



# YOUTH EMPLOYMENT OBSTACLES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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#### 1. INTRODUCTION

With the youth unemployment rate in the EU reaching up to 23.6% at the beginning of 2013, the situation is getting rather critical. Almost 7.5 million young people in the EU between 15 to 24 years of age are unemployed, do not study or do not receive any vocational training. In this regard, the European Commission proposed a package of measures on December 5, 2012 to help its member states tackle youth unemployment and social exclusion issues through providing young people with new job, further education, trainings and internships opportunities.<sup>1</sup>

The youth in the Czech Republic face similar problems as the rest of the EU. In this regard, this study aims at analysing the main problems of the youth, and the recent graduates in particular, on the Czech labour market. With the target of identifying the core roots of unemployment, the study focuses on the mismatch between employers' and graduates needs. Its aim is to demonstrate desired competences that the recent graduates should work on and similarly the incentives that the employers should provide for the potential recently graduated employees in order to make them attracted to the job. Furthermore, the study analyses issues related to the educational system in the Czech Republic and it identifies lacking systemic elements that would better prepare young people for their first job. The study also points out the lack of cooperation between the private sector and schools and the lack of practical knowledge gained during the school years. The second chapter deals with measures supporting employment adopted in the Czech Republic and at EU level and recommendations for youth employment.

The data for this analysis were provided by The Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic (Svaz průmyslu a dopravy ČR), The Confederation of Employers' and Entrepreneurs' Associations of the Czech Republic (Konfederace zaměstnavatelských a podnikatelských svazů ČR), The National Institute of Vocational Education (Národní ústav odborného vzdělávání), Czech Labour Office (Úřad práce) and the webpage infoabsolvent.cz.

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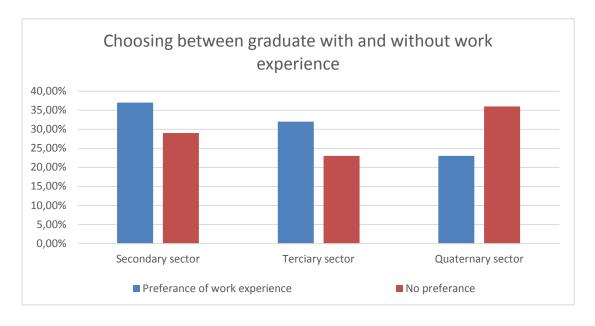
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Youth Employment Initiative: 52013DC0144. In: 2013. Available from: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52013DC0144:EN:NOT

#### 2. SITUATION AT YOUTH LABOUR MARKET

The youth unemployment is particularly pressing in certain member states and regions.<sup>2</sup> To illustrate this phenomenon, according to the Labour Office there were 91.1 thousand unemployed people under the age of 25 in the Czech Republic in 2013, i.e. 16.8% of the total unemployment rate. The main reason for this percentage is the unfavourable situation on the Czech labour market, especially the fact that the labour force supply highly excesses the demand. In 2013, the ratio of applicants for one available job offer was 13.6. Furthermore, the profiles of graduates do not correspond with the requirements of employers.<sup>3</sup>

#### 2.1. HOW FIRMS CHOOSE THEIR EMPLOYEES

When deciding which applicant to recruit, the crucial factor for being selected as a new employee is the work experience. The following bar chart shows how this factor affects decision-making process of an employer in the secondary<sup>4</sup>, tertiary<sup>5</sup> and quaternary<sup>6</sup> sector. The employers were asked to choose between two recent graduates: with work experience and without.



The reason for potential recruitment of recent graduates is their knowledge of languages and innovative fresh approach. On the other hand, the lack of experience in the field is the most common reason for recruiting more experienced applicants. In the following table, the most common employers' arguments for and against recruitment of recent graduates are listed.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid., In:2013.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>Realizační plán programu Záruky pro mládež České republiky. In: *Program Záruky pro mládež* České republiky [online]. 2013 [cit. 2014-03-23]. Available from: https://portal.mpsv.cz/sz/politikazamest/zarpromla

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Includes those economic sectors that create a finished, usable product (production and construction).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Includes selling of service, such as health care, tourism, transportation, etc.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Includes industries providing information service, such as research, consultancy, education.

Data were compiled from SKÁCELOVÁ P. [ed.] Uplatnění absolventů škol na trhu práce – 2008. In: Uplatnění absolventů škol na trhu práce – 2008 [online]. p. 69-72.

#### THE REASONS FOR/AGAINST THE RECRUITMENT OF RECENT GRADUATES

#### FOR:

- progressive ideas and working attitude
- new perspectives and solutions
- willingness to work and gain knowledge
- lower wage claims
- flexibility
- knowledge of the latest technologies and theories
- no transfer of previous work habits
- lack of other applicants
- knowledge of languages and experience from foreign countries
- self-presentation at the interview
- personal qualities
- determination to adapt to the firms' environment and values

#### AGAINTS:

- lack of experience in the field and working experience in general
- unrealistic ideas about salary, working hours or job description

#### Less mentioned reasons:

- no positions available
- lack of work discipline
- some positions require specific skills which recent graduates do not have
- recent graduates do not apply for some positions, even though firms do not avoid a cooperation with them

According to the National Institute for Education, the ability to take responsibility followed by willingness to learn are considered the most important skills to have when applying for a job from a vocational training centre. The graduates from vocational high schools are required to be able to use IT devices and to be independent. The similar requirements are applied to the graduates from colleagues. When choosing an employee among graduates, the employers pay attention especially to the field of study, achieved degree and also the willingness to learn.

To sum it up, the general requirements of enterprises on graduates are the following: 10

- Problem solving ability;
- Ability to take responsibility;
- Ability to understand work instructions;
- Ability to make decisions:
- Communication skills;
- Independence:
- Willingness to learn.

and Důvody zaměstnavatelů pro ne/přijímání absolventů: Infoabsolvent.cz [online]. 2014 [cit. 2014-03-23]. Available from: http://www.infoabsolvent.cz/Temata/ClanekAbsolventi/4-1-09/Duvody-zamestnavatelu-pro-ne-prijimani-absolventu/26

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> ŠKÁCELOVÁ P. [ed.] Uplatnění absolventů škol na trhu práce – 2008. In: Uplatnění absolventů škol na trhu práce – 2008 [online]. p. 60-67.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 69.

10 Informační systém o uplatnění absolventů škol na trhu práce: Požadavky zaměstnavatelů. Informační systém o uplatnění absolventů škol na trhu práce: Infoabsolvent.cz [online]. 2014 [cit. 2014-03-23]. Available from: http://www.infoabsolvent.cz

## 2.2. REQUIREMENTS OF STUDENTS OR RECENT GRADUATES **TOWARDS POTENTIONAL EMPLOYERS**

In general, students tend to appreciate creative working environment in well-known and strong companies that offer stable employment possibilities and a lot of travelling. Furthermore, students look for a dynamic working environment, respect and creativity.

This study presents results of a research performed by a Swedish company called Universum. The purpose of the research was to reveal career preferences of thousands of Czech students from more than 60 Czech universities. 11

#### WHAT ARE THE CAREER GOALS AMONG STUDENTS AND GRADUATES?

The most important goals are:

- to balance personal life and work
- to have a stable job (desired by 71% of medical students)
- to work for the common good (desired mostly by medical students)

It is important to point out the differences between different branches. On one hand, future economists want to be active, creative and innovative and desire to work on the highest posts in international environment. On the other hand, these high ambitions are not ordinary for students and graduates of Sciences or Humanities who together with lawyers prefer to run their own business. However, current students and graduates share the desire for jobs' creativity and the company's strong reputation rather than a good salary which was essential for the previous generation.<sup>12</sup>

#### WHAT STUDENTS AND GRADUATES APPRECIATE?

As mentioned above, the criterion of high salary is not as important for employees as it used to be in the past. Moreover, the survey shows that high salary is the least important criterion. 13 On the other hand, according to the respondents the most important requirements are the following:

- Internship or traineeship in the Czech Republic or abroad;
- Training courses;
- Bonuses and career growth:
- Creativity of the job;
- People and culture in the company;
- Reputation and image of the company;
- Possibility to work abroad within the same company they work for.

Favourite employment fields among students and graduates are academic sector (nearly 25% of respondents), tourism (17% of respondents), media and marketing and public sector (15% of respondents).<sup>14</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Studenta: Český student chce stabilní a prestižní práci. Praha: Studenta Media, s.r.o, 2014, 36.číslo/březen 2014, p. 7 – 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Studenta: Český student chce stabilní a prestižní práci. Praha: Studenta Media, s.r.o, 2014, p. 9.

However, it is important to bear in mind that unrealistic students' and graduates' expectations of future careers can also be considered an obstacle.

#### 2.3. EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Czech educational system calls for a rapid change. Especially technical field of education is no longer as attractive for students as economic or legal field. According to the Confederation of Employers' and Entrepreneurs' Associations there is a prevalent high number of unemployed young people. One of the reasons is that schools do not sufficiently cooperate with employers. Furthermore, students should be motivated to gain working experience during their studies and should be financially supported with scholarship opportunities. Another reason is the lack of reform in the educational field.<sup>15</sup>

#### NURSERY, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The objective of the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic is to enhance the quality of technical skills already on a nursery and primary level of education. It is also crucial to support the creativity and soft skills of children such as communication.

Furthermore, it is necessary that students in the age of 15 and above also get involved in the working process. In order to enable this, high schools should have functional partnerships with companies from particular fields.<sup>16</sup>

According to the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic, it would be also useful to change the structure of financing the scholar system as schools are financed normatively (per capita). In the long term, financing schools according to the level of their graduates' employment rates might be seen as a better solution.<sup>17</sup>

#### **TERTIARY EDUCATION**

Tertiary education in the Czech Republic is divided into two branches – universities and "higher professional schools". Universities are primarily designed for students from high schools. Higher professional schools are meant to be a superstructural education for specialized high schools offering shorter educational programmes (120-150ECTS<sup>18</sup>) so that the students can be integrated in the working process as soon as possible.<sup>19</sup>

In order to involve bachelor's programme graduates in the working process, universities and higher schools ought to work on partnerships with employers and provide students with internship opportunities. In this way, master's programme students could easily gain soft skills and practical knowledge that would be useful when applying for full-time jobs.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Zaměstnavatelské a podnikatelské svazy: K programovému prohlášení vlády. *Parlamentnílisty.cz* [online]. 2014 [cit. 2014-03-24]. Available from: http://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/nazory-a-petice/Zamestnavatelske-a-podnikatelske-svazy-K-programovemu-prohlaseni-vlady-303368 <sup>16</sup> Ibid., p.1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> SVAZ PRŮMYSLU A DOPRAVY ČR. Hlavní cíle SP ČR v oblasti technického vzdělávání. Praha, 2013., internal document

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) is a system of evaluation at European universities in which students have to gain certain amount of credits in order to receive a degree. They get credits for each successfully terminated subject and the usual number of credits needed per academic year is 60 ECTS.

successfully terminated subject and the usual number of credits needed per academic year is 60 ECTS.

19 SVAZ PRŮMYSLU A DOPRAVY ČR. Hlavní cíle SP ČR v oblasti technického vzdělávání. Praha, 2013., internal document

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> SVAZ PRŮMYSLU A DOPRAVY ČR. Hlavní cíle SP ČR v oblasti technického vzdělávání. Praha, 2013.

#### 2.4. COOPERATION OF EMPLOYERS AND SCHOOLS

The survey of The National Institute of Vocational Education focused on the cooperation between schools and employers from different sectors. The cooperation with a secondary sector often works on a basis of students' excursions and visits at companies. The industrial factories of this sector often promote available job positions directly at schools and also sponsor and participate in research projects.<sup>21</sup> The tertiary sector offers the cooperation with schools by facilitating practical training at companies. Eventually, quaternary sector enables students to gain work experience at workplace and also offers participation of workers and experts in the educational process.<sup>22</sup>

The survey also shows the opinion of private sector on the current situation of the Czech educational system. In this regard, employers would appreciate if more focus was paid to the practical part of the education which would enable students to obtain practical skills during their studies which could subsequently be used in their future jobs. Employers would also welcome building closer ties with schools in order to broaden and deepen the cooperation between the private and academic sector: students would be in touch with the newest trends and technologies and would be able to get connections with companies of their interest during their studies.<sup>23</sup>

The private sector also accuses the academic sector of not allowing its students to come up with new initiatives and to think independently and proactively. The educational system pushes its students to listen to theories rather than express their ideas and opinions.<sup>24</sup>

#### 3. CURRENT **MEASURES** AND RECOMMENDATIONS AGAINST YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

#### 3.1. MEASURES AT EU LEVEL

On February, 7 - 8, 2013 the European Council proposed the implementation of the Youth Employment Initiative<sup>25</sup> with 6 billion EUR budget for the period of 2014 to 2020. The specific form of measures of the Initiative is a subject to discussion between the European Commission and each individual member state, as its purpose is to adjust and complete domestic measurements and each member state is required to create the system according to its domestic and regional conditions.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> SKÁCELOVÁ P. [ed.] Uplatnění absolventů škol na trhu práce – 2008. In: Uplatnění absolventů škol na trhu práce - 2008 [online]., p. 73.

Informační systém o uplatnění absolventů škol na trhu práce: Požadavky zaměstnavatelů. Informační systém o uplatnění absolventů škol na trhu práce: Infoabsolvent.cz [online].

SKÁCELOVÁ P. [ed.] Uplatnění absolventů škol na trhu práce – 2008. In: Uplatnění absolventů škol na trhu práce – 2008 [online]., p. 74. Ibid., p. 74.

Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Youth Employment Initiative: 52013DC0144. In: 2013. <sup>26</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and

Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Youth Employment Initiative: 52013DC0144. In: 2013.

The main goals of the Initiative consist of introducing a guarantee<sup>27</sup> for young people, improving the quality of internships, launching European alliance for Apprenticeships and transforming EURES.

EURES (European Employment Services) is coordinated by the European Commission and aims at facilitating a free movement of workers within the European Economic Area and Switzerland. The network includes public employment services, trade unions and employers' organizations. The main objective is to assist the employers and to provide information to people who wish to work within the European Economic Area.<sup>28</sup>

#### **ERASMUS +**

Erasmus+ is the EU Programme in the field of education, training, youth and sport for the period of 2014 to 2020. Erasmus+ is the reset of the following European programmes implemented by the Commission during the period 2007 – 2013. The Programme has an overall indicative financial envelope of 14.774 billion EUR for the next seven years (2014 – 2020).<sup>29</sup>

The Erasmus+ is designed to support Programme countries' efforts to efficiently use the potential of Europe's human and social capital. It follows the principle of lifelong learning by linking support to formal, non-formal and informal learning. The programme also enhances the opportunities for cooperation and mobility within partner countries, notably in the fields of higher education and youth.<sup>30</sup> General objectives that are included in the Programme are: recognition and validation of skills and qualifications, dissemination of project results, open access to educational materials and documents, international dimension, multilingualism and protection of participants.<sup>31</sup>

The target groups of Erasmus+ are individuals: students, trainees, apprentices, pupils, adult learners, young people, volunteers, professors, teachers, trainers, professionals of organisations active in the fields of education and youth. However, the programme reaches these individuals through organisations, institutions, bodies or groups that organise such activities.<sup>32</sup>

#### 3.2. MEASURES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs provides 1 billion CZK (36 million EUR) per year via regional projects for individual consulting or retraining graduates. This project called "Professional experience for young people up to 30 years" is designed for young job seekers who are registered at the Labour Office for more than four months and have little or no work

<sup>28</sup> EURES. *The European Job Mobility Portal* [online]. 2014 [cit. 2014-04-09]. Available from https://ec.europa.eu/eures/main.jsp?acro=eures&lang=cs&catId=1&parentId=0

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> According the European Council everybody under the age of 25, whether registered with employment services or not, gets an offer of job, apprenticeship, traineenship or continued education after he or she formally finished previous education or became unemployed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup>EUROPEAN COMISSION. *Erasmus+: Programme guide* [online]. 2014 [cit. 09.04.2014]. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide\_en.pdf ,p. 18. <sup>30</sup> lbid, p. 9.

<sup>31</sup> lbid, p. 11 – 14.

EUROPEAN COMISSION. *Erasmus+: Programme guide* [online]. 2014 [cit. 09.04.2014]. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide\_en.pdf, p. 23.

experience. Since 2012, young people have been enabled to attend retraining courses that help them gain knowledge and skills currently required in the labour market.<sup>33</sup>

Regarding the salary, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs opposes increasing the minimum wage up to 40% of the average wage. The implementation of such measure would result in a loss of Czech industrial competitiveness followed by an uncontrollable growth of unemployment.<sup>34</sup> The Confederation of Employers' and Entrepreneurs' Associations of the Czech Republic also disagrees with increasing the minimum wage up to 40% of the average income. In its opinion, the scheduled rearrangement of the minimum wage is possible only if the economic growth and policies for disabled people are favoured.

Labour Office tries to ensure the candidates better job opportunities in the labour market. However, it is only a short term goal. The main aim of the active employment policy is to remove barriers, i.e. to provide applicants with training and support when launching a freelancing licence. In 2013, the active employment policy targeted candidates who had been registered at the Labour Office for more than five years and had lost their jobs because of health issues or age.<sup>35</sup>

In the context of active labour market policy the Czech government introduced at the end of 2013 new measures aimed at individual work with candidates – job sharing, outplacement, short-term job support, individual coaching and occasional registered work. Job sharing should support generational exchange of experience by providing employers with the wage contribution per current employee approaching retirement age and serving as mentor to the candidate. Outplacement is based on the assistance of Regional Labour Office both to the dismissed employees and employers in case of mass redundancies. Individual coaching for unemployed should be ensured by selected employment agencies that will be awarded financial compensation depending on how many applicants they provided with job and how many of them kept the job.<sup>36</sup>

#### **OPERATIONAL PROGRAMMES**

In the period between 2007 and 2013, the Czech Republic has implemented a range of operational programmes that helped to support youth employment.

Operational Programme Human Resources and Employment 2007-2013 was aimed at reducing unemployment through active labour market policies and professional training. It also focused on including socially excluded people back into society, improving the quality of public administration and supporting the international cooperation in these areas. The Programme was mainly funded by the Convergence objective with 1.88 billion EUR earmarked by the European Social Fund.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> MPSV podpoří zaměstnávání absolventů, na jejich mzdy poskytne čtvrt miliardy korun. *MPSV.cz* [online]. 2013 [cit. 2014-04-22]. Available from:http://www.mpsv.cz/cs/16710

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Zaměstnavatelské a podnikatelské svazy: K programovému prohlášení vlády. *Parlamentnílisty.cz* [online]. 2014 [cit. 2014-03-24]. Available from: http://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/arena/nazory-a-petice/Zamestnavatelske-a-podnikatelske-svazy-K-programovemu-prohlaseni-vlady-303368

Pro jednání 107. Plenární schůze. *Asocr.cz* [online]. 2014 [cit. 2014-03-24]. Available from: http://www.asocr.cz/addons/107%20RHSD/Aktivni-politika-zamestnanosti\_-vyhodnoceni-programu-na-podporu-zamestnanosti-....pdf

36 Sdílené pracovní místo i individuální koučink – MPSV představuje novinky v aktivní politice zaměstnanosti.

Sdílené pracovní místo i individuální koučink – MPSV představuje novinky v aktivní politice zaměstnanosti.
 [online]. 2014 [cit. 2014-04-29]. Available from: http://www.mpsv.cz/files/clanky/16739/tz\_221113b.pdf
 OPERAČNÍ PROGRAM LIDSKÉ ZDROJE A ZAMĚSTNANOST. *Strukturální fondy* [online]. 2014 [cit. 2014-04-22]. Available from: http://strukturalni-fondy.cz/cs/Fondy-EU/Programy-2007-2013/Tematicke-operacni-programy/OP-Lidske-zdroje-a-zamestnanost

Operational Programme Education for Competitiveness was focused on modernization and integration of primary, tertiary and further education into a comprehensive system of lifelong learning. The aim was to improve research and development conditions. This Programme was mainly funded by the Convergence objective with 1.83 billion EUR provided by the European Social Fund, which represents approximately 6.8% of total funds provided by the EU to the Czech Republic.<sup>38</sup>

The operational programme Enterprise and Innovations with the budget of 3.671 billion EUR focused on small and medium-sized enterprises and on supporting employment in structurally affected regions. Furthermore, the operational programme was aimed at promoting innovation, increasing the competitiveness of Czech industries and businesses and maintaining the attractiveness of the Czech Republic and its regions to investors. Moreover, another aim of this program was to provide young people without sufficient experience with job opportunities. Since 2007, the operational programme has managed to support more than 12,000 business projects and has created more than 22,000 jobs. Due to this successful implementation, the Labour Office plans to continue to run this programme in the period 2014–2020.

Another important tool is the measure aimed at young people under 30 years of age. The European Youth Guarantee Program serves as a useful tool. In 2013, employers could have gained monthly 24,000 CZK (880 EUR) on each employee previously registered at the Labour Office. In 2013, the heads of states in Brussels agreed that 6 billion EUR would be available in the next two years. <sup>41</sup> This system supported 13,269 applicants in 2013. <sup>42</sup>

There are also other projects led by business organisations to support youth employment, cooperation between businesses and research centres and social dialogue, such as National system of occupations aimed to create an information base on the requirements of the labour market, Communication - the gateway to research with its web portal Career Market or New Final Exam 2.<sup>43</sup>

OPERAČNÍ PROGRAM VZDĚLÁVÁNÍ PRO KONKURENCESCHOPNOST. Strukturální fondy [online]. [cit. 2014-04-22]. Available from: http://strukturalni-fondy.cz/cs/Fondy-EU/Programy-2007-2013/Tematicke-operacni-programy/OP-Vzdelavani-pro-konkurenceschopnost [online] Implementace operačních programů financovaných ze strukturálních fondů. Asocr.cz [online]. 2014 [cit. 2014-

Implementace operačních programů financovaných ze strukturálních fondů. *Asocr.cz* [online]. 2014 [cit. 2014-03-24]. Available from: http://www.asocr.cz/addons/107%20RHSD/Implementace-operacnich-programu-financovanych-ze-strukturalnich-fondu-EU.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Implementace operačních programů financovaných ze strukturálních fondů. *Asocr.cz* [online]. 2014

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Euroactiv [online]. 2013 [cit. 2014-04-09]. Available from: http://www.euractiv.cz/ekonomika-a-euro/clanek/summit-eu-na-zaruky-pro-mlade-pujde-8-miliard-eur-rozpocet-eu-010939

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Pro jednání 107. Plenární schůze. *Asocr.cz* [online]. 2014 [cit. 2014-03-24]. Available from: http://www.asocr.cz/addons/107%20RHSD/Aktivni-politika-zamestnanosti\_-vyhodnoceni-programu-na-podporu-zamestnanosti\_-....pdf
<sup>43</sup> SPÄP [online]. 2014 [2014-2014] at 1014 [2014-2014] at 1014 [2014-2014].

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> SPČR [online]. 2014 [2014-04-29]. Available from: http://www.spcr.cz/projekty/projekty a HK ČR [online]. 2014 [2014-04-29]. Available from: http://www.komora.cz/pro-podnikani/projekty/aktivni-projekty/nzz-2/nzz-2.aspx

#### 4. SUMMARY

The study analysed the main problems of youth on the Czech labour market. The first chapter focused on the employers' requirements towards recent graduates and the competences the recent graduates should work on in order to become successful job candidates. Furthermore, the study analysed key issues and problems related to the Czech educational system. It also pointed out the lack of cooperation between the private sector and schools and the lack of practical knowledge gained during the school years. The second chapter concentrated on measures supporting employment adopted at EU and national level and recommendations on reduction youth unemployment by key stakeholders. The conclusions of this study are the following.

Czech schools do not provide graduates with the required skills and practical abilities. As a consequence, students face a lack of soft skills and the ability of creative thinking. Furthermore, the level of the cooperation between schools and the private sector is not sufficient. Schools do not focus enough on building partnerships with employers and providing their students with internship and scholarship opportunities. For these reasons, employers prefer to hire more experienced applicants rather than recent graduates.

The European Union introduced measures that were implemented in order to increase the youth employment. The European Commission earmarked a significant amount of money to run the Youth European Initiative which is supposed to help young people increase their job opportunities. Another initiative supported by the European Union is Erasmus+ that enables students to gain academic and work experience in other member states. There is also European Youth Guarantee program that is very promising and supports those firms which hire young applicants. It is necessary to wait and see if the currently established measures are sufficient to lower the youth unemployment or not.

This study pointed out that the current educational system in the Czech Republic does not prepare its students for their first jobs. Therefore the study recommends that students should be encouraged to develop their soft skills and creative thinking during studies. The following methods were used: analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction and comparison.

#### This study was elaborated by:

students of School of International and Public Relations in Prague : Pavlína Roubíčková, Iveta Zelená, Zuzana Viglaská

students of the University of Economics in Prague: Klára Balounová, Romana Šumpichová, Lucie Svitáková, Kateřina Kabátová, Alena Malásková, Klára Pechalová, Klára Spáčilová, Lenka Svobodová, Kateřina Bendlová,

The elaboration of this study was led by:

Jana Radová, the student of the University of Economics in Prague





### **RESOURCES**

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