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THE APPEARANCE OF A NEW GENERATION ON THE LABOUR MARKET

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Abstract: The youngest generation acts as career starters currently on the labour market - that is why the behaviour of Generation Z is only imaginary. However, their expectations for their future jobs can currently be examined. Our paper on their possible job expectation presents the career and job ideals of first year BSc students in the Hungarian higher education who belong to Generation Z. The research focuses on surveying the young's requirements towards their future jobs and work conditions and also their expectations concerning payment and position. According to the hypothesis of the questionnaire of 112 students the generation characteristics can also come to the surface in job seeking and as they are well-informed about the labour market, they have realistic hopes about their future placement. As career choices must be made and job seeking cannot be evaded, either, that is why gathering information on the labour market and active participation is inevitable from the part of the young in addition to preparing themselves to meet the challenges. The results point out that the hypothesis could partially be accepted. The situation explored also highlights the necessity of complex career orientation services and deepening labour market knowledge so that the self-confidence of the Generation Z students could be built on real and realistic self-knowledge and also their plans concerning job seeking and vision for the future should be created in accordance with the current trends and requirements.

Keywords: expectations, labour market, reality, Generation Z

INTRODUCTION

As a result of shrinking employment all over Europe, the issue of how the changes will affect the opportunities and chances of the young and the career starters to be competitive on the labour market will arise. The findings of research and examinations and everyday experience show that young people are rather under informed in the world of work. They are unaware of the labour market processes in details neither do they know the current labour market situation or their future possibilities. It is an important task to bring up conscious young people who can make well-established decisions on their own. It can be implemented as a result of a more carefully planned and organised educational system and also the information exchange within the families. However, Generation Z, as the second digital generation, can pose special challenges for the old at schools and at work, as well. Some features of communication, ways of thinking and behaviour patterns have changed as the online forum has come to the foreground together with such an emotional attitude that could not be experienced before. That is why it is essential that the gap between Generation Z and the older generations should not broaden. This phenomenon and process must be known and understood as this is the only way of forging successful and effective cooperation in work, life and school.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Today the expression of 'working age' in a classical sense of meaning embraces 20-25 years, which is a reference point when distinguishing generations. According to the definition of McCrindle & Wolfinger (2010) generation is the group of such persons who were born at a similar time, were shaped by the same era affected by similar social characteristics, i.e. it is a group glued together by similar lifespan, living conditions, technology, events and experience. The members of Generation Z - as it is the most frequently used term - were born between 1995 and 2009. There are several other terms to describe them in literature such as net generation or the generation of digital natives (Jones & Shao, 2011).





From the point of view of population they are the smallest generation who were brought up in smaller families as they are mostly the children of the mothers in their 30's or 40's who postponed setting up a family because of their careers. They are expected to have a longer lifespan compared to the previous generations. They are the first global generation as they were born in a world more and more defined by digital technologies in which they were practically brought up (Kapil & Roy, 2014). Their most frequent source of information is the web. They are used to be online and connected at all time with a continuous and constant access to the internet. 'If we want to reach them, let us try and find them on Facebook first'. That is why they are socialised virtually (Tari, 2010).

Generation Z possesses such skills and abilities like multitasking, cooperative and autonomous learning. What is more, parallel activities are not strange for them, either. This generation acquires all these skills in their free time after school strictly on their own or by learning from the other members of their networking generation (Kissné, 2014). Moreover, experiences are very important for them and they want to have a good time regardless whether it is at home or at work (Tabscott, 2009). Generation Z has just started their careers so that is why their behaviour at work can only be hypothetical but they are supposed to have totally different expectations on the labour market (Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015), which will pose a great challenge for the organisations (Singh, 2014).

Presumably, quick changes characterise them as they live at a faster pace than their ancestors did and they will be ready to instant changes. Of two jobs they are more likely to select the one with a conscious social responsibility strategy and an environmentally conscious way of thinking (Kissné, 2014; Ferincz & Szabó, 2014). In addition to attracting and retaining the talents of the new generation (Martin-Schmidt, 2010) attention is drawn to establishing cooperation between the different generations (Hadijah & Badaruddin, 2015).

It goes without saying that the transition from education to work has become more complex and challenging due to partly the changes on the labour market and the career opportunities of the young. The first job that pays is regarded as a milestone that distinguishes young adulthood from adulthood. It can be regarded as a transitory or temporary stage when the young can make attempts and try themselves in different professional areas or choose the best tailor-made job that they can do with success and satisfaction. At this stage the starters can experience the opportunities and threats of their profession and choice. The impression on professional areas can affect their future jobs and decisions. The initial experiences on the labour market are decisive (Nagy & Szűcs, 2009; Deák & Ferencz, 2015). Several factors can influence the labour market success of the young such as family background. As such, the chances of the graduates are higher if they complete their internship at a company as they can practise under real circumstances at work (Szabó, 2015; Ferencz & Notari, 2012). However, the young themselves can also have an impact on several influencing factors, as well. The chances for finding a job, job-fit and professional success are higher if they choose a job that suits their interests and abilities. This statement draws attention to the importance of career orientation and career advisory that should start at primary schools. Going on studying means higher salary and a more stable labour market situation (Quintini, 2014).

The requirements and needs for the quality of labour have been changing and increasing so quality work, adaptability, ability to study independently and the development of general competencies are gaining more importance (Szádvári, 2011). Education must react to these changes and shift in stress that could be experienced on the labour market. At present a significant part of the graduates do not possess the skills and competencies required by the labour market (Makó, 2015).

Conscious job seeking means that the young employee has to consider the resources like education, qualifications, knowledge, experience, skills, abilities, personal characteristics, interests, expectations for the job and the employers and also what expectations must be fulfilled. After assessing all the resources and expectations can it be decided what positions and desired jobs can be applied for with better chances in real. Considering the facts above may be the most difficult in choosing a career or looking for a job. But if they are absent, job seeking will merely be controlled by desire, which can be followed by a lot of disappointment (Csehné, 2015).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The empirical research was carried out with the students of Szent István University, Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, Gödöllő who belong to Generation Z (112 students). The questionnaire was directed at exploring students' desires on the labour market and their expectations at work.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. In addition to the general part directed at the demographical data, the current (student) status and other features (languages spoken, internship, job experience), the





second part was focused on the exact preferences of the future employment. Closed questions were used in the questionnaire, which were filled in online. With regard to the fact that Generation Z is still very weakly represented in higher education, the size of the sample would seem to be small in absolute value but proportionally it covered nearly three-quarters of the entire examined community. The data were processed by simple statistical methods.

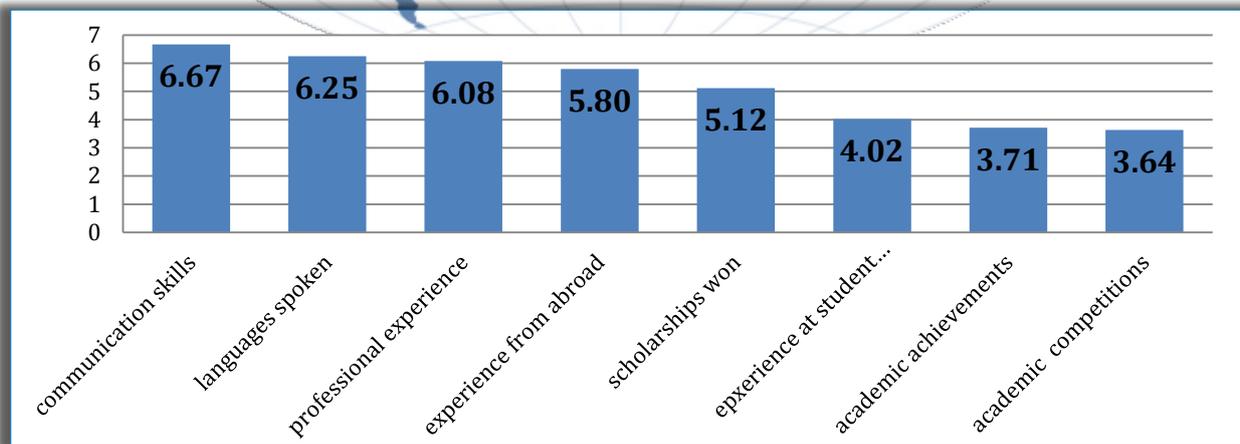
The breakdown of the participants by gender reflected the typical breakdown of the examined faculty, i.e. 23% male and 77% female. Only 19% of the respondents did not have a language exam while 81% had. Most of the language exams are in English and German. We supposed in the research that the features typical of the generation could be explored when seeking a job so it means they are well prepared and informed and they have realistic expectations for their future jobs, which could only partially be proved.

RESULTS

In connection with preparedness for the challenges of the job, three factors were examined, namely, whether they had professional experience, language knowledge and internship (practice period) spent abroad. Most respondents took/take part in compulsory internship, twenty-seven (24%) in corporate professional practice while 24 (21.5% of the respondents) have never worked. Twenty-one of them (19%) work(ed) for student organisations. Only 4 (3.5%) have been working continuously since they started university. Of the 112 respondents 52 (46%) work(ed) voluntarily as not part of the compulsory internship.

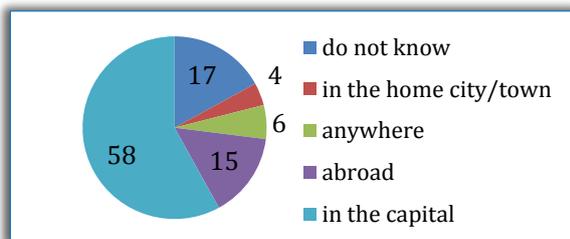
Regarding language knowledge 91% of the respondents speak at least one or more languages in addition to their mother tongue and only 10, i.e. 9% cannot speak a foreign language while 34% can communicate in several more. Language learning and working abroad regardless they are part of compulsory internship or not, are part of the question about experience abroad. Of the 112 students 37 (33%) have already lived abroad for a longer time to work or study while 75 (67%) are inexperienced.

The importance of job seeking was indicated on a Likert scale of 7. The results are shown by Figure 1. The respondents considered communication skills (6.67), languages spoken (6.25) and professional experience (6.08) as the most important in job seeking. According to the students the three least important factors are experience at student organisations (4.02), academic achievements (3.71) and participation in academic competitions (3.64). These latter two factors were surprisingly ranked low by the students.



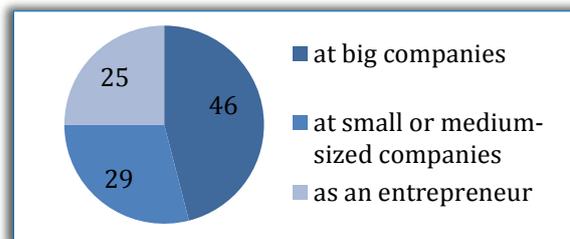
Source: authors' own research

Figure 1: What factors are the most important when looking for a job?(n=112)



Source: Authors' own research

Figure 2: Expectations about the geographical situation of the workplace(%) (n=112)



Source: Authors' own research

Figure 3: The expected form of the company where they would work for(%) (n=112)

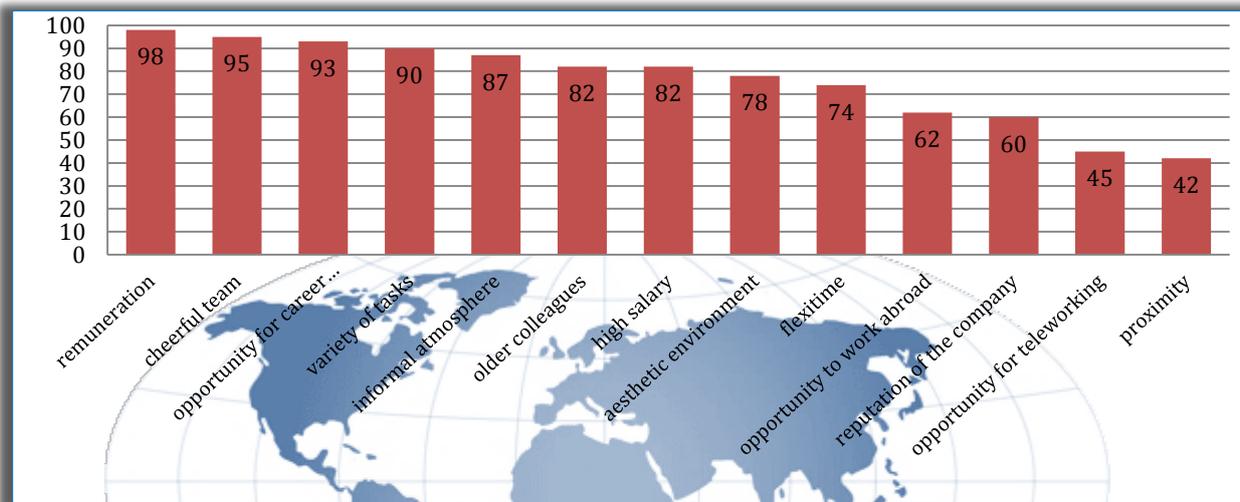




Nearly half of the respondents (47%) want to go on studying and working simultaneously after taking the final exam. Twenty-eight percent want to work only while 19% would study exclusively. Three-quarters of the pattern want to find a job in the area of qualification and only 25% would try it in another area.

The geographical requirements of the job illustrated by Figure 2 reflect the capital-centred nature of Hungary as more than half of the students (58%) would like to find a job in Budapest, capital of Hungary. Figure 2 also presents that plans to work abroad were no dominant knowing the special features of the generation as only 15% would like to work abroad. At the same time, however, the proportion of those who would return to their home town after graduating is very low (4%).

With regard to the employment rate of the future the number of those who would like to work for a multinational or big company is outstanding (46%). Medium-sized enterprises (29%) and private enterprises (25%) follow nearly with the same value (Figure 3).

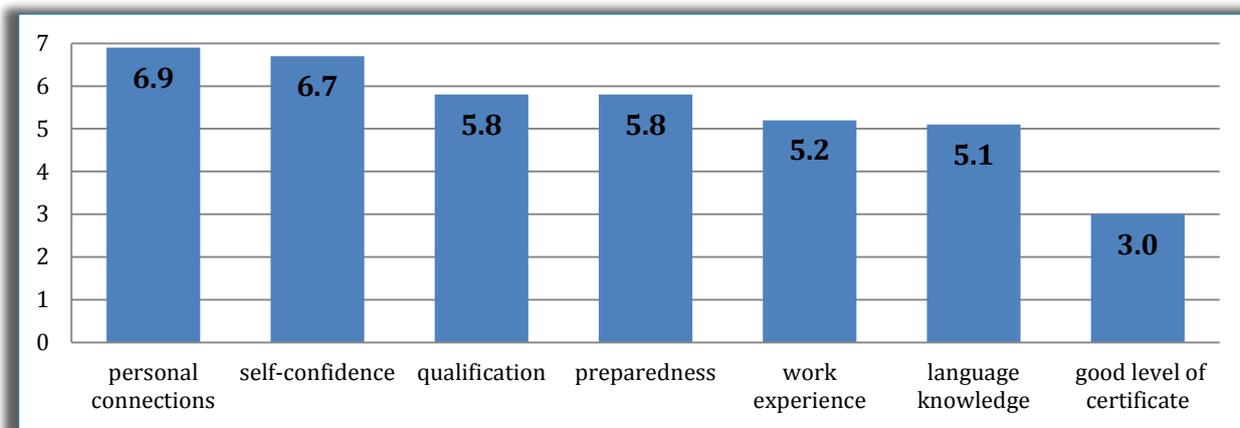


Source: Authors' own research

Figure 4: The important factors of their would-be jobs (n=112)

The work requirements of the respondents typically suit the needs of this generation for quickness, rapidness and being in a constant change. It is not surprising that among the preferences for their future workplace students indicated remuneration at the first place (98%) followed by a cheerful team (95%) and opportunity for a career (93%). The work preferences outlined here correspond with the one that could be expected by knowing generation Z; career development, variety of tasks and remuneration take the lead. At the same time, however, the opportunity to work abroad and flexitime as motivators do not have such a powerful effect (Figure 4).

The following question analyses the respondents' plans for the future based on a 7-grade Likert scale. The results are illustrated by Figure 5.



Source: Authors' own research

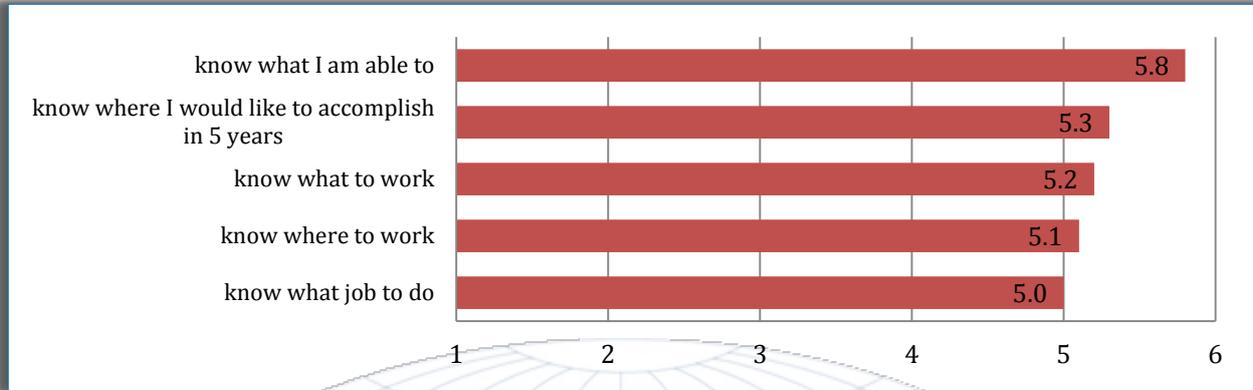
Figure 5: What is important in the labour market?(n=112)

The results reflect the career trends that could be heard frequently nowadays as of the personal connections that came first. On the other hand, the typical features in connection with the self-image of



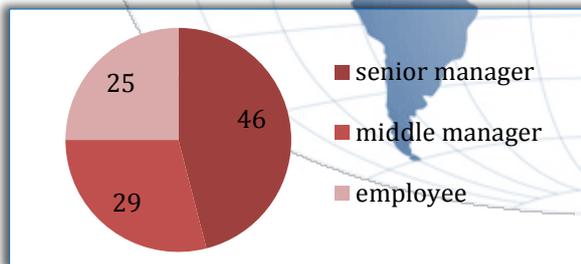


Generation Z are well presented, i.e. in the attitudes of the respondents the importance of trust in themselves overtakes the significance of professional preparedness. The thoughts of the respondents on their plans are reflected by Figure 6 on a 7-grade Likert scale. Based on the results it can be concluded that Generation Z have higher than realistic self-esteem which is not based on a real, worked out and refined self-image and knowledge. The future goals are rather less stable than their trust in themselves. They know less about where they would like to work, what job they would need and what they would like to accomplish in 5 years' time.

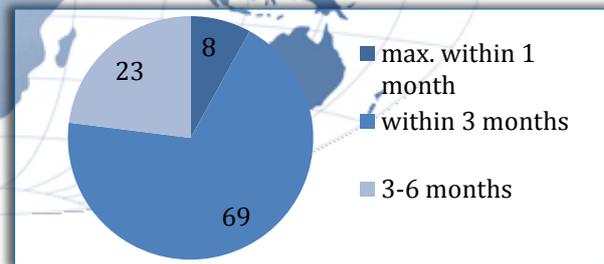


Source: Authors' own research (n=112)
Figure 6: Certainty of goals for the future (n=112)

Taking the future positions at work into consideration most students voted for being senior managers (46%) while half of this figure (29%) wanted to be middle managers and only one-quarter (25%) would be satisfied with being an employee (Figure 7). This image for the future does not correspond with the Hungarian reality. Regarding the length of job seeking the responding students are very optimistic.



Source: Authors' own research
Figure 7: Positions expected by the respondents (%) (n=112)

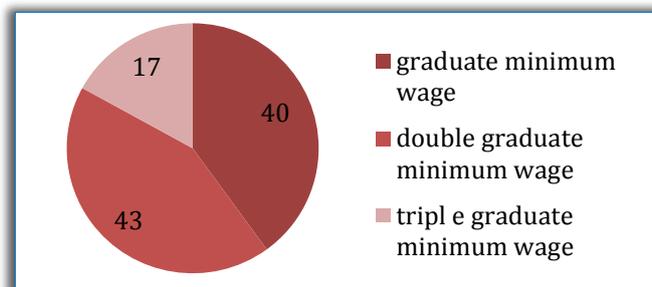


Source: Authors' own research
Figure 8: Time that job seeking is expected to take (%) (n=112)

The majority (69%) can imagine only waiting for 3 months to find a job. Only 23% are realistic when counting with at least 6 months while 8% are very optimistic when they think they would find a job in 1 month (Figure 8).

The average time to find a job in Hungary is 5.4 months in the case of graduates from higher education.

As far as the salary requirements are concerned the ambitious features of this generation also prevail here as more than half of the students (60%) marked to earn triple or double the graduate minimum wage at their first workplace after graduation and only 40% have a more realistic picture, i.e. count with the minimum wage for graduates (Figure 9).



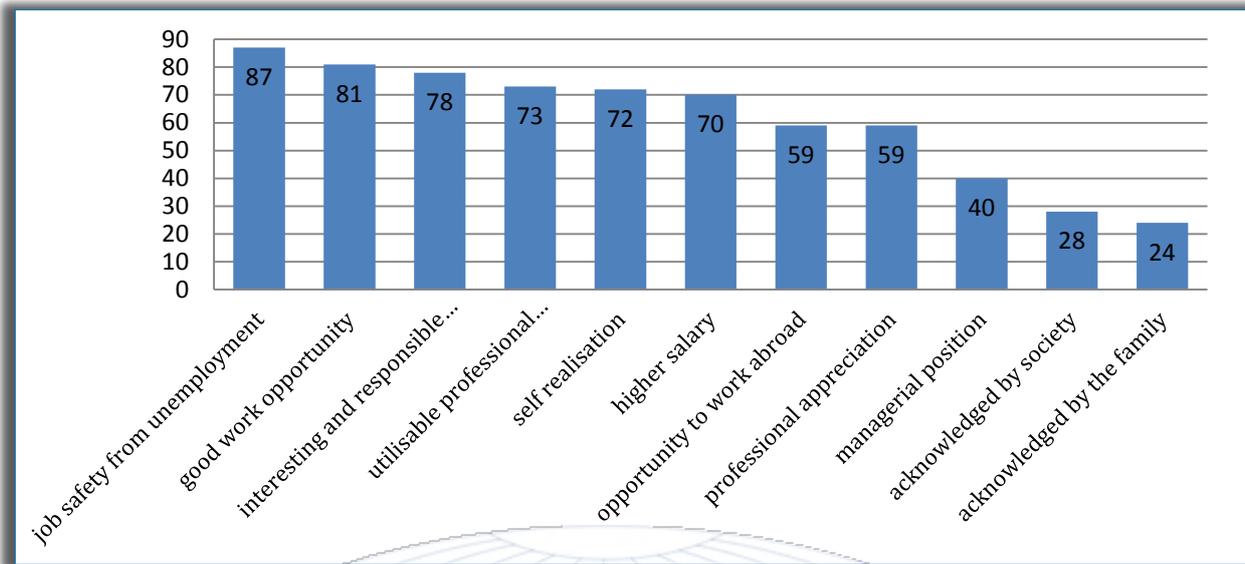
Source: Authors' own research
Figure 9: Salaries expected (%) (n=112)

Figure 10 shows what the respondents expect from a degree. The results (more than one answers were possible to indicate) show that job safety from unemployment has become very important (in 87 cases) followed by good work opportunity (81) and interesting and responsible tasks (78). With a slight difference in importance, utilisable professional knowledge (73), self-realisation (72) and higher salary





(70) can also be regarded as important issues. In the last third of the rank professional appreciation (59) and opportunity to work abroad (59) can be found while the least important expectations include social (28) and family acknowledgement (24).



Source: Authors' own research

Figure 10: Expectations from the higher education degree (n=112)

A significant part of the respondents (40%) are optimistic about the marketability of their future qualifications (Figure 11). Twenty-eight percent of the respondents are very positive about their jobs but the proportion of those who could not answer this question is the same. This suggests lack of knowledge and information about the labour market. Only four percent of the respondents regard their qualification not to be marketable. In a positive case, the majority seem to have assessed the labour market demand and value of their would-be qualification when choosing a career properly or simply, they are just not aware of the labour market demand.

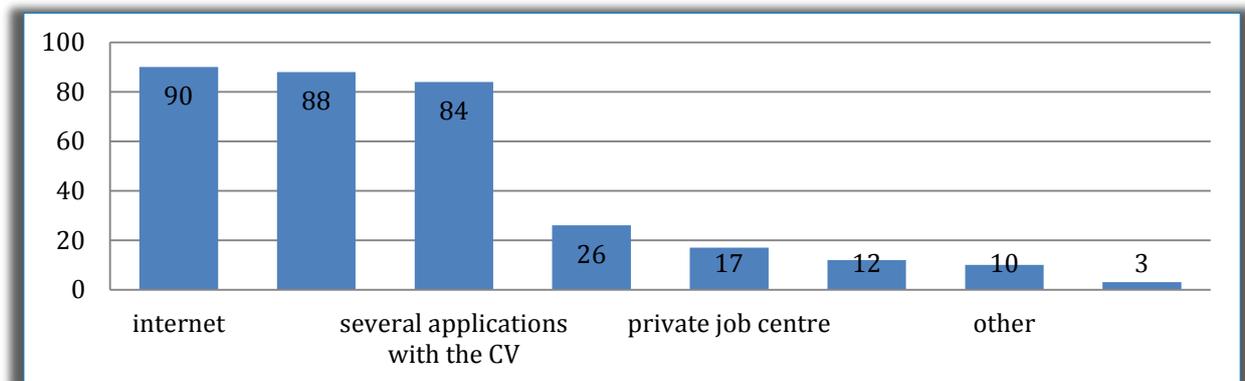
With regard to the forums of job seeking the young generation sees the Internet (90) as the main source of information as it was expected followed by help from family members, friends and acquaintances (88) as Figure 12 presents.

Selecting multiple channels and handing in several applications simultaneously (84) is a bit less frequent. Turning to labour organisations (26), private job centres (17) and press releases (12) are rarely marked options when looking for a job. The responses are in line with the characteristics of this generation.



Source: Authors' own research

Figure 11: Respondents' judgment of the labour market situation of their qualification (%) (n=112)



Source: Authors' own research

Figure 12: Methods of job seeking (n=112)





CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the examined pattern the ambitions generally typical for Generation Z were proved right (they would work in addition to studying, they would work for a big company in the capital), and there were higher than realistic expectations (such as length of job seeking, required salary or position). This latter one refers to lack of knowledge of the labour market. Longing for working abroad is regarded as a common feature of the generation. However, it was represented below the average. Of the necessary factors for finding a job trust in themselves and connections were thought to be more important than professionalism but they have higher self-esteem than it could be concluded from the stability of their professional future. They have plans, objectives and expectations but awareness is not typical. Knowing the current labour market trends longer time for searching, more failures and less motivating career start await the young than they had expected. The findings of the examination prove that gathering labour market information and activity are also necessary in addition to preparing ourselves, as we cannot escape career selection and job seeking. So the hypothesis of the examination was partly proved. Based on the results of the examination recommendations can be made that informing students about the labour market situation should be a must starting even from secondary school together with the information where shortage appears on the regional or national level and what competencies are required. The objective is not to get the young acquainted with the current labour market situation in details, rather, to channel them to gain information about the shortages, over-qualification, outdated jobs and new programmes. That is how they can gain new necessary and useful information about their jobs. Attention must be drawn to the fact how the employees should prepare for the job and gain information before making a well-established decision to reach the objective. For them, the need for labour market consciousness would be much more important reality in the near future so that is why it serves as a useful guide for the representatives of Generation Z.

The situation revealed calls for complex career orienteering services, which include strengthening self-knowledge, developing career management and gaining ability to know the labour market basics so that the self-assurance of Generation Z should be built on real self-knowledge while their plans to find a job and future prospects should be centred on current trends and expectations. The question of how to implement it arises from the information management technique of Generation Z adapted to their continuous online or networking presence on the principle of reaching the students with these services where they actually are.

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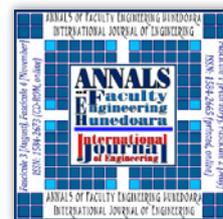




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