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youth for exchange & understanding



JOB HUNTERS

34TH YEU CONVENTION
PUBLICATION OUTPUT



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Youth for Exchange and Understanding Cyprus

YEU Cyprus was established in 1995 as a Cypriot local civil organization (NGO), aiming to foster closer co-operation and better understanding among the young people of the world by exchanging information, experiences and ideas, on cultural, educational and social issues. YEUCYPRUS is affiliated with YEUCYPRUS International platform. It is a full member of Cyprus Youth Council (CYC) - the official coordinating body of Cypriot Youth Organizations. It implements several activities including workshops, field trips and training courses and it organizes and participates in various international and local events to foster tolerance and mutual respect among youngsters. Visit our website for more details about YEUCYPRUS at www.yeucyprus.org or find us on [Facebook](#).

Job Hunters Youth Exchange - 34th YEUCYPRUS Convention

The *Job Hunters* youth exchange aimed to inspire young people to re-enter the labour market after exploring and enhancing their skills and potential. This project was the starting point which will help them reconsider their abilities and capacities and inspire them to enter the labour market. The idea of the youth exchange was born in the context of youth unemployment which describes the situation of young people the recent years. This youth exchange envisions involving unemployed and NEETs young people with the aim to inspire them to re-enter the labour market after exploring and enhancing their skills and potential. The project strategically involves partners from countries or local realities that face unemployment and it has the potential to equip the participants with the knowledge, skills and empowerment to get employed.



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Job Hunters in Cyprus

The youth exchange took place in three places: Nicosia, Pedoulas and Limassol between **20 - 30 July 2015** and it gathered 45 participants (educators, youth workers, activists etc.) from 10 different countries (Cyprus, Belgium, Italy, Poland, Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine and Portugal).

The outcomes of this project were an online publication and a video created by the participants. The outcomes of the questionnaires together with participants' suggestions and ideas will be included in the present publication. In addition, the video aims to empower and inspire other young unemployed people.

In addition, the impact of the project did not concentrate only on the target groups but also support other youth organizations that focus on youth unemployment and whose members are unemployed youngsters or NEETs. This will happen through the developed publication.

Objectives

- To identify the reasons -other than the economic crisis- of unemployment in different partner countries. For example low self-esteem, inactiveness during the unemployment period, etc.
- To exchange opinions on the meaning of the term “work” and its value in our everyday lives;
- To explore the connection/relation between labour market and field of study and the social implications derived by this relation;
- To identify the strengths and weaknesses of their personality on several sectors;
- To develop specific skills (spoken communication, making effective presentations, time management, teamwork, etc.) which will later foster their employability;
- To explore self-employability concept with a focus on social entrepreneurship;
- To empower youth to (re-)enter the labour market.



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The results of the questionnaire

Youth and labor market: what kind of relationship is this?

The main objective was to identify the various factors –other than the economic crisis- which aggravate the phenomenon of youth unemployment according to the personal opinions of the European youngsters.

In order to bring on the surface those areas in which youth organizations can actually intervene to make young people more employable, we wanted to go beyond the reasons of “economic crisis” and “lack of jobs” and see if there are other obstacles that young people face towards employment.

Types of question needed to be answered:

Which role does a job take in their life?

Which expectations do they have for their work condition?

Which value do they attribute to be employed?

How do they live and explain the present situation?

What skills do they need to be employed?

117 questionnaires

23 average age

20 different countries

Qualitative analysis

Standardized survey

We collected the thoughts of the young Europeans about the topic of employment in its broader meaning and we didn't focus only on the work conditions of young people, but we also tried to analyze their relationship with the labor market

The questionnaire's outcomes:

Among young people positioned into the category of NEET are those who completed a cycle of studies, but, not having a clear way to forward later, they find themselves in a sort of limbo. They could be undecided between studying and working, but not involved in either activity.

If we are clearly collocating half people out of the NEET group, because they are working, studying or both and they are fulfilled with this role, they are not looking for a different condition. It means that there is **no clear and easy transition from the educational world to the labor market and therefore**, after the end of their studies, some youngsters still consider themselves as students because he/she is looking for a new role, without knowing which one it will be.



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As we didn't reach so many NEET people, we decided to re-frame our research and to focus our analysis more on what having a job actually means for young people and on which role a job can have in youngster's life



Asking subjects **what work means** for them for the majority of the young people interviewed it is *a way to be independent*, followed by *a way to get money*. Only few of them see other meaning behind it, as for example to feel helpful and to contribute to a better world or the opportunity to create relationships. And only for a small number it is a way to be fulfilled.

This may be a signal of the current trends in society, where to be adults correspond, among others, in having a stable work condition that implies also an economic stability and the opportunity to go out from the parents' house, in other word to be independent. Without a job it is hard to reach all the steps that lead to adulthood. However, these answers also show that most of the time working is something done as a must and not as a pleasure, like if the two conditions could not live together.

Regarding **the motivation to select a job**, for a big majority *to be in a good working environment* is very important as well with *the opportunity to use knowledge and competences possessed* and the *need of money*. Half of them consider *the opportunity to learn something new* very important followed by *having good relationship with colleagues and superiors*.



Young people seem ready to move or to cut time to their daily life in order to work, if a good job opportunity is proposed and above all if is in line with their education or can give them new knowledge and competences.



One of **the most important aspects in choosing** a job, according to the half of the youngster's opinion, is *to speak a foreign language* among having *knowledge, practical skills* and showing their motivation. Moreover, a third consider important to have some experience abroad.

It results that, as youth workers, we should help young people to deal with a job interview or to write a motivation letter in order to emphasize their competences and to make visible their motivation.



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It shows that young people recognized the value of labour rights and human dignity, but maybe they need more support and more tools to keep standing for these rights and not to lose them. Even though they are aware that nowadays flexibility is a request in the majority of working space and they consider it a trait that can open easier the door of the labour market.

One of the main **obstacles to realize their work ambitions** is according to more than half of



the people *not having enough support from the government and from public bodies* as well as the stagnation of *the labor market and the economic system*. They believe they have enough tools to get ready to enter into the labor market, to be adults and autonomous, but then they feel there is no space for them in the society; the system is not ready to welcome them, to give them some space, to include them.

Another obstacle underlined, is the fact to live in a certain place, or country in a wider perspective. Young people are aware that in a globalized world they could be forced to move to have more working opportunities.

For **overcoming these obstacles**, more than a third of the responders believe a solution will be *reforming the labor market as well as an economical support from the government or from other public bodies*, a more proper or focused education or training and starting their own business or project.

More than a half of the subjects consider that their **school education has left some gaps** with respect to skills as verbal and writing communication, time management, active listening, creativity, self-confidence, etc. for most them or to some degree. In order to improve or acquire these competences they were volunteering, doing extra-curricular activities, having international experiences or self-learning.

5 PRACTICAL TIPS TO BOOST YOUR EMPLOYABILITY



ACQUIRE NECESSARY KNOWLEDGE

Once you decided the field you would like to explore or to have a career in, the next step you need to follow is to verify if you have the necessary knowledge to become a pro in that field. It might be a new master programme you would like to attend, some specific courses, a training course or an workshop. Once you have more knowledge about a field, your chances of having that job will definitely increase.



IMPROVE YOUR SOFT SKILLS

Public speaking, time management, creativity, active listening, team work, communication skills are only few of the most important skills that can help in the daily interactions with your leaders and colleagues. Make now a sincere assessment of your skills and start improving them if necessary. Social interactions and volunteering activities might be an useful tool.



USE THE POWER OF NETWORKING

They say the opposite of networking is NOT working, therefore take advantage of all the tools you have in order to promote yourself as a professional. If you participate in a project, have some business cards with you, make yourself remarkable in a good way, use social media for making establishing new contacts (e.g LinkedIn) and be up to date with the new opportunities.



MAKE YOUR ATTITUDE YOUR ALTITUDE

Attitude makes it all. It can help you find your dream job or it may have the opposite effect. Being self-confident, having a professional image, adapting your verbal and non-verbal language to your audience, knowing your targets and showing passion are few of the practical tips that can make a huge difference in the process of finding a job.



DON'T MISS ANY OPPORTUNITY

Instead of waiting for the perfect chance to find a job, take advantage of all the opportunities you find for acquiring a certain knowledge, improve your soft skills and attitude. Be proactive and choose to do an internship, to be a volunteer, to be part of an international experience. All these experiences will make you more competitive and prepared among other candidates for a job.



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Conclusions

As youth workers, we should help young people deal with the application process for a job. They need to emphasize their competences and to make visible their motivation throughout different tools (CV, Motivation letter, etc)

Young people need to understand themselves and improve their hard and soft skills through projects, volunteering activities, international experiences, workshops, etc.

For overcoming the obstacles while finding a job as youth workers we need to find a solution to work with public bodies for improving the the labor market as well as a more proper or focused education or training among encouragement for starting their own business or project.

Session summaries

TITLE	DISCOVERING MYSELF		
TYPE	Individual activity aimed at illuminating personal learning paths		
GROUP SIZE	Up to 30	DURATION:	2 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	A4 or A3 Papers, pens/crayons/markers		
SESSION OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To focus on reflection, evaluation, vision and planning• To get to know one’s strengths & weaknesses• To introduce oneself in a fun and descriptive way but also to understand and reflect on the past and imagine the future.• To explore different learning styles and possibilities to take advantage of them in learning situations• To build a shared view compiled of similar, different and perhaps differing perspectives.		
SESSION DESCRIPTION (STEP BY STEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce the method if participants are not yet familiar with it. Draw an example river to help people visualize what it might look like.• Participants will receive a number of questions to help them reflect what kind of person they are at the moment (where I come from, my personal portfolio, my learning needs and goals). Ask people to think about their past, present and future learning experiences (tell them to close their eyes and ask them questions that will evoke their memories)• Ask participants to draw rivers at the two-thirds point of the page. Ask them to use the bigger part of the river to represent where they come from and what led them to attend this event.• Ask them to draw images that represent key milestones from the past, present and those they would envision for the future, focusing on their Sills, Knowledge and Attitudes.• Ask the participants to write a story behind the drawing• Participants are split into groups of 5, they share their drawings and their stories within their small groups• Tell the participants that they will return to their drawings and use the smaller part of the page to represent what they gained from the event and what they will use from it back in their normal environment• Debrief	TIMING 15 min 45 min 60 min	
PREPARATION	play soothing music in the back		

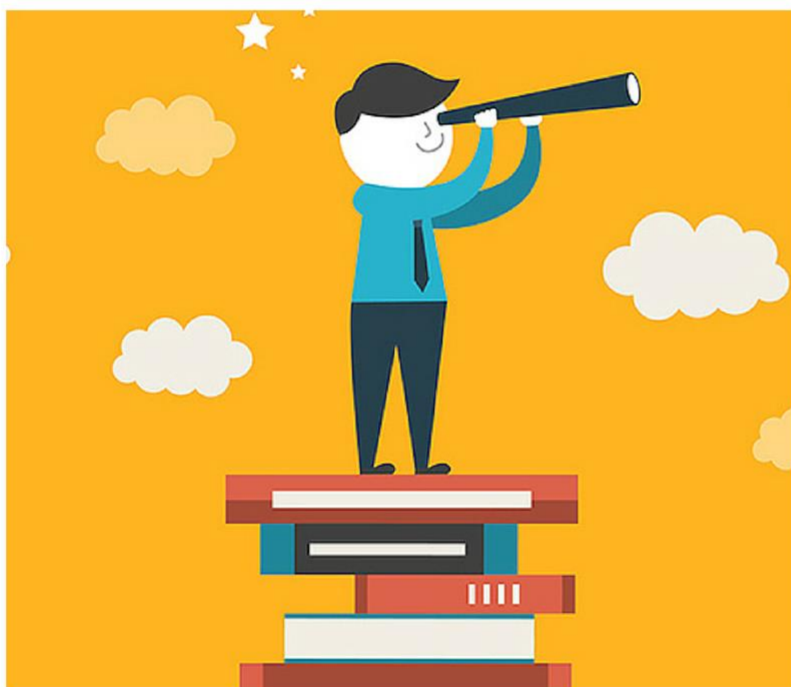
TITLE	ASPECTS OF UNEMPLOYMENT		
TYPE	A small group activity exploring different aspects of a problem through creative means		
GROUP SIZE	Up to 30	DURATION:	90 min
MATERIALS NEEDED	Flipcharts, printer, paper, colorful paper, A4 paper, crayons stickers, markers, glue, tape		
SESSION OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● To get to know other people’s views on the problem of unemployment● To explore different performance methods and possibilities to take advantage of them in various situations● To build a shared view on the question of youth unemployment taking into account similarities and differences all around Europe		
SESSION DESCRIPTION (STEP BY STEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Split participants into 5 groups. The participants of each group will need to answer a few questions, which they’ll have to present in the end in a creative way. <p>Ex:</p> <p>Make a list of top 5 problems youngsters face. How does unemployment rank?</p> <p>What are the statistics of unemployment all around Europe (based on your knowledge about your local realities)?</p> <p>What are the reasons for youth unemployment?</p> <p>What kind of obstacles do young people face in their personal development followed by/caused by the lack of employment?</p> <p>What kind of emotional consequences are followed by the lack of employment?</p>	TIMING 15 min	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Presentations <p>Presentations should be done in the most creative way, such as theatre play, song, dance, any kind of creative performance. The choice of the performance method may be left to the participants, or it can be distributed to them in a random way.</p>	45 min	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Debrief	30 min	
PREPARATION	Finalize the questions for the groups. Adapt them to the problem you want to tackle.		

TITLE	WHAT DOES WORK MEAN IN MY REALITY? (COMMUNITY MAPPING)		
TYPE	A small group activity exploring a specific issue through creative means		
GROUP SIZE	Up to 30	DURATION:	2 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Colored paper, flipcharts, markers, pens, post-its, recycled materials		
SESSION OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To use the tool of community mapping to illuminate the relationship between youth and the labor market and to pinpoint the position that youngsters occupy in the workforce across Europe. To engage youth in exploring their assets within physical and social environment To raise the self-esteem of youth and to make them more civically minded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To suggest or focus strategies towards a specific goal – youth employability 		
SESSION DESCRIPTION (STEP BY STEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the mapping process and the time frame Divide participants into their national teams and explain the objectives and the expected outcome: teams have to present their local realities through 3D maps (using drawings/ print outs/collages, recycled materials...). They should focus on job opportunities, labor market, future perspectives and examples of good practice for employability. Encourage them to use different colors and techniques to represent different categories or assets. Tell them their maps are to be exhibited in the museum of employability 50 years from now Presentation Groups present the information about their local realities in the plenary in the form of an exhibition in the museum in the future. The spectators (the participants themselves) should take some notes about something that they discovered, that was unexpected, shocking, that they would like to bring into their own country... Debriefing Sharing of thought and impression about the works of other countries. Example: what did you learn about others? Are there any similarities between different countries? What did you like the most? What would you like to examine more? 	TIMING 15 min 45 min 30 min 30 min	
PREPARATION	Collect old newspapers, boxes, plastic containers and cans		

TITLE	BE THE POLITICIANS – TAKE ACTION		
TYPE	A simulation activity designed to give the participants the taste of being a political animal!		
GROUP SIZE	Up to 30	DURATION:	2 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	Tables (2), chairs , A4 papers, pens, green/red voting ballots, chronometer, camera, projector		
SESSION OBJECTIVES	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how to act as a group • Act within specific time limits and under pressure • Develop their oral skills (speak in front of an audience/express themselves clearly) • Be creative and answer simultaneously 		
SESSION DESCRIPTION (STEP BY STEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining the process Participants will be split into groups according to the political parties of the European parliament (7 out 10 in total). Some of the facilitators/core team will be reporters/journalists and some others will be the lobbyists. A political agenda about measures against youth unemployment will be given to all political parties. 2 facilitators will be the president of the parliament and the president of the Commission who will announce the results and guide the process. • Welcome speech All parties will have 20 min to prepare their speech in groups. • Round 1: Each political party will have a 3-mins-talk to present their ideas. • Round 2: Each party will have 5 min to prepare their arguments in order to defend themselves according to what the others have said. Then there'll be 2 min talk for each group There will also be a 10 min break to lobby and take some interviews from the politicians • Round 3: Open time for every politician of each political group (1min/person) to express their opinions, if they want. Dialogue among politicians will be encouraged. • Final voting of measures which will be taken in the future. Announcement of the result • Closing of the plenary session 	TIMING 5 MINS 2 MINS 20 MINS 21 MINS APPROX. 20 MINS APPROX. 10 MINS APPROX. 15-20 MINS 10 MINS 5 MINS	
PREPARATION	Voting ballots (25), political agenda with measures, prepare the room to look as a parliament, prepare the questions for the journalists/lobbyists.		

TITLE	REAL JOB INTERVIEW SIMULATIONS		
TYPE	A simulation activity designed to equip the participants with the skills and attitudes that will increase their employability		
GROUP SIZE	Up to 30	DURATION:	1.5 hours
MATERIALS NEEDED	papers, pens, chairs and tables for interviewers		
SESSION OBJECTIVES	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Find out how to boost their CV and motivational letterLearn how to prepare for and act in a job interviewDevelop their oral skills (speak in front of an audience/express themselves clearly), work on their self –esteem and learn the importance of body language and posture		
SESSION DESCRIPTION (STEP BY STEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Participants will be split into small groups. Their team leaders will give them practical info on how to write their CVs and motivational letters and inform them about a job opening at YEU. They will be encouraged to apply for the job and invited for an interview.Real job interview simulation takes place with trainers acting as interviewers and participants as interviewees.Participants are given face-to-face feedback on the impression they gave out on the interview with suggestions and tips on how to improve their performance	TIMING 10 MIN 60 min 60 min 20 min	
PREPARATION	Prepare interview questions		

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