
GUIDANCE AND OUTREACH FOR
INACTIVE AND UNEMPLOYED

LITHUANIA





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Guidance and outreach for inactive and unemployed

Many countries across the European Union (EU) have high levels of unemployment and of inactive adults. These phenomena are frequently associated with low levels of qualification and insufficient basic skills. They may also reflect lack of adjustment between skills demanded in the labour market and skills developed in formal education and training. In both cases up-skilling and re-skilling solutions could be explored to increase the employability of adults.

The national reports developed by ReferNet partners reflect efforts done by Member States to reach vulnerable groups affected by unemployment and inactivity and help them reengage in learning and employment. The reports refer, in particular, to measures which may include young adults not in employment, education or training (NEET) and adults undergoing long term unemployment (LTU), given their persistence in many countries and the high challenges these groups face.

The policy strategies and initiatives in focus shed light over ways to support the most vulnerable to find learning and qualifying solutions. Career guidance and counselling support to people with decaying skills, low levels of motivation and insufficient basic skills are addressed. Its instrumental role in providing information, identifying skills needs, clarifying career options and developing positive attitudes towards learning is made clear.

Whenever possible, outreach measures were described, addressing the ones who fall out of the scope of standard policies to support registered unemployed or recent education drop-outs. Many reports entertain an important discussion on the entitlement to social protection and its effectiveness in addressing the challenges of all demographic groups.

Lastly, Cedefop trusts that these reports will provide an important characterisation of current opportunities and challenges across the EU in establishing appropriate upskilling pathways for adults. Current European policy initiatives urge MS to integrate skills assessment measures with flexible learning and validation solution, where guidance services and outreach will necessarily play a key role.

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CHAPTER 1.

Introduction

According to the forecasts published by the European Commission, the Lithuanian employment structure will be determined by three factors in the future: changes in technologies, demographical changes and changes in international trade. In turn, the rapidly changing technologies make it important to have counselling and informing services in the creation process of work places of good quality. Their implementation allows solving the unemployment problems of target groups, long-term unemployed persons being one of them.

The long-term unemployment in Lithuania is determined by general economic situation in the country, reduced demand for labour force (especially with low qualifications or unqualified), insufficient investments into the sectors of industry, building and services, decreasing agricultural development, intensive expansion of technologies, and small salaries. The career system is also not well developed in Lithuania and the system for validation of competences acquired informally and non-formally is fragmentary.

The reasons behind long-term unemployment are multidimensional: low education and qualification of the unemployed persons, negative attitude of the employers towards long-term unemployed, passive life style and negative habits of job searchers, insufficient mobility, and lack of labour market information. The long-term unemployed have lower self-esteem and frequently obsolete competences.

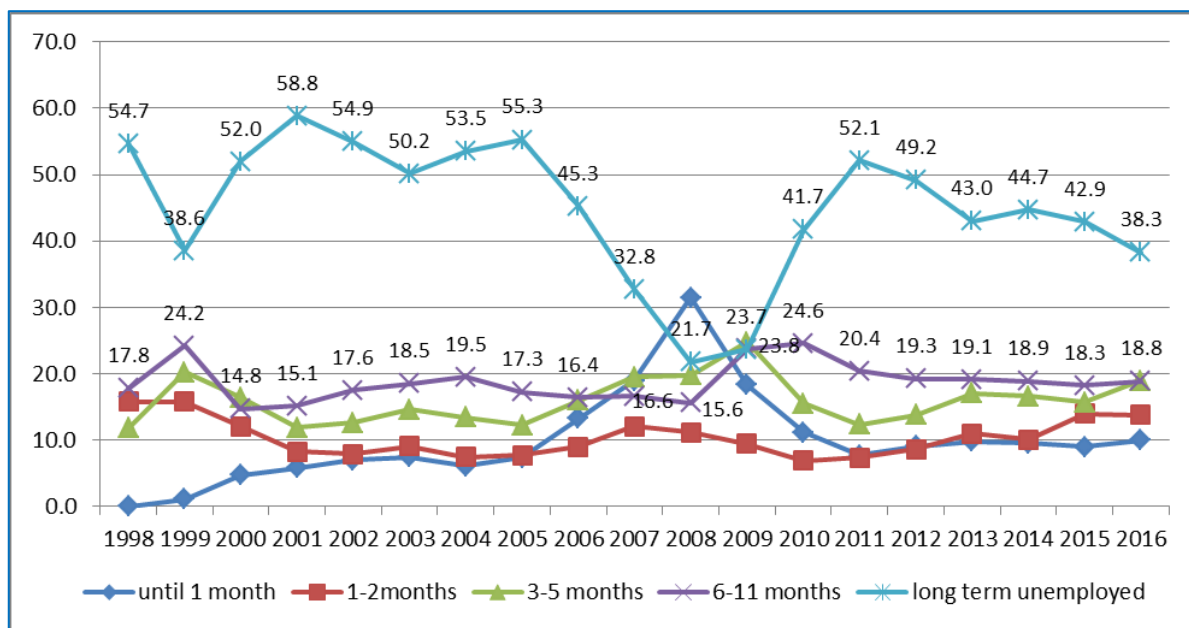
It has to be noted that persistence of low incomes is causing social tensions. Various researches have revealed that unemployment is always accompanied by poverty. Lithuania is one of the Member States of the European Union (hereinafter – EU), with higher ⁽¹⁾ income inequality. The situation in the Lithuanian labour market has nevertheless been improving in recent years. This improvement was determined by general growth of national economics and a decreasing number of residents of working age. In 2016 the unemployment level reached 7,9% ⁽²⁾, which is similar to EU average (7,4%), with registered unemployment hitting 8,1%. It should nevertheless be noted that according to the

⁽¹⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/LT/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52017SC0080>
[accessed 12.04.2017].

⁽²⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/LT/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52017SC0080>
[accessed 12.04.2017].

Department of Statistics, long term unemployed constituted 38% of total unemployed in 2016 (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. Lithuanian long-term unemployed (³) in the comparison with the other groups by duration of unemployment (according to the data of the Department of Statistics Labour Force Survey) (%)



Source: Data of the Department of Statistics <https://osp.stat.gov.lt/statistiniu-rodikliu-analize/>

During the recent economic crisis youth unemployment reached 35,7% (2010), surpassing the already high level of 31,1% after the Russian crisis in 2001. In 2016 it decreased again to 14,5%. The fluctuations in unemployment level of this group are especially sensitive to economic crises; therefore the fluctuation amplitude of the index of youth unemployment in question was the biggest (⁴).

As unemployment decreases and employment rises, career guidance and counselling are being made more effective in helping to meet this increased labour market demand. work places is ensured.

(³) Persons, who have not worked for 1 year and more.

(⁴) www.statisticsjournal.lt/index.php/statisticsjournal/article/download/154/pdf [accessed 12.04.2017].

CHAPTER 2.

National Strategies of Outreach and Guidance Services in Implementation of Upskilling Policies in Lithuania

The objectives set in the Lithuanian National Progress Programme for 2014-20⁽⁵⁾: “To increase the incentives to people who are distant from the labour market, and their opportunities to take part in active involvement measures”, “To increase participation in the labour market”, have the goal to reinforce prevention of poverty and social isolation of young people and adults, as well as motivate and create the desire to work among unemployed, long term unemployed and disengaged youth.

The Ministry of Social Security and Labour (MSSL), the Ministry of Economy (ME), and the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) are responsible for upskilling policy in Lithuania. In order to systematically address the problems of long-term unemployed people, the consistent cooperation of the aforementioned institutions is needed. It should be noted that there is no national coordination institution in Lithuania, to monitor harmonise the educational, occupation and social policy measures of across all relevant public authorities.

In 2015 the Map of Specialist Qualifications⁽⁶⁾ was prepared. It allows planning the State-funded education and training offer, modelling financing principles of higher education schools and vocational education schools, evaluating the need for the vocational training programmes. It also implements the competences forecast will be needed on the labour market. Moreover, it provides data, which allow monitoring the youth occupation according to the set indexes.

The Lithuanian employment policy is based on the Law on Support of Employment of the Republic of Lithuania⁽⁷⁾, administered by MSSL and implemented by the Lithuanian Labour Exchange though its executive agency, LLE

⁽⁵⁾ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.31A566B1512D> [accessed 12.04.2017].

⁽⁶⁾ http://mosta.lt/images/leidiniai/Specialistu_kvalifikaciju_zemelapio_pirmine_analize_2015.pdf [accessed 19.04.2017].

⁽⁷⁾ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/422c8b5042b811e6a8ae9e1795984391/vZbtWOYyTm> [accessed 12.12.2017].

The following measures of support of employment are determined in Lithuania: general services, active political measures of labour market, employment support programmes, and passive support to unemployed.

General services of employment support consist in informing, counselling, mediation in employment, and planning of individual employment activities. Their goal is to help the jobseekers to plan their professional career, to find a suitable job and get employed, and to help the employers hire suitable employees. General services of employment support were financed only by the Employment Fund.

The objectives of the Programme of Employment Growth in 2014-20 created a favourable environment for the development of guidance and counselling services ⁽⁸⁾.

The share of young people not in employment, education or training (inactive persons) (15-24 years old) should be under 8,9% by 2016 (the objective was nearly implemented – in 2016 the NEET index of 15-24-year old youth was 9,4%)

By 2016 the long term unemployment level should be under 5,2%. This objective was surpassed, with the rate reaching 3% ⁽⁹⁾.

Active labour market policy measures included:

- (a) vocational training of the unemployed,
- (b) supported employment: subsidised employment, support of upskilling,
- (c) support to establishment of work places: subsidies for establishment of work places, implementation of local employment initiatives, support to independent employment, support to territorial mobility of the unemployed.

Additional support was also made available for: t first time workers;

- (a) long-term unemployed,;
- (b) unemployed under 29 years.

The MSSL together with municipalities, social partners and other ministries prepared the plan of actions for Increase of social Involvement in 2014-20 ⁽¹⁰⁾, where special attention is given to children and young people.

The activities of political structures of youth are regulated by the Law on Fundamentals of Youth Policy of the Republic of Lithuania ⁽¹¹⁾. Various national

⁽⁸⁾ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/602335f07edd11e4bc68a1493830b8b9> [accessed 12.04.2017].

⁽⁹⁾ <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/download.do?tab=table&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tsdsc330> [accessed 24.05.2017].

⁽¹⁰⁾ <http://www.socialiniszemelapis.lt/index.php?-790104930> [accessed 28.04.2017].

institutions, non-governmental organizations, and youth representatives take part in youth policy. The Department of Youth Affairs (DYA) under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour is responsible for implementation of national youth policy. The municipal youth policies are defined and implemented by municipalities in cooperation with local communities. Youth implemented by assigning competences and specialised authority to local administration, representatives of the public sector, non-governmental organizations and youth representatives.

The following activities were foreseen in the National Youth Policy of 2011-19 during the period of 2014-16 ⁽¹²⁾:

- (a) development of open work with youth,
- (b) strengthening of youth policy in regions,
- (c) support to strengthen youth non-governmental activities and initiatives,
- (d) observation of youth situation,
- (e) reinforcement of cooperation between youth and national organizations,
- (f) strengthening of more active involvement of young people into civil and political life.

The Youth Guarantees has been under implementation in Lithuania since January 2014 following the implementation plan of the initiative of Youth Guarantees approved by the Minister of Social Security and Labour. The plan ⁽¹³⁾ was prepared with the aim to implement the recommendation of the EU Council of the 22nd of April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee (2013/C 120/01). The youth guarantees are a set of measures to promote youth employment, addressing career decision processes, vocational training, upskilling and entrepreneurship. The programme attempts to raise young people's awareness about the possibilities offered by the State under the slogan "Youth Guarantees – learn that you Can!".

Since Lithuanian society is ageing, it is recommendable to enlarge the scope of the target group for youth policies to include people from 15 up to 34 years old. This would help create critical mass and cover the relevant group for the implementation of youth policy (including outreach and guidance).

⁽¹¹⁾ https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.92E111F705DD/TAIS_267613 [accessed 28.04.2017].

⁽¹²⁾ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.7D6DF07FA988> [accessed 27.04.2017].

⁽¹³⁾ <http://www.ldb.lt/jaunimui/naudinga/Documents/Jaunimo%20garantijos/Jaunimo%20garantij%C5%B3%20iniciatyvos%20%C4%AFgyvendinimo%20planas.pdf> [accessed 28.04.2017].

In order to consolidate and guarantee the interinstitutional and intersectional cooperation, on the 14th of January 2014 the Cooperation Memorandum regarding Implementation of Initiative of Youth Guarantees ⁽¹⁴⁾ was signed. The activities under the initiative are financed with different sources, including Youth Employment initiative, the European Social Fund and State budget. MSSL, LLE and DYA are responsible for the provision of guarantees to the young people, who have already left educational system or labour market. MES and subordinate institutions implement measures of preventive character targeted at young people, still enrolled in the educational system. The role of the ME and the public agency “Enterprise Lithuania” in implementation of Youth Guarantees is related to the measures inducing youth enterprising and independent employment.

On the 24th of March 2014 MSSL formed a commission to monitor the implementation of initiative of Youth Guarantee consisting of 20 member organizations, which have signed the Memorandum. The purpose of the Youth Guarantees is to ensure that no young person is left behind and that every young person would can get a work offer, further education, industrial practice or internship, if he/she does not succeeded own his/her own.

A virtual matching service was created, where unemployed people and students may search for job offers, according to the selected criteria, create and edit their curriculum vitae (CV), send it to an employer, save their preferred job offers, request information by e-mail or text messages about interesting job offers. Employers can advertise vacancies by uploading them directly into the national vacancy bank. LLE offers the opportunity to the unemployed to use the guidance and counselling services via telephone, e-mail or by inquiries on the LLE website www.ldb.lt (section “Questions”).

The purpose of the amendments of the Labour Code in 2017 was to consolidate more flexible regulation of labour legal relations, which should induce creation of new work places and activeness of labour market. Formal education is characterized by flexibility, easy accessibility for problematic or risk groups, good socialization and clear intervention methods. Youth not attending school is monitored ⁽¹⁵⁾. This system is used to accumulate and store data about pupils and to provide information about young people not attending general education and the reasons for dropout.

In order to reduce the number of early dropouts who did not finish lower secondary education, productive learning model is being developed in Lithuania.

⁽¹⁴⁾ <https://www.jaunimogarantijos.lt/data/public/uploads/2016/06/2014-01-14-jgi-igyvendinimo-bendradarbiavimo-memorandumas.pdf> [accessed 28.04.2017].

⁽¹⁵⁾ <https://nemis.emokykla.lt/mnimnis/> [accessed 12.04.2017].

It gives special attention for development of individual work skills. The productive learning model is organized for the 9-10 graders above 15 and under 21, enrolled in lower secondary education. At the moment there are 5 public schools implementing Productive Learning in Lithuania.

There are also 12 youth schools in Lithuania. In 2016 there were 888 ⁽¹⁶⁾ pupils studying there. The purpose of youth schools ⁽¹⁷⁾ is to help young people return to consistent learning, restore their learning motivation, create conditions for self-knowing, encourage problem solving in life, and to develop resistance to negative social influences.

A modular vocational training system is under implementation. Its purpose is to help people quickly acquire skills and qualification, to improve or change qualification effectively, increase accessibility of vocational training, improving participation of diverse age groups in lifelong learning system, and to attract as many persons to labour market as possible.

In order to make the recognition process of knowledge, skills and capacities acquired by self-education or informal mode more effective and transparent, in January 2015 the description of evaluation procedure of personal competences ⁽¹⁸⁾ was specified. The evaluation procedures of competences were simplified and the formalization possibilities of competences acquired in informal or self-educational method were regulated. The recognition of competences could help the people acquire the desired qualifications more easily, increase the employment possibilities, strengthen motivation to study and develop, and raise employability of vulnerable groups, such as migrants, unemployed, elderly persons or low qualified.

One of the most effective measures to raise employment is to expand work based learning. In 2016 a [Final plan for the development and implementation of apprenticeship system was created](#) ⁽¹⁹⁾. One of the priorities set in the plan is to “grant support to minors, without strong general competences and who endeavour at their first profession (e.g., pupils, who have not completed secondary education, unqualified employees)”.

⁽¹⁶⁾ https://www.smm.lt/uploads/lawacts/docs/609_e34d39718278eb495bdfef45472e5e7d.pdf [accessed 19.04.2017].

⁽¹⁷⁾ <https://e-tar.lt/acc/legalAct.html?documentId=TAR.1E5DB39BFF71&lang=lt> [accessed 19.04.2017].

⁽¹⁸⁾ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/43f8cf209cc411e48dcdae4eb2005eaf> [accessed 26.04.2017].

⁽¹⁹⁾ https://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/svietimas/Pameistrystes%20galutinis%20veiksmu%20planas_SMM_final%202017%20pdf.pdf [accessed 24.04.2017].

There is no outreach and guidance system aimed at long-term unemployed and youth not in employment, education or training as its target.

Career guidance policy is defined by MES, MSSL, and ME. VET specialists and general education schools, municipalities and units coordinated by institutions subordinate to MES and MSSL (points career information and guidance) provide career guidance. Career education is a predominant practice in Lithuania. By referencing to best foreign practices, career education programmes and of career management skills (CMS) frameworks were prepared to support the organisation of CMS training at schools (also integrated into subject curricula). The local labour exchange offices organizes activities related to career education and various institutions are actively using the support of the EU structural funds to finance career guidance services in education and social policy ⁽²⁰⁾.

The lifelong career guidance system is not well developed in Lithuania due to systemic factors, such as the scattering of services. The system is distributed across the policy areas of education, employment and social policy, which are supervised by different institutions. Priorities and measures in these areas are defined with regard to their specific needs. There are no homogeneous concepts, unified monitoring, and no shared financial mechanisms with long-term perspective have been created.

The LLE provides information and counselling services for long-term unemployed and NEET registered in the local labour exchange offices. The network of social partners formed by LLE is addresses youth employment, assessing and provide suggestions regarding implementation of the measures. The Local youth councils are operating by 10 local labour exchange offices. More than 100 youth organizations and organizations working with youth are participating in their activities. The implementation commissions of the initiative of Youth Guarantee were formed by 50 client servicing units of local labour exchange offices. They include about 240 employers and representatives of public and educational institutions.

The expansion of the network of youth job centres of the local labour exchange offices is underway. At present 37 youth job centres are operating in Lithuania. Their objective is to help young people under 29 in all the municipalities of the country integrate the local labour exchange offices, train career related competences, and to motivate them for lifelong learning.

⁽²⁰⁾ http://www.euroguidance.lt/images/docs/Patikslintas_tyrimas_Karjeros_kompetenciju_ugdymas_LT.pdf [accessed 08.05.2017].

The network of open youth centres/ spaces operating in municipalities is also being developed. These centres are dedicated to all the young people, who are searching for a safe environment, new forms of communication and gathering, who have free time and do not know how to spend it purposefully. Special attention is given to young people, undergoing marginal dynamics and exclusion, frequently due to their behaviour or appearance. These youth often lack purpose in life, motivation to study and strength to manage daily routine, engaging in criminal activities and substance abuse.

The work with youth on the streets is in an initial stage in Lithuania. The essential turning point was achieved on the initiative of the Department of Youth Affairs of Vilnius City Municipality in 2011 when the first call for youth work projects was issued. Despite this initiative, the youth work on the streets is not supported by any legal acts. No tasks, objectives or principles of this work form are officially provided, and there is no definition of how it should be implemented, under whose responsibility.

In general, street work is understood as support to the most vulnerable social groups in an attempt to preserve their rights and dignity. The activities are carried in the urban areas. Activities are normally developed where people spend most of their time (for example, in the parks, on the streets, malls, playgrounds, uninhabited houses, shopping centres, cafes, etc.). Street workers go to peoples contexts breaking the limitations of more traditional provisions. The services are provided regularly, according to the pre-determined schedule, usually on work days, from 4 to 8 pm, not less than three times a week. The locations for street work may change depending on the season and usual gathering places of young people.

After the contact is made, the young people have access to individual support sessions in the premises of the organizations. The street workers provide personal, social and educational help in various forms to young people, refer or accompany them to already existent institutions and organizations.

The work with young people on streets is performed by the organizations that have experience with young people. Street workers develop their activity in teams and normally have training in Social Sciences and work experience with young people with difficulties ⁽²¹⁾.

⁽²¹⁾ Laureckis K., Laucytė G., Došienė E., Beliukevičiūtė D. *Practical guide on work with young people on streets "Teach from the Street"* (2015). http://www.jrd.lt/uploads/Leidiniai/leidinys_mokytis_is_gatves_v1.3-1.pdf [accessed 12.12.2017]

For example, PI Social Centre of the Blessed J. Matulaitis is implementing the “Sofké” ⁽²²⁾ programme which helps young people, who spend most of their day on the streets. At present the work focuses mostly in Viršuliškės, Pašilaičiai and Žvėrynas boroughs in Vilnius city. The main target group are 14-20-year old individuals, but support is also provided to other young people is not avoided. According to the promoters, “Work on the streets is a long-term process, during which we attempt to make warm, respectful relations with young people. We talk about topics important to young people, we play together, and sometimes we simply greet each other and leave. We do not want to change young people; we do not moralize them, do not assess them. We want them to help as much as a young person or “dudes” want.” The Sofké team may be spotted working on the streets on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 4 to 7 pm”. DYA attempts to create and implement a consistent outreach and guidance system to cover national and local municipal levels. The purpose of youth information and counselling is to help young people find guidance regarding all aspects of their life and to encourage independent decision-making.

At present there are 40 youth informing points in Lithuania which provide opportunity to young people to find information and information resources in a language they understand. Eurodesk Lithuania is composed of 22 regional representatives of a with the main purpose of informing and counselling young people on work opportunities. Since the 20th of January 2011 Eurodesk Lithuania has been cooperating with the EU programme “Active Youth”. As part of this cooperation it gathered the network “I know it all” composed of over 200 young journalists, interested in European topics and eager to write or take photos.

A joint evaluation system of work competences of youth and youth workers was created addressing the of hiring, skilling and qualification of youth workers. The system grants certificates of youth worker which verify that an individual has the necessary skills to work with youth. According to the National Development Programme of Youth Policy for 2011-19, 1000 youth workers should be certified Lithuania by 2019.

One of the strategic preventive measures of youth unemployment is the national programme of voluntary youth activities, which helps unemployed young people to strengthen their employability and to expands their career possibilities. The programme’s implementation is regulated by Act on voluntary youth activities ⁽²³⁾, the Description of evaluation and self-evaluation of competences

⁽²²⁾ <http://www.matulaiciosc.lt/jaunimas/sofke/> [accessed 14.12.2017].

⁽²³⁾ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.56F2B0985794> [accessed 08.05.2017].

acquired during volunteering activities ⁽²⁴⁾, and the Description of organization procedure of volunteering activities of the project “Find Yourself” of the initiative of Youth Guarantees ⁽²⁵⁾.

Since October 2013 DYA, Lithuanian Council of Youth Organizations, Agency of Youth International Cooperation and 12 non-governmental organizations have been implementing the project “Youth Volunteering”. NEETs aged 16-29 participate in the volunteering activities for 3 or 6 months and develop competences, usually required by employers such as self-discipline, communication, organization, planning, decision-making, and, in some cases, work experience. According to the DYA data, 306 persons were engaged in volunteering activities in 2017, where 152 young persons completed the volunteering activities successfully, of whom 53 found a job, 11 emigrated for studies or work, and 19 plan to return to the educational system.

In order to ensure proper development of the programme, a tool to register achievements during volunteering programme ⁽²⁶⁾ was created. The Lithuanian Confederation of Business Employers and its social partners created a portal for the organization of volunteering activities ⁽²⁷⁾. Non-governmental organizations use it to advertise volunteer activities and search for volunteers, while potential volunteers find the offers which fit their needs. The portal stores the data on young participants and their evaluations. Starting in 2018, 0,25 extra points will be attributed to higher education applicants for their national or international volunteering activities, when access queue defined (*numerus fixus*) ⁽²⁸⁾.

In order to integrate the unemployed into the labour market, the EU granted almost EUR 150 million to Lithuania for the years 2014-20 which are complemented by EUR 30 million from the State budget. 8 projects will be financed by these funds until 2019:

- (a) “Support of employment of long-term unemployed persons” (EUR 24 138 million),
- (b) “Increase of competences of unqualified persons” (EUR 35 348 million),

⁽²⁴⁾ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/f11ca5206b7911e69d8fa40f56962063> [accessed 15.05.2017].

⁽²⁵⁾ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/24fe44306b8311e69d8fa40f56962063> [accessed 15.05.2017].

⁽²⁶⁾ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/f11ca5206b7911e69d8fa40f56962063> [accessed 12.04.2017].

⁽²⁷⁾ <http://savanoryste.gerapraktika.lt/> [accessed 27.04.2017].

⁽²⁸⁾ <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/031d41d06deb11e6a014b8463e530a88> [accessed 19.05.2017].

- (c) "Acquire marketable profession" (EUR 4 34 million),
- (d) "Help to people with disabilities" (EUR 7 588 million),
- (e) "Support of elderly unemployed persons" (EUR 20 270 million),
- (f) "Support to social enterprises in 2015-16",
- (g) "Find Yourself" (EUR 33 798 million)
- (h) "The New Start" (EUR 35 375 million).

CHAPTER 3.

Good practices

3.1. Primary and secondary interventions within Youth Guarantees “Find Yourself” and “New Start”

The primary intervention “Find Yourself” and project of secondary intervention “New Start” are being implemented under the Youth Guarantees in Lithuania in 2015-18 ⁽²⁹⁾. Young people not in employment or education from 15 to 29 years old are welcome. It is planned that more than 35 000 young people will receive intensive help for integration into labour market or continuation of education by 2018.

The purpose of the project “Find Yourself” is to reduce the number of young people not in employment or education from 15 to 29 years old through early activation measures based on the assessment of personal needs and potentials. The project is financed by the European Social Fund, Youth Employment Initiative, and State budget of the Republic of Lithuania. The project is executed by the Lithuanian Labour Exchange under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (LLE). Project’s partners: 10 local labour exchange offices, Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (DYA), 58 youth organizations and organizations working with youth (partners of the initiative of Youth Guarantees). In 2017 the project “Find Yourself” is being implemented in 60 municipalities in Lithuania.

LLE and local labour exchange offices are providing guarantees to registered 16-29 years old NEETs. DYA cooperates with 58 partners – youth organizations and organizations working with youth, open centres for youth and open spaces for youth – and provides guarantees to the young people not in employment or education of 15-29 years old, who are not registered in the local labour exchange offices.

The teams of Youth Guarantee Coordinators are formed in each municipality and include the people working in the partner organisations. One of the key goals of activities of the Youth Guarantee Coordinators is to find young people aged 15 to 29 who do not work, study and have not registered in the local labour exchange offices, and provide them conditions to return to the educational

⁽²⁹⁾ <https://jaunimogarantijos.lt/en/> [accessed 19.05.2017].

system or find a job. Various tracking methods are employed, such as street work, cooperation with social workers and contacts with families at risk and local community representatives.

Together with the Youth Guarantee coordinator, the young person clarifies his/her career preferences, assesses his/her skills, and skills needs drawing up an individual plan of activities. The coordinator c takes part in the implementation of this plan,c enabling the young person, to acquire the needed knowledge and skills to enter the labour market or encourage him to return to the educational system.

The project's activities are oriented towards the needs of the following target groups: young unemployed not ready for labour market (forecasted number of participants – 18 000 persons), young unemployed persons ready for labour market (forecasted number of participants – 5 000 persons), voluntary activities of young unemployed persons (635 persons), inactive young persons (forecasted number of participants – 12 000 persons).

The project's activities meant for the young unemployed persons not ready for labour market consist of the following:

- (a) exercises of specialists working with young people – coordinators,
- (b) group exercises (16 topics according to the individual needs),
- (c) identification of work skills, professional interests and personal features and individual psychological support, when needed
- (d) services for young people oriented towards hired work: theoretical introductory exercises to labour market, visits to companies, meetings with employers, practice of 20 days in the chosen company, mentorship,
- (e) services for young people oriented towards the educational system: information about educational system, visits to educational institutions, introduction to the profession of interest– shadowing,
- (f) entrepreneurship education: teaching of enterprising fundamentals, presentation of good practices, meetings with small businessmen,
- (g) outgoing seminars – experience training for self-assessment, reinforcement of team
- (h) building, social, communication skills.

The activities meant for the young unemployed ready for labour market consist of training of additional capacities and competences, visits to companies, meetings with employers, and informal vocational training. The purpose of voluntary activities of young unemployed is to perform practice up to 4 months in the chosen non-profit-making organization.

Activation tools are used according to individual needs of each young person, using diverse types of work and methods of informal training. Work is

strongly individualised: in individual meetings the project's coordinator presents the project's purposes, benefits and sets goals – to return to the educational system, labour market or to find a place for practice. The participant then develops a detailed plan of individual activities together with the coordinator and chooses the methods to achieve the set goal. There is permanent feedback between the project's coordinator communicates and the young person, granting permanent supports and help. The individual work and continued discussion of outcomes increase the probability that the young person will find an adequate offer for studies, work or practice.

The following activities are offered to the unregistered participants:

- (a) job search and job interview support;
- (b) information on how to return to education and training to prepare for a profession;
- (c) information on volunteer activities to gain experience,
- (d) support in starting independent activities,
- (e) development of motivation, determination to achieve the set goals, and to learn problem solving.

From the beginning of the project's implementation until the 1st of May 2017, 11 024 young unemployed not ready for the labour market and 2 810 young unemployed persons ready for labour market have been involved in the activities of the project "Find Yourself". Of these, 8 519 participants completed participation in the project's activities and 2 819 found a job. According to the Department of Youth Affairs, until this 1st of May, 2 743 NEETs have been included the project, 1 852 of whom successfully completed the planned activities and 396 found a job. In total 743 persons got involved in volunteer activities in the course of the project "Find Yourself" (427 NEET, 316 young unemployed).

Success stories

"Pasvalys resident, Evaldas Sekmokas, expected to get a secretary's job according to his training – he was searching for that job for several years. While qualified and experienced individuals are on demand, striving labour markets are mostly urban. It was not easy to find a job in the agricultural Pasvalys region. Stereotypes which associate this profession with the female gender may have also not helped. However Evaldas was not one to be discouraged. The young man decided to try his luck as a soldier – he served in the dragon battalion of the Grand Lithuanian Duke Butigeidis. When he finished his service he considered what to do next. He wanted stable income and to be in contact with people. When he came to the local labour exchange office, an adviser told him about the projects for young people. The young man started participating immediately in

the project "Find Yourself". "I liked the project that I participated in, because I got introduced to my peers and found people thinking in a similar way. The tasks performed with other participants, discussions and professional work of lecturers helped me to see job-seeking in a different light. The work inspired confidence in myself and helped me decide on a new profession," – states Evaldas. With the help of the local labour exchange office, the young man completed the courses of loader drivers and soon found a job in one of the regional companies – UAB "Kurana". "The personal characteristics that are not taught anywhere – sense of organization, concentration of attention – are important for the job of loader driver – operator. You either have such characteristics or you don't" – believes the young man. Of course, any work needs skills. They may be gained through another project of the LLE under MSSL – "New Start" that pays the grant and compensates partially the wages and contributions of national social insurance. The most important thing is that Evaldas feels successful, is glad with his choice and hopes to keep his job. The young man believes that he will continue improving skills of the loader driver and will become a good specialist in his area." ⁽³⁰⁾.

In project "Find Yourself" the issues of young people, who have not worked or studied for a while are carefully taken into account. Their frequent isolation, and loss of social relations and skills tend to drive to loss in self-respect and self-awareness – they feel unsafe and repudiated. This has negative impact on their life quality and generates the preconception that choice of profession and labour market functioning are essentially a lottery. In the programme the situation of many of these demotivated individuals has been successfully changed in cooperation of the young person and project's psychologists. For example, the young man, who did not enter any school after graduation from the secondary school as he had difficulties with the studies was invited to the project "Find Yourself". The young man was maintained by his parents. Sometimes he would find some temporary job, but he did not see any clear future perspective. He would spend the major part of his time playing computer games – getting educated, as he would say. His young man took part in all the activities of the project "Find Yourself" – seminars, lectures, volunteering and... he continued doing nothing. The project's specialists recommended him visiting the psychologist for individual consultation. The consultation revealed many personal

⁽³⁰⁾ <https://www.jaunimogarantijos.lt/lt/sekmes-istorijos/evaldas-noriu-tapti-geru-savos-specialistu/276> [accessed 12.12.2017]

problems encountered by the young man still in the early adolescence. They had impact on his communication with parents, peers, preconceptions about opinion of others. He learnt to be powerless, i.e. when the person feels that he cannot control the situation and thus even does not try to improve the situation. The psychologist helped the young man to understand himself, learn his advantages and overcome the fears. The young man chose a confectioner's profession as it was the most suitable for him. He started endeavouring at his objective when he felt that he can act alone, without help of others – the thing he had not done earlier. Even 8 individual consultations were needed for such a result, and the young man said: "It is a pity that I have not known this earlier" ⁽³¹⁾.

Participants of the project "Find Yourself", who have not received offers for work, studies or training, can take part in the secondary intervention "New Start" in order to acquire a desired and marketable profession, to consolidate the lack technical skills directly in a work place, and to gain work experience.

The purpose of the project "New Start" (assigned financing – EUR 35 375 386) is to increase the possibilities of 16-29 years olds to integrate the labour market. The project is financed by the EU Structural Funds, Youth Employment Initiative, and State budget. The project is executed by the LLE (macro level) and local labour exchange offices (regional level). The young people not in employment, education or training of 16-29 years old, who have participated in the project "Find Yourself", may take part in this project.

The following activities are implemented in the course of the project:

- (a) vocational training (forecasted number of participants – 9 000 persons),
- (b) employment through subsidies (forecasted number of participants – 2 065 persons),
- (c) support for acquisition of work skills (forecasted number of participants: 2 895 persons after having participated in the vocational training and 2 000 persons ready for labour market).

Each participant has an individual employment plan which reflects their needs, capacities and future career plans. The tools of the project "New Start" are applied in a flexible, smart way. For example someone who has participated in vocational training and who has acquired qualification or competences, may still benefit from support to acquisition of technical skills. The aim is to provide the

⁽³¹⁾ <https://www.jaunimogarantijos.lt/lt/naujienos/naujienos/profesijos-pasirinkimas-kaip-pakloti-gerus-pamatus-ateiciai/278> [accessed 12.12.2017]

maximum support to the young person and to ensure the smooth and successful integration into the labour market.

According to the LLE data, from the beginning of the project's implementation until the 30th of April 2017, 3 192 people have taken part in the vocational training activities of the aforementioned project, 1 318 persons have participated in the employment through subsidies, and 614 persons – in the programme supporting work skills.

3.2. Project of prevention of Long-Term Unemployment “Support to Employment of Long-Term Unemployed”

In order to ensure effective prevention long-term unemployment ⁽³²⁾, LLE and local labour exchange offices have been implementing the project of prevention of Long-Term Unemployment in 2014-17, with the purpose to help long term unemployed acquire or improve qualifications, to develop competences, develop technical skills in work environments, and to get integrated or consolidated in the labour market. The project is financed by EU Structural Funds, Youth Employment Initiative, and State budget with an assigned financing of EUR 24 138 397,82.

Target groups of the project are : long-term unemployed ⁽³³⁾, very long term unemployed, i.e. the ones who have not worked for 2 years and more before registration in the territorial labour exchange ⁽³⁴⁾.

More than 13 613 of registered long-term unemployed and other people who have not worked for long term, take part in the project's activities (duration up to 2 years). They have the opportunity to benefit from support to vocational training, including technical skills development, subsidised employment and territorial mobility.

Local labour exchange offices cooperate closely with representatives of the employers (Chamber of Industry and Crafts, branch associations, etc.). Meetings are organized with the aim to discuss possibilities regarding qualification and

⁽³²⁾ In this case the concept of long-term unemployment covers the persons under 25 registered in labour exchange, who have not been employed for more than 6 months, and persons over 25, who have not been employed for more than 12 months, calculating from the day of registration in the territorial labour market.

⁽³³⁾ Persons registered in the labour exchange, who have the status of long-term unemployed person.

⁽³⁴⁾ Persons who do not have the status of long-term unemployed person.

subsidised hiring of participants and reach agreements. Job fairs are also organised.

Local labour exchange offices cooperate with elderships⁽³⁵⁾ and municipalities. Information about the project, including how it is implemented and its benefit is constantly disseminated and targeted events are organized for regional organizations, local communities and unemployed. The representatives of local labour exchange offices take part in the meetings of municipal Trilateral commission, cooperate with DYA and employees from the unit of social support.

Information on the project is also made public on the information boards and websites of the local labour exchange offices, websites of social partners, and in press. During each visit to the labour exchange unemployed are informed about the opportunities provided by the projects. Leaflets about the project's activities suitable for the person are distributed. Meetings are organized with providers of vocational training. Upon the clients' wish or if the mentor determines the need, it is suggested for some persons to use the individual psychological consultations.

The selection of the project's target group is carried out in the following stages:

- (a) Periodic monitoring of registered unemployed is carried out, the needs, capacities, qualification and motivation of each of them are assessed;
- (b) During the individual visit the possibilities are discussed regarding participation in certain tool, with thorough information about the project and specification of an individual employment plan;
- (c) With regard to individual needs of the person, the offer of free work places is assessed and it is agreed about participation in particular tool supported by the project;
- (d) Counselling and legal help is provided to the unemployed person.

The project's participants have an opportunity to use the tool "Folder of my Achievements", which is a portfolio aimed at increasing the person's motivation, self-confidence, and at helping to assess own possibilities anew. Users normally change their attitude towards job search and normally tend to disengage from activation measures less frequently than non-users.

Conditions are created for participants to "try a profession". Meetings are organized in the territorial labour exchange with training providers. During these meetings the representatives of the training provider introduce to their

⁽³⁵⁾ An eldership or elderate subdistrict is the smallest administrative division of Lithuania. Due to urban growth across ages, it can be a very small region consisting of few villages, one single town, or part of a big city.

organisation, study programmes, etc. Visits on site are proposed, to get familiar with the training staff, other pupils, training facilities, and offered study programmes.

The biggest tool of the project is subsidised employment. It is planned that 5 271 persons will take part in the in it, with 2 915 long-term unemployed and 2 356 – persons, who have not worked for 2 and more years before registration in the territorial labour exchange. The aim of this tool is to help the unemployed overcome the obstacles to employment and to compete in the labour market. Employers, who hire the unemployed not only find the lacking employees, but also receive the financial help of the State for every employed person for the set period: the subsidies for salaries are paid and the contributions of national social insurance are partially compensated.

According to the LLE data, from the beginning of the project's implementation until the 30th of April 2017, more than 4 500 participants have been employed under the scheme. This tool helped to employ the participants successfully in the companies of processing industry, trade, vehicle repairs, agriculture, forestry and fishery, and farms.

It is planned that 3 651 unemployed and 2 622 persons, who have not worked for 2 and more years before registration in the territorial labour exchange, will take part in the activities of vocational training. According to the LLE data, from the beginning of the project's implementation until the 30th of April 2017, 5 424 persons have already taken part in vocational training in order to acquire or improve their qualification. People participating in this tool were studying the marketable professions of driver (14,9%), manicurist (6,4%), accountant (4,9%), cook (4,5%), hairdresser (4,4%), waiter (4,8%), metal welder (3,5%), finish worker (3,2%), and sewing operators (3,1%). The trilateral training and employment contract was especially successful. It is signed by the Labour Exchange, the unemployed person, and the employer. Participants undergo work place training, where s/he is employed upon completion of training. The big advantage is that the unemployed person may choose the future work place.

Integration of 1 066 long-term unemployed persons (where 100 persons will be after vocational training) and 759 persons, who have not worked for 2 and more years before registration in the tool supporting acquisition of technical skills. According to the LLE data, from the beginning of the project's implementation until the 30th of April 2017, this tool has been already used by 1 667 persons. It is meant to help people obtain jobs when starting the professional activities adjusted to their qualifications, by supporting development of complementary skills or to refresh them through workplace learning.

The tool supporting mobility of unemployed persons will be open to 304 persons, where 172 will be long-term unemployed and 132 persons, who have not worked for 2 and more years before registration. According to the LLE data, from the beginning of the project's implementation until the 30th of April 2017, 318 persons have used the possibilities of the tool supporting mobility of unemployed persons. This tool is meant to create possibilities for the unemployed persons to be hired on a radius of 30 km or longer distance from their residence, when the labour exchange cannot offer any suitable work. The travel and accommodation expenses may be reimbursed for the participants.

According to the LLE data, from the beginning of the project's implementation until the 30th of April 2017, possibilities have been created for more than 12 000 project's participants to renew their work skills or to acquire new marketable profession and to obtain stable jobs. More than 4 700 persons got a job or started working independently after having obtained a qualification.

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