early intervention and the beginning of the activities are very important, as in many of the cases reforms will be needed, for example, improving the systems for professional educations and trainings.

The European Commission helped each and every member state of the EU to develop its own national plan for the youth guarantee execution and to initiate its application. The Commission also helped the activities for the increase of the awareness for the creation of the youth guarantee, as in 4 member states (namely, Latvia, Finland, Portugal and Romania) a full pilot project was in action in 2015. The concept, the products and the visual materials from this pilot project, as well as the drawn conclusions, were presented on national, regional and local organs, which wanted to use them under the form of a package of electronic instruments.

The Commission continues to aid the activities on the information and popularization in another four member states of the Union (Bulgaria,

Greece, Lithuania and Slovenia) during the 2016-2017 period. Aside from this, in April 2016 an invitation for the presentation of the proposals was published for the aid of the activities on the popularization of the youth guarantee in yet another 5 countries of the EU during the 2017-2018 period.

The Commission also relieves and eases the exchange of good practices between the governments, in particular through The Program for mutual education of the European Employment Strategy.

History of the success

A good example is Finland.

Finland prepared a detailed and in-depth scheme for the youth guarantee. According to the grading of Eurofound during 2011 83.5% of the young people searching for a job have received a successful offer within 3 months after being registered for unemployed. The Finnish scheme has led to the faster composition of personalized plans for the youth, as in this way the unemployment has successfully decreased.

The ratios of the benefits and expenses on the youth guarantee

Despite the fact that it's impossible to present accurate data while every country of the EU has not yet decided how to apply the scheme, according to a recent study, the benefits are far greater than the expenses.

The total expenses for the creation of the youth guarantee schemes in the Eurozone sum up at about 21 billion euro annually, which amounts to 0.22% of the GDP. The inactivity, though, costs a lot more. The young people who are not currently employed, are not studying and are not going through a course cost the EU by estimations 153 billion euro yearly (1.21% of the GDP) – in the form of missed benefits, profits and taxes (source: The Eurofound report about youth unemployment).

Not all measures within the youth guarantee are costly. In that way, for example, the enhanced cooperation between the interested persons is effective, without the need of big budgets.

Financing

For the youth guarantee to become a reality, in the national budgets priority has to be given to the youth employment, so that larger expenses can be avoided in the future.

The EU will add to the national expenses on these schemes through the European Social Fund and The Initiative for Youth Employment the sum of 6 billion euro.

In the conditions of not enough offering of free work positions, the quality offering of jobs will answer to the possible of the following criteria: to match the education/qualification of the youth, to be suitable for his or hers health condition, to be in compliance with the individual profile of the young person, to offer sustainability of the employment, to match the requirements of the health and safety conditions of labour, to give the opportunity for the individual growth of the young person. The quality offer for the young people between the ages of 15 and 18-years-old will be connected primarily with the return to the educational system, as well as the inclusion in a continuous education, and trainings, and apprenticeships. The quality offer for education will answer to all possible of the following criteria: to be in compliance with the profile and the attitude of the youth, to have a demand for it on the labour market and to bound by a particular work position.

The possible services, from which every young person depending on their individual profile can take advantage of, are the following:

- Professional orientation – the provision of information regarding the choice of profession, qualification, additional qualification or requalification;
- Motivational training, which would be offered as in the labour offices, so as in third-party licensed organizations as well;
- The education for the acquiring of a professional qualification and/or key competence, which are in demand on the labour market;
- Measures for the creation of work positions through financial subsidiaries for the employers;
- Internship programs and measures, aimed at young people with secondary or higher education and professional qualification;
- Subsidiaries of temporary employment;

- Encouragement of territorial mobility in the country when searching for and beginning a job;
- Service provision from the network of the European employment agency (EURES);
- Aid for starting a personal business from the young people with higher education and qualification, who have motivation and business ideas.

The measures taken for youth unemployment are already giving results:

Nearly 11000 souls under the age of 29 in Bulgaria have found their labour realization in the previous year of 2015, thanks to the active politics and actions of the social ministry according to a researched carried out by the NSI.

During the first half-year of 2015 the newly registered unemployed are 196 314 people and they have decreased by 9802 people when compared to the previous year, which is an indicator for a notable stabilization of the real economy, including the private sector and from there the labour market as well.

During the same period the tendency of the growing of the damn for workforce in the labour offices on the primary market continues. In the period of January to June of 2015 the unemployed ones that have begun work are 144 908 people, with 8497 souls (with 6.2%) more compared to the same period from 2014.

On the background of this even feint optimism it is interesting to note the situation on the question with the unemployed amongst one of the most vulnerable groups on the labour market – the young people under the age of 29.

In this sector there is also room for optimism, because the youth unemployment for 2015 when compared to 2014 has decreased considerably.

The data from the Administrative Statistic of the Employment Agency shows that, in comparison with the month of July 2014, the unemployed young people under the age of 24 have decreased considerably as well – with 5983 souls, and their portion is with 1.1% less.

In comparison with the month of July 2014, the young people under the age of 29 have decreased notably as well – with 10 906 people, and their portion is with 1.5% lower too.

According to the latest Eurostat data, for the month of June 2015 the level of youth unemployment under 24-years-old in Bulgaria has decreased notably for the second consecutive month and is 18.8%, which is with 1.9% lower than the average level of the same youth unemployment for the EU (20.7%). When compared to June 2014 it has decreased considerably – with 4.9%.

During the period from January to July 2015 on programs, projects and measures for education and employment, financed with funds from the national budget, in employment have been included 5 500 young people under 29, as some of them are the primary target group.

The measures, which are giving particular results, are connected with the successful functioning of the European programs, whose beneficent is the Employment Agency of the Social Ministry, as well as their own department programs.

2.

The topic for youth employment is amongst one of the latest for Bulgaria and the European Union. The tendency in the increase of the unemployment amongst people under 29-years-old during the last few years places the necessity of this questions to begin its solution on the level of the whole European Union. Bulgaria, as well as the other member states, include a noticeable amount of measures in their social policies for the reduction of the amount of unemployed young people and release a considerable part of their budget for their realization. In connection with this, one of the most successful, from the viewpoint of the assimilation of funds, operational program has begun – “Human Resources Development” for the period 2014-2020.

SCHEMES ON OP “HRD” 2014-2020

Youth employment

The Employment Agency is the beneficent on the procedure for the provision of granted financial aid, called “Youth employment”. The total budget for the project is 35 million levs and will be realized till the end of 2016, as an opportunity for internship and education during worktime will be given to 8 000 young people under the age of 29, and for a period of 6 months as well.

The project “Youth employment” gives the opportunity to the employers to hire youths in two main directions: internships and education during worktime. In both cases, if the current address of the young people is different from the populated place of work, resources are granted for transportation from and to the working place for the first month of the internship or education.

The employers, which assure internships on this schemes, will have their expenses covered for:

- wages in the amount of the minimal insurance income for the relative primary economic activity and the qualification profession group for the relative year, to which the opened work position is related;
- the health and social insurances of the youths for the period of 6 months.

If after the expiration of the internship the young person remains on the job and signs an unlimited labour contract, the employer will furthermore have the expenses for health and social insurances covered for another period of 6 months.

Towards the beginning of the month of August 2015 there have been 662 contracts signed with employers, as in employment there have been included 1 142 unemployed young people, from which for internships – 585 people and for an education – 557 souls. The total number of the mentors included in the project is 575, from which 352 are trainees and 223 – learning personnel. To the present time in the Directorate of the Labour Office of Vidin there have been signed 82 contracts with employers for 155 work positions. To this moment there have been hired 150 young people.

There are also another 5 people waiting to sign on this scheme.

The first thing, which makes an impression, when an employed applies to this scheme, is the relieved procedure. This way the Employment Agency relieves the ones searching for a job as well. To speed up the approval of the candidatures, their processing has been shortened. When the employer is already approved, they submit a considerable amount less documents, in order to get involved in the scheme as fast as possible.

The conditions and the set of required documents for the applying on the “Youth employment” scheme of OP “HRD” have been published in the website of the EA and can be received in every directorate of the “Labour Office”.

Education and employment of the youth

On the 13th of January, 2016 the Employment Agency announced the start of the first stage of the scheme for the education and employment of the young people under the 29-years-old threshold – the “Education and employment of the youth” scheme, financed by the Operational Programme “Human Resources Development” 2014 – 2020.

The total budget of the scheme is 115 million levs, as within it it is forecasted to be included 23 000 youths. The activities of the scheme cover unemployed people under the 29-years-old age limit inclusive. The goal of the operation is the integration of the unemployed young people under the age of 29, inclusive, which have been registered in the labour office, in employment through the assurance of educations and subsidies for continual employment.

The scheme is realized on two stages on the territories of all regions and municipalities in the country.

First stage:

Starts on the 13th of January, 2016 and assures the direct employment of youths, which have been registered in the labour offices as unemployed.

Second stage:

Will insure education of the young people for the professional qualification and the key competences, followed by an appropriate employment.

Eligible employers

Employers from the real sector and municipal enterprises under article 52 from the Municipal Ownership Law, answering to the requirements for the receiving of minimal aids according to the Regulation (EU) #1407/2013.

Organs of the executive authority in accordance with the Local Self-government Law and the local administration – municipalities, regions and mayoralties.

First stage: eligible activities

The first stage of the scheme gives the opportunity to the employers to hire registered in the labour office young people under the age of 29 on positions, which fall within the reach of single professional groups from the 2nd to the 9th grade from the National Classification of Occupations of 2011, for a period up to 6 months on full-time working hours: The employer has to insure a mentor for the hired young people for a period up to 3 months. Every employers answers for a minimum of 1 month and a maximum of 7.

A mentor can be a person from the same enterprise, who has professional experience in the same or similar profession, based on which the mentoring will be executed.

The minimal requirement for the determination of mentors: the overlapping of activities and responsibilities of the occupied by the mentor position to the employer and those, set in the job description of the hired based on the scheme young person.

The return of the expenses of the employers.

For the employers, which ensure employment of young people on the scheme, the expenses will be covered for:

Wages in the amount of the minimal insurance pay for the relative primary economic activity and the qualification professional group for the relative year, towards which the opened work position is concerned, as well as the due insurances for the employer's expense – for a period up to 6 months;

Expenses for mentors in the amount of half of the minimal work wage – for a period up to 3 months.

Requirements for the youths for the inclusion in the scheme

- To be registered in a directorate of the “Labour Office”
- To be of an age under the 29-years-old mark, inclusive
- To not be participating in any form of employment, any form of and education or training, including regular, nightly and remote forms of education, as all sorts of professional educations and key competences as well.

Towards this current moment the scheme in the Directorate “Labour Office” of Vidin have been stated 128 work positions, and in this number 34 employers in the real sector. On work have been hired 125 persons.

Nearly 1 billion levs in the following 6 years will be invested by the Labour Ministry and the social policy through the Operational Program “Human Resources Development” for the opening of new work positions and the assurance of a higher and of higher quality employment. The individual employment of unemployed and the capability for the quick adaptation to the labour market will also be encouraged. For all people, which are not working, and are of work age, there will be insured the opportunity for a training and qualification, with which a maximum number of people to improve their work capabilities. The overall expectations are that through the programme and the projects on it will be improved the qualification of about 100 000 people in the whole country and to give work to about 28 000 people, searching for employment. 17 000 will be young people, to which it is expected that the actions of the social ministry for employment and education will reach.

Labour workshops towards the Employment.

Towards the 27th of June, 2016 in the labour offices in the country there have been declared a total of 21 789 free work positions, shows the statistic from the Employment Agency. The big question in front of the unemployed people in the country is, however, how can they reach these places, to get information about them and to find the desired work position on the labour market in their populated area or one that is in close proximity.

The Employment Agency, through its network of 107 labour offices, 147 affiliates and 548 third-party offices, even in the smallest of inhabited places, really covers the entire territory of the whole country, offering different opportunities, so that everyone, who desires to, can find the most appropriate job for him or her.

Outside of this structure, however, there exists one very effective and proven throughout the year form of mediation between the employers and the employees and those are the so-called labour workshops.

A quick check in the calendar of the Employment Agency shows that labour workshops are organized throughout the whole year – almost every day, in different locations in the country. Information about the workshops themselves can be found as on the website of the agency (<http://www.az.government.bg/>), so as in every labour office as well. The employers, which take part in the workshops are usually motivated to hire people, even without the necessary qualification. They often offer different additional educations and trainings, so that the opportunities in front of the candidates are practically larger and better than they seem to look at first.

On the 9th of June, 2016 the labour office in Vidin organized a youth labour workshop and met the employers with the unemployed. It was the 89th from the beginning of the year, organized in our country by the Employment Agency. 30 employers from the Vidin region presented their firms and available work positions – a total of 41. Most demanded for were drivers, constructions workers, shop assistants, credit consultants, cooks and tailors.

For the first time at the workshop there were presented available work positions in the country and outside of it as well. The War Regiment in Vidin showed the free places in the Bulgarian army too.

115 young people in the ages below the such of 29 visited the workshop. They also found detailed information about the positions, the specialties and professions, from which the business' have need. Some people even signed labour contracts.

„Atelier for searching for a job ”.

This service is provided in accordance to the particular need of the person, who is searching for a job. For individual or group work within the reach of the Atelier the unemployed people can choose from 25 topics, which develop different skills and competences. From the beginning of the year, the service has been used from 15 124 youths, which is almost 75% of all unemployed persons, who have participated in the Atelier for searching for a job. The most frequent problems, with which the unemployed people in Bulgaria are faced with, are:

- Firstly, the low qualification
- The other problem is connected with the overall performance on the interview with the employer. Many people have the need of motivation, of clarifications, and of particular help. A problem for some of them is the composition of the motivational letter and the preparation of the autobiography, according to the European requirements. Not everyone, however, is acquainted with the new models, so to many of them we offer help in this particular way. We prepare them for their performance in front of their employers. A large portion of the unemployed have the required qualification and skills, but do not know how to present themselves. We create the Ateliers for searching for a job, in which many of them are prepared exactly for the meeting with their employer.

National Programme „Activation of Inactive Persons”

Main Goal

The activation and the inclusion on the labour market of inactive, and in that number the discouraged, and unemployed persons through the individual and group application of instruments and services for their attraction and motivation to be registered in the “Labour Office” and the encouragement for their inclusion on an education and/or employment.

Direct Goals

The social integration of the economically inactive persons of working age and also the unemployed from the vulnerable groups on the labour market and the decrease of the risk of poverty.

Aiding the labour and social integration of unemployed persons through the offering of mediator services, the identification of other services (social, health, educational and others), from which they are in need of, and the rendering of help for their provision.

The work with the young people is aided by psychologists and managers of cases, hired on the National Programme “Activation of Inactive Persons”. An individual psychological aid is provided to a large number of young people.

The National Programme “Activation of Inactive Persons” – there is a total of 56 youths under the age of 29 with higher education that have been hired, that are also not studying, and not working as well. They serve the function of a mediator between the economically inactive young people and the institutions, which are offering them the appropriate social, health, educational and other services.

In the Directorate “Labour Office” – Vidin have been hired 5 people on this national programme.

START IN THE CAREER

The main goal of the programme is to be insured the opportunities for the acquisition of labour experience of the unemployed young people, that have graduated a secondary or higher education, with the aim of the facilitation of the transition between education and employment.

DIRECT GOALS

- The prevention of the de-qualification of the young people;
- The prevention of the “brain draining”;
- The provision of opportunities for the update of the public administration;
- The provision of opportunities for the continual hiring of a part of the youths on a steady job;
- The reaching of the flexible combination of knowledge, skills and experience, correlating with the requirements of the market economy.

OBJECTS AND REACH

The program is realized in two main components.

The object of Component 1 is the group of young people under the age of 29 with no work experience on their specialty, which have graduated a higher education and have a degree, and are registered in the directorates of the “Labour Office”

The object of Component 2 is the group of young people under the age of 24, who have graduated a professional education within the last 24 months, who are with no work experience in the field that they have acquired their qualification for, and are registered in the directorates of the “Labour Office”.

The employers under Component 1 are public administrations – the central departments, including their secondary officers with budget credits and their territorial divisions, which are from the administration of the executive authority, in accordance with article 36 from the Law for The Administration, The Regional and Municipal Administrations.

The employers under Component 2 are from the private sector.

The programme is realized on the territory of the whole country.

On Component 1 the minister of labour and social politics affirms quotas with work positions.

The positive effect of the realization of the Programme is expected in the following directions:

The limitation of the spreading of unemployment and its continuity amongst the youth (under the age of 29, inclusive);

The overcoming of the social aftermath of unemployment amongst the youth and the increase in employment;

The assurance of opportunities for the acquisition of labour experience for the youths with secondary and higher education.

The programme is realized until the 31st of December, 2016.

EURES

What is EURES?

EURES (EUROpean Employment Services) represents a network for collaboration between the public employment agencies in the countries of the European Economic Area (the 28 member states of the European Union /EU/, Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein) and the Confederation of Switzerland. In the network there have been included also the partnering organizations – private providers of services in the sphere of employment, professional unions, employment organizations and others. The network is coordinated by the European Commission.

The EURES networks was created in 1993 from the European Commission and the member states of the EU with the aim of aiding the mobility of the European labour markets through the rendering of the necessary help to the following:

The ones looking for a job, which want to work abroad; the employers, which want to hire workers from abroad; the ones searching for a job and the employers in the borderline regions.

The services of the EURES for the citizens and the employers express the provision of:

Information from the databases, published in the [EURES portal \(European Job Mobility Portal\)](#);

Information and consultations, offered by over 900 mentors and counselors of EURES and all countries, which are members of EURES.

The databases of the EURES portal offer:

Information regarding the available working positions, declared through the national and public employment agencies in the member states of EURES, as well as the work positions, declared through the so-called EURES counselors;

The opportunity to publish a professional CV from the ones, searching for a job's side in the relative database of the portal; this database is accessible for the employers registered in the portal, which are interested in motivated people, which are searching for a job, from other countries of the EU/EEA;

Information about the conditions of life and work in the countries of the EU/EEA;

Information about the labour markets in the countries of the EU/EEA;

Information about the restrictions in the free movement of workforce, introduced by the old member states of EURES regarding the newly-accepted countries in the EU;

Information about the possibilities for education and professional education in the EU.

EURES has a network of over 850 counselors.

Apart from a job in the country, thanks to the opportunities, which our membership in the EU grants us, all year round there are new workers, who are hired on seasonal employment abroad.

“It is very important that the people, who want to work abroad, have to know that the best and probably the least risky variant for them is to choose their future job through our mechanisms. Every foreign employer is registered in the European network of employment services EURES, which guarantees the background check for their legitimacy. That way there is a real exchange of workers and employers throughout the whole of Europe that is established, in which we successfully include ourselves.”

Regarding the work of the employees of the DLO Vidin I can summarize:

Towards the unemployed young people, which are not registered in the Labour Office I appeal:

I summon them to register themselves, for them not to miss the opportunities, which are offered here. The Labour Office is working entirely for them. There are a lot of programmes and schemes, with which we can be helpful. Mostly about employment, because the idea is to offer realization to these young people on the labour market and to work in the field of their specialty.

I am glad when things work and the people succeed in finding their suitable job. In this way we are helping not only them, but ourselves as well.

The pride and the feeling for the well-executed work are one of the strongest stimuli to work in the Labour Office.

The direction for the younger people, who have graduated only a secondary educational degree, is connected with the search for an appropriate job for their specialty and their education.

They have fluctuations about what exactly to pick as a job and that is why we try to find and discover their interests, to help them to orientate themselves to that, which they would like to do. In the career development centres there are, in the moment, being carried out meetings with employers and consultants, which are helping the youth orientate themselves professionally. They are very interesting in the projects, such as “Start in The Career”, “Youth Employment”, “Employment and Education of the Young People”, which are currently in action. These are project from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, with which they are acquainted. In the moment, just before the beginning of such a scheme, the flow for the registered with us young people increases considerably, which quickly succeed in realizing themselves on the labour market. The young people increase in number in the exact moment that a new programme starts and there is a certain project, on which the Employment Agency is working. A part of them are on the OP HRD, financed by the European Social Fund, and the others – from the National Plans for Employment Programme, financed by the state budget.

We also work actively with the employers. We meet with them, we offer them different programmes from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP), in which they can receive financing when hiring unemployed people. Such opportunities reveal the measures on the Operational Programme “Human Resources Development” (OP HRD) by the Ministry and the National Plans for Employment Programme (NPEP), which the Employment Agency is carrying out.

The cases are always interesting, unique, because every human faith is different. The employee from our institution is often met desperate people, who have the need for the professional and humanly support. With active working they acquire will and confidence that they will have the opportunity to work once more.

Many young people reach out to us in order to find a job. We search for the most appropriate one for them, and in the case of a lack of one, we guide them towards requalification. In this way they increase their professional skills, earn experience on their specialty and are more competitive in the dynamic labour market.

Everybody has to try, to not lose courage and faith...