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"EU4Youth: Fostering potential for greater employability"

Market Research Report

Gegharkunik and Tavush regions 2018 - 2021

YREVAN 2019

“EU4Youth: Fostering potential for greater employability”

Labour Market Analysis 2018-19



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INTRODUCTION

EU4Youth is a 36-months Action to be implemented in Armenia, Belarus and Georgia. The Action is financed by the European Union and implemented by the Armenian, Belarusian and Georgian Red Cross in collaboration with the Danish Red Cross. The Danish Red Cross Youth and Connectio are partners in the project. The overall objective of the Action is to contribute to improve educational opportunities and development potential of youth in the three above mentioned countries in line with the Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 8.

The specific objective of the Action is to support access to employment of marginalised youth groups through partnerships, targeted skills development and promotion of entrepreneurship. The objectives will be reached with related activities aimed at bridging the gap between marginalised youth and the labour market through increased cross-sectoral cooperation and empowerment of youth.

The Action will enhance the labour market access for disadvantaged young people and the acknowledgment of non-formal skills in the labour force by building cooperation among state and non-state actors and the private sector, as well as by building formal and non-formal skills among 12,900 marginalised youth and support 180 young women and men to realise their own business ideas.

The project will take place between 2018 and 2021 in the regions of: Georgia; Senaki, Zugdidi and Khelvachauri, Belarus; Gomel and Mogilev, Armenia; Tavush and Garharkunik.

This report will unfold key findings in order to secure the further work and focus of the Action in terms of output 1.1: *Cross-sectoral partnerships and co-operation established to bridge the gap between labour market and marginalised youth*. This output aims at connecting and establishing alliances between the labour market, job centres, educational institutions, local authorities and other NGOs in order to fully analyse the potentials and challenges faced by marginalised youth in the targeted regions and come up with concrete options/referral paths to the right education and training in order to bridge the gap between labour market and marginalised youth.

Previous reports about the labour market and its demand have generally had the employers' needs and demands as their focus. However, this report has the needs of youth as a starting point as well, taking into consideration and comparing it with the demands of

the private labour market thus mapping gaps between the labour market demands and needs of the youth.

METHODOLOGY

The report departs from an anthropological approach, and fieldworks in the three countries, along with cross-cultural comparison of data from the three contexts. The use of semi-structured and structured interviews has allowed for gaining insight into themes and challenges that were specific to a particular context, as well as an overview of issues of importance in all three countries. This bottom-up approach was applied in order to ensure that preconceived ideas not distort the final data-set, and we have thus deliberately not chosen particular themes or keywords as vantage points. This approach ensured that ground was laid for which aspects subsequent interviews should cover in order to match both local circumstances and possibilities of cross-cultural comparison. A total of 66 semi-structured interviews were carried out by Connectio during fieldworks, and following this an additional 99 structured interviews were carried out by local partners.

Desk-research covered pre-existing reports which were collected and read in order to create an overview over labour conditions, unemployment, migration, mobility, business promotion, employers'/employee associations and Corporate Social Responsibility in the three contexts. Based on insights from these, and a brainstorm session with representatives from the three Red Cross Societies held in Copenhagen April 2018, a series of relevant official institutions, NGOs and private enterprises were mapped out. Subsequently, specific institutions and organizations were contacted by Connectio and the Red Cross Societies in order to set up meeting schedules for the three fieldworks, and a fieldwork design for pilot-testing in Georgia was developed.

Fieldworks in the three contexts was carried out in collaboration with representatives from local Red Cross Societies, entailing that the fieldworks not only served as means to collect data, but also to initiate the process of creating a network between the Red Cross Societies and local enterprises aimed at future collaborations within the project. During the fieldworks "snowballing" was applied in terms of using one connection (a public official or a representative from a local enterprise) to create connections to a wider network. Supplementary interviews and meetings were thus added along the way.

Additional data collection was carried out by local collaborators following thorough briefings from Connectio, who afterwards received transcribed and translated data. The combined data-set has been measured against the Youth Needs Assessments carried out by local RC societies.

The businesses that have taken part in interviews cannot be seen as fully representative of all businesses in the respective regions in terms of the demands and challenges they have and meet. Instead, they should be understood as indicative of the overall tendencies in the field of business they represent.

The structure of the analysis has been determined by the form and character of data received from the local RC offices. For instance, given the form of the local youth needs assesment, recommendations for Georgia are combined rather than specific for each site. The key focus has been to let the data stand out as much as possible, and provide room for and emphasis on the different local foci, challenges and opportunities.

Finally a cross country comparison was conducted in order to share experiences, best practices and focus points in terms of challenges and opportunities in bridging the gaps between the labour market and the youth.

ARMENIA

1. AIM AND METHOD

The main objective of this chapter is to present a series of recommendations in terms of how the Action can bridge the gap between marginalized youth and the labour market in Armenia with regional focus on Gegharkunik; Gavar and Sevan, and Tavush; Ijevan and Dilijan.

To be able to match the needs of the labour market and identify matches and opportunities for youth to increase their access to employment, the report is based on a research trip to the regions of Gegharkunik and Tavush conducted in June 2018 where qualitative methods (such as observations, semistructured interviews - 15 in total - and numerous conversations) were deployed. Interviews were held with businesses, non-governmental organisations, interest organizations and ministries (see appendix A for further information). Furthermore, local ARC offices have conducted additional interviews (see appendix B) with a wide range of local business in Gavar (10 businesses), Sevan (12 businesses), Ijevan (16 businesses) and Dilijan (14 businesses), working in fields ranging from tourism, service, production, education to agriculture and banking, in order to shed light on the individual business' needs and demands, challenges and opportunities. Based on a questionnaire among young people (500 in total) between the age of 14 and 30 residents of the four above mentioned cities an assessment of their needs and demand has been mapped out.

The key findings of this chapter are based on a triangulation of the research trip, the additional interviews with local businesses and the needs assessment of the youth. Background data has been collected through earlier reports undertaken by The World Bank (2014, 2015) and similar projects by non-governmental organizations and projects done by local Red Cross Offices in the respective regions of the current project.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. Beginning with an general overview of Armenia its political and economical context, giving an understanding of the field of research. Subsequently the main findings are presented in relation to the four cities; Dilijan, Ijevan, Sevan and Gavar. In each section the demands of the businesses are laid out

alongside the needs of the youth, ending in a series of recommendations for each individual site. As a conclusion a brief summary across the different recommendations will be presented.

2. THE POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMICAL CONTEXT

Armenia is located in the southern Caucasus region, neighboring Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Iran. The country was part of the Soviet Union until 1991 and has since undergone large scale institutional changes. While many of these have been successful, several sectors and institutions are still in need of reform. In the wake of independence in 1991 the country was furthermore marked by natural disasters, ongoing conflict with neighbouring Azerbaijan and depopulation, aspects that have all affected upon the condition of the current labour market. UN statistics show that the population has declined by over 640.000 people due to migration since 1991, a demographic trend that is continuing. This has particularly affected rural regions, that furthermore suffer from population flows to urban areas (as entrepreneurship and businesses tend to center around Yerevan) and seasonal work-migration (particularly to Russia). Previous studies by the World Bank have shown that the informal labour market remains a significant aspect of the Armenian socio-economic landscape, one consequence of this being that it presents an unfair competition to the formal labour market and that the informal labour force constitutes up to 64% of the total labour force. Previous studies also show that although the labour force in Armenia is generally well-educated there is a significant gap between labour market needs and the skills of the workforce.

The above-mentioned phenomena are particularly present in the Tavush and Gegharkunik regions, which are dominated largely by small-scale business and high levels of unemployment, and these overall aspects of the labour market have also been evident in the data collected for this analysis.

The following unfolds the specific demands of the businesses and needs of the youth in Dilijan, Ijevan, Sevan and Gavar and brings about specific recommendations for every city.

3. DILIJAN

The city of Dilijan and its surrounding natural areas are a growing site for tourism. As a result of this, the majority of the businesses present in this survey are in the service sector.

In general the businesses are divided into the following sectors:

1. Service
2. Healthcare
3. Agriculture
4. Production
5. Education

In the following sections the demands of businesses in Dilijan are presented alongside insights from youth assessment ending in a total of 6 recommendations.

Business demands

The overall aim for the majority of businesses is to open new branches and expand in their respective markets. They wish to strengthen the flow of tourists and open new hotel complexes, restaurants etc. This points to demands of a bigger workforce in their different areas of expertise (mainly the service industry; hostels, food caterings, bakeries, confectioneries). Across the different fields of business is a focus on soft skills. Hotel Dilijan Resort sees the following skills as important; *“Being a non-conflict person, the ability of making decisions quickly, politeness, communication skills, knowledge of languages are essential.”* The focus on communication and being non-conflict is shared by the company Bread and Confectionery; *“Being specialized, communication skills, being non-conflict, creativity is highly important.”* Restaurant Ureni focuses on: *“Being a non-conflict person, ability of making quick decisions, politeness, the knowledge of languages.”*

It is evident that soft skills like non-conflict competencies (conflict-resolution), communication skills, creative thinking, politeness and being able to make quick decisions are in high demand across all fields of business. As a growing site for tourism, soft skills are increasingly playing a bigger role, as is hard skills such as foreign languages. Villarest House LTD expresses how the job position in many ways determine the required skills; *“For the cook, it is important to have professional skills and ability to make decisions quickly. For the receptionist, the knowledge of foreign languages is important.”* The Best Western Plus

Paradise Hotel shares the requirement of speaking foreign languages; *“I think tourism is developing day by day and knowledge of different languages will be needed.”* As the H&T Hakobyans LTD Dilijan Brewery states, the combination of hard and soft skills are important;

Concerning professional skills, mostly we need people with technical specializations. Especially tinker, turner, locksmith, welders. We cannot find these. So we have to train them in the company. Professional skills of technologists, being non-conflict, creativity is important and highly appreciated.

Dilijan Medical Center CJSO agrees and states how mainly professional skills are important, as there are internal rules and regulations that needs to be followed in term of caretaking. However, language skills and creative thinking are welcome, but not obligatory. Across the different fields of businesses demands like foreign language skills, computer skills and professional skills in terms of specialization (especially in the fields of bakeries, medical center and breweries) have a high priority. It is worth noticing that several businesses do not demand *either* soft skills *or* hard skills, but emphasize a combination of the two.

Finally, experience plays a crucial role. The majority of the businesses demand work experience from their candidates. Dilijan State College of Arts SNCO expresses how CV is not enough; *“we ask about former workplace, why she left it, is it possible to contact the former employer for more information, we pay attention to personal qualities as well.”* Dilijan Medical Center CJSO focus on work experience; theoretical as well as practical knowledge. H&T Hakobyans LTD Dilijan Brewery does not give importance to CV, but humanity; *“During communication with job seekers we understand [...] It’s the practice where we understand whether the candidate fits our requirements or not. For me it is very important.”*

Experience should be understood as both prior working experience and in a broader sense like volunteering. As Scholae Mundi Armenia states: *“We encourage youth, because we know that they don’t have work experience, but it’s is important to have volunteering experience or experience in general.”* Seeing experience in a wider range gives the youth the opportunity to shed light on other kinds of experience than just work, e.g. volunteer work.

Youth Needs Assessment

The needs assessment has been conducted among 125 young people all living in Dilijan. Among the respondents 71% is between the age of 14 and 25, 26 % between 26-30 years of age and 3 % above the age of 31. 86% of the respondents are female. 40% have a general

education, 19% have a secondary education, 39% have a higher education and 2% do not have an education. To the question “Are you working now” 52% answered “No”.

The possibilities of engaging youth in courses concerning the kinds of *soft skills* demanded by businesses are favourable, as 84% of the youth would like to participate in non-formal education. Furthermore, 50% of the youth state that if they could not find their dream job in their province, they would create their own. Building on this and thereby nourishing the youths willingness to develop and applying entrepreneurial ideas also strengthens soft skills like creative thinking, initiative; taking quick decisions.

As Dilijan is a growing center for tourism, mastering foreign languages (focus on English and Russian) is a valuable asset. As mentioned above the majority of businesses emphasise the importance of language skills, both businesses directly related to tourism and business working in other fields. 35% of the youth would like to participate in English courses. In addition, 90% of the youth want to participate in free skill development courses.

As several of the businesses have a focus on work experience an emphasis on internship and mentorship will be beneficial, as most of the businesses already have mentorships and training for their current employees. 13% of the youth do not have work experience, 17 % would like to have vocational experience and 19% would like to participate in vocational training. 79% would like to have a professional job in the future.

This opens for an opportunity for businesses in taking in youth who do not have an education, but would like to gain experience and professional training. During an interview with a representative of The Ministry of Education and Science they state “[it] *Has been difficult to set up internships because of lacking cooperation with companies.*” The Republican Union of Employers Armenia state that there is a “*lack of employers on boards, lack of engaging enterprises and places of learning*”. However, the labour market analysis conveys that the majority of the participating businesses would actually like to focus more on internships and mentorships, “*We are interested and in case of offers, we will be happy to organize*” (The Venchrs CJSC, Café-restaurant_IDEA). Best Western Plus Paradise Hotel in Dilijan states that “*No, there were not such cases [of internships], but we are open to collaborate, as we are flexible.*” Taking interns other than students, increases the businesses’ opportunities of shaping the worker specific for their needs and ways of working. In addition, 37% of the youth range their current skills between 7-8 (on a scale from 0-10). A focus on internships would help bridge the gap between translating their

“skills on paper” to “skills in practice”. Internship or job-training must of course always be profoundly justified, so the risk of exploitation is undermined.

Recommendations

- 1. Collaborate with businesses in offering free courses in soft skill development through casework.** Focus on offering courses in soft skills emphasizing non-conflict skills (communication, teamwork, problem solving), creative and independent thinking and oral presentation skills. Base the course on cases from the participating businesses, e.g internal challenges the business faces at the moment in the work team. This makes room for learning hands-on and gives the participating youths the demanded experience and an actual case they can present at a future job interview. Consider collaborating with Business Support Center Yerevan, where they focus on training and professional development.
- 2. Offer courses in developing and applying entrepreneurial ideas.** Focus on creating a course where the youth can develop and unfold work ideas and dreams. This will strengthen their independent and critical thinking, which is a businesses demand. Let them introduce their ideas to relevant businesses.
- 3. Develop free language courses in English and Russian.** There is a mutual need and demand for mastering foreign languages, especially English and Russian.
- 4. Focus on internship in different ways.**
 1. Facilitate exchange of experiences between businesses in having interns in order to inspire and strengthen the use of internship. Make the businesses tell “the good story of internship”; what value has it brought to the business; financially, in terms of development, new knowledge and perspectives etc. Appoint a number of businesses as “Business ambassadors” (e.g. VivaCell or Winery in Ijevan who at the moment has 15 interns).
 2. Create a corps of role models of young people who have been interns. Get in touch with young people with different educational backgrounds and make them tell how and where they have been an intern. How did they find the respective business? How did they apply? What did they learn on an educational and personal level throughout the internship? Make them inspire and help other young people on their way to translate “skills on paper” to “skills in practice”. And
 3. Speed-dating. Create a non-formal meeting space between businesses and youth. Invite different businesses and youths to a non-formal meeting. Focus on getting in touch with young people who are not in enrolled in college, university or VET. The businesses become more visible and increase their chances of finding interns.

4. IJEVAN

Ijevan is the administrative center of the province of Tavush. As in Dilijan the service and tourist industry are two main sectors in Ijevan. 10 of the 17 participating businesses work in the service industry. In total, the 17 businesses are divided into the following three sectors:

1. Service
2. Production
3. Education

In the following sections the demands of businesses in Ijevan are unfolded and presented alongside insights from the youth assessment ending in a total of 4 recommendations.

Business demands

Across the different fields of business is a focus on soft skills. The retail and food service company Inamur LTD explains how human values are important in their line of work:

I am not so interested in knowledge, because they have to communicate with people and qualities are the most important thing for me, as they communicate with people. Professional skills are taught here.

The emphasis on communication is shared with the majority of the participating businesses. The SEF International Universal Credit Company expresses how communicative skills are essential in order to introduce and sell their products:

For example they have to be able to present the product and during the process of presentation it should be acceptable for the customers [...] They should be non-conflict persons, should be ready for work in a team, our work is teamwork, the knowledge of languages is desirable but not obligatory.

Furthermore, being non-conflict is an asset highly valued. Both Ijevan Municipal Utility Service LTD and North Electric Networks (a branch of CJSC Electric Networks of Armenia) demand this soft skill, along with creativity and being able to work quickly. The confectionary PE Naira Petrosyan shares this view, and tells how *“Being non-conflict and creativity”* is required soft skills. Tavush Regional State College SNCO express how *“To perform according with job description, to communicate with people easily, being non conflict, computer skills are essential, language knowledge and creative thinking is essential.”* Looking at the different statements, it is evident that soft skills like being non-conflict, thinking creatively, learn quickly, having communication and presentation skills and being responsible, are highly valued in terms of required qualities.

As the quotes also emphasise, hard skills such as language skills, computer and technical skills are in demand as well. Israelyan and Astghasar LLC, a furniture production company stresses that responsibility and professional skills are most important: *“If they don't have them, they should learn as soon as possible as it's very important to be skillful in the furniture production.”* The Ijevan Ambulatory CJSC focuses on *“Professional knowledge and interpersonal relations.”* The woodworking company Ohanyan Vilyam emphasises hard skills as well: *“Professional skills, it is a dangerous work, then ability to learn new skills, communication skills, and most of all honesty is valued, not to cheat.”*

However, as the different quotes make visible, soft and hard skills co-exist and do not exclude each other. The first quote stems from a furniture production company. It highlights a valuable approach; the will of the business to learn the candidate the needed skills. This underline the businesses focus on the candidates willingness and eagerness to learn and develop new skills. A majority of the businesses understand and use internships as skill training for the new employee, exemplified by SEF international universal credit company:

Yes, we provide the practices, training. With the candidates we have chosen. For example if we make announcement of free vacancy and we choose 3 candidates, for these people we give a chance within 2-3 months to attend[...]Then we choose the candidate according to the competition.

The businesses emphasize the importance of a training period for new employees in order to see *how* the employee works and to teach them the necessary skills, as Ijevan Bentonit kombinat OJSC also explains: *“Understand, for our company it is not typical to hire people by CV, because its multi profile work [...] It's dangerous equipment so they have to learn on job.”* Other businesses collaborate with colleges in offering internships for students, such as Vahan&torner LTD, Hotel Qarvansara: *“Sure, we have contracts with educational institutions”* and Israelyan and Astghasar LLC: *“We have had interns in production, аццօղւմեց, from colleges and universities”*. On the other hand, some businesses do not use internships, but would like to: *“There were such a program years ago. It was good.”* (PE Aida Israelyan, bakery). Inamur LTD, a retail and food service company expresses the same: *“No, but it's a good idea”*. This wish to have internships supports the businesses' emphasis on experience, as an asset: *“The practical work is important, not explanation on how to do. I need practise not theory.”* (PE Aharonyan Arshavir), PE Naira Petrosyan, confectionary also

emphasizes work experience, as well as the bakery PE Naira Sahakyan, "*It's important to have experience.*" In addition, a number of businesses do not ask for a resumé as seen above. They want to see the skills, not read or hear about them. However, this opposition between the businesses' emphasis on experience and the number of businesses who actually offer internships opens a gap of possibilities in supporting and strengthening internships among others.

Youth Needs Assessment

The needs assessment has been conducted among 125 young people all living in Ijevan. Among the respondents 80,8% is between 14-25 years old and 19,2 % between 26-30 years old. 76,8% of the respondents are female. 20,8% have a general education, 11,2% have a secondary education and 68% have a higher education. 55,2% do not currently hold a job.

65% of the youth are interested in participating in non-formal training. 86,4% would participate in free training courses in order to develop their skills. This underlines a need to develop courses with specific focus on non-conflict skills, creative thinking, communication and oral presentation skills.

In terms of hard skills, 34% of the youth would participate in English language courses and 18% in computer courses. 19,2% would participate in courses concerning tourism. This would be beneficial in terms of developing soft skills like politeness, decency and responsibility which are demanded by the businesses when interacting with tourists and customers. Another focus for hard skills could be how to write a CV and look for a job. 32,8% of the youth do not know how to write a CV. As a number of businesses make clear they do not focus on CV, it would be beneficial to make a workshop that clarifies *how* and *where* to look for a job, as 18% do not know *where* to look and 16% do not know *how* to look for a job.

52% of the youth do volunteer work. This is useful as several businesses see it as an asset that the job candidate is able to show their skills, not just tell about them. However, there is a gap between the youth own understanding of their skills and the actual practice of skills. 41,6% of the youth range their current professional skills between 7-8 (on a scale from 0-10 and 29,6% range between 9-10. This calls for a focused effort according to change the view of what skills actually entails, what counts as skills, and what ways to obtain skills are

deemed as “correct” and thereby approved. Volunteer work are skills in practise that could be translated into work skills - and experience.

Recommendations

- 1. Create a collaboration with businesses concerning soft skills.** As mentioned, the majority of businesses demand soft skills like creative thinking, non-conflict skills and communication. To specify the more specific demands in the different areas of business we recommend creating a meeting space between youth and businesses, where the different businesses in more detailed way describe what they understand by non-conflict, creative thinking and so forth in relation to their area of expertise. This is useful in creating soft skills courses based on specific knowledge from the businesses. Consider to have some of the lessons at a giving business making it more practise-oriented.
- 2. Offer hard skill courses in collaboration with businesses and with a focus on case work.** There is an interest and demand from both youth and businesses in learning and mastering hard skills such as English, computer skills and technical skills. It could be useful to offer courses in tourism as well. Create the courses in collaboration with the businesses with a focus on case work. This will give the youth an opportunity to translate their skills into practise.
- 3. Create a business hub where businesses can inspire each other, exchange experiences, challenges and best practices concerning internships.** What do they gain from it? How do they use it? How do they recruit? Could it be possible to share the workforce? Make a work rotation: When an intern is finished one place, another business “take over” the intern. This provide the intern with a wide range of competencies which are beneficial for the businesses as well. In addition, the businesses demands for the intern/candidate to learn and develop new skills will be met to a higher degree, because of the different experiences, insights and skills from the previous internships.
- 4. Create a workshop where focus is on translating volunteer work into work experience and work skills.** Consider to offer a workshop where the benefits of volunteer work are explored and focus on how to articulate and translate the skills and experience from volunteer work into useful competencies and experienced that could be used in a job application.

5. SEVAN

The city of Sevan is placed in the Gegharkunik province on the northwestern shore of Lake Sevan making it a popular resort in Armenia. The majority of the interviewed businesses are in the service industry. In total the businesses are divided into the following four sectors:

1. Service
2. Production
3. Retail and trade
4. Healthcare
5. Education

In the following sections the demands of the businesses in Sevan are unfolded and presented alongside insights from the youth assessment ending in a total of 4 recommendations.

Business demands

A majority of the businesses demand soft skills qualifications such as communication skills, creativity and non-conflict skills. Fly-net service LTD, a computer service company mentions communication skills, being non-conflict, creativity and abilities to take initiative as important qualities for service-oriented workers. The confectionary production and shop Poghots Paradi 588 expresses how: *“Being non-conflict, creativity, communication skills, are important for the sales manager.”* The fast food service company PE Karen Ohanyan follows this saying that: *“Being non-conflict, knowledge of foreign language for some level, creativity. There are technical skills, that I teach them.”* The demand for soft skills correlates with Sevan being a popular tourist resort, as many of the businesses who have a focus on these specific soft skills work in the service industry. In relation to this, exemplified by PE Karen Ohanyan, a focus on hard skills such as language holds an important role. More than half of the businesses express the need for candidates with hard skills such as foreign language skills, professional skills in the respected area of expertise, organizational skills and computer skills. Tis LTD, a provider of TV and internet services focuses on hard skills like: *“IT skills [...] Professional knowledge, communication skills, computer skills, skills for solving marketing problems, knowledge of foreign languages is an asset.”* The hotel restaurant Togran and Vahe LTD stresses how knowledge of foreign languages and communications skills are important. Converse Bank CJSC explains how: *“Work experience, education,*

knowledge of foreign languages, ability to make decisions in different situations that can occur during work” are essential in their process of finding the right applicant.

As further mentioned by Converse Bank CJSC work experience is important as well. In general the majority of the businesses, across different sectors, have focus on experience and the practical skills more than the actual certificate or CV. as the trade company PE Anush Khachatryan expresses: *“CV is not obligatory, we just have a conversation on the prior work experience.”* The cattle and milk production company Ara-Areg LTD Lhasen stresses how practice makes the specialist more competitive as long with work experience and knowledge. The bakery PE Karen Ohanyan shares how there is no need for a CV; *“I give the candidate something to bake. If I like it, I take him for work.”* This highlights the need of focusing on how to translate one’s knowledge and skills into actual practical knowledge and experience. Furthermore, it opens up for an important opportunity for young people that do not have a degree or certificate.

Youth Needs Assessment

The needs assessment has been conducted among 125 young people living in Sevan and the neighbouring communities. Among the respondents 76% are between the age of 14 and 25. The remaining 24% is between 26 and 30 years old. 69% are female. 30,4% have a general education, 28% have a secondary education and 41,6% have a higher education. 43,2% do not currently hold a job.

77,6% of youth show interest in participating in non-formal education. This correlates with the business’ demands of a higher degree of soft skills in the workforce. 86,4% of the youth want to participate in free training courses in order to develop their skills. To the question “If you had the sufficient amount of money, what would you do” 68,8% of the youth would create their own job in their region. Furthermore, 52,8% answer if they could not find their dream job in their province, they would create their own. This shows a willingness, a want to stay and a platform on which to build and strengthen entrepreneurial ideas as well as skills like creative thinking, innovation and organizational skills among others, demanded by the businesses as well. Furthermore, a focus on strengthening the entrepreneurial platform could help decreasing the population flow to urban areas among youth.

In terms of hard skills 39,2% want to participate in English courses. 20% express interest in participating in computer courses. 15% want to take courses in tourism. Several of the businesses recruit through announcements on different websites and social media platforms and through network and connections. However, 27,2% of the youth do not know *where* to find work, why a course in *how and where* to look for jobs would be recommended.

20,8% rate their current professional skills between 5-6 (on a scale from 0-10), 35,2% rate their current skills between 7-8, 24% rated it between 9-10 and 13,6% rate it 10. Overall the youth have an above average confidence in their own skills. However, the businesses express a greater need of experience, thus being able to use one's skills in practice. This clarifies a gap between the youth understanding or feelings of their own capabilities and their actual practical use.

Recommendations

- 1. Focus on soft skills courses.** The businesses' focus on experience and the youth's willingness in participating in free courses of skill development and non-formal education lay the ground for a focused work in offering workshops in soft skills, especially communication, non-conflict tools, teamwork and oral presentation skills.
- 2. Create an English language course.** Both businesses and youth show a demand and need for learning and using English in practise.
- 3. From telling skills - to showing skills.** Develop courses between academics and the production and service industry in order to match how the business can benefit from hiring an academic even though it may not look obvious at first. Change the candidate focus from "explaining their skills" to "showing their skills" from concrete cases; what kind of challenges, problems can the candidate solve. The value that the candidate is able to create will be more clear for the business. This kind of course can also be created for non-academics.
- 4. Entrepreneurial courses and workshops in collaboration with businesses.** Make the courses in collaboration with businesses in order to both support the businesses demands of a more experienced workforce but also to make the youth aware of the job opportunities in their society; where to find and apply for jobs. The entrepreneurial vantage point can nourish the creativity, innovation, independence and initiative among youth – whether or not the skill is used to create a business or in a job position.

5. GAVAR

Gavar is the administrative center in the province of Gegharkunik. The majority of the interviewed businesses work in the service industry. In general the businesses are spread across the following four sectors:

1. Production
2. Service
3. Retail and trade
4. Education

In the following sections the demands of the businesses in Gavar are unfolded and presented alongside insights from the youth assessment ending in a total of 4 recommendations.

Business demands

A majority of the businesses demands soft skills and view it as an asset in terms of employability. The bakery Gavari Hats OJSC focuses on: *“Ability to learn fast and communicate, be creative and innovative.”* The Pasta (arishta) production company Bazikyanneri Arishta PE Vanush Bazikyan also emphasis the ability to learn quickly and be creative. Khach-Mats LTD that works with agricultural distribution explains how: *“As for the skills, negotiating, willingness to learn, creativity and innovative thinking are also an asset.”*

In general the businesses demand a willingness to learn, creativity, communication skills, innovative thinking and being polite and cheerful, as many of the businesses deal directly with tourists and other customers.

Not only soft skills are valuable in terms of being employed. The majority of businesses focus on hard skills as well. The computer service company Shach values: *“Skills and responsibility [...] Right now we are searching for a person who knows the programming languages really well.”* The Gavari Hats OJSC bakery demands managerial skills in terms of market development. The NGO Good Hope demands hard skills like: *“Professional, language and computer skills.”* The company PE Vardges Musoyan producing pakhlava and lokum needs employees who know how to handle the equipment. In general the businesses focus on hard skills ranging from professional skills in managing equipment, knowledge of foreign languages (both English and Russian), computer skills and skills in managing.

More than half of the businesses are concerned with experience. To the question of what they focus on in a CV or application, half of the businesses answer they do not require

a CV. As exemplified by Gal-Goga LTD who produces doors and windows, their main focus is on the known job experience, and stresses that there is *“no need for a CV.”* This is especially articulated in the bread production sector where both the cake production company PE Ruzanna Yuzbashyan and the Pasta (arishta) company Bazikyanneri Arishta PE Vanush Bazikyan as well as the PE Vardges Musoyan bakery and confectionary explain how they do not ask for or focus on CVs. Khach-Mats LTD distributing agricultural products have another approach and take in: *“weak candidates and work on them until they become qualified.”*

The choice of not giving highly importance to CV both opens possibilities for youth without a certificate, but also demands more of the youth themselves in terms of obtaining experience as well as on a policy level in order of establishing collaborations between State Employment Agencies, universities, VET’s and businesses. All except one business offer internship for students, especially students from universities. None of the businesses mention collaboration with VET colleges. During the research trip The Ministry of Education and Science expressed concerns in terms of difficulties setting up internships between businesses and VET students. The explanation given was, *“[that] companies prefer to train someone themselves instead of waiting 4 years for the students to finish a VET college”*. The REUA expressed that, *“lack of employers on boards, lack of engaging enterprises and places of learning”* made it difficult.

However, the interviews with the businesses add an extra dimension to it, as the majority of the businesses recruit within their network; friends and family, which could be limiting the more “open-ended” recruitment and possibilities for collaboration with VETs.

Youth Needs Assessment

The needs assessment has been conducted among 125 young people living in Gavar and the neighbouring communities. Among the respondents 68,8% are between the age of 14 and 25. The remaining 31,2% is between 26 and 30 years old. 51,2% are female.

65,6% have a higher education, 17,6% are still studying while 8,8% have a secondary education. To the question, if they currently work 63% state they do not work.

65% of the youth want to participate in non-formal education. 85,6% of the youth want to participate in free training courses in order to develop their skills. In terms of hard skills 43% want to take part in English language courses. 18% want to take part in computer

courses which correlates with the business demands of stronger skills concerning foreign language and computer skills.

18% of the youth do not know *where* to look for a job, while 16% do not know *how* to look for a job. Following that, 32% do not know how to write a CV. 40% have no idea about the job requirements in their province. This adds to the needs of change in the business' recruitment process and for the municipality to offer courses in *how to* and *where to* apply for jobs.

35,2% rate their current professional skills between 7-8 (on a scale from 0-10), 24% between 9-10, 20,8% between 5-6 and finally 13,6% on a 10. This shows a high confidence in own abilities. However, the crucial question is, how many feel confident in *applying* their current skills.

Recommendations

- 1. Collaborate with businesses in offering courses in soft skills.** Focus on offering courses in communication, creative and innovative thinking. 65% of the youth are interested in participating in such non-formal courses. Collaborate with businesses; this gives the youth a more hands on learning with concrete cases while the business get new eyes on their challenge(s), an opportunity to recruit skilled labour and get a problem solved for free.
- 2. Offer language and computer courses.** It is a shared need and demand between the businesses and youth, that skills like foreign languages, especially English and Russian and computer skills are strengthened.
- 3. Arrange meet-ups between businesses and youth.** Strengthen and make visible the different job opportunities in Gavar. The majority of the businesses recruit within friends and family which means they are more or less "invisible" to others. The meet-ups will not only contribute with more visibility but can also have as goal to create internships which can generate work experience among the youth.
- 4. Focus on developing and applying entrepreneurial ideas in collaboration with businesses.** Make entrepreneurial courses in collaboration with businesses in order to both support the businesses demands of more experience but also to make the youth aware of the job opportunities in their province. The entrepreneurial vantage point can nourish the creativity, innovation, independence and initiative among the youth - wether or not the skill is used to create a business or in a job position.

6. SUMMARY

Overall, the labour market analysis for Armenia conveys a gap between marginalized youth and the private market sector influenced by a missing link between the youth skills on paper and their ability to actually apply them in practice. However, this should also be understood as a more structural problem in terms of the difficulties in establishing collaborations with private sector businesses and the youth in order to strengthen the possibility of internship and thus gaining experience. Particularly, a focus on strengthening the collaboration between VET's and businesses should be applied. Furthermore it would be helpful to promote profession orientation and capacity building to young people. The data reveals that young people to some degree lack self-esteem and motivation and that there is a gap between the demand of the specialists and the professions chosen by young people. At the same time there is a need for raising awareness and promoting HRM, CSR and soft skill for the employers.

In addition, on the level of policy there is generally a wish that the VET educations undertake a transformation in relation to the quality and standard of new equipment and technical practices. Standards are not high enough, the educational material is outdated and does not match the needs of the businesses and the technological development. Even though none of the businesses express a discomfort per se with the level of VET educations, it is notable that only a few of *all* the interviewed businesses mention them as partners. RUEA notes that aside from problems having to do with lack of equipment and the physical premises of VET schools, along with needs of updating curricula and teaching methods, there is a lack of actively seeking to engage private enterprises and places of learning. This is echoed in interviews at the National Institute of Labour. Several businesses express interest in potentially collaborating with VET schools, but have not had the opportunity to do so. The youth participating in EU4Youth would very likely benefit from this gap being bridged.

The focus on soft skills across the four sites is noticeable. In line with the overall project aim, courses and workshops in soft skills and life skills would be beneficial and give the youth a greater possibility of becoming a part of the workforce. In terms of both hard and soft skill courses it is recommended to conjoin theory with practice; offering courses either in collaboration with businesses or focusing on case work. This increases the youth's ability to translate skills on paper to skills in practice.

BELARUS

1. AIM AND METHOD

The main objective of this section is to present a series of recommendations in terms of how the BRC Action can bridge the gap between marginalized youth and the labour market in Belarus with regional focus on Gomel and Mogilev.

To be able to match the needs of the labour market and identify matches and opportunities for youth to increase their access to employment, this section is based on a research trip to the regions of Gomel and Mogilev as well as the capital of Minsk conducted in August 2018 where qualitative methods (such as observations, semistructured interviews - 18 in total - and numerous conversations) were deployed. Interviews were held with businesses, non-governmental organisations, interest organizations and ministries (see appendix C for further information). Furthermore, local BRC offices have conducted additional interviews (see appendix D) with a wide range of local business in Gomel (18 businesses) and Mogilev (12 businesses) working in fields of service, healthcare, production and trading in order to shed light on the individual business' needs and demands, challenges and opportunities. In order to convey the gaps between the marginalized youth and labour market the BRC have conducted a needs assessment among 200 young people between the age of 16 and 39, all residents in the regions of Gomel and Mogilev.

The key findings of this section are based on a triangulation of the research trip, the additional interviews with 24 businesses in the region of Gomel and Mogilev and the results from the youth needs assessment.

Background data has been collected through earlier reports by The Swedish Public Employment Service in collaboration with Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Belarus, Committee on Labour, Employment and Social Protection of Minsk City Council, the Public Employment Service in Minsk, Vitebsk and Grodno (2013, 2017, 2018), UN records, The World Bank (2018) as well as projects carried out by BRC.

The chapter is divided into three main sections. It begins with an general overview of Belarus and its political and economical context, which provides an understanding of the field of research. Following this are the main findings in terms of the businesses demands and the youth needs assessment presented in relation to the regions of Gomel and Mogilev, ending in a number of recommendations for each region. As a conclusion a brief summary across the different recommendations will be presented.

2. THE POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMICAL CONTEXT

Belarus is located in the eastern European region, neighboring Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania and Latvia. In 1991 Belarus gained independence from Soviet Russia. Being a part of the former USSR, Belarus had the role as the so-called “assembly plant” of the Soviet Union and specialized in science-intensive production. This has in many ways predetermined the current structure of industry which is oriented towards production of ready-made items (UN). Thus, industry and production constitute the economic backbone of Belarus. After gaining independence Belarus adhered to the socially-oriented model of market economy which has proven to be consistent and efficient (UN).

A report made in collaboration between The Department of Employment in Minsk and The Swedish Public Employment Service (2013) conveys that the labour market in Belarus is still dominated by state owned enterprises which are operating in the traditional sector of the Belarusian economy, which is also evident in the data collected for this research; all JSC companies are partly state-owned collaborations. The socially-oriented model has left the private labour market with few resources, thus keeping it underdeveloped.

Belarus faces a problem of migration among young people and/or qualified professionals resulting in businesses having difficulties finding skilled labour. The 2013-report stresses that the total level of unemployment in the country is as high as 7% and the total amount of unemployed is estimated to at least 1 million persons. Especially among young people the levels of unemployment are higher than average as employers, when recruiting, prefer experienced specialists. This leads to a high degree of migration in search for jobs elsewhere (The Department of Employment in Minsk and The Swedish Public Employment Service 2013, The Committee for Labour, Employment and Social Protection of

the Minsk City Council and the Swedish Public Employment Service 2018). Another group facing long-term unemployment is disabled people. Disability is still treated by authorities as a medical problem, and there is a lack of working methods for vocational rehabilitation and employment of people with disabilities (Swedish Public Employment Service 2013).

Numerous meetings and conversations during the research trip conveyed a series of structural challenges in relation to paying taxes when unemployed. Many people, young in particular, seek jobs in the “shadow economy” or leave the country. Center for Support and Development of Youth Entrepreneurship (afterwards referred to as CSDYE) explains how the Ministry of Economy and the government have been paying attention to the development of entrepreneurship over the last two years;

Unemployment numbers: recent official statistics show that unemployment percentage is 0,5 in the regions and 0,1 in Minsk. Real numbers are much higher as people don't register as unemployed.

CSDYE clarifies that the government recognises this problem and see entrepreneurship as being a potential tool for regulation, as there is a high demand for it in the regions, especially among women and youths. A possible solution for the BRC in addressing this challenge is by supporting the yearly event of CSDYE, where youth come together and receive training and get an opportunity to create a business plan. After this follows a entrepreneurship festival where established businesses are invited to give advice and feedback.

The following unfolds the specific demands of the businesses and needs of the youth in Gomel and Mogilev and brings about specific recommendations for the two regions.

3. GOMEL

The region of Gomel is situated in the southeast corner of Belarus, bordering Russia to the east and Ukraine in the south. Around a third of the region is agricultural land. The region is one of the most advanced industrial regions in Belarus. There are about 300 medium and large enterprises, which between them account for 22% of the total industrial output of the Republic of Belarus. Agriculturally the region is self-sufficient, and also provides the food-processing sector with raw materials. The participating businesses in this research covers the following work sectors:

- Healthcare
- Production
- Trade and retail
- Service
- Agriculture

Business demands

As a consequence of the increasing migration among youth, several of the businesses express difficulties in finding qualified and specialized workers. As the textile factory Smarta states, “We are bleeding employees”. Belville, a retail company, explains how the labour market has changed; *“The labour market has changed, before we used to get 10 application per day, nowadays we get one because of the migration.”* One of the reasons for the increasing migration is the demand for specialized labour. In general there is a need for specialisation among the businesses, independent from the different work sectors. A forecast of labour market tendencies in 2018 made by the Committee for Labour, Employment and Social Protection of Minsk City Council (2018) conveys that *“Employers more and more often note an emerging shortage of specialists. At the same time, the wage level offered by employers does not motivate jobseekers to acquire and deepen their professional knowledge.”* (ibid.: 12). Even though this forecast is concentrated around the city of Minsk, the findings from this research clarifies that similar trends are at work in Gomel. Belville elaborates their experience;

People in "good working age" leave due to labour migration - there are worse working conditions abroad, but the salaries are better. It is difficult to maintain younger people in the same position. People over 40 years tend to stay in the same job and seek the securities involved (such as health insurance), younger people leave very quickly.

One way the BRC can address this problem would be by focusing on entrepreneurship and strengthen this possibility among youth. However, as the private owned furniture business Gesta points out, *“It is too hard to start as an entrepreneur. The government need to change the laws making it less complicated. There is too much paperwork for new entrepreneurs”*, and thus advices young entrepreneurs to *“leave the country.”* The structural challenges with applying entrepreneurial ideas in terms of difficult rules and legislations are - as mentioned earlier – present countrywide. However, it was especially encountered and articulated in the region of Gomel. The CSDYE explains how the main obstacle for young entrepreneurs is lack

of knowledge about entrepreneurship, while in other countries pupils already practice entrepreneurship in school. This practise does not exist in Belarus; there is no platform where people can receive information. As the CSDYE points out, a systematic approach for working with youth in this area is lacking.

The majority of the businesses in this research focus on hard skills such as education and professional skills as well as work experience when finding the right applicant. As the blood transfusion station Rogachev points out as the most important; *“Length of job experience, qualification, recommendations from previous working place.”* Zhitkovichskiy Leshoz, a forestry farm shares this view as well; *“Business skills, age, professionalism and working experience.”* The trading company Alesya follows up; *“Applicant’s education and previous work experience.”* The focus on hard skills are as shown shared across the different work sectors.

A majority of the businesses demands work specialization from the present and future workforce. However, some express dissatisfaction towards the educational system. Alkopak, a bottle production company in Gomel, tells how *“The education institutions do not listen to the demands of the labour market.”* One way to address this is by focusing on internships and giving students of universities and VET’s the opportunities of practical work experience during their studies. 6 out of the 14 businesses from the additional interviews provide internships. As the production company Olymp and Co. stresses; *“We provide practice of secondary and special educational institutions with subsequent employment in the sector of processing and harvesting of wood.”* This practise could with benefits be strengthened. Clinical Hospital Gomel has an agreement where a person can apply and receive a free education given you have a recommendation from a senior employee. Afterwards they have to work at the hospital for at least 3 years. Most of the people end up staying when this period ends. This agreement could be adopted by other businesses and work sectors, e.g a collaboration between universities and the labour market.

Secondly, a focus on internships is a way to meet the demands of work experience expressed by the majority of businesses. During an interview with the Office for Labor, Employment and Social Protection of the Gomel City Executive Committee, they explained how, in their point of view the absence of work experience is the main problem. Aside from practical work experience, young people lack an understanding of what it generally entails

to have a job. The focus on internship during studies would not only give the students important and relevant work experience, but also insights into what it actually means to hold a job on a personal as well as on a professional level. Furthermore, it is a chance for the businesses to educate the students in exactly their working practises and methods, thus giving them the opportunity to form and specialise the student to a potential future employee. This would be a mean to address the experienced mismatch between the needed skills in the labour market and the skills the educational institutions provide and focus on. A tendency not only conveyed in this current study. The forecast report from 2018 underlines this as well;

The employers, as the survey data suggest, believe that the problem comes from the fact that educational establishments train specialists of a very wide profile who have a general theoretical idea of the profession. Therefore, the labour market lack narrow, unique specialists (2018: 12).

In terms of soft skills, the focus of the businesses is minor compared to hard skills. However, several of the different companies express a demand for soft skills such as communication, teamwork, politeness, honesty and sociability. Adding to this is the important and complex factor that the applicant should not be addicted to alcohol, drugs or other substances. It is a problem faced by several companies. This is a complex challenge which demands action on several levels.

The office for Labor, Employment and Social Protection of the Gomel City Executive Council work to improve the qualifications, helps vulnerable groups and support entrepreneurships. They emphasizes that vulnerable groups should be seen as being like everyone else, and not be further separated. The Association for Social Workers points out the problematics with mental illnesses and disabilities. Overall people battling with mental illness or disabilities have poor conditions; employers do not feel obligated to hire or work with this group. The Committee for Labour, Employment and Social Protection of the Minsk City Council stresses that;

A considerable share of the unemployed in 2018 will be citizens who are not competitive in the labour market – those who lack occupation, work experience or have an occupation, which is not in demand in the economy, a lengthy interval in labour activity or limitations due to the health condition (Committee for Labour, Employment and Social Protection of the Minsk City Council 2018: 6).

Youth Needs Assessment

The results of the youth assessment conducted in the Gomel region is used to identify the needs and challenges of socially disadvantaged youth. The respondents are 100 young people aged 16 to 35 years. 15 % live in Gomel city, 59% in bigger cities and district centers while the remaining 26% live in smaller villages in rural areas. 54 of respondents are female and 46 men.

47% of the young people do not study nor work. 35 % work full time, 5% part time. The remaining 13 % either study or combine work and study. Among the 40% of the employed youth, 65 % are workers in the construction, trade and service sector. The remaining 35% work as qualified professionals such as health workers, lawyers and teachers. Statistics show that among the employed youth, men make up for 58% and women 42% where the majority (63%) is between 30 and 39 years of age. As for the most acute problems in the process of finding a job, "No vacancies" takes the lead with 22%. However, following this 15% expresses they do not encounter any problems. 11% points to low salaries as encountered problems.

When assessing non-formal education, we see that the majority (54%) of respondents are interested in receiving such education. Thus, BRC have a great vantage point in offering soft skill courses focusing on communication, teamwork and collaboration skills, personal leadership skills and time management. In terms of participating in training courses in order to develop their professional skills (hard skills) 87% would like to. However, 42% do not know what kind of training course they would take part in. 39% answers they would participate in additional educational courses such as accounting and computer courses. The specific interest in these topic could be explained by the fact that the majority (39%) would start their own businesses if they had the money. However, to the question "what would you do, if you did not find your dream job in your place of residence" only 15% would create their own job, whereas 55% would adapt to the situation and 20% would leave the country.

Nonetheless, the fact that 55% would adapt to the situation indicates a willingness and want to stay, why there would be a basis for cultivating and encouraging youth to go into entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the needs assessment underlines that unemployed people seek other options in terms of income, as only 3 % relies on state assistance".

Recommendations

- 1. Consider how to offer courses in entrepreneurship.** As mentioned, entrepreneurship could be a beneficial way to address the migration problem and youth seems to see it as a positive possibility – if the process is funded. The research has also shown that the rules and legislations concerning entrepreneurship are complex. We therefore recommend close collaboration with Center for Support and Development of Youth Entrepreneurship in relation to their yearly event and festival for entrepreneurship.
- 2. Create information and collaboration hubs between companies and educational institutions.** BRC could act as the link between the labour market and the educational institutions in terms of strengthening the collaboration and enhance the use of internship/training in practice. It could be beneficial to go deeper into how and why businesses do or do not use internships as to gain a better understanding for their reality and actions, thus making it more concrete in terms of what to focus on in collaboration hubs between companies and educational institutions.
- 3. Focus on providing life skills and soft skills courses.** Even though the businesses do not mention soft skills as the most important per se, it is evident that a large group of young people faces challenges in their personal lives - many of them having depression close to them, making it difficult for them to engage in jobsearch. However, there is a willingness and interest from the youth in terms of finding a job and 54% expresses interest in participating in soft skill courses. A focus on personal development and guidance could make it more bearable for the youth to engage in job search and the different courses and workshops connected hereto, eg. in personal leadership, time management, responsibility, communication, teamwork etc. This could redress the businesses perception of the youth not knowing what it says to hold a job.
- 4. Campaigning for “everyone is needed”.** People dealing with mental illnesses and/or disabilities is a group facing several challenges in terms of joining the labor force. They face stigmas and prejudgements. Sharing information and spreading knowledge is a way to break down misconceptions thereby increasing the possibilities of companies opening up to hire or take on interns from vulnerable groups in society. Focus on the person instead of the diagnosis, letting the business to get to know the person behind the label. It is important to continue a close dialogue with businesses and campaigning for a more inclusive stand in terms of working conditions, working hours, having a mentor on the job. In relation to this a collaboration with state employment agency or other state institutions or interest organizations would be beneficial if possible.

4. MOGILEV

The region of Mogilev is situated in the eastern part of Belarus, bordering Russia. Nearly half of the region is agricultural land and more than third is covered by forests. The Mogilev region is one of the major industrial centres of Belarus. The biggest industries include tyres, lifts, electronics and motors. Most of the agriculture is arable. However, there is also a significant cattle farming industry, providing meat, dairy and leather supplies. The businesses participating in this research covers the following work sectors:

- Production
- Construction
- Retail and trade
- Services
- Agriculture
- Healthcare

Business demands

As an equivalent to the businesses of Gomel, the participating businesses from Mogilev also have focus on hard skills such as education and professional qualifications, job experience as well as living up to the labor legislation in terms of having the right documents, exemplified by JSC Osipovich Plant of Automobile Aggregates; *“Package of documents according to the labor legislation, recommendations from previous working places. Education, qualification, ability and skills.”* The bakery and confectionary company Domochay follows; *“Appropriate education and qualification, age, positive feedbacks from previous working places.”* The wholesale and retail company Mogilevmezhraybaza express how; *“Relevant education, working experience and length of work experience”* is crucial in finding the right applicant. This comes to show that the focus on hard skills is shared across work sectors. Furthermore, it conveys how work experience, the length of it and recommendations from prior work places are in high demand. The agricultural enterprise Zarya underlines this point of view; *“If you are “just” a student, you are “raw”, untrained, not mature.”* The lift company JSC Mogilevliftmash expresses how; *“They [youth in particular] are not ready and in lack of the right skills. They are immature, they don’t know what they want. They need as a minimum to have to will to work.”*

It is also evident that a gap between the demands of the labour market and the educational institutions, especially VET colleges, exists. As the Office for Labour Market in

Mogilev Municipality explained in an interview during the research trip, more internships need to be made. Right now there is 8500 vacancies, especially in the medical sphere, sowing, sales and cooking. Some employers organises vocational training themselves for the exact job position in order to match the needs of the companies and bridge the gap between competencies and demands. Several companies stresses that even though people are educated, they are still not specialized - and thereby qualified to carry out a job, like Mogilevmezhraybaza tells: *"It is desirable to be familiar of specialized programs that are used in the trading activities of the enterprise."*

These insights call to a focused effort in strengthening and spreading the use of internships from the companies point of view as well as from the vocational colleges. Some districts in Mogilev are already working on this in order to create more specialist in the future. A third of the businesses provide internships. However, it is evident that a majority of the businesses focus more on internal mentorship for new employees, and in many ways perceives the mentorship as internship. The wholesale and retail company Mogilev Interdistrict Base, tells how there internship in the workplace is used; *"There is a mentoring system. An experienced specialist is assigned to a young specialist; work is carried out according to an approved individual plan."* It would be a beneficial role for the BRC to lead this in terms of creating meet-ups and information hubs between VET's and companies, as well as between students and companies. Furthermore, a strengthened use of internships would influence positively on the students work experience already before graduating, thus meeting the demands of the businesses in terms of the applicant having practical work experience and recommendations.

A challenge which came to light during this research are the problems concerning transport to and from rural areas to the respected workplace. Several young people living in small town in rural areas are unemployed due to lack of transportation. The company JSC Mogilev Metallurgical Works, stresses how; *"People from rural areas has a hard time coming here because of transportation. There is no dormitory. Youth needs a place to stay to be able to work here."* Hotel Mogilev experiences the same problem; *"People from rural areas can be good workers, but for success focus must be on: transportation, relocation, internship and information."* Attention need to be brought to this problem. There can be a series of solutions to this from arranging information campaigns, arranging daily busses with help of the municipality or getting a handful of companies experiencing this problem to get

together in terms of providing dormitories or other forms of housing for future workers. Another focus could be to follow the practise of the supermarket JSC EVROOPT, who sends trainers to rural areas in order to train and educate staff in the rural area.

JSC EVROOPT tells how; *"We give everyone a chance. People are different, we have an individual approach."* Everyone gets training and a mentor who helps with onboarding. Thus there is no need for any specific professional skills. They collaborate with VET colleges and employment centers and gives attention to also take in and train social disabled people. JSC EVROOPT underlines how; *"Interests in the work, willingness, motivation to receive qualification and honesty, reliable and teamwork are important."* Focus on motivation and dedication among youth and the wish to work are, among others, expressed by the company Zenit and Kruglyanskaya a construction company as well. The agricultural company Zarya explains how;

There are two kinds of people, The ones who can, but don't want to and the ones who want, but can't. We need people with more dedication. It is not easy to work with young people, they don't know what they want, they need to find their own core.

In relation to this, BRC could focus on offering Life Skills courses and collaborate with schools in terms of offering career advice and workshops for students in universities and VET's as well as to pupils attending secondary school. Furthermore, internships could also be a mean to help young people finding "their core and own path" in the labour market. However, on a structural level there is a need for looking at the working conditions and level of salary. The Committee for Labour, Employment and Social Protection of the Minsk City Council (2018) points to the fact, that young people's low motivation towards acquiring blue-collar professions among other stems from; *"unattractive terms of employment (salary, working conditions, worn-out equipment, work schedule, etc.)"* (ibid.: 15)

When looking at required soft skills the focus especially turns towards communication skills, teamwork, responsibility and honesty. Hotel Mogilev demands soft skills such as; *"working in teams, personal values, communication, openness and honesty."* Mogilev Central Clinic demands soft skills like; *"Communication and of course willingness to work, honesty and initiative."* According to what future skills are needed a majority of the businesses do not have an answer. However JSC Osipovichi Plant of Automobile Aggregates requires: *"Strong team players, leadership and organizational skills."* The agricultural Enterprise focuses on; *"IT and/or digital skills because everything is automatized."* Mogilev

Central Clinic demands future skills like; *“Language and information technology, stress handling, communication and conflict resolution.”* Hotel Mogilev requires better language skills for the future.

Youth Needs Assessment

The results of the youth assessment conducted in the Mogilev region is used to identify the needs and challenges of socially disadvantaged youth. The respondents are 100 young people aged 16 to 39 years. The majority (63%) of the respondents live in rural areas. 37% live in towns of Mogilev region and Mogilev city. 36 of the respondents neither study nor work, 35 work, 26 respondents currently study and 2 are engaged in part-time employment. Finally 1 respondent studies alongside employment. 47% are male, while 53% are women. The majority of the women are between 16 and 29 years of age and live in rural areas.

The most common problems when looking for a job are the need for professionals with work experience, inadequate work schedule and salary and the lack of opportunity to enhance professional skills. However, only 36% are interested in non-formal education. Note that the reason why the remaining 64% are not interested could be due to the fact that they do not fully understand the term and its components.

The course that scores the most in terms of which training course they would like to take part in is entrepreneurship (10%). Note 63% did not manage to give an exact answer, why they are not taken into account. Corresponding this, to the question of what type of activity the respondent would like to do, if they had the giving funds, entrepreneurship scores the highest again (21%). However, 62 respondents found it difficult to answer, which could be seen as a supporting indicator for the businesses perception of the youth not yet having found their core and path. 65% expressed a desire to participate in free training courses. 19% found it difficult to answer. In relation to this 82% did not understand the labour market requirements. This calls for a focus on one side providing courses on how to apply for jobs (focus on how and where to find vacancies, how to write an application and CV) and courses in the rules and regulations of the unemployment system. Furthermore, it would be valuable to arrange meet-ups with businesses as to provide the youth with the opportunity to talk to and get to know first-hand, what the businesses want and demands.

In case of not finding a dream job at the place of residence, 49% will adapt to the situation, 16% will create a dream job by themselves, 11% will leave the country, while 24%

chose other options. As mentioned above entrepreneurship has the highest ranking in relation to what courses the youth wish to engage in. The gap between the 21% who would like to be an entrepreneur if having the sufficient funds and the 16% who would create their own job, if they could not find their dream job, could either indicate the inherent risk factor in starting own business as well as the lack of knowledge on how to actually do it.

Recommendations

- 1. Strengthen the use of internship.** A majority of the participating businesses stresses how work experience and specialised knowledge are an important factor when finding the right applicant. The use of internship is a fruitful way to accommodate this demand from the labour market. It will give the students a possibility of developing skills in practise, get experience and a sense of what it will say to have a job and be way to bridge the gap between VET and the labour market demands.
- 2. Focus on offering transportation from rural areas.** The research conveyed how it is a problem that a lot of young people in rural areas are unemployed due to logistics. They cannot transport themselves to relevant workplaces situated other places. BRC could with benefit raise awareness to this problem engaging companies in providing dormitories, housing or daily transport to and from the workplace.
- 3. Cultivate motivation among youth by offering workshops.** Several of the businesses mention how youth lack motivation, dedication and willingness. BRC could cultivate this among youth by offering Life Skills courses, workshops in terms of finding one's motivation and path, professional and/or personal interest and incorporate them in their job search or career.
- 4. Provide meet-ups between local businesses and youth.** 82 of the respondents in the youth needs assessment did not know the requirements of the labour market. Arranging meet-ups between businesses and youth would be an opportunity to give the youth first-hand knowledge of the labour markets requirements.
- 5. Provide courses in soft skills, language, IT and entrepreneurship.** Among the companies soft skills such as communication, conflict resolution and collaboration/teamwork were at the top in terms of both which soft skills are required as well as which skills will be required in the future. In terms of required skills in the future language and IT skills were in high demand. Furthermore, 82% of the respondents in the youth needs assessment did not know the requirements of the labour market, on reason for this could be the lack of knowledge on how and where to look for jobs. Entrepreneurship ranks high among the youth, however,

lack of knowledge on how to actually do it both in terms of how to make a business plan, a budget, to fundraise and network as well as how to navigate in the rules and regulations of starting own businesses are lacking.

5. SUMMARY

In general the gaps between the labour market and youth are influenced by structural challenges. The biggest challenge is young people migrating in order to look for better jobs - and salaries - abroad. Secondly, it has the consequence of leaving a great part of the active workforce in the so called “shadow economy” where both salaries and working conditions are poor. Another challenge is the complex bureaucratic system of entrepreneurship. As both the business demands and needs assessment among youth convey, there is too much paperwork and “red tape” blocking the youth from starting their own business, which 39% of the youth living in the region of Gomel would like to and 21% of the youth in Mogilev would like to if they had the sufficient funds.

In terms of empowering and inclusion of people struggling with disabilities and/or mental illness, the businesses do not have a high awareness of how to work with and include this segment in their workforce. Sharing knowledge is an important way to break down misconceptions and prejudgements.

The business demands call for a focus on soft skill training as a majority of the businesses experience how youth do not know what it means to have a job; meeting hours, responsibility, reliability and communication. The BRC has an important role in terms of meeting this demand and offering soft skills courses. When looking at the needs assessment it is evident that the youth as well has an interest in strengthening their soft skills, 54% of the youth in Gomel and 36% of the youth in Mogilev would actually like to participate in soft skill training.

Overall, it is beneficial for the future work in BRC to focus on a close ongoing collaboration and dialogue with the labour market in order to bridge the gaps between aforementioned and the youth. Engaging youth in workshops and training courses in soft and hard skills based on dialogue with businesses is crucial. As well as arranging meet-ups between youth and businesses.

GEORGIA

1. AIM AND METHOD

The main objective of this chapter is to present a series of recommendations in terms of how the Action can bridge the gap between marginalized youth and the labour market in Georgia with regional focus on Senaki, Zugdidi and Khelvachauri municipalities.

To be able to match the needs of the labour market and identify matches and opportunities for youth to increase their access to employment, the report is based on research trips to Senaki, Zugdidi and Khelvachauri region conducted in May and June 2018, along with meetings with relevant ministries and organizations in Tbilisi, where qualitative methods (such as observations, semi-structured interviews - 33 in total - along with numerous conversations) were deployed. Interviews were held with businesses, non-governmental organisations, interest organizations and ministries (see appendix E for further information). Furthermore, local GRCS offices have conducted additional interviews (see appendix F) with a wide range of local business in Senaki (4 businesses), Zugdidi (5 businesses) and Khelvachauri/Batumi (8 businesses), some of them working in fields ranging from tourism, service, production to agriculture and banking, in order to shed light on the individual business' needs and demands, challenges and opportunities. Furthermore, local RC Offices have conducted Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) among youths in Zugdidi, Senaki and Khelvachauri municipalities in order to unfold the needs of the youth. VCA is a tool which enables identification and mapping of key socio-economic challenges and capacities within communities through gender and age sensitive inclusion and mobilisation of community members. The result and analysis of the VCA was made by the GRCS.

The businesses that have taken part in interviews cannot be seen as fully representative of all businesses in Senaki, Zugdidi and Khelvachauri in terms of the demands and challenges they have and meet. Instead, they should be understood as indicative of the overall tendencies in the field of business they represent. The key findings of this section are based on a triangulation of the research trip, the additional interviews with local businesses and the results from the Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA). Background data has been collected through earlier reports by The World Bank (2014, 2015) and Ministry of

Labour, Health and Social Affairs Georgia (2015) along with similar projects by non-governmental organizations (World Vision Georgia 2015) and projects carried out by local Red Cross Offices in the respective regions of the current project.

This chapter is divided into four main sections, beginning with an general overview of Georgia and its political and economical context providing an understanding of the field of research. Subsequently the main findings of the labour market research are presented in relation to Zugdidi, Senkai and Khelvachauri. Following this the insights from the youth VCA conducted by local GRCS offices are presented. The main findings are analyzed in relation to the results from the labour market research with the goal to identify gaps between needs and demands - this leading to 10 recommendations as possible ways to bridge the gaps between the private labour market and youth.

2. THE POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMICAL CONTEXT

Since the gaining of independence in 1991, sociopolitical instabilities have severely marked the everyday lives of large parts of Georgia's population. This has been particularly prominent in border regions to Abkhazia and South Ossetia. As a consequence of political instability and economic challenges, out-migration has been significant in the country for the last two decades, both in terms of rural youth leaving for larger cities and in terms of seasonal or complete migration abroad. This is an aspect that has also been highlighted as prominent in the interviews conducted for this report, and one that affects upon all three sites.

Following the revolution in 2004 a series of public institutions were reformed and large scale projects (such as boosting tourism) were initiated. Despite the success of some of these, they are yet to benefit parts of the population, particularly those living in rural areas. Moreover, for ordinary people, local businesses and NGOs alike it has often been challenging to navigate the reform processes undertaken. On an overall level, there has been a surprising lack of cooperation between the private sector, NGOs and state institutions, a gap that this project may fruitfully seek to address. It should be noted that a willingness for such cooperation in relation to this project has been prominent among business owners, state-organizations and other NGOs alike during interviews.

The following unfolds the specific demands of the businesses in Senaki, Zugdidi and Khelvachauri municipalities.

3. SENAKI

Senaki is a town in the Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti region in the western part of Georgia. The SMEs particularly work within the fields of agro products such as nuts, tea, milk and corn, processing factories and wood and asphalt production. Added to this are a small number of individual or family-run enterprises, mainly working with tourism or handicrafts. The businesses from Senaki participating in the additional interviews work in the areas of:

1. Agriculture
2. Construction
3. Healthcare

Business demands

Despite the fact that the four companies are in different fields of business, they have a series of common demands and challenges. Especially the focus on experience of the applicant is shared among them. However, it depends on the job. If it is non-professional, the motivation and willingness to work are seen as more important than both CV and experience. As the business LTD “Keda”, who processes and exports hazelnuts, explains:

No special professional skills are required for those who work on hazelnut processing. Soft skills are also less important for us. As for other positions like accountant, technologist, manager and etc. we request appropriate education in the field, good communication and team working skills, experience in the field would be an asset.

A hazelnut worker does not need to have specific skills, professional nor soft skills, however an accountant or a technologist need an appropriate education and specific soft skills. This attitude is not uniquely for Keda. Both Savane (a construction company) and Oso (which works with construction and refurbishment) share this, saying that for their construction workers, there are no special requirements. However their engineers need to present a CV and relevant experience. LTD Clinic Senamedi, who provides medical services, states that in terms of applications they: *“mainly focus on professional education; and then professional experience would be an asset of course.”* This points to different demands according to the field of business and the profession.

During the research trip it became clear that not only hard skills are pivotal, but soft skills as well. Soft skills like personal leadership, herein the skills of organizing, planning and monitoring as well as motivation and willingness to work are in demand. Senamedi states that: “[...] as for the soft skills like communication, creative thinking, teamwork and networking skills are required” whereas Savane emphasises: “that a person should be compliant, follow rules and regulations (for instance follow all the safety rules during the construction work).” Evidently, communication skills and teamwork are in high demand. It is worth mentioning that hard and soft skills do not exclude each other. However, the businesses do not elaborate on what they see as hard skills other than the necessary education or certificate.

The general lack of information and collaboration between businesses and educational institutions creates a gap between skills learned during education and the actual demand of skills in the labour market. This gap is illustrated by the fact that only one of the four businesses provides internships. Internships is a fruitful way to strengthen the collaboration between labour market and the educational sphere securing a better alignment between the skills needed in practise and the skills taught. Only Savane uses internships, but not officially; “Yes, we have experience of internship, when interested candidates come here to learn particular professions, for example, recently we had an intern who wanted to study accountants work. This happens unofficially as a rule”. As the quotation illustrates, it is done unofficially. As the Ministry of Education and Science explains, there are not yet any systematic use of mentor- or internship, or in using companies as role models.

A systematic use of internship would strengthen the collaboration between VET colleges and the private labour market minimizing the gap between skills and jobs. Moreover, this could be beneficial in terms of breaking down the present stigmas towards which job you hold as well as the reputation of vocational training. American Chamber of Commerce explains the majority of youth seeks towards university because of these stigmas. Oso, working within construction and refurbishment, feels the consequence of this saying, “Although there is massive unemployment in Georgia, it is very difficult to find an employee even if you need simple construction workers. Usually young people are ashamed of their work as a construction worker.” Interviews in the regions support this claim, particularly in terms of youth feeling pressured by parents who perceive VET colleges as a

second-rate educations. This is a situation the Ministry of Education and Science currently tries to improve by promoting and branding vocational training.

Furthermore, during the research trip to Senaki it became clear that transportation is a problem among youth. Both in terms of transporting one from home to the workplace which challenges the possibility of getting a job, but also in terms of having the possibility of participating in youth activities. As the possibilities in Senaki in terms of youth activities are limited it would be beneficial to arrange transportation to Zugdidi, where possibilities of participating in youth activities are bigger.

3. ZUGDIDI

Zugdidi is the capital city of the province of Samegrelo and is the regional center for education. The province of Samegrelo is situated in the western part of Georgia. The participating businesses in this survey represents the following fields of business:

1. Service
2. Finance
3. Telecommunication
4. Agriculture

Business demands

The main challenge is finding skilled and experienced labour. As both Hotel Iberia Palace and Anka Fair Trade express, *“Those who are more experienced and educated they don’t want to work in Zugdidi and mainly move to the capital city.”* (Hotel Iberia Palace). Anka Fair Trade continues,

But it’s very difficult to find experienced employees and we have such cases that we hire less experienced ones (Hazelnut business is relatively a new area in Georgia) and then take care for their development. For instance for the newly selected lab. specialist we brought experienced specialist from Turkey to train this new employee. This is a general challenge in Georgia; companies in lack of experienced and skilled employees. As pointed out by the Ministry of Education and Science, a lot of young men and women migrate to the neighbouring Turkey for seasonal work or to bigger cities hoping to enhance their job opportunities. This is articulated by local Red Cross offices and Khelvachauri Youth Center as well, stressing that youth cannot see the possibilities in Georgia and therefore migrate to Turkey. This is a complex problem demanding attention and collaboration between the different educational institutions, governmental institutions,

NGOs and the privat labour market.

Three out of the five interviewed businesses provide internships. JSC TBC Bank collaborates with Meskhia University providing internships for their students where Agro Lazika collaborates with agricultural and technical universities funding their students if they agree to continue working at the company. JSC Silknet collaborates with Sokhumi University, stating:

Yes, we have such practice, periodically we have students of Sokhumi University here for practice. Actually, this is not a formal process. We proactively look for such students and they might become our potential employees. Tbilisi office has extensive practice of such internship.

It is worth noticing that JSC Silknet does not officially collaborate with Sokhumi University, underlining the need for a more systematic use of internships and collaboration between educational institutions and businesses. All of the five businesses are providing mentorship for newly selected employees as well as for interns. This practise could beneficially be applied for all employees as a mean of securing ongoing skill development thus keeping up with new techniques and innovation in the respected field of business.

In many ways the field of business influences how tensive a focus the individual business has on hard and soft skills. In the agricultural field the demand for non-professional work is high and the focus on and demands for specific hard skills low. Agro Laziko who cultivates berry fruits explains, *"We mainly need workmen (they mainly have to work on land) here, so we don't have any special requirements. Motivation to work with us is enough."* LTD Anka Fair Trade, processing hazelnuts follows: *"As for the daily workers we don't ask them to bring CVs"*. On the contrary the hotel business and finance sector have a greater focus on education and professional skills, exemplified by JSC TBC Bank; *"For each position job-specific professional and soft skills as well as appropriate education you need to perform a particular job would be required."* As in Senaki, hard skills are not further elaborated than having the relevant education for the specific job. However, it was made clear that the youth is lacking skills in writing a CV;

First of all, I should admit that many even don't know how to complete CVs. So, for example on the position of administrator I would not discuss the applications with incomplete CVs. So, I focus on completeness of the CV.

A future hard skill that is high in demand because of the growing tourism is the knowledge

of language, which is both expressed by Hotel Palace and Agro Lazika, the latter being in terms of getting acquainted with the latest news within the field.

The additional interviews, as well as the interviews conveyed during the research trip, make evident that both hard and soft skills are in demand. Agro Lazika expresses how they view communication skills and teamwork as the most important soft skills as do Hotel Iberian Palace and Anka Fair Trade:

There are some criteria that makes a person employable in our company such as willingness, good vision, adherence to hygienic rules, being organized [...] Good communication skills and team working would be the most important soft skills for us. (Anka Fair Trade)

In general soft skills like communication, being able to work in teams, motivation and willingness to work are important across all the five businesses.

The ways of recruiting is a mix of both informal and formal channels, e.g. job postings on www.job.ge. and in news paper, TV and/or radio channels and informal ways such as recommendations from current employees, friends and/or family. Anka Fair Trade explains how they use formal channels when wanting to recruit professional staff and informal when recruiting non-professional staff, *“We recently wanted to hire a lab specialist and we made announcement on jobs.ge. As for finding the daily staff (workers) we mainly use informal ways, through recommendation of existing staff or our friends.”* Even though only mentioned by Anka Fair Trade, it could however be beneficial for other businesses as well to intertwine the different channels, not only making the job position decide which channel to recruit from in order to enhance possibility of reaching more candidates with different backgrounds and skills.

4. KHELVACHAURI

Khelvachauri is a small town located 8 km from Batumi, the capital of the autonomous republic of Adjarien province in the the southwestern part of Georgia. Batumi is situated by the Black Sea making it a popular tourist attraction. Furthermore Batumi has an active industrial harbour. The interviewed businesses represent the following areas:

1. Production
2. Service/turism
3. Trading
4. Construction

5. Media publishing

Business demands

In general when looking for non-professional workers there are less requirements from the businesses point of view. The most important is experience and good recommendations. As to professional workers focus is on education and the ability of fulfilling the specific professional requirements of the respective job position. Hotel Wyndham underlines this distinction saying that for managerial and upper level positions educational background is very important, while for housekeepers and service delivery staff hard skills such as language are less important. Instead, experience is in focus. Hotel Radisson Blu follows up on this point of view:

For instance, if I have a vacancy of reception staff first of all knowledge of foreign languages will be important, this may not be so important if I'm looking for a waitress. In the case of housekeeper, I may focus on her experience of working in a brand hotel and so on.

This is not only practised in the hotel business, but also present in the field of manufacturing where the bakery LTD Khelvachauri Purproduqtebi explains how higher education and relevant professional skills and experience is required for the managerial personnel, laboratory workers and accountants. As for the bakers, they focus on aspects like age, appearance, hygiene and bakery skills as well. Furthermore, they explain how they do not *"have special requirements, if a person comes and has no skills at that moments, we teach/train her/him so she/he becomes employable in this company."* The bakery's focus on hiring people without any immediate skills is shared with the sewing factory Batumi Tex; *"Having sewing skills will be an asset but as I already mentioned if a person does not have these skills we offer them one-month probation period (which is reimbursed) and train him/her to develop these skills."* This finding does not per se categorize as a demand, yet it conveys a gap between the private labour market and the youth. The businesses express how they are open to hire people *not* showing a certificate or holding a specific education. Instead motivation, willingness to work and in some cases experience are important. Several of the businesses articulate how they do not mind, if the applicant does not have any skills. They hire the person anyway and train them during the employment.

This kind of practice should be shared through different information channels, eg. the businesses own website, announcement in the local community, jobcenters, on Job Fairs

etc. thus increasing the potential for the recipients to be aware of this possibility. Furthermore this would help increase the visibility of vacancies which among others Youth Center Khelvachauri points out as being too few. Furthermore, there is a discrepancy between the statements of the businesses and the Khelvachauri Youth Center's perception of the businesses not being willing to hire youth. As the Ministry of Education and Youth points out, awareness needs to be raised towards career and job possibility starting with the businesses taking co-initiative and responsibility. At the same time this could heighten the motivation among youth.

Five out of the eight businesses who have been interviewed additionally provide internships. The businesses are in the branches of hotel, security service, manufacturing and media-publishing. The branches of trading and construction do not yet provide internships, however they show interest. Especially the hotel industry works with great attention towards this, offering paid dual internship:

As I already mentioned we have signed dual program with state professional collages (Black Sea Collage and New Wave) and their student will have opportunity to make internship at our hotel (both undergo theoretical training and practice). The internship will be paid. (Hotel Radisson Blu Batumi)

Hotel Wyndham Batumi are in the process of starting dual internships. A focus on internship and a systemic collaboration between the private labour market and colleges can strengthen the quality of the educations (VET colleges as well as universities) and make it easier for the students to translate their skills from paper to practise - as well as giving them experience during their studies, like the media publishing agency LTD Gazeti Batumelebi explains:

We have collaboration with different universities (Tbilisi State University, Caucasus School of Business and others) and provide summer internship for their students. The funding for this internship is provided by the university. Periodically we also make announcements for internship and students have opportunity to work together with our experienced staff and develop writing skills, interviewing skills and etc.

This, however, means that the universities and VET colleges are ready to offer time and resources in supporting internships for their students.

Across the different work branches the businesses in general demand soft skills like communication, teamwork and motivation, exemplified by Delta Services; *"Communication skills, motivation, teamwork, being organized and honest are all important soft skills for us."*

The importance of motivation is a crucial point as several of the governmental institutions, NGOs and private businesses interviewed during the research trip mentioned a lack of motivation among youth as a challenge.

5. YOUTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

According to the data from National Statistics Office of Georgia in 2017 the unemployment rate in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti Region is 8.6%; in Adjara 10.9%. More than 40% of the interviewed young people in this survey label themselves as unemployed. Such a radical difference between the official data and this assessment is caused by how the youth themselves perceive the term “unemployed”; if they do not have the desired job with the relevant salary they categorize themselves as unemployed.

GRCS staff members and up to 60 volunteers conducted a youth needs assessment in the three target locations in August and September 2018. Here the tools from VCA was used. The aim of the assessment was to find out the needs of the youth, what are their problems and challenges during an employment phase. This assessment has been done by using tools of Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments:

- **Secondary Data** – Search and analyze existing secondary data;
- **Mapping** – Providing employment opportunities in territorial units;
- **Season calendar** - Determine the possibility of seasonal employment opportunities;
- **Problem tree** - Find out the problems of the community related to the employment and make the optimal decisions;
- **Individual interviews** - Individual surveys of beneficiaries.

Gender and age diversity, as well as professional background has been taken into consideration while conducting the assessment, people with disabilities and IDPs have also taken part in the meetings. In every municipality 150 individual and 15 focus group meetings (6-8 people in each group) were conducted by 2 volunteers, one who was facilitating and another who documented the meeting. In total 744 respondents has been questioned during the assessment. 327 females and 417 males were interviewed in the ages: 28% 16-19 year old, 31% 20-24 year old, 21% 25-29 years old and finally 21% 30-33 year old.

Main findings

After analyzing the data it was highlighted that one of the main problems in all target municipalities was lack of available workplaces. Despite the fact that there are several opportunities (state and private sectors) in the municipalities to be employed, lack of available workplaces is still an actual problem which is increasing migration from rural and suburban regions to the capital. Furthermore, youth are facing difficulties finding a relevant and desired workplace with decent salaries after finishing their education.

- **Excessive expectations of employer to potential employees.** In most cases the employers' claims and expectations are perceived as excessive and are often not seen as relevant in relation to the work and salary.
- **Nepotism.** Individual interviews as well as focus group meetings revealed that a majority of the young people think employers hire people whom they know because of a lacking competitive business environment. This fact de-motivate youth from seeking jobs.
- **Low salaries.** Most of the interviewed highlighted that they see the payment as not being in line with the job.
- **Lack of job opportunities.** This is one of the main challenges faced by the youth. There is lack of job opportunities on the labour market and at the same time there are many people looking for jobs.
- **Lack of required qualifications.** Young people often do not have the appropriate qualifications when they are looking for jobs making it difficult to find one thus leading to demotivation.
- **Lack of part-time jobs.** Another one of the main challenges that young people face while searching for job opportunities is lack of part time and/or free scheduled jobs. School pupils (12th grade) and/or university students have limited opportunities to find jobs, and work during their free time.
- **Lack of non-formal skills.** More than half of respondents mentioned that because of lack of non-formal skills they have less chance of being employed. Youth don't have life-skills and practical skills. The situation is aggravated by the fact that there are no free training courses on local level.

- **Lack of information about professions.** Often there is a lack of information among school children about different professions. Youth don't have information on which kinds of professions exist.
- **Entrepreneurship.** Apart from employment problems, young people do not have knowledge and skills to start their own small business. They do not know how to launch their idea into reality, how to write a project proposal, where and how to get funding etc.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The main findings from the business survey focusing on the businesses demands and the needs assessment focusing on youths need has lead to the following recommendations in order to bridge the gaps between the private labour market and the youth.

- 1. Ongoing contact between GRCS and private sector.** Ensure that an ongoing contact between GRCS and the private sector is maintained and developed throughout the project, and encourage contact between businesses and VET colleges through meetings between GRCS and representatives from the different parties. AmCham among others emphasizes that the corporation with companies should be in practice and relation-based - not only on a policy level. This underlines the importance of ongoing, practical, involvement between GRCS and the companies.
- 2. Information hubs for young people.** A focus on information hubs should be outlining where young people can search for jobs (online portals etc), where funding opportunities and programmes for entrepreneurs are available, when and where courses on soft skills take place, possibilities at VET colleges, study programs and which mentorship and internships are available. Furthermore, this could help decrease the experience of nepotism present among the youth. As the needs assesment shows their prejudice has negative influences on their job opportunities, why the job possibilities need to be more transparent.
- 3. Internships.** One possibility of dealing with the problem of out-migration is by focusing on internships with colleges but also during secondary school or after finishing ones degree. Moreover, the lack of part-time jobs may propel youth to seek out temporary jobs abroad. Approaching local business with the aim of creating part-time jobs will serve as beneficial both for the target group (who will gain experience and increase opportunities to work while studying) and businesses (who on the long run will gain more experienced employees).

- 4. Arrange company visits for youth.** While the youth assessment shows that youth find companies to have excessive expectations, interviews with companies reveal many to believe that youth lack motivation (the latter is often being a gendered issue, relating particularly to young men). While job-fairs are a good possibility for creating contact between businesses and local youth, on-site meetings may prove more fruitful as it provides youths with the opportunity to see the actual workplace (and potentially talk to other employees) and the employers an opportunity to get to know the potential employees. In addition, this could help young people to get acquainted with employers requests and demands bridging the gap between the different perceptions of what it takes to get a job, and thus enhancing the motivation among youth.
- 5. Arrange mentorships with individual entrepreneurs.** While there are state-run organizations supporting new entrepreneurs, youths may benefit from meeting up with established entrepreneurs. In several interviews it was problematized that young entrepreneurs tend to focus on establishing small businesses that in effect already exist, thus limiting their potential for success. Having a mentor who has succeeded in becoming an entrepreneur may help to (re)focus ideas as a supplement to the organizational support provided by state-programmes. In addition, this could help create more jobs thus enhancing a more competitive business environment.
- 6. Information and experience exchange between businesses.** The practise of hiring people without the necessary skills with the purpose of training them during the employment should be shared and distributed to other businesses and field of businesses. Create information hubs or other forms of exchange with focus on sharing information and experience between businesses and across fields; a hotel can learn from a production company and vice versa. A more communicative model could also be applied here, RC collecting data about “best practise” and distributing to the other companies in the network of the project.
- 7. Free training courses in CV writing and soft skills.** As Hotel Iberia Palace illustrates a lot of applicants do not know how to write a CV why they do not take them into consideration for the job. Overall, the general lack of soft skills needs to be addressed as a focal point. As a case in point this may be in terms of English (and Russian) language courses, particularly in relation to the tourism industry, that focus on *practicing* language skills and not just on having a diploma. The needs assesment further conveys a need for courses in office programs as well as courses focusing on life skills as to increase the self-confidence among youth.

- 8. Focus on the marginalized youth that are not enrolled in an educational institution.** A lot of the companies represented in this survey do not have any specific requirements which makes it possible to take in youth “outside the system” as interns. However, this has another side to it; the salary and working conditions.
- 9. Campaigns on “everyone is wanted”.** Rising awareness campaigns together with businesses who are interested in hiring applicants without the immediate skills and train them during the employment. It would be beneficial to do this in collaboration with the government; 50/50 paid by company and government. According to Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Affairs models like this already exist. But it needs more awareness and more direct involvement by the businesses - especially those taking in “non-professionals”. GRCS could be the connecting point between the youth, the companies and policymakers at the Ministries.
- 10. Dual internship in different branches.** For example in production, service-sector and construction. Young people should during their education be taught both practical and theoretical skills. We recommend corporation with the VET-colleges and universities, so internships can already be started during their education.

7. SUMMARY

An ongoing and close dialogue and collaboration between the GRCS and the labour market is crucial in order to bridge the gaps between the labor market and the youth. As AmCham emphasizes this dialogue should be based on a practical involvement and interaction between the labour market and the youth. Support and cultivate the possibilities of youth meeting established entrepreneurs and company visit, being on-site and able to actually see the workplace and talk to a potential employer.

It is of importance to look at the gender-based issue in terms of young men often lacking motivation when it comes to engaging in job searches. Focusing on businesses who take in interns and employees without any hard skills and train them in their respective companies is a way to meet this challenge. In general, a more transparent and easy to access approach should be applied in terms of offering internships and mentorships. The role of GRCS would be to arrange meet-ups between businesses and youth as well as starting exchange forums between businesses emphasizing the benefits of having interns.

On policy level, GRCS should push for the use of dual internship as well as strengthening the current possibility for businesses to get 50% of the expenses covered by the state when taking in interns without immediate the skills. Furthermore, this practice should be a possibility in terms of taking in vulnerable people, struggling with mental illness and/or disabilities, thus empowering a more inclusive labour market.

CROSS COUNTRY COMPARISON

The collected data shows several overall tendencies across the three countries. In this final section we measure these against the overall objectives and activities in the EU4Youth project in order to assess which of these demand particular attention in relation to youth- and labor market needs.

Bridging gaps and visibility

To “consolidate and establish partnerships” is an activity of Output 1.1. Fieldworks in all three countries confirm that there has previously been a very low level of contact between local NGOs and local businesses. Yet, it was also clear that there is a significant interest from the side of local businesses to engage in the EU4Youth project, and to cooperate with NGOs such as the Red Cross on youth and employability. While this interest is an initial success-story, the project must keep in mind that relations to local businesses continuously have to be maintained and developed. Exactly because there has been no previous culture of collaboration, local businesses may easily forget that collaborations are possible. A positive measure taken by the Armenian RCS has been to create a folder that depicts how collaborations with the Red Cross may unfold, an initiative we suggest GRCS and BRCS consider replicating. Interviews with business show that it is important to be very concrete when describing what collaborations can consist of. This can be ensured by specific mention of activities, such as providing a given number of mentors, agreeing to host yearly company-visits, participate in joint meetings with VET colleges, or giving presentations at job-fairs. It may be beneficial for the local RC offices to create a process model that will specify the different steps in the collaboration with companies. Furthermore we recommend that partnerships with companies be agreed upon in a contract to ensure that both parties are aware of their role and participation.

Moreover, although Corporate Social Responsibility is a relatively new phenomenon in the labor markets in Armenia, Georgia and Belarus there are several local corporate networks who increasingly engage with it, one such through AmCham. Developing and maintaining relations to businesses and organizations that actively make use of and promote Corporate Social Responsibility will support both the visibility and promotion of

EU4Youth, and can serve as a basis for establishing relations between businesses and the target group.

Soft skills and knowledge exchange between RC Societies

Output 1.2 mentions “Non-formal learning activities” as an activity. The original project description notes that the private sector has a “rigid perception of non-formal skills, internships and on-the-job trainings”. Our data, however, suggests this not to be the case. On the contrary, there is a great demand for soft skills from employers, while the youth assessments show a tendency among young people to downplay the importance of such skills. Lack of soft skills, or not being used to presenting soft skills, is thus a widespread problem among youth across all sites. Aside from entrepreneurship and on-the-job training businesses are particularly interested in communicative skills, being non-conflict and being motivated. Given that soft skills is in high demand by local businesses we propose that this is given particular attention over the coming years, and that the RC Societies share their experiences with soft skill courses in a forth running manner.

Mentor schemes

Output 1.3 includes “Mentee/mentor schemes for entrepreneurship” as an activity. Findings show that mentorship programs are potentially fruitful measures to employ in all three contexts, and both local businesses and individual entrepreneurs have expressed interest in participating. It is vital that the quality of such schemes are secured, and given that the Danish Red Cross Youth have significant experience in mentorship programs we highly recommend that the Danish Red Cross financially support that this expertise is passed on to ARCS, GRCS and BRCS through local workshops. Please note that in order for this to succeed you need mutual agreement between the parties about openness to share knowledge and processes.

Coordination with other NGO and EU4Youth projects

To develop and maintain relations with outside partners in the private sector is of high importance, but it also applies to relations within the NGO sector. Given that the EU has funded very similar projects to NGOs such as Save the Children and World Vision, it is

important to coordinate activities and continuously examine whether there may be potentials for collaboration. Compared with data from Georgia and Belarus, there appears to be a relatively low level of direct collaboration between NGOs in Armenia. Examining the background for this has not been part of our general inquiries, but experiences from the three countries point towards unrealized potentials for collaboration and exchange of ideas.

Beneficiaries

Based on the local youth needs assessment, and the preliminary interviews conducted in Armenia, Georgia and Belarus, we recommend that gender is considered as an aspect. As an example, in the local youth assessment conducted in Armenia the number of male respondents is relatively low and it may be fruitful to cross-read numbers and themes to account for gender differences. In Ijevan male respondents account for only 23,2%, in Dilijan only 15%. As such, the number of male respondents who consider non-formal training a waste of time could potentially be 100%, and there can potentially be great variety in levels of unemployment. Moreover, the youth needs assessments from all three countries do not specify whether respondents belong to particular vulnerable groups (such as IDPs, people with disabilities, ex-convicts and so forth). It may be worthwhile for the RC societies to keep this in mind when the specific groups of beneficiaries are established. The three assessments are available in a separate appendix, so that the RC societies can read the assessments from the other contexts.

VET Colleges and political and institutional change

Taking into account ongoing political developments (whether in relation to ongoing conflicts in border regions, local political unrest or ongoing institutional reforms and changes), we recommend that efforts to maintain and continuously develop relations with political decision makers (both on state and local levels) are ensured. This may be through meetings and through inviting official representatives to partake in activities and events, allowing a greater potential for sustainability and policy development in the wake of the overall project, as well as institutional support throughout.

It is a common trend in all three countries that there either is a lack of communication or cooperation between local business, NGOs, local municipalities and VET

colleges. Moreover, public perceptions of VET colleges in all three countries are largely negative, which means that youth may not see them as a viable choice for future employment. On the other hand, a significant amount of the local businesses that have been interviewed show a great interest in more cooperation with VET colleges, and are in need of employees with a VET education. Working concretely with local authorities and local businesses in terms of both changing public opinions about VET colleges, and assist them in terms of upgrading equipment, curricula, teaching methods and possibilities of internships, will strengthen the possibilities for local youths in all the sites.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

List of companies, ministries and NGO's interviewed by Connectio during the research trip to Armenia June 2018

	Organisation	Sector	City
1	Business Support Center	Municipality	Yerevan
2	AMCHAM Armenia	International Commerce	Yerevan
3	Career Center	Municipality	Yerevan
4	Ministry of Education and Science	Government	Yerevan
5	Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs	Government	Yerevan
6	National Institute of Labour	Government	Yerevan
7	ILO	Interest organisation	Yerevan
8	RUEA	Interest organisation	Yerevan
9	Armenian Tree Project	Business	Yerevan
10	VivaCell	Business	Yerevan
11	Red Cross	NGO	Ijevan
12	Winery	Business	Ijevan

13	Chamber of Commerce	Business network	Yerevan
14	Red Cross	NGO	Sevan
15	Bakery	Business	Sevan

APPENDIX B

List of additional interviews conducted by Armenian Red Cross local offices

	Organisation	Sector	City
1	Israelyan and Astghasar LLC	Furniture production and trade	Ijevan
2	PE Aida Israelyan	Bakery	Ijevan
3	PE Ohanyan Vilyam	Woodwork production	Ijevan
4	SEF international universal credit company	Finance	Ijevan
5	Tavush Regional State College SNCO	Education	Ijevan
6	North Electric Networks, branch of CJSC Electric Networks of Armenia	Service and supplyment electricity	Ijevan
7	PE Vrej Sarhatyan	Sewing production	Ijevan
8	PE Naira Sahakyan	Bakery	Ijevan
9	Inamur LTD	Retail and food catering	Ijevan
10	Ijevan Municipal Utility Service LTD	Municipality; Sanitary, landscape gardening, protection of cemeteries.	Ijevan

11	PE Naira Petrosyan	Confectionary	Ijevan
12	Vahan&torner LTD, Hotel Qarvansara	Hotel and restaurant services	Ijevan
13	Ijevan Bentonit kombinat OJSC	Mining industry	Ijevan
14	Ijevan Ambulatory CJSC	Healthcare	Ijevan
15	PE Aharonyan Arshavir	Bakery	Ijevan
16	PE Seyran Iskandaryan	Bakery	Ijevan
17	The Venchrs CJSC, Café-restaurant_IDEA	Café and restaurant	Dilijan
18	Dilijan medical Centre CJSO	Healthcare	Dilijan
19	Dilijan National Park SNCO	Forest preservation	Dilijan
20	Bread Bakery	Bakery	Dilijan
21	Dilijan State College of Arts SNCO	Education	Dilijan
22	H&T Hakobyans LTD, Dilijan Brewery	Brewing	Dilijan
23	Bread and Confectionery	Bakery	Dilijan
24	Restaurant Ureni	Restaurant and catering	Dilijan
25	Scholae Mundi Armenia Charity Foundation	Civil education	Dilijan
26	PE Suren Aghajanyan, Getap hotel-restaurant	Restaurant and catering	Dilijan

27	Villarest House LTD	Public food services	Dilijan
28	Hotel Dilijan Resort	Hotel and restaurant	Dilijan
29	PE Ayvaz Tarmazyan	Bakery	Dilijan
30	Best Western Plus Paradise Hotel in Dilijan	Hotel and restaurant	Dilijan
31	Bohem" teahouse-studio, Social Enterprise, founded by Sevan youth club	NGO	Sevan
32	Converse bank CJSC, Sevan branch	Finance	Sevan
33	PE Karen Ohanyan	Bakery	Sevan
34	Fly-net service LTD	Computer service	Sevan
35	Ara-Areg LTD Lhasen	Milk and cattle production	Sevan
36	Sevan state college SNPO	Education	Sevan
37	Poghots Paradi 588 LTD, social enterprise	Confectionary	Sevan
38	PE Ruben Ghukasyan	Stomatology	Sevan
39	PE Anush Khachatryan	Trade	Sevan
40	Tigran and Vahe LTD, Hayots ojaxh hotel-restaurant	Hotel and restaurant	Sevan
41	Tis LTD	TV and internet services	Sevan
42	PE Vahagn Babayan	Hair and beauty salon	Sevan

43	Gal-Goga LTD	Door and window production	Gavar
44	Khach-Mats LTD	Agriculture	Gavar
45	PE Vardges Musoyan	Bakery and confectionary	Gavar
46	GEGHARKUNIK REGIONAL STATE COLLEGE SNPO	Education	Gavar
47	Gavari hats OJSC	Bakery	Gavar
48	Ara-Nane LTD	Hotel and restaurant	Gavar
49	PE Ruzanna Yuzbashyan	Confectionary	Gavar
50	Good hope	NGO	Gavar
51	Shach LTD	Computer services	Gavar
52	Bazikyanneri Arishta PE Vanush Bazikyan	Pasta (arishta) production	Gavar

APPENDIX C

List of companies, ministries and NGO's interviewed by Connectio during the research trip to Belarus August 2018

	Organisation	Sector	City
1	Clinical Hospital Gomel	Healthcare	Gomel
2	Belville	Business; retail and trade	Gomel
3	Alkopak	Business; bottle production and plastic recycling	Gomel
4	Smarta	Textile factory	Gomel
5	Furniture Salon Gesta	Furniture shop	Gomel
6	Association for Social workers Belarus	Interest organisation	Minsk
7	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection	Government	Minsk
8	Center for Support and Development of Youth Entrepreneurship	Municipality	Minsk
9	Committee on Labor, Employment and Social Protection of Gomel Regional Executive Committee	Local government	Gomel
10	Office for Labor, Employment and Social Protection of the Gomel City Executive Committee	Local government	Gomel
11	Employment Center (Labour Market)	Mogilev Municipality	Mogilev
12	JSC Mogilevliftmash	Production factory	Mogilev

13	JSC Mogotex	Production factory	Mogilev
14	JSC Mogilev Metallurgical Works	Production factory	Mogilev
15	Hotel Mogilev	Service	Mogilev
16	Mogilev Central Clinic	Healthcare	Mogilev
17	JSC EVROOPT	Trade and retail	Mogilev
18	Agricultural Enterprise Zarya	Agriculture	Mogilev

APPENDIX D

List of additional interviews conducted by Belarus Red Cross local offices.

	Organisation	Sector	City/Region
1	Social Services Population Center of the Gomel City Central District	Social services	Gomel
2	Individual entrepreneurship	Trade and retail	Gomel
3	State educational institution Social and Pedagogical Center of Zhlobin City	Education	Gomel
4	Private production unitary enterprise Olymp and Co	Wood production and trade and construction	Gomel
5	Rogachev blood transfusion station	Healthcare	Gomel

6	Gomel Regional Children's Hospital for Medical Rehabilitation	Healthcare	Gomel
7	JSC Novobelitskaya trade company Alesya	Trade	Gomel
8	Zhitkovichskiy Leshoz	Forestry farm	Gomel
9	Private unitary enterprise	Beauty Salon	Gomel
10	BRCS Svetlogorsk district organization	NGO	Gomel
11	JSC Zhlobin Garment Factory	Clothing production	Gomel
12	Central Dobrush district hospital	Healthcare	Gomel
13	Bragin district consumer society	Trade	Gomel
14	Name unknown	Trade	Mozyr
15	Name unknown	Confectionary production	Gomel
16	Name unknown	Healthcare	Gomel
17	Name unknown	Trade and retail	Gomel
18	Name unknown	Agriculture	Gomel

19	Sun	Cosmetic factory	Mogilev
20	JSC Zenit	Machinery	Mogilev
21	Housing and repair operational management of Leninsky district of Mogilev City	Communal unitary enterprise; housing	Mogilev
22	Mogilevobldorstroy	Communal unitary enterprise; construction of roads	Mogilev
23	Trading unitary enterprise Mogilevmezhraybaza	Trade and retail	Mogilev
24	JSC Osipovichi Plant of Automobile Aggregates	Production	Mogilev
25	Branch of JSC Domochay	Finance	Mogilev
26	JSC Bytuslugi	Public service	Byhov
27	Governmental Enterprise Kruglyanskaya PMK 266	Construction, service and trade	Mogilev
28	JSC Mogilevski KSI	Production and sale	Mogilev
29	Health Facility Mogilev regional anti-TB dispensary	Healthcare	Mogilev
30	OAO Department store Centralny	Trade and public catering	Mogilev

APPENDIX E

List of companies, ministries and NGO's interviewed by Connectio during the research trip to Georgia May/June 2018

	Organisation	Sector	City
1	UN Global Compact	International corporate sustainability organisation	Tbilisi
2	Enterprise Georgia	Government institution	Tbilisi
3	AMCHAM	International business chamber	Tbilisi
4	Vocational Education Development Department	Ministry of Education and Science	Tbilisi
5	Ombudsman for Business	Independent institution	Tbilisi
6	EU Delegation		Tbilisi
7	Ministry of Education and Youth	Government	Tbilisi
8	Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Affairs	Government	Tbilisi
9	Local entrepreneur	Hospitality services and social projects	Batumi
10	Red Cross Office	NGO	Batumi

11	Red Cross Office (volunteer and entrepreneur)	NGO	Batumi
12	Fast track textile LTD	Business; production	Khelvachauri
13	Youth Center	Youth department of the City Hall	Kchevalchauri
14	International Investors Organization	Business network	Adjara
15	Department of Tourism	Local government	Adjara
16	Employment Office	Municipality	Adjara
17	Adjaristqali	Local business	Adjara
18	Youth Department	Mayor's Office	Batumi
19	Atinati	NGO	Zugdidi
20	Youth Department	City Hall	Zugdidi
21	Zugdidi Community College	Education	Zugdidi
22	EkoHub	NGO	Zugdidi
23	Zugdidi Sports Center	Municipality	Zugdidi
24	EyeSight	NGO	Zugdidi
25	University of Georgia	Education	Zugdidi
26	TechPark	NGO	Zugdidi

27	GMCG	Local business implementing projects for Enterprise Georgia	Zugdidi
28	Cooperation for Capacity Building	NGO/Research Center	Zugdidi
29	Red Cross Office	NGO	Senaki
30	Department of Education, Culture and Youth	Mayor's Office	Senaki
31	Female Entrepreneurs	Local businesses	Senaki
32	Resource Center for Controlling Schools	Municipality	Senaki
33	Senaki Vocational Training College	Education	Senaki

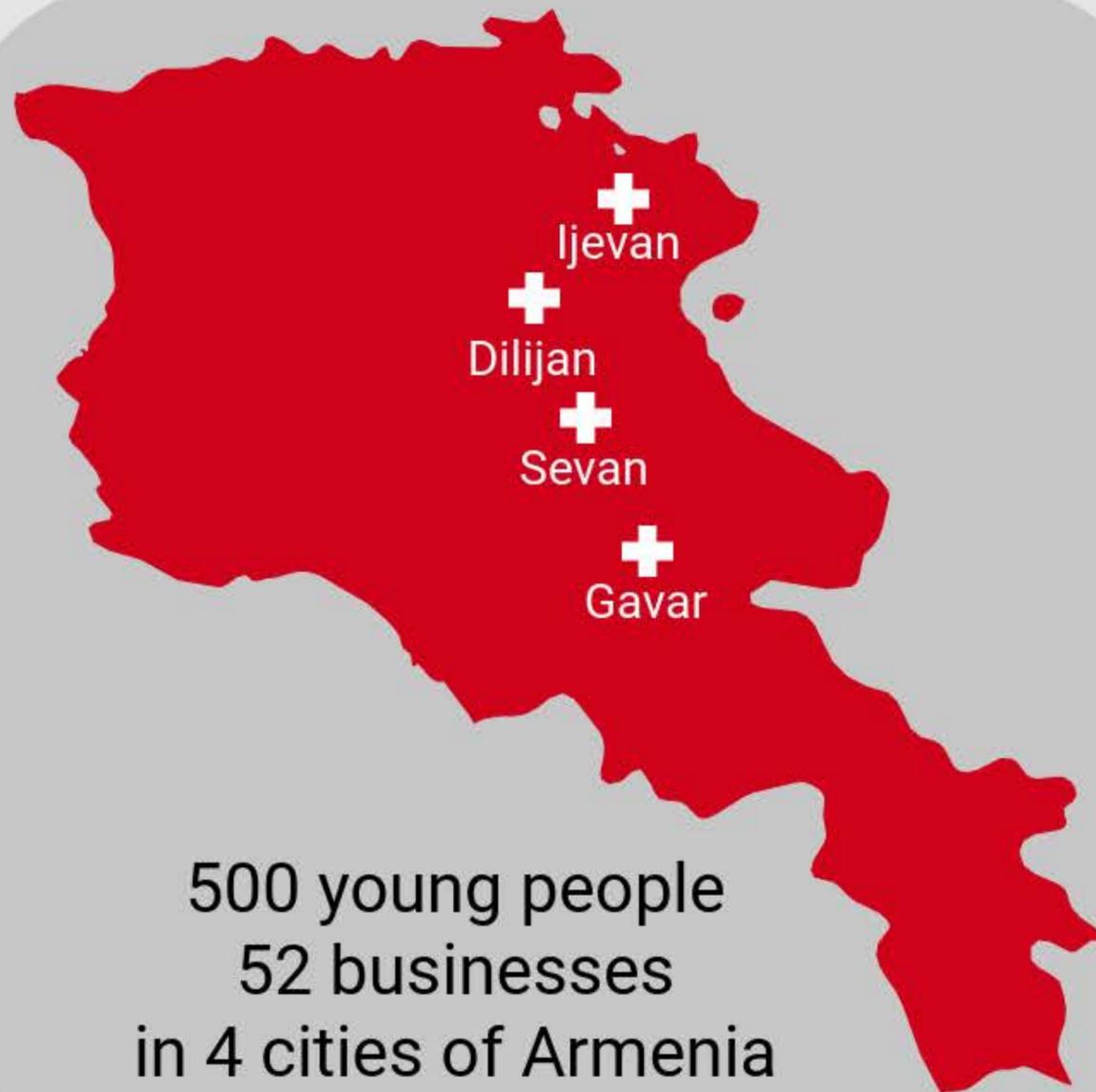
APPENDIX F

List of additional interviews conducted by Georgian Red Cross local offices.

	Organisation	Sector	City/Region
1	LTD Clinic Senamedi	Healthcare	Senaki
2	LTD Oso	Construction and refurbishment	Senaki
3	LTD Savane	Real estate	Senaki
4	LTD Keda	Hazelnut processing	Senaki

5	Hotel Iberia Palace	Hotel and restaurant	Zugdidi
6	JSC TBC Bank (Zugdidi Branch)	Finance	Zugdidi
7	JSC Silknet	Telecommunication	Zugdidi
8	LTD Anka Fair Trade	Hazelnut processing	Zugdidi
9	LTD Agro Lazika	Berry fruit cultivation	Zugdidi
10	LTD Khelvachauri Purproduqtebi	Bakery	Khelvachauri
11	LTD Delta Service	Security services	Batumi
12	Hotel Radisson Blue Batumi	Hotel and restaurant	Batumi
13	LTD Majid Al Futtaim Hipermarket Georgia. Brand: Carrefour Supermarket Batumi	Trade and wholesale	Batumi
14	Hotel Wyndham Batumi	Hotel and restaurant	Batumi
15	LTD Tao Msheni	Construction	Batumi
16	LTD BatumiTex	Sewing factory	Batumi
17	LTD Gazeti Batumelebi	Media publishing	Batumi

Regional Youth Needs Assessment



Respondents by sex



by age



3 of the respondents
are over 31



"EU4Youth: Fostering potential
for greater employability"

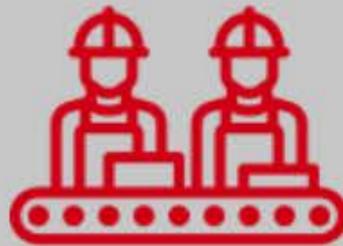
Interviews were conducted with 52 business companies

working in fields:

Service



Production



Education



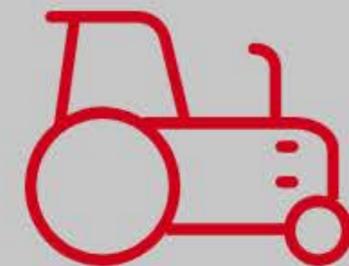
Health



Trade



Agriculture



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DANISH
RED
CROSS

"EU4Youth: Fostering potential
for greater employability"

Regional Youth Employment and Income

Employment (%)



Income sources (%)



"EU4Youth: Fostering potential
for greater employability"

Employment Needs of Regional Youth

Where would they wish to work?

61%

In their region

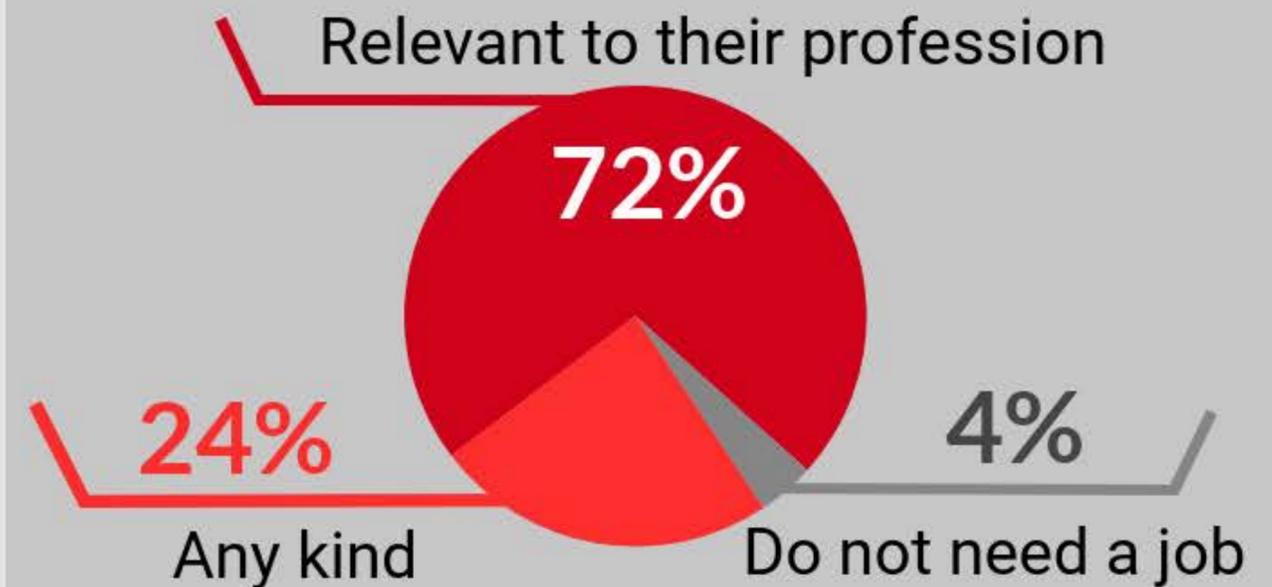
15%

In other region of RA

24%

In the capital

What kind of job would they wish to do?



56% of respondents would like to start their own business



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"EU4Youth: Fostering potential for greater employability"

Employment Demands of Business Companies

Soft skills:



Communication



Non-conflict



Being polite and cheerful



Ability to make decisions in different situations



Creative thinking

Technical skills:

ABC

Knowledge of a foreign language/s



Technical skills



Computer skills



Working experience



Volunteering experience



IT skills



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"EU4Youth: Fostering potential for greater employability"

What do the youth do to become competitive?



39%

Read books



19%

Nothing due to the lack of time



22%

Participate in trainings



8%

Cannot afford due to the lack of means



12%

Volunteer



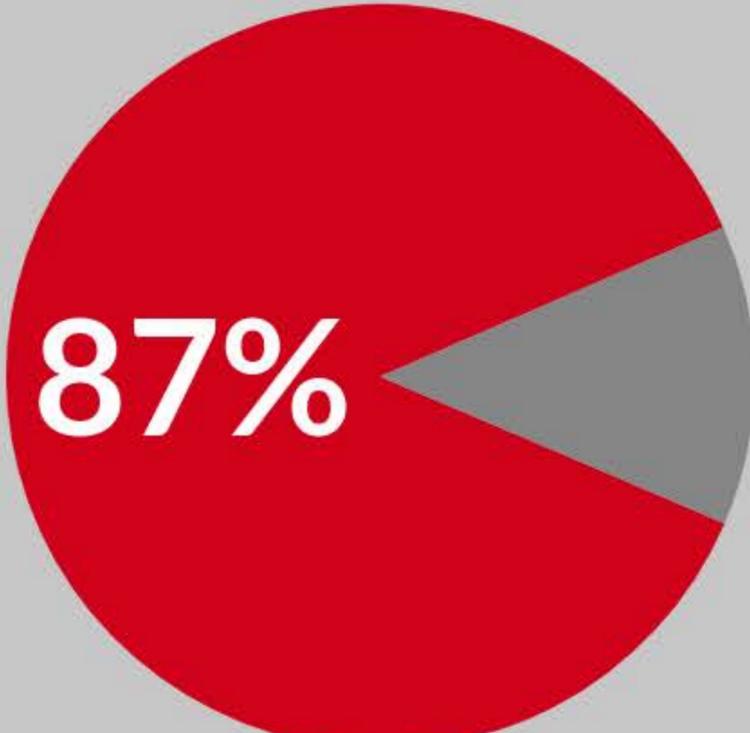
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DANISH RED CROSS

"EU4Youth: Fostering potential for greater employability"

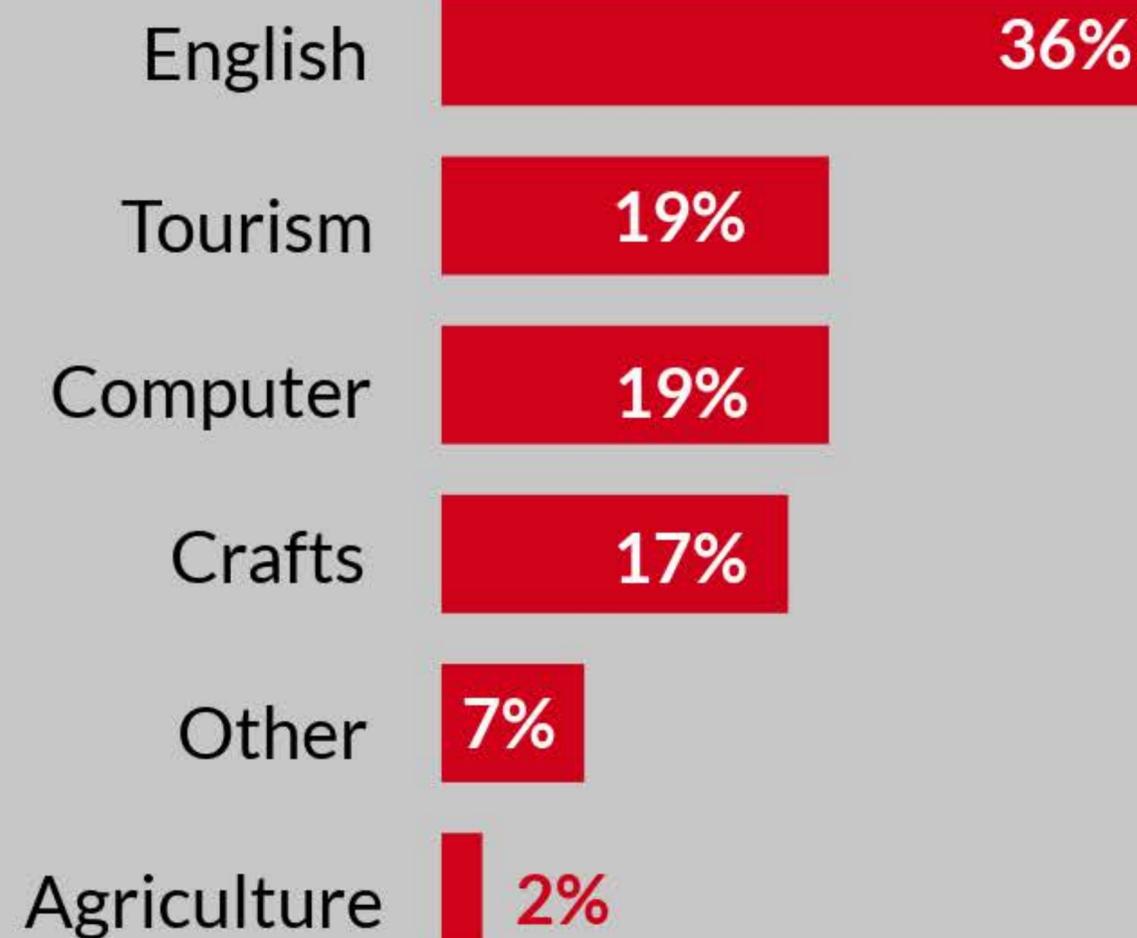
New skills through free of charge trainings



87%

Wish to attend
free of charge trainings

Wish to obtain skills in:



"EU4Youth: Fostering potential
for greater employability"

Recommendations

- ✓ Collaborating with the business companies and offering training courses in soft skills
- ✓ Creating a network of business compaines for its members to inspire each other and discuss the best practices and challenges
- ✓ Arranging training courses on how to develop and apply entrepreneurial ideas



"EU4Youth: Fostering potential
for greater employability"

Recommendations

- ✓ Focusing on internship
- ✓ Arranging training courses on how to turn volunteering experience to working skills
- ✓ Offering free language and computer courses
- ✓ Arranging meet-ups between youth and business companies



"EU4Youth: Fostering potential
for greater employability"

Goal and Target of the "EU4Youth: Fostering Potential for Greater Employability" Project

Goals:



Serve as a bridge between employer and employee



Develop youth skills



Promote youth involvement in regional activities



Encourage entrepreneurship

Engagement:

4000

young people (aged 16-30)

300

affected by migration and conflict

establishment of youth hubs

in 4 cities

support to entrepreneurial ideas of **60 young people**



The project is funded by the European Union



DANISH RED CROSS

"EU4Youth: Fostering potential for greater employability"